

Cosmic Bullsheet



**The News Sheet of
The
Cosmic
Hillbashers**

<http://www.cosmics.org.uk>

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Editorial : Fiona McDonald

Greetings Fellow Cosmics,

A big thanks to everyone has contributed to the Q3 2009 Bullsheet – and apologies that it's taken a while to get it ready but running and Cosmic bullsheets have had to take a bit of back seat recently.

The first article is an important communication from the Cosmic Committee about safety on Cosmic club runs. I know from personal experience that if you lose someone even on a warm summer night it can be a worrying if not traumatic time for both the lost runner and those searching for them. We should all try and make an effort to look out for inexperienced members and not just assume that someone else will.

I hope you enjoy reading the various race and run reports including a successful Bob Graham attempt by Simon Pearce and a slightly less momentous run with Lois and Peter! Unfortunately there is no Viet-nunce report yet as Derek says that there are too many rickshaws in the way!

Congratulations to Claire Whitehead who won a silver medal at the weekend as part of the Scottish ladies team in the uphill only race at the Keswick Commonwealth Championships. Claire has demonstrated fine form in both Scottish and British Championship races this year and it's looking good for a Cosmic lady Scottish champion if Claire runs well at Meall a Buchaille.



I hope everyone enjoys the local Aberdeenshire hill race series and I'm sure you're all looking forward to those winter sessions at Kings again already.

Fiona

Your committee has decided on the following measures to ensure safety on Cosmic club runs:

Everyone is free to roam the hills at will, but for organised club runs we felt a system needs to be in place to ensure that everyone, particularly new members, are looked after. A recent unfortunate incident, where the mountain rescue had to be called and the police were involved, highlighted the need for us as a club to address our responsibilities. A major potential problem is of inexperienced members going off route and getting lost, but anyone, including the fastest and most experienced campaigners, might be unlucky enough to sustain an injury and be faced with a long hobble home.

All members and others on Cosmic Runs are expected to carry the following essential kit: **compass, whistle, map, mobile phone, full body cover** (appropriate for the conditions), **emergency food**. Please note that this is almost the same as the compulsory kit required for races, so it will do no harm to get used to carrying and using it. It is for our own safety that we carry the kit. During the incident, the police (quite sensibly) wanted to know what kit the casualty was carrying. They also suggested that everyone should carry a mobile phone.

One person is to take responsibility at each club run and will give a

short briefing before the start. They will check that everyone, especially new members, know where they are going, check who is taking which route, indicate expected finish time (how long we wait before someone is considered overdue), and do a head count. Anyone who is intending to divert from the normal route, or breaking off early to head home for instance, should make this known at the briefing.

The "Responsible Person" will be a member of the committee or another experienced club member (volunteers are welcome and can be added to the list of contact numbers).

Information and a map with contact numbers will be circulated by email with the reminder for each run. In an emergency dial 999, or text 112 (text may often be better when mobile reception is poor).

This does not absolve individuals from responsibility for their own safety when taking part in a club run.

Glenshee 9 – not for the fainthearted

By Anita Hamilton (from Cosmic website blog)



The Glenshee9 was the 4th counter for this year's championship. A good Cosmic turnout of 8 (out of 69 runners) set off from the ski car park. Conditions were good - sunny and clear with a bit of a breeze so not too hot and really amazingly dry underfoot. The field soon spread out and the last you saw of the faster crowd was when they were returning along the ridge from the first top, Craig Leacach.

The first 5 hills were OK, but Gary and I found it a bit of a slog on sore feet back to Cairn an Tuirc then we managed to take a not ideal route on the descent, involving lots of steep rocks and heather before finding the path. We arrived at the cut off check point at Seann Spittal road crossing literally with seconds to spare. The steep climb up Cairn Aosda looked (and was) daunting and about halfway up I realised I was failing badly - guess a combination of not eating and drinking enough and not enough (not any!) long training runs was the cause. Had to watch Gary pull away and sheer bloodymindedness and stupidity led me to actually complete the course - which includes the long trek along the ridge to Carn a Gheoidh (2nd to last hill) and back, when you can just see the last see and the last descent to the cafe just there.

Tom Owens won in a new record time of 3.20.16. Jason ran well to be first Cosmic in 12th place, Matt and Sean both had good runs finishing within a couple of minutes of each other in 25th and 26th place respectively, about 10 minutes behind them were Colin and Ritchie also only a couple of minutes apart in 33rd and 36th places respectively, then Gary in 59th and myself in 61st, a resounding last place (by 20 mins). Thank you to Sean, Colin and Gary for kindly looking after me when I finally made it the finish. Some people were timed out and some including Rob retired - why wasn't I as sensible? The race was very well organised, a marshal at every checkpoint, all very friendly and helpful - even for the last straggler who was keeping them out on the hill. It's a great course (apart perhaps from the sadistic inclusion of Carn a Gheoidh) but in poor visibility the navigation would be interesting to say the least and I guess rather more people would be timed out.



