

OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

MAY 2022



Sunny Scotland on the Glen Clova meet. Photo Christabel Goode.

Editorial

Details of two Lake District hut meets coming up and a camping weekend in Swaledale plus lots of local walks - some of these meets still need a leader to come forward - can you help?

Also in here details of the new access agreement for Wildcat plus write-ups of the last of the Scottish winter meets - with wall to wall sunshine, the new members meet and several walks - including the start of the Gritstone Trail - if you missed this first stage it is to be repeated - see page 14 and a fascinating account of the British Ice Climbing Championships - without any ice!

Needless to say the sad loss of three long-term members recorded in here will be dominating the thoughts of all who knew them - Farewell, Charlie Cullum, Uschi Hobday, Janet Burgess.

Finally - a plea from the Committee - we still need a Secretary - A volunteer would be most welcome!

The AGM minutes are at the end of this newsletter.

Copy Deadline 20 May.

Forthcoming Meets 2022

Michael Moss: email: meetsec@oread.co.uk

May	Apr. 30-May 2 11 13/14 19 21	Early May BH, Wye valley Wednesday walk Low House hut Thur short walk Weekend walk	Rushmere Farm campsite, Crossways near Coleford. Hayfield (Millie's Tea Room) Conniston, Lake District Flash Bar Cafe	Leader needed Rachel Walker MAM hut. Charlie Taylor Ruth Gordon Stuart Firth
June	May 26 - Jun. 5 8 10-11 16 18 18/19 25/26	Spring/Jubilee BH, Pembroke south, Manorbier Wednesday Walk Fylde hut Thur short walk Weekend walk Camping and walking, Swaledale Midsummer meet & BBQ	Skrinkle Haven, Skrinkle Bay Camping Tideswell Little Langdale Langsett (Polka Dot cafe) Usha Gap Camping and Caravan Site, Heathy Lea	Leader needed Chris Radcliffe Fylde MC hut swap, meet leader needed Ruth Gordon Peter Amour
July	23 Jul. - 7 Aug. 6 11-15 15-16 16 21	Alpine meet Wednesday walk Hut working party BBQ Tan yr Wyddfa Weekend walk Thur short walk	Argentiere (Chamonix), France Wildboardclough Tan yr Wyddfa Congleton	Gill and Chris Radcliffe Clive Russell Dave Helliwell (Snod) Tony Howard Stuart Firth Ruth Gordon
August	3 18 20	Wednesday walk Thur short walk Weekend walk Late summer BH	Tansley (Kath's Cafe) Longshaw Estate cafe	Ruth Gordon
Sept	3/4 7 10/11 15 17 30/1	BARMY comp Wednesday walk Climb? Thur short walk Weekend walk Climb and curry High House,	Heathy Lea Ashford tea room Ilam NT café Borrowdale, Lake District	John Gwyther Ruth Gordon Louise Amandini Tony Howard, K-Fellfarers' hut
Oct	5 8/15 15 20 23-29 31	Wednesday walk Mediterranean sport climbing Weekend walk Thur short walk Strawberry cottage, Glen Affric Scotland Start Monday evening indoor mClimbing unit, Derby	Hope Froghall	Avoiding half term 24/28 Oct Stuart Firth Peter Amour
Nov	2 5 12 17 18-19	Wednesday walk Bonfire Weekend walk Thur short walk Fylde hut	Hollingsclough Heathy Lea Hathersage (Outside cafe) Little Langdale, Lakes	Clive Russell Richard Linney Ruth Gordon Dave Helliwell (Snod), Fylde MC hut swap
December	3 4 7 9/10/11 14 15 26 24-3 Jan	Annual dinner, Fox and Goose Post prandial walk Wednesday walk Bullstones Black rocks evening meet Thur short walk Boxing day walk Christmas and New Year hut meet	Nr Chesterfiled. Chris and Gill Radclif Rowsley (Massarellas cafe) Cromford, Derbyshire Tan Yr Wyddfa	Date & location TBC Date & location TBC Location TBD

Exciting Opportunities

A leader is urgently needed for the Fylde Hut meet in Little Langdale on 10 -11 June: see the write-up below and contact Mike Moss if you are able to help.

Most of the Wednesday and Weekend Walk leadership opportunities in the Oread calendar have now been successfully filled. However, there are still a few vacancies for those who have yet to demonstrate their willingness to lead a group of enthusiastic walkers. Specifically the following dates are available:

Saturday 18 June Langsett (Polka Dot Cafe - see specific meet write-up below)
Wednesday 05 October Hope
Wednesday 07 December Rowsley (Massarella's Cafe)

In addition, there are two traditional meets that may require some focus:
Sunday 04 December Post-prandial Walk tbc
Monday 26 December Boxing Day Walk tbc
Please let me know if you are interested in putting yourself forwards.
Stuart Firth email ; xxxxxxxx tel. xxxxxxx

Wednesday 11 May Hayfield Walk Rachel Walker

We will meet at Millie's Tea Room, 7, Church Street, Hayfield (SK22 2JE) at 10.30a.m. (10.00 if you would like a drink first). The Sett Valley Trail Car Park is nearby on Station Road (SK22 2ES).

