



## ***COSMIC BULLSHEET***

The Bulletin News-Sheet  
of Cosmic Hillbashers

ISSUE No 30  
QUARTER 2 - 2002

### **Editorial**

**Phill Thompson**

Well editorials seem to come around quicker than ever, and the rush to meet deadline publication is even more frantic than usual. This edition could actually have been larger but for time constraints, as one of the important functions of the Bullsheet is to provide the list of Tuesday evening/Saturday morning/Social events that keep Cosmics so friendly, so I can't be late!

This time I've allowed myself a little bit of editorial indulgence by publishing Part 1 of The Grey Corries by Moonlight by Glyn Jones. The original is a beautifully handwritten account by Glyn and I hope my editorial cuts haven't harmed his superb prose. The full account stretches to some twelve pages and I intend to publish further extracts in future editions.

Glyn is known to a number of Cosmics from him supporting various Ramsay Round attempt. He is also known and respected in hill running circles for his solo epics around Scotland and for instigating and being original organiser of The Rings of Fire , a low key high endurance event held in Galloway.

Glyn is one of my oldest friends and we go back over twenty years, to the time when we used to chase each other around the then M21B course at orienteering events. The event and description fit better in to the now sadly defunct Cosmic Comic, as it was always Brian Lawrie's idea that the Comic would be a natural repository for hill "adventures" of a timeless nature , and Glyn's account certainly meets that criteria. In fact Glyn received the FRA Endurance/Long Distance award 2001 for his effort. I'm a bit vague on details as his description was of typically understated bewilderment as to why all these people turned up to give him an award . Anyway, enjoy part1 of the account , more to come next time.

**Phill**

The last race in the re-arranged Scottish Hill Running Championship was the classic Meall A Buchaille Hill race, which starts and finishes at the Glenmore Lodge Centre near Aviemore. The race is a medium category race with what seems like is a lot of climbing. This year's end of Scottish Hill Runners Season Bash and Championship prize giving was also being held in conjunction with the race. The joys of having young children meant unfortunately we were unable to partake in the usual festivities this year.

Having decided to travel over on the Friday evening we awoke to rain, mist and low cloud, on the Saturday morning, not a good omen for the race later in the day. With recent forestry work (I think) and a decision to make the first climb less rough there was a slight course change this year, for the better I must add.

With punctual timing the rain started just in time for the start of the race, everybody huddle at the front of the visitor center under cover until the last minute when everyone was called to the grassy area at the back of the center for the final race instructions and the start of the race. A good quality field was present, a who's who of this years runners, it was good to see Graeme Bartlett making a welcome return to the hill racing scene.

Off goes the gun and away we go, charging across the grassy area to a narrow opening in the fence and on to the trail through the forest. Up the new climb, rejoining the old course at the forestry track, tucking in behind John Hepburn (Lochaber) and Ronnie Gallacher (Westies) we continued to climb above the tree line and out into what I can rightly call the worst conditions I have ever raced in, sleet, wind, and rain, not very pleasant.

Dan was having another great run at the front, mixing it with the best. I made the classic mistake nearing the summit of the first hill, thinking we were very close to the top I decided to put in a bit of extra effort and get in front of Ronnie, but to my horror it was a false summit and Ronnie quickly went past me as my effort faded. Getting to the summit was a relief, I felt really sorry for the marshals on a day like this.

Into the descent, with Dan, Stewart Whittle and Graeme Bartlett off in the distance, I was a little detached from the second group containing Adam Ward, and Des Crowe. Knowing Hayden was behind I was expecting him to come flying past at any moment but to my relief I reached the base of the second climb without him passing me. Unfortunately I need to stop on the climb up the last hill to do my shoe laces back up, which was very annoying, something to learn from this I do believe.

Continuing upwards to the top you get a good view of the leaders, boy they were really motoring, with Graeme now opening up a gap over Dan and Stewart. The final big descent is easy to start with across short heather but the final section back into the forest is through knee deep heather which is really energy sapping. Back into the forest for the flat out descent to the Reindeer center, then up hill again along the forestry track to the final down hill section which was absolute agony. I thought I was gaining on the little group in front but they just managed to hold on, if only I hadn't need to retie my laces. Entering the finishing area in 7<sup>th</sup> I was please with my run.

Dan managed to hold off Stewart to get 2<sup>nd</sup> another great run, and Graeme marked his return with a victory and a new course record despite the conditions. Cosmics just missed out on the Team prize getting second place with Carl Pyrcce being the third counter in 18<sup>th</sup> place just ahead of Dave Armitage who won the Super Vet Prize. Well done Dave and all the other Cosmics who put in some very creditable performances in pretty horrible weather conditions.

