

# HAM SHAG

Kennet & Avon Hash House Harriers

## BETELGEUSE? - NO! BEETROOT JUICE

Save for a stray or overly optimistic two hour run in April, the astronomers amongst us have seen the last of any regroup star gazing for many months to come. No more planets or comets to try and identify. No more constellations to pick out in clear cold dark skies. If Gazza gets his telescope out to stare at heavenly bodies in the next six months, he better make sure that Public Enemy is not watching him!

Astronomers may wonder why Betelgeuse has started attracting so much attention now that the evenings are growing lighter, but instead the talk is about Beetroot Juice, the latest vegetable to be credited with wonder powers. The war time myth that carrots helped the British to see in the dark had a faint scrap of scientific truth. Carrots are rich in vitamin A, which the body uses to making the light sensitive pigment rhodopsin, that allows the eye to work. Now scientific studies are showing the benefits on health and stamina of glugging down beetroot juice.

The reason for beetroot's winning ways, says Professor Andy Jones, from the sport and health sciences department at Exeter, is nitrate, a nutrient found in soil that helps build protein. This converts into nitrite in the body and then into nitric oxide, which has a "double whammy" effect: it widens blood vessels, increasing blood flow; and it reduces the oxygen needed by muscles, enabling them to work more efficiently.

Paralympian marathon gold medallist David Weir asserts that beetroot juice helped power him to his haul of four gold medals, while cyclists, rugby players and other athletes are fast becoming fans.

So if you're tired of being an also-ran in the middle of the pack and want to out-do the latest bunch of young FRBs (front-running bastards), try drinking beetroot juice 30 minutes before exercising.

ALL NEW !!!

Easter Special

April 2013



There is just one side effect though ... it will turn your piss pink!

Le Caniveau

KENNET & AVON HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

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Internet

<http://www.bristolhash.org.uk/kah3>

Run No. 1176  
Hare : Gazza

Hop Pole, Limpley Stoke

Weds. 13th March 2013  
Scribe : Le Caniveau

The river Avon carves its way down from the lower Cotswolds and the valley sides are no mere wrinkles on the topography of the area but steep combes and gorges that no hasher would want to climb twice. That's probably why Gazza's run climbed the steepest road up from the Hop Pole, only to descend back to the village two checks later, and then climb up again for check three.

By this early stage I was already muttering under my breath. I can generally get the gist of most hares' trails reasonably quickly and enjoy a fair degree of success at the checks, but just as top football clubs have their bogie teams, so I have a bogie hare. The only check I got right all night was check three, and that was only because Gazza told me it went up the private drive. Spider has no such problem with Gazza, and he was soon calling the pack On On from way out in front, but you can bet there will be one hare that can set a run that will leave Spider trailing behind.

The trail headed across open farm pastures, where, under the cloudless sky, we had hoped to see the PanSTARRS comet, but it seems the administrators had already sold it off. The trail then snuck into Hog Wood and the first regroup, followed by the only shiggy on the run, a kissing gate forcing us through a patch of gravy-like mud.

Across the A36 we reached the second regroup (after only 3 miles according to Sir Galahad's hash-nav), where we gazed upon Freshford United FC's wooden hut that could have been burnt to microscopic proportions by the hash as a result of a wayward Roman candle set off by Gazza on the Guy Fawkes run 18 months earlier. Gazza isn't that much of a bright spark though and the hut didn't reach ignition temperature in the psychedelic flurry from the firework.

From the regroup, the pack headed down to Sharpstone where the pack suffered a vasectomy, being detached from both its Pauls. Fat Controller took the shorter route directly to Freshford church, soon to be followed by the pack after they traversed past the village hall, while Le Caniveau took a typical Caniveau short cut. Within the hour (no, that's not a misprint), we had returned to the Hop Pole.

