

## **Foto Jen I.C. Fun Run and Barbecue**

Well, I must admit that my doubts over Max's running of this years Foto Jen I.C. Fun Run and Barbecue were unfounded. The boy done good. (Mind you, he had a good teacher).

Starting and finishing in the usual locations of Pinkneys Green Car Park and White Mark Farm, the event followed the now traditional format of a map search of the northern half of OS175 (Reading and Windsor) to try to locate the positions of the clues by means of a series of photographs taken by Max during the time that he should have been carrying out the tasks set for him by Flight Couriers Worldwide (but we won't tell them).

The omens were not good for the event, being held after a week of torrential rain. However, the date selection team of Tony Phillips and John Williams came up trumps once again and the day, although not raging sunshine, stayed dry and fairly warm for most of the day.

An unbelievable thirteen cars started the event with the first clue being attached to a tree somewhere at the start. This was found to be a photo of Gollum (from the Lord of the Rings Trilogy). It was obvious (to those who have read the book or seen the film) that he was searching for the ring. But what was his second name?

Once that had been sorted (courtesy of a nine year old daughter!), our next problem was whether to travel clockwise or anti clockwise around the map. It was decided that if we omitted those clues in the far bottom left hand bit of the map then we would have enough left to travel in an anti clockwise direction and still visit the requisite fifteen of the twenty locations.

Off to the first location. This was a road sign somewhere in Warren Row. A quick burst down the A4 presented us with our first problem. There was a steam rally being held at Knowle Hill, and it was a biggy! We finally cleared the traffic and located the said signpost where, once again, daughter came up trumps. If this went on much more, she would be impossible by the end of the day. We progressed through more points until we were approaching the familiar areas around High Wycombe. Home advantage was bound to come in handy here. Wrong again! First thing we (I) realised that Hambledon Valley and Hughenden Valley are totally different places and are miles apart (although not too far from our first points). This threw us slightly and we then arrived in West Wycombe. I now know that there are three copies of the map on display in West Wycombe. Guess who found the correct one at the last place we looked. All was to no avail as we failed to notice that one of the bins in the recycling area was collecting on behalf of Great Ormond Street Hospital.

After that, we faired quite well, finding most of the answers fairly quickly. Then we reached a T junction between Bolter End and Turville. This should be easy we thought; nothing but the signpost, a drain or two and a gate. Nothing gave us the answer to 'GS \_ \_ \_' although one of the drain covers did have BS 873 part 6 on it. Thinking that Max may have been suffering from Fat Finger Syndrome when he was compiling the question sheets, we filled that in as our answer and were deemed to be correct.

After the time spent exploring West Wycombe, we were now running short of time and so decided to make a run for home collecting any clues that we happened to be passing. We were nearing the finish just down the road from Christmas Common when we came upon another road sign that looked familiar. We pulled up to find out which farmer owned the farmhouse. Just as I was about to get out of the car I glanced in my rear view mirror and noticed a sign saying ROSE FARMHOUSE (It was not quite like that, more like 'ESUOHMRAF ESOR') so we put that down and carried on. We then decided that we had time to carry on past the finish into Watlington to try to find out what anchors were in the recycling area in the car park. When we arrived, Tom Ryan and Rob Brook were already there but had not yet found the answer. While we were hunting, several more teams arrived and pretty soon the area was full of people studying all sorts of strange objects. The peace and quiet was soon shattered by Andy Greenland giving a loud blast of his whistle to summon Dave Taylor and Diane to him to inform them that he had found the answer. Andy Greenland is a sly old fox and the only thing certain was that there was no need to search the area around where he had blown the whistle! It was at this time that Jen decided to stretch her legs and come to see how Kirstin and I were getting on. We told her what we were looking for and she immediately said 'there it is'. And it was too, right next to where I had just spent five minutes searching! (and nowhere near Andy's whistle blowing area).

We got back into the car and drove back up the lane to the finish where we had exclusive use of one of John and Rosemary Williams' fields. Brother Malc's team had finished earlier and were attending the barbecue while Max sat in his van marking the sheets as they were handed in.

Soon the food was ready and peace fell over the field (as well as my mum, but that is another story) as everyone tucked into the traditional finishing meal of burgers, sausages and chicken with salad, all washed down with Cola or Orange-aid.

The marking was completed and it was announced that Tom and Rob had won. We were placed eighth, just behind Malc and Rose (these positions were subsequently reversed after checking).

The games then ensued with Tom getting out his by now tatty volleyball net and a game was soon in full flow.

Thanks are extended to Max for his organisational skills, Rose, Jo, Malc and Jen for their culinary expertise and to John and Rosemary for their facilities. Next year will be the Centenary Fun Run and Max is now confident that he can manage to arrange it. I hate to admit it, but it will be hard for him to better this year's efforts.

*Pete Farmer*