

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

September 1969

Bulletin 33

Side 1

Dear Member,

I hope that you have been able to take full advantage of the summer's glorious weather. It is so easy under such conditions to forget that our hills can still be very dangerous places - the tragic accident to the Cockermouth Rescue Team showing that fine weather brings its own hazards. I don't want to open this newsletter on too gloomy a note, so hoping that I've given you food for thought, I'll just wish everybody a happy - and safe - summer holiday and remind everybody that contributions to the next bulletin are urgently required!

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The following article was held over from the last bulletin; and to put last things first, a "future drier and brighter" day did appear, and Derek led the climb with such ease that he wondered how he had found it difficult in the first place. However, to go back 3 months

The Mist-ery of the Missing Leader

I. Dewhurst

Saturday dawned clear well, not exactly clear but at least it wasn't raining, even though the cloud was low enough to put Gimmer out of the question. However, after the previous evening's beery talk of hard routes we daren't sit around the 'Brit, so we made our way slowly - very slowly - up to White Ghyll (perhaps Gimmer would have been a bit ambitious anyway!). As we drew nearer it became evident (certainly not 'clear') that the cloud was lower than we had thought. A detailed inspection of Haste Not Direct proved impossible - we could only just see the crag! Despite this we decided to 'have a do' - in two pitches. So Derek 'volunteered' and led off up the wet greasy corner, baulking at the first overhang - slowing down a bit for the second - and then emerging triumphant at the belay. Well, he'd put three runners on, and two of them were mine, so I set off after him, baulking at the start, struggling where he'd ran and flying up the overhangs before they could give a full impression of their immensity. As I arrived at the belay, I put it to him, that as he had had a good rest, he might like to lead the second pitch too. You'd have thought he would have learnt after all this time, but no, gullible as ever, he agreed and off he went.

The route looked really impressive as he disappeared among the mist and overhangs. Gasping and Cursing informed me of his 'progress', till somewhat more relieved tones signified the accomplishment of a 'pull out to a piton and small stance'. A few more moves and the end would be in sight. Another runner; reports of tiredness, and then ".....Fred." It's amazing what a wealth of meaning can be put into a single word! Be that as it may, the next thing was Derek, emerging from the mist and overhangs, like some giant bird to provide one of the latest chapters in the annals of the Achille Ratti 'epics'.

"..... And the next object is a peg", but as this had proved to be unattainable he had traversed off to the belay on Haste Not; and then,
/blow

blow me if he hadn't done it again - most of the runners were mine Side 2
(perhaps he's not quite so dim after all!)

"- Anyway, you will have a top rope to within six feet of the top, and we do have to get off the crag somehow, and" So I was finally cajoled into it, and with a quick heave, and a quicker prayer the route was finished.

The usual post-mortem followed, and it was agreed that the climb had been defeated but not conquered, and that really it called for a repeat; well not exactly a repeat - but another ascent - at some future, drier, brighter date.

FROM THE HUTS

BISHOP'S SCALE - the "New Regime" has already started to make its presence felt, with several changes in the hut. Members (and their guests) are asked to take note of the new "Day Glo" notices that have gone up - and to act on them! The new committee has already started its life - at a working weekend (successful) - and it was decided (amongst other things) to hold a New Members Meet in the Autumn.

The effects of the long spells of fine weather are clearly reflected in the Log Book. The 'Extremes' and 'Hard V.S's' showing many notable ascents, whilst the routes at the lower end of the scale remain as popular as ever. The long distance walkers have not been much in evidence, but this is due more to the poor walking conditions (hot sunny weather) than to any lack of enthusiasm.

BUCKBARROW - the hut continues to run smoothly on its way, the usual working weekends, keeping the inside in condition and giving the exterior its triennial painting Due to the forthcoming absence of the Warden, Paul Charnock, the Secretary of the Hut Committee - Eddie Kelly - will become the acting hut warden for the next 10 months (approximately). From the beginning of August, therefore, any correspondence concerning the hut should be addressed to Eddie at 5 Scotforth Rd., Preston.