Limpley Stoke was taken from Shaftesbury Abbey by Henry VIII following the dissolution of the monasteries, and granted to the Earl of Pembroke, and later the Earl of Wessex. When he fell into debt, the Stoke estate was sold on to the Dickes family, and they developed cloth mills, using the strong flowing river. Later, in the 20th century, Limpley Stoke became popular as a Spa town (rather than a Gem village, or a Barn-stormer hamlet). Sadly any thermal influence was missing from the back room of the Hop Pole, and starting with Pinky and Perky, the numb and frozen pack returned to the bar to sit in front of the gas powered log fire, turning from blue to pink as warm blood returned to their extremities. Sadly, it was too cold to move again for any down-downs.

## Run # 1121 Beaufort Hunt, Chipping Sodbury

29<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Hare : The Fat Controller

I became aware of the town of Chipping Sodbury back in 1974 when I travelled to Wolverhampton from Poole in a mate's 1970 Ford Capri. I bet you're asking why we were going to Wolverhampton? We stopped just off the A46 and took a picture by the road sign, standing in front of the letters 'bury' in Old Sodbury!. It seemed quite funny back then. We headed down the A432, by-passing Chipping Sodbury, and stopped for a beer in the White Lion in Yate! Yes, Yate did exist back in the dark ages! [ It's amazing, that one can remember fairly useless trivia, facts and events of 38 years ago, but can't remember where we hashed from last Wednesday! But I digress from the thrust of this write-up! ]

We have now hashed from the Sodburies on 25 occasions over K&A's hash life of 20 years (more than once every year!), but we haven't hashed from all of the pubs. It would be easily possible to have a gallon of beer in the 8 pubs of Chipping Sodbury (with it's marvellous High Street) and not have to walk too far, although the **Bell Hotel** on the road to Old Sodbury would probably be the best starting point! Only once have we hashed from this recently refurbished pub (now more of a restaurant) ironically set February last year by 'Perky'. Heading westwards, one has to turn off at the large round-about up Horse Street, to the **Boot Inn** (Now I have stopped here on the odd hash, but not the most inspiring of boozers and often doesn't sell real ale! But we haven't hashed from here!). As we head towards the town, around a sharp bend, on the right hand side is the **Portcullis Inn** (the scene of Dave Robey's only hash trail back in February 1998 - who remembers him? ). Now the Portcullis is another pub that I have stopped at on the odd hash, and again a pub that lacks atmosphere and decent real ale. As we turn the next corner, the War Memorial stands in front of us, we are again heading due west up Broad Street and the High Street. On the left are 2 decent pubs - **the Royal Oak** (never hashed from here) and the **Beaufort Hunt** (twice from this pub). Opposite are the **George** (again, never hashed from this pub) and the **Squire Inn** (7 trails from this large eating establishment with a decent garden). Up the hill, past the Market Cross on the left to the far end of the High Street is the **Grapes Hotel** which has a curry house attached (Maggars Xmas 2010 curry run). In total just over the mile from the Bell to the Grapes. [ I like Chipping Sodbury - nice wide high street with some interesting shops as well as pubs - I can imagine what it must have been like before cars. ]

In total 14 runs from the pubs in Sodbury itself, add in another 9 from the Old Dog, 1 from the Cross Hands hotel on the A432/A46 junction and one starting from Sodbury Common gives us the 25. *Unbelievably 'Sleepy' has set more than 50% of these runs!*

Now for my run on the first Wednesday hash that has coincided with the leap year (i.e the 29<sup>th</sup> of February for all you pedants), I was tempted to do a pub crawl, but decided to do the standard route - North of the town and clockwise - which basically runs to the west of the quarry through the woods, crosses over the Wickwar road, into the fields, dissects the golf course towards the rugby club and then some twiddly bits through the housing estate to get back to the High Street - nice and easy, back in the hour - job's a good 'un!

I had planned to go to the Red Lion (this would have been a first-time visit - see above), but the Beaufort Hunt was significantly cheaper.