1. Graeme Bartlett 51:26
2. Dan 52.4
3. Stewart Whittle 52.43
7. Andrew (me) 54.47
8. Hayden 55:07
18. Carl 58:03
19. Dave 58.43
31. Dennis 62:58
51. Gary 69:44
63. Peter Ferguson 73:21
67. Stuart 74:17
71. Katy 75:31
80. Lois 81:12
82. Elaine 81:54

Cold fuels the bright silence which cloaks my bivouac. Frost defines the limits of my small world, nipping at its edges. It's twelve hours since I began my second night's bivvy in sub-zero temperatures, and I've been up three times to jog some warmth back into myself after waking frozen. Moonlight slants over Mullach nan Coirean, percolating through the sparse trees into my rudimentary den in Glen Nevis.

After eating, I strip down to my hill running clothing and jog to the Youth hostel where I phone Barbara for reassurance that the croft isn't in chaos. Then I wake my control, and alert Mountain Rescue. Enough time to do Charlie Ramsay's Round, but only if conditions are right; if not I will be content with completing a winter Tranter's round in "solo & unsupported" style.

It's 0654, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2001. Jog up the road as dawn begins to light the sky over Sgurr a Mhain. I've waited nine weeks for the right conditions and this is my last chance for a good moon within 6 weeks of the shortest day. Why 6 weeks? Well 6 weeks on each side equals 12 weeks, equals one quarter the traditional length of a season. I believe that daylight length is an important criterion for a "winter" record.

Up the waymarked path besides the Allt a Choire Dheig I go. Then through steep birch woods to the deer fence corner on the ridge and into a white world. On my left, beyond the Devil's Ridge the sky glows with rose and gold. As I turn up the steeper ground south westwards the moon is directly in front of me, shining from a clear sky. Across the glen the first pink kiss of the sun is on Ben Nevis, then a sliver of Aonach Mor and flank of Aonach Beag flush as the sun's lips caress them. Tomorrow's last hills - if I stay the distance.

I have 5 pounds of food, suitable warm clothing, and an ice axe which is to be in my hands for 90% of the journey. The first two Mamores pass swiftly beneath my customised Addidas trainers, the snow being just right for fast travel.



Then I meet the soft snow . The over-yielding snow up to 18ins deep, with a crust not thick enough to support a heavyweight hill runner and his 12lb pack. It's an arduous struggle in the shadows of Sgurr an Lubair, up the steep slope to the start of the Devil's Ridge, with the stalker's path mostly buried too deeply to be recognisable. For a moment I am full of vexation in the knowledge that I'd missed the best chance this winter, but that soon gives way to the fun of the journey, even though to gain one step uphill often takes three steps of effort. Soon I am able to stride out along the ridge to shapely Sgur a Mhain. There are a couple of steps on this ridge that I'd been worried about re winter conditions, and one of the reasons why I'm going anti-clockwise, but they pass in an exhilarating scramble.

The daylight hours pass quickly in the intense glittering light and I meet several groups of people including some who have done a circuit of the Mamores from the Kinlochleven side. I chat to one man and his son, and the father's eyes keep wandering down to my trainers which do not display crampons. To reassure him and prevent myself being cast as a bad example to the teenager, I show them my bolted soles. Uphills are hard work in the powdery deep snow, the steeper the slope the harder it is. But downhills compensate for this : absolutely fabulous flights made with long sliding strides, the spindrift spraying behind me.

As the short day hastens towards sunset everybody but me is heading downhill back to shelter and hot food. I'm ascending Binnein Mor and casting my eyes constantly to the show in the south west where the sky is ablaze with sunset. I reach the top of the highest Mamore just after 4pm with the red sun perched for a moment above the lines of the hills. It has been a wonderful day , so clear so bright, with superlatives quite inadequate to describe the hills or my joy at being among them.

