

Hash Number: 2257 24Oct21
 Venue: The Butchers Arms
 Sonning Common
 Hares: Donut, Hashgate, TC

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49 HASHERS AND 4 DOGS! GREAT!



The Butchers Arms

Spot CouchPotato Kirsty Nick Twanky MessengerBoy Ms Whiplash PennyPitstop Motox Dumb Dumber Iceman Crusty BGB Dunny Rampant Andy (see Down Downs for his new Hash name) TinOpener Lilo and Minx Brenda and dog Sprocket WaveRider NappyRash Florence Zebedee FalseTart Shifty Steve BlowHarder PissandChips Lizzie and dog Jowzer Dorothy Sleazy PrettyinPink Ruby Sean Cloggs NonStick Lonely Posh Bomber C5 AWOL Aqua JJ RobRoy and dog Rosie NoSole Slapper HappyFeet DoorMatt

THE HARES' TALE

LAYING THE TRAIL

I guess the more appropriate pub in Sonning Common from which to run our Hash would have been The Hare and Hounds but Donut and I have laid a few Trails from there and we are always welcome at The Butchers. After a request by SkinnyDipper we swapped our original 7th November date for 24th October since her pub is currently in the middle of renovation. Given the superb weather we enjoyed I think we may have done best out of the deal. But I get ahead of myself – let's talk about how we laid the Trail on the Saturday afternoon.

It's a curious thing but most Hares generally get quite nervous about their Trails. Will the Pack get lost? Will the flour have been eaten by creatures/blown away/obliterated by torrential rain/covered with snow/sabotaged? All of which has happened, of course. Personally, my feeling is that Hashers turn up expecting to enjoy themselves while doing a bit of running (or walking) and they always do, regardless of any issues. We're an amiable, forgiving bunch and that's partly why we Hash together.

Donut is a bit of a worrier when it comes to Trail laying so it was really helpful that TC agreed to join us. She's fit, sensible, has laid many Trails previously... and worries about it just like Donut. 😊 This meant



that they could discuss the design and size of each Check and flour blob as we went along and could rightly sneer at my cavalier attitude.

