



## RAF Spadeadam Half (ish)



**September 16<sup>th</sup> 2018**

So, another Sunday, another run, another Half marathon, one rather different on so many levels to last weeks GNR. I was hoping that the struggle I had last week would stand me in good stead with what was about to befall us at RAF Spadeadam in Cumbria.

The day started as usual with a bit of a drive, this time it was my turn to drive with Paul Blackett my only passenger today.

We left pretty early to give us plenty of time to get through security at the base then get sorted for the run, the weather was looking much better for running in comparison to last week, even a little rain was forecast.

We arrived after a straightforward drive at 9:20 then got ourselves signed into the base. Once parked up we wandered up the road to get our numbers. We were also given a timing wristband, and got our rather nice tshirts too, and a mug, so good so far !.

We then waited for our other Blyth Buddies to rock up, it wasn't too long before we bumped into Lesley, Heather, Sue and Craig, unfortunately we didn't see Chris or Nigel. We then went down to my car to drop off some outer jackets and have a quick loo stop, unfortunately there wasn't much loo roll around, thankfully I just needed a pee !.

We also took the opportunity to have the obligatory prerace photo :

We then wandered up to the start.

Now this being a RAF base there were lots of interesting military paraphernalia knocking around, and we took the opportunity to take a few pics, these next two being the pic of the bunch !



So after much messing around the race finally started 30 mins late, as there were large toilet queues and only 3 toilets.

We were told at the briefing that the first 6 mile were uphill, this was both true and bollocks, as we were about to find out.

The first 3 mile were on the road, with a gradual incline and a little switchback included, we then turned off to the left onto the gravel track that was to become our home for the next 9/10 mile.

It was a nice gently undulating beginning to the track but then at mile 5 we started to turn into the wind, which was pretty tasty and bad enough on the flat then at mile 6 we turned a corner and started heading uphill, into a headwind. This was the toughest bit of the race, rising to a peak of 1200ft at just before mile 8, the hell continued until 8.5 when

we turned left 90 degrees and started the run in. Now after climbing so much in the first half I was expecting a gentle decent for the next 5 miles, no such luck.

After a quick downhill mile from 9 - 10 there was a tricky incline followed by a sharp climb up to the final water station at 10.5, then back down again, then up again, again into the headwind, whilst it was a net downhill there was always a uphill section waiting around the corner, it was awesome, not.

There was another downhill section from 11 – 12 , with another cheeky uphill bit, then down for ½ mile, then up again. After 12.5 I started to pick up the pace a little with only 0.6 of a mile to go, or so I thought, but no, I had forgot about the organisers little habit of adding a little bit more onto the stated distance, after clicking past the 13.1 mile point and still no end in sight the road finally went consistently down. Eventually I recognized the start section and knew the end was not to far away. With gravity assisting I managed to keep the guy behind , behind me, and I was across the line, total distance 14 miles, bar stewards !.

Well knackered I picked up the awesome medal, then went and got a cup of tea, unfortunately the only negative to the whole day was a lack of snacks at the end, only some penny chews.

I then got a quick change then headed back up to the finish and was just in time to see Heather come flying down the hill to the finish with Sue and Paul not far behind. I missed craigs finish as I was getting changed , sorry mate !.

We then nipped back down to the car and retrieved the ladies overjackets, the lasses and Craig then went up to find Lesley and Paul and I jumped in the car to get home.

So, with a total of 1300 ft of climbing and a git of a headwind it was a rather tough race, but the experience of running around the RAF base and the fantastic medal and tshirt along with the great Craik with my Blyth buddies made for a tremendous day out. Even though it was very tough I would like to do it again next year, I can heartily recommend it !

Thanks for reading (results, map and relief below), total number of finishers 250.

Steve D

No.	First name	Surname	Club	Time	Position	Gender pos	Age cat pos
74	Steve	Dobby	Blyth Running club	01:51:52	25	23	12
269	Craig	Tonkin	Blyth Running Club	02:04:24	57	51	13
10	Heather	Barrass	Blyth Running club	02:14:42	84	13	7
34	Sue	Browning	Blyth running Club	02:16:33	90	16	9
24	Paul	Blackett	Blyth running club	02:18:01	98	81	39
149	Chris	Kell	Blyth Running club	02:26:52	133	96	19
137	Nigel	Howitt	Blyth Running club	02:26:57	134	97	48
93	Lesley	Falkous	Blyth Running Club	02:35:02	166	57	30

