

Race Report – London Landmarks Half Marathon – 25 March 2018

When I failed twice to get a place for the London Marathon it was nice to see another, brand new London (half) Marathon starting to be advertised on social media. Marathons are far too long for me anyway, so this seemed to be the perfect solution.

Not too much detail was being given away about London Landmarks Half Marathon (LLHM) at first as they appeared to be just testing the idea out to see what response they would get. So we were drip fed bits and pieces for a few months via social media as they collected email addresses of those interested. Lots of Email updates followed, then the release of registration for the ballot and it started to look like all those that were saying “it will never go ahead, not in the centre of London” were about to be proven wrong. This was only to be 4 weeks before the London Marathon, how and why would anyone get permission to close down the centre of London, the cost and security risk would be enormous.

It turns out the planning of this event has actually been going on for many years now. I got a place in the general ballot for the first ever LLHM, which was only a few thousand as the rest of the 10,000 were charity places. WICKED!! I had been planning on putting the miles in for this one and breaking the 90 min target I had set myself for a HM before I get too old.

With being new to running, into my third year now, I am constantly aware of the fact I am battling against time and improvement will be short lived at 55 years old. I always need to weigh up the benefits of pushing a bit more to improve, with pushing a bit much and injuring my already weak ankle. Unfortunately for me, a bad start to the year with Man Flu galore wiped out my longer distance training and restricted me to much shorter, although faster, training sessions. I knew the 90 min goal was highly unlikely now, maybe the next one. So I decided to simply enjoy this very first LLHM.

The updates via emails leading up to this race were incredible, they really did drum it home to everyone to remember the clocks went forward the night before, it would be impossible to forget. They also sent a tough plastic oversized string bag out with race numbers and T-Shirts to all participants in advance. The baggage area would only accept these official string bags as a security measure. It worked really well and the drop off and collection system they had in place was spectacularly quick, easy and friendly. It was all set out in alphabetic rows, you chose which one you wanted and handed bag over. You were given a wristband identical to another which was put on your bag and then ushered out through the tunnel to the outside simple and fast.

The race itself was superb from start to finish; the crowds were amazing all the way round the course. It was a carnival atmosphere and a typical British yet multi-cultural feel all the way round with bands, choirs, fancy dress, cheer leaders, soldiers, dancers, bells ringing and lots of information placards on posts pointing to landmarks as we passed and circled them. You could almost forget you were running, I think I did. The medal at the end is simply the best ever, which is 2 medals in one as it opens up and all 4 sides are decorated with a space for your official time tag (optional extra) to fit. It is difficult to say if it is a PB course due to so many U-turns and twists combined with the amazing

scenery to tease your mind away from the race. But it is flat with the best encouragement ever experienced from start to end.

It does have a very fast final 3 mile though, if you have it in you to go for it. I think by that time I had just slumped into the Tone Zone, knowing I had no chance of the 90 mins, and was thinking what an incredible atmosphere and sight. I found myself applauding the spectators that were applauding us. This was cheaper than GNR to enter and far superior in many ways, even though I still remain a great supporter of GNR. Oh and the official photos are all FREE unlike most big events and the APP is just incredibly awesome and user friendly. It is loaded with ridiculously clever one click options, probably to the annoyance of anyone that gets my Facebook updates as it was posting as I was running. It could have posted more but believe it or not, I chose to play safe and restricted most of it.

Next HM for me is Geneva in 6 weeks' time but LLHM is going to take some beating. I would, as if you haven't already worked out; I highly recommend this event to anyone.

Tony Dunn

London Landmarks Half ... » Half Marathon

London Landmarks Half Marathon 2018


Running @ London, 3/25/2018

SEARCH

HALF MARATHON

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POS	NAME		BIB	M/F	CATEGORY	CHIP TIME
625	Tony Dunn		573	M	M55-59	01:39:40