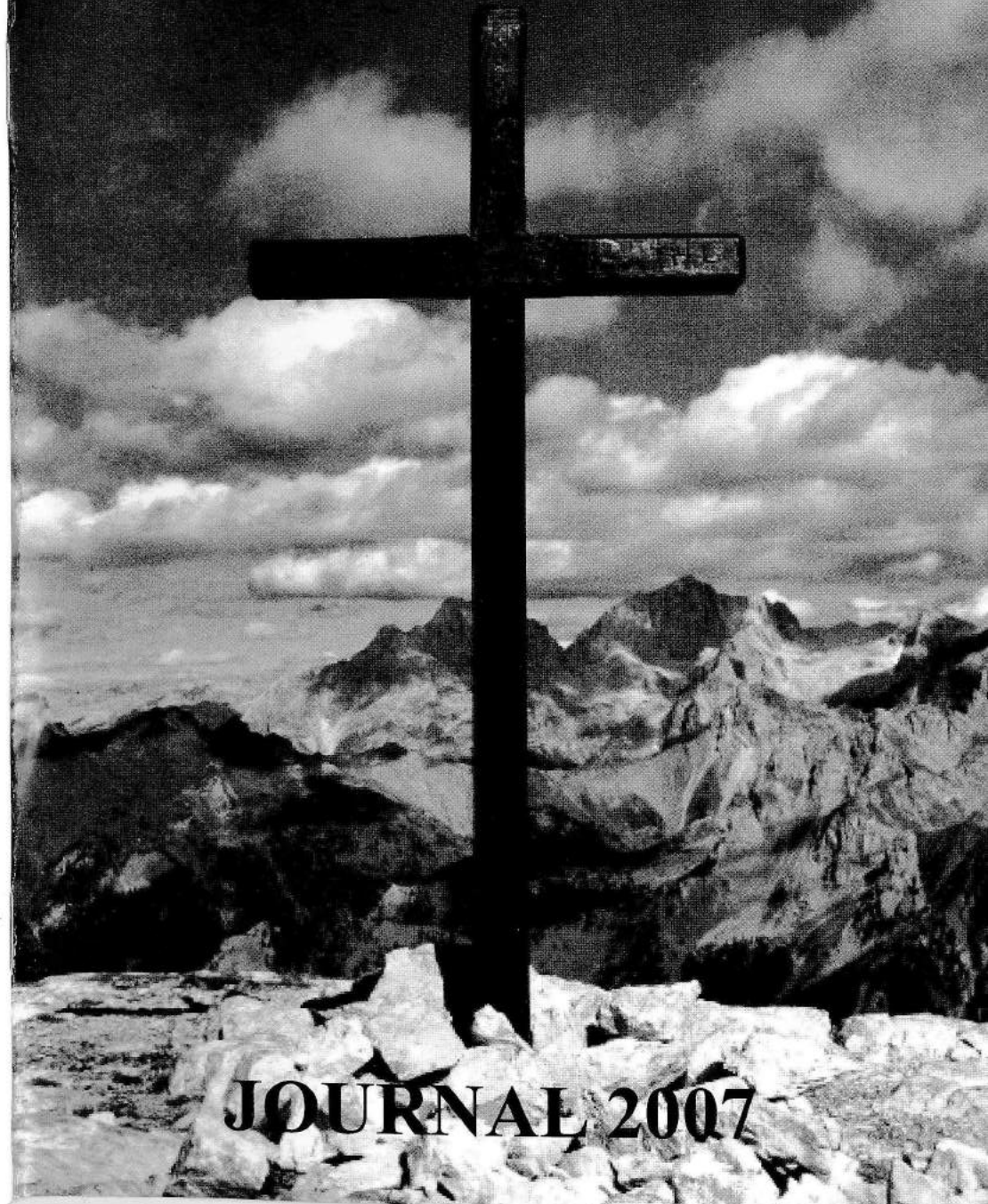


ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB



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JOURNAL 2007

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB



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Front cover:
Marmolada peaks in the Dolomites from Punta da Valacia (2637m)
by Mandy Goth

Introduction

It is gratifying to note that the journal is now benefiting from the influx of active new members willing to put pen to paper. These together with articles from older established members cover adventures world-wide and demonstrate the continuing development of the club in all outdoor activities. Long may this continue.

Ad Altiora

*Michael Pooler
Chairman*

ACHILLE RATTI MINI MOUNTAIN MARATHON

Phil Hodgson

THE grand occasion was the 50th anniversary of the Bishop's Scale Hut in Langdale. Most people arrived expecting a pleasant weekend of banter, barbecue and booze so the activity planned for the Saturday morning took some by surprise. Arthur's programme of events described it as a "fun orienteering event". Whether fighting one's way through head high bracken, in a torrential downpour, trying to find the cunningly hidden, small wooden posts detailed on a soggy map can be described as fun, is certainly open to question. But, the intrepid entrants who braved the elements did seem to enjoy themselves.

We'd planned the checkpoints for the three hour score event sat at home in front of Memory Map. However, in our meticulous plotting of positions and route choices we'd forgotten the effects of the wettest summer on record. On the Friday night as we put out the controls these were all too obvious. As I fought my way through acres of triffid-like bracken I wondered if I should add "machete" to tomorrow's list of compulsory kit. I cursed as I battled my way along the side of the intake wall above Grasmere. A distance that should have taken me 20 minutes took nearly an hour. And the shorts were a big mistake. My legs were flayed by the unforgiving fronds of ferocious fern. I'd expected to be out a couple of hours but it was nearly dark when I legged it down off Silver Howe and back along the road to the hut. Mandy had suffered similar problems over on Lingmoor.

As Saturday dawned the clag clung to the fells. Torrential overnight rain became a torrential morning downpour but, by 10 am, I was ready for the long queue of entries. I waited, computerised entry system at the ready, as one or two inquisitors popped their heads round the lounge door to see what was going on. Mandy wandered round the hut cajoling people. I extolled the virtues of short score events to anyone who'd listen, I explained how easy the course was, I lied about how the controls were in very obvious and visible places. By 11 am we finally had 11 illustrious competitors on their way. They had three hours to visit as many controls as possible with the objective of achieving the highest score. The further away the checkpoint, or the more devious its location, the higher the score. Every minute late over the allot-

ted three hours and you rapidly accumulate penalty points. And it's very easy to go into minus numbers. After a couple of hours the first runners started arriving back. Their tales of woe would fill several journals but I'll regale you with a few edited highlights.

- Leo still managed to find quite a few checkpoints despite losing his control card just after he'd set off.
- Dave H's temporary disorientation from the map took him, by a roundabout route, to the café in Chapel Stile.
- John and Ann strolled round enjoying themselves and bagging the nearer controls.
- Paul and Alex had an epic tussle with tussock and bracken.
- Andy came back looking like he'd done a triathlon in his clothes with the swimming as the last leg.
- Alan's battle was with his specs. He not only struggled to see where he was going but couldn't see his map.
- Dave M lost his compass and pen before he'd got 100 metres down the road. He came back in reciting girls' names. It was the only way he could remember the letters on the controls.
- The bracken obviously took its toll on Jean and Sheila who raced back in with only five seconds to spare.

Most of them produced a crumpled soggy bit of paper as evidence of the controls they'd visited. Some of these took a while to decipher! In some cases this waterlogged record was beyond redemption and they had to resort to remembering where they'd been. With everybody's map disintegrating under the relentless deluge it was a wonder that anyone got any points. But they did. I think everyone managed a category win of some kind and, as might be expected, Dave just clinched overall victory with a whopping 120 points. Next time I shall provide waterproof maps and control sheets!

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Xtreme Liloing

YOU'D have thought that they might have had enough exercise for one day. But no, "What are you doing after lunch?" Dave enquired.

"Nothing...why?" I responded, hesitantly.

"Well, the rivers up, and I've got a couple of wetsuits in the van..." I knew what was coming.



