

EVENT REPORT and RESULTS 2006

Marshals

John Westcott start and checkpoint closing.

Dave Challenger start and checkpoint 1.

Pat Challenger and Mervyn Harvey checkpoint 1.

Reg Chapman, Ken Styan, Bill Thompson checkpoint 2.

Peter Waterhouse, Betty Waterhouse and Anne O'Mara checkpoint 3.

John Westcott created and Dave Challenger checked a novel route which, to participants' general delight, found them on footpaths they had never tried before.

For those interested in such things the results are overleaf. It looks like we have another four world records, Kenyans please note: well world records for the 30.3 and 20.6 mile routes in these conditions. Mind you everyone achieved a personal best, which can only be bettered if our man of a thousand footpaths, John Westcott, forgets himself one year and uses these routes again. Not likely.

Does event organising affect your health? I have had to visit the doctor to try and get a cure for this obsessive, compulsive disorder of having to look at every weather forecast. I was so desperate to find positive climatic news, which did not include rain, snow, sleet, cold, I even consulted the Galapagos Meteorological Office to see what they thought the conditions would be in the South of England. They said it would be cold and wet and any local finches would eventually evolve to have thermal vests and gore-tex feathers, which I thought a singularly useless piece of information. Having followed the BBC's advice I came down to Leatherhead car park with all manner of water proofs only to find that it was dry. But their predictions must have put off the usual large gathering of on the day entrants, many of whom had decided not to emerge from their beds. I was thinking of suing for loss of business, but I'm sure that, like Network South West, they would say, "Well it arrived: just a little late". Yes from about midday it was the most miserable weather and turned the mud into even more slippery mud. Back in the car park at the end I was considering whether we could get sponsorship from a detergent manufacturer. Those returning were perfect for a before and after commercial.

And I again failed to get to all the checkpoints to say thanks to everyone for their help. I got as far as Tanners Hatch to set up the checkpoint, but to find the hostel was full and as the 15 breakfasting (at 11:30!) guests would not have appreciated being covered with plastic floor sheet, or having me spill water over them it delayed getting the checkpoint into full operation. Then I found that the hose on our venerable water heater was broken and my attempts to fix it were in vain, so I feared that the later walkers would not have their warm elixir to take them onto the finish. Finally some bartering with the Youth Hostel meant that we could use their kettle. If in the gloom you thought that what you saw was a new extension to the Bluebell Line, it was only a steady stream of steaming teapots crossing the hostel's garden.

Certificates are enclosed. If I have made a mistake just let me know and I will send an amended version.

Lost property – Ski type hat acrylic, brown outside, fawn inside. If you've noticed your head is cold contact me and we will send it to you.

Congratulations to all who braved the elements. Don't forget to come next year for the 30th Anniversary route, when the weather will be lovely.

Barry

