

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1985

Editor's Bit

Crawling from the wreckage of the A.G.M. comes the new newsletter. Storming down the tracks with a full head of steam; it's the same old train with a new engine. The old one's gone back to the depot for an overhaul. I'm told there's no more coal for the older engines. Hey Ed?

Martin Dale

Regretably we must begin this new era on a sad note.

FRED WILSON

Fred joined the FMC late in 1961 and in his first few years as a member did some rock climbing and was always a strong fell walker.

When electricity came to Little Langdale, Fred was one of the small team who wired the three cottages "Newhouses", and he also lent his skills in a similar capacity when Stair hut was built in 1969.

The skiing bug bit him in the early nineteen sixties and he became one of the Club's keenest and most proficient skiers, joining nearly all the ski holidays which were organised by Club members in the days before Fylde Ski Club was formed. His enthusiasm for skiing never waned and it was only four days after he and Dorothy returned from the French Alps that he left us.

As a teenager Fred was a keen cyclist with Cleveleys Road Club and in recent years he developed an interest in sailing and spent many days afloat, mainly with other club members. Many fine wines and excellent beers were produced over a period of many years in the Wilson house. Fred was highly respected at work for his ability, competence and thoroughness in a position of much responsibility

Those who spent days, weekends or weeks on the hills in Fred's company will not forget his comradeship and humour. Indeed the "Gentleman's Weekends" won't be quite the same again.

Recently we have all expressed our sympathies to Dorothy. The bonds which she and Fred made over the years with many of us will help her in the future. And memories ..... We all have our own; and those of Fred nearly all produce a smile.

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NOTES

New Members

The following are welcomed as introductory members:

Mr. Simon Whittaker	19 Rossall Lane, Rossall Park, Fleetwood. Tel. Fleetwood 3252
Mr. Roger Musson	27 Hillside Avenue, Kirkham, Lancs, PR4 2YR Tel. 685326
Carole Lee Bamber	80 St. Andrews Rd South, St. Annes-on-Sea.
Mr. P. Challinor	7 Orme St., Blackpool, FY1 4AL. Tel. 27490.
Mr & Mrs. B. Skitterall	47 Lawsons Road, Thornton, Lancs, Tel. 823300.

Mr & Mrs. Barrie Stott (Big Nob) are welcomed back as introductory members, now living at 37 The Poplars, Guiseley, Leeds LS20 9PF.  
Tel. 75112.

Full Members

The following are welcomed as full members:-

Matthew Henderson  
John and Jenny Parker  
Kevin Stephens  
James Creaves.

Change of Address:

Chris Campbell 12 Norton Drive, Irby, Wirral, Mersey ide  
L61 4XP. Tel 051 648 2011.

Vivienne and Mark Broughton 40 Gadshill Drive, Stoke  
Gifford, Bristol, BS12 6UX.

Andy Dunhill has recently moved to Newcastle-Upon-Tyne  
and can temporarily be found/contacted at 45 Tenth Ave, Heaton,  
Newcastle, the house of one William McRae!

Debbie Mabbett, who has been picked to fence for England. Hon Guard!  
now lives at 13 Fallowfield Road, Ansdell, St. Annes, Lancs.

Pete and Steph Hope, Thornbank, Copp Lane, Gt. Eccleston, Lancs.  
Tel. Gt. Eccleston 70331.

CONGRATULATIONS

Julie and Paul Reid wish to announce the coming of the new messiah!  
Young Benjamin Reid, weighed in at 71b.3ozs.

GOING AWAY

Andy Blaylock has decided to pack up his troubles in his little kitbag  
and go and retrieve his boomerang. Andy is off to Australia at the end  
of April for a year, where he hopes to do some climbing, and suss out  
the beaches and sheilaks. All the best, Nob.

SOCIALS (All held at 8.30 pm, The Buccaneer, unless otherwise stated)

1st May The Dave Earle Lecture! 'Skye'

15th May Rockclimbing in France - Al Phizacklea (of Scafell Guide-  
book Fame)

12th June Boozy Bike Ride Ring Don. Nichol for Details on Tel 869950.

FUTURE OUTDOOR MEETS

27/28th April Beginners Rock at Stair (Martin Dale. Tel. (work)  
856123, Ext.233.)