So what I want to know guys is - what was the result of the great

nipple trial? Were the corn plasters as distributed by Colin (£1.99) as effective as nipple protectors (£4.99 I think)??

Glamaig Hill Race 2009

By Sean O'Sullivan

Unlike last year's beautiful weather, the Cosmics who went to Glamaig this year knew the Weather Gods were frowning on them.



While most of the crowds found ways to make the most of Friday's lull in the weather – variously in Glen Shiel or roundabouts, some of us had to work. So, with last minute additions, 5 of us crammed into a 'family hatchback' to head west.

Of course, on arrival, we found Peter and Lois trying to drink the bar dry, while mentally scarring Peter's friend and first-time Glamaig-er with tales of dragons in them hills. Back at the bunkhouse, more drinks were had – perhaps this was Lois' stealth training that people have so often rumoured... After all, Lois openly admitted that she "doesn't like this stuff" (I still can't believe she was actually talking about the same 16yr Lagavulin I was drinking...).

Saturday morning dawned, but we still couldn't see the hill, so anyone who was sober enough to be bothered headed over to the fairy pools for a dip. As it turned out, the girls went to watch, while the men stripped down. There was no use comparing tans – Ashley has been working on his for 10 years, just for this moment, and all

that effort paid off. You can't please everyone though – Elaine was most disappointed to miss the changing room scene.



As usual, the race was the race, with a few bumps and scrapes, a lot of wet grass and bog, but with several folk improving their time. Simon and Rob just missed the honours with a great 4th and 5th, Lois held her F40 title (despite the Lagavulin) and Elaine strolled into the bar just as her name was called out for 1st F50. With disappointed faces all round due to lack of tea-cosies, we remembered that the real reason everyone trekked over to Skye was for the ceilidh... dutifully Steve and Margaret turned up from their Kayak expedition just in time!

The ceilidh passed in a blur, but signs of a successful night started to flow back to the bunkhouse, and before you knew it, we had a full house, with Alan and Tilly Smith, Brian Marshal and Ritchie's potential new family. After a few more drinks, Ritchie was being told to man-up with outstretched arms press-ups the order of the day – all I can say is, why??? Either the technique didn't impress, or the girls had another workout to do, because I didn't get woken up in the night.

In the morning we all headed back, with a pause for Simon and Rob to run a few extra miles and Elaine to bag another Corbett. All those with no brain for themselves followed suit. But with a plan to meet back at 3pm, sceptic Bruce bet £100 that it couldn't be done. Ritchie and I had foolishly worn walking boots – but was that going to stop us taking £50 each? No, but half way down the hill lethargy did, and the ever decreasing prospect of pulling readies from Bruce's tight, sweaty, lycra leggings (maybe that's why the girls kept up on the way down...).

What a Peachy Runner! - An Interview with Simon Peachey

by Fiona McDonald

How and when did you start running?

I can still remember my first XC experience from school aged 5 or 6 – I wore 'whites' & plimsolls with no tread – I came back less than white – it was a very muddy course on a flooded canal towpath. It felt like a great adventure and I wanted to beat my classmates. Motivation has remained similar ever since!



What is your favourite run?

When I lived in Edinburgh I used to love running along the top of the crags and up to the top of 'The Seat'. Awesome views and some pretty rough running for a city centre run! I reckon now Brimmond Hill is pretty cool – great views of Aberdeen & cows & its quiet.

What is your favourite race?

Big mountain races are my favourites eg Arrochar or Slioch, also very fond of the 7 Hills of Edinburgh because it feels 'anti-establishment' when you're climbing over walls and fences in various areas of the city when you wouldn't normally behave like that!

What was your toughest race?

That's what great about running – any race where you don't feel fit and feel you are doing badly is a tough race!

Who has been your greatest adversary in races?

Whoever is just ahead - more often than not it's the 'usual suspects' who are near me in a race Stew Whitley, Brian Marshall....

What are your most startlingly running achievements?

Getting the occasional race win always startles me!

What is your best bit of kit?

I'm most attached to my bikes – any one of 3. A smoothly running bike is a joy to ride in my (sad) opinion.

What are your favourite running shoes?

I seem to be forever binning bloody shoes just as they get really comfy. You can't beat a pair of Innov8 Mudclaws, but they sure don't last long. Rant over.

