



Herts
Hash
House
Harriers

Herts official Website: hertshash.co.uk



Run No.1989
10th July 2022
Venue: The Highland Gathering
Beers: Tring, Fanny Ebbs & Side Pocket for a Toad
Location: Harpenden
Hare/s: Mr X
Runners: 13
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 2
Hash Hounds: 0
Total: 15 – if Mrs Mallet was really there?
Membership: On a Highland Fling

Summer had well & truly arrived with the old mercury pushing up the thermometer [No Pebbledash! – Ed], but with every 'silver lining' there's always a dark cloud on the Horizon, as both Flanders & Milf succumbed to the latest round of Covid & couldn't make the Hash this week, or the Highland Gathering.

This next surge of lurgy left Mr X with a couple of spare, pre-ordered tickets, & TBT OBE with one extra entry [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] for Harpenden Highland Games.

Now, with Trail having to get the Hash to get to Rothampstead Park for Noon & the entry of the Pipe Bands, one of which included our very own Tent Packer, plus the rise in temperature to heights of just below 30° to make Harpenden hotter than Hawaii that day, combined with the Hare setting off from Kent at 04:30Hrs to go around & set the Trail, all added up to make this a shorter than normal Trail.

The Hare finished his work with laying the Trail, having narrowly avoided being mullered on a footpath by a bunch of inconsiderate cyclists who were hacking down a path at breakneck speed, he arrived back & decided with half an hour to go, he would get out of the heat of the sun & stop off at the Queens Head for some well-deserved refreshment!

Sitting in the Queens Head, Mr X enjoyed an excellent pint of Umble Magna, he would also purchase another Pint for My Lil', after he had texted that he had arrived at Harpenden Station & was on his way. My Lil' found Mr X outside the front of the Queens Head, applying some factor 50 sunblock.

My Lil' arrived & soon made a dent in his pint, then No Eye Deer & Whatevershesays came wandering down from Rothampstead Park, near to which they had parked up at.

The group of four walked down under the Cathedral like vaulted Skew Bridge to find TBT OBE, Fliptop & Paxo at the starting point of 'Grove Road Car Park', however Where's Wally? couldn't find a space when he tried to park there, it seems that a lot of spaces were still occupied from the Saturday drinking session, even when the Hare arrived just after 09:00Hrs? So, Where's Wally? went off to find a side street to park up in.

As the Circle was being called there was some excitement as Sparky arrived, TBT OBE jumped to his feet to help Sparky find a parking space, which he did, & the Pack watched as Sparky mounted his Fiesta over the kerb & drop in to the spot! [Careful Pebbledash! – Ed]

Fliptop had welcomed everyone to the correct Run Number, then it was over to the Hare, as Sparky was faffing about getting his knee pads on & his horn out! [Ok we'll give you that one Pebbledash! – Ed] Mr X went on to explain that it was normal Herts Hash Markings, there were short cuts & then he added that half the Trail was in the shade, No Eye Deer was quick to point out that the other half would be under the blazing sun.

There was a codicil at the end of the Hare's speech, that was that the Trail was in two parts. Firstly, there would be an A to A, so those who wanted to leave bags in the cars could do so, then retrieve them up for the A to B section that could be just walked to the Highland Gathering.

Without any further ado, the Pack set off to the east on the urban street of Grove Road for 130 Yards to where arrows pointed the way south-westward down the terraced homes of Longfield Road. On the way, Mr X explained that this area of Harpenden was once a village in its own right & at one time was known as Bowling Alley, hence some of the really old timber framed buildings still dotted about the shopping area.

The FRBs all headed away from Grove Road, which existed on the 1884 Ordinance Survey Map, while they were on a 500 Yard loop down to left hand bend before the dead-end of the backstreet, then around to Coleswood Road to come back to Grove Road. Meanwhile the first of the short cuts was at this junction, where the SCBs followed the Hare over the crossing & on to a CHK by Dark Lane, the first part of which is the access road between the Recycling Centre & the Grove infant School.

The Hare was surprised that the late arriving Where's Wally? had taken the short cut, he was now checking it out well ahead of the others, who were now mostly walking the hot pavements, with the exception of TBT OBE who had broken out in to a gentle trot.

