

White Peak Way Challenge – 15/16 October 2016

The White Peak 100 is a route based on John Merrill's White Peak Way, which is 85 miles from Ilam Hall, but our route extended this by 15 miles by commencing in Ashbourne and taking in the Weaver Hills and returning back to Ashbourne on the Tissington Trail.

The core team comprised of Alan Eccleston, Mark Rogerson, Andy Swift and myself. Andy was very ill but luckily for us was still able to give valuable support, running a few of the legs and driving the support car until re-enforcements arrived. So there were always two of us in the car and two out running.

Andy (on home turf) and I climbed the Weaver Hills, unfortunately shrouded in mist. One thing that became clear however was that Andy, still recovering from a viral infection, wasn't firing on all cylinders. After passing Ilam, a combination of Alan, Mark and I followed the route down the Manifold Valley to Wetton before dropping into the Dove Valley and up to Longnor. The early mist had cleared and we had great clear weather. Andy and I then traversed east to reach the Wye valley where we passed Millers Dale and finally Tideswell. Although we were getting tired it was good to turn north again, and with Mark and Alan doing the one-two we reached Peak Forest. From there the route follows the Limestone Way over the high moorland into Cave Dale and Castleton which unfortunately all but finished Andy off. Then came the final push of the day which saw Mark and I climb up to the summit of Mam Tor, where we were pleased to meet our first bonus runner Karolina. We followed the ridge past Hollins Cross to Lose Hill in great weather with the usual cast of paragliders overhead. We just got down into Hope by nightfall, which marked the end of day 1 and 51 miles, so we all enjoyed a well-earned rest, dinner & ale at Edale YHA.



Mark Rogerson in the failing light at Lose Hill

The next morning saw Mark and I tackle the toughest stage of the run straight up the front of Win Hill and back down again to Bamford, and then the Derwent Valley to Hathersage. Mark just took shelter before we experienced the only real bad weather of the event where Alan

and I battled along Froggatt Edge in very wet and windy conditions to reach Curbar Gap. We were all wet and tired at this point and needed a boost to lift team spirits. Fortunately for us Robin had agreed to cycle up to this point and meet us. So as planned, with Robin's bike stashed in the back of the car he ran with the team for the next 25 miles. This took in the Derwent Valley South to Rowsley then a wiggle back to Youlgreave before turning south-east to Biggin and lower Dovedale. So with Robin off home on his bike Alan, Mark and I bought the route home through Thorpe and the Tissington Trail back to Ashbourne with Andy at the wheel of the car. It was a great feeling to clock up the last few miles on the trail and reaching mile 49 (100 in total) at Ashbourne market place.



Andy Swift, Mark Rogerson, Jon Kinder, Alan Eccleston and Robin Carter

Well done and a big thank you to all the team.

Jon Kinder