What do you prefer to eat pre-race?

Coffee & cornflakes

What do you prefer to eat during a race?

Powerbar Gels – strawberry & banana. Jelly babies though I can never decide if I prefer Bassett's or Sainsbury's.

..and post-race?

Whatever I can lay my hands on quickly!

What is your ideal training week?

Mon – Road Ride / Chaingang / easy run

Tues – Krunce or Cosmic run of course!

Wed – 1hr to 1.5hrs somewhere

Thurs – Hill reps – grrrr!

Fri – Easy run

Sat – Race

Sun - Long run / day on hill

What do you do when you're not running?

Spend majority of my time with Anna. Also I'm quite into photography in fits and starts so sometimes I spend quite a bit of time taking photos. I put 'arty' shots only on: www.sipeachey.com (Ed - Not sure I could publish all the 'arty' photos – but here's an example!)



I've recently learnt to scuba dive so hopefully will be doing more of that. Do the occasional mountaineering trip / bike tour too.

What do you do for a living?

I'm a geologist – which perversely is entirely computer based now.

It has allowed me to go on field trips to some fantastic places in the past though – notably dragging survey equipment over sand dunes with camels in Oman, mapping in the Alps, Baja California. I did manage a trip to India recently too. I do find my work really technically interesting but it's boring for interview purposes!

Do you have a favourite Scottish hill?

Probably Arthurs Seat but generally I like the experience of being on the hill more than any specific hill. Being out with friends, racing, the view and so on.

What is the most exotic hill you've climbed?

I climbed a Volcano in Ecuador called Illiniza Norte 5200m. That is still my personal altitude record. Was a great run down too since it was ash and small volcanic fragments which made for ideal descending. Unfortunately it was cloudy on the summit so it was kind of similar to a munro in that respect. I remember passing a guy in plastic boots and a down jacket slogging upwards – we were in powerstretch and running shoes – he looked a bit shocked!

Where would you most like to go now?

Diving somewhere or the Himalaya is on the next holiday ticklist – it's important to always have a holiday plan in mind!

What is your favourite tipple?

Beer with roasted hops – dark ales & stouts.

Do you have a hero/heroine – related or unrelated to running?

No not really – no-one is whiter than white!

Any favourite Cosmic memories?

Recent post-Glamaig Ceilidh was pretty cool.

Are you planning any particular races next year?

I might do a SkyRace if possible – they sound pretty exciting!



A day in the lakes – my Bob Graham Round.

by Simon Pearce

If my offshore medical was to be believed I had grown 2" and put on 2kg since last year. "Just extrapolate the line" the nurse said, "in a few years you'll be overweight!" She failed to point out that if the growth spurt I had obviously had in over the same period continued, I'd be 7ft tall before long! Little did she know that only a week before I had shed 5kg in a little under 24 hours - I didn't try to explain!

Richard Askwith describes the Bob Graham round as "one of the great fell-running challenges; a 65mile course over a particular sequence of forty two Lake District peaks, with 27,000 feet of ascent and decent, which runners aim to complete within 24 hours. It's not a race: the challenge is simply to do it". Typically it is broken into five "legs" with pacers employed to provide moral support and witness each summit.

The BG was always something I might have a crack at *next* year (after all I was still "serving" my running apprenticeship!). However, after a few too many pints of Snecklifter late last year my Lakes based pal Toby and I finally committed to having a go in June this year.

Fully aware that any attempts at training I had made in the past normally floundered within a couple of months (training *is* cheating after all!), I decided to employ the "tell anyone who'll listen" approach. The theory being that if enough people thought I was serious about doing it, then my fragile ego wouldn't let me back out of it. Before I knew it, I had a bunch of willing volunteers for the day and an Aberdeen based training partner in Chris (inspired, he subsequently completed a successful round in July!)

A winter and spring of running passed and the day arrived!

Toby and I intended to run together where possible but had organised some dedicated pacers for the later legs. Several other attempts were being made by others starting at 1am on Saturday

morning too. The sight of a gaggle of lycra clad runners heading into the mist was a little confusing for the kebab wielding youth of Keswick although it made perfect sense to us!

The first two legs passed without any incident with Toby and I stealing a march on our 23 hour schedule despite the hill fog. Those first two legs whilst normally representing a big day on the hill are simply a warm up for the rest of the day.

With the first tell tale signs of fatigue beginning to kick in we arrived at Dunmail and we were met by Toby's wife Lisa and a fresh set of pacers. To my horror and without warning I was reunited with a hastily eaten pot of rice pudding - this was to set the tone for legs 3 and 4!

