

## Ripper's Row

The weekend of March 25th & 26th was the annual TCR Triathlon show at Sandown Park, Surrey, which also provided the venue for the Ripley Relays. As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Ripley Relays were staged to help raise money and awareness for the Prostate Cancer Charity as rugby star and indoor rowing legend Andy Ripley was diagnosed last year with Prostate Cancer. The following report on the day comes from organiser Jon Goodall:

"In all there was a 24-hour relay team, 3x50k relay teams, an attempt at the Men's Team Marathon record and a 50k Treadmill World Record attempt.

"Saturday the 25th had Martyn Low, Andy Burrows, Megan Brown, Brian Garner, Niall Williams, Kelly Sapsford, Kay Hughes, John Davies, Gary Blackman and Chris Heth start the 24-hour relay at 12 noon, all set to finish at 1pm BST on Sunday 26th. The team were given a huge boost when the great man himself Andy Ripley turned up to meet the team on Saturday evening and ended up spending over an hour with them.

"Going into the night, staying awake was always going to be difficult, so a series of games/dares were staged to keep things lively. Martyn did a "Star's In Their Eyes" special, singing along to Johnny Cash! Games of Twister were played in-between rowing. You name it and it was probably done in the name of keeping awake and rowing for 24 hours! Oh, and a fair bit of alcohol was consumed as well! It was then down to Martyn to row the final minute of the 24 hours in Biggles style helmet and flashing glasses (that he wore for most of the time) and cross the finish line while Queen's We Are The Champions played over the PA system. The team rowed over 360,000m between them.



"Sunday morning at 10am, Hywel Davies made an attempt on the 50k treadmill record. Running at 16kph for the whole distance, he went through the London Marathon distance (26.2mile/42,195m) in 2 hours 37 minutes and carried on to the 50k mark and even winding it up to 20kph for the last 800m and set a new World Record of 3 hours, 7 minutes and 21 seconds.

"1pm and the Countrywide MAD Team were set to attempt to beat the current Men's Team Marathon record held by Team Oarsome. The day started badly with Andy Sangster having to withdraw with a back injury, but Nik Fleming, Tony Larkman and Stuart Williams made the brave decision to row with just the three of them which meant 7x2000+m - 13min rest per person instead of the planned 5x2100+m - 20min rest. It paid off with the guys taking over two minutes off the old record. The new record stands at 2 hours 15 minutes 51.5 seconds, an average 500m pace of 1:36.5.



"2pm and the 50k mixed teams got underway. The ALL-STARS team had 6 members from the 24-hour team who clearly felt they wanted more action. Countrywide MAD Team submitted a mixed team while FIBRA Rowing Team came all the way from Italy especially to take part! All three teams rowed above expectations with FIBRA setting an Italian National Record, just a short distance behind MAD who also set a UK record while the ALL-STARS Team were not too far behind despite being mostly lightweights and having six members who had been rowing close to 27 hours!

"MAD Team IRC: 2:23:39.3s - 1:26.1 ave/500m. - Kev Peebles, Rob Smith, Graham Parker, Jon Goodall, Pete Marston, Chris Barker, Kelly Sapsford, Siobhan Woodcock, Shelly Wilkins and Kara Wirt.

"FIBRA Rowing Team: 2:29:45.7 - 1:29.8 ave/500m. - Antonello Cantera, Luigi Manes, Claudio Varamo, Diego Rivieri, Sabrina Gasperat, Gianmaria Grassi, Maria Grazia Giampa, Alex Etzi and Angela Price.

"ALL-STARS (Oarsome Old Taff Flyers): 2:38:30.6 - 1:35.1 ave/500m - Dave Speed, Xavier Disley, Kerry Loan, Dougie Lawson, Niall Williams, Gary Blackman, Andy Burrows, Megan Brown, Brian Garner & Kay Hughes.

"Andy Ripley was bowled over with the success of the event and in his typical modest self, had this to say: 'Although I have no right to, I'd like to, on behalf of the Prostate Cancer Charity, to those who organised, participated, donated or even just gave their time to read about what went on in Esher, two weeks ago, just to say thanks.'



"To date donations stand at £4896 including gift aid which is the third largest ever private contribution to the Prostate Cancer Charity. Donations can still be made at <http://www.justgiving.com/rippersrow>

"Special thanks must go to Roscoe Nash (<http://www.netfit.co.uk/>) who gave the rowers free use of the NetFit arena to compete. Janice and Pete Marston for all their time and effort in providing all the food for everyone. Adam and Laura for the countless hours of Sports Massage provided, and a very special thanks to TAUT (<http://www.taut.co.uk/>) who gave all the rowers free use of their sports drinks and paid for the 24 hour row to be staged at Sandown Park. Without Roscoe Nash and TAUT, this event would never have happened!"

Fonte: concept2.co.uk