

# COSMIC COMIC



*News Reviews and Interviews*

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

FEBRUARY 1996

# EDITORIAL

by Brian Lawrie

Fraser Clyne's article in the 'Green Final' drew attention to the difficulty that North East Clubs are finding in recruiting new members (and in Metros case a 50% drop in membership) is a timely warning to Cosmics not to rest on our laurels.

Cosmic numbers are steady at the moment and several good runners have joined us this year. There is still a vibrant feeling about Cosmics; a feeling that we are going somewhere, and that there is still a lot to do. If this wasn't the case after only two years then certainly something would be amiss

So keep being involved. If you don't want to organise an event or write an article for the Comic be at the Club runs on Tuesday nights or Saturday mornings. Good turn outs are inspirational for everybody.

Cosmics are justly proud of their sociability and Club spirit. If we cease to be a participating Club then, for me, much will have been lost.....*Be there!*

## THE COSMIC WAYS

In order to learn better the intricacies of our devious Cosmic Ways across the mountains and through the woods dig out your maps and identify which Saturday runs pass or are near to the following places or features. Don't be lazy. Think of the educational benefit. It might even stop you getting lost! Sheets 44, 37, 45 and 38 of the 1:50,000 Series will help as will Pathfinders 272 and 214. These should all be in your collection anyway. If not, go and buy them immediately!

1. Hosies Well
2. Mire of Midgates
3. Long Slough
4. Adending Burn
5. Meikle Tap
6. Hill of Trusta
7. Goauch Wood
8. The Strone
9. Sand Loch
10. Maiden Causeway

## MORE MEMBERS

### RICK ALLAN

Rick's mountain adventures are generally on the grand scale when compared with most of ours. Rick is one of Britain's leading Himalayan climbers. He has stood on the summit of Dhaulagiri 26,795 ft, the sixth highest mountain in the world and been on numerous other expeditions including two to Mount Everest. Rick finds that hill running gets him fit for his expeditions. Has lungs like Mitchelin Man!

### ANDREW WHYTE

Andrew joined Cosmics because he was fed up with pounding the roads. Rarely misses a Tuesday night although sometimes the search for 'black gold' has to take precedence. His first off road race up here in the North East was the Krunce. His first hill race was Meal An T Suidhe (Meal an Tea for the non Gaelic speakers). Ambition is to run some of the big Lakeland Fell races. What's wrong with the Scottish ones?

### EDDIE BUTLER

As far as he knows the only granddad in the Cosmics. Ambition: not to run like a granddad and keep within two hills of Lawrie and Kammer in a 'long' training run. In his prime Scottish vet triathlon champion in 1992. Not in his prime - lying in the heather with cramp in the Glen Clova Race. Second ambition - not to lie in the heather - except with Kath!!

### KATH BUTLER

As far as she knows the only Grandma in the Cosmics. In her prime Ladies record holder of the four Cairngorm 4000's. Favourite races Sierre Zinal and Moffat (old course). Now enjoys training as opposed to competing. Never quite recovered her form after drinking (9%) cider at the Collieston race. Why has she entered again?

# NEWS AND BITS

## HILLS ARE BEST

We know of course that hills are best but now we have confirmation from the best of sources. A recent article in Peak Performance reveals what an important part running in the hills plays in the training of many of the Kenyan elite.

Tegla Loroupe, a recent winner of the New York marathon, believes that the toughness of their hill workouts is the 'key reason' for their success.

Often Loroupe trains on the famous Menengei volcano (7,800 ft) near Nakuru city. Starting at a height of 3,800 ft Teglas route grinds its way for 12K up trails and dirt roads to the summit. All in forty five minutes.

Sergoit hill provides Sammy Lelei (59min 24sec half marathon) with a regular lung bursting sprint from 5,000ft to 8,000ft. Gasp!!

Michael Kapkiai (Turin marathon in 2hr 10min 33sec) has an equally tortuous route on Kipkoikoi mountain near Iten, Kenya. This entails a vicious 3,000ft climb up a 3 mile trail to the summit.

Godfrey Kiprotich prefers his Kerio valley workout. This 21K run winds its way over 3,000ft to the summit of Tambach Hill taking Kiprotich a mere eighty four minutes!

Find a hill Cosmics and get cracking.

## CLUB DISCOUNT

*Show your membership card at Running Shop, Marshals and Blacks and they will give you 10% discount. Marshals will not accept credit cards when giving discount, only cash or cheques.*

## CLUB STANDARDS

Standards were published in Issue 3 of the Comic, 10% of the winners time got you a Gold, 25% a Silver and 50% a Bronze. The idea of course was to give every runner in the Club an extra challenge in the races he or she was competing in. Only one can win but every runner, up to a point, can improve their standard. We thought the idea was fairly innovatory and have had at a little expense, some cloth badges made up for the purpose. These can be sewn onto tracksuits, bags etc. They even make good beer mats as one sceptic suggested. Green will represent achievement at Bronze level, orange at Silver and red at Gold. Maybe next time round we can have a bronze colour for the bronze level, silver for silver etc. Unfortunately the orange and red are very similar. Until this batch of badges is cleared there is nothing that can be done about it. Both Ewen and I would be very interested in some comment on the badges. Do you feel it is a worthwhile idea to pursue? Let us know one way or another. Put your comments on paper and we'll print them.

## RULE CHANGE

The B.A.F. has changed the rules to allow hill runners to compete in unpermitted hill races in 1995. You can now run in ANY hill race without fear of losing your amateur status e.g. Braemar Highland Games. Initially this is for a trial twelve month period, but should become permanent. Roger Boswell's unrelenting campaign (but there were others) made his name synonymous with the effort to affect this change north of the Border. The Lochaber man's efforts coincided ultimately with a move by the English F.R.A. to persuade B.A.F. that it was now impossible to enforce an unpopular rule. They succeeded so now you can go and win a tanner at the Highland Games without anybody so much as saying boo.

# STRETCHING A POINT

- by Sonia Armitage M.C.S.P. S.R.P.

Stretching is an important complementary component to any running program. It is important whether you are as flexible as 'Bendy Bambi' or as inflexible as Dave Armitage!

