

NEWSLETTER OF THE OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

August 1991

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Summary:

- W 14 August Baslow area
- 23 - 25 August North Pembrokeshire
- 6 - 7 September Mid-Wales
- 13 - 14 September Clogwyn du'r Arddu
- 27 - 28 September Golden Oldies

W 14 August Baslow area Rob Tresidder
This is the meet for non Alpinists and disappointed big mountain folk. Almost the last opportunity this year for evening climbing and walking in the far north. I intend to ouaff afterwards in the Prince of Wales in Baslow.

23 - 25 August North Pembrokeshire Rock Hudson
All members and their friends are cordially invited to join this meet, which will give opportunities for walking, climbing or whatever is your interest. Coastal paths, quiet crags or, for those with a 'long nose' and on friendly terms with old stagers, visits to unknown cliffs and the possibility of 'new' routes! Camping is at Rhosson, near St Justinian's (GR 725252), near the coast with cheap basic facilities.

St David's will be able to provide evening venues for meals or drinking. To help with transport, contacts, please call me on 0602 333031 or at the Brunswick the Tuesday before, so that economic use is made of transport etc.

6 - 7 September Mid-Wales Helen Griffiths
I think it would be difficult to find a better camosite, so I shall again be camping at Hafod Dywyll farm (GR 685162). To get to the site, take the A 493 from Dolgellau towards Fairbourne for about 4 miles, then turn left up a minor road. After about a mile, take the track on the left past King's Youth Hostel, go over a bridge and the camosite is through a gate on your right. It's a fairly basic camosite and very cheap (50p last year). It's advisable to bring some drinking water for Friday night/Saturday morning as the tap is difficult to find in the dark.

There is a wide variety of climbing and walking nearby with Cadair Idris within walking distance and the Arans and Rhinogs only a short drive away. The beach at Fairbourne is also quite an attraction if the weather is hot.

I shall be in The George at Penmaenpool on Friday night. For more details, please contact me on Derby 247372 (work) or Belper 824921 (home).

27 - 28 September Golden Oldies Doreen Hodge
Just a reminder that the Golden Oldies is slightly earlier this year. Bookings now being taken for what has always turned out to be a most enjoyable meet. I'm again looking forward to having a full complement at the hut. You can contact me on Derby 572407 at any time.

CIRCUIT TRAINING FOR CLIMBERS

The evening class which ran so successfully last year at Anthony Gell School in Wirksworth will run again at almost the same price, in spite of local management of schools and the huge cuts in DCC's community education budget. It will however take place on Wednesdays unlike last year. More details about registration in next month's newsletter.

PAST EVENTS AND ANCIENT HISTORY

Northumberland (Chris Radcliffe)

Saturday saw my introduction to Northumberland sandstone at Kylloe. The main conclusion that Tony and I came to was that it gets a lot harder as soon as you put a rope on (must be the size of your rack - ed.) Everytime we roped up we either failed or had a desperate time: soloing we were unstoopable. In the afternoon we moved on to Kylie in the Woods where we were joined by mad man Mattock, wild eyed and staring after curing his hangover with a white line nightmare from Newcastle on his motorbike. At first glance K-in-the-W looks green dark and horrible. On closer inspection, it is green dark and horrible - with superb climbing on it.

Sunday we went to Bowden Doors where Tony and I decided to have a desperate time on Overhanging Crack and so roped up. After a joint total of 5 retreats, we both finally managed to swim the last 376 moves (3 feet of climbing) to the top.