The walk will begin up the Snake Path past Kinder Reservoir, ascending into William Clough, onto the summit plateau of Kinder Scout. We then walk by Kinder Downfall, crossing Red Brook, then walking above The Three Knolls and descending to Tunstead Clough Farm and back into Hayfield.

Distance: 9 miles Ascent: 1590ft

Rachel Walker email: xxxxxxx Tel xxxxxxx

13-15 May Low House hut Coniston Charlie Taylor

We have the MAM Low house hut located in the village of Coniston booked for the weekend. The hut is located close to the fells of Dow Crag, Grey Friar, Wetherlam and the Old Man of Coniston with great walking and climbing in Great Langdale, just a few miles up the road. The Grizedale Forest offers plenty of easy walks and some of the best natural trails Mountain Biking routes the UK has to offer.

Please book your place with Charlie Taylor: email xxxxxxx
or call/text me on xxxxxxx

Thursday 19 May Short Walk Ruth Gordon

We will start at 11.00 am at Ashover Village Hall, On street parking or there are usually plenty of spaces at the Village Hall, Most of the route is not on the White Peak map, you need Explorer 269, Chesterfield and Alfreton. My plan is

cunningly to avoid all the steepest ups and downs in the parish, taking us via Hockley Quarry to Fallgate, Milltown, Overton Hall, Goss Hall and Butts Quarry. The basic route is a mere five miles but can be lengthened with some steeper ground included according to the enthusiasm and fitness of the party on the day. There are, of course three excellent pubs in the village should anyone happen to be interested in such establishments.

Ruth Gordon email xxxxxxx tel. xxxxxxx

Saturday 21 May Flash Bar Cafe walk Stuart Firth

Meet at 10:00 for 10:15 departure. Lay-by car parking at Cistern's Clough GR 034698 OL24 White Peak. (This has not been recced so please allow time to find an alternative.)

I hope the Buddhists amongst us will not be offended by this route being taken in a widdershins direction.

Cistern's Clough, Dane Head, Orchard Farm, Danebarrow Quarries, Panniers Pool,, Turn Edge, Wicken Walls, Flash, Nield Bank, Flash Bar Cafe (excellent, 08:00 - 16:00; early birders might like a bacon buttie), Dove Head, Cistern's Clough. Bring packed lunch.

Please let me know if you intend coming or you would like me to match-make car sharing.

Stuart Firth email: xxxxxxxxx tel. xxxxxxx

Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday Thursday 2 – Sunday 5 June Pembroke South

Some people are stopping at Skrinkle Bay campsite but that is now full. There may still be space at Upper Portclew Farm, Freshwater East. Cost is £10 pppn. Everywhere is filling up fast for this weekend. If you want to go it will be a case of finding any campsite that can offer you a corner!

Wednesday 8 June Hathersage Walk Chris Radcliffe

Perhaps a lesser known corner of Derbyshire. This walk starts in Hathersage, climbs to Nether Bretton via Highlow Brook and Bretton Clough. Across to Abney and Overton Moor, returning along the Derwent Valley. Approximately 16km/10 miles with 450m elevation.

Meet at the end of Station Approach where it meets the B6001 at SK 2319 8117, 10:30 am. Bring lunch to eat en route. There are a multitude of hostelrys and cafes to visit at the end of the walk.

There is some roadside parking along Station Approach (not in the station itself) and other nearby roads, with a Pay & Display car park off Oddfellows Road.

Please let me know by text or email if you are interested to join me for this walk. Chris Radcliffe: email xxxxxxxxxxxxx tel. xxxxxxxxxx

10-11 June Little Langdale Meet Leader needed

This delightful hut is well situated for a variety of crags - in Langdale itself are Gimmer, Raven, White Ghyll and Pavey Ark and there's magnificent quarries close at hand too. If the weather is kind, with the long daylight hours this could be the best climbing or mountaineering weekend of the year. This is a hut swap so we only pay our own members' rates £5.00 per night. Extra nights before or after may be available but must be booked and paid for direct with the hut warden. Jen Chambers, email: fmc.bookings@outlook.com

We have 16 beds for Friday and Saturday nights. Parking is limited – only 6 spaces adjacent to the hut so car share if possible.
Contact Michael Moss if you are interested.

15 June Kendal Mountain Tour film festival Nottingham

7.30 pm Broadway, Nottingham.

Enjoy a screening of some of the world's best outdoor films. Plus hear from ultra runner and award winning author, Elsie Downing. There will also be an opportunity to win fantastic outdoor gear from tour partners. Tickets £18 (£10 concessions)

<https://www.broadway.org.uk/whats-on/kendal-mountain-tour-2022>

Saturday 18 June Langsett - Polka Dot Cafe Short Straw

Meet at the Polka Dot Cafe near the dam over Langsett Reservoir at 10:00 for a 10:30 departure. A short straw poll may be held to nominate a leader - unless someone volunteers beforehand.

