

Another Record Breaking Chiltern 20

The annual Chiltern 20 Challenge Hike continues to attract more and more interest every year. In order to cope with the high level of thirst for adventure from over 300 Scouts who were part of 76 different teams from 32 different Groups, the organising committee took the bold step to hire a secondary school for this year's event, and imbedded the amazing finishing team and the Eastbourne First Aid team directly from the Southern 50. And just for good measure, the committee introduced two events this year: the senior route which was about 28kms and the junior route which was about 18kms.

Teams came from right across the County and beyond. It was especially pleasing that 20% of the 10-14 year olds came from Groups in North London District, and a third of the participants were girls.

There was a commendable 90% finishing rate. One team enjoyed themselves so much that they spent over 10½ hours completing the event, whilst the first team home breezed round in just over four hours.

This annual event has been organised by a County team from Greater London North for the past 35 years and is always supported on the day by over 100 adults who enjoyed a day in the countryside as much as the young people.

Just for the record, the Phoenix Flyers from 201st Islington won the senior event. This team name is well known to Southern 50 aficionados as they regular occupy a similar position in February. Phoenix Flyers finished eight minutes ahead of the first of six Devon based teams from the 20th Torbay, who all finished in the top thirteen places. Third place was a team from 23rd Southgate who swept the board last year.

The senior teams who were accompanied by an adult saw 11th Finchley finishing just ahead of a team from 1st Twickenham who were entering the event for the first time.

The junior event saw a team from 6th Friern Barnet complete their route just eight minutes faster than a team from 6th Southgate. Both Groups continue to show good improvement every year.

Event Chairman, Colin Batsford, said: "As a Scout Leader, training the young people in our charge in various skills is very fulfilling in itself. But to see them use those skills successfully makes it all the more worthwhile. To see the Scouts out there in the great outdoors, where young people should be, using their skills together with their mates, having fun and achieving something, one cannot be anything other than inspiring".

Kitty, aged 13, from 8th Holborn, who just happens to be playing the title role of Cinderella in this year's Pantomime, said "What a brilliant day, and so well organised. I have never walked so far in my life before".

The event organisers will now turn their attention to The Southern 50, designed for Explorer Scouts and adults in Scouting, taking place on Saturday 13th February 2015. Further information can be found on www.scouts-gln-southern50.org.uk

Fozzy
(Chris Foster, Hon Sec, Chiltern 20 Challenge)