I run down the n.ridge of Binnein Mor then drop over the edge into its vast shadows, heading directly to where Binnein Beag rears up into the last of the daylight. The steep climb up Binnein Beag is frustratingly slow because of the yielding snow. Another annoyance is that darkness is coming an hour sooner in the schedule than I would wish and it's along time to moonrise.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT BULLSHEET

**Cosmic Social Events – Quarter 2 Year 2002**  
**Social Secretary – Elaine Stewart**

**Social Retrospective**

**January**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup>**

This years Cosmic Xmas Party was held at the Grammer FP Club with a fancy dress theme of 'Pop Stars'. The best dressed of the night had to go to Derek who came as Alice Cooper. He was wearing bright pink lycra leggings with a little flare on the bottom and covered in blue butterflies. White face, black eyes and black lips a long black wig and biker jacket. Nobody knew who he was till he opened his mouth. Willie Watson arrived wearing an amazing wig with a few flowers set in it, he definitely looked more like Quintin Crisp than Scott MaKenzie 'Flowers in Your Hair'!! By the end of the night the wig ended up on Shunter's head, which help to keep him warm on the way home. Sue Buchan was Scary Spice wearing an all in one leopard skin outfit, bushy hair and 3inch platform shoes. Mike Stone came very smartly dressed as Frank Sinatra... or so we thought but he was actually Robbie Williams. Peter Ferguson aka 'Jonathon King' made good use of his handcuffs for catching a few chicks.

There's lots more, see the photos for the rest!!

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>**

A group of usual suspects attended this years Carnethy Five Hill Race. We stayed at Palmerston lodge as in previous years, which has always been a success as we can all fit snugly into one dormitory, unfortunately for Gary who booked a bit late, had to make do with a dinky sofa instead. The organisers got it right this year by creating a better atmosphere for the celeidh in the Scottish Brewery. For some of us on Sunday it was a walk up Carlton Hill, followed by a session on Alien Rock.

**March**

No celeidh organised as many Cosmics are off on a jolly ski trip to La Tania.

**Forthcoming Features**

**April**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>**

After the Krunce a slide show will be given at the Grammer FP Club, 86 Queens Road, by Ian Searle who had taken a year out from work, to join the Cutty Sark round the world yacht race.

### **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>**

Night out organised by Helen Mackie to Carmines for a pizza then on to the theatre to see Dancing in the Streets – Motown's Greatest Hits, or for those now partaking in some dance classes there's always CeroC instead of the theatre.

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup>**

Splash & Dash are organising a disco to help raise funds for the Stonehaven Half Marathon.

Venue: Station Hotel  
Stonehaven

Tickets £4 available from Helen Mackie or Bob Sheridan.

### **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>**

Master bakers required!

Tasty delights needed for after the Clachnaben Hill Race. It would be most appreciated if some of you could bring along a cake or something edible.

### **May**

#### **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Cosmic curry night.

At the Nazma Tandoori Bridge Street.

Let me know if you are coming and I will book a table for 7:30pm.

#### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup>**

Lois's birthday. Possibility of a party!!

### **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>**

After the Balmedie Beach Bash there is usually a BBQ, so bring along your own burgers & drink.

### **June**

#### **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>**

Possibility of a Cosmic Jolly Weekend away to do the SAL Championship hill race on the Isle of Mull. It's 19 miles and 7500ft, not an easy one. Cost £8, start 1:00pm. Can you let me know if you are interested?

**DON'T FORGET..... TUESDAY NIGHT IS PUB NIGHT.**

Having endured 2 weeks of snow and ice during the Christmas and New year holidays my training had been somewhat curtailed. I did managed to fit in a couple of runs and decided to give the annual El Brimmick race a go, especially as I missed it last year and it was a 2002 club championship event. On arriving at the start to my surprise and relief no Dan, so I was at least in for a shout. Given the poor attendance at last years Elrick Relays it was good to see a more sizeable field.

The weather was cold and conditions under foot were apparently soft and for once no ice on the steps. The race started with the usual cavalry charge to the first narrow section across the bridge through the rocks and up the step bank. I managed to get in front through this section and worked into the climb, hotly pursued by Hayden, Steve, John and Alan Smith. Holding a small gap at the summit of Elrick hill I hurtled onwards and downwards toward the steps and along the road.

The climb up Brimmond hill is normally hard but when you find yourself in the front you find yourself trying that much harder. Up the hill, over the stiles and onto the final drag to the trig point, not looking back just in case they were really close. It felt like they were. I reached the summit and began the descent, initially down the road, over the stiles again and then on to the grass. It is an odd sensation being in the lead of a race, all you think you can hear is the noise of people behind, their breathing or the cracking of twigs. I must point out that this is a situation I have not found myself in very often (one other time). Not wanting to look round I continued down the hill, across the road and back up the steps. Thanks to the encouragement of Rob Taylor and Tim Griffin, I thought if I could hang on till the top of Elrick again that I might be able to win the race.