"I haven't brought a lilo", I replied, trying not to sound too relieved.

"Not a problem, there's a couple in the drying room, and Andy's up for it."

There was no way out without losing credibility as joint founder of the Krypton Challenge – an epic event involving cycling, running and ... liloing (I'm a crap swimmer).

So, here was a new challenge – extreme liloing, down a raging river. I'd seen the river that morning and raging was an understatement. Before I knew it we were wearing wetsuits, life jackets and helmets and driving down to the bridge before the New DG. Dave and Andy manhandled their big, padded, blue air mattresses out of the van. Both their lilos looked about a foot thick. They probably won't even get wet I thought as I clutched my two thin, plastic, Asda lilos, gaffa taped together to form a lurid pink and green sandwich. At least the rescuers will be able to see me. I looked over the parapet. "Have you seen it?" I gasped at the swirling torrent below. Dave and Andy still looked enthusiastic. We climbed the fence.

"What's that hissing noise?" Andy asked. I could hear it too?

"Damn", my second thoughts were becoming obvious, "I just caught one of my lilos on the barbed wire!" With half my intrepid craft as deflated as my enthusiasm I was just about to tell them to carry on without me when the buggers dived in and were off like a shot. "Oh, sod it" I sighed as I jumped in after them.

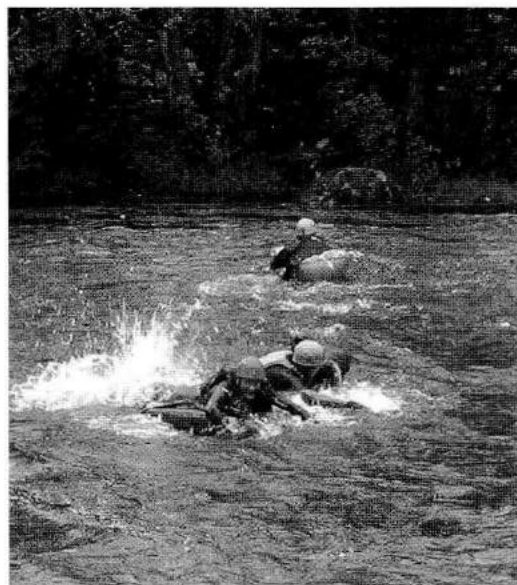
The initial shock at just how fast we were moving soon became elation. It floats! Lying atop (in my case half submerged) our inflatable vessels we went with the flow, so to speak, managing to avoid low branches and the occasional rock by exuberant paddling. Smooth stretches of fast water were interspersed with rapids of even faster water. The buffeting of waves occasionally unbalanced us, knocking us off the lilos, but we managed to scramble back on. Dave and Andy started getting cocky and tried to stand up Hawaii-5-O style but always ended up getting a ducking. Once in it was impossible to stand against the powerful flow. Occasionally it was impossible to stand up

because the river appeared to be bottomless. Thank goodness for lifejackets. We hammered down the river negotiating rapids and dodging protruding boulders with growing confidence.

"Where's Andy?" We looked behind to see him dangling from a low branch. We grabbed his



punctured lilo as it washed past. Undeterred he proceeded to follow us with nothing but his life jacket to keep him afloat. This didn't last long. After a few bruising encounters with submerged rocks we rescued him and he shared Dave's liferaft. "The next rapid's the best one" Dave shouted, gleefully. "After that you'd better get to the side and grab the bank, you wouldn't want to go over the weir!" The big rapids approached rapidly! As did several protruding rocks, cutting through the water towards us like sharks fins. We ducked and dived past them. With eyeballs at water level some of the standing waves looked outrageous but our flexible craft negotiated the rough water



with relative ease. We plunged over a small waterfall, popped out from a stopper, spun through a whirlpool and were spat out the other side. With the perils of the weir foremost in our minds we paddled madly for the safety of the bank. It was over so quickly! We stood outside the Wainwright, laughing and spluttering and looking forward to a well deserved pint. "This'll make rainy days more interesting" grinned Dave. "Which river's next?"

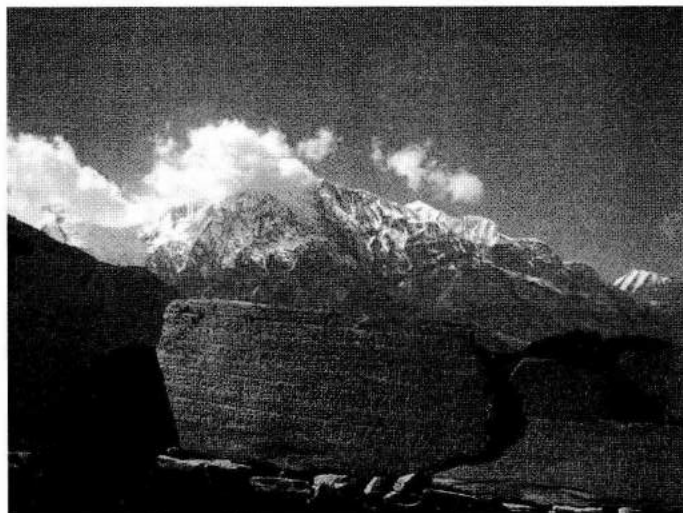
THE ANNAPURNA CIRCUIT: October 2006

Chris Farrell

NINE of us set out on what the Sunday Times dubbed "one of the world's great walks". We booked ahead with a small Nepalese company based in Katmandu for sherpas, porters and internal transport. Our Sirdar, Jambou, a buddy of one of the group, had been at my house in Nottingham a week or two before; it was good to meet up with him again in Katmandu. Two of us raised our average age a bit – Stan was 71 and Sylvia 69.

The circuit, which starts a long day's bus journey west of Katmandu, is essentially a 16 day walk heading north up the Marsyangdi valley and then south down the Kali Gandaki valley, the hard bit being an 18,000 foot pass (we started the walk at 2,000 feet) called the Thorung La in the middle. Like the mountains, the valleys are huge. It takes 6 days walking to reach Manang the district capital at the head of the valley; a further 4 days to get to and cross the pass; and 6 days to walk down. The Marsyangdi curves round the east side of the Annapurna massif with Manaslu (8,000 meters) directly ahead at the





start. The Kali Gandaki valley swings back round the west side of the massif between Annapurna itself and Dhaulagiri (both 8,000 meters) making it the deepest valley in the world.

Nights were spent in lodges built for the trekking trade (which brings in more income than farming), one of the Sherpas going on ahead to book. Cooking is by a small cast iron wood burning stove with a couple of hotplates – whatever the number to be catered for. You can get a hot shower sometimes but only if you are near the front of the queue and there has been enough sun to heat the solar panel! Basic rooms and beds and even more basic loos are the norm. Dave and Martin had their best night's sleep in what looked like a garden shed.

The walking is generally along excellent, though often very steep, paths which form the trade routes for the local population. Seeing at close hand the lives of the locals was as fascinating as the scenery. We had to keep reminding ourselves that the bottles of coke – and everything else – had been carried for days on someone's back (or at least on a pony's) despite costing only about 20 rupees more than in Katmandu. We competed to find the oldest Mars Bar for sale, which turned out to be about 18 months past the sell-by date!

Manang is one of many other-worldly places we passed through. It took us the best part of a week to walk there and we had a rest day there to acclimatise (but actually climbed a local hill for a superb view of the Gangapurna ice-fall which was ok as we were 'sleeping low' which is the important thing for acclimatisation). Manang sits in a harsh dry Tibetan landscape in a high valley, a collection of flat topped mediaeval buildings surrounded by huge snow-capped mountains. It is the capital of a Buddhist region and, typically, each entrance to the

town has long rows of bronze prayer wheels to be passed on the left hand side so that they can always be turned clockwise and the prayers sent off to heaven.

