

Boulsworth Bog - 13 April 2014

by
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On arrival at Wycoller, I walked to the barn to register and looking around, it was obvious this was a senior's race with a motley crew of what I thought were the older end of the fell running fraternity. There was of course the odd younger serious runner hoping to bag a win. After registration, I was feeling quite confident about a decent finish and I felt up for it, apart from a very odd bout of water on the knee.

As I was going through the normal dilemma of whether to wear something under my vest, Richard Treitl came towards me from the car park with his mate, looking like they were about to climb the north face of the Eiger. I wasn't sure they knew something I didn't, so I decided to go with only the vest and shorts, as being a big lad, I overheat fast when there's anything higher than a mole hill to climb.

We all parked in the car park apart from Screw. I can only put this down to the fact that he had one fell shoe and it's a fair old hop to the start from the car park. The start loomed and the motley crew formed into a group. I was still feeling confident at this point and thought Andy Berry had a good chance of being first back.

The race started and we set off up the road. I soon settled in to mid pack and felt I was going well, with the leaders still in sight at the end of the first mile, which came up in 8 minutes. Then the hill started proper and as usual I took on the persona of an 80 year old with asthma. And, as usual, I started to do a fantastic job of going backwards down the field. Not having done the race before, I dug deep and tried to keep the place where I started in view, with a bid to getting back there at some point. As we progressed up to the trig, there was a mix of track and bog, so it was hard to get a decent rhythm going and what seemed to be false trig points didn't help. I did glance across to the right at one point to see Andy Berry and co starting their descent.

Having stemmed the flow of going backwards with a hundred yards to go to the trig, I got back past the first of my foes and rounded the trig. My favourite part of a fell race was now on and I had to catch and pass 6 people to get back to the point where I was at, at the bottom of the hill. I bounded down the hill passing the first three people within a couple of miles. Now feeling more like a V40, I clawed my way back past another 2 including the first lady. As we came off the moor, there was a really nice descent down through a wood and I spotted my last conquest about 30 yards in front. The only thing I had to worry about was getting lost. If you don't know, I am the worst at any form of navigation, so that was a worry. I found my way back onto the road on which we started and realized there was probably about half a mile to go. The last place I wanted back was now 10 yards in front of me. I put what energy was left into a sedate sprint finish and managed to just overtake the other runner as we turned into the finishing field. What a result. I was well happy.

Obviously I forgot to stop my Garmin, so looked for my official time on the finishing board, What astounds me is how fit some of these geriatric runners are. I finished 36th, but there above me was a V60 chap.