

Editorial

Dark Peak News

Summer
01



Editorial

Dark Times

"Yessss... some grass to run on!"

A quick sidestep and I was on the green stuff. I'd found some. It even had a little hill to go with it. A few metres later, after the initial delight had quickly faded I reflected on my position... on the grass verge of a less than salubrious Bradford council estate. Now it was quite a good length of grass verge and had more grass than dog shit but it was still far from a fell or even the "little" two mile strip of woodland I normally use for lunchtime runs. I was in the best shape I've been for a few years but no way to prove it in competition (other than... a road race - yes some of us were that desperate). Winter and Spring 2001 will not hold many happy memories for runners. There was hardly a fell race or orienteering event in sight. Even races miles from any infection were cancelled.

"Has life really come to this?" I thought

Making the best of it

But out of adversity comes character and creativity. Paul Sanderson (or was it Rob Davison?) was first off the mark with a Wednesday night tour of the Sportsman of North & West Sheffield. Close behind was Alan Yates with a reappearance of the Great Urban Fell Race. It attracted a record field and underlined what a superb course Alan devised those years ago. I doubt it will be the last running. Maybe a winter night version could also be tried next year?

Andy Harmer put on a 'Truncheon alternative' on Loxley Common, one of the few areas to remain open. Gavin Williams persevered (after the less than successful inaugural event) with his Porter Valley Plunge and Dave Tait came up with a couple of scenic road races. As things started reopening Bob Berzins put on a Round-the-Parks race, an event which deserves a re-run where it will hopefully attract a larger field to try it's 14 miles of off-road running.

All these people and more should be applauded for trying to bring interest and humour to some dismal days. Things are improving but there is a long way to go. Event cancellations are already reaching some September events in the calendar. When will "normality" resume? Indeed, what will we consider as normal in the future?

What is our future?!

In coming months and years we'll wonder whether it was all worth it. Will our responsible attitudes be repaid when it comes to permissions for future races? What will the long term affect on our sport be (if any)? Every weekend race cancellation in Scotland and the Lakes lost the local economy hundreds if not thousands of pounds. As the landlord at Wasdale Head put it, he could have bought all the sheep in Wasdsale, killed them, opened up the empty fells and it would still have cost him less than he has already lost! Spare a thought too for equipment suppliers, the Pete Bland, Running Bear, Ultrasport and Compass Points of this world. Dark times indeed.

News

Club runs make it back to the fells

With the re-opening of the Derbyshire moors, Wednesday night club runs have finally made it back onto the fells. A hastily re-arranged run at the end of May saw about 16 runners heading up onto Derwent Edge. The dreaded white or yellow notices had gone to be replaced by the much friendlier code of conduct. Access may still be quite limited (paths only in many places) but it's heading in the right direction. Sadly, options from the Sportsman are still limited until Sheffield follows Derbyshire's example. Changes to runs will be put on the web site and announced each Wednesday.

Lowe Alpine MM confirmed

The Lowe Alpine Mountain marathon will definitely go ahead barring a new outbreak of F&M in Scottish Highlands. Courses will be a little easier than usual but they could still maintain the Lowe's reputation as the roughest, wildest but most interesting mountain marathon. Location is kept secret until 36 hours before the event but is about 3 hours drive beyond Glasgow.

Races start to reappear in Scotland as access improves

More races in Scotland have been declared as ON as access continues to improve. May 12th saw a new race from Achintee near Fort William with a 5 mile course taking runners part way up Ben Nevis. A ceilidh followed to reward those who have made the effort to get there. Two classic events took place on Arran; Goatfell and Glen Rosa.

Scotland led the way on access with most of the high mountain areas open. Visitors are requested to follow a set of access guidelines to avoid contact with livestock. The Scots are adopting a common-sense approach which seems sadly lacking in some English areas i.e. they are removing the blanket bans and replacing them with partial access supported by a code of conduct.

Dark Peak compete in Isle of Man Easter Athletics Festival

Worrying signs were displayed on the Isle of Man over Easter when the four members who travelled to the island ended up participating in a 5 mile road race, a cross country and a road relay! Although a poor substitute to the cancelled Manx Mountain Marathon a good time was had by all... and we weren't last!

Ex Dark Peaker 3rd in top New Zealand endurance event

A current dark peaker (Mike Browell) and a former member (Ali Cory-Wright) completed this years NZ Coast to Coast Race. In a country of tough multi-sport events this is one of the top competitions: you run 2.8k / cycle 58k / mountain run 26k / cycle 15k / kayak 67k /cycle 70k. Ali Cory-Wright came a superb 3rd in a time of 12 hours and Mike Browell was no less delighted with his 230th position in just under 17 hours. Mike was somewhat nervous of the kayak stage but came through it, citing some earlier coaching by Gavin Williams as being particularly helpful.

Coming Events

SUMMER 2001

Club runs every Wednesday from the Sportsman, Lodge Moor, Sheffield at 6:30pm or at an "away" - start times vary - CHECK BELOW). Runs are normally 1.5 hours on paths and moors with shorter options often available. Abilities vary and there are usually a couple of regroupings during the run. "Local races" are open events usually entry on the day with an entry fee (£2 ish) and a few prizes. "DPFR races" are informal events for Dark Peak club members, usually with no entry fee and no prizes.