Whatever your limit in range of movement it is important to stretch to your own limit to help maintain the mobility you do have, and more importantly, to help prevent injury. This becomes more important the older we get. Stretching is necessary whether out for a training run, a race, an interval session or even a ceilidh!! Stretching is the part we all miss out when anxious to just get on with the session or simply short of time in a lunch hour. However, if you want to continue with this mad but wonderful sport of running up and down hills

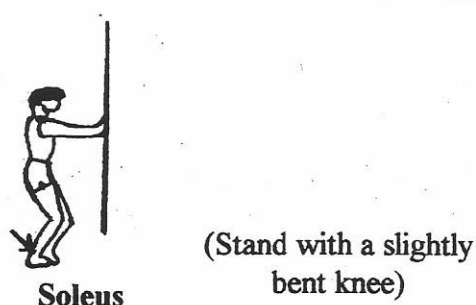
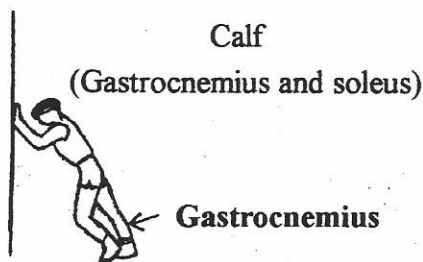
for many years to come stretching must be integrated into your training and racing.

## When to stretch:

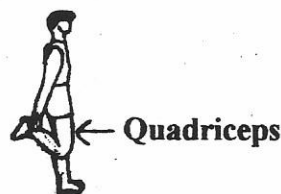
Ideally during a warm up. It is best to start with some easy jogging then stop and stretch. It is equally important to stretch at the end of a run, session or race as muscles tend to tighten immediately after running.

## How to stretch:

Find your own limit in mobility and stretch the muscle in a static position for 30 seconds - the muscle should just be taught (NO BOUNCING OF THE MUSCLE). The stretch should be pain free. Should you acquire an injury despite all this stretching - go and see your physiotherapist!



Start with a slightly bent knee and slowly straighten your knee



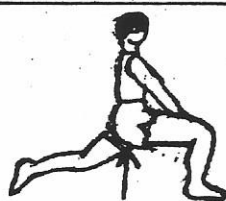
Groin

Gently push knees towards the floor until you feel your groin area taught



Iliotibial Band

Place your left leg across your right knee - lower right knee until the outside of your thigh becomes taught - vice versa for left knee.



Hip Flexors



## SCARY STORY!!

*by Brian Laurie*

Just when you thought running was good for you and that flogging yourself on these hills was strengthening your heart and lungs along comes a spoilsport to undermine all you ever believed in. Innocently flicking through the pages of the March issue of the 'Running Times' I jabbered to a halt at the interview with Kenneth Cooper. (you golden oldies will remember him as one of the guru's of the 70's running boom).

What was so controversial as to set my false teeth clattering and a splutter of spittle to descend on to the glossy pages of my magazine?

Well, they were yakking on about free radicals, a subject on which Cooper has just written a whole book. Now I had read about these critters before in Hilda's health mags and heedful of possible dangers, had promised myself an extra banana a day to combat the menace - why, you will see later.

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### ***A bit of gentle aerobic exercise is apparently O.K. but serious training is out.***

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How innocent can you be? Cooper's appraisal of the subject has such serious implications for the competitive athlete that an extra piece of fruit wasn't going to solve anything. In fact a vulnerable, suggestible, weak willed hypochondriac like myself is in great danger, if Cooper is right, of being left at the complete mercy of his local health food shop!

Lets begin at the beginning. What are free radicals? Apparently we should regard them as rogue molecules which are cruising the pathways of our bodies, reacting with other substances and starting off destructive chain reactions. These molecules are produced within the body as a by-product of oxidative metabolism (i.e. using oxygen in air to provide us with energy).

When the number of free radicals greatly increase, the potential for damage to the body's cells and tissues increase.

And they are multiplying, our modern world sees to that. Pollution, fumes, alcohol, rancid food, ultra violet rays, food nutrition all contribute to the problem. To help stop this process you must seek out antioxidants which are the body's defences against free radicals, such as vitamin C, vitamin E and beta-carotene. If all that is not bad enough, the very exercise that we take to maintain health and vigour may in fact be exacerbating the problem, and be condemning us to an early grave! Good heavens, do you really want to read this? Here is the really bad news.

A bit of gentle aerobic exercise is apparently O.K. but serious training is out. Dr. Cooper, in fact, recommends that you do not allow your heart rate to exceed 85% of your maximum heart rate! Free radical production, normally neutralized by the body's protective system will be greatly boosted by hard training and may overwhelm the body's defences. Cooper believes that high intensity exercise may increase the chances of getting a heart attack and other horrors that we are all striving to avoid. Free radical damage may be a causative factor in cancer, arthritis and ageing! Gulp!

What's the evidence for all of this? The literature on the subject is growing and there appears to be little disagreement among the experts (of which I am definitely not one) about the need to increase our antioxidant intake. Even an non athletic Joe Bloggs should be gobbling down his antioxidants in the form of fruit and vegetables.

At this point in time Coopers views are probably pretty extreme. Phew! Nevertheless, in his interview with 'Running Times' he does make worrying observations about some of his own patients. He notes particularly the increasing problems of irregular heart beats in highly trained athletes and the incidence of prostrate cancer in his older patients who are ultra distance athletes.

What can we do about it? Can we be more than innocent bystanders as the storm rages within us? Well we can, but

the answer that Cooper provides may not be acceptable to all of you because it almost certainly means taking massive amounts of pills to supplement your diet. Yes, supplements!

According to Cooper you just cannot get the level of antioxidants that are necessary even from a well balanced diet, (if you run more than 25 miles a week or at over 85% of your max) to combat free radical activity.