My rice pudding repeat also seemed to disengage my hill climbing legs and Toby and his pacer soon put a gap between us over the first hills of leg 3. As Bob (my pacer) and I slowly drudged up Sergeant Man, I was met by Toby who had been waiting patiently. With a stiff handshake and prolonged eye contact we wished each other the best of luck and Toby disappeared at speed.

I dragged my heels over the next few hills with another visit from my stomach contents clearing away any remaining thoughts that I might be able to finish the round. And having concluded I wouldn't finish the round I immediately perked up - after all I could stop if I wanted to!

Bob and I ticked off the next few summits just about maintaining the lead on the schedule and as I descended Esk Pike I could see Toby climbing the trod to Great End. By this point I had started eating again and was feeling more positive about the day. I finally caught up with Toby on Lords Rake and it was great to summit Scafell together. He had gone through a comparable low patch and we were both beginning to feel a little stronger. We stretched out on the way down to Wasdale and I arrived shortly after Toby having maintained the schedule advantage.

Bob's solid support over leg 3 and his calm encouragement had got me through the most difficult patch of the round! Toby and I were pleased to catch up and the drizzle had lifted to make way for sunshine. The world seemed like a much better place! The only

problem was that with almost 2 hours spare on the 24 hours challenge I couldn't justify dropping out!

Toby and I set off up the trod on Yewbarrow together but Toby quickly established a gap and once again we agreed to separate. The pressure of the round eased with every summit as Steve (my new pacer) and I ticked them off, building on the advantage over the schedule. Steve did a fantastic job of motivating me and I actually enjoyed the leg. A caffeine gel towards the end of the leg had a somewhat dramatic effect and I arrived at Honister in jubilant mood.

I left immediately with energy gel still coursing through me whilst Steve rested for a few minutes. He struggled to catch me until, Duracell bunny style, I slowed to a crawl (it seems the energy gel had worn off!). The final few hills passed slowly, but a change of shoes at Newlands Church gave me new legs for the road run in. I arrived some time after Toby and the applause on Keswick high street from friends and (still confused) kebab wielding youths alike marked the end of a great day. A day which had only been made possible by the support of some great mates before, during and afterwards.

As I hobbled out of the medical centre 1 week later (having failed to explain why black toenails were not necessarily an indication of underlying health problems) I paused for thought. The nurse's measurements *had* been wrong, because after last weekend I was *already* walking 7ft tall!

Spot the Difference!



and engraved up to date - not a trivial task.

Race organiser Jason Williamson probably jinxed the weather for the Mither Tap race by writing in his report for last year "Will we ever get a dry night for this race?" However it was not too heavy when most were actually running, though the rocks at the top were rather slippery – I spent most of the descent trying to spit out heather having fallen flat on my face in it. Both Whiteheads turned out for this one (they must have hired a baby sitter). Dan Whitehead knocked 3 seconds off his record, Simon Peachey was 2nd followed by Rob Brookes, who managed to keep ahead of Claire Whitehead this time. Another fantastic run by Claire in 4th place overall again took over 5 minutes off the women's record. Alan Smith and Steve Helmore were 1st MV40 and 1st MV50 respectively. The prizes for the event included special edition local honey from David Wilkinson's hives – Jason's write up was headed "And all for honey ...".

The format for the series is 3 out of 4 races to count with points awarded as per finishing position. After the 3rd race Simon Peachey was in the lead, followed by Rob Brookes, both having done 3 races. However, with two wins out of 2 races done Dan Whitehead was an equally good prospect for the overall title so long as he did the last race at Cheyne Hill. Alan Smith's position as 1st MV40 was probably unassailable. 1st MV50 was Davy Duncan (on 3 races), but he could be overtaken by Steve Helmore or Ashley Jermison. If Claire Whitehead did the final race she would win the women's trophy in fine style and be probably something like 4th place overall. Carolyn McLeod is also in a good position having been 2nd woman in 2 races.

The final race was at Cheyne Hill. In a close race, Dan Whitehead finished 1st, 12 secs in front of Simon Peachey, giving Dan the overall title for the series. Simon was 2nd and Rob Brooks 3rd in the series. Alan Smith was 3rd at Cheyne Hill giving him 4th and 1st M40 for the series. Steve Helmore was 13th giving him 9th place in the series and 1st M50. Clare Whitehead didn't make the last race, probably because she'd been busy at the trials for the World and Commonwealth Championships in Keswick. Veronique Oldham set a new Ladies record for Cheyne Hill, but had completed only 2 races, so Carolyn McLeod (2nd Lady at Cheyne Hill) took the Ladies prize for the series. Anita Hamilton was 1st F50 for the series. Joseph

Helmore completed 3 races to be Junior champion for the series.