RACES IN ITALICS ARE PROVISIONAL AND SHOULD BE CONFIRMED BEFOREHAND

Jul

Sun	1		Local race	Lads leap Crowden from Crowden Y.H.on the A628 GR994074 £3 to organiser Des Gibbon (01457 854381) or on the day. Race on!	6m 1700
Wed	4	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Sat	7	17:00	Club race	Loxley Lunge, Barbecue + time trial from Dave Holmes' house. Start any time 5pm-8pm	
Mon	9	19:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Hathersage, School field.</i>	4.5ml/925'
Wed	11	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Sun	15	11:15	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Peak Forest, Peak Forest village stores.</i>	6ml/650'
Wed	18	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Wed	18	19:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Bamford, Bamford recreation ground.</i>	4.5ml/1000'
Thu	19	19:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Sheldon, Cock and Pullet, Sheldon</i>	4ml/527'
Tue	24	19:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Robin Hood Monumental Fell Race. Robin Hood near Baslow</i>	5ml/875'
Wed	25	18:45	DPFR race	Cakes of Bread, Fairholmes car park	
Sat	28		Other race	Snowdon. Race on!	
Sun	29	11:00	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Holme Moss. Brown Hill res., Holmbridge</i>	16ml/4000'

Aug

Wed	1	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Wed	8	19:30	Local race	Bradwell.	4.5ml/600'
Wed	15	18:45	DPFR race	Alport, Birchin Clough lay-by	
	18-19		MM	Phoenix Long O. Cheviots Entry details: A Nicoll, 47 Holywell Ave., Whitley Bay, NE26 3AQ.	
Wed	22	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Tue	28	18:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Barrel Inn Fell race. Hawkhill car park, Eyam.</i>	5.5ml/900'
Wed	29	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Sep					
Sat	1	11:00	Club event	Thornbridge Weekend featuring Ashford fell race at 11:00 and late afternoon barbeque. Details: Roy Small or Hugh Cotton.	
Sun	2	14:00	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Shelf Moor. Shepley Street, Glossop.</i>	5.9ml/1500'
Wed	5	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Fri	7	18:45	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Great Longstone Chase. Cricket Ground, Great Longstone.</i>	4.8ml/950'
Sun	9	10:30	<i>Local race</i>	<i>Totley Terminator. Cricket Inn, Totley</i>	20ml/3250'

Sun	9	13:15	Local race	Padfield Plum fair Torside Scamper. Padfield (near Glossop)	6.5ml/1050'
Wed	12	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Sat	15	15:00	Local race	Dungworth gala, Dungworth sports field (including gala which starts at 1pm) - provisionally rearranged from 30/6/2001	
	15-16		MM	Mourne Mountain marathon. Entry details: www.mourne2day.com	
Wed	19	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	
Sat	22	15:00	Local race	Lantern Pike, Little Hayfield.	5ml/1050'
Sun	23	11:00	Local race	Stanage Struggle. School lane, Hathersage.	6.75ml/950'
Wed	26	18:30	Club run	Sportsman	

Note: English and British championships abandoned for 2001

[XC=Cross Country, MM = Mountain marathon or Long mountain orienteering]

Where an address is provided entry is usually in advance only. Where no details are stated entry can usually be obtained on the day. However, to be certain and for additional details of all open events please refer to the FRA calendar. A full listing of all fell events is available to FRA members.

All club members should consider joining the Fell Running Association. At a cost of £9 a year it includes 3 magazines as well as the full fixture list. For details contact the Membership Sec., Pete Bland Sports, 34a Kirkland, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 5AD.

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MORE NEWS

National Sports Library

The National Sports Library is a community-based project, which aims to assist all of our 'Grass roots amateur sports clubs'. As you may be aware this is a totally non-commercial project and as such we are looking for assistance in 'letting people know' that this initiative is now live.

Totally free, the national sports library has a host of 'features' for all to take advantage of. From recruiting new players to advertising an event, from publishing match reports to gaining maximum free PR the national sports library is fast becoming a tool for all clubs, leagues and governing bodies alike.

One of the main objectives is to familiarise people with technology. We ask for your support in this. You can help by spreading the word. Firstly check it out at www.nationalsportslibrary.co.uk, I am sure you will agree that this is something which we and our communities need.

National Sports Library

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New arrival

Sarah Eilidh Pedley was born on Easter Sunday (15th April) at 06:37 weighing 6lb 13oz.... so Helen and Mike will have plenty to do whilst there isn't any fell racing and orienteering!!!

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Membership Changes

Mark Chapman, Tel. 07811 267275.

A.G.M.

DPFR AGM 4/4/2001
Maynard Arms, Grindleford.

The Maynard provided a warm welcome as usual, with a special menu and free use of the upstairs room. Approximately 45 members attended.

1. Apologies

Dick Pasley, Mike Pedley, Mark Harvey, Alan Yates, Howard Swindells, Jacky Smith.

2. The minutes of the 2000 AGM were agreed.

3. Matters arising - none.

4. Annual Reports

4.1 Chairman - see separate written report [*not yet received for the newsletter*]. Dave also explained some of the background to our disqualification from the Calderdale Way relay. He also stressed the need for everyone to adhere to the temporary access restriction due to Foot and Mouth. Report accepted.

4.2 Secretary - see separate written report. Bob also mentioned that the Countryside Bill had completed its passage through Parliament and the Right to Roam was now law, although ongoing was a lengthy process of mapping and Local Access Forums looking at individual areas. Eric Mitchell said that this process would take about two years in the Peak District, before we'd notice any significant difference in access. Bob

also explained the decision to repay the Calderdale Way prize money from club funds. Report accepted.

4.3 Treasurer - see attached accounts. Roger Woods questioned the amount of interest paid on the current account and offered to shop around to find a better deal.