The inhabitants of Manang are Gurung and speak a local language; horses and archery are their obsessions. Not so long ago it was an independent kingdom and the town dwellers were given freedom to trade overseas; many now have connections with Hong Kong and Singapore. A volunteer medic (an Austrian who lives the rest of the year in the Solomon Islands) gives daily advice sessions on acute mountain sickness (AMS). Evidently, there are fewer problems with trekkers than with the locals who wrongly assume they are immune from altitude problems and consequently return too quickly from overseas trips. We went to the pictures in an old barn in Manang with a tiny audience and watched the worst film (*Death on Everest*) I've ever seen.

Three days later we tackled the high pass, Thorung La. It was a cold 4am start with head torches up steep scree slopes leading, after several hours, to the top where the oxygen is half that at sea level. At these heights you can get out of breath just climbing into your sleeping bag. We were still below the snow line (just) and 10,000 feet lower



than Everest's summit. It was a long day (over 10 hours) with a very long descent of over 6,000 feet to the next habitation. Poor old Bill could only stagger down with help to stay upright but our most senior members plodded on without fuss. That night it snowed which would have made things a lot more difficult on the pass.

We were now heading downhill – great! After several days in the wide, wind-swept upper reaches of the Kali Gandaki, the valley gradually narrowed to the steep-sided, verdant gorges we had experienced walking up. Rice terraces, which must have been built over hundreds if not thousands of years, climbed ever upwards; tiny villages were scattered at enormous heights above us. The walking was enlivened by religious Divali ceremonies as we moved from Buddhist to Hindu areas with gleeful choirs and bands at each village. At Totopani with its wonderful hot springs the party split up with the running group taking a slightly more challenging route to the finish. One last big uphill day took us out of the Kala Gandaki to Ghorepani and Poon Hill for a pre-dawn climb to view sunrise over the Annapurnas. It was then down to the final stop at BIRTHANTI at the foot of Machhapuchhre (Fish-tail).

The circuit ends at the pretty little tourist town of Pokhara where you can take a rowing boat on the lake; it's just like Keswick except for the awesome array of giant white peaks overlooking it – Dhaulagiri, Gangapurna, Machhapuchhre, Annapurna and many more. The restaurants are pretty good too.

The low points: lack of hygiene and an awful night in Manang (thought I had AMS!) following a dodgy pizza.

The high points: fantastic walking, wonderful mountain scenery, local culture and great weather – clear blue skies all the way.

Rating: 5 stars!

THE HILL RACE

Phil Hodgson

THERE was less than an hour to go before the start. I could already picture the scene. I cruised down the last steep hill before the games field having just passed the race favorite, his ageing knees affecting his descending prowess. I powered onto the field to tumultuous applause. The crowds, gathered to ogle the heavy sports of the Highland Games, cheered as I sprinted the last 100 metres, the first home of the hardy hillrunners who'd entered the Hill Race. And not just any old hill race; this was none other than the 2.5 mile Killin International Highland Games Hill Race.

Held on a Wednesday afternoon at the start of August every year, it attracts some of the most respected international 'heavies' of the Highland Games circuit. This year was no exception. There were competitors from the US, New Zealand, Poland, Australia, England and Scotland. One of them claimed to be the ex-World's Strongest Man. Their competition for the title of Games Champion involved throwing ridiculously large stones and hammers across the field and tossing cabers the like of which would give most telegraph poles an inferiority complex. These guys were by no means your stereotype athletes. Built like the proverbial brick outhouse their Hagrid like bodies bulged under 'traditional' highland shirts whose lurid graphics extolled the virtues of Famous Grouse and Irn Bru. Just one of their kilts would provide several pairs of tartan curtains for a large lounge window.

I anticipated the fiercely competitive hill race that would be an integral part of the grand occasion. I scanned the crowd for familiar faces, the fast boys, the stalwarts, the hard men of the hill running scene. I was perturbed by their absence. The spectators were predominantly your local highland games types, tourists and a smattering of larger than life Americans. I sauntered over to the small registration tent expecting the usual form filling, registration team and number issue. "You doin' the hill race?" the young girl asked.

"Yes", I replied, expanding my chest and tightening the abs.

"Just fill in your name and address then", she pointed at a clipboard on the table. I expected to see a long list of entrants but was amazed to see only four other names on the sheet.

"Where's the start?" I asked.

"I don't know," the girl replied, "I'm sure he'll announce it." Quarter

of an hour later I realized I'd forgotten to get a race number. Back at the tent the race organiser welcomed me to the games. I explained my lack of number.

"Don't worry laddie", he assured me, "we don't need numbers, I'll know all yer names." Amazed at his powers of recall I asked whether the route was flagged. "Och no, ye just run up that hill over there", he pointed, "just follow the path... and there's a wee laddie at the top who'll point you back down again."

"Are you expecting a good turn out?"

"Och aye, I think there'll be at least seven or eight of you."

At 2:45pm, with less than an hour to go, there were still only five of us entered and, hard to believe I know, I was the second youngest in the field. My opposition consisted of a 60 year old Scottish gentleman, a lithe looking lady in her fifties, another chap whose physique resembled that of Jos Naylor and a young 17 year old lad. My mind raced, so to speak. There's not many 60 year olds who can take me on a steep downhill...and that Jos lookalike must have dodgy knees...and I'm not going to be beaten by a lady no matter how fit she looks. And the young boy? A few too many McDonalds I surmised from his slightly pasty appearance. Maybe I could win?

It's strange how that weird mix of hope, competitive nature and downright delusion can combine to fire one's imagination. I was getting nervous. "I'd better change and warm up", I said to Mandy. Sporting my best Tod Harriers vest I walked towards the hill. It was then that I spotted another runner. The wiry chap with a thick mane of curly hair, wearing the dark blue vest of Ochil Hillrunners, bid me good day.

"I see it's a top class field", he commented.

"Is it?"

"Aye, Colin Donnelly and a good few of his friends from Lochaber are here." He pointed up the hill. Ambition plummeted as I spied half a dozen athletic types warming up, nonchalantly cruising up and down a gradient that I'd struggle to walk up. "And there's a couple of us here from Ochil." My hopes hit rock bottom when he added, "It's the best line up for years, there's two ex-Scottish champions, and two ex-British champions in the starting line-up." I was beginning to worry that I might be last. "Jos" was looking even leaner and meaner than the great man himself, the lady probably holds numerous hill running records and the young boy was, no doubt, the local college record

holder. I might just hold off the older gentleman, I hoped.

It was uplifting to see that the canny highlanders completely ignore any Scottish Athletics "how to start a hill race" rules and regulations. The race organiser called the 17 starters to the line. "Right lads and lasses, it's good to see so many runners here. I hope you all have a good race...you shouldn't get lost, just run up and down that hill over there. Now I've managed to leave my stopwatch at home so ye'll have to time yourselves....so, watches ready... OK" We waited... "Well, off you go then!...". We raced down the field to a loud cheer from the crowd. The first 100 metres was flat. The next mile and a quarter was ridiculously steep and the runners were soon strung out with me near the back. "Jos" had disappeared vertically upwards, the young boy was a dot in the distance and, with me reduced to walking, the old chap was well up the hill and still running. It was the toughest short climb I've done in years. My hands on knees persistence pulled a few places back by the summit, and I gained a few more on the mad hurtle back down, including, to my great relief, the oldest and youngest competitors. I entered the field to applause, albeit slightly less tumultuous than that in my daydream, but welcome nonetheless. I wasn't last (I was in fact 9th). and can at least now claim that I was once in the top 10 in an international hill race. Fame indeed.

We all received a goody bag as we finished. I'm now the proud owner of a Killin International Highland Games Hill Race T-shirt. I smiled as I recalled the race. The minimalist approach was a breath of fresh air. It must have been how most hill and fell races used to be before interference by athletics bodies and the like. I wonder if all the Highland Games races are like that. I'm going to have to find out. And you never know, I might be in with a chance if only two or three turn up!

