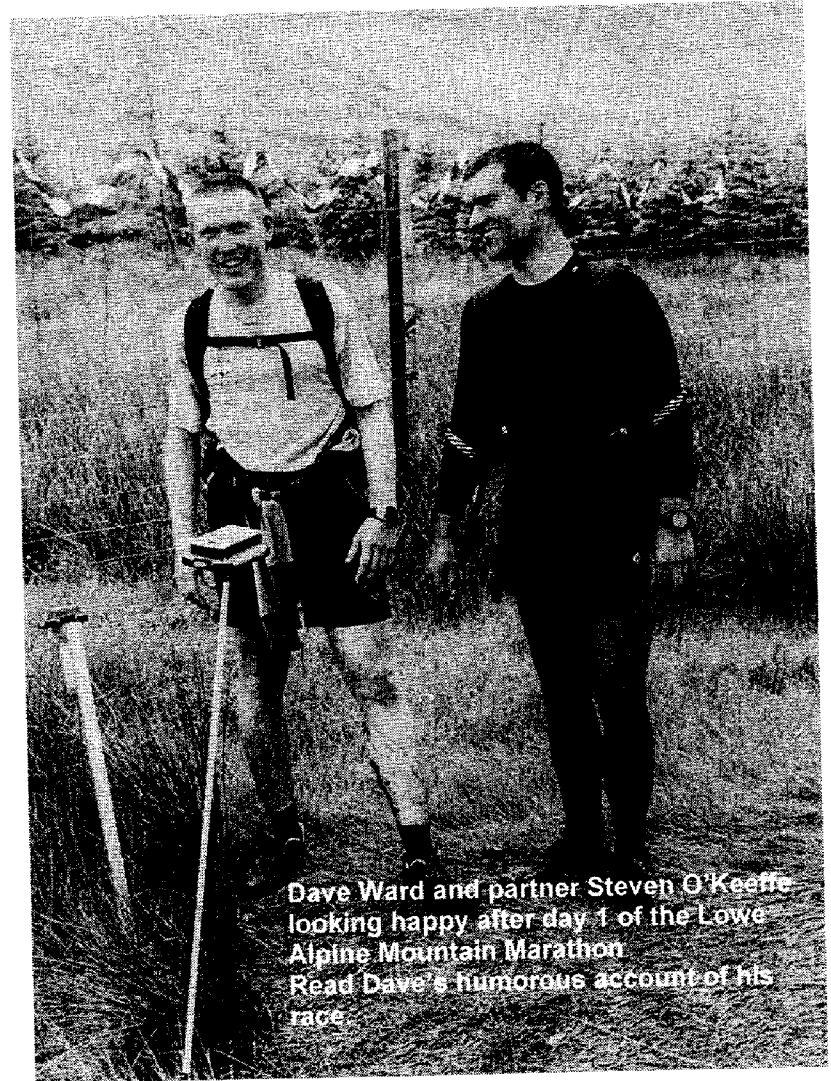


Fylde Mountaineering Club

Founded in 1950

NEWSLETTER



Dave Ward and partner Steven O'Keefe looking happy after day 1 of the Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon. Read Dave's humorous account of his race.

Editor's bit

Here's hoping that everyone has had a good summer and haven't got caught by those ticks which appeared in the last edition. I did after running in Tentsmuir forest in Fife. Unfortunately I didn't remove it properly and had to go to the hospital to have the head removed. On a more cautionary note, a fellow orienteer didn't notice one on his back for several weeks (he thought it was a boil) and has now been diagnosed with Lyme disease. Be warned!

Some Reminders.

Renewal of membership will be coming up again so watch out for the notice. Prompt payment helps reduce the administrative load on your friendly membership secretary.

The **Club Dinner** will be at the same

Summer Walks

Or- The one's I've been on – Or – There and Back Again

10th May – Fairhaven (And Now for Something Completely Different)

Avril and Jon (Trevorrow) treated us to something completely different but most certainly not a silly walk. Jon's knowledge of the Ribble Estuary from his alter ego as a lifeboat man opened up a completely different world to the land lubbers of FMC.