As something of an experiment, Junior races have also been held this year. We had 1 Junior at Durriss, 4 at Balmedie, 5 at Mither Tap and 2 at Cheyne Hill, all taking place on shortened versions of the courses. We have to comply with strict guidelines from SHR as to how far and how severe junior courses for different ages can be. We also realise that the Junior courses need to be extremely well marked and marshalled, otherwise one or all will go the wrong way! One problem is that as the lower age limit for the main races also varies due to their different lengths and difficulty, so some young people find they have run a mixture of Junior events and main races. The junior format may need to be refined for next year.

119 people did at least one race this year (including 12 juniors), 25 completed the series having done 3 or more races. Four new records were set (3 female, one male).

The Three Peaks

By Lois Noble

Never let it be said that Mr Peter Larkin "absconded" : *to depart or leave quickly and usually secretly, especially to avoid punishment or arrest* (Chambers Concise Dictionary 2004!) "darn sarf", distraught by the claim that he was "too fat to be a hillrunner."

From his very door, the gruelling challenge of "The Three Peaks" beckons. "The Three Peaks" (not to be mistaken for its lesser namesake ; "The Three Peaks") is an arduous run spanning two counties – Hampshire & West Sussex. It involves the demanding ascents of three of the finest peaks in the area, Titty Hill, Older Hill and Iron Hill, with Scotland's Knob (I kid you not) as an optional extra.

After leaving "The Bothy" (home of this highly tuned athlete ... or should that be highly strung?), dare I admit - by road, one soon ventures into more familiar terrain. Titty Cottage, a chocolate box



that they must indeed, keep abreast of the forthcoming challenge. Its grandeur lifts one's spirits prior to tackling the ascent of Titty Hill which rises to a respectable 146m, therefore separating it from smaller neighbouring peaks. A quick cuppie on the summit then it's off towards Older Hill.



Titty Hill (from Peter's front door)

The pain & suffering incurred climbing the steep South face of Older Hill serves to remind us, that we are no spring chickens, but a couple of b****y, auld hens (an 80 year old patient once described herself as such - I liked it, very apt - so in it goes)!

The first sighting of the trig point is such a relief after an exhausting ascent, and confirms its' mountain status at a height of 207m. Peter freely admits he feels dizzy even thinking about such altitude! It is therefore just reward to pause and appreciate the fantastic views of the South Downs and Titty Hill, The Bothy now a mere speck in the distance.



Older Hill (from Peter's front door)



Summiting Older Hill
(New Club Kit Peter?)

Alas, still no relief, it's onward to Iron Hill, wrestling through the brambles & nettles which adorn the many signposted rights of way (navigation classes not required here) before the final slog to a not insignificant 196m. For those who may scoff, it has to be said the legs of iron and buttocks of steel are essential to the successful, almost vertical ascent up a treacherous, stone and root strewn hanger: *a wood on a STEEP hillside* for those unfamiliar with English spick.

Tis not over yet, still a few miles to go, passing a strip of land named Shuffle Sheeps, which is enclosed by pine trees and purple heather! This area was well established before Larkin's deportation, his self- acclaimed Scottish Credentials have nothing to do with



their introduction.

Then finally, exhausted, dizzy & oxygen deprived after 17k's hard running The Bothy pops into view. A welcoming sight as is, in true Larkin fashion, the bottle of St Peter's Organic Ale which awaits – a just reward for such fine efforts in the local "mountains".



..... Just never again let it be said that this highly tuned athlete is "too!!

Look out for the winter training sessions to be emailed shortly or check out the Cosmic website www.cosmics.org.uk .

COSMIC CHAMPIONSHIP RACES 2009 remaining			
Sat 26 Sep	Cairn William		1500
Sat 26 Sep	Two Breweries		1200
Sun 4 Oct	Bennachie		

TUESDAY NIGHTS and MID WEEK RACES (meet at venue)			
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22nd Sep **Countesswells** from opp Riding Stables (NJ-8700 0453), Bieldside Inn

29th Sep **Riverside Run** from Duthie Park Winter Gardens Car Park

SATURDAY RUNS and RACES			
Date	Location	Grid Ref.	Time
Sat 26 th Sep	Cairn William	Monymusk	1500
Sat 26 th Sep	Two Breweries	Broughton, Borders	

Lift Sharing

If you would like to share lifts check out the Cosmic Yellow Pages (membership list) for details of other members who may live near you and check the Cosmic yahoo email group for last minute messages.

For more details about Cosmic races or runs see the website www.cosmics.org.uk and for other races see the SHR website www.shr.uk.com.