

Shak's Tracks

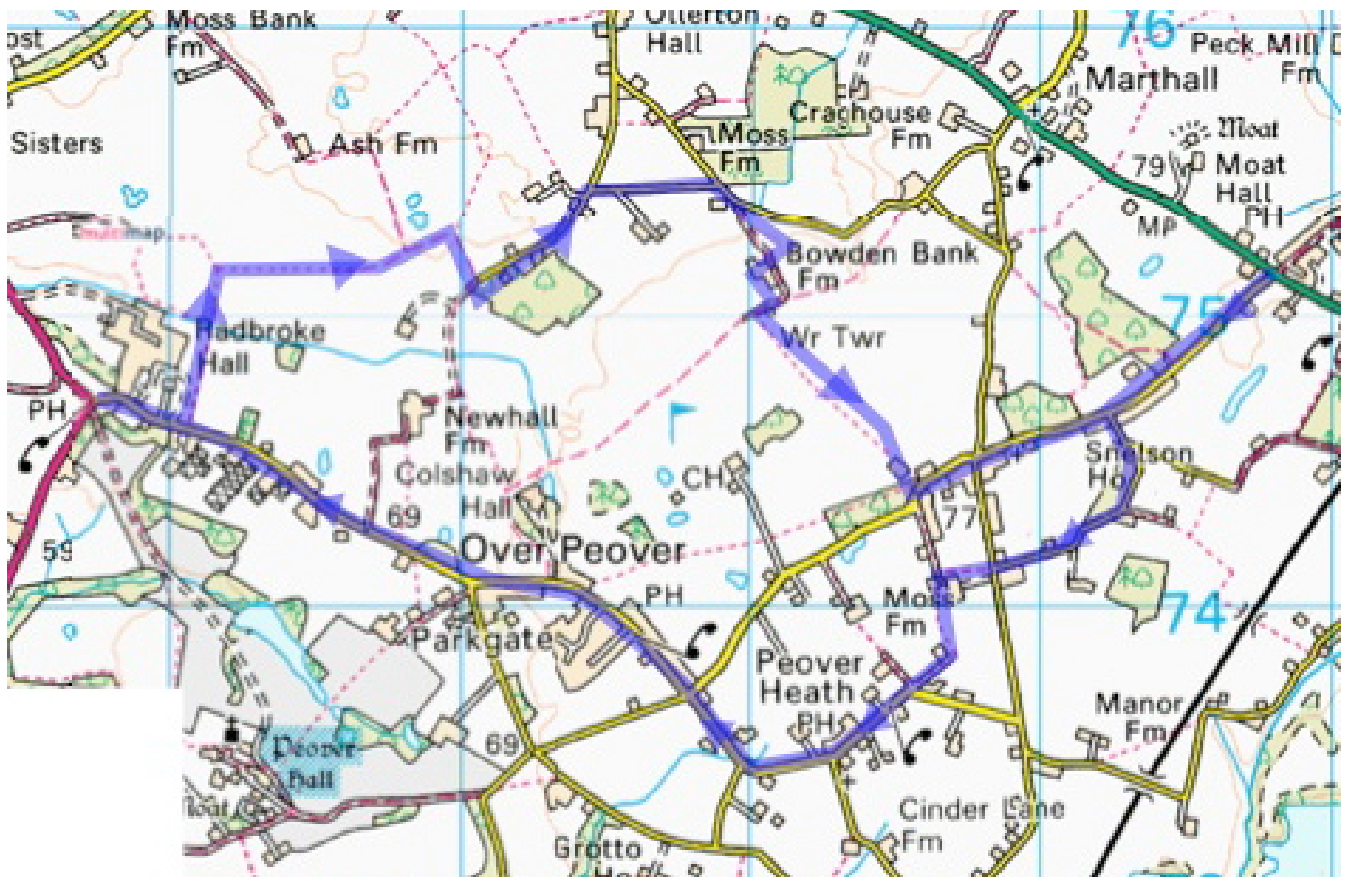
The Road to the Pub

There are signs of spring in the hedge, the rain is only moderately heavy and thoughts turn to Spring and road racing. This is the time of year that you test the effects of all those Winter miles by subjecting yourself to fast pace races on dull road. So, how do we spice it up? Take Mr Tupper's advice and ensure there are several pubs en route thus harking back to those innocent days when the only performance enhancing drug was beer. However, one of the most difficult problems in running is pacing. It's all too easy to set off too quickly and end up staggering to the finish. Here's an opportunity to practice careful pacing in and out of the pub. Remember, in spite of Alf Tupper's unorthodox approach to re-hydration, he has never fallen behind through excessive drinking. Think on !

We'll start by the Egerton (not in it!) and run down Pepper Street as far as Common Lane, where we turn left and after about 100 metres or so bear left at the fork and continue until we reach the junction with Mill Lane. At this point, we'll cross the road and take the field path straight across to Moss Farm, bearing left by the buildings and across two fields to the track that leads to Wellbank Lane. We'll follow this and about a quarter of a mile along is the Dog Inn. Many will remember this when it was known as the Gay Dog and will also recall the picture of the cheerful mutt, woven into the carpet. Ready for a drink? Think about the comment on pacing. On we go, past the Dog and when we reach the junction with Stocks Lane, we'll forge straight on. It won't be long before we reach the Parkgate Inn on the right.

Now we're deep in gooseberry country and the pub has hosted many gooseberry shows. Here's a snippet of conversation: Mrs Shak - "What do you do at gooseberry shows?". Gooseberry Guru - "Show gooseberries, Kath". Enough said. Let's continue down Stocks Lane as far as it's possible to go (about 1.5 miles), past the nursery on the left and Radbroke Hall on the right and we're at the Whipping Stocks. More refreshment? I'll just point out we've not turned for home yet. So it's a quick slurp, turn back down Stocks Lane and just past Radbroke Hall on the left, take the path which goes along the left hand side of two fields and crosses the stream.

If you're carrying a warm, beery glow, beware. This is where you'll need to navigate more carefully. The path continues along the left of the next field to join another track at which point we'll turn sharp right and follow this across the next several fields before turning sharp right on the track in the direction of School Lane. Here we'll carry on for a short distance before turning right



into Percival's Lane. At the end of Percival's Lane, it's a short right into Moss Lane and almost immediately, we'll take the track which forks off left toward Bowden Bank farm. After a while the track bends round to the right and there's a path on the left which goes across the next three fields to emerge on Chelford Lane. Turn left and we'll soon go across the junction, up Pepper Street and the Egerton is in sight once more.

If there's any remaining capacity, you can celebrate a taxing seven miles, or one under the eight as Alf might say. If you can remember the route, you've either been very abstemious or you've not been running fast enough. Runs are always most satisfactory when they have a good finish. A warm pub is, of course, the ideal place to stretch thoroughly and replace any lost fluids. As always, sage advice from Mr Tupper. We'd do well to heed it.