A (slightly) downhill trek out to the middle of the estuary meant that the shoreline we had left and Blackpool Tower and the piers disappeared behind a sandbank. The River Ribble was a mere stream about thigh deep and Southport seemed close enough to touch. The tide was far enough out for the old walls built to delineate the channel into Preston were plainly visible.

A good crowd attended and were well rewarded with "big sky" views from Southport, the Sefton coast, North Wales and some gas rigs flaring off. About 8km or so

venue as last year according to my sources. A change is unlikely but this is only provisional information. The date for your diary is the **3rd of December**.

Socials at the Raikes

Don't forget; 8pm for a prompt 8.30 start

12th October 2005

Dave Turnbull, BMC Chief Executive

9th November 2005

Dave Hunter from Rock+Run - Climbing in the Lofoten Islands

14th December 2005

Boyd Harris, Photographer - Kanchenjunga Revisited

24th May Nicky Nook (Ride 'im cowboy)

Another good crowd on another fine evening, if a bit chilly, managed a good loop over the top on to the Bleasedale road via Fell End. After a short uphill stretch on the road we turned south-west by Grizedale East and Barnacre reservoirs, past some very frisky young bovine animals to Burns Farm before turning northwards to pass through Pedder's Wood to get back to the cars.

On the top of Nicky Nook we encountered a group of runners coming the other way which included a scantily clad female; "I wonder what she wears if it's hot?" was heard from the back of our throng!

About 9km

9th August Dunsop Bridge (The Centre of England)

Hasn't the weather been good on these walks? On the ones I've been on anyway. No change here. We waited a bit for Donald but he failed to appear. So we set off through the posh wrought iron gates of Thorneyholme, which I'm sure used to be a restaurant, south along the river Hodder through Burholme to Burholme Bridge. Apparently on a previous SW (last year?) some of this section was extremely boggy but this year there was only on small damp patch. Up the road for a click or so before heading off right towards Higher Fence Wood (Farm). This is next door to Dinkling Green Farm which is part of Myerscough College. We headed north through the wood and over the col between Totridge and Mellor Knoll before descending to the Trough road at Hareden. A short section on this road brought us to the path to Closes Barn and the footbridge over the River Dunsop near our starting point. Still no sign of Donald but he did appear for a pint in the Sun at Chipping. Be warned, expensive crisps here – 50p a bag!

About 11km

23rd August Cadshaw (a duck hunt and I shouldn't have raved about the weather)

On a damp evening the intrepid band headed off into the woods towards Turton and Entwistle Reservoir. The rain appeared to be diminishing but most of us kept our overtrousers on until we happened to stumble across (by accident?) the Strawberry Duck. Excellent pint of Bank Top Brewery ale from Bolton and we were off back to the cars before it got dark. Naturally it started raining! Returning around the other side of the reservoir we got back to the cars at about 9pm. It was dark enough by now so set off for an excellent pint of Joseph Holts in the Black Dog at Belmont. Good value at about £1.50 for a pint!

About 7km

John Denmark

Email Addresses

As you know I send out occasional emails regarding sales, events etc. and I always get some bounced back. To save a lot of hassle I have started to delete these from my email list of members. They have not been fully deleted and I can easily reinstate them.

Those deleted on 16/8/05 were (in no particular order), email addresses for:

Dave and Lynda Laycock

Doug and Dorothy Brown

Dennis Carrigan (is it two "n"s or one Dennis?)

Elaine Scarles

Paul Taylor

Eric Maymon

If the above members would like to get back onto the email list please let me know. Email is the obvious choice, of course but a telephone call will do (Sue and I are not on holiday all year contrary to circulating rumours and do spend some time at home!).

If anyone has an email address and would like to be on the list please email me on.