It was noted that a £600 profit was made on the relays. There followed a lengthy discussion of how this money and any other surplus should be used. Eric Mitchell suggested that we make a contribution to organisations who have helped promote and maintain access to fell running country, by for example, footpath reopening and maintenance. He mentioned The Ramblers Association and the National Trust. Paul Sanderson said it was dangerous to set a precedent and race organisers have caused themselves trouble by making donations to "political" organisations. Andy Harmer suggested that race accounts should be published to the penny and all profits should go back to the runners. Roy Small said we were worried that we could make a loss on the relay. Andy Moore said we charged a fair entry fee, but he deliberately set out to make a profit to boost club funds at the Burbage race. Maurice Musson said that Topley used profits from races to subsidise weekend trips for race marshals. John Myers suggested a donation to farmers charities for those affected by Foot and Mouth. Generally there was a feeling that we could donate something, but not be tied in to making donations in further years.

Motion: To establish a Presidents fund of £250 in 2001 (and for one year only) for a donation to a worthy cause. The committee will liaise with the President to decide how the money is spent.

Proposed: Hugh Cotton

Seconded: Andy Harmer. Motion Carried.

The Treasurers report was accepted.

5. Race reports

Dave Holmes read out an Email from Dick Pasley thanking everyone for their efforts at the relays. Dave went on to congratulate everyone on the success of the event. The 2001 Skyline was cancelled due to Foot and Mouth. Andy Moore read his race report of the Burbage race. Everyone agreed it was a great success and thanked Andy. The 2001 Burbage race has been cancelled.

6. Election of officers

Chairman - Dave Holmes re-elected. As Dave has mentioned in his report he was willing to continue for one more year, but after that he thought it was time some one else took over the job. He suggested someone might like to shadow him this year, before taking over the job fully.

Secretary - Bob Berzins re-elected.

Treasurer - Jeff Harrison re-elected.

- Club Captain - Rob Davison
- Membership Secretary - Tim Tett re-elected.
- Newsletter Editor - Mike Pedley re-elected.
- Equipment Officer - Richard Hakes re-elected.
- Club Coach - Jacky Smith re-elected.
- Cross Country Secretary - Pete Dyke re-elected.
- Skyline Co-ordinator - Jim Fulton and Chris Barber.

Roy Small pointed out that he felt he no longer had responsibility for maintenance of the club hut. However as he'd done such a good job of the refurbishment, by unanimous approval he was elected to the new post of Honorary Hut Warden.

7. North of England Registration Scheme

Bob explained the latest situation as detailed in the Secretary's report. There had been some take up of the scheme within Dark Peak, but Bob pointed out the scheme is not compulsory - anyone wishing to run only on the fells does not need to join. Paul Sanderson was disappointed that, after the strong opinions expressed last year so few members of Dark Peak made it to the FRA AGM. Dave Holmes pointed out again our worry of the registration fee increasing in the future, but its still held at £1 for 2001.

8. Calderdale Way

Dave Holmes explained that with the change in club registration to the North of England, it was now easy (no extra cost) for clubs to affiliate to fell running. This might be a problem if DPFRR members are in another club, which they thought was a road/cross country club. Being in two fell clubs could cause them to be ineligible for Dark Peak. Pete Dyke said the secretary of Hallamshire had assured him that they would not affiliate for fell running. John Myers raised the issue of composition of teams and elite runners. Anne Watmore asked who is responsible for checking eligibility of runners in the relay teams. Bob said that in his view if a runner was in more than one club, or they had just swapped clubs they should ask for advice and get someone to check. Bob offered to check club affiliations and first claim status - he will put a permanent feature in the newsletter publicising this.

9. Any Other Business

Motion: That Dark Peak take up membership of www.pylonofthemonth.co.uk
 Proposed Jim Fulton, seconded Chris Barber.

Motion carried.

Meeting ended 10pm.

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Features

A Rum do

Richard Hakes, Dave Markham and myself were the Dark Peak contingent of a group of dads and lads who spent a week on the island of Rum over the Easter break. The trip had been called off, due to foot and mouth restrictions, but at the last minute word came through that part of the island had been opened, and as that part comprised the mountainous south eastern corner, including the Rum Coullins, the trip was very definitely on again.

The boat trip from Mallaig was memorable, taking three hours and calling at the magical islands of Eigg and Muck before dropping us out of a door in the side of the boat and shuttling us to the pier. We had to dip our feet in disinfectant and were then informed that we were only allowed to have access to 2 of the hills in the south east corner of the island. We were a bit disappointed and there seemed no real reason for this extra limitation of access. There was a rather arbitrary line on the map which we were not supposed to cross, although it was conceded that once we were up on the hills there was no way of knowing where we went. Rum is owned by Scottish Heritage and there is much research done by them on the deer population. There is no livestock however in the southern half of the island so we could not really understand why the lines were drawn where they were. We made no complaints but decided that we would just play it by ear.

Well, we behaved impeccably for most of the week and became very familiar with the wonderful hills of Hallival and Askival, enjoying sensational summit views to the other Small Isles and the mainland. We looked longingly at the close tops of Sgurr na Gillian, Ainsival and Trollaval, which were denied us. The weather forecast for the Thursday was particularly good however, and we decided that an early raid on the 3 illegal hills was called for. We had encountered lots of deer on the permitted hills. The other three were part of the same group and we felt justified in extending the arbitrary line a few hundred feet to allow us to take in these forbidden fruits.

We had a 6 a.m. start and set off from our farmhouse bothy to walk the 6 mile coastal path. We should have run it really but I for one was already pretty tired from 5 days of hillwalking so we walked. We reached Dibidil bothy at 8 a.m. It was occupied by a group of guys who we'd met on a couple of occasions during the week. They were walking the hills at times but were also drinking quite a lot and were sending one of their group on the 12 mile round trip back to the Kinloch shop for a rucsac full of tinnies. Well we didn't disturb them this morning but crept past their bothy and entered forbidden territory.

