

Magnificent 7 – Saltash – Sunday 17th July 2011

I was pre-warned about this race before entering – the Magnificent 7 Hills!!! Not a great lover of hills of any gradient, I wasn't sure what to expect, other than this would be a tough one. I thought the only way to get through these 7 miles would be to treat as a training run and if the worse came to the worst would have to walk up the hills. The day started with torrential rain – not a good omen – the car park was half a mile from the start and luckily the sun came out for the walk from car to start – on reaching the clubhouse the skies opened – torrential rain for a solid hour!! Just as we all lined up to start the rain stopped – good omen?? Not sure yet.

411 runners lined up at the start line – and we were off – starting off through the town and down a long hill (the first of 7?), not a bad start, but throughout the race – in the back of my mind was the awful thought 'I have to run back up that hill!' – that awful thought lasted throughout the race. I must admit – I was pleasantly surprised – there did seem to be more downs than ups (but I may have been that fatigued I did not notice the ups!) – the route was lovely, taking us through lovely countryside then back down along the tamar river.

Everyone was in good spirits and a Tamar Trotter lady runner was giving a step by step description of the route along the way. The rain held off for most of the race – only one small shower (a welcome relief) during the 7 mile run. The marshalls were fantastic – very encouraging. After 6 miles I got to thinking – oh no that terrible up-hill slog is looming – after a deep breath – I started up the hill – only to find half way up the marshalls were directing us to the left along a flat road – what a lovely surprise – the detour was much kinder on the legs.

However, as I turned the corner to make my way back to the finish – there were lots of runners all packed up walking back to their cars and I was still running!!! I finished the race in 1hr 15 mins – not a great time – but pleased to finish and receive my lovely medal, t-shirt and delicious choccy bar – what a treat.

Well done to Jenny S, Amanda, Alison, Pauline, Sharon and Jenny M who also took part – great times by all.

This is a race to put in your diary for next year.

Shirley Player