John@denmark.demon.co.uk

I do realise that the digital world is not perfect and there are a couple of addresses here that I was surprised to have bounce back, so if I have I appear to have deleted prematurely it is only 'cos I'm trying to be tidy.

It might also be appropriate to remind everyone that my stint as Newsletter Editor is coming to a close after 5 years so this will be my penultimate edition. I could continue to do stuff with emails etc. but would rather hand it all over to someone. Volunteers required before the next AGM.

John Denmark

A BIG THANK YOU

After two major operations, both scary and cancerous, I have just finished a course of radiotherapy. Hopefully after a few more weeks things should start to get back to some sort of normality.

I would just like to say a big big thank you to everyone in the club for their messages of concern and support. I have lost track of the number of get well cards, phone calls and gifts that I have received from you. These have ranged from Viz and Private Eye to books on mountaineering and most tasty of all my two most favourite malt whiskys. People who have visited seemed to a bit disappointed with me still having all my hair (wot hair) and a lack of bandages or a decent scar and said I was a fraud but you will have to blame the NHS for this. Again my many thanks for all your support, it was certainly appreciated and required.

Hopefully we will see more of you all as things improve.

Mike and Jenny Tolley

ITALY JULY 2005

There is lots of rock climbing in Italy & it's not all in the Dolomites. Paul Taylor has lived in Milan for around 8 years & introduced us to climbing in the Bergamo area where his partner, Christina, has a house at Ardesio In Val Seriana. Chris Thistlethwaite & I arranged to meet in Milan for a 10 day climbing trip in mid July. Chris was on his annual motor bike tour of Europe & I flew courtesy of Ryanair direct Newcastle to Bergamo.

We spent the first night in Milan & did some touring next day. It's an interesting city & fortunately not too hot when we were there. It's normally 35-40C in July. The city is relatively friendly & we never felt hassled unlike Madrid a few years ago where we constantly felt we were going to be mugged or robbed. We looked at few churches & other sites but missed out

on the painting of the Last Supper as it was booked for several weeks in advance.

There is an excellent topo guide to the Bergamo area by Alessandro Ruggeri although it does not have any English translation. All of the climbing areas we visited were fully bolt protected. There is a good range of lower level crags & some very good & impressive ones in the mountains. We visited a mix of both. One problem is that a common weather pattern is good in the morning building up to a thunderstorm in the afternoon. This explains why the area is very green.

One of the main crags visited was Lantana-Corna Rossa which has predominantly single pitch limestone climbs. The quality is excellent & there is plenty for all levels of ability, plus it's a short walk. Another very good place is Valle Dei Mullini which is a limestone gorge with four separate cliffs.

The climbing is generally on the hard side with only a few grade 5s & lots of 6s & 7s. The cliffs face varying directions so the sun can be avoided or found to a certain extent. The plus here is an excellent restaurant/café at the car park.

Climbing of a different nature can be found at Rogno overlooking Lac d'Iseo. This extensive crag is a sort of course grained sandstone offering single & multi pitch (3-4) climbs. We did one which climbed some impressive territory at a reasonable grade although it had somewhat undergraded innocuous start. It's relatively low down so can be very hot.

The main mountain crag visited was Pinnacolo Di Masalana at the head of Val Seriana. It is a very impressive granite buttress with several 6-8 pitch bolted routes. We did two climbs. On the first attempt we did 5 pitches of Il Risveglio 6b+ but got stormed off & had to abseil down. We returned a couple of days later & did New Age 6c. The abseil descent is common to both so we were able to complete the final 3 pitches of Il Risveglio which made for a long day.

My First Mountain Marathon by A.Mole (aged 30 and 3/4).

Coerced by the Denmarks' enthusiasm in the late night haze of last years FMC dinner I decided to have a go at a mountain marathon this year. The decision was aided somewhat by Steve saying, "You'll do the LAMM with me won't you Dave?" Entry was online and all very high tech thanks to the organiser Martin Stone being a computer whiz. He makes his money

Both of these climbs have some excellent technical slab climbing combined with steeper more strenuous sections & the quality is generally superb. The cliff is at 1800 metres so good weather is needed. It's also a fairly solid 1 & a half hour walk.