Tony then went on to show what a star he is by soloing the first 15 feet of a HVS, deciding that it was horribly undergraded and that he could move neither up nor down. He was however quite comfortably ensconced hanging from a large jug on a wall that could only have overhung by about 30 degrees. So, ignoring the jokes about feeling really pumped (we all know Tony is invincible), I took a couple of photos before throwing up some gear. The rope was received well enough, but maybe I should have removed some of his rack before throwing up his bandolier. Tony's arms seemed to stretch another 6 inches as he caught the thirty or so runners and I had to admit that, on consideration, I too was baffled as to "what the hell" he was going to do with two No 4 friends in a finger crack. Hving arranged a few bits of gear, he attempted the move again (showing great spirit, since it says in the book that the route is E6 if you take ten minutes gearing up at the crux while hanging from one arm). But, in the end, gravity got the better of him.

We were successful on a whole string of VS 5as whatever that means) which looked about E4 but actually had superb holds on them. Radcliffe was heard to say how useful this was when he was hit by a cloudburst halfway up.

The evening saw the completion of a seven man hacky, after about three hours of trying, and the game of gladiators reached its climax with a total of six people juggling. Jude was asked if we were part of a circus, but replied no, we were just a bunch of clowns.

DG

July committee meeting

The treasurer reported that the recent work (re-roofing and dry rot treatment) on Tan-yr-Wyddfa had cost nearly £6500. This has eaten into our cash reserves. However, the hut is now more or less back to normal. Unfortunately Bill Kenyon's party from Wilmorton College were badly rained off and unable to complete

the re-painting of the outside of the hut.

There was some discussion as to whether Dreads might prefer to meet in a separate room at the Brunswick on Tuesday evenings.

Borrowdale (Roger Larkam)

This was a well attended meet with representation from almost all sections of the club. Unfortunately it was a popular weekend with everyone else so the campsite was crowded and noisy. However I was actually woken by a stentorian voice from Rock's tent admonishing "Turn that radio off - now." This was however successful in suppressing the anti-social irritant.

Saturday morning brought waves of rain in from the SW which gave most of us an excuse to lie in. The more determined mountain men headed off for the hills clad in waterproofs. Other less hardy souls sought the flesh pots in Keswick.

After a morning spent festering, Roger, Richard and I headed off for a classic scramble - Ashness Ghyll, an exciting waterfall climb. This was quickly disposed of and the improving weather sent us scurrying along to Shephard's Crag where we launched onto an over ambitious project for my current state of fitness - The Bludgeon. I grunched my way to the top of the pinnacle beneath a radically overhanging headwall and then felt the need for pro, so placed a Friend in a hole. This however proved to be the vital hold with the result that even tenuous contact with the rock was not maintained and as the Friend pulled anyway, a soectacular plummet followed which silenced the crowds on neighbouring Little Chamonix.

After this time consuming failure, we joined Mike Wren and Reg Squires with their lads who were climbing more amenable routes nearby. Once again I was nearly sandbagged on a short route appropriately named The Graso. My companions having placed some tenuous HBs below the crux offered me the lead. After the earlier frustrations, I fired the crux only to find myself on a steep wall without any pro. Scott and Fidler on a neighbouring route were probably even more grioped than I was listening to my anguished wimpering.

Such frailties are unknown to our President and his troupe of jugglers who finally forsook the umpteenth game of Hacky Ball and headed for some E point test pieces on the Falcon Crags.

Everyone seemed to have had a fulfilling day one way or another and joined an early evening convivial gathering at the Scaffell, until too much beer on an empty stomach dictated a return to the camp site.

Sunday was another pleasant day and parties headed for classics on Shepherd's and Goat while I dragged Richard to inspect Grange Crags - a jungle location known mainly to the local hard men. The do-able routes were overgrown while the best lines were unprotected and rather hard. Eventually we headed for a more traditional venue, Black Crag, where the Squires/Wren team were in action. Raindrop proved a fine super direttissima and aptly named as we got up just as the first droops fell.

Altogether an excellent weekend both for the climbing and a comprehensive and sociable Dread meet.