It was a glorious morning and as we climbed the southern slopes of Sgurr na Gillian the views out to Eigg and over to Muck, Colonsay and Tiree were breathtaking. We had a steep climb but stopped regularly to gaze around at the sea and the sky and these wonderful mountains which we had completely to ourselves. Or had we?

Five Club Fred

Fred Feckless was a member of Honinger Harriers Threkeld AC. He was also a member of Black Beak Boggers, Chefs of Fidelity AC, Bateman's Harriers and LummoX Women's Institute.

He was a member of five different clubs so that he could attend five different Christmas booze ups.

Honinger Harriers had lots of long boring speeches. Black Beak Boggers used to go to a café for tea and scones. Chef's of Fidelity never bothered to organise anything special but simply stayed in the pub longer after training one evening. Bateman's Harriers went to every pub on West Street as a prelude to a ruby whilst LummoX had a disco. Since all the clubs in Threkeld all thought they were the best and everyone else was useless, they only looked for their own names in any race results and so no-one noticed what Fred was up to.

But being a member of five different clubs did have disadvantages. Fred had to pay five lots of subscriptions each year and read five dreadful club newsletters every month. Added to this, each club actually expected him to race from time to time. For Honinger Harriers he ran Cross Country. Boggers made him run up and down steep hills. His speciality with Chef's of Fidelity was on the track at 5,000 metres and Steeplechase whilst his Bateman's vest was most often seen on the road. At LummoX he was one of their best joggers.

All this competition sometimes wore Fred out but being a member of five clubs did have other benefits. As an excuse to escape his wife, he had the choice of five training sessions to go to on each night of the week with five different pubs to go drinking at afterwards.

In fact, life for Fred was almost perfect until one cold damp day he pulled his hamstring.

Poor Fred! He was sent to see the physiotherapist not once, not twice but five times, by five different coaches. The physio said that Fred's hamstring wasn't nearly as bad as he was making it out to be but, to be on the safe side, he ought to have some deep massage and a cortisone injection. Poor Fred! He didn't have one thumb jammed into his groin, he had five, while his bum was like a pin cushion by the time the physio had finished.

Now one hairy bum may look very much like another but no-one, not even a busy physio, could stick the same needle into the same backside five times and not become suspicious. Sure enough, when she checked her appointment book she noticed that she had treated the same athlete five times but he had been referred to her by five different club coaches. So she rang the club secretaries at once.

Alas Fred had been found out.

The club coaches couldn't really care less what Fred did as long as he trained hard and kept on winning races but the secretariat took a different view. They stated that Fred had no business drinking so much beer and having such a good time and from now on he could only be a member of one club. (Except LummoX that is who simply expelled him from their team).

But Fred was a five booze up a year man so he moved Strictly Residents AC.

Now Residents were spread across the whole of Threkeld and trained on five different nights from five different venues. They were a sociable lot and were always enjoying themselves having things like bar-b-ques, handicap races and long Sunday runs ending at a pub, plus the normal Christmas do. In fact it was even better because, when last counted, there were no fewer than thirteen events involving alcohol listed in the club newsletter for the year; in addition to the normal after training drinking sessions.

And since everyone knew was Fred was up to, nobody cared - as long as he kept on winning races that is!

"Gilbert Portenbrew"

Originally published in Steel City Striders Newsletter 2000; thanks to Peter Brown for sending it in

Reports and Results

Sky Run : 25-26 November 2000

Witteberge/ Southern Drakensberg , South Africa

So the story goes that the Sky Run Echo Challenge is based on the "Skywalk Mountain Wilderness Trail" founded in 1991 by a bloke called John Michael Tawse a missionary from Aliwal North in the Eastern Cape and was designed purely for spiritual motivation! Not one to spread lavatorial gossip however, but rumour has it that he was hooked on a blond Afrikaans chick originally from Ventersdorp who happened to be staying in Rhodes approximately 160 km from his 'boardary' (farmstead). Now JM was not a wealthy man and the only horse that resided in his town had been shot for biltong! So basically the quickest and shortest route to his fair 'meise' (lady) was by the only other mode of transport he possessed - Shankse's pony over local 'ills.

Whatever the truth maybe, we will never know, however it turned out to be one hell of a mountain traverse.

Traditionally Sky Run starts on the last Saturday of November from Lady Grey, nestling at the foot of the Berg. The route ascends steeply to an average height of 2500 meters and follows the main ridge line of the Witteberge mountain range or the Southern Drakensbergs, along the Herchel border fence that divides Lesotho, Transkie and South Africa. Eventually climbing to an altitude of 3001 meters on Ben Macdhuhi the highest peak in the Eastern Cape before a bone jerking descent to the finish at the ski resort in Tiffindel 140 km later, where it has been known to snow sometimes in June!!

Originally this region was surveyed by the early British settlers back in 1826. All the peaks and dales are aptly named after well known Welsh, Scottish and Lakeland landmarks, Ben Nevis, Ben Macdhuhi, Pitlochrie, Snowdon, Bedgelert, Skiddaw and Helvellyn are but a few.

The day of the race finally dawned and as the race report in the January issue of Runners World (RSA edition) elaborately wrote. "Seventy Four extremely adventurous, daring and maverick mountain athletes set off to the blast of a rams horn under the pre-dawn starlit skies only to be consumed by dark and mysterious mountains, like lambs to the slaughter".

I have read similar accounts of British folly during my rambles to historical landmarks such as "Rorkes Drift, Isandlwana and Spion Kop!