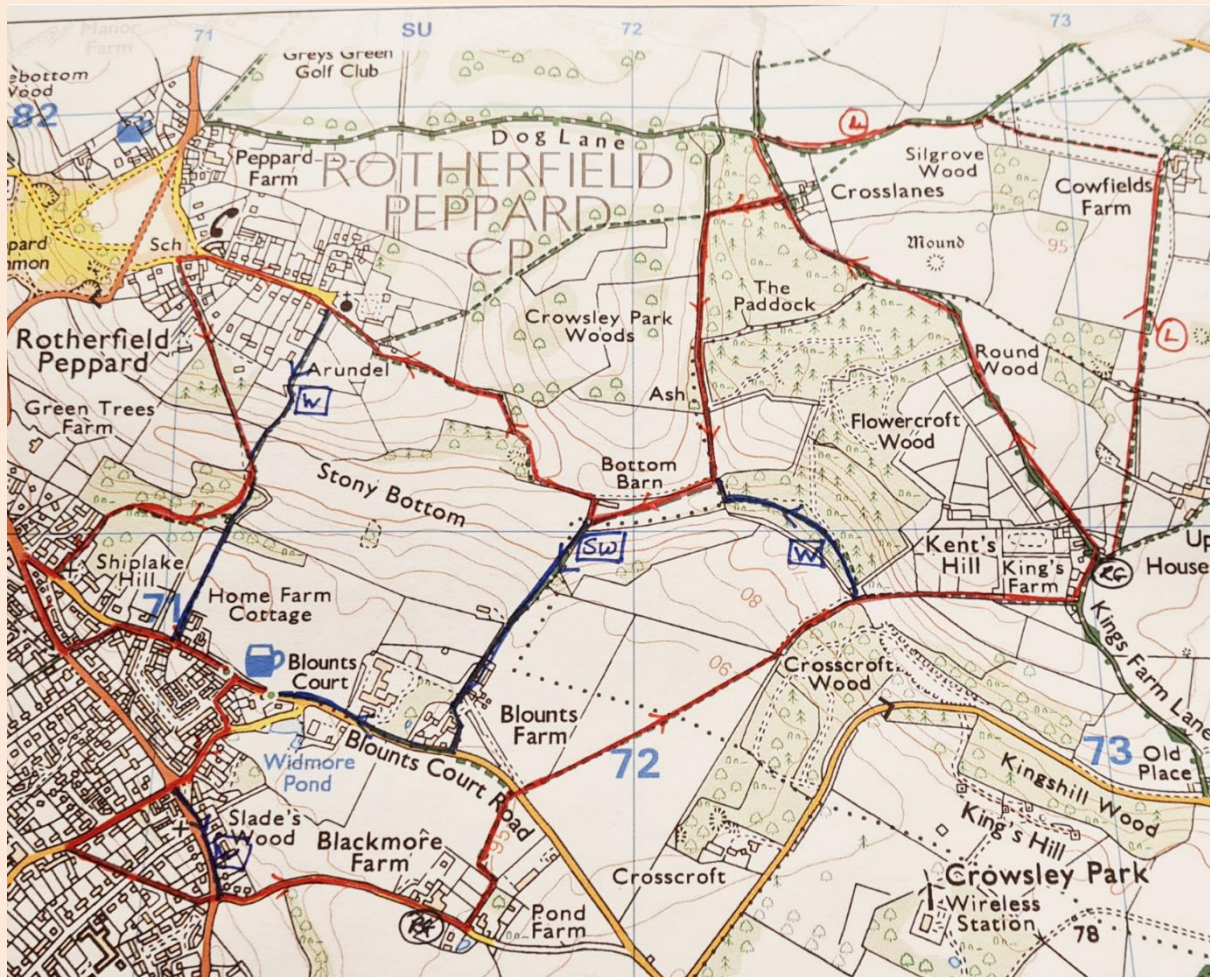
Luckily, having lived in this area for quite a number of years, I know it like the back of my hand. Does anyone **really** know the back of their hand that well? I just looked at mine (the right hand) and it and I stared at each other with the sort of look you give to people whose name you feel sure you should know but haven't a clue as to what it is. The phrase is a bit like saying, "I know it like the front of my leg." I'm sure there are other body parts that could be mentioned but I don't want you to get too side-tracked...

Anyway – we'd worked out a (to me) well-known route on my very useful Ordnance Survey mobile app (£23.99 annual subscription for every map you'll ever need – one of the best investments you can make) and had recce'd it on the previous Monday so we'd know almost every inch, where we'd lay Checks and where

the Walkers' Trail would go. Perfect. The three of us floured-up and off we went.

It was so useful having TC with us. She was very keen to lay F's, which generally saved me from having to run too much. It is, after all, very important, when laying a Trail, to have judicious and diligent management control in place to ensure flour markings are applied appropriately. I'm sure that TC and Donut appreciated my professional supervision...

Everything was going great until we reached the location of the second Regroup. The idea here was to lay a loop for the faster and more manic runners, while the sensible cohort would trot along the shorter route, everyone ending up at the same place. Though not necessarily at the same time. Donut volunteered to lay the loop that we had discussed during our recce. Being a chivalrous sort of chap, I was going to suggest that I lay the loop. Then I thought, I'm only being sexist and anachronistic and Donut is perfectly able to lay the damn loop. Off she went and off TC and I went on the shorter Trail. Oh dear. About half an hour later I received a call from Donut (thank goodness for mobile phones!). She had somehow missed the stile near to the Regroup that led to Cowfields Farm (see below) and merrily hoofed it all the way to Highlands Farm, which is on the outskirts of Henley. Oh my days!



The big, blue beer mug is the pub. Runners' Trail in red. Walkers' in blue. 'L' is the Long Trail. 'SW' is the Walkers' short cut.

Fortunately, she reappeared, somewhat breathless, as TC and I were laying flour in the woods near Shiplake Hill. We were also breathing heavily – there's a pretty steep hill in them thar woods. The rest of the Trail was fairly straightforward and we got back to our cars without being rained on. All in all, a good afternoon's work.