Parking at the nearby Langsett Visitor Centre. Map OL1 Dark Peak; GR 211005.
I'm happy to act as a matchmaker for those wishing to share a lift.

A suggested route is along the north shore of the reservoir, Hingcliff Common, Mickleden Edge, Cut Gate, Featherbed Moss, Outer Edge, Harden Clough, Hordron, Little Don river (flows even more quietly than the big one), Langsett. A good pub for a post-walk pint and/or pie on the way home is the Old Horns, High Bradfield, S6 6LG.

Contact for car share or volunteer leadership:
Stuart Firth email xxxxxxxxxx; tel. xxxxxx

18-19 June Swaledale Meet Peter Amour

Swaledale, possibly the finest of the Yorkshire Dales with oodles of footpaths, open access land, the Pennine Way, and the Coast To Coast routes to indulge in, not to mention pedalling action to be had both on or off-road.

I shall be camping at the very well equipped (and located) Usha Gap Farm Campsite, <https://ushagap.co.uk> just up-river from Muker. The site caters for tents, caravans and motorhomes.

If self-catering they do have their own fresh meat products. For nearby eateries there are the following, (advise booking):-

Farmers Arms, Muker 01748 886297

Kearntons, Thwaite 01748 886277

Phone signals are very poor in the dale, so I advise booking meals a) before entering the dale, or b) calling in.

Booking - I'm intending to stay for more than just the Friday/Saturday nights, and have indicated that others may too. Phillip and Louise are expecting us and are aware that individuals may be arriving/going beyond the weekend dates. To ensure a pitch contact their website directly and fill in the booking form and include the word OREAD

For any more info my mobile number is xxxxxxxxx

23 July – 7 August Chamonix Gill Radcliffe

The plan is to return to Camping Du Glacier D'Argentiere camp site near Chamonix. **It hasn't been possible to do a group booking for the summer alpine meet as the campsite owners would like everyone to book individually and pay a deposit (42 euros). Therefore, please book your pitch online with camping du glacier d'argentiere if you intend coming on the summer alpine meet. Chris and I have booked from 23rd July to 7th August.**

The campsite tells me that it's filling up, spaces are available at the moment, but there won't be room for people who turn up without booking first.

If you have any questions or are struggling to book then please get in touch :
Gill Radcliffe tel.xxxxxx email xxxxxxxxxxxx

News, Articles and Reports from Meets

Club Secretary

There is a vacancy on the Club Committee for the position of Secretary. If you would like to take on the role, please step forward. Or if you want more information please get in touch with me.

The role includes distributing meeting agendas, taking and distributing meeting minutes, keeping the club documents etc up to date and other administrative functions.

At the moment the various functions have been distributed amongst the other committee members, but this situation is not sustainable.

The club does not run itself, although it might look as though things 'just happen' this is because certain individuals are putting in a lot of work behind

the scenes. If everyone does their bit when they can the club will continue to flourish, if they don't well you can guess.

At the moment we need someone to step forward.
Nigel Briggs email xxxxxx tel. xxxxxxxx

New Wildcat Access Agreement

Message from Rob Dyer, BMC Access and Conservation Officer

Following several months of negotiations and working closely with the new owners of Wildcat (and Willersley Castle), I'm pleased to announce that we have a new access agreement in place for climbers. Access is different from before and a little more effort is required, involving the need to walk to the top of the crag and abseil in, but this is a significant improvement on what has been and could have continued to be a complete ban. A big thank you to the new owners Manor Adventures from me for listening to our proposals and agreeing to continue to allow climbing at this fantastic crag.

Full details of the agreement and why it is needed are below, but **it's worth stressing how important it is that we as climbers demonstrate to the new owners that we can follow the agreement made, otherwise there is a very real risk that access will be banned.** The new owners monitor this site regularly, so if anyone feels like thanking them for getting access back up and running that certainly wouldn't hurt the growing relationship between them and the climbing community.

Site signage is up to tell visiting climbers what to do and the RAD has been updated, but please do spread the word to anyone who climbs at Wildcat to make sure it's understood and followed as widely as possible.

Land from the broken wall southwards has recently changed ownership and the approach to Wildcat Main Crag has changed. All climbers must now approach by walking to the top of the crag (path to the left of the broken wall), abseil to the ground and not walk beyond the crag base. This is essential to maintain a good relationship with the new landowner and ensure continued access for climbers.

There is good reasoning behind the new approach. The crag falls within a parcel of land now being used for outdoor education of young people, so the new landowners need to prevent climbers and members of the public from coming into close contact with children on site for child safeguarding purposes. By limiting access only to climbers who will stay in close proximity to the crag, there is sufficient buffer zone between the crag and other areas of the site being used with children.

