

It was surprising, and slightly disappointing, to find that there were only two Ciren vests lined up at the start but then the details of the race - a five mile figure of eight around Quedgley (where?) followed by three undulating seven mile laps (you can't be serious?) and an end on Rea bridge (why?) together with a week's worth of awful weather forecasts were not exactly tempting. Worse was the fact, previously announced, but not believed by us, that the marathon was marked out in kilometres while the associated 50K race was marked out in miles. This meant that, despite the grind of three identical laps, I have never run a race with so little clue as to where I was let alone how much I had still to do. Luckily despite having been ill, like all the rest of the world, and so feeling poorly prepared, I felt great on the day - stormed (well everything is relative) round the first lap, comfortable on the second and at least kept going on the third, leaving Rupert behind half way through this last lap. But then he really had done no training because of his injury caused by his amazing 100 mile run in November.

The event was not without drama - the world record for running a marathon in a clown costume was broken - as already reported in the Telegraph - and the St Johns Ambulance crew had to carry out emergency resuscitation at the road side.

The weather was kind, the marshals cheerful, the Ciren vests were recognized by many and the traffic considerate given that most of it was supporters driving the opposite way around the laps. We found the hills, each one done three time of course (and there were three hills which stick in my mind), gave a bit of variation and the downhills that followed almost made up for them. Probably not a race to aim for a PB but at least I achieved my aim of getting the qualifying "Good For Age" time for London 2010.

Liza Darroch

ETHIOPIAN SHOES REMINDER:

THIS WEEK IS THE LAST CHANCE FOR CONTRIBUTING ANY SECOND HAND (OR NEW) RUNNING SHOES TOWARDS THE NEXT CONSIGNMENT GOING TO ETHIOPIA.

IDEALLY PLEASE BRING THEM TO THE CLUB MEETING TOMORROW NIGHT. OR CONTACT ME (07905037288) IF THAT DOES NOT SUIT.

**LIGHT, "TECHNICAL", RUNNING TOPS AND SHORTS ALSO WELCOME - (ordinary cotton clothes are heavy to transport and available in Ethiopia.
THANKS AGAIN LIZA**