CJR

Four Craggs meet (Rob Tresidder)

A CRAG TOO FAR, OR THE SAGA OF THE WANDERING PILLOW

"Half a league, half a league, and half a league again, into the misty mountains marched the six thousand." Well, we weren't six thousand or even six. Just Rob, Steve and I appeared for the main event of the Four Craggs meet. We started well after dawn but quickly reached the foot of Cloggy. The air was moist and the rock was slippery so we settled for a quick scramble up the Eastern Terrace, first climbed in 1798 by a pair of reverend botanists. From the top we traversed the hillside to Cloggy station and then descended an infrequently visited gully into Cwm Hetiau and so round into Cwm Glas and the foot of Cynn Las where we ate our dinner. We then climbed the muckiest Central Gully to be found on any crag. On the basis of the dirt I collected on my shirt, some Oreads thought I had been playing a well known Welsh game in a bog. Ever onward behind the fleet of foot meet leader, we ascended the Clogwyn y Person arete starting by the Faron's Nose - thoroughly enjoyable in the improving weather. So from Crib y Ddysgl on to the top of Snowdon for five minutes reflection on the day before descending "home" to Tan-yr-Wyddfa.

After a 12 hour day we needed the refreshment provided by the Quellyn where we were regaled by those Oreads already ensconced with the tale of the walking pillow retold Hobbit fashion. A story of stripy pillows moving in the dark to beds which only dawn could reveal, a yarn of fog horn like sirens announcing and pronouncing on the fate of the holder of the pillow, a saga which will live in the minds of some and be told by many on wet weekends in the hut.

The meet leader's "unstructured" Sunday paradoxically saw the team much more together with six Oreads on the Wastad and ascents of the easier classics: Wrinkle, Crackstone Rib, Ribstone Crack, Shadow Wall, Overlapping Wall, Unicorn Direct and Elidor.

SHORT NOTICES

AN APPRECIATION OF CYRIL DOUGLAS MILNER, MEMBER OF THE ALPINE CLUB AND HONORARY MEMBER OF THE OREAD

Douglas, one of the great characters of the climbing world, passed away in the early part of this year. We of the Oread will remember him best for his wonderful style of judging in so many Oread photographic competitions during the sixties, seventies and eighties.

His comments, criticisms and praise, in front of a packed and eager audience, monocle at the ready for each and every slide, his witty repartee with the beer swillers at the back, have never been equalled.

Douglas was well qualified as a photographic judge and wrote many books on the subject. His original book was "Mountain Photography", written forty years ago. This was followed by "The Photography of Scenery" and the still current "Focal Guide to Mountains".

Douglas was a true Oread and loved the mountains in all their aspects. A skilled rock climber, alpinist and photographer, his finest book was "Rock for Climbing" (now a collectors' piece). It includes superb photographs of the Alos and the Dolomites and in this book and in our hearts he will always be remembered.

Gordon Gadsby

THE NEW GIRLS

Congratulations to Liz and Tim Whitaker on the birth of their daughter Sophie in June and also to Gail and Gil Male on the birth of Joanne in July.

BROAD PEAK

Robin Beadle climbed the famous 8041m peak in the Karakorum last month. He described the high traverse along the summit ridge as comparable to Beinn Eighe.

NEW MEMBER

Welcome to Bill Kenyon who was elected to full membership of the Dread at the June committee meeting, and to John Blackledge who was elected at the July meeting.

QUORUM

An extraordinary general meeting of the club to discuss the size of the quorum (for general meetings) will be held immediately before the Photo Meet on 12 October. A more detailed notice will appear in the next newsletter.

NEXT EDITION

I intend to publish the next edition on Tuesday, 3 September. Please send all written material to me at 61 West End, Wirksworth DE4 4EG to arrive by Monday, 26 August. I especially look forward to hearing from Ian Soars. A word about the length of contributions. I have no desire to shackle the literary throes of my contributors, but it does all have to be typed up. I think writers should pause and wonder how many Dreads want to read a whole typed side of A4 on the subject of a single weekend meet. I would welcome some feedback on this: are contributions too long?

Rob Tresidder

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