ACHILLE RATTI LANGDALE JUNIOR MEET

15 - 16 September, 2007

THIS was a great meet; 15 kids, ages ranging from 2 to 14, turned up with families in tow. Saturday's weather was mild and dry so there was a group walk over Side Pike and Lingmoor Fell, returning to base via the pub (for some). Arthur's new barbeque was put to good use in the evening, with plenty of burgers, sausages, marshmallows, lemonade and a chocolate fondue! Oh, and a few beers too. Although Sunday morning turned out a little damp it seemed to clear up briefly just about when the traditional junior fell race took place in the Bishop's Scale back garden. Each competitor received a medal and some sweets, and class winners received trophies, all presented by club hero Danny Hope! The results and picture are below.

Keep an eye on the meets card / newsletter for details of next year's meet. It will be run along similar lines, but as we are a climbing club we hope to do a bit of cragging and other more adventurous stuff as well.

ARCC Annual Junior Fell Race 2007

Under 5s

1. Isabelle Kelly
2. Ruby Makin
3. James Kelly

Under 8s

1. Harri Tipping
2. Tom Makin

Under 10s

1. Jack Lloyd
2. Jack Gale

Over 12s

1. Jayme Gale
2. Zoe McArthur

Under 12s

1. Charlie Perry
2. Tim Tipping
3. Emma Lloyd
4. Freya Hardcastle
5. Emma Gale



QUEEN FOR A DAY, 8 - 9 June 2007

Tash Fellowes' Bob Graham Round

"IT'S your turn now," is what my husband Chris said to me when he'd successfully completed his Bob Graham Round in June 2006. Having watched him throw up at Dunmail, traipsed around leg 4 with him in low cloud and rain trying without success to convince him to eat anything but gels, I thought this was a bad idea. "Well," he replied, "you can either come with me to the BGR dinner next year and watch me get my certificate, or you can come with me and get one of your own." He had planted a seed in my mind and just waited for it to germinate, as he knew it would. It didn't take long for me to see the training commitment as an opportunity rather than an inconvenience and over the next 6 months I was out in the hills every week in all weathers, doing long races or just long days out with mates. It was wonderful; only once did I wish I was at home doing some ironing rather than lost in the mist looking for Rossett Pike. My endurance steadily improved so that my last big run, the Old County Tops race with Dave Makin of Achille Ratti, gave me a huge confidence boost and at last I felt ready for my attempt at the Bob Graham Round.

Thankfully, Chris and Dave sorted support and logistics for me; not two of my strong points. Finally 9 June approached and nervousness turned to excitement as the business of preparing gear and food took my mind off the size of the challenge. And then there we were, at the Moot Hall, taking photos before the off at midnight.

It was a relief to get going and I felt as if I was floating as I headed comfortably up towards Skiddaw with Chris, Phil Hodgson (navigating), John Thompson and Chris Preston. Passing through the car park at the fell foot some lads sitting in a very fragrant car asked us happily if perhaps it would be a better idea to go up in daylight. On this particular night it wouldn't have been; the view from the top of Skiddaw was lovely, lights twinkling down below us and Great Calva silhouetted in the distance. As we descended Hare Crag the air became deliciously cool and damp. Great Calva came and went quickly as we chatted, and then we met up with Chris P, who had skirted around the bottom of Skiddaw. Ascending Mungrisdale Common a fat yellow crescent moon hung just over the horizon and shortly after that the skylarks started chattering as it began to get light. Phil led an excellent line down Halls Fell and as we trotted towards Threlkeld and breakfast

we watched the light brighten over the valley bathed in cloud. We were 10 minutes ahead of schedule and I felt great.

Janet Makin and Debbie Campbell had tea and porridge ready; I forced it down ("I'll need it later..."), a quick change into a T shirt and then off again, this time with Jonny Whitaker (navigating), Jeff Lea, Anna Maria Crabtree and Chris P. The porridge was heavy in my stomach but I put my head down and plodded, not looking up again until we had conquered the steep part of the ascent up Clough Head. The view looking back to Threlkeld was magnificent, the remnants of the cloud inversion dissipating just before the sun came up. The conditions underfoot were bouncy and we made good progress over the Dodds, unavoidably massacring thousands of antler moth (according to the FRA forum) caterpillars which covered the ground. We were steadily gaining time and so took it easy over the rest of leg 2, not wanting to get to Dunmail too early (as had happened with Chris the previous year) or to risk exhaustion later on. Jeff did a brilliant job making sure I kept drinking; the temperature was rising and it looked like it might be a scorcher of a day.

After the descent from Dollywagon Pike, Anna Maria went on ahead to alert the troops, while Jonny, Jeff and I tackled Fairfield. Eyes down, steady pace and the summit soon appeared, although we'd left behind Jeff who, concentrating on me, had neglected himself and badly needed a rest and some refreshments. Luckily Dunmail wasn't too far away. On the ascent of Seat Sandal we picked up Chris P and then trotted down for a bacon butty and tea at Dunmail where there was a great party atmosphere to match the weather. The catering team (Janet Makin, Debbie Campbell, Kaz Howard) were awesome in their efficiency. We were 30 minutes up on the schedule.

"You were so jammy with the weather," said Mandy Goth later (she completed her Round in 2006 in less than ideal conditions). She was right. Although there was a hot sun, the breeze kept the temperature down. I kept a hat on to stop the glare and I'd pinned a wet flannel to it to keep the sun off my neck. I set off up Steel Fell with Alan Kenny (navigating), Andy Dalton, Phil Hodgson, Richard Leonard and Jane Smith. As with all the big climbs at the start of each leg, I kept my eyes down and focussed on a steady pace until the steep part was behind us.

With 20 years of supporting Bob Graham attempts under his belt, Alan was spot on with the pace and knew leg 3 like the back of his

hand. The first half is not my favourite, but it soon passed as he pointed out wheatears and teals while Phil and Richard discussed the merits of hydroponic cultivation and the price of tomatoes. It was good to catch up with folk I'd not seen for a while, and when I was tired it was good to listen in on the conversations and banter going on around me.

We stopped for a few minutes on Rossett Pike where Austin Guilfoyle, Pete McGonagle and Arthur Daniels were waiting with tasty snacks, coffee and soup (which was the business). There and on the ascent of Bowfell I noticed dozens of pretty little gold and green beetles, which became less charming when they sunk in their teeth (or whatever beetles have instead of teeth). By this time, clouds were wraithed around the Crinkles and we wondered if it was going to clag over. It didn't though; it just came and went, and kept the temperature down whilst not affecting visibility.

My spirits rose as we ascended Bowfell; we were approaching my favourite part of the route where there are rocks to skip across when it is dry, and it was. The concentration needed takes your mind off your legs so the miles passed very pleasantly. Paul Charnock and Dave Talbot had a rope ready on Broad Stand and in these conditions it was a pleasant scramble and not the nightmare slimy stream that Chris had had to deal with the previous year. The scree run off Scafell was fun and we arrived at Wasdale feeling very buoyant. It was getting difficult to eat but rice pudding (and of course tea) went down OK while Mick and Rhys tackled the unpleasant job of looking after my feet. All this attention really did make me feel like the queen.

Soon we started off up Yewbarrow with Rob Green (navigating), Dave and Sean Makin, Rhys Watkins, Mick Howard and Andy Brookfield. Eyes down, steady pace, we got to the summit 9 minutes up and agreed it would be a good idea to slow down a bit. I enjoyed the views as we ticked off Red Pike. There was plenty of banter to listen to, and scuffles going on as the lads vied to offload water and energy drinks. The lakes glinted and the hills were in shades of grey in all directions. I wished I had a camera with me.

Around Scoat Fell and Pillar we came across streams of runners; it was the Ennerdale race. Some looked pretty wasted and I thought that's the difference that racing makes. By the time we got to Steeple everything tasted the same and it wasn't a good taste. While Dave and I nipped over to Steeple the lads set up a picnic so that I could

choose something to eat. What a huge choice, from pies and butties to choc bars and fruit. I chose banana and grapes, hoping that the juicy grapes would help it go down.