As Where's Wally? headed the correct way up toward the entrance of the allotments beyond the Recycling Centre, the Hare thought that he'd be off & away from the rest in no time. Mr X needn't have worried as we are talking about Where's Wally? & even though he was almost on top of the Trail, he failed to see the orange arrows & came back toward a bewildered Sparky & Paxo, who had just been into see what the Recycling Centre had to offer? Perhaps he should have taken Sparky in for some new furniture??

The rest of the Hash were spotted coming down to the end of Coleswood, the Hare shouted out it was 'Safer to use the crossing' just in case some were already delirious from the heat? Where's Wally? came back from his attempt to search down by the front of the school, as Paxo was "On!" to the Trail up in a north by northeast rise on the footpath beside the old narrow tree-lined Dark Lane.

On the way up toward the end of the homes on Sherwood Rise, TBT OBE was talking about mortality & what to do with someone's ashes? Mr X said that TBT OBE could have them placed in a bottle to go around the world at sea, or better still have them used to mark a Hash Trail, a some who have gone before us wished to be scattered in an area they like to Hash, Mr X added that it could be the best Hash TBT OBE had ever set?

The second CHK was found on the end of Sherwoods Rise & Where's Wally? was off to the southeast on dusty ancient footpath in to the long wooded stretch above the school & below more local allotments, but there was no calling of "On!" from Where's Wally? which led to TBT OBE to veer off in searching the wrong option up into tree-line on the edge of Sherwoods Rise, eventually TBT OBE was called as the Hare marked the Trail in the direction Where's Wally? had last been seen.

The Hare now offered up a Short Cut though Sherwood Rise, but no one, not even Sparky wanted to take this. No Eye Deer was concerned as to how Sparky would cope in the heat, especially as he was wearing long trousers & his carpet-layer's knee-pads [I bet Pebbledash is now thing of a nice long Shag-pile right now? – Ed]

It was a nice, gentle 170 Yards under the cooling shade of the dense tree-canopy to the next CHK on the Footpath, which rises up from the eastern side of the school & away up to the northeast.

The Trail seemed to be picked up quite quickly, with more broadleaf trees sheltering the Pack from the sun on the 210 Yards, on which the Pack moved away from the allotments & school grounds to run behind the homes on Grove Avenue, then reaching the next CHK.

The rest of the Pack would catch up with Where's Wally? & TBT OBE as both went wrong, searching northward up Greenway link between the two housing estates on either side of the old footpath. Fliptop & Paxo were now on to the correct choice by searching the continuation of the footpath, now the Hash were on a slight incline to the northeast as it passes by a small wooded area between the fenced of gated back of Grove & Aldwick Roads.

The Keenies were soon obeying the arrow & heading into the Children's Nature Reserve & Play Area with various things to view & for small minds to enjoy, so it was ideal for the Hash to work their way around this shaded loop. This was also the area where the Hare encountered the mad cyclists, who nearly knocked him over, but if a kid came out of this play area being hit by some prats peddling along at over 20 MPH on a gritty surface could have ended in catastrophe.

The Hare cut this loop out, since he had set it, but he made sure Whatevershesays, Kylie & No Eye Deer who escorted Sparky on this small detour. A CHK was found by a crossroads of footpaths, now Where's Wally & TBT OBE redeemed themselves as they picked up the Trail for the last 289 Yards of the old footpath to where it merges out on to Green Lane Close.

Arrows turned the Pack to the west, as the Trail ran along the Wheathampstead Road, keeping to the quieter side road that is set parallel to the busy main route running below the Aldwickbury School. Along this section, separated by a wide green with large broadleaf trees from the busy route, My Lil' mentioned that one of the detached houses here belong to the 'Late Great Eric Morecombe', he said that he was surprised that there wasn't a Blue Plaque to honour the fact? In a Casanova sketch, what Ernie wrote, he introduced himself as Lord Eric, Fourth Duke of Harpenden, and certain parts of Birkenhead!

400 Yards along to the west, then down to the southwest as Piggotshill Lane heads away for the roundabout back toward Harpenden's Southdown, just a few yards along into the shade the next CHK was found at the start of Sherwoods Rise. Now the Pack would spend the most time out exposed to the sun, with the odd bit of shade dotted along the 600 yards all the way down to the end of suburban Piggotshill Lane & the shops either side of Grove Road & Southdown Road.

