

DRAFT

The Singapore Hash House Harriets, founded 1973

If you've been running on the Hash for a while, you'll have acquired an unusual brand of local knowledge. This will include having a good eye for the depth of a jungle stream, or the reliability of the log across it; knowing which creepers are ^r pickle-free; where the wire washing lines are stretched in kampong ^A gardens, and whether you're about to tread in mud or shiggy. You will be quite familiar with the difficulties of running on standard ^u gauge railway sleepers, negotiating storm drains, and descending expressway banks under control. Should you be new to S'pore and jogging, let alone running, there are compensations to offset the startling experiences which the runs offer. Namely, views of Singapore you would never see by car, which you are even less likely to discover alone; ~~the~~ happy discovery that hardly anyone runs like a professional (but you will get better at it) and that some people walk now and again; ^a chance to eat out all over the Island, at lorry drivers' food stalls, air-cond. restaurants, club houses, ^{and} Harriets' homes. You'll find these food ^{and} drink 'ON ONS' after a run make Wednesday night one of the best in the week. In fact, it seems we've never had it so good.

Yet the Ladies Hash was started in S'pore on the more rugged basis of - if you can't beat the men, join 'em. (The men's group had been going strong here since 1962). Caryl Gurney, grass widow of a Hashman every Monday night put the idea of a women's group to her friends : "it produced screams of laughter". However, the men allowed girls to participate in a run at Dover Road in Oct. 1973, these twelve girls survived the course. Records of Run 2 are misty, but Run 3 was along Jurong Road. Caryl, first Grand Hash Mistress had to phone girls individually ^{and} cajole them into running. But in January 1974 for Run 12, they went into print in the Men's Hash circular.

"This made a tremendous difference to numbers as now Hash wives were learning about us instead of just reading the jokes. April '74 found the 'Ladies Hash', as we called ourselves, with a notice of our own".

How far things have changed since then may be seen.

"Run 12 ... take the laterite road alongside Paya Lebar runway proceeding South. Continue for $\frac{1}{4}$ ml. (This road is probably not marked.)"

Drinks after the run used to come from a (donated) cold box. Straws hadn't been invented it seems ...

- "If Harriets don't wish to drink out of bottles after someone else, please bring your own mug."

The next week's Hare had more responsibilities than run-setting. She had to

"collect the Hash sign, trail material, cups, cool box ^{and} ice packs. Wash the mugs. Order beers ^{and} 7-Ups for her run."

Domesticity was strong : at Run 46 the well-attended ON ON was held at the Balmoral, Holland Village.

"Housewifely feelings overcame many of the participants who then proceeded to wash down the tables with great gusto."

caps. ON ONs have always been a regular feature but one 1974 menu takes some beating for pure gastronomic daring :

"curry smorgasbrod and draught."

Attendance peaked and troughed with

"a quiet ON ON at the Premier Hotel for 9. (Only 6 had turned up for the run with more laying the paper than running)."

Today, our membership is constitutionally restricted and we always have someone on the waiting list to join. Then, Harriets were given a spare copy of the Newsletter ^{and} told

"give it away, let's grow."

Since husbands ^{and} boyfriends were in on runs from the start, it soon became necessary to restrict membership to 'accompanied men only' if the group was to stay a true Ladies' Hash. The first

GHM (in full)

"fought hard to keep it for the Ladies only as a night out - although the men were always welcome to ON ONs."

Grand Hash Mistress.

Human nature being what it is, however, the 50th Celebration Run newsletter declared

"it was great having so many fellahs on the Ladies Run".

Both S'pore ^{and} Johore Harriets had joined in. The men, soon 'unaccompanied' ones were let in, made the girls a little complacent. A pointed reminder was necessary in the 1976 Rules on Running :

"not to leave the job of checking to the men. They are not on the run to do the checks. They do a great job protecting us from kampong dogs, helping us over rivers and generally keeping us moving, but not the checks. It's a Ladies' Hash".

Before the first 100 runs, men were being reminded this time "to let the Ladies set the pace", and this advice has never stopped.

What were Ladies wearing ⁱⁿ the early days? After Run 46 somebody (?) had left behind a "short olive green batik culotte and shorts" which, if worn together seem guaranteed to protect just about everything important.

The language used on runs was probably as colourful as ever, but officially the English terms were agreed that we use today : ON ON, CHECK ^{and} ARE YOU ON? There was a ^{good} case for standardising ^{these} terms :

"Run 42 : the excellent discipline of the Harriets almost broke up the run. Some non-H writer had scrawled 'STOP HERE' prominently about half way round. They did."

Circulars or newsletters haven't changed much in form or content although it is generally agreed that notes made at the beer wagon can you let you down later ...

"Run 49 : 1 metal Hash sign are missing. Please have a look in your homes for them."

The 'Receding Hareline' wasn't inaugurated until after Run 66.
Previously, the ladies relied on volunteers, e.g.

" - HELP!
- Audrey
- HELP!
- HELP.!"

It took almost 100 runs to get the girls into gear. After that they started to receive compliments from the Men's Hash on their running ability too. If you are a new-comer, don't worry, it won't take you that long! But don't expect wonders from yourself first time out. Just take it easy and enjoy running with the Singapore Hash House Harriets - On On !

Bryn Thompson

Lynn,
This is my attempt at a Hash History
aimed mainly at new members.....?
What d'you think?

Bryn.

4.9.80.