A great little trod avoided a lot of the rocky path between Pillar and Black Sail Pass, and the route up the nose of Kirkfell was enjoyable, again the climb taking my mind off my tiring legs. I was starting to feel pretty weary now. At every summit I asked Dave how we were doing. "Don't worry, we're still well up," he would say vaguely. I took this to mean that we were slowly eroding into the buffer of time that we had previously gained. I wanted to preserve it so I dug in.

I've never been phased by Great Gable but today it looked a bit bigger than usual. Fortunately Martin Kirkman was waiting at its foot with tinned peaches. They could have been tinned anything and I can't say I enjoyed them, but they were just right to set me up for the ascent. Eyes down, steady away and eventually the summit appeared. After that, the rest of the ridge was fine and we descended happily to Honister.

Arriving at Honister, Chris said "What hills did you miss out on that leg?!" It was only then that I realised that we had gained another 38 minutes. Despite this good news I felt pretty glum, my chin kept wobbling of its own accord and I really, really didn't want to eat anything. "Pull yourself together and get your blood sugar back up," I thought and forced down some soup and parts of a crisp butty (good idea Kaz!).

The atmosphere was like a party going up Dalehead with Dave, Rhys, Mick, Andy, Chris P, Mandy Goth, Debbie Campbell, Arthur Daniels and John Thompson (preparing for his own attempt the following weekend). The ascent passed quickly carried by the happy chatter going on around. I made sure to absorb the view from the top – my day was nearly over and I didn't want to miss anything.

I had noticed my feet getting a bit sore over Brandreth and now, as we picked up the pace on the descent off Dalehead, I could feel blisters coming up nicely on the balls of my feet. I remembered a TV programme I'd seen about military training where one of the officers had said something about pain being temporary so I concentrated on that. Hindscarth came and went, and I nibbled on a piece of mint cake on the last climb up Robinson. And then there we were, summit number 42. What a feeling, and what a view, thunderheads in the distance, evening sunshine over us. Arthur suggested carrying on to Causey

Pike. No thanks. Someone said it was time to walk now and enjoy the remainder of the day, but it was actually time to disengage the brain and have some fun on the final descent off Robinson.

At the gate we met Chris, our children Emma and Jack, and Harvey my father-in-law who ran down the road with us to Newlands Church where I changed into road shoes. The road section was hard because, not having recce'd it, I didn't know where I was or what to expect and I don't enjoy road running at the best of times. However, having mates all around kept me going and the flies helped to keep my blood sugar up.

It was the biggest buzz running, or rather floating, up Keswick High Street to touch the Moot Hall 21 hours and 5 minutes after my last visit; there was noise all around and then I had FINISHED. My grin got wider and wider, I wish I could have that feeling bottled. We celebrated with champagne and then later in Langdale with plenty of beer at the New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel. I didn't want it to end.

It was an unforgettable day, made so by a brilliant support team and perfect weather. Thanks very much to everyone who helped me and especially to Chris for being such a saint, I owe you all!



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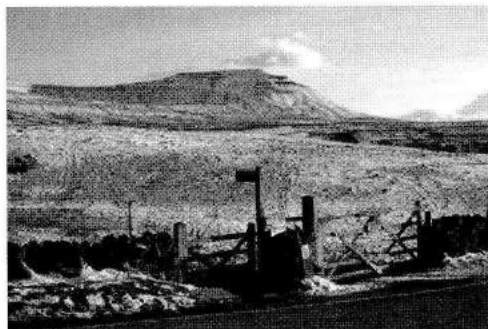
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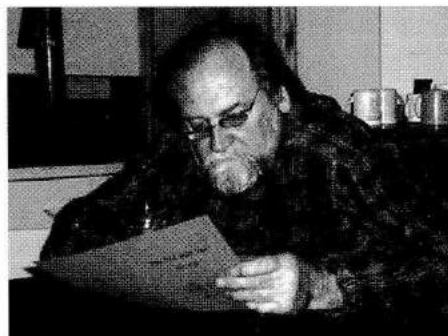


ANNUAL DALES WEEKENDS

Some reminders of the enjoyable weekends which have been held over the last few years in the Yorkshire Dales



Ingleborough – March 2006



Barry studies the Hill Inn menu – 2006



Chapel-le-Dale meet – 2006



Trow Gill – 2007



Ribble Head – 2006



Chapel-le-Dale Church



Chapel-le-Dale meet – 2006



Whernside summit – 2006



Halton Gill meet – February 2005

DISTANT MEMORIES

Brian Chalmers

JUDGING from the pages of the ARCC Journal it is clear that distance, *per se*, has its attraction in a similar way to altitude, technical difficulty or exposure. However, while the gift of agility is more often granted to the young, endurance comes with maturity. In my own case, after a few hill walks and rock scrambles in 1957/58, I served a belated apprenticeship in rock climbing with the University of Bristol Mountaineering Club when I was a postgraduate student. That was mainly in Avon Gorge and North Wales and included two trips to the Alps. One of our more unusual achievements was driving up the track to Llyn Llydaw in my 3-gear Ford Popular with a party of four to climb on Lliwedd. Subsequently, lack of practice naturally reduced my technical ability and my interests turned to more general mountaineering. Thus started my interest in distance events of various types. As the

following account shows, I tried a lot of things but excelled at none.

The first long walk which caught my attention was the fourteen peaks of the Welsh 3000s but the first solo attempt failed miserably, lost in cloud on a spur of the Carneddys and exiting down to Bethesda. That was the only time I asked directions from a sheep. A later, better-organised effort, from North to South, was successful in just over twelve hours with a group from 'The Mountain Club' based in Stafford. We ran down from Crib Goch to our camp which had already been prepared near Llyn Llydaw. I didn't even get cramp that night.

Throughout the 1960s I



Leader at the crux of 'Main Wall' on Cynr Las in North Wales, 1962



The Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gilleann, Skye, 1966

made frequent visits to the Scottish hills with my regular (now long lost) climbing companion from Manchester University. We became familiar with various sections of the Cuillins on Skye, including one memorable day when we ascended through thick cloud to emerge onto sunlit black peaks above a table of white cloud. In 1968 we set out to traverse the complete ridge, including its seventeen Munros. After placing a base camp near the Sligachan Hotel, we walked the length of Glen Sligachan to Loch Scavaig from where we ascended and then traversed the southerly peaks on the ridge before descending slightly to the lochan in Coir 'a Ghrunnda where we bivouaced for the night. On the next day the seemingly endless succession of peaks followed in perfect weather conditions, using the rope on a few pitches and with finger ends reddened raw by the rough rock. However, as we commenced our descent from Sgurr nan Gilleann, gathering clouds turned into heavy rain as night fell. We ploughed straight across the sodden moor towards the shining light of the Sligachan Hotel, arriving there just before the 10 pm closing time. As I recall, we ordered four pints of beer which the two of us drank as we stood in the growing pools of water around our feet.

I had never run anywhere since my annual school cross-country race but in 1968 I joined the 'Cheshire Tally Ho Hare and Hounds

Club', following the suggestion of Jim Kilduff who was formerly a member of both that club and ARCC. The 'Tally Ho' was founded in 1872 and is the second oldest running club in UK. Their regular programme comprises fortnightly paper chases of about 8 miles in open country. The club is generally non-competitive but, by a combination of effort and cunning, I did manage to get my name inscribed on both their handicap race trophies! Two special events were organised to mark the centenary season 1971-72. The first was a '10x10' run in which ten packs of runners simultaneously ran different 10-mile routes all converging onto what was then called the Church Hotel at Edale, so completing 100 miles in the afternoon. For the second event, their annual 'point-to-point' run was extended to cover the full marathon distance of 26 miles taking in Errwood, the Cat and Fiddle and the Roaches, and having two tea breaks instead of the usual one. This was my first experience of running that distance.

