Day 1. Red castle to Culdaff.

Brisk wind, but the sun got out now and again.

Walkers and 5+ hour runners set off at 7:45, the rest of us at 9.

Immediately I was at the back with a few others.

I had set my self a target of 4:30, which should have meant taking it easy.

The first half was undulating, more than I had expected and in reached it in 2:10.

Although we were told that there was only one drinks station, at half way, a number of marshalling points had bottled water and later on, canisters with taps, so you could fill your own. Some also had food, choccies and bananas, so all told it was a pretty well supplied event.

After half way came the first really big hill, right up to a telecoms tower. The walking began in earnest here.

This was also where I started to pass some of the early walkers, including a little Japanese looking lady, who had a JWultra bag and buff, so I had a bit of a chat with here, before resuming my chat with Simon, a young German running his first marathon.

It was starting to feel really hard now, and more walking was taking place on any thing resembling an incline.

The views were spectacular, as you might imagine from all the climbing.

It was similar in character to Clonakilty, but much much harder.

The last few miles were mostly down and flat and I passed a number of people, before finishing in a ridiculous 4:44.

Food was put on for us in a pub garden over the road before the bus turned up to takes us back to the start.

Nice food, but not for veggies. Soup was fine, then there was chicken with rice, and tuna sandwiches. I missed the chicken and rice out, but with hindsight should have had the rice in my soup.

I am assured that today is the hardest day, which may well turn out to be true but it is in my legs now and I am very tired.

I have opted for the early start tomorrow, which means leaving here about 6:45. Not ideal, but I don't really want to be stone last in the 9 am start. It was evident that there were sub 5 people in the slow start today.

Right then, now into town to find wifi so that I can send this.