MIDSUMMER FELL RACE 21.6.97

1	P Tarrier	23.10
2	P Filler	23.22
3	M Cates	23.36
4	B Wootton	23.42
5	J Wallis	23.45
6	T Eccles	24.58
7	S Herington	25.10
8	S Adams	25.30
9	Q Broadbent	25.31
10	C Finney	25.44
11	M Wells	25.51
12	G Sayer	26.13
13	L Austin	26.18
14	P Deadman	26.28
15	N White	26.32
16	N Pitcher	27.01
17	C Tedeschi	27.16
18	?	27.23
19	R Pitcher	27.42
20	J John-Lewis	27.52
21	M MacLannan	28.03
22	P Robinson	28.16
23	A Cole	28.28

And then came... somewhere, sometime and somehow or other...

J Little

T Gasper P Cressy T Austin

W French B Murrey D Maher M Gasper

A Cushway A Croucher W Hutchings R Warner

M Fitzgibbon B Arkell R Hepworth M Cushway H Papachristos

Midsummer. In England. What to expect? Torrential downpours? Well... yes, sure, certainly - but someone didn't - whoever was in charge of this race for instance! Oh, let's not be bashful! Name names! No, I must field all criticism. "Field...", hmmm... how could I betray my Captain and let everyone know that it was he who layed the trail for this 3 miles 600 yards race and the rain washed it all away and thus a bemused chunk of the abovementioned field failed to enter the field known as Yardley Meadow and so cut their course short. I just cannot name the guilty party.

I was spectating from high, on what we call Yardley, with a bunch of other sarcastic spectators. We counted them all out... and waited to see who'd be first to hove into sight down the meadow to enter the right of our field of vision... so we could count them all in.

Wrong! Firstly, running uphill, alone and unhappy, came Roger Warner, retiring hurt, but at least he'd not gone off course.

Then... "There's one of them!" "No. I know the course. That guy's running from left to right. He's a jogger." A pause. "Then so is he! And her! And him, and him and him...!" "Ooops! They must've gone off course!" "Then who are that crowd now coming from the right?" "Uhm... I give in."

First to reach us was a total stranger - someone from Woodford Green, I believe; a guest. Teresa Gasper was pushing him close second, Peter Tarrier was lying a handy 6th or 7th and Paul Filler and Michael Cates were battling Rich Hepworth and Derek Maher for those precious midpack positions. I can't be too sure; my eyes were so full of tears of laughter. It was hilarious - not if you were running, of course, or off course or - more importantly - on course and all these folk had somehow nicked ahead of you!

Our Captain was about 15th and aghast. He knew where the buck would stop. And months later, though the buck may have stopped, the teasing still hasn't. There was great worry that the Orion 10 - another Captain Quin enterprise - would end up doing a couple of circuits of Doncaster... "But I put down loads of paper trail!" It must've washed away. "And I did put marshals at vital intersections!" Ah yes, sure... Apparently Andy Vince had been asked to marshall at the foot of Yardley where both packs came back together. Poor Andy has just returned to the club since he ran as a Junior and had absolutely no idea where the Fell course went and was overwhelmed when folk started running at him from all directions!

Peter Tarrier kept his cool and won the race well, in tricky conditions: it was wet, greasy and slippery - and then there were obstacles on course such as extraneous runners - and it's thought that there's lots of money on Yardley because of how Bob Pitcher kept his eyes on the mud at his feet as he plodded uphill, unsmiling and refusing to acknowledge his fans!

The look of innocent and utter astonishment - when Paul Cressy at last heeded and believed he was the tail-ender and did a slack-jawed, double-take back downhill to see... no-one!... is a sight that'll stay with me a long time. Paul had been on the right route but at this point he gave up, laughing. Which is just as well, because this reporter would have had no qualms about telling everyone how he'd no intention of running all the way down and back up Pole Hill in order to finish last, but that can stay our little secret, Paul.