Try your hand at rockclimbing in Borrowdale, or hope-  
fully in the mountains. Expert tuition from the  
Club's top rock athletes and thugs. Anyone welcome,  
whether novice or experienced and just wanting to  
polish up on techniques. Psych up with Sean Smith;  
place runners with Kevin Stephens; Flash E3's with  
Mark Harding or stand on your head on the pinnacle  
of your choice with Pete Roscoe'.

4/5th May Stair Hut - Family Weekend  
Rock that Cradle with Dave Earle

11/12th May Ladies Meet (Liz Rawcliffe, Tel.31477)  
Bend the Gender, again with Dave Earle.

11/12th May Corris (John Wiseman, Tel.826594)  
A chance to sample the delights of Mid-Wales. Good  
walking country on Cader Idris and the Arans or the  
Dovey Forest, or climbing on Cader or Cowarch.  
All from a base of a snug cottage with a friendly  
pub along the road.

- 19th May Caving Meet (Mick Tolley on Preston 713817)  
Own transport. Ever fancied grovelling around underground? Now's your chance! Beginners welcome.
- 25/28th May Arran - camping. (Sean Smith on 866813)  
There's something for everyone on Arran, one of the best ridges in Scotland. Wonderful scenery and rock climbing on all grades on fantastic granite. The pubs are quite good too, with very flexible opening hours, even on a Sunday! Crossing by Ferry from Ardrossan to Brodick and camping in Glen Rosa. Ring Sean for further details of ferry times etc.
- 2/8th June Cluanie Lodge (Eddie Craig on Garstang 4169)  
This meet is already over subscribed but Eddie has a reserve list for anyone who is interested.
- 8/9th June Hut to Hut Walk (John Wiseman on 826594)  
Set out Saturday morning from Langdale to Stair by a route of your own choice. An easy walk with a Pub lunch or a long stride over the high hills. A limited amount of gear can be transported to Stair for you. If you want to save space you can always have a Saturday evening meal in the Swinside. On Sunday pick a route back to Langdale. With a bit of ingenuity there are many variations that can be planned. How many summits can you top in the two days? How many pints as well? Why not have a go?!
- 15/16th June Chester Hut (Mark Harding on 52166)  
A brilliant hut, excellently situated above the fleshpots, of Llanberis - handy for Cloggy!
- 23rd June Three Peaks Coach Meet (Mary Aspin on Fleetwood 6785)  
How fast can you do them? In which strange order can you bag them? How many cafes can you tick in between? Join Mary on this classic bog trot round the top three in Yorkshire (nearly).
- 29/30th June Ladies Meet (Mary Aspin, Fleetwood 6785)
- 24/31st August Lundy (Martin Dale on his work tel. 856123, Ex.233)  
14 places up for grabs - those in the Barn are already taken. Anyone interested in camping (those with strong tents), or being put on the reserve list, please get in touch with Martin as soon as possible. Cost - approx. £60. Hut and Heli.flight. £50. camping & helicopter.

Midweek Rockclimbing. As the light nights are now upon us, we can get out to the quarries in the evenings. Tuesday and Thursday night trips organised. Contact Martin Dale or Kevin Stephen, or any of the lads.

Up to date information about future meets and socials can be found on the colourful FMC notice board in the Climbing Dept. of the Alpine Centre, Church St., Blackpool.

HUT AVAILABILITY

April 5-7 Langdale  
12-13 Stair  
19-20 Vags Hut - Nant Peris  
27-28 Stair

May 3-5 Langdale (Stair, Families)  
10-11 Stair  
17-18 Langdale  
24-25 Stair  
31-1 Langdale

June 7-8 Hut to Hut (Both Huts available)  
14-15 Langdale  
21-22 Stair  
28-29 Langdale

July 5-6 Stair (Langdale, Families)  
12-13 Langdale  
19-20 Stair  
26-27 Langdale

Always book with John Wiseman - Tel.826594.

HOLIDAY 1985

Hi There! Mitchell Cliffmore here with some more ideas on how to spend your summer break.

BMC Courses BMC Services Ltd. Crawford House, Precinct Centre, Booth St East, Manchester M13 9RZ.

Rock Climbing (1 week course)

May 4th-9th Cornwall

May 25th-1st June Ogwen

July 20th-26th Peak District

August 10-17, 17-14, Capel Curig, Plas Y Brenin

October 27-1st November Cornwall

Price - £120.