A new fence has been installed along the line of the old wall to prevent the public walking onto the site. This blocks off the previous approach path, but please do not climb over the fence and instead access the crag from above by abseil. It is imperative that climbers follow this new approach and self-police, as climbing over the fence is very visible to instructors using the river below and will jeopardise future access to the crag. If you see other people trying to climb over

the fence, please inform them of the new approach – it is up to us as climbers to make sure we stick to the agreement and keep access open.

Currently four in situ abseil stations exist at the top of Jackdaw Grooves, Lynx, Tut's Anomalous and Climacteric. It is hoped that additional dedicated abseil lines which don't interfere with popular routes may be developed in future, but for now these existing abseil stations provide a solution. Once you abseil in, please stay in close proximity to the base of the crag where you will be well away from any children on site.

Due to their close proximity to areas being used by children, access is no longer possible to the four smaller crags south of Wildcat Main Crag (Upper Tor, Mill Tor, Woodbank Tor or Mole Trap Buttress). Other than Upper Tor, these crags have mostly returned to nature through lack of use.

Bike Ride for Woodhead Mountain Rescue 13-16 May

Ken McBride (friend of former Oread member Pete Wragg) is planning a mammoth bike ride to raise money for Mountain Rescue. A bit of sponsorship would be much appreciated, details below.

***BY BIKE, SOLO, AGAINST THE CLOCK,
500 MILES, IN 60 HRS.... (HOPEFULLY)***

For Woodhead Mountain Rescue

Starting 13 to 16 May 2022

500 MILES/800KM, 60HRS.

**STOCKSBRIDGE-WHITEHAVEN, WHITEHAVEN-TYNEMOUTH
TYNEMOUTH-STOCKSBRIDGE.**



TO DONATE GO TO:

“Ken’s Hills and Beaches “ in [Just Giving.com](https://www.justgiving.com)



Thank you for your support
Ken

25- 26 March Glen Clova Christabel Goode

Our Scottish winter meet to Glen Clova turned into a trip to a sunny paradise! Small patches of snow were still visible on the tops of some of the hills but not enough to get any winter routes. On the Saturday we all headed off for a walk through Corrie Fee up to Mayar and Driesh (local Munros). This turned out to be less of a walk and more of an expedition clambering over and under about 1km of fallen trees (left



over from Storm Arwen). The sign at the car park said the path was impassable but we showed them! At one point Dave got stuck between some trees and rather than help him, lots of us took photos of him instead. We had our lunch from the top of Mayar enjoying the view and the sunshine then continued up to Driesh summit. The way back through the trees was slightly easier as we went a different way. Seyhan and Mike R had gone ahead as they thought they'd be quicker but by the time we reached the hut in the afternoon they'd been back for two hours! The walk was followed by a quick swim in the river by Seyhan and Steph.



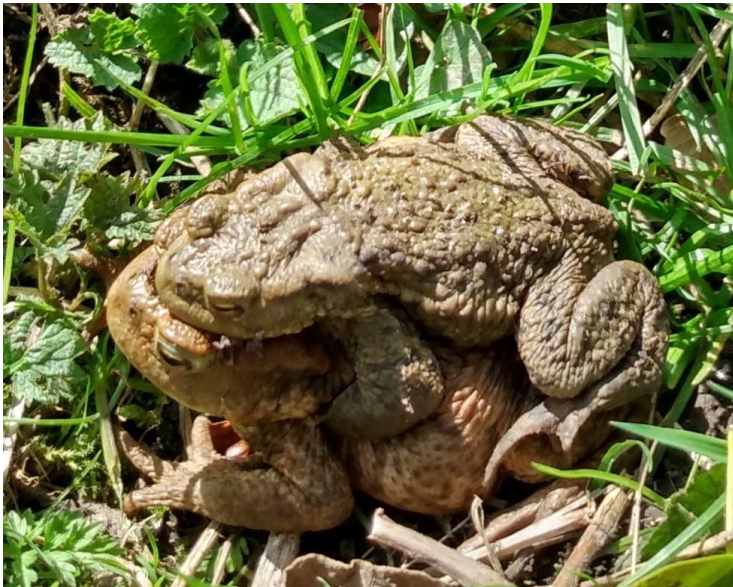
On Sunday Seyhan and Robin (Christabel's friend) headed off for their own walks whilst the rest of us headed for Red Craigs for some trad climbing. The sunshine and heat continued and lots were regretting not bringing shorts but a good day was had by all. Gill, Mike H, Mike R, Mike M and Pip stayed on for another night and squeezed in a morning walk before the long drive back in the daylight.

27 March The Spring Stride Nigel Briggs

Having been cancelled on the previous two years the Spring Stride actually took place this year. This year the well known tracks around Lathkill Dale were visited.

The group assembled in the Car Park in Over Haddon, I was a little concerned about how busy the day would be as the fact that it was Mothering Sunday had passed me by and the weather was good, 'unseasonably mild' one could say. However, my fears were unfounded and the day in general was much quieter than usual. Maybe taking a stroll in the Peak is not the done thing on Mothering Sunday.