There was 16 of us out tonight, but I can't remember if there were any down-downs!

***On On, 'The Fat Controller'***

Run #1174

27th Feb 2013

The Bridge Inn, Shortwood (just off the Avon Ring Road)

Hare : Le Caniveau

Scribe : The Fat Controller

The return of the Ham Shag last week has given me back the enthusiasm for scribing something for our much-missed post-hash reading material (although I do prefer to save my copy for the early-Thursday morning ablutions!).

This was my kind of run for a cold February evening with the temperature just hovering above freezing point. I was surprised that there weren't more of us. [ Just 9 of us set off at 19:30 and only 10 in the pub after the run - 'Stiff' having arrived at 20:00. ] In fact you have to go back to May 2012 when there were 10 or less hashers on a run - 'Soprano's' effort from the Crown at Brinkworth. There would have been more of us but 4 brave souls (idiots) had set off cycling from Chippenham to the pub, but apparently 'Sir Galahad' hasn't got the hang of his trusty steed, and ended up in an untidy heap in a ditch. [He ought to try stabilizers, they're quite cheap in Halfords!.] And how were we made aware of this? It seems as though Rich Puddle (one of the 4) had returned to collect his car and drive to the Bridge to inform the hare, before returning to Chippenham. Surely he could have brought the other 3 and they could have done the hash! Far too sensible for kids. And even if 'Sir Galahad' was a bit injured, he could have stayed in the pub!

So why was it my kind of run, you are all asking? Well, it was just over 5 minutes from the house, is the first reason. Secondly, when we set off over the ring road towards Emersons Green I could see that up to your knackers in squelchy cow shit fields could well be missing from the trail - and so it proved. We have had a lot of these types of runs during the winter months when the hash slowly degenerates into a precarious walk! Okay, so perhaps not up to our knackers in cow-shit each week, but not far off. Tonight seemed like a good night for doing the trail!

Anyway, the various local cycle paths and tracks made for fairly easy hashing, and despite the proximity of the nearby landfill site (with its pungent smell), the few front-runners there were proceeded to find the trail with comparative ease and speed. Too speedy in fact for 'Cover-up' and his exceedingly bright torch who soon lost the trail by the landfill site. I hear it's haunted! With a little assistance from 'Le Caniveau', a couple of us back-markers soon found ourselves at the front at the first re-group. Bit of confusion at this point as the trail had mysteriously disappeared, and then, after a couple of missing checks, there were a few fields from here-on until we hit the main road to/from Pucklechurch, I headed directly back to the Bridge Inn, although the trail deviated slightly off the main road. Just over the hour by my watch, which is perfectly acceptable for the last Wednesday in February.

cont'd...

Both the Bass and the Doom Bar were good, and as there were only 10 of us, we were all able to sit around 1 table! One of the Hodges was missing, so no down-downs tonight! By 9:30 we were all gone home!

A thought occurred to me driving back home on the Avon Ring Road. Why is the A4174 still called the Avon Ring Road? Avon no longer exists, and it's nowhere near a complete circle (like the M25 around London, or the M60 around Manchester).

On On

'The Fat Controller'

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### ***Corrections and Clarifications.***

There was a serious inaccuracy in the Hole of Shame statistics printed in the last edition of the Ham Shag.

It appears that in the heat of meeting publication deadlines, the hole of Shame "*runs wimped out of*" statistics for Spiderman and Perky had been transposed.

We wish to make it clear that Spiderman, a long standing and well respected member of Kennet and Avon hash has not wimped out of as many runs as Perky, and we are only too happy to print the correct statistics in this edition of the Ham Shag.

We would also like to thank Spiderman for his generosity when highlighting this error at the bar of the Hop Pole, Limpley Stoke.

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## ***What's Bugging You ?***

Did you miss tick awareness week at the end of March, aimed at keeping walkers, runners and dogs safe while enjoying the great outdoors? Hashing through the countryside leaves us exposed to the many invertibrates that enjoy a good feast off a sweater hasher. And not only do the little beasties drink our blood, they could potentially infect us with some horrible disease.

