

# The Snake Lane 10 Sunday February 18<sup>th</sup>

Should you trust a doctor?

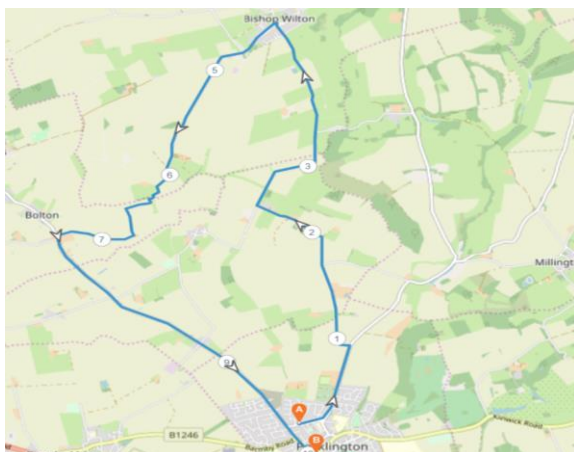
A strange way to start a race report but these very thoughts floated fleetingly into my mind at Stewart Park, Parkrun in October 2023.

Having enjoyed a lovely Parkrun and post-run refreshments, our merry little band of running enthusiasts were reminded by one of our doctor friends, that entries to the Snake Lane 10 Mile would be opening at 11am, and maybe we should consider entering.

To this day, I'm not sure whether we had too many strong coffees, were high on adrenaline after our run exploits or high on something else in the chocolate brownies, but the entire car, signed up for the events within 5 minutes. This was a feat in itself, as entries to this event sell out in minutes, so you have to be quick, such is its popularity.



As the months passed, talk turned towards the event. Whilst discussing it with past competitors, I couldn't help but notice that the faster members had a gleam in their eye, with talk of flat roads, PB's and trophies. The event has a big reputation for being one of the fastest in the calendar. Lesser mortals were prone to a case of the shakes and "Don't take me back there". Mentions of exposed roads, long straights, no cover from extreme weather and relentless pacing, making me a little nervous. There was also talk, in dark corners, of a "Mystical Panda" who floated through the field (more brownies...?).



The race itself is an early start at 9am, due to it being a "Closed Road Event", a rare event these days, but one that also permits the use of headphones. An early start from Ripon, its about an hour to Pocklington and the roads were quiet. One concern was the amount of rain falling as we left and throughout our journey but as soon as we arrived, it miraculously stopped. Race prep is made easy using the race HQ at Pocklington Rugby club, and I'm pleased to report that its not only Ripon Rugby Club that would benefit from a little "TLC" in the changing rooms. 😊

Twenty-five minutes before the start, all competitors are "shepherded" to the start, so for those entering in future years, get there early as it was noted our Nidderdale contingent doing a little extra "warm up" on

the way to the start.

9am sharp, and we were on our way. The route follows flat roads north of the town, as it passes through quiet open countryside. With the recent wet weather, the course was wet, and in at least 2 places, the road was completely flooded, necessitating an ankle-deep splash. Something I wasn't expecting to see was the remains of many amorous frogs. Clearly Valentines day and the warm weather had whipped them into a love-struck frenzy, but clearly many had "croaked it" as they were as flat as a badly tossed pancake on the tarmac (sorry 😞).

We eventually came to our first drink stop, just after the beautiful village of Bishop Wilton, and the road which had been a little undulating (!), took a nice dip downhill at this point. We were now on the part of the course that is called "Snake Lane" as it twists lizard like through the flat country towards the village of Bolton, heads bobbing over the hedge line.

A little climb just before mile 9 and then it's a gentle roll into Pocklington, where the crowds were amazing at cheering us home. I got so excited I started my sprint finish early, mistaking the 200m to go sign as the finish line (beware!).



So, what did I like...?

😊 The Race goodies were great, a buff, a nice big shiny medal and a pair of sunglasses, all in Pocklington Blue and White of course!

😊 The Pacers, there was at least one for every 5 minutes, a great idea, and very encouraging

😊 The race organisation, faultless, encouraging and plenty of car parking (albeit some is a little far away)

😊 The route, designed beautifully to produce a genuine PB course, the mile markers were flags which made distance checking much easier than races with simple boards.

😊 The closed roads, wide, safe route for best performances

What I didn't like...?

😞 It's a personal thing but the allowing of headphones, I tried numerous times to warn folks of my passing only to have to barge my way past (politely of course)

The stats

Distance 10.04 miles

Elevation 274 ft

Runners 1565

## The results

Cathy Simpson 1.24.13 (PB!)

Andy Purll 1.25.44

Lena Conlin 1.33.17

Sarah Jones 1.35.00

Emma Sawyer 1.35.40

Alison Pauling 1.36.57

Caroline Harland 1.37.46

Kate Dickinson 1.39.07

James Parkes 1.42.33

Some great results in the Ripon Claret, with everyone enjoying the event.

So, should you trust a doctor? Of course! a big thankyou to Kate Dickinson for encouraging us all to compete, it was a wonderful morning.

And finally, was there a mystical Panda? You'll have to enter next year to find out 😊