

# Durham Coast Half Marathon

June 10<sup>th</sup> 2018



So, having entered this very late ( Wednesday before the race !) I travelled down to Seaham with Michael Ashby and Graham Wood, we got there in plenty of time and had a little walk to registration. On the way we bumped into Anita and Sandra so we all sauntered along the coast to get our numbers, we also bumped into Warwick, Shaun Dodd and Paul Whalley, this was relatively small contingent from Blyth that would be competing, in no small part to the fact that the Blaydon races was the day before the race ( but Shaun and Sandra had done it ! nutters !) but also because this race has a reputation for being hard as nails. But since I have stupidly entered the Chevy chase again this year I was going to use this as an opportunity as a training run, also the fact that I was the only one in my Division competing ( yay full points !) allowed me the luxury of taking it relatively easy.

At this point I feel the need to mention the weather, the forcast was 15 Deg and cloudy, it was 16 degree and very sunny when we arrived, and then got warmer, back to this later...

We then nipped back to the car , had a bit more food and drinks then headed back to the start line.

Graham, Michael and I went for a little warm up run to get a feel what the first 0.5 mile would be like, this was to be a bit of a cake walk to what was to befall us shortly.



So the time to start (11am) had finally arrived, about 400 were due to start, final figures to be confirmed later. Since I was wearing a backpack I took the opportunity to take a number of photos for prosperity, heres one of us waiting at the start !

So the first 3 miles were relatively ok, what I would describe as undulating, and a welcome break from the sun came in the form of a little wooded area, there were a couple of steep little climbs but nothing in comparison to what we were about to experience.

Mile 3 – 4 was lovely, a gentle down hill section, as we arrived at the 4 mile point however there was a steep down hill section...

Now I know the old adage is what goes up must come down, but today what goes down must also come up was rather more apt.

So, here was the first of what turned out to be 5 sets of rather steep upwards slogs, which I walked all of them, just about.

After I caught my breath there was a very scenic section on the top of the cliffs, undulating up and down for approximately 3 miles till we arrived at another steep down section....

This 2<sup>nd</sup> uphill set was even worse than the first !



This was quickly followed by more steps at mile 8, and whilst half way up I looked around to see Warwick right behind me, turns out he's rather good on the hills !, I duly stepped aside and he skipped past me ! Good man !. Then, we were back on the undulating cliff top path and I picked up some speed and nipped past Warwick, we then were heading downhill again at 8, only this time we ran along at sea level for a couple of hundred metres before climbing our way back up to the cliff top, no steps this time, a rather cheeky gradient on a path ( peaking at 25 Deg).

The next section to mile 12 reminded me of the Beadnell to Alnmouth coastal run, but hillier, with less sand ! and was almost quite pleasant.

The last decent incline of the day was the final set of steps at 12 mile and the lady I had just passed skipped up the stairs ahead of me, but I just plodded up them.

We then approached the caravan park which denoted the beginning of the end, and thankfully only one last little hill a couple of hundred metres from the finish. I could now see the finish and I was close enough to the lass that just past me to finish with my customary quick finish, I just got her with about 30 m to spare, finishing in 1:50, thank god that was over !

Paul W and Graham W were at the finish, and had been for quite some time !, Paul just finishing ahead of Graham taking top points in League 1. I think I was 3<sup>rd</sup> Blyth in then Warwick came in a couple of mins behind me.

I picked up a cup of coffee, split a good deal over my hand then nabbed a rather large, and as it turned out rather tasty, bit of chocolate coated flapjack !, I then got my tshirt and medal !.

We then milled around the finish area waiting for the rest of the gang, next through the finish line was Shaun Dodd , then Sandra Watson, both who could certainly feel the previous days Blaydon races in their legs. Sandra said that she had passed Michael and he had turned his knee quite badly, we were rather concerned about him.

But the big man turned up not too much later, managing a decent finish despite the obvious pain he was in.

Next up was Anita to approach the finish line, looking rather sprightly and thankfully injury free !

A quick photo then we queued up for the minibus back to the start, which took a good 20 mins, next time we do it we will park at the end, but you don't know till you try these things, the organisers had pushed people to park at the start as there were more parking spaces available but the minibus's were taking about 45 mins on a round trip back to the finish.



Once back to the start we went our separate ways home, Graham, Michael and I mulled over the race on the way home, we had all found it tough, poor Michael was in quite a bit of pain in his knee, fingers crossed it isn't too bad !

Once home I realized that I should have really used some sun cream, as I was rather burnt ! will I ever learn ! probably not ☺

After a quick shower it was time for some grub, a lovely lasagne prepared by my missus, what a star !

So,

Would I do it again, possibly, it so much more interesting than a road race, I was in the fortunate position that I didn't have to race it, so that may have made a difference.

However I still could fancy trying it again !

Unlike Graham and Michael ☺

Results				
Placing	Time	Name	Division	position
13	01:37:20	Paul Whalley	1	1st
14	01:38:30	Graham Wood	1	2nd
49	01:50:57	Steve Dobby	2	1st
65	01:54:00	Warwick Roberts	3	1st
85	01:56:52	Shaun Dodd	3	2nd
151	02:06:09	Sandra Watson	3	3rd
168	02:10:06	Michael Ashby	3	4th
282	02:35:01	Anita Brabazon	4	1st

Thanks for reading

Steve D

All the best,

Steve D