



Easingwold Running Club – Advertiser article November 2023

Marathon Day, Yorkshire Marathon 2023

After training through the summer, the sudden drop in temperature was a bit of a shock to the system. I had run the London marathon eight years ago, completing it in just over five hours after being plagued by injury and struggling to keep up with a proper training plan. This time, training had mostly gone as planned, so I felt ready for it, the morning had arrived, my heart was racing. I arrived at the event village, full of people getting prepped with energy gels and race numbers, it was a quick bag drop and I headed to the start line. It was actually fairly quiet for the warmup, which meant plenty of space.

I was determined not to make the same mistakes as in London, so I ensured I was well hydrated and fuelled with energy before setting off. I had also had the benefit of great support from ERC's Neil King, having just completed his 'Leader in Coaching' course, giving me regular tips and advice about the best way to approach race day.

As I crossed the start line, the sun was beaming against a beautiful blue sky, I had put myself next to the 4:15 pacer but they had shot over the start line at quite a speed and I decided I needed to stick to my training plan of start steady, keep steady. With Neil's voice in my head: 'the race starts at 20 miles', I knew I had a lot of work to put in. We passed York Minster which was stunning against the sky - I wasn't the only one to get the phone out for a little snap of it. At this point, it was all going according to plan, steady pace, sun keeping us warm on a very autumnal morning.

The race splits at around 5 miles, I have completed the ten miler a couple of times, so it had all felt familiar until that point. The crowds were cheering and I spotted a friend which helped immensely. Ten miles in, I was still feeling good, and then reached the half way point and saw my family which was lovely - a quick cuddle with the kids helped give me a boost. As I was about to set off again, I saw a fellow ERC runner, Liz, passing me. Brilliant I thought, I'll catch her up and we can have a morale boosting chat. She was running well but my calf muscle was starting to hurt. No, I said to myself, I can't chase her down, I still have 13 miles left! As we headed towards Stamford Bridge, the crowds cheered, exactly what was needed, then it was a slight incline up towards Dunnington.

I saw Liz and managed to close the gap as we both were slowing up the hill. I was definitely starting to struggle, feeling the pain in the legs with a niggle that was worrying me. Thankfully, another morale boost at the 17-19 mile point with crowds cheering and my family waiting again with some energy drinks and jelly babies. Another cuddle with them was what I needed to keep me going as I hit the dreaded 'wall'. I had got to 19 miles in, I heard that voice in my head again '20 miles is where the race starts'. I knew at that point it's mind over matter. I was starting to feel the

pain, but at that point in the race, it became a mental challenge, I checked my watch and saw I was still on schedule with my plan.

Right 20 miles, I had broken through the 'wall', now I was counting down, 'just get through the next 3 miles, it's a Parkrun', I thought to myself. When I passed the 22 mile marker, I felt relief. I heard someone in the crowd cheering and confirming 'it's one more Parkrun'.

As we headed back towards York, I recognised the end and saw Liz again, we were nearly there. I had been worried about the uphill at the very end, I shouldn't have been. There was an overwhelming relief that I knew how close I was to the finish line, crowds cheering, I could see the end. With tears in my eyes, I crossed the finish line at 4 hours and 20 minutes. I had completely smashed my London time, the emotions were incredible as I gasped the last few meters half crying with relief and half with joy - my Yorkshire Marathon was done.

Georgina Robinson