On another day we planned to do a class 3 scramble/climb on Pizo Arera but due to very scant directions on where the climb was we could not find it. We went for an excellent walk instead up the very impressive mountain of Pizo Arera. This whole area offers excellent walking both lower down in the valleys & on the ridges & tops of the many mountains.

Overall we found the grading to be hard & Chris used lots of big silver handholds (Mick Tolley was there in spirit at least). Or perhaps it was just the effect of the 2-3 litres of red wine he drank each evening, who knows?

Thanks to Paul & Christina for an excellent trip.

Andy Dunhill

through the electronic timing system used in fell races, orienteering and the like. Steve plumped for the B class, it sounded safe enough, as the options were Elite, A, B, C, D and novice. I was a bit unsure of what gear I needed for it and ended up buying some pretty daft lightweight items - the most obscure being a blizzard pack - a type of metallised survival bag that you can sleep in and most importantly it passes the kit check. This turned out to be a duff choice.

After a car swap at Skelton and pick up at Carlisle, off we trooped in the Escort up to Oban. As soon as the venue was announced, it was on the cards that we would be ending up on Mull and so it was that we left the car behind and were given tickets for the ferry to Craignure. With a bit of nouse we should have scoped the ferry times in advance and ended up missing the 6pm one by minutes. Never mind, that left us time to have tea on the prom. Most of the other competitors had found the chippy, but Jenny (Steve's better half) had other plans. The tourists were a bit bemused by the sound of the stove blasting away, but we had a gourmet veggie pasta dinner in the drizzle. Anything to avoid Calmac food, I'd had enough of it on our recent trip to Jura. The ferry queue was chokka by the time we came to board, good banter, meeting fellow competitors, perusing maps of the Island, trying to second guess where the routes might take us.

As the ferry was leaving there was still a steady stream of folk arriving at the terminal, some vainly running while weighed down by two rucksacks, only to find they'd missed the boat and had to wait for the last one. Arriving on Mull we were informed that we could queue for the diddy train to Torosay Castle or walk the mile or so to the campsite. Once at the castle and starting to get unpacked, yep you've guessed it, the midgets came out to play. Over to the bustling marquee and we got registered and I felt the urge to buy some more last minute gear and energy gels from Rick at Compass Point. A sleepless few hours, interspersed by a lot of forced eating and we were soon woken by the skirl of the bagpipes, race day was upon us. I found Ali Welsh in the mon-

ster portalo queue which didn't seem to be moving, I couldn't wait that long and plucked up the courage for "The Trench".

Maps in hand we were herded onto a bus and drove up through Salen to the start at Scarisdale. After going through the start all geed up, the first thing to do is to stop and mark the checkpoints on the map. Canny Steve suggested we wear our cags, overtrousers and midge nets for this. A shrewd move as being eaten alive whilst marking up does not help your concentration. A double check of our checkpoints and we were off up the hill. A few old hands sounded quite alarmed at the distance between CP1 and CP2, about 10km as the crow flies and giving massive options of route choice. We took what seemed to be the more popular line through rougher ground but shorter in distance, but took a detour along the road, passing the C, D and Novice start. All was going reasonably well until the mist started getting worse, ending up as an absolute "pea souper". We wasted 45 minutes thrashing around ferns and woods above Loch Uisg trying to find "the knoll". The mist momentarily cleared long enough for us to see the zulus about 100m above us blasting along and there it was, the bloody knoll. It was so big, we couldn't believe we'd missed it. An important lesson learned here about navigation, a 1:40000 is fine when you're belting along, but you are given the 1:25000 on the back for a reason.

