



### *How to enjoy "Hare and Hounds"*

**F**OR those who live in or near the open country, a paperchase—"hare and hounds" some folk call it—is one of the jolliest ways of spending three or four hours—that is, if you go to work in the right way.

To carry it on over six or seven miles and to make an actual race of the outing is very much the wrong way. The start off may be all right, but it won't be long before the slower runners find themselves left far behind; they have to run by themselves, they get tired and footsore, and they finish up fagged out and disagreeable. The outing hasn't done them a bit of good, and they have obtained no pleasure from it. Wrongly carried out, paperchasing becomes beastly hard and tiring work; it ceases to be a recreation.

For a paperchase to be a success, there ought to be open country to run over—trotting along through the dust of a hard road is no fun. The ground should be moderately dry under foot, also. To plod over a wet and heavy land, through thick, drenched grass; to get stuck up to the ankles—with the chance of losing a shoe in the mud—is anything but a joke. Though, if it should happen, there is sure to be a laugh at the expense of the

victim! Who hasn't grinned over the description of the wretched plight of Tadpole, in "Tom Brown's Schooldays," as he painfully struggled back at the end of the "big side" paperchase, fagged out, plastered with mud from head to foot, and with only one shoe, the other having been left in the sticky clay of a small brook?

The idea of a paperchase is the sending out in advance of a couple of "hares," who usually get about ten minutes "law," as it is called. The "hounds" follow the route the "hares" have taken, by means of the "scent" left behind. This "scent" is just bits of paper, torn into quite small pieces and carried by the hares in some convenient receptacle. An old pillow or bolster case, unfit for further service, makes a capital scent bag.

As the hares go along, they leave this scent behind them, not in a continuous trail, but as small handfuls scattered here and there alongside their trail, dropped by a gate or stile, or so disposed that the hounds—the pursuers—are able to see it without taking a great deal of trouble. To hide the scent now and again, so that the hounds lose the trail and can't recover it without a lot of searching



and waste of time, may be smart, but it isn't to be recommended.

The hares should always be a couple of good runners, stayers as well as fast; and as they get their ten minutes law, it is hardly "playing the game" for them to employ any tricks for deceiving the hounds in order to rob them entirely of any chance of overtaking the hares.

For all that, there are several dodges, perfectly legitimate, that the hares may make use of. It is not unfair for them to separate, say at a stile, each laying a separate trail, and to meet again some distance beyond. The laying of a false trail is also perfectly legitimate. This is accomplished by the hares separating, and the fleetest footed of the two taking a direction at an angle with that of his companion, laying a scent as he goes. This may continue for a couple of hundred yards or so, when the hare, suspending the dropping of any more scent, cuts across to rejoin his companion.

When the hounds come upon this side trail, they are bound to follow it, since they have no means of telling whether it is a true or false one, and the pack will divide. If the hare who continues along the true direction, after scattering a little scent beyond the stile, then leaves a bare space for ten yards or so, or perhaps tucks a handful of scent behind a clod of earth or bunch of grass or weed—where it is not to be noted except by the sharp-

eyed—the hounds are liable to be baffled and lose time.

Hastily assuming that the obvious trail they see is the one to follow, they continue along it until they are pulled up by its abrupt disappearance. Whereupon, there is a casting around to pick up the scent, ending with a return along the false trail back to the stile, where some eagle-eyed hound discovers the partly concealed scent they had all previously overlooked.

But the trick is not one for the hares to play too often in the course of a run.

It is always well for the hounds to have a leader, and he should *not* be the fastest runner. If he is, he is liable to take the pack along at a pace beyond the powers of the slowest; it should be a point of honour for the pack to keep as much together as possible—until, at least, the hares are sighted or the pack is within a short distance of the end of the run.

As a matter of fact, the first hound home is not at all certain to be the speediest runner. Running across country, thick grass, ploughed earth, up and down hill, is a very different proposition from running on a level track, which favours speed; cross-country running gives a chance to the more deliberate but long-staying runner, whose muscles are not so liable to be fatigued by the frequent changes in the going.

Paperchasing requires a different method of progression from ordinary running. The stride ought to be fairly short, and running on the toes is quite useless. The feet have to be lifted much higher than is usual; this gives "beans" to the front thigh muscles of those who are not used to the game.

There are a few tips novice paperchasers would do well to bear in mind. Leather-soled shoes, not rubber gym. shoes, should be worn. The soles of the latter are not substantial



To plod over wet and heavy land is anything but a joke.



enough; wetting does them no good; sometimes, even, the sole may get torn clean away. Cloth or flannel knickers are far better than running shorts. Boots are no good. If laced shoes are worn, they ought not to be tightly laced.

Old hands at paperchasing have a tip for crossing a ploughed field that gives a big advantage over runners who are not aware of it. Instead of trying to run from furrow to furrow (when going squarely or diagonally across the plough), or springing from the top of one furrow to the top of the next, they arrange the stride so that the foot alights on the nearer side of the ridge beyond; and so to the next and following ridges. By this means the feet are at more or less of a level all the time, and the calf and thigh muscles don't get tired quickly.

Going uphill, either drop to a walk or shorten the stride; and don't make the mistake of thinking that a bit of downhill is just the moment for increasing the stride. The toes will get sore if you do. Jumping over a succession of gates or fences becomes painfully tiring after it has been repeated many times; climbing may be slower, but it conserves strength.

In all sports it is really a bad thing to do too much. Naturally, it is very disheartening on, say, your first paperchase to find yourself being left behind simply because the leader of the pack isn't troubling to keep his men together. You may be a bit out of condition and perhaps for that reason seem to be the slowest runner and are getting left behind.

In such circumstances you are liable to



Climbing may be slower, but it conserves strength.

tuck your elbows in and strain yourself to overtake the others and keep up. Now that's really a very wrong thing to do, and you are liable to do yourself a lot of harm.

It is far better just to peg away at a speed that is well within your capacity, and let the others get on with it. Next time out you will have learned a bit, and you will be in better condition; after a chase or two you will find yourself well up at the front.

Most important of all: don't make the distance too long. Four miles as the length of a 'chase is ample. If a bit less, there will be no harm done. And, whether you're a hare or a hound, don't drink lashings of cold water immediately the run finishes. Cool down before you drink. Wash out the mouth half a dozen times with cold water, but don't swallow any.

And when dressed you'll be ready to enjoy a good tea!

THE END