Rock Climbing (3 day course)

July 15-17; 18-20 Peak District

Price - £55.

Rock Climbing for the over 50's

July 28-30th Peak District

Price - £55.

August 3-10th Lake District

Price - £120.

Mountain Craft on Skye ( week)

August 31-Sept 7th Glen Brittle Memorial Hut Price £110.

Alpine Mountaineering

Ailefroide, Dauphine, France

July 6-13; 13-20; 20-27; 27-Aug 3; 3-10; 10-17. Price £115.

Arolla, Valais, Switzerland

Aug 3-10; 10-17; 17-24; 24-31. Price £130.

Chamonix, Haute Savoie, France

July 13-27; 27-Aug 10; 10-24. Price £195.

Irish Mountain Holidays Monafodda, Roscrea, Co.Tipperary, Ireland.

Six tours, guided walks to the Peaks of Lugnaquilla (Wicklow), Galtymore (Tipperary), Carrauntouhil (Kerry), Mweelrea, Croagh Patrick and Slievemore (Mayo).

June 15-22, 29-July 6th.  
July 13-20th, 27-Aug 3rd.  
Aug 10-17; 24-31st.

Price - £250.

Montagne A La Carte - Jean Claude Bernard.

Organized mountain hikes and treks, also cross country skiing and alpine mountaineering in the Oisans and Les Ecrins in France.  
Further information available from the Editor.

Inchree Bank House, Onich, Fort William. Tel Onich 287.

Bunkhouse for up to 23 people. £2.80 per person per night  
£17.00 per person per week.

Equipped with flush toilets, washing facilities, electric shower and drying room a piano and even a climbing wall!

Alex McIntyre Memorial Hut, Onich

Booking Secretary: Brenteggo, 2 Ormond Court, Larbert, Stirlingshire.  
Tel: 0324 554452.

Surfwind (Windsurfing Holidays and Board Hire)

Duncan Jones, High Street, Rhosneigr, Anglesey, Gwyndd, LL65 5UX.  
or Warden House, St. David's Road South, St.Annes, FY8 1TJ.  
Tel. 711919. Write for further details.

Chris Campbell (Address earlier in Newsletter)

Chris is hoping to go to the Alps for 2 weeks in August/September with the intention of climbing Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn. Any budding alpinistes interested in this project, please contact Chris on 051 648 2011.

Further details of all these holidays may be obtained from the Editor.

BIRDS!!

Wherever you are going on your holidays, don't forget the Birds.

Seasonal Bird Bans:

Gogarth: Mousetrap Zawn, Red Walls, Penlas Rock 1 Feb. to 31 July.

Great Orme: Unnamed crag, Lower and Upper Craig Pen Gogarth, Castell-Y-Gwynt, Lefthand side, Point Five Buttress, The Hornby Crags 1 March to 31 July.

Little Orme: Great Zawn Lefthand side, Detritus Wall, The Allotment West Buttress of Detritus, Auks Buttress, Diamond Buttress 1 Mar.-31 July.

Lleyn Peninsula: Cilam Head, Craig Y Llam 1 Feb - 31 July.

North Pembrokeshire: Penbwchdy Head, St.David's Head, Mur Cewhineu 1 Feb - 31 July

South Pembrokeshire: Stack Rocks area 1 Mar - 15th Aug.

Newsford Arches, Triple Overhang Buttress Area, The Fortress, Mowing Word, West Face, Stackpole Head West Face 1 March - 31 July.

Stackpole South Face and East Face 1 Mar -15 Aug.

Gower: Yellow Wall 1 Mar - 31 July

Devon; Berry Head, Torbay Old Redoubt 15 Mar - 31 July (Legal restriction - Max. Fine £1,000!!)

N.Devon: Bassy Point Le-Trac Walls and Promontary Mid-March - mid June.

Dorset, Swanage: Tilly Whim Caves to Scotsman's Chimney, Nutcracker Traverse to Quasi Mode, Tatra to 'B Line' March to July.

N. Cornwall, Tintagel: Access: Keep low profile, i.e. wear camouflage, blacken faces, crawl on all fours etc!! No Bird Restrictions.