In the early 1970s there was an upsurge of interest in the Pennine Way of 280 miles and I was moved to attempt it in both 1974 and 1975. The first effort was not satisfactory, suffering from too heavy camping gear, hunger and then dehydration in the final section of over 30 miles in the Cheviots. Throughout the walk I had shared all rations equally with my companion who was about half my size. The principles which I adopted for my second (solo) attempt were: never to leave the route for food or accommodation to minimise distance and loss of altitude; to eat at every opportunity offered by civilisation to reduce the load to be carried; and to carry a minimum weight of gear, including just a polythene sheet for use on those occasions when the shelter of a convenient field barn, overhang or tree could not be found. I was quite satisfied to complete the route in nine days, generally walking three 10-mile sessions each day, in morning, afternoon and evening.

The 1980s saw the boom in marathon road races, which I joined. In sixteen completed races I managed to progressively reduce my time by about 30 minutes but still failed by four minutes to reach my sub-3 hour target. I did, however, finish third in the 'Over 50' age group in the 1985 Daffodil Marathon in Stockport. By the time that I had learned how to train properly, with an appropriate combination of speed and distance, I had begun to suffer recurrent muscle injuries so further improvement was unattainable.

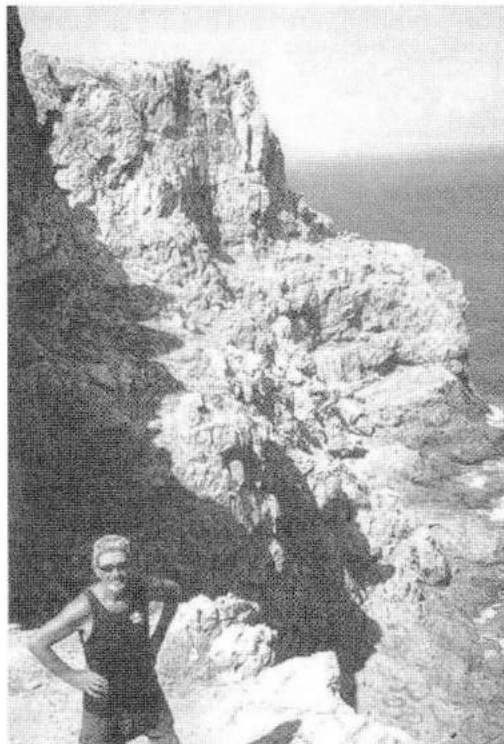
In the same period, my attention was diverted to the Bullock Smithy Hike, so called after the ancient name of what is now Hazel Grove.

This is a 56-mile hill route in rough country around the Peak District and, starting at midday on the Saturday at the end of first week in September, it inevitably involves night time navigation. See www.bullocksmithy.com for more details. The total height gained and lost in the circuit is over 7000 feet. Once again my first attempt was a failure, owing to inadequate distance training, but in the following year I managed to finish in 12th position, my best in any event. Local knowledge was a great help in optimising the route between checkpoints.

Concurrently with the marathon races I became aware that there was a full range of fell races to be run. After struggling with the pace in short and medium length races, I became attracted to the longer events. I did, however, finish ahead of Chris Brasher in a Fairfield race and, on another occasion, I had pleasant surprise when my name was called as the winner of the 'Over 45' age group in a local short fell race. Over the next five years, and after a few poor performances including going badly off-route in the peat groughs on Bleaklow, I managed to dip under four hours for both the 'Marsden to Edale' and the 'Edale Sky-line' races. In the second of my two 'Three Peaks' races I was pleased to reduce my time by about thirty minutes. As I limped tenderly into the office on Monday morning one of my non-athletic colleagues said



Looking northwards from the summit of Mont Blanc, 1994



Near Falasarna in Western Crete, 2002

"I see you have been abusing yourself again". A more respected colleague said "Why can't you learn to grow old more gracefully". I was always stronger uphill than downhill or on the flat, my inadequate leg speed being possibly explained by the fact that a long pendulum has a low natural frequency. It also seemed that two attempts at any long event seemed to be necessary for me, the first being for familiarisation with the route and to learn how to pace it.

The distance of 56 miles occurred again in the Comrades Marathon in South Africa. This annual road race was initiated in 1921 and was named in honour of comrades

from the First World War. Visit www.comrades.com for more details. It takes place annually, in alternate directions in successive years, between Pietermaritzburg and Durban. The highest point on the route stands at 650m above sea level, the 'up' run being generally regarded as more tiring while the 'down' run is more painful. In 1984, 8513 runners started at 5.30 am from Pietermaritzburg, with the temperature varying from zero at the start to tropical down on the coast at Durban. Features of the race are that the first ten finishers are awarded gold medals, those under 7hr 30min get silver medals, then the next group have bronze medals, while those over 11 hours get absolutely nothing. The excitement is maintained as, at each of these cutoffs, the president stands on the finish line with his back to the stream of runners and fires his gun to determine who gets what. I failed by 47 minutes to get the silver medal I had aimed for and I didn't get a second chance.

It was as this running career neared its end that I made the simple

calculation that anyone who runs about forty miles per week over a period of, say, 15 years will have run the equivalent of the circumference of the earth! It had become clear that I had slowed down so a return to mountaineering was called for. Between 1990 and 1994 I had five good summer trips to the Alps and I joined ARCC in 1994. An intermittent Munros project, which lasted from 1961 till 1995, is in abeyance, after 131 peaks. My notebook reminds me of an earlier solo run of the South Kintail Ridge, with its seven Munros, in under five hours.

Then came payback time! Between 1998 and 2005 I had four joint replacements, two hips and two knees. Now all are working well and, after 50 years in the hills, the mileage is building up again. The Taygetos range in the Peloponnese looks interesting and then there is the E4 footpath which runs the full length of Crete –



Beinn Tarsuinn from upper screes on Buadh Stac Mor

decent of the south ridge brought the col where a traverse path contoured around the north west face of Meall Garbh. Beinn Tarsuinn, the next peak, a faint grey shadow in the drifting grey cloud. The lone climber had started to descend into a corrie at the head of Gleann na Muice. We had now donned every bit of gear in our sacks hats gloves, the lot, some would say, just a typical summer's day out on the Scottish Hills. Nobody said anything but seeing the lone climber descend gave us a boost, who says not anything is competitive? The traverse path, one of the few encountered all day soon brought us to Bealach Odhar below small crags streaming with water. A food stop, even the sandwiches were now soggy. The weather had really set in and a decision was made to do number four, Beinn Tarsuinn, then look at the weather and make a decision on continuing or not.

Climbing up into thicker cloud, we stayed close to the edge of the north cliffs of Tarsuinn. We were still moving well keeping up a good pace as we climbed up the rocky scree path. Suddenly two figures loomed in the mist. Two guys had bivouaced under the boulder at the col between A`Mhaighdean and Ruadh Stac Mor. The older one of the two, hidden inside a huge yellow anorak hood also told us how he had bought a new stove for the trip, but had brought along the wrong type of fuel canister. Therefore, they had been eating cold food for the last day and were now down to the last sandwich. They were descending into Gleann na Muice. For some strange reason our flagging spirits lifted and determination, rather than doubt, set in to complete our

trek. Beinn Tarsuinn's summit cairn loomed in the mist, we had now completed four. The North West ridge provides the decent and as the cloud lifted and rain ceased we were treated to tremendous views down to Lochan Fada and across to Slioch.