Once the deserted dusty streets of Lady Grey were negotiated and care not to awaken the ten residents that were unfortunate to reside there, the road eventually petered out into a narrow but well worn track. Climbing steeply for a further 8 km, this forms part of the Lammergeyer Mountain trail, which disappears into oblivion on the summit of the Microwave Tower (2484m), and the first check point.

It was here that a small lead group of seven runners were met by a spectacular blood red sunrise appearing over the remote Transkie mountains to the east and breathtaking views over the Herchel district and beyond.

I was in good company. Two times winner of the event Bruce Arnet from rival Jo'burg club RAC, Robin Gardener from Natal and record holder of numerous long mountain traverses and Roger Steel from Cape Town, second in the Three Peaks challenge that takes in Devils Peak, Table Mountain and Lions Head. The remaining numbers were made up of local farm lads and aspiring would be Jos Naylor.

So the stage was set for a right good old lively ding dong over the next stage that followed the boundary fence, contouring Olympus Beacon (2452m), Graskop (2572m) and Snowdon Peak (2725m) and the 40km mark. A somewhat tough undulating traverse with rocky outcrops of jagged basalt, knee deep moorland grasses and the occasional venomous Berg Adder.

One of the main problems was water, or rather the lack of it. As I peered up into a cloudless blue sky I observed a group of Cape Griffin Vultures spiraling upwards on an endless thermal obviously delighted at seeing breakfast approaching on the hoof in the form of a group of scrawny runners.

It was on the steep climb up to Avoca Peak (2769m) that Bruce made a break with yours truly hanging onto his bumbag for dear life (He's a nice boy is Bruce). Roger began to fade rapidly over the marshy section and was beginning to feel the effect of altitude having complained about a headache earlier, or was it the ale at the pasta party!

At Avoca checkpoint we were well clear and making good progress. By Skiddaw summit (2407m) and 70km we were alone with only the Black Eagles and the occasional Mountain Reedbuck for company. By the Dragons Back, a long rocky knife-edge ridge extremely precarious and requiring high levels of concentration as one slip either side would certainly make your eyes water. By the end of the traverse I was totally alone – Bruce had ditched me and I was digging deep into my reserves having “bonked”.

The long rough descent into Balloch valley was difficult terrain to negotiate and by now getting very warm took its toll. To make matters worse a marshal at the Rondavals checkpoint sent me in the wrong direction by pointing to the river. I automatically assumed that he meant run down the river literally. Where I commenced thrashing aimlessly around for half an hour in waist deep water, cursing the marshal and questioning his line of parentage before realising that there was a good footpath that ran parallel to the river all the way down to Balloch cave. This obviously delighted a troop of Baboons perched high up amongst the sandstone crags and appeared to mock this diabolical blunder and their barks echoed all the way down into the valley below.

By the time I reached Balloch cave checkpoint and my support party I was well ‘balloched’ and 40 minutes behind the leader.

One of South Africa's hidden jewels, tucked under soaring berg cliff faces, with majestic sandstone sculptured buttresses, lush mountain grasslands, rushing streams and waterfalls cascading through indigenous forests, Ballochs unique wildlife and fauna is quite magnificent (I got this crap from a Thompsons brochure).

After a change of clothing, footwear and replenished sustenance I was back on my feet only to see Bruce disappear over ‘Balloch Wall’ the next daunting obstacle. Consisting of 900 meters of very steep grassy ascent ending in granite cliffs just thrown in for good measure. This took me the best part of 45 minutes to scale and the descent into Lundins valley was hard on tired limbs and quite jarring over lime stone klints, very similar to those on the flanks of Ingleborough in the Yorkshire Dales.

My objective was to reach Wildfell checkpoint before night fall approximately 10km away and get back onto the mountain ridge where navigation is quite straight forward to the finish in Tiffindel. That was the plan!!

The long slog up to Wildfell on a dirt road was run at a good even pace and I reached the army checkpoint in good time only to find that the leader had only departed 10 minutes ago and was looking rather jaded. This gave me a lot of encouragement to say the least and decided to take in some well earned grub provided by a South African look alike to Baldwick out of black adder. What I didn't consider was how quick it gets dark here and before I could stagger back onto my feet the mountain ridge loomed dark and daunting some 5km away and the first fireflies flickered in the still night.

I reached the gully which formed the initial ascent back onto the main ridge without much fuss and congratulated myself on my efficient orienteering skills, however this was to be short lived.

Once at the top of the gully I came upon a vertical cliff face with a fence attached to it, once again assuming that this was the boundary fence that followed the main ridge. Just like the proverbial sheep I followed it to the summit expecting to see the ridge fall away in a North Westerly direction only to find that I was stranded on an isolated knoll with sheer cliff faces all around, aptly named 'Loskop' (lost head). A huge chasm lay between me and the main ridge now on the East! In sheer panic I hurtled down the cliff face back to the fence faster than intended, my head torch took the full impact and disintegrated on contact with the basalt rocks below. Bruised, shaken and very pissed off, I stumbled back down the gully and proceeded a painful contour back around and up to the ridge on a bearing taken from the map. If I had continued back along the fence I would have found a good path all the way up to the ridge. This was explained to me afterwards - but too "bloody" late was the cry.

What seemed endless after tearing myself to ribbons on thorn scrub and falling into hidden stream ways I finally reached a grassy but steep embankment that slowly and torturously led me to Breslins Kop (2863m) and back onto the main ridge. What should have taken me 45 minutes to scale the ridge from Wildfell took me two and half hours.