Heading up Lathkill Dale the extent of Ash dieback became apparent, no doubt the recent felling scars will mellow in time. The various mining remnants were inspected and speculated over as we wended our way towards Monyash. Just before the road it was sharp left out of Lathkill Dale and over the top bouncing through Cales Dale before dropping down to the River Bradford. In Cales Dale there were a number of toads on the move and one amorous pair almost strayed under my carelessly placed boot. Fortunately, for them, my placement was poor!



Amorous toads, oblivious as to how close to my boot they were.

We followed the river towards Alport passing the swimming pool which got a few longing glances from those that are into cold rivers. Despite offering to wait the opportunity to swim was declined. From Alport it was up and over the hill and back to Over Haddon, entering the village by the pub. Well it would have been rude to walk past. Nothing really exciting or

dramatic happened, no records were set, just a pleasant walk on a glorious day with good company.



Lunch in the sun

Thanks to Jan and Chris Wilson, Richard and John Linney, Janet Briggs, Louise Amandini, Linda Drew and Stuart Firth for sharing the day.

6 April Gritstone Trail 1 Stuart Firth

All good projects have a beginning, a muddle and an end. Well, this one certainly started with a muddle as yours truly had inadvertently designated the meeting point with a completely fictitious grid reference. Just to confuse people further, I had decided to start the walk in the middle of the Trail at Macclesfield Forest rather than at one of the ends – Lyme Park in the north or Kidsgrove in the south. Nonetheless the group - including a potential new member, Keith Walsh - assembled in the correct place and duly departed on time.

It was not long before it started to drizzle and then rain; as is traditional, waterproofs were donned just a little later than might have been wise. The team remained in good spirits as we became established on the Trail proper. As we approached the first major summit at the radio station, the clouds lifted and a stunning 359-degree panorama opened up.



We could see the Wrekin in the distance, mid-Wales, Snowdonia, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Derbyshire and Staffordshire spread out before us. Luncheon was taken in the shelter of a suitable gritstone wall and with a delightful view in front of us.



We then descended into warmer regions, removed layers of surplus clothing and left the Gritstone Trail proper. The return route started along the appropriately named Greaseley Hollow and a photo was taken on the bridge where our route coincided for a short distance with the Peak District Boundary Walk. After we had cleared the bridge, Jan put her professional engineering hat on and declared that it appeared to be sliding off its support.



The countryside on the way back to our cars was still delightful and the conversation stimulating. One lady member even broached the subject of how one could - with the utmost simplicity – self-select a name as a porn star, should one ever feel the need. Intriguing...

As we neared the end, we came across a sign which indicated that the natives might not have been as friendly as we had assumed:



But you can be assured that no Oreads were hurt in the fulfilment of this walk. The next instalment will be on Saturday 16 July.

Many thanks to those attending: Nigel and Janet Briggs, John and Frederique Gwyther, Jan Wilson, Pippa Leach, John Green and Keith Walsh.

Postscript: Peter Amour and Sue Todd were unable to undertake this Stage 1 of the Trail and have expressed an interest in so doing. Peter has offered to lead the walk on another occasion. Should you be interested in joining him, he would be pleased to hear from you. (Peter Amour xxxxxx xxxxx. I hope these details are more accurate than my grid references.)

8-10 April New Members' Meet Ben Wooler

For the first time in what felt like forever we actually managed to have a new members meet and climb outside on real rock!

Saturday started with a good show of OREADS old and new as well as many prospective new members at the ever popular Stanage. The bitterly cold start led to some chilly fingers despite the strong showing of duvet jackets which made

the first few routes trickier than expected. This was a sign of things to come with snow putting an end to the days climbing mid-afternoon with many retreating to Hathersage for a brew.

The meal on Saturday night seemed to go down well and the meet leader received no reports of food poisoning or illness in the days to follow and so marks it down as resounding success. The bonfire was lit and marshmallows were toasted and judging by the amount of recycling much merriment was had.



Sunday started slowly but eventually a good sized group descended on Froggatt to climb or just bask in the Sun.

Thank you to all who attended and took part in the weekend this year after many false starts and we hope to see the new faces again through the year.



The Meet Leader and some of the team at Froggat.

21 April Ambergate Walk Ruth Gordon



It was a glorious morning but only two people had said they were coming – so something of a surprise to when a last minute flurry of arrivals produced a younger and fitter team than expected and seven of us set off, soon to be joined by Roger who had off-loaded some of his surplus energy by running from Belper. Then his current Gnome fetish demanded a photo call: we had reached “The Garden of Lost Hats”.

None of the Oreads present were in Gnome mode, nor, in the sunshine, felt inclined to don any of the bedraggled hats in the care of the local gnomes. We made our way up through Shining Cliff woods, blissfully mud -free for once, sparkly with spring flowers, admired the mill pond, pondered the chalk – dabbled routes on the crag and on to the fabulous views from the fields above Alderwasley.

A lunch stop by Alderwasley war memorial saw some very strange activities -whatever were they doing? Answers on a postcard please – but I will reveal that Steve Bennett was the undoubted champion -"I didn't think I could do it. I've never managed it before!"



