

October 2014 OMM Report



The event was held in the Cheviots centred on Clennell Hall, Country House near Alwinton in the Coquet valley. Over 400 sq km of rolling hills with steep sided valleys and a mixture of grass, heather, peat and forest The Cheviots is a really good area for a Mountain Marathon.

Dominated by The Cheviot itself at 815 meters it is England's border country with Scotland and Northumberland's hidden treasure. I served my hillwalking apprenticeship in The Cheviots over 50 years ago and did my Duke of Edinburgh award expedition here which was my introduction to wild camping and hillwalking which I still enjoy to this day.

This year The OMM was returning to The Cheviots after a 12 year absence, I competed in the 2002 event with my long time mate Keith which was centred on Wooler.

However on this occasion my team mate was to be my grandson Angus, 48 years my junior and what a privilege and special experience for me.

On arriving at the event centre on Saturday morning we were greeted by Paul Figg & Rachel Antill who were competing in the 'C' class and were patiently waiting for there star time. We were doing the less demanding 'D' course and after a quick sausage bun & cup of tea, set off for the start, a 25 minute walk from the event centre. The weather was overcast and blustery but no sign of rain.

The first day course was specified as 19.3 km & 1,530 meters, this took us West in a huge anticlockwise circuit with the overnight camp being only 2 km NE of the start.

Day two was sold as a 15.5 km course with 950 meters of height gain but they implemented the bad weather course because of the severe winds on high ground.

Reducing the overall length by about 2 km but more importantly allowed us to get of the high ground much earlier.

Day one weather deteriorated and by noon we were in full cover waterproofs but the temperature held up so not too bad and we were able to erect our tent between showers, discovering as we did that we were camped only 10 meters from my mate Keith and his partner Sue who were doing the Short Score course.

A wet and windy but snug and warm overnight camp set us up nicely for day two, the weather although starting wet soon dried up but the wind grew in strength making it difficult to make progress on high.

Now down to the nitty gritty :-

Day one - Placed 56th out of 94 with a time of 6 hrs - 11 mins - 57 secs.

Day two - Placed 42nd in a time of 4 hrs - 03 mins - 25 secs.

Overall position was 46th with a combined time of 10 hrs - 15 mins - 21 secs.

End result was a fabulous weekend away with my Grandson in some of the most beautiful countryside in England.

Dave T