Into the last descent, and provided I could keep going I could win the race. Across the bridge and up the last climb and in the home straight, yes I had done it, OK the time was slow, but a victory is a victory. Waiting at the finish who should appear next over the brow of the hill but Hayden and Alan Smith going neck and neck, eye balls out. Despite crossing the line together Hayden was given second place by a gnats whisker, with Alan third. Steve managed to get the better of John in the final stages of the race to come in 4<sup>th</sup>, with John Buchan (5<sup>th</sup>) being pursued by Dave Armitage.



Some interesting prizes as ever, the chocolates were much appreciated by my family.

Good little race, short and sharp, a good season opener. Thanks as ever to Ewen for organizing the race as usual. Plus a big thanks to the helpers.

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## Dear Cosmics

This is a warning to others and a plea for help from those who might have been through the same downward spiral. It all started quite harmlessly with the weekly social trip to Linksfield Thursday track sessions. I thought I could handle it. Just a session once a week and ok so some of them are heavy road users but I didn't think it could happen to me. Not a Cosmic. I thought I had it under control.

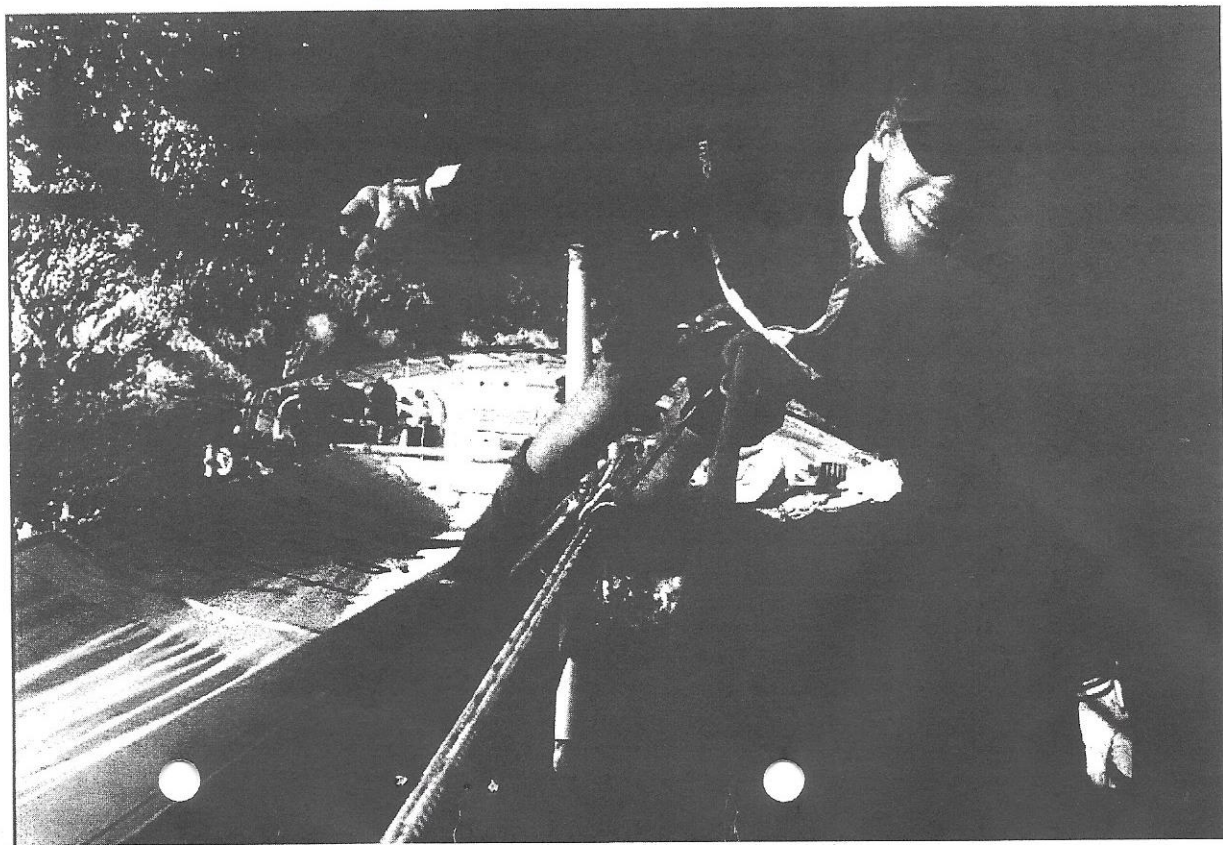
Then I started doing the occasional late night run down the beach. It wasn't so much that I wanted to as I kind of needed to feel good about myself. After all everyone else at Linksfield was doing it and well they just seemed a nice bunch and I wanted to belong. I didn't realise what was around the corner. And then someone whispered in my ear "Fancy something a bit harder, a half marathon maybe?" I should have been stronger I should have JUST SAID NO.