It has also been decided, as regrettably necessary, that the hut fees for members should be raised to 3/- per night. Guest fees would remain unchanged at 5/- per night.

The fine weather has brought about a considerable increase in the hut's popularity, which it is hoped to maintain through the rest of the summer.

DUNMAIL - the summer "season" is now in full swing, with the hut occupied almost continuously until the middle of September. The parties have so far been kind to the building and the year has been successful - if uneventful.

TYN TWR - a frustrating report to make! The plumbing and electrical work has been completed as far as is possible, and everything now awaits the outside contractors. They have promised however - with many apologies - to start work within the next few weeks.

OTHER HUTS

The Irish Mountaineering Club have informed us that as "there has been a certain amount of violence in Northern Ireland and some sabotage to electricity and water installations", their hut in Ulster has been placed out of bounds. "No one apparently can give us any idea how long this restriction will be applied so I can only suggest that anyone considering a visit to Ulster should write to our hut warden:

John Forsythe, 368 Belmont Road, Belfast

before crossing the water."

The letter went on to point out that the huts at Glendasan and Glencar were unaffected, and the I.M.C. looked forward to the day when it could once again extend its hospitality to our members visiting Ulster.

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THE EASY WAY TO CLIMB ?

Barry asked me the other weekend why I didn't write an article on gliding, perhaps as an excuse for not being seen at the hut much for the last couple of years. You see, there's an easier way to climb - -

Gliding can be a frustrating sport, the weather can be so bad even the birds are walking, or you can be unlucky and fail to find lift on a perfect day when everyone else is romping round the sky at cloudbase, but it has its fascination too, to take off into an ever changing element not knowing what you will find, or whether you will be up for five minutes or an hour. It's a glorious feeling to cut you ties with the ground, to sit high in the air in a responsive little machine and tap the power of the wind; to climb up into the blue, with no sound except the gentle hum of air over the skin, with no means of support except your own skill and the curve of an aerofoil.

The Blackpool and Fylde Gliding Club flies from Samlesbury aerodrome, though we still have a club house on Blackpool Airport. As Samlesbury has no ridges to divert the wind upwards, we rely for our 'lift' mainly on thermals.

A thermal is just a chunk of air which gets heated over a warm patch of ground until it is warmer than the surrounding air. As anyone who has tried to go to bed early at Bishops Scale knows, hot air rises (in the case quoted carrying voices with it) and as long as it rises into still cooler air above, it will continue to go right on up, until entrainment, or mixing with the surrounding air mass weakens it, or it meets a temperature inversion - a layer of warmer air at height.

Whilst it is going up, it is possible to fly a glider into it, and, by circling, to stay inside and climb with it. Thermals come in many shapes and sizes, tight turbulent ones only 100 yards across or great vertical rivers of air a mile wide, climbing at anything from fifty to over a thousand feet a minute.

Let me describe a good day's flying?

It had been a rather frustrating morning, about the middle of April this year, we were all rigged and ready to fly when we were grounded for an hour /while

while B.A.C. operated some Lightings in the vicinity. Then we had three cable breaks on the trot, and had to replace a weak length of cable.

We use a twin drum 100 h.p. winch to launch our gliders, and 1,400 yards of cable down the main runway can give 1,000 to 2,000 feet on the launch, depending on conditions.

I had had one flight in the Olympia 2.B., and not found any lift, though it looked promising. Then Ian took her up and scratched for half an hour, fairly low down. John went off in his V-tailed 'Fauvette', took a thermal straight off the launch, and climbed steadily away to cloudbase.

The two seat T.21b trainer was hanging on at a thousand feet in weak lift, and the EoN Baby intermediate single seater was just off the launch when Ian landed.

I helped to push the red and silver Olympia back to the launch point, buckled the 'chute on and slid down into the cockpit for another go. If John can get away it must be something. He's miles away now, still up at cloudbase.