So here we go at last folks. What precisely and in some detail are these antioxidants and what amounts should we be taking? The answer is absolutely loads of vitamin E, vitamin C and Beta-Carotene. Coopers recommended doses for athletes with the training regimes described above is to ingest 1,200 IU's (International Units) of natural vitamin E. (my vitamin E capsules are 200 IU's, so I would need to take six a day instead of my usual two), 50,000 IU's of Beta-Carotene (a precursor of vitamin A), and 3,000 milligrams of vitamin C (2,000 for women). If you are awestruck by the need for so much Beta-Carotene be comforted by the knowledge that you will find almost 25,000 IU's in a baked sweet potato and a raw carrot has over 20,000 IU's.

Those of you who eat a great deal of fruit and vegetables will get a lot of this naturally, but you will need to be eating five to nine large servings a day, not just an apple before bed! Vitamin E is virtually impossible to get in the amounts Cooper recommends without taking supplements. Take your supplements with meals and take small amounts of vitamin C throughout the day to prevent loss through excretion.

So there you are. If you don't trust my summary (remember I am no expert) or would like to know more get a hold of some of the recent literature on the subject, some of which is listed below.

### **Sources**

*Running Times* - March 1995  
*Health Guardian* - March /April 1995  
*Peak Performance* - January 1995  
*Dr. Kenneth Coopers Antioxidant Revolutions* - (Thomas Nelson Publishers)

## **ANALYSING PERFORMANCE - WHAT MAKES A TOP HILL RUNNER**

by Ewen Rennie

**What separates Martin Jones, Beverley Redfern and Carol Haigh from the rest of us? What makes a top hill runner? Is it their genes? Or the training they do? Or what?**

What are the component skills of hill running? Depending on the actual race being considered I would argue that there are at least eight basic component skills that go together to make up the masterful performance - the complete Wilson-of-the-Wizard supremo. The complete hill runner needs: Basic speed; Downhill technique; Endurance; Motivation; Navigational skills; Nutritional sense; Pace judgement and Uphill strength. Other coaches may argue for more skills, or even a different list but someone with these eight will be hard to beat.

Basic Speed can be required for a sprint finish in any race but becomes particularly important in races such as Butter Crag or Carnethy where an early obstacle (hole in the wall) restricts the field and can lead to the loss of vital seconds. Of course as the race becomes longer basic speed becomes less important as tortoises such as John Blair-Fish and Andy Curtis prove as they grind past you after ten or twenty miles of hard fell running.

Downhill Technique is easy to recognise when someone like Andy Styan comes whistling past you off the top of the hill after you gutted yourself to get there before him. Indeed downhill technique is one of the few component skills to have been previously discussed in the *Fellrunner* with an article by the maestro himself in the June 1991 issue. Like all skills it requires practice, Styan himself at his peak would practice it once or twice a week, and yet a survey I did in 1991 found only three people who practised descending skills regularly.

Endurance is what becomes important as the race becomes longer but even the shortest hill race is not necessarily won by the person with the fastest time over one hundred metres.

Speed endurance - the ability to maintain a constant high effort over time is what is likely to count. Whilst basic speed is measured by time over a short set distance, speed endurance is measured by the ability to sustain reps with only a short recovery without drop off in performance.

Motivation is frequently what separates the also ran from the champion. Forget the myth that champions are born not made. **THEY ALL HAVE TO WORK TO IMPROVE WHAT THEY'VE GOT.** Motivation is needed not just to get them up for the event but also to do the training on a cold wet winter's night. Many a grafter has beaten someone with far more natural talent.

Navigational Skills or route choice are often the weakest part of the hill runners armoury. Too few races actually demand these skills but all hill runners should be able to pin point their own position and navigate from A to B. Just occasionally the mist comes down or the snow sweeps in then the results can be turned upside down. At a cloud enshrouded Jura in 1991 Supervet Bill Gauld almost sneaked a victory through his ability to pace count and use a compass. How many hill runners could confidently tackle a Blue or Brown course at a local orienteering event or even manage a street orienteering event?

Nutritional Knowledge may seem a marginal skill to include but athletes like Sally Gunnell reckon it's what has given her the edge to be a World Champion. If Steve Ovett had listened to advice about fluid losses prior to the 1984 Olympics then Britain would have had all three medallists in the 1500 metres. I can remember staggering across the finish line in the Moffat Chase and asking Jack Maitland how he had got on. 'I didn't eat early enough,' came the reply. Yet I in my foolishness had been out half-an-hour longer and not eaten a thing. Lack of fluid, both before as well as during the race, cost me a top ten placing at Stuc A'Chroin in

1989, yet how many hill runners' really know about glycogen stores and rehydration? Pace Judgement is vital in any race longer than 100 metres. Not even John 'Mr. Muscle' Regis can run a 200 metres flat out the whole way. He talks about cruising the bend and sprinting the straight (or vice versa) and yet how many hill runners plan how they will parcel out their energy or where they will make their efforts during the race? Monitoring your body and knowing how much you've got left are vital skills to learn. The really motivated runner may seem to be able to run himself into the ground on occasion but even they have to spread their effort over the course. There is no glory in being first half way up the hill if you're twentieth at the finish.

Uphill Strength is both a mental as well as physical thing. Blair-Fish's shuffle and Jack Maitland's orang-utan imitation are both effective in getting them to the top faster than their contemporaries. Long after most folk are walking these two are grinding their way to the top. Powerful quadriceps from cycling (or weight training) are beneficial but give me the athlete that can dig in and ignore those about them.

Different races will make different demands on this skills and areas of knowledge but they should all be worked on and they can all be improved. The once or twice weekly coaching session and post race analysis will help. What suits me may not suit you but don't be afraid to ask for help or to argue the toss but don't expect to be spoon fed everything. After all I need to keep some tricks up my sleeve so that I can still beat some of you occasionally.

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## THE COSMIC QUIZ

A rather disappointing entry of only five teams faced the warped mind of Ewen 'Quiz Setter Extraordinaire' Rennie in the Blue Lampie on 16th March. Intended as an intra-club as well as an inter-club event it was left to Phil Kammer and Ian Jolliffe to uphold Cosmic honour against the might of Metro, Aberdeen AAC Amateurs, the Lynx Pack Oldies and the Joggers from Environmental Medicine.