Down into the village, through Kennel Woods, the bluebells just starting to go for their moment of glory, and down through the fields to Whatstandwell. Here, without prevarication or delay the chaps headed straight into the Family Tree Cafe where my write up suggested beer might be had.

Shock-Horror! Not a proper pub – only bottles - mutter, grumble, moan, complain – we sat and toasted ourselves in the garden, sheltered from the cool wind, and it was all so awful they had to have a second round. After an hour Roma, Heather and the Meet Leader deserted the troops and headed off back along the canal. We passed a swan, nesting inches from the towpath with a clutch of five eggs and a duck with nine miniscule ducklings going like clockwork toys – hey Spring is here!

The drinking team caught us up and back at Holly Lane all were accounted for. Roger declined a lift and set off at a steady jog back to Belper. Thanks to you all for your company on such a lovely day Tony Howard, Roma Wilcock, Steve Bennett, Michael Hayes, Roger Larkam. Heather Clifton-Smith and Harriet Burson-Thomas who came along to meet some Oreads for the first time. Thanks to Tony and Michael for the photos.

Dry Ice Tim Sellears

With European and Scottish winter climbing plans firmly sunk due to matters outside of my control I was feeling pretty fed up heading towards birthday number fifty four. But what to do without looking like I'm having a mid-life crisis ? An email from the Scottish Dry Tooling Club promoting a competition at the Glasgow Climbing Centre answers that question ... and hence I find myself a competitor in the British Ice Climbing Championships.

Regrettably I keep my booster jab appointment the Monday before and am immediately laid up in bed for a day before being forced out by work commitments. Needless to say I'm not exactly full of energy or feeling prepared as I board the train for the six hour journey north. I hold on to the fact that my fruit boots from the Czech Republic arrived the day before which must be a good omen.



The championship has three different categories and I've optimistically entered all of them. Just in case you were wondering ... there is no ice !

Lead Competition

"This is an open lead competition for serious competition climbers and those looking to push their limits. It will run in a similar format to a UIAA European cup with two qualification routes used to determine the top eight male and female climbers through to an on-sight final. All will be on plywood kick-boards climbed on lead with a time limit, one flash attempt and a judge for scoring."

As I tie in for the first qualifying route it dawns on me that I'm not only wearing fruit boots for the first time but also that I've never tried to use an ice axe on an artificial hold before. Kicking a crampon point into the plywood gives a reassuring thump, seems quite stable and feels not that dissimilar to chewy ice. After a couple of moves I attempt to latch a hold with my axe that looks like two parallel pipes at a near horizontal angle. All goes well until I fully weight the axe and stretch to reach the next "stein" hold; these are used with an inverted axe where the pick is up and you lever the handle down. I slide off and am well caught by one of the excellent competition belayers; both of whom do a brilliant job for the whole competition.

A woman with NED on the back of her top steps forward and tells me to use the tip of the pick between the pipes and not to hook them both using the teeth near the handle. The rules state that if you don't manage to make the first lead clip then you're allowed another go. With this new information I eagerly start again ... only to fall off the same hold in a slightly different way !



It turns out that the woman in question was Marianne van der Steen of the Dutch national team who eventually goes on to win the female lead final. As the day progresses I find this encouragement by everyone at the event creates an amazing positive and inclusive atmosphere.

The qualifying routes are done a couple of hours apart to allow for recovery time but appear consecutive in this write-up to ease reading.

[Me demonstrating the wrong way to hook the twin pipe hold. The area allowed for your feet is bounded by the red tape.]

Having successfully completed a number of the fun competition routes I feel much better prepared stood at the bottom of the second qualifying route. Then I hear the commentator over the tannoy “and on qualifying route two we have Tim Sellaars about to start” ... no pressure then. I make much better progress than on the first route but you have to remember that it’s all relative! As I latch a side pull I hear “... he’s off ... no he’s managed to hold it ... come on Tim ... another step ... oh no that’s it this time” and I’m back on the floor. While I take my fruit boots off I’m congratulated by another climber yet to go and feel pleased with my meagre effort. As I watch the next few competitors it’s obvious that recognition of the hold types and their unique quality will be key to any improvement.

[Marianne showing how it should be done with the event photographer watching. The blocks are hung from the ceiling on ropes and there were two more after this one!]



Fun Competition

“Grades from M2 - M8, 15 routes, all top rope or auto-belay, rock shoes, multiple attempts allowed, self-scored and for all levels of ability, even first time toolers! A limited amount of loan equipment will be available if you don't have your own. Top 8 male and female competitors will go through to an on-sight final.”



This is exactly what the name suggests with points awarded depending on the number of attempts before completion; 1st=10, 2nd=7, 3rd=4 and 4th=2. Although the grade of the route isn't shown on the scorecard it's reasonably obvious which ones are at each the end of the scale.

A good many of fun competition climbers seem to be in the low-middle grades and this helps create a great camaraderie with plenty of banter about where and how to pass the crux.