HARING AROUND THE HASH

The next morning, early and in the sunshine, Donut and I drove to those parts of the Trail that were accessible by road to freshen any flour that required it. The First Regroup certainly did, as it had been eaten completely by anonymous, nocturnal animals. Just as well we checked! Most of the rest was ok, so we drove to The Butchers.

We hadn't expected to see anyone there so early, but Spot was obviously in an eager mood this bright morning and was sitting there in his car. Nice to chat to him while we enjoyed some coffee.

One of the things we had agreed with the pub's owners was that we would park tidily and all up one end of the car park so that their lunchtime customers would have no problem parking. Hashers began to arrive, so we slipped into parking attendant mode. First to park were Kirsty and Nick, followed quickly by CouchPotato, then MessengerBoy and Twanky. Subsequently, there was an *en masse* arrival so Donut and I were scurrying around pointing at spaces and issuing instructions such as, "To me; to me; to me. That'll do." And "Left-hand down a bit." And "You're on my toe." We finally got everyone stacked in with Shifty and FalseTart (their car, that is) magnificently located on the grassy mound below the pub sign.



Luckily, it wasn't quite this bad.

We were surprised at the number of people who had joined us and it was great to see a number of virgins (see Down Downs for names). The sun shone. The GM welcomed us. We Hares gave brief instructions. And the Hash was under way. Apart from WaveRider, Donut and Rampant. They all ran back to: a) get the apron to wear, b) get the flour she had forgotten to take along, c) lock his car! Doh!

Now one of the main problems with being a Hare is trying to keep up with the Pack while ensuring no-one (including latecomers) goes the wrong way. This means stopping to lay arrows and/or kicking out Checks after everyone has gone past. So you're forever running like a scalded cat to catch up. Great exercise but flipping exhausting!

The first loop went well, leading the FRBs and Pack uphill into Sonning Common before leading them back down (via narrow alleys) to the main road that they had just crossed, back over it and up a fairly steep road (marked with a sign that stated, 'Danger: failed road'. We never did find out exactly what that meant – people live up there in grand houses and drive up and down it all the time. At the top was the Regroup we had redrawn earlier and I staggered up the hill after SkinnyDipper, pleasantly surprised, when I reached the Regroup at the top, to find the entire Pack was waiting. Excellent! One of the main parts of a Hash is to keep people together and indeed there they were, chatting and enjoying the beautiful sunny day with the big, silver moon floating up in the clear blue sky behind them. We set them off again and were pleased to see a few enjoying the Bar 2 that Donut had placed carefully further along the road. 😊

A little further on, curiously, across from us on the road that leads to the pub was NoSole, in her car. AWOL immediately jumped in the back, assuming that he could be driven around the rest of the Trail. It turned out that NoSole had driven Slapper to the pub. They had arrived late, along with HappyFeet and DoorMatt. The three of them, I learnt later, had made a complete balls-up of the Trail. Initially, they



Motox... wearing a fur coat.

ran past the arrow that led them away from the pub and managed to find the On Inn. Coming back, they eventually figured out parts of the Trail but somehow ran up the Walkers' short cut (despite there being an 'F') and found that they were back at the pub! Actually, this sounds like a success story to me. A short run and back to the pub with no queue at the bar. Perfect!

Meanwhile, the Pack was staggering their way up a steep hill by the side of a wood to enjoy a sneaky Two-Way Check before fetching up at the second Regroup. I found myself way at the back with TinOpener and Motox. Given that the latter was walking, I take my hat off

to him for forging gracefully up those hills like a snow leopard in the Himalayas.

This Regroup was where the Long and not-so-Long Trails split. As we set each group off I thought I'd watch the Long Trailers to see if they'd get caught out with Donut's False, which she'd laid on the way back from her sojourn to Highlands Farm. It was most gratifying to see that a number had. 😊 Mind you, my smile drooped as I realised I would have to run like a crazed lunatic (and uphill again!) to catch up with the Short Trailers.

However, TC and I had devised a way to slow them down by laying a Bar in the forest to the left of the main track along which they were running. No idea if anyone was caught by it but Donut mentioned that certainly Crusty and BGB were slowed down while they investigated it before Donut pointed out the correct route. We had also laid a One-Blob Check after this and, hopefully, people took the opportunity to check it out.