The lonely ridge run now above 3000 meters on well trodden paths gave some respite on tired limbs. The tranquil African night sky was incredibly beautiful enhanced by the occasional shooting star and the distant eerie cry of a Black Backed Jackel caught on the cool evening air somewhere on Ben Macdhui's summit now looming directly in front of me. This and knowing that the finish was close inspired me into a brisker pace and virtually cantered up to the summit checkpoint onto Ben Mac's plateau having to wake up the marshal by shaking the tent vigorously in the process. Thereafter starting the long steep descent to the Tiffindel ski resort its lights now clearly visible below.

I finished fourth overall in 21 hours losing two places during my walk about on Loskop. Bruce Arnet went on to break the course record in 17 hours 57 minutes.

Edale Roads Race : 22 April 2001

An elite group ran the inaugural, and hopefully only, race from the Nag's Head, to Mam Nick, Pindale, Cheshire Cheese and back to Edale. Most chose wisely, turning right out of the village and getting the hills out of the way early. Coming the other way, up the Winnatts, did give the views of remembered days over Kinder. Peaceful cries of lambs, still alive. The rolling prizes worked well, supporting the local shop – I handed on two tins of soup to receive three cream eggs ! As has almost been written, " It's a poor man who can't come last in his own race ".

Dave Tait

Pos	Name	Time
1	I.Smith	1:16:24
2	A.Sealy	1:18:08
3	P.Winskill	1:19:10
4	M.Robinson	1:20:28
5	J.Boyle	1:22:16
6	P.Cox	1:24:53
7	A.Jenkins	1:25:50
8	D.Tait	1:30:29

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Blacka Moor Benchmark : 25 April 2001

Thanks for an excellent turnout for this new race on a pretty inhospitable, most people's journeys to the start being accompanied by hail and thunderstorms. There were 33 starters, some late, and 27 finishers , six retiring or not completing the route. There were also a couple of other runners out for a run.

The course was suitably wet and muddy after the downpour giving rise to favourable Dark Peak conditions underfoot. There were a few route choices, some it appears by accident and bad map reading. Only Mark Harvey observed the correct number of benches in addition to myself, namely nine. One wooden bench was passed three times at checkpoint 1, 8 and 13. There was a stone bench on the boundary wall between 2 and 3, and 11 and 12 near the badger setts and gorse bushes. This should have been passed twice on the optimum route choice! There were four other solitary benches : one on the left on the climb to checkpoint 1, one in the rhododendron bushes between 5 and 6, one on the descent from checkpoint 7 and one on the climb from 8 to 9 just after the wall crossing. A two minute penalty was added to each competitors finishing time for every bench missed (or in the case of Tim Ray additional benches claimed!). The attached results sheet shows the finishing positions of everyone and also their final places after penalties.

Ian Smith, who started four minutes after everyone else won a cream egg for finishing up in first position even without this four minutes taken off his time. However there was some dispute afterwards as to whether he went to checkpoint 6. Tim Tett missed out on his cream egg by not being in the pub. Andy Moore moved to third position and

claimed first Vet40 as he was in the pub, receiving another cream egg. Hilary Bloor became first lady with an observant run netting 8 benches and got a cream egg. As is always said in Dark Peak races, "It's a poor organiser who can't win his own race", so on moving up to seventh place I won first Vet50 and kept an egg for myself. Paul Sanderson had a good observant run and finished in fourth place receiving an egg.

Cream eggs were also awarded to Lynn Bland for best haircut, John Myers for coming last and finishing in the dark whilst we were all in the pub, Tim Ray for finishing , missing checkpoint 14, then climbing up to claim it and then claiming he had counted 27 benches so clocking up the most penalties, and to Hilary for timekeeping. However she was pretty upset when she realised someone had pinched it from her seat in the pub. A further cream egg was given to Richard Hopkinson incorrectly but he is a good egg anyway.

Moz.

pos	name	Finish time	benches	penalty	Final time	Finish pos
1	Ian Smith	1-06-26	8	2-00	1-08-26	2
2	Tim Tett	1-05-15	6	6-00	1-11-15	1
3 [1 st M40]	Andy Moore	1-07-59	7	4-00	1-11-59	4
4	Paul Sanderson	1-10-34	8	2-00	1-12-34	6
5	Mark Harvey	1-14-44	9	Nil	1-14-44	9
6	Andrew Middleditch	1-11-08	5	8-00	1-19-08	7
7 [1 st M50]	Maurice Musson	1-20-10	9	Nil	1-20-10	18
8	Dave Holmes	1-10-27	4	10-00	1-20-27	5
9	Gavin Williams	1-14-42	6	6-00	1-20-42	8
10	Tom Westgate	1-15-40	6	6-00	1-21-40	11
11	Richard Hakes	1-16-02	6	6-00	1-22-02	13
12	Richard Hopkinson	1-15-06	5	8-00	1-23-06	10
13	Dave Allen	1-07-29	1	16-00	1-23-29	3
14	John Gunney	1-19-42	7	4-00	1-23-42	16
15	Phil Cox	1-15-51	5	8-00	1-23-51	12
16 [1 st F]	Hilary Bloor	1-22-26	8	2-00	1-24-26	20
17	Alan Yates	1-19-41	5	8-00	1-27-41	15
18	Lynn Bland	1-20-07	5	8-00	1-28-07	17
19	Roy Small	1-26-00	7	4-00	1-30-00	22
20	Tim Hawley	1-16-02	5	8-00	1-30-02	14
21	Clive Last	1-20-16	4	10-00	1-30-16	19
22	Andy Harmer	1-32-37	6	6-00	1-38-37	23
23	Rob Mason	1-37-14	7	4-00	1-41-14	25
24	Mick Poulter	1-37-14	6	6-00	1-43-14	26
25	Hugh Cotton	1-32-37	3	12-00	1-44-37	24
26	Tim Ray	1-23-48	27	36-00	1-59-48	21
27	John Myers	2-10-00	5	8-00	2-18-00	27

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Sheffield Marathon : 29 April 2001

Leave Don Valley Stadium, round the East end for 4 miles then out past the canal & slag reclamation plant, under the motorway, past the back end of the airport and to a roundabout in Catliffe. Then back on the same route to the stadium. Round the stadium then at the end run through a gate where the 1/2 marathon runners ran in to the finish whilst the full marathon runners repeated the whole process again. Some areas of some support and other areas where you could run for a mile and not see anyone except other runners.