## FINE ART

Mountains and mountain scenery is an exhibition of hill and mountain landscape pictures as seen by artists from the 1780's to the 1980s. There will be works by many very well known artists like W.Heaton Cooper, R.I. and Kyffin Williams, R.A., and all the pictures will be for sale.

The exhibition is to be held in the Colin Jellicoe Gallery, 82 Portland Street, Manchester 1, from May 17th to June 15th (incl.) at 10-6 weekdays and 1-5 Saturdays. It will be opened by Bill Peascod, well-known artist and climber.

## THE A.G.M.

Emerging from the Armageddon of another A.G.M., the Bergfuhrer is again at the helm, steering us into another of his reichs which must be approaching double figures by now.

The other changes : Sec. Barbara Sealey taking over as Treasurer; Dave Earle as Vice-Chairman and Martin Pickup as the Secretary. The Committee is definitely a very active one this year with its fair share of climbers and walkers alike. The newsletter editor has now been made an official post with yours truly taking over from Eddie Craig.

The meeting finished early! At 11.30 pm., much to the relief of the Bar staff. Lots of things were left unsaid so anyone who did have points to make, please see any committee member and the matter will be discussed at a Committee Meeting in the near future. Have your say - it's your Club.

## UNPAID SWIMES

As you may have guessed your subs are now due, and as many found out if they hadn't paid by the AGM, they didn't get a vote. This 'No Pay, No Say' ruling for those who wish to know, was passed at the A.G.M. on 20th Feb. 1980. All monies owing should be sent to the Treasurer, Pronto!!

## WHAT COLOUR?

How do you like your curtains hung? What colour do you like? Al Peel, the new Stair Hut Secretary has this problem. Any ideas, please contact him before he goes for the Paddington Bear ones for the Men's Dora!!

## POP HOLING GEAR.

The pop holing gear has been deemed unsafe, even for the F.M.C.! It has been written off so anyone now wishing to go underground, will have to hire their gear from the usual sources - Whernside Manor or Inglesport.

## CHEAP GEAR

Anyone who may have just left his or her rucksack at the side of the road on the outskirts of Calais, or who may just fancy a new tent, may wish to know that Sean Smith is in possession of various bulk order catalogues containing lots of gear at 'cheaper than Mr. Gentil' prices. Generous discounts are available for Club members for bulk orders, so get together and contact Sean for further details.

## EVEN MORE CHEAP GEAR

Enclosed in this little package, you will find yet another flexible friend which unfortunately will not fit into any magic wall that I know about. It will, however, on production at Frank Davies shop in Ambleside, entitle you to 10% discount!! Also in Ambleside, Rock and Run in Cheapside give a 10% discount to Club members on production of a membership card. Good for fell running gear.

THE SYLLABUS

Also enclosed, is the new syllabus. Packed full of "action" meets with action meet leaders, who will hopefully send their meet reports to me. It contains some new exciting editions. Plenty of holing going on, with pot holing from Mick Tolley and the "Dig Your Own" variety, snow holing with Kevin Stephens. There's also Gable and Pillar meets to look forward to, plus your regular coach and family weekends. Mary Aspin is still looking for any ladies to lead meets, as well as go on them. Please contact Mary if you are interested.

ADVERT

Wanted: Size 5 (Adult) Walking Boots for a growing young lad.  
Contact: Keith Lockett, 21 Oakworth Avenue, Ribbleson, Preston, Lancs. Tel. Preston.709271.

ANNUAL SLIDE COMPETITION

The competition this year was of an exceptionally high standard in both categories (Scenic and Action).

The Club would seem to have had a great influx of photographic as well as mountaineering talent over the last few years and though there can of course only be one winner in each category, the general standard was so good that everyone who entered is to be congratulated. So don't be discouraged if you were not a winner. Keep up the good work and try again next year!

The winners were, as follows:-

- |        |      |                                     |                                  |
|--------|------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Scenic | 1st. | Dave Earle (after years of trying!) | Little Langdale Farn             |
|        | 2nd. | Jenny Parker                        | Alpine scene                     |
|        | 3rd. | Jenny Parker                        | Reflections - Llyn Ogwen.        |
| Action | 1st. | Alan Peel                           | Abseiling in the Verdon          |
|        | 2nd. | Andy Blaylock                       | Bouldering on Flagstaff Mountain |
|        | 3rd. | Roger Brookes                       | Ice climber, Greag Y Rhaeder.    |

The judge this year was yours truly, who of course duly received a certain amount of flak from various unsuccessful entrants! (contrary to certain evil rumours, I did not receive any bribes from the winners!) Next year, however, I shall not be the judge. One go at it is enough to lose one's popularity! No, this honour goes to the winner of the booby prize for the worst slide. Who is it? Well, you've all heard of automatic-auto focus-auto wind-all singing, all dancing cameras. Alan Peel's goes one better, it has been asked to judge next year's competition! Well done, D. Duck! You've booped again!