But I didn't. it hurts but I know I'll feel better for telling you all. I did the Inverness half marathon on Sunday the 18th March. I counted the miles, I counted the minutes, I've calculated my minute miles, split times, the works. It couldn't get any worse. A real bad trip but maybe the next will be better. There, it's out now. But what can I do now. A small part of me wants to do another, I've even thought about a 10k. I say to myself it'll be ok one more road race and then I'll stop, its just to see what its like when you have a good one. So Cosmic should I, should I try another, should I turn my back while I still can?

Yours  
Desperate of George Street (Shelley)

(10)

Ian Searle showing his nautical prowess. Come and hear how he did it on 2<sup>nd</sup> April



## SUMMER WEEKENDS

There's lots of races and talk of another Carl Pryce/Dennis McDonald Charlie Ramsey attempt but for those who don't drink too much on a Friday night then join us for:-

Saturday 6th April - **Glen Tanar** - meet Duthie Park at 9-15 or  
GR-NO476957 at 10am

Saturday 13th April - **Mither Tap (Bennachie)** - from Visitor Centre -meet  
Hazlehead 9-15am or GR-NJ6999217 at 9-45am

### **Saturday 20th April - CLACHNABEN HILL RACE - Noon**

Saturday 27th April - **Millstone** -meet Hazlehead 9-15am or GR-672190  
for 9-45am

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May - **Kerloch** - meet Duthie Park at 9-15am  
or GR- NO 699917 for 9-45am

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May - **Scottish Championship - Ben Lomond** 1pm

Saturday 18th May - **Mither Tap (Bennachie)** - from Visitor Centre -meet  
Hazlehead 9-15am or GR-NJ6999217 at 9-45am

Saturday 25th May - **Scottish Championship - Culter Fell** 2pm

Saturday 1st June - **Millstone** -meet Hazlehead 9-15am or GR-NJ672190

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June - **Durris** - meet Duthie Park at 9-15am or GR-NO761916

Saturday 15th June - Folk away at Lowe-Alpine MM

Saturday 22<sup>rd</sup> June - **Scottish Championship - Eildon** 3pm  
plus Highland Cross

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June - **Scottish Championship Isle of Mull Fell Race** 1pm

## TUESDAY NIGHTS

It's meet Hazlehead at 6-15pm (sharp) and then it's off to the hills for a 6-45pm start with a Pub thereafter (not compulsory).

**2nd April - First KRUNCE of season at Rotten O'Gairn,**  
GR-NJ851055 then Ian Searle's Around the World - The Times Clipper  
2000 Slide show at the Grammar FP Club 86 Queens Road.

9th April – **NE Kirkhill** at GR-NJ845116 and then Bucksburn Manor

16<sup>th</sup> April – **Hill of Fare** at GR-NJ743039 and then Broadstraik

23rd April – **Durris** at GR- NO761916 then Old Mill Inn, Maryculter

30<sup>th</sup> April – **Mither Tap** from Visitor Centre at GR-NJ699217  
then Monymusk Arms

7<sup>st</sup> May – **2<sup>nd</sup> KRUNCE of season at Rotten O'Gairn,**  
GR-NJ851055 then Bieldside Inn

14<sup>th</sup> May – **Kerloch** at GR-NO699917 then Old Mill Inn

**21st May – BALMEDIE BEACH BASH**  
at GR-NJ976181 then Barbecue **£2 entry fee**

28th May – **Clachnaben** from Glen Dye at GR-NO649868 then  
Feughside Inn

4<sup>th</sup> June – **3rd KRUNCE of season at Rotten O'Gairn,**  
GR-NJ851055 then Bieldside Inn

11<sup>th</sup> June – **Cairn Mon Earn** at GR NO768924 then Old Mill Inn

18<sup>th</sup> June - **Mither Tap** from Visitor Centre at GR-NJ699217  
then Monymusk Arms

26<sup>th</sup> June - **Durris** at GR- NO761916 then Old Mill Inn, Maryculter

2nd July – **4th KRUNCE at Rotten O'Gairn,** then Bieldside Inn