With a maximum of four members per team the Cosmics were only at half strength whilst Metro and the AAC youngsters had full teams. The format of five rounds, with ten questions in each set and every team attempting all the questions kept everyone on their toes. Comfort breaks were taken after rounds two and four with Ewen keeping us abreast of the scores as we went along.

Round One, the local questions - had such beauties as :

Which local hill race fails to go anywhere significant?

Which local runner holds the most world best performances?

(Answers at the bottom of the page.)

The Olympics featured in the second set with items like:

At which Olympics did Fosbury flop to his Gold medal?

When did women first compete in the Olympics? and

At which Olympics were all the British 100m runners Scottish?

By this time Colin Youngson and his cronies had a clear lead from Maughan's Morons and the Lynx Pack with Cosmics and the AAC youngsters (average age 18 despite the appearance of grandad Griffin in their team) fighting out the minor placings.

The third section, British Athletics, had ticklers like:

In 1970 Lachie Stewart won the Commonwealth 10,000m but who finished second or third? and Who wore 001 at the first London Marathon?

Then followed a picture round courtesy of Ronnie Maughan so it was no surprise when his team closed up a bit on Metro who led from the Lynx Pack. Further down the field Cosmics started a late charge!

The last section on World Athletics had items like:

Who was the first Commonwealth Marathon Champion to win in his own country? and Who was the first man inside 13 min 30 sec for 5000m?

Metro held on to win from Environmental Medicine with the Lynx Pack third.

All-in-all a very enjoyable, informative evening with Ewen pitching the questions at just about the right level of difficulty. He's already started work on the next set of quiz night questions so all that it needs is a much higher turn out, appropriate fines on Colin Youngson for arguing with the question master and Tim to turn out for the right team!

Answers:-

Round One: Bennachie, Don Ritchie

Round Two: 1968, 1928, 1980, (Wells, Sharp, McMaster)

Round Three: Ron Clarke and Dick Taylor  
Fred Lebow

Round Five: Rob de Castella, Ron Clarke



*We cannot ignore the symbols inherent in both the natural and man made world. Wherever we tread, the human imagination responds to the stimulus of its surroundings. (From John Buchan - "The Condition of Man")*



# DISTANT HILLS

by Phil Kammer

The origin of long distance hill running is lost in the mists of time; epic journeys made invariably out of necessity across country in the days before roads or even well trodden paths existed.

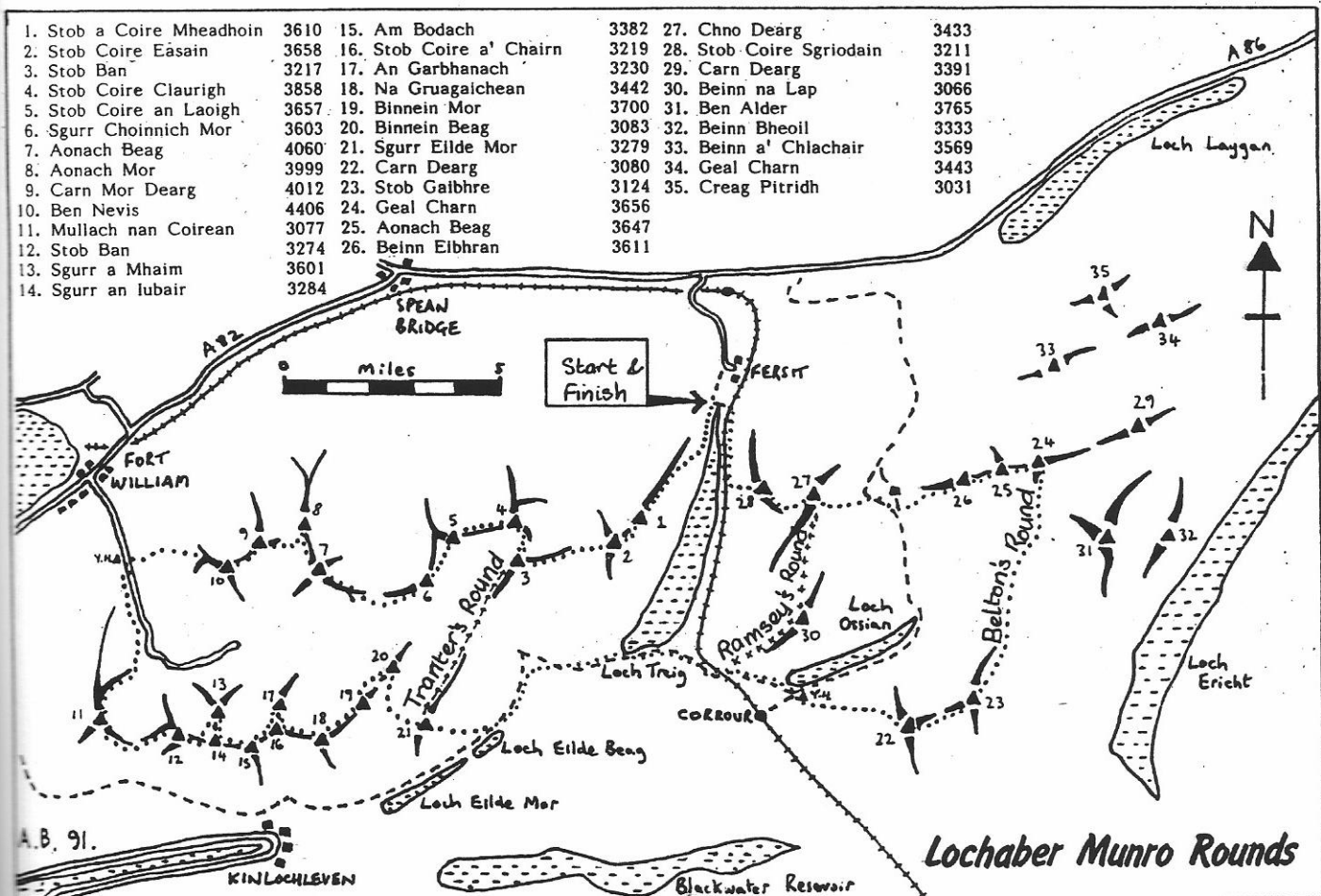
The high passes or 'Bealachs' between summits were the important landmarks connecting glen to glen across the highlands. Within living memory walking was the only means of travel for most people and often great distances would be covered as part of life's daily routine. The Victorians were probably the first to approach the hills with sport in mind and the prodigious walking feats of the early mountaineering pioneers stands as testament to their considerable fortitude. Neither inclement weather nor the onset of winter deterred these hardy souls. With more than just a hint of rivalry amongst this band of 'Gentlemen of the hills'.

