

2005 NDR - BY THE RUNNERS WHO TOOK PART

Here is a selection of views taken from the Runners World Forum + Serpentine AC website

Very many thanks to the organisers of this. I've only done a handful of races, and they've always been jolly affairs, but the north downs run was the friendliest event I've taken part in. The orchard bit was killer btw.

I feel I must reiterate just how well organised this race was....perfect. The Istead boys really do deserve a pat on the back for this....

Well I did it and I am never doing it again!! ... Can't fault the course, the marshals were brilliant, the weather was kind but i hated every minute I was out there!

My Gran called me 30 minutes before the start. I explained I couldn't chat forever as I should get ready and at the end of the call she said "enjoy your jog". Cruel but funny, bless her ;-)

Just wanted to say well done to everyone who ran yesterday an outstanding race brilliantly marshalled. On a personal note was running really well to 20K when the dreaded calf cramps hit (why do calf muscles only cramp in races and not on training runs) Anyone going to run Bewel water 15 next week?

Morning all, bit stiff this morning after yesterday. Firstly a massive 'well done' to Pants, then a huge 'well done' to the Organisers ..fantastic marshalling/water stations etc....not once did I feel like I was lost....marshals and signs in all the right places....fantastic effort. I ended up in 10th (I think) in 2:05, which I was fairly pleased with at this stage....I'll be back !!!

Loved it, Loved it, Loved it!!!!

This was the best race I have ever run - can't fault it one little bit ten out of ten.

What a brilliant day.

I can't express how much fun this was yesterday. Great marshals, great course improvements, great spectators, great competitors, great weather and some great results!

I whole-heartedly add my thanks to the organisers for making it such an enjoyable experience and my congratulations to you all for some excellent performances, especially the stand out results from Pantman.

A truly brilliant day out, thanks to all involved in organising this! Fabulous event!

*This is the best organised race I have ever done – full stop. The marshalling is great and the signing superb in their absence. I cannot even begin to imagine how hard it must be to put all this together and yet it is streets ahead of much more basic, simpler races! There is almost nothing you can fault this race on - it's that good!
Andy - you and your team are the real winners today. It's the best race on the calendar once again!*

Stunning organisation - was continually impressed by all those arrows and sprayed roots. Tried to say thanks to every marshal - but here's a big THANKS to everyone involved with putting it on.

Dare I say I thought it wasn't as tough as I feared it would be? Thought there'd be more long hills. I'm definitely not complaining mind! And my calves were shredded at 27k nonetheless. Delighted with 3:08:28 (my watch with a few stile queues taken out) and 3:12 official time. Sub 3 next year!

What a run! This race has to be the one that everyone else tries to emulate. The views, marshalls and organisation were all terrific. I have also decided to hide my identity, just in case my employer ever decides to take a look at the forum and have gone for 'Cliff face' in honour of the descent we climbed down today, the one where I saw a number of mountain goats looking nervously over the edge, too frightened to go down!

Thanks to all the marshals, especially the one who apologised when she answered 'No' to my rather desperate enquiry - is that the last of the hills?

As my thighs were turning to concrete and my heart pounding fit to burst from climbing yet another steep ascent towards the end of this incredibly scenic, off-road race, what was going through my mind was the quotation from Dryden: "All the happiness mankind can gain, is not in pleasure but relief from pain". By 20k, I just wanted it to be over: I stopped worrying whether a female would pass me, and hurried on as best I could, the sooner to put an end to the pain. Mercifully, every kilometre had a marker, and the countdown to the finish thus made the task manageable.

I doubt my emotions were much different from those of the couple of hundred other competitors - a high

proportion of them veterans - who took on the challenge of what has to be one of the most beautiful races anywhere. The poppies were in full bloom in the chalky fields we climbed and descended; there was lots of pretty woodland to run through; numerous stiles and kissing gates to overcome, and no risk of getting lost because the course was so well-marked and marshalled. Every hazard had a notice too, and there were 6 water, sponge and jelly-baby stations manned by enthusiastic helpers.

The weather was very kind to us: much cooler than the past week and overcast, making it pretty comfortable for running. And the prizes were better than the London marathon's! Stirling won 5th Senior Male and I won the 45-54 women's prize, which secured me Sweatshop vouchers and a lovely engraved crystal wine-glass, which I am sure will be put to good use! (The prize for winning my age-category in London, and beating nearly 1,000 other women of my age, was...a wooden plaque - thanks David Bedford). All finishers were rewarded with T-shirt, snacks and water and the immense satisfaction of not having to climb another hill today. A very well-run event altogether.