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF THE EX SECRETARY'S EXHAUSTIVE STUDY (See last News-  
BIG LIZ REPLIES! letter)

Sorry Dave, But if we got cracking now and had one every year, I'd be drawing the pension before the team was complete. You should have mentioned this earlier !!!!!

Liz Rawcliffe.

NOBS ON SKIS?

Once again lethargy hits us, the total state of unfitnes and health. So an alternative meet was needed. Courcheval 1650, The St. Tropez of the skiing world. Unlimited miles of pistes and cafes to get those legs fit and the throat into a finely tuned appliance again.

So off went Martin Dale, Sean Smith, Tom Knowles, Glenn Brookes and myself to this palace in the French Alps. Experience among the team was minimal, if not non-existent, but this was nothing to these hard men of the mountains, and bars. After being ripped off for the usual delicacies: Lift passes and a few lessons, the alcing spots were sussed out, not too impressive at first sight, especially because of the lack of blimp.

The first three days went slowly with temperatures in the 'nothing on top' range, and skiing in the "Wow, into this nob" category with quite a few throbbing heads. Gradually as the confidence increased the height and difficulty of the runs increased with Martin, Sean and Glenn showing that taking lessons can get you doing hard red runs with plenty of moguls very quickly. Tom and Alan saved the money on lessons but spent it on hyper-expensive rounds at cafes up on't hill.

Still wishing there was more snow but not cursing the red hot sun and clear blue sky, a day out was had to another resort in "Les 3 Vallees" called Courcheval 1850 where the day was spent trying to spot any women who were not dressed like sheepdogs. No major accidents occurred, apart from a 2 hour trip down a red run in the valley next door with one ski!

The 'apres-skiing' was taken to "like ducks to water". A local bar called "Au Plouc" (which means the clown for anyone who can't speak Swedish) was frequented on quite a regular basis with the locals proving to be very hospitable and somewhat impressed with Martin's new greeting method. Anyway Saturday came along with lots of snow, plenty of drink and a 26 hour coach journey back to a freezing Blackpool.

Au Voir

Al Peel.

#### POINT FIVE

'Beep-Beep, Beep-Beep, Beep-Beep'. It's 6.45 am. and time for someone else to get up, but not me. It feels cold in the C.I.C. hut this morning and has been snowing outside, I snuggle deeper into the warmth of my redline. Gradually the hut rumbles into action as bleary-eyed and stiff-limbed climbers begin their daily routine once again. Kettles boil, tea is made, and porridge stirred. After the regulation brew in bed I decide to get up; the hut having warmed up somewhat by now.

With breakfast over people begin to gather thoughts and equipment together. The routes we have talked over and dreamed about now assume an altogether different character in the grey coldness of morning.

'What are you doing today?' I am asked by a fellow climber.

'We haven't decided yet' I coyly reply. It was the same answer I gave yesterday when there were two parties on the route and there was plenty of spindrift. Then we had sneaked off to the Little Brenva Face and had it to ourselves, today there were no excuses - it had to be Point Five.

Having made the decision we opted to take only one rucksack between us, the leader carrying all the gear and the ropes. In this way we hoped to be able to move faster and more easily whilst on the route. So we set off, Mark with the sac and myself with all the hardware, trussed up like a chicken and jangling like a gaoler.

By now the cloud had lifted to reveal the icy grandness of Britain's highest mountain. The sheer size and scale of the place is almost alpine, where else can you find a 1000' ice route which starts half-way up the cliff? The approach to Point Five is up Observatory Gully -



a Gr.I snow plod through some magnificent scenery, Tower Ridge being just to your right and the Orion Face to your left. As the angle steepens out come the ice axes then next the crampons till a few hundred feet below the gully proper where we decide to gear up on a convenient ledge. We don't want a repeat of yesterday's fiasco on a fifty degree snow slope at the base of a vertical ice pitch where we nearly dropped everything, including ourselves, in the struggle to gear up.