Sir Hugh Munro who was responsible for cataloging the three thousand foot peaks of Scotland would regularly walk thirty miles in a day. His speciality was long winter treks over several days in our local Grampians.

The development of walking as a sport has been steady over the years with many challenges being met along the way. The most notable achievement was probably Philip Tranter's circuit of the Glen Nevis hills in June 1964. Tranter set off from Glen Nevis Youth Hostel with his companion Blyth Wright and first of all tackled the eleven munro summits along the convoluted ridge of the Mamores range. From here they descended to the glen and immediately began the long grind onto the ridge of the Grey Corries to lead them back over Ben Nevis to their starting point.

As Tranter strode on, Wright dropped out, but Tranter too was fighting fatigue. He fell asleep for two hours on Aonach Beag and in his panic left his water bottle behind.

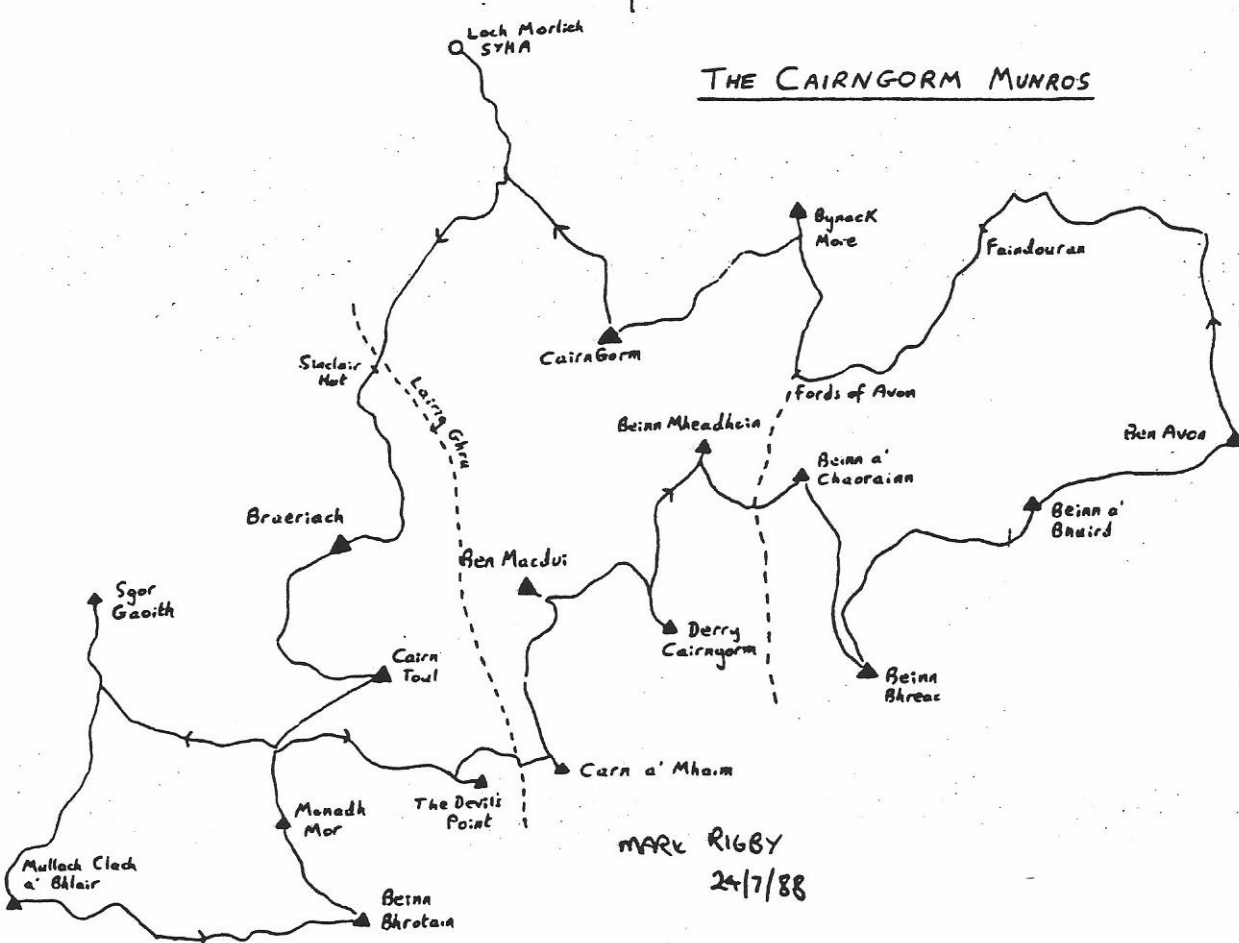
Despite this Tranter found the strength to make the final climb onto Ben Nevis and returned to the door of Glen Nevis Youth Hostel in 23 hours having scaled 19 munros in under 24 hours. Philip Tranter's round quickly became a classic test piece for the fittest of mountain walkers and with many repeats being made over the years.



Then in 1978, after months of rigorous preparation Charlie Ramsey of Lochaber Athletic Club smashed Tranter's record when he stormed his way over 24 munros in 23 hrs 58 min. The mountain runners' had arrived. Ramsey's approach to the task was very clearly a departure from Tranter's spur of the moment journey, reportedly the result of a bar room wager. Charlie Ramsey firstly had the vision to imagine what a properly trained mountain runner could achieve and then set out to plan and prepare accordingly. His intention was to strike out east from the summit of Sgur Eilde Mor along the northern fringe of Rannoch moor and onto the isolated munro top of Beinn na Lap. From here he would turn north to capture Chno Dearg and Stob a' Choire Sgriodain before descending to the glen at Fersit. The next obstacle was the huge climb onto the twin munro tops of Stob a' Choire Mheadion and Stob Coire Easain from where he would rejoin Tranter's route back over the Grey Corries and Ben Nevis.

