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Butcher battles from Birmingham to Bank Holiday

Anyone who has ever gone a night without sleep will know the effects that sleep deprivation can have on the body and the mind, but imagine losing that sleep while also running 145 miles non-stop.

That's exactly what Weston Athletic Club's Sara Butcher did over the bank holiday weekend when she took part in the Grand Union Canal Race.

The race follows the canal path from Birmingham to London and runners must complete the course within 45 hours. Stops are allowed along the way for food, drink, rest and tending to blisters, but the rules dictate that participants cannot pause for more than 40 minutes at a time, so no time for sleeping.

The race is widely regarded as Britain's premier ultra marathon, and entry each year is strictly limited to 100 participants. At this year's event, nearly half of those who started the race dropped out along the way due to injury, exhaustion, or not making it to the checkpoints inside the time limits.

But not Sara. Despite incredible fatigue, blisters and pain, she battled on through checkpoint after checkpoint with the support of her family along the way. Having set-off from Birmingham on Saturday at 6am, she arrived at the finish line in Little Venice in London at 1.35am on Monday, 43 and a half hours later.

Commenting after the race Sara said: "I think my feet have disowned me. I promise I am never signing up to another crazy challenge like that again."

ENDS

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