O.K. Cockpit check. Controls. Ballast. Straps. Instruments. Trim Canopy. Air-brakes, closed and locked. Cable on.

"All clear above and behind?"

"All clear!"

Clear in front too.

"Take up slack", the light signal flashed to the winch driver, three quarters of a mile down the runway, the cable slithered tight.

"All out!"

The little Oly shuddered as the pull came on the wire, rolled forward, off the skid, onto the single wheel under the fuselage. Hold her straight, vibration dies as we lift off.

I held her in a gentle climb for the first 150 feet, then eased the stick back to get the most out of the launch. 48 knots, climbing nicely, wind east, five knots, variable, a sheet of fluffy cauliflower cumulus clouds ahead, one or two separate ones to the left, a big blue patch on the right.

One thousand three hundred feet, and the speed drops as the winch driver throttles back, pull the yellow release knob and the cable falls free, hear the click as it clears the hook under the nose. Now, straight ahead and let's see if the sheltered, sunny west slope of Mellor Hill is giving wind shadow thermals.

The Grossfell variometer (a very sensitive barometric rate of climb/descent indicator) shows six feet per second down - not so good, push the nose down to put on speed and get clear of the sink, 55 knots, out towards Mellor village, now, ease the speed.

The variometer needle climbs slowly out of the red half of the dial, into the green, one down, zero, one up, one up, two up, a surge! Into the turn, quick, where's the best bit? 42 knots, four feet per second climb on the
/vario

vario and I get centred, pulling the Oly round in a tight left turn to stay in the core of the thermal, where the strongest lift is. Climbing away, over the upwind boundary, drifting back slowly in the light breeze.

Above two thousand feet the lift began to get stronger, six feet a second, nearly 400 feet a minute, and I climbed faster, three thousand, still over the runway, three five and its fading a bit, keep the turn smooth, check altitude, instruments, look around for other aircraft.

At about 4,000 John's blue and white Fauvette slid into view to the North West, started circling. My thermal is weak now, only two feet per second up and John is obviously climbing faster, half a mile away, so let's go and join him.

We closed on the little V-tailed French sailplane at 45 knots, joined his thermal at about the same level, easing over to get on the opposite side of his circle so we could see each other all the way round. If you lose sight of a glider in the same thermal there is a danger of collision.

The lift went to six or eight feet up again, though John was slightly better centred and climbed away from me slowly. At five thousand feet we were close up under the cumulus cloud where our thermal reached condensation level and gave up its moisture in cloud forming droplets.

Over Courtauld's Works the Fauvette straightened up and headed back upwind towards the airfield. Good, now I've got the sky to myself! I recentered under the darkest (and therefore thickest) part of the cloud in eight up, checked the area clear, and went on instruments. You don't always get the chance of cloudflying and it requires practice. This was a perfect little practice cloud, not very big and quite shallow, maybe an inversion prevented its vertical development.

Anyway, at five two I was gently sucked up into the blank grey-white void and only the simple basic instruments on the panel told me I was climbing at three to five feet a second at 42 knots in a gentle rate 1 turn to the left, at 5,250 feet.

We played around in the cloud for about ten minutes but it wouldn't go higher than five thousand five hundred, at which height I got occasional glimpses of a pale sun above. Right, straighten up, ignore your disorientated balance mechanism that says you're going into a screaming dive to the right, fly straight and level on the turn and slip and airspeed indicators and we pop out the side into bright sunshine, heading back upwind from Ribbleton.

By using the lift under a series of little clouds I worked my way upwind across Samlesbury and Mellor to Wilpshire, admiring the view of the spring green fields and the blue reservoirs at Grimsargh and Longridge, and decided I hadn't time to go out to Chipping and back. (We are trying to buy a farm there for our own site, not dependent on the kindness of the B.A.C.).

I've been up about an hour now, better go down and let someone else have a go, so turn downwind and practice stalls, trimming for speed, stalls with the airbrakes out, and arrive just upwind of the field at 4000 feet. Plenty of height, so let's have some fun on the way down.