Makes a change and makes you appreciate the fells even more.

Jim Fulton

1	Darren Hale	(Salford)	2:30.17
53	Michael Robinson		3:11.00
54	Chris Ledger		3:11.01
56	Dave Tait	M50/5 th	3:12.22
101	Philip Elliot	M40/39 th	3:26.32
124	Bernard Jobson	M50/12 th	3:31.52
188	Jim Fulton	M40/55 th	3:48.36

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Porter Valley Plunge (2) : 1 May 2001

In true DPFR style Gavin won his own race, but only because the whippets were saving themselves for the Tigers Ten the following evening. Lynn tracked Roy all the way, then burnt him off for second place on the gruelling up-hill finish. Firm conditions and enhanced local knowledge meant that everybody recorded a PB, with the exception of Jim - but I guess he had an excuse, having completed the Sheffield marathon at the weekend.

Gavin Williams

1	Gavin Williams	35.51
2	Lynn Bland	43.07
3	Roy Small	43.21
4	Maurice Musson	43.51
5	Hugh Cotton	44.12
6	Hilary Bloor	44.29
7=	Jim Fulton	48.41
7=	Kevin Saville	48.41
9	John Myers and Bess	57.50

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Round the Parks : 18 May 2001

Now it has to be said that this was a small and very select race, followed sometime later by a motley crew. The small and very select part was John and Charlie, who no doubt clung together like limpets and tussled all the way round, with a bare seven seconds separating them at the end. Maybe they repeatedly changed position, and came hammering down through the woods at breakneck speed, each trying to get into the narrow ginnel first. Maybe Charlie slowed momentarily to avoid injury to a slow moving pedestrian? Perhaps he stopped to let a little old granny successfully meander across his path? But we will never know... [*ed. But we DO know; see later!*]

It should be reported that the organiser arrived on his trusty steed with a totally adequate collection of maps (GW take note) and announced his non competitive status following a bit of road-rash when his fiesty steed collapsed beneath him. He also tried the old 'calf injury' ploy, but from the clip in shoes and slick lycra outfit, it was clear that he was determined to break the spirit of his temperamental cycle.

Now, at the motley crew end of the race things were very different. It was more a case of 'Nature Ramble meets Dog Obedience Class'. Much re-grouping took place, long delays ensued when the hound from hell and whipper-in went awol, dog walkers were terrorised, cokes were snorted and golfers were vilified (I think the dog took their ball....).

I'm certain I could knock at least 15 minutes off my time, but as that would only move me up from 3rd to 3rd, it didn't seem worth trying....

Mike F Browell

How I won but didn't...

This was perhaps the most bizarre race I've taken part in. The start was what could be called informal, as five men and a dog jogged off across the playing fields towards the edge of Ecclesall Woods. By the start of the woods (i.e. after about 400m) I found myself in a commanding lead! Although I didn't realise it at the time, John (Boyle) had suffered from cramp and had had to stop and stretch for a minute or so. Consequently I was running alone for the next hour.

Apart from a slight hesitation at the top end of Graves Park (and a brief stop to remove my orthotics) I was pretty pleased with my route-finding. Even so, I had been expecting John to catch me for the last hour. I even began to think perhaps he'd got past in Ecclesall Woods without me seeing him? But then, as I looked behind to check traffic when crossing a road in the London Road area, there he was!

John hung back as we ran through Brincliffe, presumably hoping to 'Worsell' me! He finally caught me as I waited for a green man before crossing Ecclesall Road at Hunter's Bar. I was convinced at this point that he would have the momentum and would leave me for dead as we climbed the Porter Clough. I therefore played my psychological trump card: I said casually to him as started on our way through Endcliffe Park 'We must be about half way by now', knowing of course that we had done at least two thirds of the course! This ploy seemed to do the trick and I pulled

away as we climbed the clough. A spurt once we reached the road at the top sealed it and, looking back as I reached Ringinglow, there was no sign of John behind.

The detour through Smeltings Farm was new to me and I wasn't quite sure how far down Ringinglow Road we needed to go before turning off. However it proved pretty obvious and my only problem was a slip on a stile as I passed the farm which led to a cut hand and a map splattered with blood. The downhill finish through Limb Valley would have been very pleasant had my right foot not been giving me so much pain. I reached the finish in a time of 1 hour 54 minutes. John was approximately 1 minute behind, which bears no relation to the 'official results'! I must apologize to the others in the 'race' for not waiting to see them finish. I guess by then I'd got home, had a bath and had my feet up watching England give Pakistan a good stuffing at cricket!

Thanks go to Bob for the excellent organisation (especially for the magnificent course-marking!). Commiserations to all those who didn't turn up: you missed a pleasant run through bluebell-carpeted woods with the smell of Spring in the air.

Charlie Adams

Official results....