The glistening whiteness of Point Five's icefalls goad us on as we first scramble over mixed ground, then French point elegantly on perfect névé till the powder at the base of the gully is encountered. We flounder on up and eventually reach the first stance and belay where we uncoil the ropes and prepare to do battle with this icy giant. It will be the first Grade 5 that either of us has attempted, though the first pitch looks easy and Mark offers to lead this one. Ten minutes later it is my turn to climb and we are soon both below the second pitch. Now our roles are reversed as I set off on what proves to be the crucial pitch. Above me rose a slightly overhanging wall of ice which looked hard but possible, that was until I saw the first spindrift avalanche come pouring right down it's middle. I placed an ice screw and traversed leftwards to an icy groove between the rock wall on the left and the overhanging ice. It was then that my problems began. After a few steep moves up this near-vertical shallow scoop, I came to a dead halt. The ice had run out in the groove; above and to the left was only snow covered rock - no placements here, whilst to my right was the edge of the overhanging ice. Teetering on my front points with only one axe in at chest height, I began to feel very insecure. What I really needed was a runner but there were no cracks at all in the rock and the nearest decent ice was way over to my right where I daren't reach. The situation was serious since my last ice screw was twenty feet below and to my right; the prospect of a forty foot fall on to the ice of the first pitch was not exactly inviting.

My calves were beginning to scream by now and there was only one thing to do - tie into my one rather poorly placed tool and try to place an ice screw. Fumbling with clumsy mittens I clipped in and gingerly lowered my weight on to the axe hardly daring to breathe. It seemed to hold all right and freed both my hands to fix a runner. First I tried jamming a nut between the edge of the ice and the rock, but the gap was too large so it had to be a screw. Reaching as far to my right as I safely could, I made a hole with my hammer in the ice. Next I inserted a drive-in by hand till it stayed there by itself, then I gently tapped it in; it seemed to be taking so I hit it harder. Then it happened - an ominous crack appeared between the screw and the edge of the ice which I had just been using as a hand-jam. 'Blast and damnation' I cursed, as my only hope of a runner came out in my hand. I hit out at the cracked icicle and sent two large blocks of ice careering downwards almost to the bottom of Observatory Gully. Mark later confessed that he expected me to be following them any minute!

Every cloud has a silver lining, they say, and the disappearance of the offending icicle had left a smaller crack between the ice and rock beneath, enabling me to fix a nut runner. Psychological protection indeed considering the fate of the last piece of ice, but just enough to give me the confidence to try the moves. I reached out far to the right and slammed in the beak of my 'vulture', with this as my sole point of assurance, I bridged up between the rock and the edge of the ice, crampons scraping and sparking along the way. To say I was gripped would have been an understatement but I was totally committed now as I reached over rightwards for some higher placements. 'Oh, Christ! it's dinnerplating!'. The falling ice nearly dislodging my feet. After a few dodgy moments, I trust my tools and haul myself over the bulge and on to easier ground. If that's Grade 5, I thought, then

this is going to be one mighty epic!

I had to search for a belay, finally finding a small crack high up on the gully wall into which I fiddled a small hexentric. After backing this up with an ice screw and the hammered in pick of my axe, I signalled to Mark that I was safe. After such a fight, even at this early stage of the route, I knew that nothing was going to stop us now. However, I couldn't help feeling pleased when Mark asked for a tight rope, confirming that the pitch had indeed been hard.

Mark declined the next pitch and we swapped over the belay. We would have to get a move on if we wanted to avoid bonightment, so I confidently attacked the ice above, stopping only briefly to place the odd drive-in. I began to really enjoy myself, perfect placement after perfect placement allowed one to really lean out on one's tools. This was ice climbing at its very best and I ran out a full rope length to the top of the fabulous ice chimney, which was superb. Mark was not quite so lucky; he got all the spindrift that I had missed but still enthused about the climbing.

The fourth and final hard pitch lay ahead and looked reasonable and fairly short. Being cold from standing belaying I talked Mark into letting me lead it but was surprised by its steepness and after 80' had to put in a second ice screw to protect the final vertical groove - so much for being short! One last pull landed me at the belay in a snowy bay, the source of those damned spindrift avalanches which had nearly smothered me on that last bit. Mark came up quickly despite having a struggle with one of the ice screws, the bane of ice climbing seconds.

