



Northants (Shires and Spires) 35 Ultra 6th June, 2010

The course record was broken at the Northants (Shires and Spires) 35 Ultra - but by a whisker



Once again Go Beyond would like to extend our thanks to Mr G. P. S. Drye, Executive Director of the Lamport Hall Preservation Trust Ltd and his staff for making the event possible. It is a real privilege to start and finish the event in the grounds of the stunning Lamport Hall which was developed from a Tudor Manor and is now best known for its classical frontage. This provides not only a superb opportunity for photography at the start as 100 runners pass in front of the house but an inspirational finish that brought more than 1 racer close to tears.



Mark Shepherd set a time of 4:45:10 just 49 seconds inside the time set by Andrew James in 2009. The top women's time was smashed however as Philippa Taylor recorded a time of 5:16:30 which was well inside the existing mark set by 2009 top lady Sarah Nason who completed the course in 6:34:51. The day started misty but dry, avoiding the heat of the previous day and the torrential rain of the previous year so conditions were looking good.

Three runners immediately headed for the front which included Mark Shepherd with Richard Quennell and Robert Harris and they were together at all of the five checkpoints.

As they passed the first checkpoint Paul Northern, Colm McCoy and Philippa Taylor were within a few seconds of the leading group. This group continued in quite close company through CP2 and by CP3 the top three were still together Colm McCoy arrive a few minutes later with Paul Northern closely followed by Mark Lowten. Philippa obviously had her pacing worked out as she was dropping off the pace a little. Julie Sutton was starting to get in amongst the leaders.



Our front trio continued to ease away from the rest of the field arriving at 23 miles only a minute outside the three hour mark, Paul Northern was now clear of his rivals for fourth position; Colm McCoy was also hanging on in there. Drew Sheffield was now starting to pull through and he arrived at CP4 with Philippa both of whom were still looking strong.



The familiar three led though checkpoint 5, Paul Northern was in a solid 4th with Philippa, Drew and Colm all arriving together.

In the race to the finish Mark Sheperd got the better of his running mates, his time of 4:45:10 just ahead of Robert Harris in 4:46:06 with Richard "the navigator" Quennell coming in third clocking 4:49:19. Paul Northern consolidated his 4th place, Philippa coming home in 5th the highest female placing in a Go Beyond Ultra. Drew continued to run strongly in the last stage finishing 6th ahead of Colm McCoy and Julie Sutton ran really well to finish 8th in a time of 5:36:12 which had in not been for Philippa's brilliant run would also have been a highest female finish and a new course record.

Shortly after the first group came home we were treated to the first of two thunder storms ensuring that most of the field had the benefit of a cooling shower.

This was a good quality field with 15 runners breaking the 6 hour barrier and none of the finishers threatening the time limit.

First Man – Mark Shepherd – 4:45:10

First Lady – Phillipa Taylor - 5:16:30

Last Finisher – Peter Law – 9:15:00

No. of Finishers – 74