

## Retford AC goes to the i Roc

The inaugural running of the inov8 I Roc adventure race was held in the beautiful Durham Dales (ex cement works) on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of April. The race was to be a total six individual races testing running, biking and navigational Skills

Saturday

- Race 1 Fell race - 13km/900m
- 2 Orienteering - 9km/500m
- 3 Night Orienteering - 1 hour
- 4 MBT Night Time Trial - 1 hour
- 5 Night Fell Race – 6.5km/400m

Sunday

- 6 MBT Enduro – 4 hours

Retford AC fielded two teams of three, The Wanderers (including Jez an interloper to replace Amanda) and The Lost Boys



The Lost Boys had a storming first race in which Steve Wathall finished 37<sup>th</sup> overall in a time of 1:21 followed by Steve Woodward in 1:28 and Dave Pickering in on 1:36. The Wanderers Ross Howard, Charmian Heaton and Jez Sainter followed swiftly behind. It was a gruelling fell race with some difficult terrain and some mammoth climbs, all agreed it was a test in itself and not just a ‘warm up’ for the rest of the day

There was a little recovery time before the next race so a few pots of tea were downed and there was a lot of discussion about the MBT singletrack that the runners had passed on the fell race. Comments like ‘unridable, Impossible, how are you supposed to get a bike down that and I’m gonna walk my bike down there’ were heard.

The orienteering came next, competitors were given a sealed map to open when the race started, 21 controls had to be collected in the quickest possible time. Once again Steve Wathall posted very good time increasing the lead for The Lost Boys over The Wanderers. Ross was hot on Steve's heels with Dave and Steve not far behind and Jez and Charmian brought up the rear but holding good positions in the main field.



The Night orienteering should really have been called 'Dusk Orienteering' as very few competitors carried a head torch and nobody needed one. Once again sealed maps were given out to be opened on the start of the race. There were a total 550 points to be collected in the 1 hour time allowed, points being deducted for exceeding the time limit. Ross collected a very commendable 370 points with 56 seconds to spare, Charmian pulled out all the stops to collect 300 points incurring a 10 point penalty for coming in 36 seconds late but still managed to leave Jez and The Lost Boys behind her, closing the gap between the two teams.

Next the race everybody feared, (except Jez – a beast on an MTB) a single lap race with a huge hill climb and the dreaded downhill singletrack through the forest and all done in the pitch black. A surprising result, Ross led the way home on 43.30 with Steve Wathall only 9 seconds behind him, Jez came in on 44.04, Steve Woodward on 45.07 with Dave and Charmian following in as quickly as their lights and head torches would allow.

There were a lot of smiley faces on the finish line, a lot of adrenalin was still flowing, everyone was 'buzin', there were no injuries and all had overcome their fear of the forest singletrack. Every one agreed it was a superb experience which greatly depended on how good your lights were – maybe the ones that couldn't see too well were better off!



The final race of the day, only another 6.5kms to race, up that huge hill again – twice. The two Retford teams managed to field a full compliment of members which was a massive achievement in itself as there was a very depleted line up of competitors in the start pen. The majority of the runners where beginning to look very tired and battered and there were a lot of retirements as runners couldn't manage to summon up the energy or the mental willpower to leave the event centre as the race passed through to start the second loop. Another great run from Steve Wathall of 1:03:47 and Steve Woodward in on 1:14:01 increasing the lead for The Lost Boys over The Wanderers, all our other runners came in very weary and very relieved to have finished for the day. Time to relax and get something to eat and drink – would you believe it, the snap wagon closes just as our boys and Charmian decide it's time to eat, good job we went prepared. It was 12.30am we went back to the camper vans, the lucky ones managed to grab a shower while some food was rustled up.

A lot of snoring could be heard that night, it drowned out the noise from the electricity sub station – make note to myself, remember to pack the earplugs

The next morning the sun was shinning, the birds were singing but happy campers were still sleeping. They finally managed to get their act together, refuel themselves and sort out their bikes, hydration systems and food station supplies ready for the final race. A massive effort was required to get everyone to the start line. A 500m sprint start to pick up the bikes and then a four hour beasting to clock up as many circuits of the MTB Enduro course as possible, each lap finishing and starting in the event centre with its magnetic pull towards the beer tent and retirement. A fantastic effort was put in by Ross and Jez to complete 5 laps, with Steve Wathall busting a gut to trying equal them but finishing on 4 , Steve Woodward and Dave Pickering were very tired bunnies and called it a day at two laps and headed back to the shower.



A fantastic race and a fantastic effort was put in by all team members, we now have a new force to be reckoned with on a mountain bike – Steve Wathall and thanks go to Jez for filling the empty place at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour and running his ‘little socks off’

#### Results

The Lost Boys 15<sup>th</sup> team overall

52<sup>nd</sup> individual – Steve Wathall  
78<sup>th</sup> individual – Steve Woodward  
107<sup>th</sup> individual – Dave Pickering

The Wanderers 17<sup>th</sup> team overall

64<sup>th</sup> individual – Ross Howard  
96<sup>th</sup> individual – Jez Sainter  
146<sup>th</sup> individual – Charmian Heaton