

Saturday next and I had entered the Hard as Snails 10k near Guildford. This was a very hilly tough cross-country affair based on the infamous G3 runs held in the winter. I did one of the G3 runs three years ago and swore at the time, never again, vowing to stay on asphalt! Amazing how time dims the memory and allows you to break the promises you made to yourself! Though it has rained a little in the week, the course wasn't that muddy, certainly not as muddy as I remembered it. However, there was the addition of sand on most of the course, which really did take it out of your legs, not just on the many steep uphill sections but also on many of the steep down sections as well, and consequently I really had too much on my mind to admire the surrounding countryside.

As seems to be a regular occurrence with me, I was overtaken by loads of people on the ups, but was able to regain most of the lost ground on the downs. Thus overall I was quite pleased with my averaging of 5 minutes per kilometre, which if I was able to keep going would mean I would finish 12 minutes quicker than in 2007! Unfortunately, it was with this thought that I got a little complacent on a downhill section just before 9km, where thanks to a momentary loss of concentration I tripped and twisted my right ankle badly. I consider myself to have quite a high pain threshold, but this did really hurt. Walking was particularly painful, so I opted for a half-hearted run with the odd limping, which surprisingly was less painful. As I saw the finishing line in sight loads of other runners ran past me for their final dash to the line, whilst I could only manage a hobble by this point. I find out later that my time was 51:46.

Once over the line I went straight to St John's ambulance services that were on site for treatment. After an assessment the general feeling was nothing was broken, but with a cold pack on the ankle, the ankle soon ballooned in size, but at least by now the pain had eased. The St John's crew that included a delightful blonde called Lucy suggested that a support bandage might help, especially as I had a good hour drive home. Though the decision as to whether I needed to visit the local hospital was left to me. I opted out of this since I was able to put pressure on the ankle, so went just for the bandage. So on thanking St John's for their assistance and with bandaged ankle, I walked slowly back to the car and drove home. The journey was generally not too bad, the worse was getting through Guildford, but once on the M3 I could cruise and allow my ankle to rest.