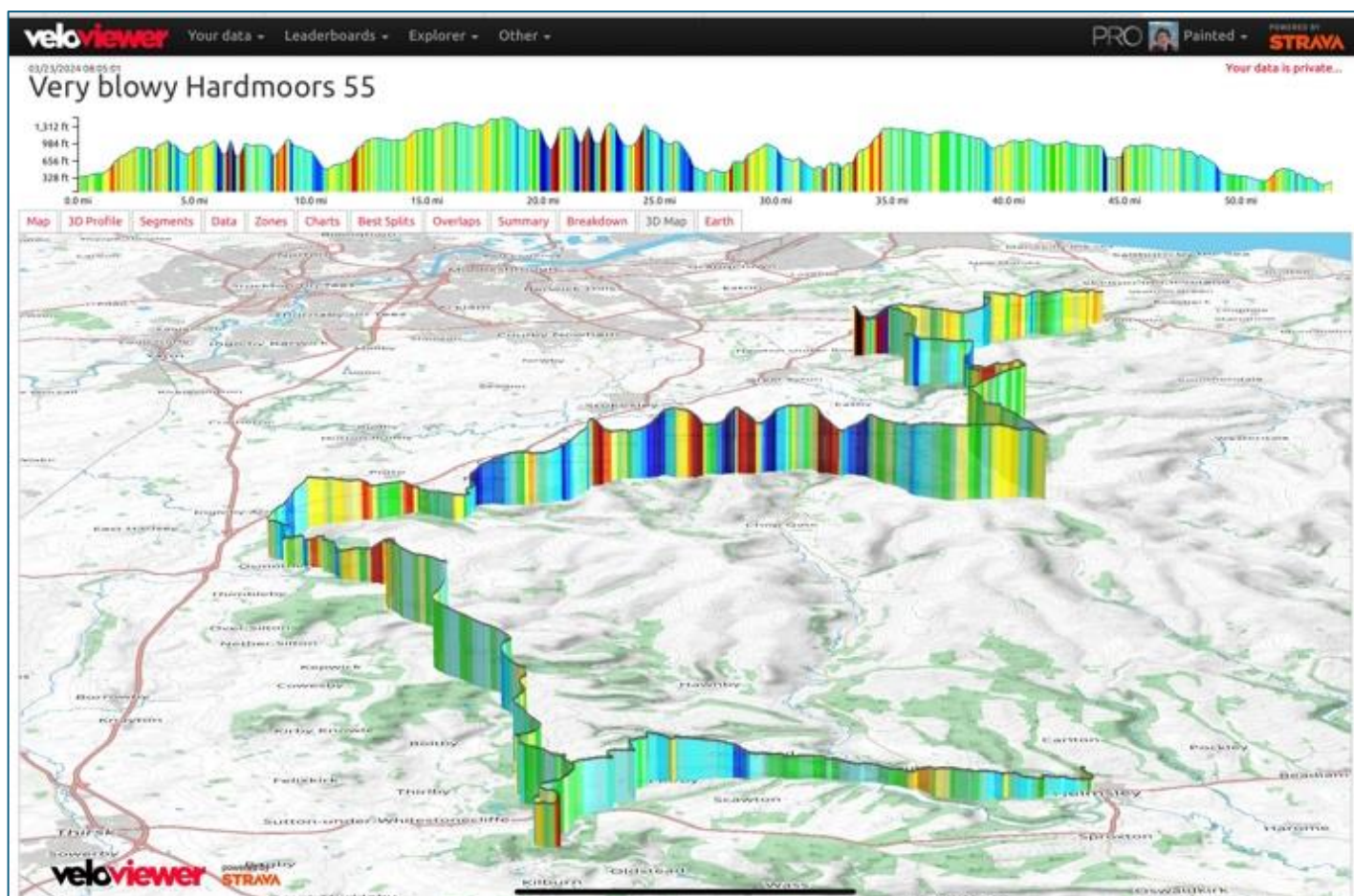


Hardmoors 55 – Lena Conlin



Guisborough to Helmsley along the Cleveland Way.

Saturday 23rd March was the 15th Hardmoors 55 and apart from 2023, Ripon Runners have been represented every year. Since David Jelly in 2010 at least 16 different Ripon Runners have defeated this challenging event.