/A clearing

A clearing turn to see the sky clear of other traffic, then pull the nose gently up, and as the speed drops towards the stall and she starts to shudder in protest, full left rudder. The nose yaws across the horizon, the left wing drops, the stick is hard back but the nose topples after it as she lurches down left into the spin, a definite pitch as autorotation sets in and the fields blurr across the canopy. White farmhouse, once, twice, three times, now full opposite rudder, pause, the spin slows, stick slowly forward to unstall her and we come out in an accelerating dive, touch seventy knots and recover, gees pressing me into the seat, and use the speed to climb again and level off.

Now a spin the other way, whirling fields and flashing river, out of it and haul up into a chandelle, a steep climbing turn, Lazy 8, chandelle the other way, find some lift and climb a few hundred feet, then give it away and whistle downwind at sixty five knots. Orbiting the hangers, sliding smoothly down the sky to a thousand feet to join the circuit.

There's a sudden surge of lift, and turn, turn, pulling the speed off to min. sink, 38 to 40 knots, a cracker! Six to eight up, stay with it for a few turns to mark the lift for the T.21 and the Fauvette, just off another launch.

They go the other way - but the lift's over here, you, you clots, I'm climbing like a rocket. No good. They won't look. Now, spin off some of this height, then brakes open from 1,800 (wow - we were climbing fast!) and track round the circuit to go finals at three hundred, just back of the boundary. Over the fence, lining up, regulating the descent with the brakes, flare over the grass, hold off till she touches, just on the stall, and roll it out to a stop. The wing sinks slowly to the grass, switches off, the instruments only have little dry cell batteries. Unlock the canopy and lift it open, straps off and climb out as the gang arrive to push you back. The breeze is cool on your hot face after a very pleasant hour and three-quarters worth of Saturday afternoon.

It isn't always like that, you can't always get over a mile high and soar miles out over the countryside, sometimes you have five minute circuits under a blanket of grey clag and huddle on a rain wet runway in a cold wind. But even that sort of gliding has its challenge - a check flight, a spot landing contest, flying in rough, turbulent air, simulated field landings on some odd corner of the airfield, it all pays off on the bright spring days when there are thermals all over the sky and you feel part of the glider you fly, when your every movement, translated by a light, sensitive sailplane, can twist earth and sky around and set you free as a bird, quite literally, circling even higher in the sky with the clouds for company and all that lovely blue stuff to play with.

Dick Seed

NEW MEMBERS MEET - will be held at Bishop's Scale on the weekend 4/5 October. This will be the perfect opportunity to meet other members, and climbing and fell-walking parties will be organised on both the Saturday and Sunday for those wishing to take part. These meets have always been a great success in the past, so whether you are a newly joined "expert", a walker hoping to become a climber, a well anyway, why not come along and see what it's all about?

The following is an extract from B.M.C. Circular No.556:-

IT IS NOW RECOMMENDED THAT THE NO.9 AND NO. 10 HIATT ANGLE PITONS MARKETED HITHERTO SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY CLIMBING PURPOSES.

The much large No.8 Hiatt angle pitons are considered to be amply strong, notwithstanding the presence of impurities in the steel as in other sizes.

As a result of the above recommendation, it is understood that the distributors have now issued a statement to their stockists and to the Climbing Press requesting that No.9 and No.10 Hiatt Angle Pitons should be returned to the nearest stockist for exchange, and that fresh supplies of pitons made from a new batch of steel will be available very shortly.