Anyway, fuff over with we got to the main climb up the gully behind Craig Ben Lodge. This was when the elite teams started coming through, seemingly lead by Scoffer and Jim Davies,

although we didn't know who had started first. Up on the plateau we again became a bit navigationally challenged but were heartwarmed when we were asked by some novices in big boots were on earth they were, the blind were indeed leading the blind. Steve's ankle, twisted on Arran a few weeks before was still holding out, though the final descent to the overnight camp was a bit of a struggle. Ali Welsh blasted through here, closely followed by his partner Laurie, vainly hanging on. I was met at the final check by the cheery Denmarks, who gave us our results slip for the first day, 31km in 9hrs 51mins, sounds slow doesn't it? Into the camp and all I could think about was food. We found Jenny and Ann who'd bagged us a spot, the tent was soon up and top chef Steve got to work on our three course spread. A look at the results found what I was half expecting, we were way behind, 100th out of 110, with 9 teams dropping out of the B class. Once in my pit I was soon catching the z's, no energy left for socialising. Apparently there was a dramatic thunder storm during the night, but I slept right through it, the new tent did it's job, we didn't end up in a puddle.

A much better night's kip than Friday was rudely interrupted by the piper at some disgusting hour. Ali looked at my choice of the blizzard pack and shrewdly pointed out the fact that they don't pack down quite as small after use (they come vacuum packed). Oh well, you live and learn. Breakfast was quickly woofed down and after braving the trench again we were ready for the start. I felt surprisingly good all things considered and started to climb

quickly away from the overnight camp and the midges at the map marking area. Had a go at navigating as well, which went OK, considering I have inherited my dad's innate sense of direction (or lack of it). I came across a rather fetching antler which I decided to carry, getting some strange looks from some people. All that lightweight gear in a tiny rucksack and I was carrying a pound of dead bone. It did come in useful as a walking stick on the steep climbs and as a leg scratcher. There is a picture on the web somewhere of me holding the thing aloft for the official cameraman.

The day was going OK until we got to the forest at Ceann Chnocain. MUDDY MIDGE HELL. The path, if you could call it a path, was a series of peat hags and long grass, interspersed with ankle wrenching holes and muddy puddles, getting sludgier, the nearer we got to the river. I've only myself to blame for getting so badly bitten, feeling strong I'd got a bit in front of Steve and had to wait for him in the bog getting eaten alive. Through here our friends Mike and Anna powered past, Anna was twining away as usual with a tiny pack on her back, Mike was carrying all the gear and navigating. They ended up 4th overall and first mixed team in the B class.

Another very steep climb out of the bog and we were soon on the home straight. We ended up at the very distinctive radio masts which suddenly appeared out of the mist, a spot I'd been to two years ago when I'd had run across Mull from Torosay. I remember finding an antler and carrying it that day too, so now I've got a matching pair. Down from the masts

we entered an area interspersed with a number of gullies and streams where a tricky bit of nav ended up in a mini panic when we thought we'd dibbed the wrong checkpoint. Flap over, we were on the home straight down the track and back to finish at the castle. Second day 37th place, 70th both days combined, if only we'd found that blinkin' knoll! We gorged ourselves on Wilf's bean feast and slab of cake and it was time to de-camp and trudge back to the ferry. I was later regaling my work colleagues about how great the weekend was,

when one of them said "You weren't one of those miserable gits stood in the rain at Oban, were you?" Anne had been on a cycling tour of Scotland and had just happened to pass the terminal as we were waiting to board!

A very enjoyable weekend. I'm converted. So much so that I've already got my entry in for the KIMM in October.

David Ward



Wet clothes on the deer fence at the overnight camp, Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon, Isle of Mull 2005. I'm fairly sure that some of these will be Dave's but it isn't Dave in the picture.

Ullapool Whit Bank Holiday 2005

The meet this year involved 9 of us renting a house in downtown Ullapool with a further 3 camping & using the house as a base. It was an international meet with the Italian contingent – Paul Taylor with two Italian ladies – complementing the French – Christine & younger sister, Claire, with boyfriend William. The rest of the team was Martin Dale, Tony Mitchell, Chris This, Tim Taylor & Caroline.