Midges and mosquitoes are probably the most common insect bites received in this country. Although the bites here don't carry the risks of deadly diseases that are found in other parts of the world, they are painful, they itch intensely, and can swell up alarmingly. Horseflies inflict the most painful bite, as their mouthparts tear the skin open rather than simply piercing through it.

It's the females of these species that do the damage. They are anautogenous: they require a blood meal before they are able to reproduce effectively, if at all. Without the meal, the eggs will not mature, and may not even be laid.

This reproductive strategy only works if the fly can escape being swatted once the bite is inflicted. Inhabitants of regions where the flies are a pest usually learn to swat immediately at the first hint of the bite. Keeping covered up with loose light clothing



can help avoid bites in the first place, and the clothing can also impede the fly's escape, increasing the chance of lethal revenge!

Ticks are second only to mosquitoes for carrying infection to humans world-wide . Tick bites in the UK commonly lead to irritation, allergic reaction and localised infections, but in some cases there can be more serious consequences such as Lyme disease. In the UK in 2010, there were 1,361 confirmed cases of tick-borne Lyme disease, and the Health Protection Agency estimates a further 1,000 – 2,000 cases go unrecorded each year.



Strictly speaking, these small spider-like creatures aren't insects, but ticks are increasingly becoming an unpleasant feature of strolls through UK woods, moors or thick grass. The bite doesn't really hurt, but once they've latched onto you, the ticks cling to your skin and suck your blood.

The charity Borreliosis and Associated Disease Awareness UK (BADA-UK) is run by volunteers who have been affected by Lyme Disease. They believe public and professional awareness is key to combating the rise in cases of tick-borne disease. They say the best defence is to take measures to avoid being bitten in the first place, which include:

- using insect repellent;
- wearing suitable clothing that prevents ticks accessing the body, with elasticated wrist and leg bands;
- using the centre of paths to avoid over-hanging vegetation where ticks may be waiting, and
- performing regular tick checks.

In line with this guidance, Pinky has suggested we introduce a Tick stop on future runs. So instead of just regrouping, we should have a good rummage around and check each other out for ticks!

Run No.1177  
Hare: Fat Controller

Bear, Melksham

20th March 2013  
Scribe: Le Caniveau

Not a lot happens in Melksham ... each day a couple of trains stop at the single track station; the tyre factories that are the stalwart of the local economy churn out a few thousand tyres; and an average of 240,000 cubic metres of water flows through the town as the river Avon, although that's all water under the bridge by now.

Melksham is so unremarkable that it has taken nearly 22 years for the Kennet and Avon Hash to use it as a venue. In fact the only previous run in Melksham was in 1813, when a misprint in the Times newspaper led to panic among depositors in Awdry, Long & Bruges' Melksham bank, with many withdrawing all their money at short notice. Had the misprint appeared in the Guardian, even that run at the bank wouldn't have happened.

Melksham also used to host a provincial round of the World Cleudo championships (the final is held annually in Torquay) in the Town Hall, but in 1974 after an argument during a power cut, one of the players, Mrs. White, is alleged to have killed Dr Black with a hefty blow of a candlestick, and made her escape via a secret passageway from the Hall to the Library. There have been no further rounds of the championship in Melksham since.

The purchase of the Bear Inn by Wetherspoon's from Wadsworth has been greeted with joy by Melksham Town Council, filling a gap in the High Street that compliments the nearby Poundstretcher store. This clearly prompted the Fat Controller to select it to continue his quest to set runs from every Wetherspoon's pub in the south-west (remember the Bridge House, Chippenham; Jolly Sailor, Hanham and the Staple Hill Oak anyone ... although Maggers bagged the Kingswood Colliers) and end a 22 year wait.

