

GOING THE DISTANCE

BOB GRAHAM 1991

We left the Moot Hall in torrential rain but, as we headed up Newlands Valley, spirits were high with a forecast for brighter weather later in the day. By the top of Robinson the rain had stopped and we enjoyed a clear run to Hindscarth and Dalehead.

At a Honister the 'Henson Little Chef' was open so we ate full English breakfast before the staff wished us on our way. We climbed Grey Knotts and into the mist. The wind increased and light rain made us cold but the familiar bits of twisted fence reassured us of our route. Descending Great Gable was difficult in visibility but the line off was found perfectly, as was the poor line to the summit of Kirk Fell, by a Mr and Mrs Sant who annually run a guided tour from Honister to Wasdale on this very weekend.

to The mist didn't clear until we were coming down Red Pike Door Head. I sat down and stripped to shorts and heli-top, it was getting warm. The afternoon looked promising, the clouds were gaining height and the sun was trying its best. Down Yewbarrow Screes and into Wasdale car park where we ate peaches and rice pudding, changed our socks and generally prepared for the big climb up Scafell.

11

As expected, this was a real 'pull', up one of the biggest. climbs on the whole round although, as I was to find out later, not the hardest. Matt said he felt a bit 'off' by the time reached the top. I think we ate too much in Wasdale but his colour soon returned to normal as we headed for Scafell Pike. we

We took the West Gill/Lords Rake option and, although a few minutes longer, it saved any waiting or anxious moments on Broad Stand. The ground is very rocky from Scafell to Bowfell and I was glad I had changed into clean dry socks at Wasdale. My feet were comfortable and the bright conditions made the going pleasurable.

a By Bowfell we had been going for nearly 10 hours and were 26 minutes behind schedule. We were reminded by John (Armistead) that little urgency was called for but no panic. Down the rake and onto Rossett Pike was quick (1) and we were soon crossing Stake Gill and heading for Pike o' Stickle. It towered above us, magnificent and proud, the evening sun paying tribute to its lofty position overlooking the Langdale valley. No time for sentiment, my body was questioning the task it was about to perform. It was a welcome stop therefore, albeit short, for Tom and Enid's fruit cake and rice pud at the stream junction between the Pikes.

Dunmail was reached only 7 minutes down on our scheduled time. Another change of socks and away up Seat Sandal with fresh supporters. I regard the next three summits as the 'killer bit', Colin calls it 'Hell Fire Corner'. Seat Sandal, Fairfield and Dollywaggon, a total of 3760 feet of ascent in 2 hours, and after 15 hours and 27 summits no wonder! If there was ever a point on the while round where I allowed a thread of doubt to cross my stubborn mind it was climbing Dollywaggon Pike. That familiar conflict of persuasions where the body is telling you

to stop and the brain says 'keep going'. Eventually, with the help of Bob's jelly fruitgums, the gradient eased and then levelled. Matt was just in front; he waited. I couldn't see his face and I'm glad he couldn't see mine. The sky was pitch black now. Someone said we minutes up and that was all that was required to bring the enthusiasm and energy surging back. were two

For the next three hours we jogged along the Helvellyns and Dodds with head torches blazing and making good progress. We dropped off Clough Head and into Threlkeld just after 2am. Bacon sandwiches and tea were eagerly accepted from the Dark Peak roving chuck wagon and because we were nearly 20 minutes ahead of our schedule we spent the time in hand replenishing vital food reserves in readiness for the last section.

The climb up Halls Fell is for me the finest mountain ascent we in the Lake District, but this time it was dark raining and were soon in thick cloud. It took us 1 hour and twenty minutes of care and concentration to reach the top and for once I was glad to be off the ridge. The run down Mungrisdale Common was uneventful and by the time we reached Great Calva it was light. Up by the fence and then the view, through the mist and up to the last peak.

Again a long wet slog, keeping Hare Crag to our left we climbed up the ever steepening side of this final barrier between us and Keswick. Eventually I could see the line of the wire fence through the mist and knew that the top of Skiddaw was a matter of

12

minutes, not hours, away. We ran along the rocky top to the trig pillar with a feeling of almost smug satisfaction, knowing it was 'all downhill from here'.

away We didn't stop. The wind was cold and the stony path dipped invitingly towards civilisation. As we descended, the steepness increased and so did the pace. The feeling of tiredness seemed to have gone. We raced down Jenkin Hill chatting and joking to our supporters who, unlike us, had rucksacks to contend with. At the road and at various points down through the wood and into the park, friends came to meet us and joined us for the 'run-in'.

It was 7:24 (and back in torrential rain) when we reached the Moot Hall and it had taken us 23 hours and 24 minutes. We were congratulated by our fellow club members who had supported and fed us. Many had themselves completed the Bob Graham Round in previous years and now unselfishly acknowledged and shared in our success.

Frank decided not to to an ankle Common. Paul month later with Roger Unfortunately, two lads didn't make it on this occasion. carry on after Dunmail due problem and Paul disappeared exploring Mungrisdale did however complete the round Baumeister and Brian Harney supporting. a

each of you Thanks to Dark Peak Rent-a-Support'; too many to name but you know who you are. It was great to be in your company for a 'really good day on the fells'.

Dave Lockwood

Keswick (Start)	08:00	Harrison Stickle	19:11
Robinson	09:35	Thunacar Knott	19:18
Hindscarth	09:54	Sergeant Man	19:32
Dale Head	10:07	High Raise	19:38
Honister	10:15	Calf Crag	19:58
		Steel Fell	20:19
	10:23	Dunmail	20:30
Grey Knotts	10:48		20:43
Brandreth	10:55	Seat Sandal	21:22
Green Gable	11:10	Fairfield	22:06
Great Gable	11:23	Dollywagon Pike	22:53
Kirkfell	11:58	Nethermost Pike	23:10
Pillar	12:46	Helvellyn	23:28
Steeple	13:10	Helvellyn Low Man	23:39
Red Pike	13:28	White Side	23:50
Yewbarrow	14:01	Raise	00:01
Wasdale Head	14:20	Stybarrow Dodd	00:29
	14:35	Watson Dodd	00:39
Scafell	15:53	Great Dodd	00:52
Scafell Pike	16:32	Clough Head	01:24
Broad Crag	16:44	Threlkeld	02:03
Ill Crag	16:54		02:23
Great End	17:08	Blencathra	03:43
Esk Pike	17:27	Great Calva	05:09
Bowfell	17:46	Siddaw	06:29
Rossett Pike	18:07	Keswick (finish)	07:24
Pike O' Stickle	18:51		
		Total Time	23:24

Ed. Colin Henson has been having another look at the BG attempts Who has done the fastest sections; have over the past years. got the schedule right? Find out in the Winter 91/92 issue of Dark Peak News.

B.G. 3

F.G. 0

Most people will know by now that, one again I failed to complete Bob Graham Challenge. This time it was purely down failure in the moving parts namely the left knee and ankle. The match was declared a victory for Bob Graham at Dunmail after 13 hours.

for taking up space reason in the However, the main Newsletter is to once again thank all the supporters, especially Colin Henson who acted the organising supremo. Also to Matt Simms and Dave Lockwood. as congratulate the successful pair, Well done chaps!

Frank Galbraith