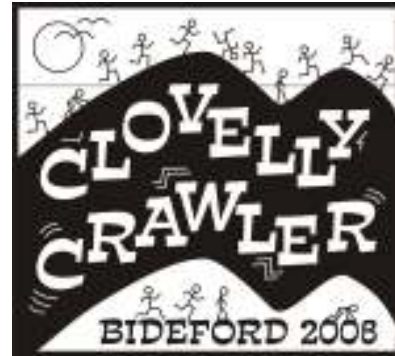


THE CLOVELLY CRAWLER

(aka Hobby Drive Hop)

The first ~~idiots~~ runners from our Club to attempt this course were Mike Gilmore (any correlation between his article in the last newsletter about dodgy knees and running on terrain like this?) and Roger Clarke, a very talented athlete who ran for us in the early to mid 80's and now resides in South Devon.



On a number of occasions Mike Gilmore tried to persuade me to join them but the alcohol hadn't wiped out all the brain cells then and I had the good sense to refrain.

However a few years ago Messrs Heard and Jewell decided to resume the run and managed to find a minibus full of simpletons to join them.

Of course, in those days we didn't have GSP or whatever they're called, so we had to use 'codger-coxy's olden guessing distances equation reckoner' which is roughly the number of hills I walk up times the number of miles Stuart Philps finishes in front of me, divided by the number of pints Heardy drinks afterwards. In this particular case the guess was fourteen miles.

On the inaugural run, Steph Jenkins & friends kindly prepared some much needed refreshment for us ... and it was sorely needed. I can honestly say that this would be amongst the top 5 hardest runs that I have ever done. The first section to Bucks Mills – approx. 5½ miles is relatively comfortable (apart from the steep decline into the village) but then the real hard work starts!

A really tough climb on a narrow path and then undulating (b***** hilly) virtually all the way back to Greencliff.

Each year we have a hard core of about a dozen – Heardy, Stu Philps, Mark Sussex, Neil Marke, Andy Jewell (injuries and viruses permitting), Glen Martin, Mark Gilbert, Tara Horrell, Lorrie Woolger, Karen Curry, Linda Eastman, Caroline Ellis and Jo Bedlar, plus over the years probably another 20 or so have joined us on various occasions.

We arrive back at the Blues severely dehydrated so it's virtually compulsory to have a few drinks and to discuss the lunacy of what we have just done – but I would recommend that everyone capable should have a go. There are shorter options from Bucks Mills (approx. 8 miles) or from Peppercombe (approx. 7 miles) which Andy Watts and Jane walked when pregnant (Jane that is, not Andy – he just looks pregnant).

Perhaps we could go mob handed next year and have a get together after – food (& drink) for thought!