The hash started through the old part of town. I had parked by the fish and chip shop on a side road just up from the pub, and heard the initial call of ON just before I'd finished tying my shoelaces. I set off up the High Street in what I thought was the direction called, until a complete absence of flour in the next 200 yards made me think again and I returned to find an arrow pointing down an alleyway beside the pub. The old town made for an attractive part of the run, with Georgian cottages lining narrow streets and the trail rounding the parish church, before it headed out over open farmland towards the river Avon, which is where I finally caught up with the pack. Thereafter, my success at avoiding false trails at checks dropped 100 per cent. When the trail crossed the trunk road back into town and I was a good way up another false trail and barely within earshot of the calling pack, my SCB instincts took over and I headed up the main road, and quickly came upon my initial short-cutting attempt. Meanwhile the pack followed a longer rat run of pathways cutting through a more modern housing estate, which led back to where I was parked. As I was changing ready for a pint or two in the Bear, Stig and Dan were on their customary On Inn sprint when they were nearly brought down by an early finishing tape, as Stuart stretched his lead across the pavement in front of them outside the chippie.

Le Caniveau

## RECEDING HARE LIST

Run	Date	Location	OS Ref	Hare
1183	01/05/13	The Bladuds Head, Catsey Place, Larkhall, Bath <a href="#">BA1 6TA</a> . Off The A4, E of Bath.	<a href="#">ST761670</a>	Public Enemy
1184	08/05/13	Nettleton Village <a href="#">SN14 7NR</a> . Four miles E of M4 junc. 18, S of Burton. Park near the phone box. Pub after T.B.A.	<a href="#">ST819780</a>	Pinky
1185	15/05/13	The Westbrook Inn, Westbrook, near Bromham <a href="#">SN15 2EE</a> . On the A3102 W of Melksham.	<a href="#">ST956657</a>	Dolly
1186	22/05/13	The Eagle Inn, Highbury Street, Coleford <a href="#">BA3 5NT</a> . About 5km due S of Radstock	<a href="#">ST690493</a>	Spider
1187	29/05/13	The Langley Tap, The Common, Langley Burrell <a href="#">SN15 4LQ</a> . NE of Chippenham off the B4069 (which joins the M4 at junc 17).	<a href="#">ST933751</a>	Cover Up
1188	05/06/13	The Kings Arms, Stratton On The Fosse, near Radstock <a href="#">BA3 4RA</a> . On The A367 S of Midsomer Norton.	<a href="#">ST657506</a>	Toreador

## HOLE OF SHAME

...those shamelessly ducking out of the full run

Hound	Runs wimped out of	Hound	Runs wimped out of	Hound	Runs wimped out of
Stiff	352	Gazza	13	L'Escargot	1
Fat Controller	351	Soprano	7	Sir Galahad	1
Le Caniveau	100	Our Kid	7	Dolly	0
Lightweight	82	Pinky	6	Stig	0
Magnum	50	Spiderman	5	Sheepshagger	0
Puki Jangut	26	Cover Up	5		
Toreador	16	Public Enemy	2	Stuart 	26
Perky	13	Snails Nuts	2	Molly 	0

## Latest additions ...

Date	Run	Location	Shamed Hounds	Reason
27 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2013	1178	Catherine Wheel, Melksham	Our Kid	He knew better!
20 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2013	1177	Bear, Melksham	Le Caniveau, Stuart	Short-cutting up the high street rather than enjoying the housing estate.
6 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2013	1175	White Hart, Castle Combe	Fat Controller	Heading towards Ford for a drink, rather than the Beer Stop at Yatton Keynell.
27 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2013	1174	Bridge, Shortwood	Stiff	Rug rats.

**Hole of Shame stats. have been accurately maintained since 21<sup>st</sup> March 2007 – run 854 from the Rising Sun, Bradford-on-Avon, so there. Any inaccuracies can be greatly exaggerated by bribing or annoying the Edit Hare.**