DEPARTMENT OF USELESS INFORMATION

.....Those who (like me) often have trouble sprinkling a bit of salt on their meat and two veg. can take heart their problems have not been entirely forgotten. During the last 100 years, the United States Patents Office has granted more than 300 patents to inventors of devices to prevent the little holes in salt cellars from becoming "bunged up"

CLIMBING IN TASMANIA - PART 2

On the logistics side of climbing, there would be about 30 active climbers in Tasmania - most of them from Interstate. Most of the big climbs are done by people from Melbourne and Sydney who migrate here for the summer, last year being about 200 assorted bods. Many more bushwalkers descend on the place at the same time to enjoy the doubtful pleasures of thick scrub, rainsoaked plateau, and sodden campsites. As is obvious, there is no trouble with overcrowding and the day I see a queue at the foot of a climb I'll migrate to Antarctica. Competition for the unclimbed faces is quite strong however, and climbing is very much a growing sport, especially interstate.

Technically, climbers here are quite well equipped. The growth of the mechanical school has developed racking organisation to a high degree. Most things are imported; American hardware - used to the almost complete exclusion of soft pegs - perlon ropes - although good laid rope specially made for climbing is available in Melbourne - tapes, boots - most R.D's for Tasmania and P.A's in Victoria/New South Wales. Mr. Ewbank - Australia's only professional /rock

rock climber - makes hammer holsters, gear racks, and an excellent range of crackers all at a reasonable price.

Standards are pretty high - and ever increasing. A new grading system à la Ewbank has been recently initiated to overcome the inevitable bottleneck of V.S. etc. It is a simple 1 grade system from 0 - 21, with the emphasis on the higher grades. Its inventor - who has climbed extensively in England and Europe claims the following equivalents (Wales)

Free	10/11	M.S.	Mechanical	M1	A1
	12/13	S.		M2/M3	A2
	14/15	H.S.		M4/M5	A3
	16/17	V.S.		M6	A4
	18	H.V.S.		M7	A5
	19/20/21	X.S.			

As for winter climbing, it is as yet undeveloped due to the infrequency of really cold conditions and fine weather when the ice is about. However, the potential is there, all that is needed is someone fiery enough (or stupid enough?) to exploit it.

The top climbers are John Ewbank from Sydney who climbs here every summer, and Chris Dewhirst from Melbourne - University student - with countless falls to his credit (or discredit). One factor of possible interest to you Pommies, is that Australian climbers only repeat routes if they are of particular interest. Everybody of reasonable standard is capable of doing new routes due to their colossal abundance. Ewbank averages almost 100 first ascents a year - all of high standard - while Dewhirst is approaching 100 new routes on one cliff face alone - Mt. Arapiles, (Victoria).

So come on lads, if new routes are your game, £10 will buy as many as you like, or are capable of. Hope you have found this of interest,

Yours

J.C. MOORE.

I have received a letter and a sheaf of photo's from two club members, Gordon and Rosemary Fox, in New Zealand. Anyone who is interested in these can obtain them from me. There is a strong possibility that a future bulletin will contain some account of their 'doings' since leaving Preston - it would just about complete the A.R.C.C. folio on Southern Hemispherical climbing.

ITEMS FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Management Committee, on June 18th, it was decided to re-affirm, and publish an earlier decision - that dogs would not be allowed inside any of the huts.

A later meeting decided to make an official club donation of £10 to the Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team appeal.

IN SEARCH OF BRANDY WINE

by H.V. Severe

On a hot June Saturday, the walk to a high crag is not to be relished. As a result, one well equipped party headed by the intrepid Terry Parker decided upon a route in Newlands - "quite close to the road". This choice was obvious. We had guides for each of the valleys, except of course, Newlands. Derek and Robert, two anonymous hard men, were well pleased with this inherent additional difficulty.

A visit to Fishers, with carbon pencil (spent match) and a foolscap 'fag' packet was aimed at snatching a brief route description from an F & R.C.C. Journal. Fishers, however, could not oblige, even though Robert bought a Borrowdale guide (because it did not contain the route we wanted). The County Library in Keswick closes at 12.30. The queue at the door at 12.25 threatened our plans, but once inside, the librarian quickly ushered the scantily clad party into the storeroom; and there they lay - gold letters glistening - the complete set of F.R.C.C. Journals. A small, hardly noticeable volume, "New Climbs 1964-65" fell to hand and - yes - there it was. Pen and paper from the librarian - there was no charge - and off we went.

