

Sunday was the day of my longest brick session yet, this winter, with a planned cycle to Salisbury, run the 10 miler, then cycle home. This started off well by snaking my way the scenic route through Grately to Shipton, and joining the A338 that leads all the way to the NE side of Salisbury. From there I rolled in to the Five Rivers Leisure Centre,

There was around 750 entrants and the place was already buzzing. Again this was no 5k fun run for fancy dressers. There were people huddled round in their running club colours and not many unattached entrants. The baggage inside the main hall was free and they let me put my bike in as well. All very nice welcoming people.

The start was a few hundred metres away at the Fire station. Gun went, we're off. I was happy to do 10 minute miles to save energy for the ride home so sat near the back for a while. Then I caught up with 2 girls from work who are practising for Reading. I ran with them for a bit and then started to move on.

At mile 3, nature called. I popped out of the race for about 30secs, then hopped back in, when I came back I was behind the girls again. All that effort and I had only made 30 seconds on them. This is when I decided to stay with them. The course was flat really for me as I do most of my runs X-country with my dog, but you could hear the club runners saying how hilly it was. I laughed to myself with thoughts of my terminator exploits last week. The miles rolled by and we were on to do my old faithful trick of doing the 2nd half faster than the first. There was a fairly big bump at around 5.5 miles and 8.5 miles, but even after crawling up them I still managed to bring the average up a bit from the first 5 miles.

Drinks stations were more frequent than usual at every 2 miles I think, I made full use of them. With a few miles to go I felt strong and so left the girls to see what I had in my running legs still. I tagged on to various runners along the way home, picking off quite a few in the last 2 miles and came into the running track finish with a sort of sprint still in me. I picked another 3 off in the last 400m.

I came in at 1hr:30min:36secs by my Garmin. Which is 9:03 average pace. More than happy with that especially after 23 miles on the bike. The girls came in 3 mins later very proud of themselves. Another friend from work named Marcus did it in 1hr 10mins. He is a natural runner and is coming to Reading as well. I grabbed a nice looking, blue finishers shirt, went and got changed, ate my faithful old pasty, a couple of gels, some flapjack and set about the journey home. The wind was coming from the NE all the way home, directly into my flipping face, this plus being a bit knackered and having a big rucksack on saw my average sink from its slightly usual standard, but all in all a brilliant Race and brick session. Would do it again next year and recommend it to all other club members.

Cheers
Jase