Charlie knew that every minute would count and so careful planning was essential. He spent many hours on the hills memorising terrain and picking out the best lines of ascent and descent. He arranged four checkpoints along the sixty mile route manned by members of Lochaber mountain rescue team. Pacers were recruited (including Mel Edwards of Aberdeen AAC) to keep him to his tight schedule.

Physical and mental preparation was similarly rigorous. In the six months before his successful round Charlie Ramsey ran or walked 1600 miles and climbed 270,000 feet. This stood him in good stead when fatigue allowed a crucial error of navigation costing him 1000 feet of extra climbing and forty precious minutes from his schedule. In his own words 'I almost cried. Losing the route is really desolating when you are tired.' As a result of this he found himself on the summit of Ben Nevis with just 35 minutes in hand and enough spirit to plunge 4,400 feet to the glen and success.



This feat had only one repeat in the following nine years by Peter Simpson who unfortunately ran out of time and recorded 24 hrs 40 min. He had only one support point along the route.

In July 1986 Martin Stone from Lancashire took the record for the 85 mile run over Scotland's eight 4,000 feet peaks. He achieved this in just over 21 hours in a solo, unsupported run which is his preferred style. He then turned his attention to Ramsey's round with the intention of extending it even

further but still within the 24 hr time limit.

In June 1987 Martin set off carrying 9lbs of kit up from Glen Nevis having chosen to tackle the job 'back to front.' On reaching the cairn on Beinn na Lap he set a course for the two forlorn munros to the south of Loch Ossian adding an extra 10 miles and 3000 feet to the Ramsey round.

Martin fell asleep three times on the climb onto Sgur Eilde Mor but the dawn brought renewed strength to carry him through to success in just under 23 hrs 30 min. No repeat of this feat has been achieved to date.

Martin admits to being highly organised in his approach with careful reconnaissance and well computed schedules. He states 'It's difficult to express what inspires me to attempt these runs alone and what motivates me while I'm out there. I can't disguise the fact that it's partly to satisfy my ego. While I may never be a good fell racer, I seem to have found my strength in long distance solo mountain running. The sense of achievement and satisfaction gained from adventures like this is unbeatable and for 24 hours I become totally detached from the reality of a 'normal'

life. The senses are finely tuned, constantly monitoring ones feelings to keep thinking positively and cope with the pressures of the schedule, navigation and the need to eat regularly.'

Just one year was to pass before the next aspirant crept north of the border to challenge Martin for more munros. Jon Broxap of Keswick, a successful fell racer, had hatched his plan for the Glen Shiel hills where he hoped to conquer 28 munros in 24 hours.

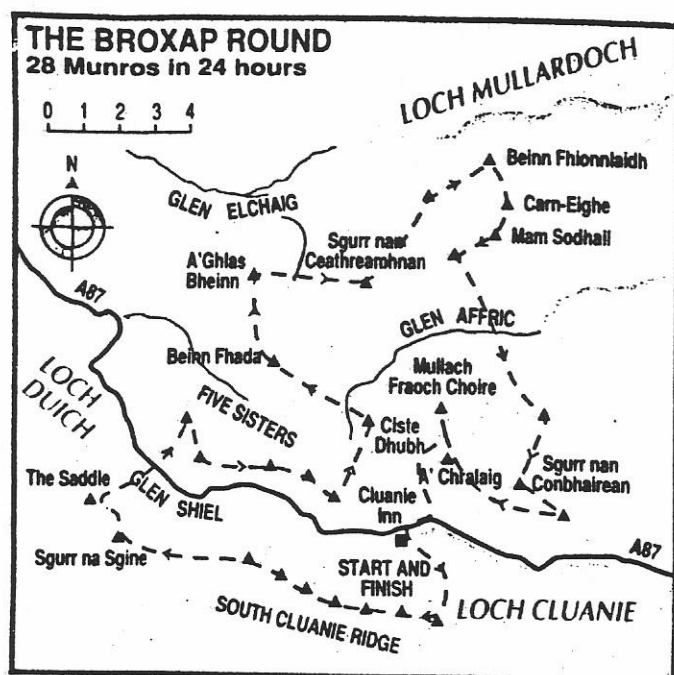
At 10am on a sunny June morning he set

off from the Cluanie Inn at an unexpectedly fast pace. The first nine munros fell in 3 hours and 20 minutes. A ten minute food stop would sustain his relentless climb onto the Five Sisters of Kintail putting him well ahead of schedule; so much so that he surprised his next team of pacers by arriving two hours early. Darkness inevitably slowed the pace and when a sup-

porter became airborne during a descent the need for caution became evident. Luckily he had a soft landing and was able to continue.

As dawn broke Jon was heading back across Glen Affric to his starting point with just five summits left to climb. With stiffening legs he covered these in the final six hours to complete a new record in 23 hours and 20 minutes.

Another Southerner, Adrian Belton, has been the latest player in the munros challenge. His two attempts to better Jon Broxap's total in 1990 were thwarted by horrendous weather and in 1991 he attained 29 munros but did not complete the round to his starting point and so Broxap's record still stands. Belton's aim was a round of thirty munros. Judging by past progress it will only be a matter of time before this is achieved.





Another 24 hour challenge was set by Mark Rigby of Ambleside when he made a round of the 17 munros of the Cairngorms in 23 hours and 44 minutes starting and finishing at Loch Morlich Youth Hostel. This journey covers 76 miles with 20,000 feet of ascent. The Scottish hills hold many possibilities for the long distance enthusiast. If just a day out doesn't seem enough there are a few longer challenges that might appeal. With three days to spare you might like to have a go at the Southern Upland Way from Portpatrick to Cockburnspath. In 1988 Mike Hartley covered its 212 miles in 55 hours and 55 minutes taking only 3 hours 15 minutes rest.