It's not just active climbers that are getting involved, my wife Natalie arrives mid morning and has also been in conversation with numerous people. Anyone in the competition area must wear a helmet with dropped axes being an obvious hazard.

Did I mention that Kendal Mountain Film Festival have two showings of their best films from 2021 during the day? This is the only plausible excuse I can muster for missing the deadline to enter my scorecard ... idiot! After watching the top 8 male and female climbers in the final later that night I don't think I need have any regrets about this.

[Me on one of the trickier routes, the finish is the green slot at the top right of the blue pole ... and yes it's just hanging in fresh air! To indicate which fixed holds can be used with your axe they have a wooden board mounted behind them like the red block bottom left.]



Speed Competition

“Held on plywood kick-boards and wooden rungs using Speed Auto-belay units, not belayers. Speed specific tools provided if you don't have your own. Footwear can be trainers, climbing shoes, fruit-boots or B3 boots with mono points. Top 8 male and female climbers will go through to the finals which will be run as head to head duels.”

You get one practice and three timed “runs” up the speed boards. These are basically vertical plywood sheets with wooden batons every 0.5m which are used for the specialist axes and if required your feet.

As I queue for my first practice run the teenage girl before me seems to literally jog up with only the odd missed step. Although old enough to know better I surmise that as I have a decent reach and the holds are obvious it can't be that hard. You won't be surprised to find it's a lot more difficult than it looks! The D handled very short axes, for some reason called Fifi's, are like hooks and work well on the rungs. But you can't just pull up on your arms for that height so, as is often the case in climbing, it's all about getting the feet sorted. This is not as easy as it sounds even wearing fruit boots which means anywhere can be a foot hold. I complete two runs and quickly decide that I need both more calories and to study other competitors techniques.

Natalie has recorded my last run on her phone and is not looking too pleased. “I tried my best” is all I can offer when I notice down feathers escaping from her jacket shoulder, she replies “I've been hit by an axe” ! We retire to the excellent Flavour Bomb café located on a balcony, which conveniently overlooks the speed climbing area, to console ourselves.

The climbers who record fast times have a steady rhythm and seem to keep their feet quite wide apart. Whilst this is useful beta it will clearly take a significant amount of practice for me to become any better. I improve my time with each go but realise I also running out of energy having been on the go since 8:30.

[Me with legs too close together and probably gasping for breath on my last timed run. At the bottom is the timekeeper and at the top you can just make out the bell which you hit to indicate completion.]

Competition Finals

As ever “time flies when you’re having fun” and it seems too soon when the competition area is declared off limits so new routes for the Lead and Fun finals can be set. If you’ve made either of these then you’re required to go into isolation, which thankfully has nothing to do with Covid, so they remain on-sight for your attempt.

There is a genuine buzz about the place as these begin with the driving force behind the event, Willis Morris (Scottish Dry Tooling Club and British Ice Climbing Team), acting as compere. First up is the Fun finals with the route up a steep and slightly overhanging wall comprising of numerous axe holds including a length of hanging chain! I’m not sure how much competition experience the Fun finalists have but they all put in an excellent performance, a few make the top which means the winner is declared on the time taken.

The Lead final is up next and as you’d expect includes some of the best British and European ice climbers. It’s clearly a huge step up as the start involves a number of moves known as “Figure 4” and “Figure 9”, I suggest you look these up on the internet rather than me try and explain them. Having climbed the wall and passed a particularly tenuous hold around a blind corner there waiting for you is a dyno to the first of five suspended blocks ! Even given the sublime skill and tremendous stamina of the Lead final athletes none of them make the final hold.

[Jonathan Brown of the Swiss National Team lands the dyno]



And after all that excitement what better way to finish the day with a few beverages from Edinburgh based craft brewery who are aptly named Top Out !

So what’s stopping you from having a go at this unique climbing discipline?

- It’s for old people like Tim ... the highest placed British Lead finalist was 15.
- It’s for young people like the finalists ... the oldest Lead competitor was 64.
- I don’t have the equipment ... apart from rock shoes most of this can be borrowed.
- It’s expensive ... the event competitors ticket was £50 in advance and included: a T-Shirt , hot drink and lunch from the café, fruit, bottled drink, energy bars, entrance to the Kendal Film show, raffle tickets (I won a beanie) and even stickers!



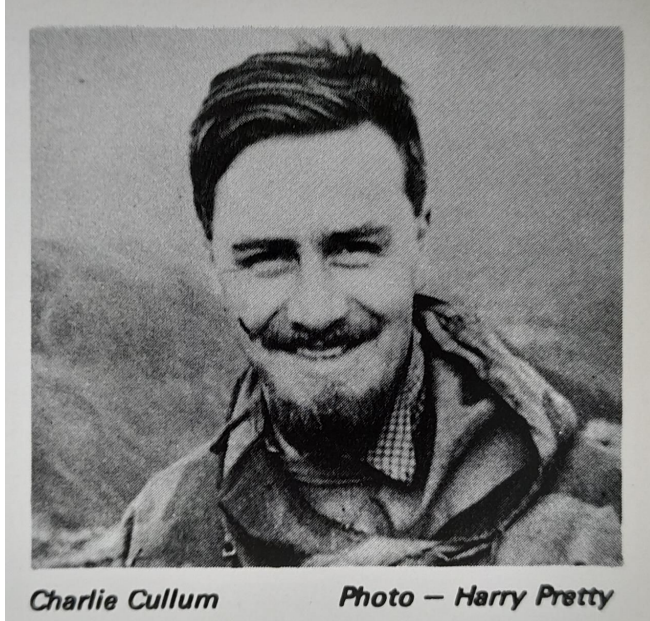
Why wouldn't you want to join in the fun ... what's the worst that could happen?



