

LONDON MARATHON 2012

The day is finally here, do I feel ready, no, I'm knackered. You just can't go to London and take it easy!

Up at 6.15 am and out to meet Martin and Steve at 7.00 am. Trains were chocker with runners and men in suits (where were they going?!). Steve left us to go to the Red Start and Martin and I headed off to the Blue Start. Having queued for the toilets twice, taken medication which consisted of antihistamine, nasal spray, asthma spray, anti diarrhoea tablets and anadin, dropped bag off, used female urinals, where I bumped into Sonya (we had a discussion on how you use the cardboard contraptions, used the cardboard contraptions, said how good they were, and that we felt better for that!) we wished each other good luck and then parted and I headed off to Pen 8.

Finally we start. Walking down to start line I'm feeling nervous but excited, and yes, need another pee. I darted off to the side to relieve myself just before crossing the line. That's better!

Within the first couple of miles I pass the pair doing it on stilts, and woman hoola hooping all the way round and a man wearing a metal frame in the form of Blackpool Tower (mad!).

I'm thinking hey I'm feeling good; doing fine, feeling strong and then remind myself I've only done 4 miles! I try my best to keep to the blue line in the road so I don't have to run any more than the 26.2 but it's proving hard. I have no idea what the time is, as I'm running with my watch set to distance only. I'm having to avoid looking at the mile markers which arch the road, as each one has a clock on it!

The support along the way is brilliant. At about 8/9 miles I see a professionally made sign which pointed to a side road which said 'short cut'; this tickled me, if only.

At one point I saw a pair of bum cheeks! It was a chap running in a metallic blue thong and blue tinsel wig. Not a pretty sight and got past him pretty damn quick!

Cutty Sark at mile 6 was where I saw the first camera. Determined to get on telly this year I waved like mad! I wasn't as enthusiastic as the race went on, but waved at every camera I saw!!

I saw Terry from St Austell at mile 7 which was great. Hazel had very kindly given me detailed instructions of where my kids and friends could go to support me. I saw them at about 14.5 when I was still quite fresh. I then saw, or should I say, heard Hazel, as I passed at about 18 miles. Nearly missed her mind as I had my iPod in, which she gave me jip about when I'd finished lol!

Saw my lot again at 20+ miles. Not feeling quite so good at this point so I stopped and gave my 2 a kiss and spoke to my friend San, this spurred me on.

I must say, up until approx mile 14/15 your body gets you through. Then it starts to hurt and your mind takes over. This is when the battle starts. You muddle through. The last 6 miles is hell! One minute you're thinking 'I can't do this anymore, it just hurts too much' then at mile 23 you're telling yourself, all I've got to do is the equivalent of the Pines, that's all! Then you perk up, but not for long, it's hurting again. 2 miles left, I think to myself, you've just got to run to the Borough and back, easy! My feet are on fire, I'm convinced I've got a whopping blister on the ball of my right foot and my big toe has got to be bleeding!

I stop between the '800m' and '600m' to go markers; I just can't go on, why would you stop then! I plod on to the 400m marker then you see the 385 yards (why they change from metric to imperial is beyond me; *how far is that?!*) I turned the corner, and there, in sight is the 3 finish clocks. I was grinning from ear to ear. It read 4.24 ish so I knew I'd managed to finish between 4.04 and 4.23 (when you deduct the 10/15 minutes it took me to cross the start line) which was my target. I think I managed a sprint at the end. Well it felt faster than I had been running in last few miles, so it was probably about an 11 min mile sprint!!

Once through, your tag is removed, you're given your medal, your photograph is taken, and you're given your goody bag and then retrieve your personal belongings. Then, not only are your legs starting to seize, you've also got all this stuff to carry. How's that fair!! I make my way to the greeting point, walking now like I've just got off a horse, and see my kids, my friend San and her brood which is great. Hazel and Bruce were there also, as was Martin. We were still missing Sonya, Steve and Andy from PB.

Sadly not everyone had a good day this year, but all managed to finish which is an achievement in itself.

Organisation of this event is second to none and is a race that any runner has to do at least once. What an experience!!

I know I said that if I got the time I wanted, I wouldn't do it again, but I will be putting in for it again on 30th April!!

Once again, a big THANK YOU to Les Maclaren for seeing me through my training!! And also to all that sent me gifts, cards and good luck messages for the race xx