We had the usual mix of weather with four good days & three of rain. On the good days we climbed on the extensive Reif sea cliffs & visited some new areas including Stone Pig cliff & Rhuba Ploytach at the north end of the peninsula. A lot of climbs were done ranging from Severe to E2. Some of the classics were repeated but also many other routes were done.

When the sun is out this is a fantastic place to climb especially when at the north end of the peninsula away from civilisation. The views in all directions are excellent with the main mountains of the North West highlands all in view. This really is something very different to anything in either Italy or France & the visitors were very impressed. Claire & William have done very little climbing using natural protection as most climbs in France are bolted. They coped very well & enjoyed the experience.

On one of the wet days we went to the Island of Handa which is a bird reserve. You are only allowed to walk on specified paths because of the many ground nesting birds. This is well worth a visit & the big sea stack of Handa is especially impressive but I have no desire to climb it as it would be a serious guano experience!

On another wet day Chris & I explored the Keanlachulish Peninsula just north of Ardmair. Although not far from the main road it is a half hour walk & is very quite. There is some nice looking climbing so perhaps next time we will be able to do some.

Amazingly there were no midges. It was probably too cold & windy most of the time.

Andy Dunhill

I wasn't going to put this in but I had a page left so read it if you must!

A Boozy Bike Ride

17th August

I'd missed all of these for various reasons (being on holiday most probably) and didn't want to pass up a beautiful evening. Sue was still recovering from a bout of 'flu we both had and with Toll incapacitated for the moment and the Lovetts still

away the Preston section of the BBRs was a bit depleted.

I decided to be environmentally friendly and leave the car at home. The ride was described as "Wrea Green and Beyond" so I thought I could bale out at Wrea Green as it's half way home and I'd be able to watch the highlights of England v Denmark, so set off by bike for Poulton via Bartle Hall, the Hand and Dagger, Wharles, Roseacre, Singleton and Hardhorn, managing a cup of tea and a biscuit at my mother-in-laws before heading up the road to the Thatched to join the throng. Now, Martin Dale has been called many things but I bet this is the first time he has been called a throng! Where was every body?

Things never go to plan do they? The evening started off OK; I got to Poulton in a good time of about 75 minutes for the 20 miles or so. An average of 14.1 mph. OK so far but it seemed churlish to expect Martin to ride to Wrea Green and then have to ride all the way back so we came up with a compromise. We'd go to Elswick, Gt Eccleston and finish at the Cartford. This meant that we would each have a reasonable ride home in terms of distance.

Pub 1 The Ship at Elswick.

A pint of Greene King I think it was. I'd already come past here on my way to Poulton and it seemed a bit weird to visit and then cycle away in the wrong direction. Anyway.....

Pub 2 The White Bull in Gt Eccleston.

Top place! A first for me and spoilt for choice here, although I've already forgotten the ales that were available! Age is a terrible thing, and combined with boozing... well....

On to Pub 3, The Cartford Arms.

Always been a two pint stop although if one tried a pint of everything getting up off the floor would be difficult, there's that many to choose from. Two pints it was then and I was getting ready for the off having succumbed to a pint of "Top Totty" that had been drawn whilst we were in there when the fateful words were uttered "shall we have another?" Once I had heard that England had lost that brought out the weaker side of me and "aye, why not?" was heard to issue from my lips. A three pint stop it was.

Beer finished Martin and I parted company. With trusty mini-maglite strapped to the handlebars I was off, retracing my revolutions through Gt Eccleston to Elswick. Whistled through Roseacre and Wharles, failing to stop off at the Eagle and Child (I still haven't been in this pub) or the Hand and Dagger. Eventually arrived safe and sound with only one comfort stop required to find that I'd clocked up 43 miles at an average speed of 13.8 mph. Phew!

Let's dust off those neglected steeds and see a better turnout for the Lights Run on Wednesday September 7th. Meet at the Thatched House in Poulton at 6.30. Further info from Martin Dale 01253 772073.

John Denmark

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