[Some pictures courtesy of the Scottish Dry Tooling Club Instagram account]

Sad Times

This newsletter records the passing of three long term members of the club.



Douglas Charles Cullum, (who was known as both Doug and Charlie), was an Honorary Member and the club's first Newsletter Editor, from 1953 – 57. He passed away on 28 February. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Mary. They joined the Oread in 1952.

“Climb if you Will” states “Much credit must go to Charlie for the valuable work he did in initiating a lively and informative monthly newsletter and for his editorship which did so much to keep members in contact, particularly those resident away from the Derby/Nottingham area”.

Paul Gardiner writes:

“I went with the Cullums on many meets. He was a very good Newsletter Editor back in the days of typing and duplicating! I remember when he thought he'd become paralysed, only to find that he'd got a spike of his crampons stuck in his trousers!!”

A browse through Charlie's writings in these early newsletters reveals a man with a deep love of the mountains, a strong sense of loyalty to his club and an enviable ability to laugh at himself.

This extract from Phil Falkner's jocular “Profile” (February 1954) gives a flavour: “Charlie is always at his best when faced with really difficult problems. He has no time for the merely tiresome. A recalcitrant primus is hurled, spluttering ignominiously, into the nearest stream. But a pitch of steep ice in a Scottish gully, with twilight not far away, calls forth his best qualities of courage and leadership. These qualities, coupled with a superb sense of humour, have won him many friends in the climbing world.”

Ursula “Uschi” Hobday 1941 – 2022

Uschi died peacefully, of leukemia, in Derby Royal Hospital on 6 April. Our sympathy goes to Colin and the family.

Janet Burgess

Janet Burgess died peacefully, at home, on 12 April. Her daughter, Loretta and granddaughter Heidi were with her. Our sympathy goes to Derrick and all the family.

Memories, photographs and tributes will be most welcome for future issues.

Hut Bookings.

Both our Welsh and Derbyshire hut bookings have now moved online at the Oread website www.oread.co.uk.

The new system allows you to see up to date bed availability details and make your own bookings.

Please remember to sign in as members first before making your bookings as you get access to the Oread beds and rates and you don't have to enter lots of details required for external bookings.

All queries and outstanding payments should be addressed to Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 179 Starkholmes Rd. Starkholmes, Matlock DE4 5JA Mobile 07771 700913. Email: michaelhayes6688@gmail.com

Our preferred method of payment is via bank transfer to our Lloyds account – Sort Code 30-98-97 Account number 62584068. Please use the 'Reference' box to say what the payment is for. **In particular please say which hut, ie Hut fees HL, or Hut fees TyW.** Your name is not necessary in the reference, unless it is different from the bank account name.

Alternatively you can post a cheque, payable to Oread M.C. to the above address.

Information on Member Activities

Welcome to new Full Member, Judy Scott and Provisional Member Richard Ward. We hope you will enjoy many happy times with the Oread.

John Fisher has a new mobile phone. xxxxxxxxxx. He would be very pleased to hear from you all.

Rusty's Puzzle Corner

This month's puzzle.

A weary old eccentric was walking up Thorpe Pastures towards Bostern Grange, taking in the extensive views to the East and North. He paused at the gate where Gag Lane leaves the open pasture and, as an excuse for a breather, took a bearing of 40 deg to Minninglow, with a prismatic compass. He then ambled on a further 0.7 miles on bearing 333 magnetic and sighted to Minninglow again before the land sloped to the west and blocked his view, this latter bearing reading as 47 deg.

Labelling the two positions, in order of arrival, as A, and B, what was the distance from point A to Minninglow?

This was actually a real life exercise, and I ask you to solve it in expedition conditions, that is to say without the use of an accurate existing map or any electronic aids other than perhaps a simple calculator. There will of course be a rounding error with these simple field measurements and this

is acceptable. I should add that my recent researches confirm that magnetic variation is now so small as to be irrelevant.

Last month's puzzle solution: Name the Gnome

The Gnome was none other than Snod! Pictured on a New Year's Day scramble on St Sunday crag in the early 1980s. He was outed by the Wilsons and Rusty who comments "The picture is merely ugly but if I'm right he has gone downhill from that point to the present day."

But – the Outing of Famous Gnomes continues.....

If Snod was "Ugly" who is "Snowy"?



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