A weak watery sun broke through the cloud as we sped down the rocky ridge to Pollan na Muice, for, as our friend in the yellow hood described, "a slog across the bog". The col between Beinn Tarsuinn and A`Mhaighdean is a mixture of pools of dark water, sphagnum patches and deep drainage channels through the peat. The sun was out and although legs were beginning to tire we made good time across the bog to the start of the climb to the summit of A`Mhaighdean. The whole route to the summit was visible and comprised of three sections, a lower rocky section, a middle grassy slope and an upper grassy slope with small crags distantly visible at the summit. Sticking to our policy of eating before each climb the last of the sandwiches were quickly consumed. The first section was soon past, the middle grassy section proved unending but the sight of a red deer hind, and her foal grazing lifted our spirits on the last section. The mist returned as the summit approached but on reaching the cairn the clag rolled away revealing the fantastic landscape over to Fionn Loch and the myriad of lochans to the west with the sea beyond. The views did not last for long before thick mist returned and a compass bearing was required



View WNW from A`Mhaighdean, Dubh Loch in the foreground



View from NW on Ruadh Stac Mor, Fuar Loch Mor in the foreground

to descend to the northeast. Going too far to the northeast led to the steep northeast ridge, which had no sign of human passage. Rereading the description in the guide and retracing our steps to the grassy slopes on the north east, before the north summit enabled us to locate a good path descending to the col between A`Mhaighdean and Ruadh Stac Mor.

The mist had become dense with visibility down to ten meters. Losing the track a bearing northeast was followed to the last Munro. The terrain in the col comprises of small crags and hillocks, difficult to navigate in thick clag, but we found the bivouac boulder and the path to Ruadh Stac Mor. The sandstone cliffs skirted the mountain seemingly forming an impenetrable barrier. The faint path, zig zagging up the screes, eluded us and we mistakenly began to descend to Fuar Loch Mor. Retracing our steps once more we returned to the high point of the path as it left the col. A faint scrape in the steep scree held the faint possibility of a path but seemed only to lead up to the wet sandstone crags. The scrape proved to be the path but the line of the path was unclear. Following the trods lead up to two small buttresses, up which we scrambled and then traversed into a steep short gully, which opened out onto the upper screes. This path might be more

obvious in clear weather but proved tricky to find in clag. Good friction on the sandstone scree boulders quickly lead to the summit where the wind started to blow the mist away and the evening sun revealed marvellous views in every direction. The last summit, we had completed the Big Six and were elated, they had been much bigger than we had thought, the day had been certainly one of the best days out on the hill that we had experienced. I peeled an orange and we had three segments each. Gill declared that it was the best tasting orange that she had ever tasted and would ever taste.

The decent follows the north west ridge, which is initially steep and rocky, to a rounded shoulder from which scree and grass can be descended to the twin lochans of Lochan a' Bhhra'ghad. A faint track bisects the lochans and rough going is encountered following the stream from the lochans to a point where the stream turns through ninety degrees to flow east. From that point, a tough slog up uphill bog leads to the stalkers path and five kilometres back to Shenavall. Progress slowed along the path the setting sun played curious tricks highlighting boulders on the hillside and throwing shadows from them creating a peripheral vision sense of movement, but the boulders were not moving we were just very tired. By nine thirty, we had reached our camp by the Sealga. The sun had just set, the wind had dropped and the midge was out. Thirteen and half hours were spent out on the hill



Sunset on Strath Na Sealga

in traversing the Big Six. After soup and tea, we squashed into the midge-infested tent. The temperature has risen and the tent was stifling and claustrophobic. I retreated to open air to find a cool breeze blowing down the Strath Sealga grey clouds wreathed the summits of the Big Six and all that could be heard was the river flowing and rustle of the cool breeze in the ancient alders.

The following morning we walked out, crossing the Abhainn Srath na Sealga, then following a path upstream to Achneigie. In this beautiful valley are the ruins of at least four crofts, the tenants evicted during the Highland clearances. We talked about the lives that the crofters must have led, certainly a hard life so remote from other habitation, but in such impressive scenery. One hour later after a slog up the hill gained the track back to the Corrie Hallie car park

INFORMATION

Start/finish: Corrie Hallie car park (GR: NG115851) for walk in. Shenavall

Bothy for Big Six (GR: NG066810)

Distance: 26km. Acent: 2,226m

Time: Walk in 3 hours. The Big Six 13-14 hours.

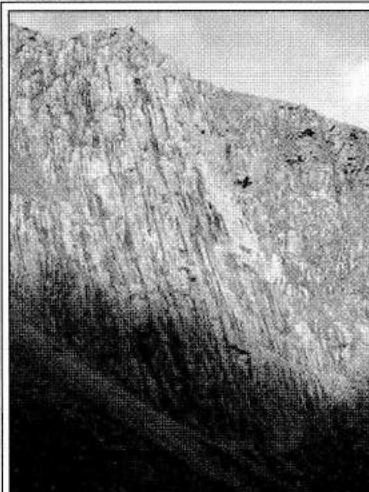
Terrain: Walk in good paths and tracks. The Big Six, few paths, bog and general rough ground. Some scrambling n Ruadh Stac Mor.

Map; Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger sheet 19, Gairloch and Ulapool.

Guidbook: The Munros SMC.

Accommodation: Camp site at Babcalon the A832; The Dundonnell Hotel, Dundonnell; B&B and Bunkhouse at the Aultguish Inn on the A832.





BOWFELL BUTTRESS REVISITED

**John Braybrook,
September 2007**

WITH a glow of satisfaction and self-assurance I coiled a rope, lashed it secure and then proceeded with the other 150ft rope.

Sydney DeCruz and myself had just finished climbing Tophet Wall, the 345ft climb on Great Gable, on a perfect Saturday afternoon in June 1985.

That morning we had climbed Bowfell Buttress, a 350ft route at the head of the Langdale Valley.

From the summit of Bowfell we made our way over the tops to Gable.

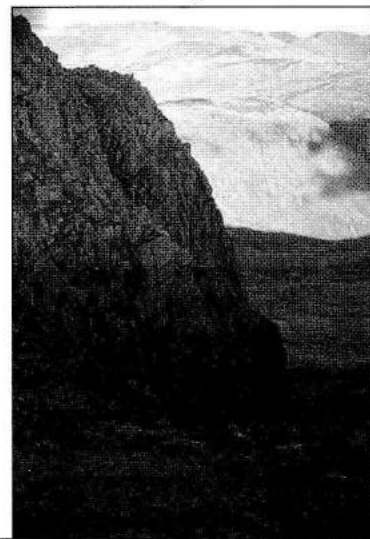
Wistfulness entered my mind as I recollect that pleasurable mountaineering day.

We had climbed Bowfell in two other years, once on the way to Scafell and again to Gable to climb.

These expeditions were in preparation for the Alpine seasons.

The first time I climbed Bowfell Buttress was in my youth in 1971 when I was 27. In the 1980s I climbed this route with Austin Guilfoyle.

A chapter in "Wayfarers All", a book I am writing, has a chapter entitled "Bowfell Buttress Revisited"



PIC DU GLACIER BLANC

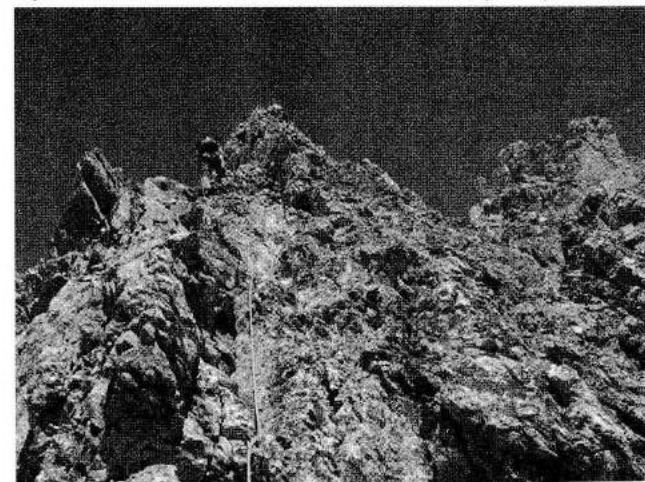
Phil Hodgson

YOU know how it feels. You've read the guidebook and the route sounds great. The topo shows lots of grade III with a nice IV to start; not too technical for a big day out on Alpine rock. That heady combination of excitement and nervousness builds inside, as you approach the ridge. But now, stood at the bottom, you scratch your head. Where's the start of the route?

