

## RNR run report 2025 (Lee Thompson)

After watching the two Norwich Teams set off at 11:30am (*bandits!*), the clock struck twelve and the **Ely Runners Open Team (or Ely A)** were off, with **Ali Steele** setting off for Hunstanton, where he duly *arrived having taken a massive nine minutes off his predicted time.*



Ali then handed the baton to **Robin Webb**, who despite a slip at mile 10 battled through the last three miles of his stage to hand over to first timer **Ed Suswain**. Young Ed ran another strong stage (finishing in 3rd place) to arrive at the Wells handover point just in time to see his lunch make a reappearance (*sorry Ed!*).

Another RNR newbie, **Ben Morris** then took over the baton for stage 4 which saw heavy rain, thunder and lightning. That didn't phase ultra-hardened Ben, who not only ran a superb stage but decided to then run the 11 miles back to his car.



Stage 5 started on the dreaded shingle although fortunately for us **Paul Bear Clarkson** seems to like the shingle (*I know, right?!*) so he made light work of the Cley to Cromer stage, knocking 4 minutes off his predicted time before handing over to **Richard Suswain**.





Richard was also on his RNR debut run and showed off his current form by taking home the stage 6 win (and thereby retaining the title that AJ had won for Ely the year before).



Stage 7 began with **Lee Tatum** (in new carbon shoes) flying towards Happisburgh (did you know that Jon Evans painted the lighthouse here, many moons ago?), before arriving in Lessingham to hand over to **Julian Moynihan** who, to quote his words upon finishing, 'Smashed it!' Not only did Julian pick up the stage win, but he also set a new stage record (being the first person to run sub-40 minutes for the 7.52-mile stage) although he wasn't the only fast-moving thing on stage 8 as the support crew made light work of their Fish & Chip dinner.

**Alex Tate** and **Craig Holgate** (ER veterans and RNR stalwarts) took over the baton for stages 9 and 10 as the night stages got well underway. They both did unreal jobs as Ely A had run most of the day solo, so we finally got to do some overtaking of flashing orange lights thanks to their efforts (and taking 12 minutes off their combined predicted times).

Next up on stage 11 was **Paul 'For the Win' Waggitt**, and that's exactly what he did! Edging out the CONAC runner by 19 seconds to claim Ely's third stage win of the race, whilst also winning a trophy for the highest WAVA (age-grading) on stage 11.

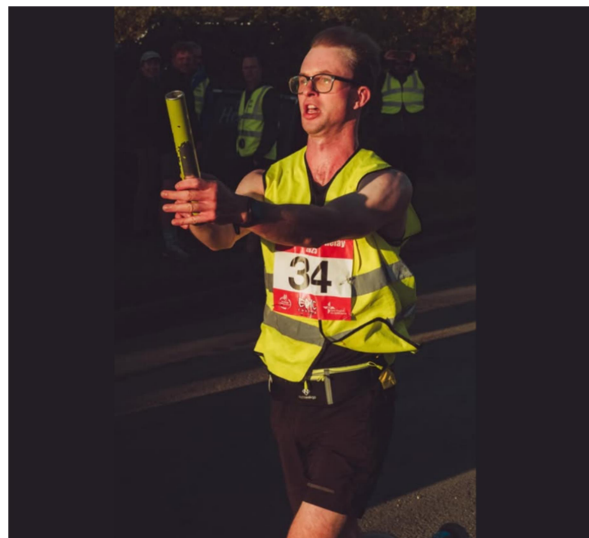
Stage 12 brought the 'Battle of the Smiths' (**Chris** for Ely / **Logan** for CONAC) and while Logan may have won this one, Chris certainly impressed the van crew as when waving us forward to grab another gel he casually mentioned that 'I just ran that half-marathon in 1:12' (with another six miles to go) before carrying on to finish second overall on the stage.



Stage 13, now dubbed the 'Levinson Leg', saw **Tom** set off for the fourth consecutive year where he delivered a top run before handing over to **AJ Ellwood** who could be seen scything his way up through the field as the race entered its final stages. It was a sea of orange lights as AJ left Feltwell before he handed the baton to **James Fisher**, who promptly set off up the A10 towards Downham Market, clearly enjoying overtaking all that lay before him.

Daylight had broken as **Alex Upstone** continued where the previous two left off before - *veerrrry carefully* - handing the baton over to **Baz Woodward** to start the final stretch to Kings Lynn. By this point in the race, we were an hour ahead of schedule thanks to the effort of the runners, so all were in high spirits on the riverbank into Kings Lynn where we met a number of West Norfolk AC runners, everyone with words of encouragement to all passing runners.

It was then after about 195 miles of running, in Kings Lynn town centre, that two Ely Runners did their take on a 1980's romcom as that was '*When Barry met Ali (son)*' as the two Ely teams swapped positions. All that was now left was the final two- and a-bit miles back to Lynnsport where it all started. With some, erm, '*motivational*' messages from the WhatsApp group chat, Barry stormed home to complete another successful race for Ely Runners.



The total time taken was **20 hours, 38 minutes and 35 seconds**, with Ely A third fastest overall and second in class (by just under 5 minutes!)

I'll finish this run report with a series of Thank You's:

- Firstly, to the runners, who despite most of them having to run without anyone in sight, did unbelievably well to take almost 66 minutes off the estimated time.
- Secondly, to the support crew as without them no team can take part. Ely A crew consisted of lead driver **Jon Evans**, bike support **Peter Royle** on his Brompton, timekeepers **Nick Dowdy** and **Stephen Howard**, social media manager **Pedro Perez** and last but by no means least, team captain **Debbie Abraham** (who I'm sure will be glad she no longer receives notifications from me!)
- And finally, to the Mixed Team (or Ely B) crew; it was very much a collective effort this year to ensure all 34 runners and support teams were prepared and ready for race day.

RNR have already released dates for 2026 – 12/13 September – *save the date!*

(Lee Thompson)