

Fit Artist Running Blog

She's an artist, she's fit, she's the FitArtist! Watch her go!



Gauntlet Games, Trent Park

I was offered a place in the [Gauntlet Games](#) a little while ago and I thought 'Nah, that's not for me' but, after having a look at the video and stopping myself being so stuffy, I decided to give it a go. I'm glad I did! So, off we all set, bright and early to get to Trent Park. As we came out at Cockfosters and followed lots of other sporty types, I commented that people seemed to be mostly in long tights and was I missing something? Eek! The park was lovely and the atmosphere was buzzing, with a group of runners setting off in one of the earlier waves as I queued for my race number and t-shirt. I noticed that there seemed to be lots of groups of friends/family and felt like a bit of a Billy-no-mates (this was ok though, because people were rather chatty and excited). Once I was numbered up and ready to go, my wave were called into the warm-up area by a muscle man in Gladiator attire. I don't normally do pre-race warm-ups, but I wasn't going to argue with him. I had noticed that lots of people had cool neon stripes on their faces, and worked out that there was a face-painting table near the registration, so briefly ignored the Gladiator while I prioritised my appearance. After we had done some jogging around, some lunges, squats and weird press-ups, [I felt knackered](#) it was time to go, but not before we had knelt down and done some more odd things...



Hands in the air like you just don't care

And we were off!



Gladiator Ready!

Straight away I was confused and went the wrong way. Yes, really. It was very unclear which way we were meant to go and there really should have been another marshal doing their best pointing. I was also a bit confused because there was a mixture of 5k and 10k runners and I had thought the 10k was a trail run for the first half, then obstacles, but it was obstacles, trail, more obstacles. Once I'd stood around for a bit looking blank and going through all of this in my head, I ran hard at a pile of straw bales and threw myself over. I was then pelted – very hard- with footballs as I tried to balance on a bar, then off into the woods. Trent Park is a lovely place to run – I have run there once before in a handicap race, where I think I got a PB at the time, about six or seven years ago. I enjoyed running through the trees and leaping over tree stumps, quickly leaving the other people behind. It was at this point that I realised this definitely wasn't a running race, with many people walking between obstacles and giving me suspicious looks as I came wheezing up behind them. I had been slightly nervous about what was going to be thrown at me (and what I would have to throw myself at), but had chatted to a woman at registration, who had done this before. She told me that I would be fine and it was a lot of fun. She was right. You would be running (or walking) for a bit and then you might hear a yelp or scream, which gave you a little warning that something was coming up. These might be giant bouncy balls to work your way through, a pool of muddy water to splash around whilst avoiding being plunged by a gladiator or, possibly my favourite, a big water slide thingy going down a hill. As I approached, the Gladiator asked me to hold on while he made it good and slippery for me and that I needed to 'take a run up'. I took a run up then very daintily got down on my knees and lay on my front. Ahem. He then had to pull me along and send me flying down the hill...towards a stuck woman. I put out my hands and gave her a shove to avoid head-butting her feet and off we both splashed into a foamy pool of very cold water. Yay! At this point I had to stop and re-attach my race number, which was a bit soggy (this makes it easier to identify yourself in the [race photos](#) afterwards).

I took on a few more obstacles, then the path forked and the 5k and 10k runners split up. I really enjoyed this trail run section, feeling good and overtaking many of the people from earlier waves, who were now walking. It was relatively easy to work out where you were going here, with red and white striped plastic dangling from trees and bushes, but there was one spot where I found myself in completely the wrong place and I'm pretty sure I and a few others went the wrong way towards the end. A few more arrows and clearer marking would be great next year

After my little run, I joined the obstacle course again, this time tackling some of my fears head-on by climbing over a wall of tyres (it's not that high, I'm just a wuss) and crawling through a pool of muddy water under a scramble net – my contact lenses even got muddy at this point and I spent quite some time blinking! Before I knew it, I could hear the music and cheering at the finish area and people were shouting 'Nearly there!' – I just had to play a game of British Bulldog, wade through foam, being challenged by a semi-naked man and dive through a bouncy castle thingie...



Bouncy

...before a quick sprint to the finish...



Foam legs

I was given my medal as I crossed the line, but there was no timing (Edward had my Garmin and said I did it in about 55 minutes, not bad!). As you can see, I was a bit wet, sticky, muddy and dishevelled:



Messy

I can't imagine why Hector didn't want a big hug...



Rrrraaaaarrrr!!!

If you think this looks like a load of fun (it is), there's still time to have a go yourself. There are other events happening in the next few months in Cardiff, Brighton and Hertfordshire. Just visit the [website](#) to book your place and put aside all ideas about racing and PBs and just have a laugh.

Source: <https://fitartist.wordpress.com/2015/06/01/gauntlet-games-trent-park/>