Having overcome all the major difficulties, it was almost as if we had entered the inner recesses of the mountain's defence system and were fair game for her ally - bad weather. The wind began to rise, the sky darkened and the temperature plummeted. The ropes froze like steel hawsers and so did all our slings; my gloves were like cardboard, even the gates of the krabs were seizing up. But we were enjoying the additional challenge as we led through pitch after pitch, mostly snow but sometimes ice, till we broke through the final cornice in a howling gale. Strangely the summit plateau was as calm as a lake is flat, the mountain had finally surrendered and allowed us to eat our meal in peace, sitting on top of one of her most prized possessions - Point Five Gully.

By Roger Brookes

Summary: An ascent of Point Five Gully on Ben Nevis in March, 1985  
by Roger Brookes and Mark Jackson.

### 8-EYED SANTA CLAUS

Yo Ho Ho!! Rub the stomach! Cold on't digests owt there this time of year, eh!, boys and girls? Christmas is fat and the goose is getting Christmas as the old saying goes. Yes it's the silly season; parties and full bore pig oats are the order of the day. Even the very fit and serious exponents of the sport have been spotted piling on the calories. Many ales will have passed down the gullet by the time you will have read this - but not all have been idle!

Let's start with the business, parties. Kevin Stephens' bonfire bash was definitely better than last year with a lot more people making fools of themselves, and not too many embarrassed nobbs in the morning. Martin Dale's grooving joints got better and also his infatuation with Ambleside continued. As a result quite a few

FMC members have spent some time on the excellent new climbing wall behind Charlottes, which is very nearly finished. A certain bunch of holidaymakers to the USA, knocked em dead in Paulton at their first gig. Frankie went to boulder and other assorted theme tunes contributed to their success. Andy Blaylock, lead vocalist, commented that it was the first time that he had performed in front of a 'live' audience. Look out for further live dates in the music press.

This is the season when Frankie goes underground usually dragging along Mick Tolley. They have been burrowing away in their wet suits deep beneath the Pennines, sliding down one shaft and then S.R.T.ing their way back up another one. Steve Swindells has also reared his ugly head and has 'jugged some lines'. The boys have as far as I know done some wild stuff in the grade 5+ area (Mick usually has to take his wet suit off on a grade 5+; that's how you tell em from Grade 5's!) Hibernation is definitely in. Steve Swindells, man of mystery, has disappeared almost as soon as he re-appeared and Dave Westby has probably overslept as he seems to have missed a whole summer. This time of year is also gritstone time. Andy Blaylock's Almscliff meet was attended by a die-hard few who had a struggle getting out of Tommy's Cafe in the morning. Young 14 year old waitresses again. Andy and Al Peel produced a rope and managed ascents of Great Western VS and overhanging Groove VS. It was too cold for that sort of enthusiasm. Kevin was too short for Wall of Horror and also the Niche, which Martin got into but couldn't get out of. Paul Clarke and new member, you can now call me nob, Bill McCrae turned up from Leeds. Andy Dunhill opting to stay in bed, wiap! It wasn't long before everyone wiaped and returned to Tommy's for more lechery. Another Brimham trip the weekend after resulted in a siege of Frensis Direct by Blaylock and Dale in driving drizzle. Martin opted for the mountains solving 'C' ordinary on Dow with an amble-side youth in North West Gas wellies.

Along came the Dinner. There was a resurgence of the Big Nob. And Bill won his bet by turning up in his kilt. The disco was invaded by unskirted porridge stirers. And someone muttered "where were all the Rolling Stones numbers?" The climbing wall got some stick that weekend and Paul Clarke and Paul Greenland managed a few first, one of which was named "Paul's Pinch" by the locals. Mark Harding, Mr Thug himself, pronounced the wall "the best in the country". This sudden popularity has shaken the local gurus into now charging 50p a session. Al Phizacklea has been issued with a hat and ticket machine!

The spate of wild parties continued with one at Paul Greenlands in Sheffield. Some climbing was done on the Saturday on Burbage North where Paul and Martin managed the Desperate Banana Finger Direct (6B) before a series of disasters and snow on Sunday threatened to dampen the activities. It was then time to force the beer down the neck as Christmas was upon us.

