

THE LAKES RUNby Mike McGovern

On 1 August 1982 Alan Heaton added yet another record to his long list of achievements, gained in over 20 years of fellmanship. He became the third man to visit all the Lakes, Waters, and Meres in the Lake District National Park in one continuous run, lowering the record for this to 25 hours 17 minutes and covering 105 miles with 17000' of ascent.

The idea for this route is credited to Dave Meek, who gave it to Pete Grant who in turn passed it on to the two men who were to make the initial attempt. Pete Schofield and Leo Pollard, both members of Horwich RMI set off from Embleton on the Cockermouth to Keswick road in August 1980 to try and do the route as a full round, starting and finishing at the same place. This first attempt was abandoned at Waterhead seven hours behind schedule.

From this initial attempt two separate concepts of the route were born. Pete felt that to continue the tradition of Lake District rounds, the route should start and finish at the same place, as in the Bob Graham round. This involved the use of a lot of road on the optimum route. Leo, on the other hand, felt that his idea of going point to point kept another tradition in mind, that of a round being feasible within 24 hours. This method also reduced the amount of road to a minimum. As these two close friends could not reconcile their ideas they decided to make two separate attempts on the run.

Thus, on 13 June 1981 Leo Pollard left Loweswater on his attempt to visit all the 26 Lakes, Waters and Meres. His time of 35 hrs. 29 min. covers an epic run full of incident, during which his mettle was tried with a full range of Lake District weather. The following weekend (19 June 1981) found Peter Schofield adding his chapter to the history of notable fell runs. Again his attempt was successful, he spent much of his time asleep on his feet in heatwave conditions. His complete round time of 42 hrs. 38 min. speaks volumes for the trials he overcame to get back where he started. Both men have written accounts of their attempts and are willing to give details of the routes, etc., to anyone interested. Which brings us to Alan's attempt.

Because of his dislike of road running, Alan had opted for a point to point run following the original route with only minor variations. At 9 a.m. on 31 July 1982 he left the shores of Loweswater, with Joe Morrissey and Mike McGovern as navigators and Bob Green and Jack Betney as carriers. From the brisk pace he set, we knew he meant business. The morning was dull with a hint of rain which came on as we descended Red Pike. As we dropped down to Ennerdale it really set in, good and British. From here Gary and Leo Pollard took over carrying and navigating into Wasdale, assisted for short sections through the valley by Wilf Charnley. As they went through the YHA grounds he was 20 mins. up on schedule. Then over into Eskdale Green. From Brantake, over the tricky bog to Devoke Water Frank Whittle took him unerringly. We were changing navigators frequently during this first few miles as we felt that while Alan was moving quickly we could reduce the chances of error caused by tiredness in this way. Even so, he left more than one helper shattered on the fell side in those first few miles.

From here Mike McGovern went down to the Newfield Inn in Dunnerdale with him, where Alan had his first real stop since starting. He had been moving for about five hours. Here one of the hard sections starts, visiting Goats Water, Low Water and Levers Water before dropping down to Coniston Water. He was assisted on the fells by Edwin Coope, Jim Dawson, Paul Murray and again Bob Green, according to whom his unrelenting pace continued over this section. From Coniston, with only a short break at Skelwith Bridge, he visited Esthwaite Water,

Elterwater, Grasmere, and Rydal Water to arrive in the late evening at Waterhead, 40 mins. up on schedule. He was assisted on these sections by Mike Lomas and his girl friend, Roy Philips and Jack Betney.

The next section saw the evening turn to dusk as our merry band set off to Kentmere church, helpers here consisted of Pete Schofield, Neal Sale, Mike McGovern and Jack Betney. The midges in Kentmere ensured that the stop was short. Our party lost one, Jack Betney and gained another, Alan Barbier, who was to navigate so well through the night. Skeggles Water we found no problem, on to Haweswater, via Sleddale and over Gatesgarth Pass. We had to travel well down the valley to find the shore of the lake, its level being low. From here in the dead of night in mist, rain and wind we travelled on to Small Water and Blea Water. Good navigation got us from one to the other then found the best line up on to High Street in a very strong wind. Hayeswater came and went in a cold mist that we came out of as we came to the main road beside Brothers Water.

Here with the first hint of dawn we found our support waiting with hot sweet tea and biscuits. With his new band of helpers, again Mike Lomas and Bob Green, Alan went off to visit Ullswater then over Sticks Pass to Thirlmere in the new dawning of the day. From here its all road to the finish, visiting Derwent Water, Bassenthwaite Lake and finally Over Water. Quite a band accompanied Alan here - Leo Pollard, Jack Betney, Barry Ayre, Mike Lomas and Frank Whittle and all will testify to the cracking pace he set over these roads, fighting time to the very end. At Over Water he finished to hearty congratulations from all his helpers and friends. Alan doesn't give much away, but I think it pleased him to have yet another fell running record to his name, and I know I speak for all his helpers when I say we were pleased and honoured to play our part in writing another chapter in the history of notable fell runs in the Lake District. Well done, Alan.

Lakes in order of visiting: Lowes Water, Crummock Water, Buttermere, Ennerdale, Wast Water, Devoke Water, Goats Water, Low Water, Levers Water, Coniston Water, Esthwaite Water, Elterwater, Grasmere, Rydal Water, Windermere, Skeggles Water, Small Water, Blea Water, Hayes Water, Brothers Water, Ullswater, Thirlmere, Derwent Water, Bassenthwaite, Over Water.

GLASGOW TO FORT WILLIAM RELAYS - 1982

by Roger Boswell

90 miles, 8 runners, over the hills.

1. 20 March. Clydesdale broke the record of 11.03.36 set by Lochaber in 1978 recording 10.48.08. Lochaber, the opposition, with a team of 4 fit runners, 2 cripples and 1 super vet. on loan from Clydesdale set new figures for the slowest time - 12.16.37.
2. 27 March. Dumbarton's brave bid ended with Ronnie Paton getting lost in Loch Ard forest. He got a cool reception when he finally emerged 20 miles later at the Falls of Falloch.
3. 5 June. No mistakes this time - Dumbarton's last man arrived at Cameron Square, Fort William just 10.23.57 after the first man had set off from George's Square, Glasgow. The big question now was, would Clydesdale be able to regain the record before their anchor man, Jimmy Shields, emigrated to Australia?
4. Went pretty much the same as 1., Clydesdale got the record back in 10.14.55, while Lochaber, largely thanks to Boswell who got lost not once, but twice, again set new figures for the slowest time - 13.03.38. As you read this, Jimmy Shields will be stretched out in the Brisbane sunshine - a peaceful, happy man.
5. Sometime in March 1983. Lochaber AC .....