All the 2000 foot tops of the Southern Uplands were climbed by Colin Donnelly in 12 days which included one rest day. His journey covered 380 miles with 82,000 feet of ascent.

The ultimate expedition is surely to visit all the 277 munro summits in one go. Hamish Brown, one of our most travelled mountaineers, took 112 days to complete them under his own steam in 1974. In 1984 Mark Elsegood reduced the journey to 66 days but only with the use of a car between ranges. Hugh Symonds really took the task to heart in 1987 by completing the whole journey on foot in 56 days. Not content with this he ran on to the English Lake District, Wales and Ireland to climb all the 3000 foot mountains in the British Isles.

The record for a completion of the munros now rests with Rory Gibson and Andrew Johnston who ran, cycled and swam between the tops in 51 days.

Rory and Andrew's expedition was meticulously planned and both took a year off work to prepare. Their back-up team, which included a film crew, was responsible for pitching tents, preparing the enormous amounts of food which the runners' required and transporting bikes between road sections.

These are not superhuman feats but the result of vision, dedicated preparation and a lot of patience. The vision is in imagining that such tests of endurance can be achieved, followed by having the dedication to sustain the prolonged and arduous training to ensure success.

If all that is said of patience is true then ultra distance hill runners' must be a virtuous bunch! After all the strength-sapping preparation and frustrations of keeping to a training schedule there is the inevitable wait for good conditions on the hills. The high tops, even in the summer months' can be bedevilled by high winds, impenetrable mist and every kind of precipitation from torrential rain through sleet, horizontal airborne slush, to hail and blizzard snow; ask Adrian Belton he knows about it!

But when the clouds part and the winds abate to a balmy breeze, there is nothing to compare with being up there on an airy crest that leads you on over open summits or into the cool shade of a snow rimmed corrie. Here is an environment that will not forgive the unfit and richly reward the devoted with a truly intense experience that will be the draw to return again and again to the high hills and open skies.



# HEART TO HEART

by Terry Kerr

I don't profess to be an expert on the subject but I have now been training with a pulse meter for over 2 years and have found it to be a very useful tool. When I first got a pulse meter the package contained a training and instruction booklet in which the training level was based on maximum pulse of 220 minus age times percentage effort. This way of training is all right for runners who like to train but not hurt to improve!

The way that I train athletes with the pulse meter is by the

KARVONEN method - this enables the person to train to their VO<sub>2</sub> max. Firstly you have to find out what your maximum pulse is. To do this I would ask the athlete to do three easy days of training, then on the fourth day do a two mile time trial. Near the end of the two mile run, say about 400 metres from the end to push on as fast as they possibly can and 100 metres from the end to actually sprint to the finish. Immediately after the session check your pulse meter and this reading is taken as your maximum pulse.

To find your training pulse do as follows: Maximum pulse minus resting pulse times percentage effort plus resting pulse = training pulse. e.g. maximum pulse 179 minus resting pulse of 56 times 80% effort plus resting pulse of 56 = 153 i.e. training pulse of 153 for that particular session. Once you have found your maximum pulse there are six ways to train using your pulse meter. These are as follows:

1. Your recovery runs should be at 60% to 70% effort. Recovery runs are very important especially after a hard session, anything from 30 to 50 minutes, but no more.
2. Aerobic runs at 70% to 80% effort. These are your long runs and it is very important not to go above 80% or you wouldn't be fit to train next day.

3. Aerobic 80% to 85% effort. This is your mid week run and is to help you to sustain running fast for long periods of time. These runs are over six miles long.
4. Aerobic anaerobic run. This run is only done once every ten to fourteen days over a distance of four to six miles at 85% to 90%

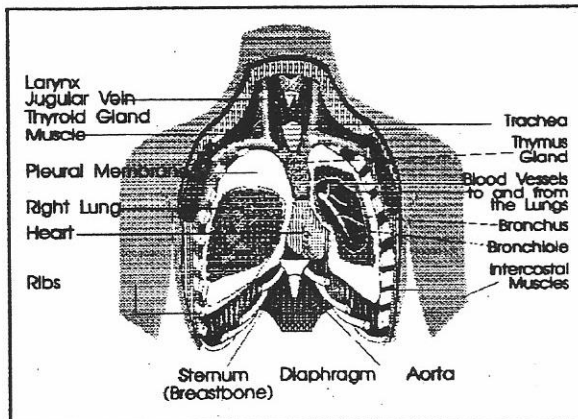
effort. This encourages your lactate tolerance and encourages the use of type 2A twitch fibres.

5. Aerobic anaerobic run. This session is a type of speed work. You run at a rate of 90% to 95% effort for anything from three to eight minutes followed by a recovery period of sixty to ninety seconds. This should be at 5K to 10K pace.

6. Anaerobic run - speed work. Effort is 95% to 100%. This type of session should be runs of no more than three minutes with long recoveries of anything from ten to twenty minutes after each rep. No more than four to six reps for this session. The longer the distance the less repetitions you do and the longer the recovery.

I hope the above will help you to understand your pulse meter and how to use it to its best advantage, therefore getting the most benefit from your training.

If you have any queries don't hesitate to get in touch with me.



## GOATFELL HILL RACE ISLE OF ARRAN - 20th MAY 1995

The Club visited Arran for the Goatfell hill race last year. Unlike our Skye trip the weather was outstanding with Saturday being particularly good with lots of warm sunshine and little or no wind.

Attending the trip were Sonia and Dave Armitage, Elaine and Keith Greenwood, Janet and Ewen Rennie, Kath and Eddie Butler, Hilda and Brian Lawrie, Steve Willox, John Stewart, Darren O'Sullivan and Steve Pryor.

On Friday night we were catapulted down the A92 in our hired mini bus by Steve in manic phase. We stopped over in the Inverclyde Sports Centre in Largs and mellowed out with a few beers.

Early next morning we crossed over to Brodick on the ferry from Ardrossan where all fourteen of us established ourselves in the rather nice Strathwhillan Guest House. Stuart Chapman was there but he had chosen to camp in Glen Rosa.