1	John Boyle	1:54:20
2	Charlie Adams	1:54:27
	then a long wait...	
3	Mike Browell	3:09:22
4	Al Pollard	3:09:23
5	John Myers	3:15:00

ACTUAL RESULTS

1	Charlie Adams	1:53:27?
2	John Boyle	1:54:20?
	then a long wait...	
3	Mike Browell	3:09:22
4	Al Pollard	3:09:23
5	John Myers	3:15:00

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Porter Valley Plunge (3) : 22 May 2001

A sweaty evening but surely both Tim and Phil could have broken Ian Smith's course record (35.01) if they had not been chatting most of the way round! With moorland access now starting to open up this was probably the last running of the PVP - although it may rise again as a night race come the Winter.

Thanks to everybody for their support.

Gavin Williams

1	Tim Austin	35.02	6	Lynn Bland	43.21
2	Phil Winskill	35.18	7	Maurice Musson	43.48
3	Gavin Williams	36.02	8	Jim Fulton	49.44
4	Roy Small	41.31	9	John Myers	52.53
5	Chris Barber	41.42	dnf	Peter MacFarlane	

In Gear

Club Kit

Vests

There are now plenty of vests available in most sizes, the cotton vests are £12.00 and the synthetic vests are £13.00

Hats

Knitted, one size fits all and available in green, blue, black and red for £7.00. There are some new fleece hats in a variety of colours they are a little bit on the big size but only £5.00 both types of hat have the club badge.

Tracksters

The current tracksters are only in purple (at the moment) but I do have them in small, medium, large and extra large £18.00

Shorts

I have the new shiny dark peak cycling type shorts with dark peak down the leg for £14.00 there are a few (very) old pairs of shorts that have been left since Howard's days for only £5.00

Fleece tops

I have both zipped for £20.00 and unzipped for £15.00 they are in various sizes and colours it is best to check I can get these ordered if there are any requests.

Polo shirts

There are only a few of these left they are all blue long sleeve £15.00 and short sleeve £11.00.

For any of the club kit please see me at a club night or race or even give me a ring on 0114 233 9912 or 0114 277 6309.

I can post the smaller things out for 50p but the fleeces cost £2.50 as they are a bit bigger.

Richard Hakes

richard_hakes@yahoo.com

Shops and Discounts

Many local gear shops give discounts to club members (exact amount varies with shop and product) but the list is quite out of date. Please let Richard know of any shops where you get discount and level of discount you got.

Editorial

Great to be back!

The last week in May was a significant one in this rather dismal year (so far) as a Wednesday club run finally reached some classic Peak District terrain. It came on a hastily re-arranged run from Cutthroat Bridge to benefit from the newly opened up Derwent Edge. It was a strange evening. The warm sunshine of Sheffield replaced by a cold wind and approaching rain. From Whinstone Lee Tor the view west made Edale look like an old volcanic crater whilst Kinder loomed dark and imposing. It was an evening where fitness didn't matter, one to soak up the atmosphere. Great to be back!

Wild land Wild-life

A day later and a bit further North, another small part of the Pennines was reopened (Rishworth Moor which lies immediately the M62). Gone were the dreaded signs warning of heavy fines, replaced by a much more friendly code of conduct and a helpful map (not everything was open). Beyond the gate lay something of a revelation... I didn't recognise the path.

It was green! No trail bike tracks, not even a Walsh print and the muddy strip was replaced by spring green grass. At least something has benefited from the rest! And are there more birds on the moors this year? The grass is longer, less burning, fewer sheep, better for nesting or is it just my imagination?

Access is such a fine balance especially in our precious lungs of open space between the urban expanse of Sheffield and Manchester. Yet the more access is restricted the bigger the impact on the accessed area. Soon much of that will change and not before time but we need to maintain a balance and be careful not to destroy the reason for being there. Maybe access based on trespassing has its good points after all! A good project there for someone!

Warning: Hills can bite!

So we can all feel great and head for the hills. But watch out; those hills can bite! Do you remember when you first started fell running or first moved to a hilly area? Burning quads, aching knees and maybe a sprinkling of twisted ankles. Legs which have been running trails or laps of a local park could get a big shock when faced with 1500' of descent or miles of heather and tussock clad moor.

A year in a half

It's been a slow start to the year, the solstice is almost upon us. Many of the year's events are lost for good... but not all. Let's really make it a good summer and autumn. Get back on the fells and support what races there are. What better excuse is needed to make this year's Thornbridge weekend a really special one? Put the 31st August - 2nd September in your diary now. See you there!

Mike Pedley

The-bit-at-the-end

Dark Peak News Autumn 2001

In the Next Issue:

All the summer race report!
Thornbridge (foot and mouth permitting) alternatively....

Poetry competition with prizes for best poem on the subject of "anything-but-fell-running"

If you run a race... TELL EVERYONE! A copy of the results and 1 paragraph to go with it can make a huge difference to the readability of the newsletter!

Articles can be submitted handwritten, typed or in electronic format on disk or via e-mail. Please use the electronic option if you can – a diskette or via e-mail to:

mike@frosthole.demon.co.uk

MS Word format preferred at the moment but I can read/convert most formats.

Deadlines for submission: **Wednesday 5 September 2001**
Publication date: **Wednesday 26 September 2001**

Thanks

PLEASE USE AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT IF YOU CAN (but scrappy bits of paper still accepted!) So if your results or article didn't make it, sorry, watch out next issue! As always, new articles and authors welcome.

Thanks for D.P.News Summer 2001 to; Charlie Adams, Bob Berzins, Mike Browell, Peter Brown, Andy Forsyth, Jim Fulton, Richard Hakes, Maurice Musson, Dick Pasley, Dave Tait, Gavin Williams

Covers

Thanks to Richard Hakes for:
Howard's view from Hallival (front)
Sign of the times (rear)

And finally for those with anoraks... keep up-to-date with the latest DPFR news and results at:

www.frosthole.demon.co.uk/dpfr or www.dpfr.co.uk
