

Oddities Dept.

Hash House Harriers get physical and juvenile

[Judd Handler](#)

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At 62 years old, Dave Cummings is the oldest active porn star. He lives in La Jolla and, in addition to starring in his self-produced series, Knee Pad Nymphos, he is a member of the Hash House Harriers, a "beer-drinking club with a running problem." Cummings is the only porn star in the H3; the remainder comprises witty perverts who are very serious about socializing and drinking beer and not so serious about running.

It's a Friday night, just minutes before the bugle calls the start of the run, which begins at the end of Sunset Cliffs and snakes through Point Loma. Only a handful of the 50 Hash members and 10 Hash virgins who show up bother to stretch before or after the six-mile run.

"Some folks do stretch, but they try to do it without drawing attention to themselves," says Cummings, "lest we tar and feather them."

Nearly every night of the week, there is a H3 run in San Diego County. A global group with more than 1,500 Hash clubs worldwide (the groups have nothing to do with hashish), H3 enjoys representation in almost every major city.

San Diego County has year-round running-friendly weather and is roughly the size of Connecticut. As a result, San Diego has one of the largest H3 contingencies, with 11 Hash subgroups. The Point Loma run was hosted by

the Larrikins, a group comprising everyday working stiffs with nicknames like Swallows It Whole and her husband, Rub My Buns. Swallows and Buns actually met through H3 and were wed this past August, at the end of a Hash run.

Hashers never call each other by their real names. Other colorful San Diego Hasher nicknames include Fairy Manilow, Foreskin Gump, Count My Pubes and Dances with Horse Shit.

“This is the most amazing collection of people,” says Swallows, pacing herself five minutes after the start of the run. “This is really a great way to break up the monotony of the work week.” Swallows is striving to be somewhere between an FRB (front-running bastard) and DFL (dead fucking last).

The Larrikins (larrikin in the dictionary means rowdy or noisy, ill-bred fellow) run throughout San Diego County. Other county subgroups include the North County Hashers, who were spotted on Halloween, running in full costume on the 101 Coast Highway. They looked like characters in a David Lynch or a Fellini movie.

Imagine a jogger dressed in an Arab sheik's caftan robe and 20 other costumed freaks, jockeying for shoulder position with ticked-off, over-privileged, crotch-hugging, pink-spandex-wearing bicyclists.

One Larrikin run went south of the border through Tijuana. “We had the police escorting us all around on the trail and stopping traffic on Revolution Avenue,” says Cummings. “It was like a SWAT team guarding us.” Cummings is in decent running shape and excellent beer-drinking shape, as evidenced during the post-run keg and food party.

The most notorious H3 run is the annual Red Dress Run, which has received much exposure on local news television. Strangely, other than that, the lunatic fringe that is the San Diego H3 has gotten little media attention. You

could say that H3, though it has many members in hundreds of cities, is an underground club.

Hash runs are predetermined by a small group of hares, who sprinkle flour and carve chalk into the sidewalks and asphalt to mark the course. The runners, also known as hounds, usually have no idea where the course will end. For that reason, they pay close attention to the markings, some of which are deliberately meant to throw off the "scent" of the hounds. Staying on course is no easy task, as the chalk markings sometimes blend in with leftover street-construction graffiti.

The modern incarnation of H3 dates back to 1938, when a British expatriate named Albert Stephen Ignatius Gispert formed a "paper-chase" running group. Instead of chalk and flour, they used paper to mark the trail. Gispert probably never would have guessed that a woman named Swallows It Whole would be a member of H3, much less a beer-swilling one at that.

Enough of the history lesson-back to the beer.

Beer is the Hashers' Gatorade and Wheaties. Halfway during the run, there are coolers selectively placed on the course for those alcoholics who need to refuel with beer in order to make it through the rest of the run. Tonight, the coolers are at the end of a residential driveway. It's a small miracle that during the Point Loma run, only one homeowner is overheard screaming, "Get the fuck off of my property!"

For those not into barfing while running, water is also available, there is never any pressure to consume copious quantities of beer. The runs, which are usually up to five miles, go surprisingly quickly, thanks to good conversation, the uncertainty of being on the right trail (Hashers listen for other hounds yelling the phrase "On-On," which signifies that they are indeed on the correct path), and the prospect of good beer at the end.

With only a few tenths of a mile left, the last chalk marking appears. It reads,

"Beer is near!" The night is just beginning. After a post-run smorgasbord of very tasty carbohydrate-laden food and a keg of beer (a moderate fee pays for food and drink), the true character of the Hashers emerges.

The end of the run culminates with "Down-Downs," an opportunity for Hashers to be unapologetically immature and condescending to each other. Awards are given to Hashers who make jackasses out of themselves; for example, stepping in dog excrement or dropping a cell phone in the urinal. Hashers are ostracized individually and are forced to chug a not-too-overwhelming portion of beer, while the collective of Hashers sings dirty ditties, such as, "There's a game called 20 toes / It's played all over town / the women play with 10 toes up, the men with 10 toes down / down, down, down." During the "down" part, the good-hearted hasher at this point chugs the beer.

Virgin Hashers are forced to get up in front of the full-fledged members. Tonight, there's only one female virgin Hasher, "Cindy." When she is introduced, all the male Hashers yell, "Hi Cindy." The female members scream, "Go Home Cunt!" Of course, it's all in jest. Cummings, who goes by the nickname, Captain Zero, further makes Cindy feel at home when he yells, "Show us your tits!"

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