The Trail used the crossings, firstly toward the Co-op, then again to the southern side of the Southdown Road, here there was the option of taking a left to go to the cars & fetch a change of clothes, or turn right to head up by the small green triangle, a short way up Walker Road to find a CHK at the southern point of the grass triangle.

Most knew that the Trail was to cross over to Southdown Road, Paxo & Fliptop seemed hesitant, but the Hare reassured them by pointing toward the Skew Bridge before marking the CHK. Under the ornate arch of the railway bridge that is a design classic with its offset ribs of bricks to keep the Midland Line Tracks aloft.

The Hash managed to get beyond the Queens Head & then the Trail made its way in to the small Nature Reserve on Southdown Common, where the final CHK of the Trail was found. Found again, the Trail passed through Wilcox Copse, where TBT OBE saw the upsetting sight of a dead pigeon covered in Trail Dust on the path toward the nor-nor-west & up out by the Cricket Club.

Moving on above Dell Ponds & then up to Bull Road, this last section of dry, brown grass common had now been requisitioned for a car park for the Highland Games. Whatevershesays & No Eye Deer recommended Sparky park up here, which he did.

The Trail crossed Bull Road, cutting the corner to cross the St Albans Road & into the wooded line by Leyton Road & a Held CHK, which was ignored as the Pack was now stretched out & there was a rush to get in just before Noon to get a photo or video of Tent Packer in all his finery as his Pipe Band entered the Highland Gathering.

At least it was shaded as Mr X & My Lil' hung around waiting for Sparky, even Kylie had finished his après Trail faffing & followed My Lil', Paxo, Fliptop & TBT OBE to the Bar. Whatevershsays & No Eye Deer entered the arena & still there was no Sparky, at least Mr X wasn't having to wait for Where's Wally?, for he was running the first section again & after he had finished this he felt a bit light-headed. [Seriously, be careful out there in this heatwave folks! – Ed]

Mr X left a description of Sparky for the guys on the gate, obviously they watch the Simpsons as they know who Mr Burns is, for Sparky gained access without any hassle when he told them his Hash name as confirmation. Mr X did managed to get back out & dash ahead to of the entry of the Pipe Bands & catch some video of Tent Packer in action.

Up at the Beer tent, Mr X found the rest out on one of the large tables, unfortunately there was no shade & so the old Sun Block came out as the group enjoyed the nice Tring Brewery Ales [Is there a phone ringing? – Ed] No Down-Downs as the Pack enjoyed the events, food & Ales, as well as more from Tent Packer's Pipes. Even TBT OBE seemed to enjoy the skirl of the bagpipes, not to mention the Ferret racing or the big boys at the bottom end doing a bit of tossing with their cabers.

Sparky made his way to join the rest, he enjoyed a haggis cheese toasty, soon followed by a large sausage-roll a women was selling for Charity at £3, which he got for £2 as she was losing the will to live as he dithered & then scratched around for some coppers!

It was a great day, though perhaps a tad too hot to be out all day without shade, everyone was impressed by the entertainments, the Ales & Ciders, not to mention the Belgium Chicken TBT OBE had for lunch after his earlier Cheese grill, which, after some detective work, turned out to be actually be a 'German Kebab', as is the trend now. There was even a nod to the Trail being just right for the conditions & getting the Pack in to the Park in time.

Though no one seemed to actually see Mrs Mallet, who Tent Packer reassured the others that she was there. Mr X had as 'Sparky moment' [Pass the hearing trumpet! – Ed] as he thought that she wasn't seen as Tent Packer said 'she was in Khaki', but the Irish band 'Missed the Ferry' sound disguised that Tent Packer actually said "I hope I find Mrs Mallet as she has the car keys!" Of course this led to a few lines of the often misquoted Anthea & Donna's 1977 'Uptown Top Ranking' being sung by Mr X!

Just a quick mention on how good the Hash are looking after their own, with some of us (No Eye Deer & Whatevershsays: Mentioned in Dispatches) who hung about at the rear to get Sparky around the Trail in one piece in such hot conditions on parts of the Trail.



Nasa reported a bright light shining up from Scotland from 6 am this morning. On further investigation from the International Space Station, it turned out to be the reflected glow of thousands of peely-wally Scottish folk trying to get a tan as soon as the Sun came out. Their bodies were so pale that they reflected the sunlight back up into space when they took their tops off, creating a phenomenon known as Peelywally Glare.

