

Langdale Horseshoe – AL 21.1km/1450m -11th October 2014

“Falls on the Fells...” – by Mark Clarkson

I headed over to the Langdale valley with Rob Salter (NFR) and Steve Ireland (still U/A!). We hit mixed weather on the way over and on arrival there still looked to be poor visibility on most of the tops, but it looked like it might clear. We managed to somehow speed through the kit check and following the age old decision of what wear we were assembled at the start for the sprint and chaos through the farmyard and through the gate – fall here and you will be trampled to death by 400 runners! Salter got a flyer and was off like a rocket, I went for a more steady approach and ran fairly comfortably down towards Stickle Ghyll. The ascent up to Thunacar Knott was a steady affair. Following the summit of Thunacar Knott I glanced up to see Salter not too far ahead and set off in hot pursuit across the Moor. I was perfectly placed to vault over him should he have descended into the muddy gloom of Martcrag Moor, but luckily for him he managed to stay afloat. This section of the route was particularly boggy and ‘heavy’ which really sapped the legs of energy. From here I ran with Salter for pretty much the rest of the race. The clag was down on Bowfell and Crinkles but we seemed to get pretty good lines, especially off Bowfell when most people seemed to head west of the summit..? We by passed the ‘bad step’ as did most others in our group. On the long fast run down to Blisco we were both pretty goosed and took it steady. We felt like we were going canny but a Pb was definitely not on the cards. The pull up Blisco was the usual torturous affair but completed fairly swiftly. I had been a little stronger than Salter on the downhill’s and on the run off Blisco I pulled away slightly... to the sound of “you better have a pint for me at the finish Clarkson...” However, it pretty much all went wrong from there. Firstly, I fell face down into a bog on the descent off Blisco, then pretty much straight after tripped on a rocky section and went flying onto elbows and knees, smashing my Garmin off in the process. Salter flew through with a couple of other runners whilst I was collecting my thoughts, checking the wounds and looking for the Garmin (I even contemplated leaving it and coming back up to get it when I couldn’t find it – pleased I chose to spend a little longer looking). Once collected I rattled on after Salter and the few runners who had come through. At the cattle grid and road crossing Salter was in close distance ahead and it was lucking like it could be a good run to the line. All was not to be. Shortly after starting the decent into the camp site, Salter had fallen and was now jogging with his left arm hanging to the left, slightly gorilla like. Concerned about his shoulder, I had a quick look and was pretty confident that he had dislocated his humerus. Given the recent events and the state of my knees and elbows I quickly chose to support my comrade in need and we jogged the rest of course together. Fair play to Salter for jogging the last half mile with what indeed turned out to be a dislocated shoulder. The pain was not particularly lessened by the ‘pain relief’ from St. Johns... 2 paracetamol! In the end, we finished pretty well in 32nd and 33rd, and although times were down, so were most peoples. Without the ‘falls’ I reckon we could have been mid 20’s.

On departing the car park for A and E at Carlisle and some real pain relief, we passed the Mountain Rescue guys responding to what turned out to be a busy day. Three call outs for fell runners and one for a walker.

Once again, a great day all in all, great route and race. Back next year for more.

Results - http://www.amblesideac.org.uk/Langdale_2014results.htm

