

HASSRA NUTS challenge obstacle course taster day report –

Only 11 signed up. 6 of those pulled out just before the event, and 2 didn't turn up on the day. That left 3 people for me to take around the course. I think it's safe to say that over the following two and a half hours, 5.5km and dozens of obstacles, they had a pretty good time. Here is what they have to say about it –

The weather on the day was not the best, rather wet for June, but what did that matter when we were going to be jumping in rivers and getting soaked anyway!! After several people dropped out, there were 3 of us plus Clint taking us round the course; we all had an amazing experience and challenged ourselves personally to achieve things we didn't think we could. We also worked well as a team, and we laughed a lot which is therapeutic in itself! The setting was great, the countryside beautiful and we even saw a fawn in the woods wondering what on earth we were doing! The river and mud did not disappoint us, and we were suitably covered by the end. We all had an amazing time and would love to try the longer course and even more obstacles if HASSRA were to put the event on again next year. Clint was an excellent advocate of the NUTS experience, and his enthusiasm, encouragement and knowledge of the course was brilliant.

Rachel Foster

The NUTS challenge taster day was advertised on HASSRA website and in our local office as Clint works in the same office as me. I was interested in doing it but thought it may be too physical for me to complete (I am now 52 and have let my previous athletic self-go a bit these days) However, two of my close work colleagues had already put their names down for it, so I made it a challenge for myself to attend.

I will be honest you get very wet and very muddy but I have not laughed so much for a while. It hurt and was hard but never under any pressure to complete an obstacle although we were encouraged and willing to try.

We did the 5k short course and went at the slowest person's pace (which was not always me) the first part of the course is dry and seemed easy although I could not get my leg over some of the obstacles but with a helping hand or two (pushed over) made it to the water part. The best part.

The water was deep, chest high in places, dirty, smelly, and thick mud at the bottom. In places everyone lost their footing or feet got stuck in the mud and took a tumble or two which was very funny.

By the time you get to the last few obstacles you are knackered wet and covered in mud and in pain. I loved it.

In conclusion I would recommend this to everyone, I really enjoyed the day, even though I couldn't move the next day and my whole body is covered in bruises and scratches, it left me with fun memories and a huge sense of achievement. If HASSRA do another NUTS event I will be first on the list.

A big thank you to Clint for organizing it and being our guide and support around the course.

Goose

“Why are you doing that?” it was a reasonable question from my shocked looking colleague, after all I am not athletic, or sporty and I doubt any of my colleagues, friends or family would associate me with any physical activity... although they may consider me to be nuttier than squirrel poo! My reply was simple: Why not? If I don't do it now then I never will!

However, although the answer was 100% true things are rarely that simple. I am 47 years-old, during secondary school I used a wheelchair, and I have learnt to walk four times in my life. When I was 29 an orthopaedic surgeon told me I should buy an automatic car, move to a bungalow, get a job in an office, and that I would walk with a stick for the rest of my life.

I have paid for my children to do the Nuts taster course, they do it with their School, in Year 11, as a team building exercise and as a unique experience before their GCSEs. But would I pay to do it myself? No, not a chance, but here was my opportunity. It was an abseiling moment, I knew it was going to be tough, I knew I would struggle and some of the obstacles would be too much for me, I expected to be far outside of my comfort zone and I was certain I would not be able to complete all 5km.

The day arrived, it was raining... oh well we would be getting wet and muddy anyway. We drove in to the carpark, there were four of us and one of those was Clint our colleague, event organiser, and course Marshal. We waited for the 'others' to arrive but they didn't, so we warmed up... I remember being out of breath during the warmup and thinking this is a bad, bad start!

And then we were off, the rain had stopped, things were blurry because I had taken my glasses off – essential, because I needed them to drive home! It was now a nice day to be outdoors,

The sun came out it really had turned into a lovely day. I missed the baby deer, which I am told was very small, really cute, and not that far away but all I could see was a blur of what was probably long grass!

There were some inevitabilities, I could not jog as much as I had hoped, the ground was a lot harder than I had expected and the impact was too much for my knees. I struggled with some of the obstacles particularly the ones requiring flexibility or co-ordination.

There were bruises, less than I feared in the days before, but a lot more than I can account for!

There were some surprises too, I had a go at most of the obstacles, I conquered a lot, was beaten by some, and my teammates got me through the others. I wasn't always the slowest person, the experience was far from unpleasant. I laughed a lot, actually we laughed a lot, there was a lot more laughter than I expected. I completed all 5.6km!

The sense of achievement was amazing, and I would like to thank HASSRA South East for giving me the opportunity, Clint for organising it, and Rachel and Goose for their support, laughter and comradeship on the journey. Clint took some photos, including an action shot of me jumping a large ditch!

Am I glad I did it? Yes.

Would I do it again? Categorically and without a doubt, yes! Surprisingly I would, It was an amazing experience and I enjoyed it all, especially the water! Thank you HASSRA South East and Clint for enabling me to do this.

Ivan Marshall

