

Cotswold Way Relay Race Report 28 June 2008

Congratulations to all the runners who took part in the Cotswold Way Relay this year. I think we did very well and I enjoyed the day immensely. I'd like to thank John McD who, whilst unable to run it due to a broken toe, organised the team and got up early to support our runners in the first half of the race. Thanks also to Chris and Libby who put on a splendid barbecue at their place in the evening.

"Tachs'n' Nails" came 7th out of the 24 Mixed team in the race with a total elapsed time of 15hrs 18mins (we came 31st out of 64 teams overall). We were over three hours behind the Relay winners, Stroud & District AC, who had a total time of 12hrs 13mins. In a nail-biting finish they were only 1 minute 36 seconds ahead of Great Western Runners (GWR) cumulatively at the end of the day! Mike Duxbury, an ex-TACH runner, won leg 3 for Stroud.

**All the results are on the Cotswold Way Relay website:
<http://www.cotswoldwayrelay.co.uk/2008Results/2008Results.htm>.**

Here's how our Tach'n'Nails athletes got on:

Leg 1 – Chris Smart had to stay with family in Gloucestershire the night before the race so he could get to Chipping Campden, the Northernmost end of the Cotswolds, for the 7am start. It's a great leg but unpopular because it's so early.

Leg 2 – Lisa Burke also had an early start and the leg with the most ascent in the relay. Before the race she was concerned about getting enough water on the route but was reassured when she found out that there was to be a water stop. Unfortunately there was no sign of it when she got to it's promised location!

Leg 3 – Chris Bloor ran leg three then, with Libby, hosted our after race barbecue back at their house.

Leg 4 – Peter Kennedy (PK) ran the longest leg of the relay and finished in 22nd place, the second highest position we achieved after Rob.

Leg 5 – Guenaelle (pronounced Gwenaye) Piou is a very talented runner who joined the team from Westbury Harriers at the last minute. Unfortunately she took a wrong turn in the woods on her leg and spent some time lost. In spite of this she ended up finishing in 31st position, the same as the TACH team average (and me).

Leg 6 – Rob Hicks had to run with very badly blisters from Tuesday's Beacon Batch race. Jo, his wife, strapped two make-up pads to his feet before the race as commercial blister pads weren't big enough. Rob was our only top ten finisher, ending his leg in 9th position.

Leg 7 – Ruth Pitchers twisted her ankle on a rutted track on her route which meant that although she was able to race at full speed on the flat she lost places to other runners on the descents. She has been out for a run since and I'm pleased to report that her ankle is recovering and is now "OKish".

Leg 8 – Jason Pitchers has been off racing for the last year with a long term injury but thankfully didn't have any trouble during the relay. He now has only two more legs to run to complete all ten and become a "King of the Cotswolds".

Leg 9 – This was my leg. I wasn't able to recce the route until the Wednesday before the race but was glad I did because there were a couple of places where I could have gone wrong. Like Jason I'm now also two years away from finishing all ten legs.

Leg 10 – Bill Charnock ran the glory leg into Bath but suffered along the route with uncomfortable shoes which ended up in the bin after the race.

See you all in the Cotswolds next year.

Antony "Turtle" Clark.