When we reached the point at where we would go down through the forest, we bumped into PrettyinPink, virgin Sean and FalseTart, all Walkers who had just arrived after walking along the Long Trail! How dey do dat?! Amazing isn't it? You give people maps and instructions and they just wander off anywhere. Still, they'd had a nice stroll and we now pointed them in the right direction while calling Shifty back from the False he had been enjoying further along the track. The eager fellow did a few of these today. He also found the Walkers' Short Cut False a little later. 😊

We eventually reached the church at Peppard where Dumb and a couple of others kindly disappeared off along a lengthy False and I managed to sucker CouchPotato, Zeb, Bomber and a couple of others to check along a narrow alley where I'd lovingly placed a neat Bar Check. Fortunately, they were still smiling when they ran back...



A couple more Checks and we were on our way to MessengerBoy's favourite valley in the area. Though it's named Stony Bottom, it's a lush, sweeping dip between folded hills of green, with a fine, steep forest on the other side of it to run up through. Luckily, the Pack were confused by the 'W' sign that didn't point to their route and they lurked about in a confused daze until I caught up and showed them which way they should go.

After popping out of the forest on to the road that led to the pub, we had laid a final, fun-filled little loop for the Pack that took them down into Sonning Common, then back up a steep alley that we had previously not known existed (Spot said he'd never seen it either).

Back at the pub, everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves. Both Donut and I noticed that there had been and still was a very happy atmosphere amongst our group this morning, which added to the pleasure of the Trail on this sunny, warm day. We hope everyone enjoyed it as much as we did and that today's virgins join us again.

Donut's and my grateful thanks to TC for her help. 😊

On On. [Hashgate](#).

DOWN DOWNS

When Donut and I got to the marquee where BH³ lazed idly there were no chairs left. Bit of a shame since we were suffering a tad from aching legs syndrome after a couple of days of running. Sleazy, bless her cotton socks, noticed our predicament and went to her car to bring over a couple of folding chairs! We sank thankfully into their embrace. What a kind soul. Presumably, she volunteers for Help The Aged.

TC and Whinge, who is suffering with health issues at present, were cheered and sent best wishes by everyone during the Hares' Down Down.

Our revered RA, Motox, presented the following.

Recipient	Reason
NoSole, AWOL	She drove round the Trail in her car and he got in the back when she had parked (see above).
Ruby, Sean, Lizzie, Kurt	Today's virgin Hashers. Excellent Downs and we look forward to seeing them again.
Andy	This was his naming ceremony (and he managed to Hash Crash today too). Bear with me on the explanation of his name, which was voted on by the group. Originally, the suggestion was 'White Rabbit' since he was invariably late for Hashes. This morphed into 'Alice' since the white rabbit appeared in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. However, the Hash will have its way and the overwhelming vote was for 'Who the f**k is Alice?'. Though I have a feeling that this will generally be shortened to 'Alice'. 😊 Motox and Ms Whiplash applied the flour and beer and Who the f**k is Alice? was baptised. The lad took it all in good spirit. Well done to him.
NonStick	The excuse for him wearing knee protection during today's run was that he had carpet burns! Not so sure that his partner, Cloggs, agreed.
MessengerBoy	He was passed the 'La Pecarina' apron by WaveRider because he advised her she look 'frayed' while wearing it. Cheeky fellow. Cloggs and PennyPitstop kindly gave us a rendition of 'I Whistle a Happy Tune' (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGS029Peg7k) which starts with the words: 'Whenever I feel afraid...' They finished to utter silence, apart from cricket sounds and tumbleweed rolling through the marquee.
Donut, Hashgate	Today's Hares. We were surprised and pleased, when we were called up, to get a round of applause. Perhaps it was because everyone thought we might not lay another Trail for a while... 😊

FUTURE HASHES

RUN	DATE	GRID REFERENCE	VENUE	HARES
2259	07Nov21	SU787720	Jolly Farmer, Davis Street, Hurst. RG10 0TH What3words: force.piano.trails	SkinnyDipper
2260	14Nov21	TBA	Woodcote TBA	Dunny Rampant