

SWINESHEAD 10 12.09.10

RACE REPORT

I decided to make this a Pre-Race type race as I have not run competitively since June, following a back injury and shoulder problems, etc. and needed to get out there and see what I could achieve. Therefore, I was not expecting great things.

I had not realised that Swineshead was relatively close to Peterborough until researching more on the map. I found that approaching the venue required better planning though, as, apart from getting slightly lost on the way in, I approached the village from completely the wrong end (the west). Thus, I was diverted a further 2 miles around to the 'safe' side where the car park was in a farm field. Plenty of space and a 3 minute walk to the village hall HQ. Basically, the organisers had blockaded the village approaches off so that only the residents could go through. This was on the grounds of safety. Which makes good sense.

A number of things were going on at the HQ, which included stalls, BBQ and a small band (1 man) although that was not in action until my return. In fact a small fete was taking place. The route is very rural, scenic and flat to undulating (hilly if you train in the fens). About 80 % road and the rest being trail with concrete surfaces across the Melchbourne estate. Some very pretty villages on route, including Riseley, Book End, Green End, Pertenhall and Chadwell End. The race was well organised and marshalled. The roads were relatively quiet and safe, but, being rural, there were few spectators. The race, in fact has also a 5 miler, which also includes the trail section, and fun run, so it catered for most runners.

As far as my race was concerned, being close to midday and air temperature close to 20 degrees C, a conservative race was necessary, if I was to finish in good order. There were plenty of water stations with drinks and sponges, & the same at the finish. Being well hydrated was an absolute necessity. Unfortunately, the final 1-1/2 miles was on exposed road and face into the wind, with a final hill, and I could feel it. One poor girl from Bedford

overtook me 3 times, during the course of the race, only to keep stalling with cramp. She did finally finish. I was happy with the final result, though.

Well worth setting aside for next year as an alternative to Grunty Fen.

Barrie Barrett: 12.09.10