On Boxing Day a sizable team set off for Ullapool. Andy Dunhill, the Meet Leader, reportedly packed his boot full of Board Games, for bored climbers. They seemed to have a good time in Dave Earle country walking up peaks of incandescent beauty. The best bit was, of course, New Year's Eve when after eating some nice cakes they got very silly only to find that the Pubs shut at 10.00 pm!! Tony Welshes 3 dogs reported having a good time, so did the local sheep. The odd few, Chris this, Paul and Julie Reid and Mark and Viv Broughton went to the Lakes. They were joined by those boring old buggers, Martin Dale and Sean Smith for some of the time who forced them out of the Swinny and on to the hill. Needle Ridge was ascended and also Paul and Chris climbed on an esoteric crag on the other side of Crummack Water, noted for its Rafferty Buttress. On New Year's Eve Martin and Sean rubbed shoulders with the 'Rock Stars' of the present in Ambleside. That's about all they remember, whilst the others went to the Swinny. How boring!

Well, according to Dave Jones new book, Rockclimbing in Britain, serious training should start in January but who can train with Al Peel about. Everyone was still 'getting the beer sussed' in the first week and it didn't get much better. A car load did managed to get to Brownstones though. They managed to work out on the 2 foot wide section of overhanging dry rock along with the 2/3 15 other people present. Alan Blackburn visited Bolton Wall, keen lad Alan, and asked what all the white stuff was on the holds. Another party weekend in Sheffield loomed. This time a 'beer left over from Ullapool' party. James Greaves was sussed, secretly traversing round his house and Water cum Jolly was visited where Paul Clarke and Greenland starred on the first 15 feet of Desperates such as Pirana and White Bait (6B).

Roger Brookes returned from sunny Malta where, with Andy Lewandoski, climbed some 27 new routes from Diff to E3. Rog has run out of good names for his routes, having dispensed with his favourites, such as Central Route, The Crack and Left Hand Groove. Any suggestions (27 needed) - get in touch with Roger! He also reports that there is plenty of scope for more routes and has recruited a gardener in Stuart Gascoigne for a return visit in April.

Andy Dunhill was 30 recently and he's still trying to kill us with curry, not to mention his driving. Shipley Glen was visited on that occasion by several teams who got into some of the best bouldering to be found anywhere!

Several people attacked the decadence of skiing fairly successfully as did some people ice routes in Scotland, particularly Roger Brookes. Whilst all this was going on the Derby Lyn was taking some stick as soon as it was light enough. So have the Prom Walls with Martin Dale producing a whole new stack of desperates at Bispham. By the end of February, summer was here, for a day at least, and Crook Rise was visited by a strong team and many fine routes ascended and soloed, including Small Brown, Ruffians and The Sole. A good day at Shepherds also put Mark Harding through his paces early on with fine ascents of Brown Crag Groove and Conclusion. Martin went on a soloing burst down Langdale the following weekend doing some 10 routes on different crags, whilst Kevin finally got MGC on Shepherds. Paul Clarke and Paul Greenland have hit the mark early again with ascents of Spare Rib E3, Venom E3 and A Bit of Cream E4 at Tremadog. Also there Mark Harding and Al Peel had a good few days doing Vector E2, Extraction E2 and the Plum E1 amongst others. Mark climbed Venom on a subsequent visit and Al Peel with Andy Blaylock led The Weaver E2 - a fine achievement for the time of year. Kevin and Martin also whipped Grasper E2 into submission. With Easter bearing down on us, Martin grabbed a biggie in Warton Main Quarry with a lead of 'Up the Neck' E3.

Mark Harding has sustained his first injury, and Paul Reid has a new climbing partner and its the climbing season again, so don't be secretive about all these routes. Let 'old 8 eye' get you sussed before the beer susses him! You'll get the Easter action in the next edition of this rag!

Take me to the Pleasure Dome. Here comes my super Nova! See you in Poland baby ..... or on your next hang-dogged ascent!

Cheers

OL' Screaming Blue Frankie 8 Eye.

Well - hope it's been worth the wait!

Make the newsletter a better place to live! Let us have your articles, reviews, poems, crosswords, comments and even your views on Big Liz's and Dave Earle's proposed 'family'.

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