



Robert Moore preparing for the start of the New York marathon

New York City Marathon 2001

By Robert Moore

When I was forced to withdraw the day before the Flora London Marathon in April 2001, I felt devastated that six months of training had been in vain. However, 'Whizz-Kidz', my chosen charity for whom I hope to raise £20,000, offered me the chance to run in the New York City Marathon instead. Once my torn hamstring had healed, my training resumed and on Sunday 4 November 2001 I was able to realise an ambition, to compete in my first ever marathon at the age of 40.

The weather was dry and warm which proved to be a decisive factor because it became imperative to take lots of water to prevent dehydration, a main reason for marathon runners hitting "the wall".

Everyone knows your name

I wrote my name on my running vest and decided to stick to the left next to the crowd, who I hoped would occasionally shout my name to keep my spirits up during testing times. I got into a steady rhythm early on and was overwhelmed by the reaction of the crowd. New Yorkers shouted my name incessantly along the course. It really lifted me.

I tried to stick to running 9.5 minutes per mile, to give me the best chance of achieving my aim of a sub four and a half

hour time. I kept comfortably within this time; at the half way stage I clocked a time of 1 hour 54 min 37 sec.

A bad patch crossing Queensborough Bridge from Queens to Manhattan from mile 15 to 16 was immediately followed by a roar from the crowd as we entered Manhattan. They were at least ten deep for the next 4 miles until we reached a bridge into the Bronx at mile 20.

By now my body was beginning to hurt (I wasn't alone!) and for the first time I really appreciated just how important mental strength is.

The roar of the crowd

The last 6.2 miles were a real test. I wasn't acknowledging the frenzied encouragement from the sidelines as much and I had

stopped doing 'high fives' with the local children. It felt as if the mile markers had been placed much further apart, but at 22 miles I received a great lift when two new friends, Bob Garwood and his brother Christopher caught me up. I decided to stick with them for a while. This dragged me through the next 2 miles, but at 24 miles I couldn't keep up and reluctantly let them forge ahead while I concentrated on simply getting round.

Thankfully I managed, roared on by an enormous crowd, to cross the finish line in 3 hr 57 min 57 sec. The relief was overwhelming.

If you would like to help me reach my target, any donations will be gratefully received. Cheques made payable to 'Whizz-Kidz'.

Long in the Tooth

By Daphne Chamberlain

If it took *THE ARCHER* eight years to reach 100 editions, how long will it take to reach 1,250? (Answer below*)

Thinking of years, which creatures can expect to see the most?

A tortoise in the British Museum is estimated to have died at about 180, while teenage turtles from Hawaii don't reach maturity until 50.

Clams, reaping the benefits of a reserved life, can go on till 150, but a convivial group of sea-anemones, held in Edinburgh for 80-90 years, all died suddenly together.

If you're a fish, it pays to be a cold one: water-wise, at least, probably because of slow early development. An octogenarian sturgeon has been found to be still growing.

It's a bit of a flutter for birds because, size for size, they can survive longer than mammals, but 60-75% of them never get beyond a few months.

Jimmy, a Liverpoolian Amazon parrot, is said to have lived to 104, but we're not sure if we can take his word for it. Parrots, cockatoos and condors can all survive till well past 50 though. An albatross has been known to get to 53, a goose to 49, and a couple of herring gulls to past 40.

Long life

After man, whales are the longest-lived mammals, with some of them nudging the 90 mark, and primates reaching 50 plus. The Asiatic elephant often has a good innings, while living up to its other reputation. One 78-year-old apparently never forgot a keeper she had last seen more than half a century before, hoisting him up in her trunk with "a trumpet screech of recognition".

Hippos Henry and Belinda lived together at London Zoo for more than 43 years, but the male tarantula spider departs at the still surprising age of eight or nine, leaving the female to entice her victims until her late twenties. With rats, however, the male lives longer.

Let's hear it for beetles (up to 45), bats (a 31-year-old recorded) and 27-year-old medicinal leeches. Even a segmented worm can soldier on till eight.

Generally, a creature lasts as long as its teeth. Let's make that true of *THE ARCHER*, too.

*Answer to question: - 100.

Acknowledgements to Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, Guinness Book of Animal Records, Flower's Duration of Life in Vertebrate Animals, and the London Zoo.



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