

SPRING

92

PARADE



RACES

Dark Peak Club Races

- Wed Apr 8 Great Urban Fell Race, Noahs Ark Pub, (SK329874) 6:45
- The long awaited return of this unique event comes with a shortened course and the promise of a pie and pea supper afterwards (is that a recommendation?). Maps and further details available from Alan Yates. Unfortunately, owing to the re-arrangement of the Dark Peak Cross Country and a breakdown in negotiations between Messers Tett and Yates, we are all now faced with a dilemma - whether to rough it in Rivelin or wander to Winkobank.
- Wed Apr 8 Not the National, Long Lane, Rivelin (SK317878) 6:45*
- The Dark Peak Cross Country Champs postponed from their February date. A 'real' cross country course with mixed terrain, hills and river crossings.
* N.B. The start will be as soon after 6:45 as those running from the Sportsman (who should aim to leave at 6:20) arrive.
- Wed May 6 Back Tor and Back, Foulstone Delf (SK220908) 6:45
- Wed May 13 3 Stones Sportsman 6:30
A repeat of the very popular 'Worsell' event.
- Wed May 27 Mam Tor Bus stop, A625 (meet at Mam Nick at 7:00)
- This new Bob Berzins produced short race will take place within a club run from Mam Nick. Any specialist racers who want to minimise any extra running may park near the start.
- Wed Jun 3 Kinder Springs Snake Layby (SK101914) 6:45
Route: 4 checkpoints (springs) somewhere near:
1 The Edge
2 Mermaids Pool
3 Noe Stool
4 Fairbrook
- 3 courses available to suit fitness & experience:
Long (1-4) 9 miles
Medium (1,3,4) 7.5 miles
Short (1,4) 5 miles
- N.B. Inexperienced or slow competitors should take advice before selecting their course!
- Wed Jun 10 Alport Castles Snake Layby (SK101914), 6:45
- Wed Jun 24 Crookstone Crashout Rowlee Bridge (SK150891), 7:00
- Wed Jul 29 Cakes of Bread Fairholmes car park, 7:00

FEATURES

KARAKORAM DREAMING

For a month last summer we spent our days on a trekking expedition to the Karakoram mountains of Northern Pakistan. Unlike Nepal, which is extensively developed in terms of facilities for the trekker, there is no support in the Northern areas of Pakistan. Consequently we chose to join an organised trip with Keswick based company: "Karakoram Experience". There were to be 13 members which included 11 clients and 2 trek leaders supported by an army of 50+ porters.

The objective for our journey was to cross the Hispar La, a high level pass at 5150m (16900') dividing two major glacial systems. In part we would be tracing the steps of Shipton's 1937 expedition to an area which was then 'blank on the map'. This necessitated traversing the length of the Biafo and Hispar glaciers which together form the longest glacial systems outside of the polar regions. The actual trek was to involve 18 days walking, covering a mere 100 miles or so. The remaining days were spent getting to and from the area - no small feat in itself.

Having arrived in Islamabad from Heathrow, together with 380kg of excess luggage between 10 of us (mainly food), we set out to explore the ancient capital of Rawalpindi; "mad dogs and Englishmen..." Despite the intense heat and jet lag we enjoyed getting lost amongst the myriad of little alleyways which must be unchanged since medieval times. The car had little place, with side streets only wide enough for pedestrians. It was here that we began to notice the character of the Pakistani people who were friendly, honest and a pleasure to meet. At no time were we pressurised to buy and everything was 'fixed price'. The streets were soon teeming with people once the sun started to go down. 95% of the people around were men; only occasionally was there a sighting of a woman, dressed in inky-blue 'Burqa' - a totally covering tent-like cape of purdah. Our important purchase of the day was a pair of "Shalwar-Khameez" each: the pyjama style shirt and trouser set which was to prove invaluable on our travels.

Still suffering from jet-lag we had to get up at 03:00 for an important flight to Skardu which saved a 33 hour road journey. By 08:00 we were sat 8000' in the delightful grounds of the famous K2 motel, sipping green tea in the shade and trying to take in the magnitude of our surroundings. Below us the mighty Indus flowed, a stream of liquid concrete due to the enormous suspended load of rock flour. Looking around the landscape appeared like a barren desert apart from the occasional green oasis, developed at the bottom of an alluvial fan as a consequence of glacial run-off.

The following day we left Skardu, travelling to Chongo by jeeps on a 7-hour bone jolting journey along boulder strewn terrain. Finally we were deposited at 9000', suffering lacerations from the vegetation we'd failed to duck beneath and dehydration caused by the intense heat in the valley bottom. At last, our first night under canvas.

Now we met our porters for the first time. They were organised by the 'sirdar', Shukoor Ali, who saw that the loads were evenly distributed at 25kg each. A strict hierarchy is observed: the sirdar at the top followed by the chief cook, Anwar Ali, then the two assistant cooks, Mohamad Ali and Ali; the details of the other levels escapes me. All the porters were keen to join; two expeditions provide each porter with enough income to see him through the year.

The initial sections of the trek involved very hot days in the bottom of valleys but soon we climbed to more pleasant conditions. No sooner had the temperature improved than underfoot conditions became terrible: imagine the most awful Scottish boulder field and make it worse by an order of magnitude. The glacier surface was covered in ankle twisting moraine wick made progress exceedingly slow; the expedition catch phrase became "All moraine is terminal". However, we continued to gain height at an ideal rate of about 1000' per day.