With a few hours to spare before the race started we lay on the lawn under the magnolias and rhododendrons stretching and sunning ourselves.

There was a bit of a debate over the type of shoes that would be best for the race, but everybody in our party plumped for studs. It was noticed that Jimmy Shields who was the first M50 and seventh overall wore road shoes. I wonder if he avoided the blisters that Dave, Eddie and I sustained?

Over a 100 runners started the race which takes the tarmac road to Brodick Castle initially. With leaden legs, this section on the return journey seemed to go on for ever.

It came as a bit of a shock to me to find Goatfell so runnable a hill. I'm one of those runners who likes a wee walk for a bit of a breather. The relentless grind was made more bearable by the passion shown by the supporting cast at various stages on the hill. Thanks girls.

Dave was third to the top and Eddie and Steve also had good climbs. It was so beautiful on the summit that it seemed almost sacrilege to just turn round and run down again.

The descent was long and hard especially with squelchy blisters eating into your concentration. Still, we all made it. Dave and Eddie, particularly ran superb races. Darren, who was pacing himself for Saturday nights Disco got his timing right and beat Steve Pryor, (deviously appearing as William Pryor on the results sheet) by almost four minutes. You can't hide that easy Steve!

Saturday night was drinking, eating, drinking and Disco but not enough to kill off Sunday (for most of us anyway; what happened to the pacing Darren?)

Sunday remained settled, if more cloudy and windy. Most elected to walk round different versions of the Glen Rosa horseshoe. Some went to Lamlash to watch the boats coming and going in the Islands Peak Race. One or two just read the Sunday papers.

We left the Island at 5.00pm just as the clouds came down and the rain came on. Perfect timing.

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## EL-BRIM-ICK RACE

The El-Brim-Ick race last year incorporated two Junior races. This was a new venture for Cosmics - one not without its problems! How do we ensure the safety of young runners? How many would turn up? What's a reasonable distance to ask them to run? What if they enjoy it and want coaching?

All these and other problems exercised the minds of Brian and I (and others) before we put on the Elrick Junior races. Being responsible for youngsters, particularly females under sixteen, is onerous. As well as physical safety (an aspect that would weigh heavily in any Junior race at Morven) there is also 'sexual' safety.

Woods house more than runners! (In a short race such as Elrick with adults waiting for their race scattered round the course this was not too much of a concern but it would be for training or at events like the Kruncel!).

How hard and how far do you ask them to run? After my first fell race I vowed never again! It has to be far enough and hard enough to clearly differentiate it from cross-country. It has to go somewhere significant to give the 'experience' of hill running and yet one is limited in the total distance that one can ask youngsters to cover.

With all these thoughts in mind, and others, we offered two different courses at El-Brim-Ick - a short one just to the top and back for the under 15's and a longer one with a loop over the back for the under 17's.

On the day eleven under 15's and three under 17's took up the challenge. One of these finished in obvious distress after a fall on a course, which in hill running terms, is easy. However post race comment suggested that they all enjoyed themselves.

On reflection we were rather conservative and indeed according to the latest FRA guidelines we could have asked everyone over twelve to do the full El-Brim-Ick race! Personally I think that is too much but I will be suggesting the longer course for all the under 16's next year with the rest joining us in the senior race. What do you think? Would you be happy with that for your son or daughter?

On the same day Simon Ritchie and Laura Lambert won the under 15 events with Stephen Baxter and Kimberley Thorburn taking the under 17's.

In the senior race the Armitages both set records - Dave taking third place overall and the over 40's record in 21 min 16 sec whilst Sonia chased the Treasurer home for a ladies record in 23 min 21 sec. Pat Donald of Deeside Runners took the lady vets title and record whilst John Buchan was the overall winner in 20 min 27 sec.

With generous sponsorship of the Junior races from Aberdeen City Leisure we still made a small profit despite the usual extensive prize list.

So, do we want to encourage youngsters?

Is anyone prepared to supervise them on a Tuesday evening?

## **OPS CLACHNABEN HILL RACE**

**24 APRIL 1995**

Forty eight runners toed the line for Clachnaben this year, a reasonable total considering the clash with the Championship race at Stuc a' Chroin the following weekend.

Similar conditions prevailed as in our two previous races in '93 and '94, with low cloud on the summits. Nevertheless we had a great race, with the lead oscillating over Mount Shade and Clachnaben between Dave Armitage, Ian Botheroyd and Tim Griffin. John Buchan was also in close attention.

Despite a fall in the run in, Tim proved stronger than his rivals and pulled away for a convincing if bloody win.

Cosmics won every category in the race with the exception of the Super Vets prize which went to Charlie Love of Dundee Hawks for the third year running.

Dave Armitage, who had hardly run in the weeks leading up to the race because of a sore toe proved that hard work on a bicycle can be just as beneficial by finishing first Vet and second overall.

This year Dave will defend his Scottish Vets Championship in a Cosmic vest.

Only three ladies entered the race this year which was disappointing and as a result we were not able to present our ladies Vets prize. Zoe Ardron, a brave new Cosmic, won the ladies race with a gutsy run.

A pleasing aspect of the race was that many runners greatly improved their times from previous years, despite the conditions being similar. David Hirst from Deeside Runners was seven minute better than in '94 and was placed a creditable seventh. This in spite of taking a 2hr 30min jog round the course on the Saturday afternoon prior to the event.

Steve Pryor's Company OPS generously sponsored the event this year for which we are very grateful. It looks as if this will continue next year which is a boost indeed for the race's future. Thanks again to all those who helped us put the race on.



# World Trophy Open Races

Saturday September 9th 1995

## Long Course

S-A-B-C-D-  
E-G-H-J-A-D-E-K-F  
11½ Km 800 m

Dreghorn  
Interchange  
(Edinburgh Bypass)

Green  
Craig

Capelaw  
Hill

Altermuir  
Hill

Scale in Metres

0 100 200 300 400 500

### Key

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
|  | track                  |
|  | small path             |
|  | route over open ground |
|  | fence / wall           |
|  | plantation             |
|  | contour (@ 25m)        |
|  | form line              |





**JOHN BUCHAN - DAY THREE**