It hadn't been particularly easy getting to the ridge in the first place. It's a long trudge up the path past the Glacier Blanc Hut and onto the glacier itself. Then, 'Traverse easy snow slopes to the base of the ridge' the guidebook advises. Easy snow! The tallus filled corrie ahead of us was completely bare. Global warming has a lot to answer for. It's not just the glaciers that are receding; much of the snow is disappearing too. The guidebooks are dating fast. Routes that should be easy plods up crisp neve are becoming loose scrabbles up shale and scree.

We tottered across moraine and jumbled blocks before scrambling up a rocky stream bed. "That looks like our ridge," Jim pointed. It resembled a roughly hewn scimitar carved from the mountains. Pulses raced as we anticipated the buzz to come. Before long the prow of the SE Ridge of the Pic Du Glacier Blanc reared above us. "Fantastic," we grinned. Now it was just a matter of getting onto the crest. "At the toe of the ridge keep the crag on your left," I read to Jim. "The initial chimney is 20m further up" We followed the instructions, eyeing up the steep cliff. "That looks possible," I said unconvinced, pointing at a groove that might, by someone with an overactive imagination, be mistaken for a chimney.

"What about this?," Jim shouted down. I scurried up to find



him, book in hand, gazing at a vertical cleft mentally comparing the vague description with the very real rock feature in front of us. "I can't see anything else that looks like a chimney," I commented as I weighed up the line, "It looks bloody steep."

"There's supposed to be a bolt half way up," Jim said, "in a recess." We craned our necks, looking for the telltale glint of metal; nothing. "I'll give it a go," I shrugged in optimistic fashion noting that the initial moves looked relatively easy. How deceptive that initial assessment of a route can be. I yo yo'd up and down the first two metres half a dozen times but an awkward bulge persistently eroded my balance. The lack of protection had a similar affect on my confidence and I backed off. "Your turn," I offered, knowing that Jim's climbing skills far surpassed mine.

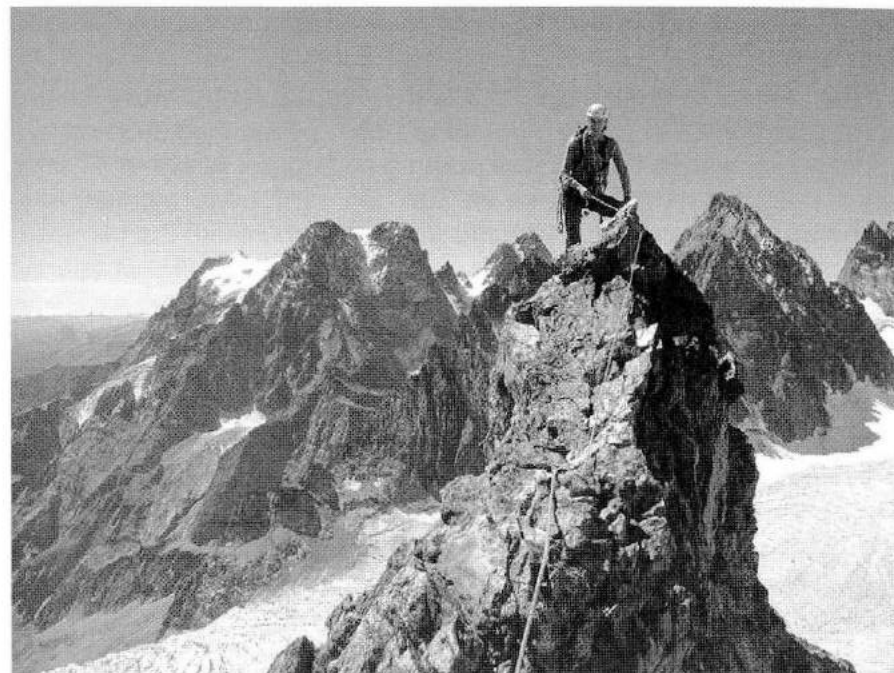
His balletic ascent looked effortless, the bulge barely noticed but, after four metres, he stopped, pondering the next move. A few minutes of tentative up and downing followed as he checked holds and looked for gear before committing himself and sidling upwards into the shaded recesses of the upper chimney. Muffled grunts accompanied his wriggling progress up the narrows before he disappeared from view. Only the trailing rope belied his passage. His triumphant shout "I'm safe," signaled his success. I made ready to climb, thankful for the top rope.

"What's it like," I called up.

"Tight."

I like tight, I encouraged myself, reminding myself of previous caving adventures, it feels less exposed. However, tight with a rucksack made for a strenuous pitch. Heaving myself out of the cleft I flopped down, breathless, next to Jim. He swept his arm at the horizon, "What a view." The pristine white fan of the North face of the Barre Des Ecrins, dominated the upper Glacier Blanc. The sun, now high enough to dispel the shadows lurking in the valleys, dazzled us as we picked out the other alpine giants of the Ecrins Massif. The Glacier Blanc swept below us, a ringed serpent, lord of the valleys.

We surveyed the serrated ridge above. "Stick close to the crest," the guidebook advised. We took coils and moved together. The rock was coarse and warm to the touch and we relaxed as we settled into a rhythm. This was what we were here for. The walk in had been worth it. We followed easy grooves on either side of the crest, occasionally



teetering along the knife edge with our rope snaking between small pinnacles. Both sides dropped away steeply but the abundance of natural spikes reduced the need for belays. The approach to the first abseil proved more intimidating. I edged my way down an airy, angled slab to an abundance of tat festooning a rock that jutted out into space. I peered over the edge. "It's a long way down," I called to Jim, "I hope this rope is long enough." Adding my own loop to the tat as back up, and having tied a knot in the ends of the rope just in case, I eased over the lip and spiralled down into the void. It was only 20m down to the narrow col between gendarmes but the precipitous drops either side of the gap magnified the exposure. Then, the usual bated breath as you pull on one end of the rope praying it doesn't jam. It runs freely and you watch the other end snake upwards until it comes slithering down under its own weight.

A short pitch on the other side led to easy scrambling and an abseil into a second notch. Ahead the ridge bared its teeth. An overhanging tower barred our way and the ridge beyond was a lizard's back. Turning the tower on the left we tiptoed across a narrow shelf of loose boulders above a face that plunged straight down to the distant gla-

cier. The wall ahead was steep. I was relieved to hear Jim say, "I'll lead this."

Now Jim likes to take his time and weigh up every move before committing to it. I'm a little more impetuous. By the time Jim was ensconced on a safe belay I was starting to fidget. His shout, "Climb when ready," seemed to take an age. So, up I went, monkey like, grabbing large handholds with much more enthusiasm than finesse. "Seems pretty straight forward," I was thinking when, almost silently, the flake I was pulling on detached itself and I found myself airborne. It's strange how a fall of just a few feet can take on a surreal slow motion feel. I jolted to a halt, spinning in space. Looking straight down at the distant glacier I was grateful for the rope and Jim's cautiousness. I reached out and grasped at another flake. This one remained attached as I swung on it and pulled myself back onto a thin stance to regain my composure before tiptoeing up the wall to Jim. The rest of the climb was a romp up corners and grooves, typical easy Alpine rock. A final delicate traverse along a knife edge arête and we were on the summit. We stood, elated, by the summit cairn taking in the stunning 360 degree panorama. "Top route that," I grinned, glad to be in one piece, "I owe you a beer!"

"A little loose in one or two places," Jim laughed, "but definitely worth the effort."

It had been a great day out. The big walk in, route-finding, lack of snow, poorly defined routes, awesome views, glaciers, warm rock, exposure, loose flakes, abseiling, the thrill of the unknown... they're all part of the typical Alpine adventure.

You know how it feels!