At the start of the bridleway, the party disembarked, and the mini-car proceeded with driver and gear. There remained but a short walk, or did there? However, the walk was pleasant. Newlands is an attractive valley and the path more attractive because it is flat. Robert was in high spirits, tossing P.A. after P.A. over his shoulder - Derek retrieving. Unfortunately for Robert, none were lost, he did not score six, and the game continued. Upon arrival at the crag, Terry handed his medical certificate to the Old Man of the hills (umpire for the day); Robert appealed for a lost P.A. but was overruled; Derek babbled some scouse; Valerie feigned under nourishment; and Bernard strapped on his plastic muscle.

Then, whilst the main party rested, ate, drank and subbathed, Terry went scouting for the route, finally finding it at the farthest and most inaccessible point of the crags from the Bivvy spot. The route was fine, containing several 'step left' 'step right' moves, both difficult and delicate, and to be highly recommended.

The day was exquisitely capped with a sojourn at the Swinside Inn - the nearest pub - where, mercy of mercies, closing time was 11p.m.

THE ANNUAL DINNER - will be on the 22nd November 1969, and as usual, will be at the Red Lion Hotel, Gramere. The price this year has unfortunately been raised to 27/6 (the club has lost a lot of money in the past, and this is an attempt to reduce the subsidy to a reasonable level) and tickets are available from the Secretary - Tom Brodrick, 22 Fairfield St., Accrington.

Please send a cheque or Postal Order (payable to the club) and a stamped addressed envelope with your order; and remembering the demand in previous years - an early application is advisable.

Buckbarrow Hut Fees - New rates will be charged from September 1st - Members 3/-, Guests 5/- per night.

John & Gilmour Presents;

"Right; Now you all know the course; I'll start you off with Ready.....then Go. Any last minute questions? NO, right then; Ready.....GO!

So began this year's fell race. There was a disappointingly small "field" of 8 entrants, but even so there was sufficient competition to create two new club records for the course.

Past the New Hotel the field was still bunched, but a quick bit of jostling at the gate put Ian in the lead, followed by Pete and John with the rest of the field spreading out behind. At the first Marshall, about mid-way up Mill Ghyll, Ian was 4 minutes in the lead, with Pete and John swapping 2nd and 3rd places between them with the vagaries of ~~xxxx~~ their separate route finding. 4th was Rod, with Derek close behind 5th and Steve, Clive and Arnold taking 6th, 7th, and 8th positions. At the top of Mill Ghyll, the positions were unchanged, though when Pete slipped John gained a temporary advantage. The grassy slope of Stickle Breast was soon passed, but on Pike How, Derek ran past a struggling Rod into 4th place, (it should be remembered that Ian was just about crossing the finishing line by this time!) and so the field assumed its final form, with Ian, Pete, and John winning the Dinner tickets.

Next year's competitors should note that every entrant was very generously sponsored - to the tune of three pints of bitter.....Finally Arnold deserves special mention and congratulations for "putting up" a very creditable performance in the newly formed "veterans" class.

Ian Dewhurst	28 min 53.5 sec
Pete Gilmour	35 08.
John Pyle	35 36
Derek Price	38 50.5
Rod Witham	40 24.
Steve Newell	59 59.
Clive Millard	62 37
Arnold Foster	69 00.

Marshalls:- D. Huddleston; P. Durkin; S. Farrell; T. Hickey.

Official Timekeeper:- M. Bennett

Starter, Umpire & Whipper-in; J. Gilmour.

Well, that's it for another issue - standard ending piece that- but all criticisms (unless accompanied by an article for the next bulletin) will be cheerfully ignored;

Sincerely,

Rod.

Editor R. Witham
37 Canada Drive,
Rawdon,
Leeds,
LS19 6LU

Secretary T. Brodrick
22 Fairfield St.
Accrington.

LOST- One Orienteering Race - will the finder please return it to the Secretary, who appears to have mislaid it.