Tea by the Gallon

A fairly relaxing routine developed; two days walking then a day off to rest and acclimatise. On walking days we would be woken up by Mohamad Ali with bed tea at 05:00. Breakfast consisted of porridge/cereal and many more mugs of tea and, if we were lucky, hot Parathas eaten with marmalade. We'd be away by 07:00 walk for between 4 and 12+ hours. On a longer day we would stop in a convenient spot and the cooks would serve yet more tea. It is recommended that you drink about 6 litres of liquid to prevent dehydration and offset the effects of altitude. Lunch consisted of oat cakes, tinned fish, tinned cheese and pate.

During the afternoon we got the opportunity to do our own thing, mainly photography, reading, writing travel diaries or just gazing at the inspiring views. Once the sun dropped temperatures would plummet. We'd turn up to dinner looking like a bunch of Michelin Men in fleece, down and thermal gear. There was always a full 3 course meal on offer, although appetite tends to disappear with altitude. Gallons of soup followed by a typical main course of pasta and veggies rounded off by pudding and custard.

High spots

By 14500' Kay was beginning to suffer from the effects of altitude; headaches, high resting pulse (up from 48 to 96!) and sleep hypoxia (swollen hands and face in the morning). The trek leaders prescribed the drug Diamox, a diuretic which expels the excess accumulated fluid, which made a night/day difference to how she felt; thankfully there were no more problems with altitude.

Conditions changed again and the moraine gave way to bare ice. The surface could be described as an ice motorway by comparison to the previous stretches, giving very easy walking. However, the crevasses were now exposed; gaping holes too deep to reveal the bottom. Beside us the mountains rose so steeply as to create sheer faces on either side, but presented fantastic views of the spire like peaks of the Latoks, West Biafo Wall and Ogres Thumb.

GOING THE DISTANCE

KARRIMOR 91

THE DEFINITIVE ARTICLE

What the gazeteers said:

"The summits of this Southern cluster of Munros allow extensive views of both the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland."

"A fine little rocky group of mountains"

"Rocky and rugged peaks with bold outlines"

"Particularly fine views over Loch Lomond"

How it was on the day

Thirty-something kilometres of right-hand slope contouring, highlights the inadequate design of ankles set at anything other than 45 degrees to the leg. Darwinian evolutionary theory states that ankle flexibility has developed to meet the normal requirements placed upon it over thousands of years. KIMM course planners have little respect for evolutionary traditions, and casual disregard for physical well being. You could spot the KIMM participants staggering out of their cars on Sunday night. They were the prematurely aged, hollow faced and haunted individuals, much in need of Zimmers and leaning at a funny angle.

New conifer planting as defined on the Arrochar map has a similar connotation to the "here be dragons" found on ancient buried treasure plans. It is just as vague and equally ferocious. Vague because the mapping accuracy was somewhat whimsical. Ferocious, because the tree planting contractors may have been told to plant to a certain height but in their excitement they ripped savage ankle breaking ditches from the gentle mountainside using inhuman force, then went completely bonkers and scattered young conifers over a few hundred extra acres of hillside. Or conversely, Harveys air photographs failed to disclose the awful truth. The latter explanation rings truest. After four kilometres of unescapable contour hugging traverse through baby trees it was seriously depressing to find that the control was several hundred metres lower than the top margin of the trees.

Gaps through the Arrochar conifer plantations are not to be trusted. It would have been a happier experience to crawl flat out below canopies of dense ficht than to risk the bottomless horrors of a butchered and abandoned clear fell. These areas seemed to soak up people like wasps in a jam trap.

Overnight camp means a mythical too-far-off kingdom, usually untamed, rugged and requiring the gentle persuasion of some heavy earth levelling machinery. Teams who made it to the overnight camp

LOCAL RACE LEAGUE

Despite Phil Crowson's determined effort to keep the 'Four Seasons' trophy hanging on his wall, Graham Berry regained the title with a a season of consistent and high quality running. Other notable achievements included an attempt by Jim Fulton to run every local race. I think he managed all but two; one when he was on holiday and the other because two races were run on the same day!

Every year there seem to more new races appearing. However, as in previous years, the league will retain its air of informality i.e. a similar set of races will be used with the final selection depending upon; a) results received and b) the mood of the editor (which may vary depending upon the size of the bribe!). It seems that this year there may be several races which clash with club events. On occasions where this happens the local race will not be used.

Mike Pedley

Pos (1990)	Name	TOTAL POINTS	Races to count	Total races
1 (7)	G Berry	552 (738)	16	23
2 (1)	P Crowson	518	16	
3 (14)	M Pedley	496 (555)	16	19
4 (28)	R Horsfield	427	16	
5 (3)	A Yates	417	15	
6 (4)	J Fulton	380 (525)	16	25
7 (18)	T Tett	345	9	
8 (13)	C Stamp	324	10	
9 (8)	A Harmer	316	9	
10 (19)	P Sanderson	289	9	
11	B Minto	269	8	
12 (17)	E Hutt	256	8	
13 (6)	J Cant	253	8	
14 (105)	A Cory-Wright	242	7	
15 (26)	P Kohn	242	12	
16 (25)	K Borman	230	13	
17 (21)	D Lockwood	228	8	
18 (15)	T Mackey	221	11	
19 (5)	J Armistead	220	7	
20 (60)	R Small	219	12	
21	B Sprakes	216	8	
22	M Simms	209	7	
23	W McLewin	201	11	
24	H Cotton	196	10	
25	P Dyke	189	11	
26	G Band	184	5	
27	R Marsden	182	8	
28	R Sanby	176	5	
29	B Wilson	170	5	
30	B Berzins	160	4	

PARK
PEAK
LEAK