I have run the Hardmoors 55 six times, the race has changed direction and also had a different route for 2019 (fifty miles including High Cliff Nab and up and down Roseberry Topping twice) to celebrate 50 years of the Cleveland Way.

The race started at 8 am and competitors have 16 hours to complete.

The race starts on the disused railway line (now cycle/footpath) near Guisborough Rugby Club.

It heads east until it meets the Cleveland Way. From this point the race more or less sticks to the National trail to Helmsley.

Winding its way through Guisborough Woods over High Cliff Nab to the ascent and descent of Roseberry Topping (320m).

Across to Captain Cook's Monument, dropping into checkpoint 1 at Kildale.

Then a climb up to Battersby Moor, turning at Bloworth Crossing to Clay Bank Top (269m) and dropping to the road crossing and the checkpoint along the route up White Hill and the Wainstones (398m), down and up, Cold Moor (402m), down and up Cringle Moor, down to Lordstones and up to Carlton Moor (408m) and Live Moor (312m).

Farmland and woods are a welcome break to Osmotherley and another Checkpoint before climbing to Square Corner and Black Hamilton (399m).

Then a run down across the moor to High Paradise farm and a checkpoint at Sneck Yate Bank.

Up again to Boltby Scar (332m) and across the cliff tops to Sutton Bank. Crossing the road towards the White horse (270m), the race route Leaves the Cleveland Way briefly, sending runners via a steep muddy path descending into the muddy woods from the cliff top. The trail exits into the carpark below the chalk image.

Now at 44 miles the 150 uneven steep steps back to the cliff top and the Cleveland Way again, feel mountainous, but the knowledge that the worst of the climbing is done, and a hot brew in Helmsley spurs weary legs onwards.

Less hilly, this section is muddier as it descends to Cold Kirkby past the springs and fishing lakes and along the road towards Reivaulx. Almost at Helmsley is the sting in the tail, an ascent up Whinny (whiny) Bank and more (howling) steps in Blackdale Howl Wood. As you exit the wood, the lights of Helmsley are so welcoming drawing you in.

A final run/walk/stagger/crawl (delete as applicable) up to the Sports fields and its done, just like that 53.9 miles and 2837 m ascent are complete.

This is a no support race (although you can get someone to run with you from Sutton Bank if you wish); all runners have trackers, and the checkpoints are well stocked. Runners can have 2 nonreturnable drop bags, one at Kildale and another at Osmotherley. I choose not to bother with the drop bags as I carry extra food with me. There is a bus from the finish to the start in the morning to help with transportation.

There is a compulsory kit list with random checks on course.

- Race vest (backpack) or Bumbag large enough to carry all mandatory kit
- Hat (a bandana is not sufficient) and Gloves.
- Spare gloves
- Waterproof Jacket (Must have taped seams and a hood)
- Waterproof trousers.
- Full running tights (Tracksters & 3/4 tights permitted).
- Minimum of 1 litre water/sports drink (to start race with, you are allowed to use this).
- Headtorch/Torch (check your batteries or carry spare just in case).
- Cleveland Way Map or OS Maps (Not just GPS)
- Whistle.
- Survival Bag
- Foil blanket
- Emergency food supply (chocolate/energy bar).
- SPARE WARM LAYER can be a Lightweight fleece e.g. microfleece/Polartec etc or Merino Wool base layer or Primaloft jacket/down jacket*.
- A fully charged mobile phone (to be kept on at all times)
- Safety pins, clips, magnets or race belt with which to attach your race bib to your body
- Suggested: ski goggles if the weather is forecast to be snowy

This year it was very windy, headwinds hampered progress and were exhausting, I wore sunglasses during the day and clear cycling glasses in the evening to protect my eyes from the wind and dust.

I completed the course this year in 14 hours 35 minutes and 42 seconds.



Bib	
Time	14:35:42
Start	08:05:01
Roseberry Topping	09:38:08
Kildale Village Hall	10:41:57
Clay Bank	12:58:34
Osmetherley V Hall	16:29:00
Finish Check	22:40:28
Finish	22:40:43