

COSMIC COMIC



News Reviews and Interviews

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 7th edition of the Comic. The number of members contributing to the magazine continues to grow which bodes well for the future. Some real talents have emerged writing on many different themes. This is what Eddie and I always wanted to encourage; intelligent, perceptive, humorous, informative writing about the hill running scene. One article that may need special comment is the Mel Edwards one. Mel is not a member of the club but is something of a local legend. He has had a long and outstanding athletic career and is still going strong today as a supervoet. After injury put a stop to running on the roads Mel took to the hills and became one of the country's leading vets, winning the Championship in 1984 and 1985. This part of his career will be of most interest to our members and will appear in Comic 8. To set the scene the article in this issue deals with Mel's road running years.

Keep writing

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THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

by Mel Edwards

Part 1. Before the hills

Long before the hill running years of the 1970's and 80's, the start of a long and varied career in running began for me in 1948 at the age of 5 with the 50 yards(!) dash at the Aberdeen Grammar School Sports. The performance by youthful wee ones, unsullied in those post war years by crisps and chocolate, resulted in a headline in the sports pages of the Press & Journal "Toddlers' Good Show In Sports".

My first memory of a major Games came 4 years later when I listened on the radio to a scratchy, halting commentary from the Helsinki Olympics. "Emil Zatopek of Czechoslovakia is on his way to his third gold medal". Photographs of this charismatic runner in the newspapers clinched it for me.....I was going to be a runner. A POINT IN TIME when a decision was made....there were going to be a few more in years to come.

Years of school sports followed, some performances not bad, 30 seconds for 220 yards at 11, but always there was the shadow of Colin Preshaw, and I was usually behind the shadow.



*1954 age 11 440yds A rare victory
over Colin Preshaw*

Another POINT IN TIME, winter 1959, age 17 and I decided the only way to beat Colin in my last year at school was to do what he didn't.....train. So, that winter I did hard 150's at Rubislaw Playing Fields in pitch black, 10 of them with jog back recoveries. The resultschool champion with times of 51.7 for 440, 2.02 for 880, and a mile in 4.45. My overdistance, marathon training for the mile was...6 laps of the track!

Yet another crucial POINT IN TIME, July 1960, and school holidays. It was a beautiful summer and I was so inspired by the Rome Olympics on TV that I started doing 4 to 6 mile runs around Rubislaw, stripped to the waist and barefeet like Herb Elliot. After a couple of weeks of this I remember thinking "I'm not only going to be a runner....I'm going to be a distance runner."

And so, on to Aberdeen University. Great first year memories of the cross country course at Bridge of Don. This was 1960, eleven years before Balgownie was developed. The course started at St. Machar Cathedral, and by road went through Tillydrone, over the pedestrian bridge at Crombies, then up the horrendous hill where the Science Park is now, to the groundsman's house. It is hard for today's runners to imagine what this used to be like; I can only compare it to the misty, boggy scene from the "Hound of the Baskervilles". Then it was down Balgownie Road, out Donmouth Road, along the sand for a mile, back, over the Bridge of Don, along the southern footpath, through Seaton and up the steep hill to the Cathedral. 6 miles of hell!

I did OK that winter, but found the track season very hard. By mid 1962 I was progressing, but not sparking. Another of those POINTS IN TIME, September 1962 and I had to get my gall bladder removed if I was going to carry on running let alone living. 10 weeks off running (this was before keyhole surgery), but during long walks to keep up my leg strength my mental resolve hardened considerably, and I vowed I was going to give this sport 100%.

The first signs of a breakthrough came in February after only 7 weeks of training, 11th in the British Universities Cross Country in snow-bound Essex. 60 places higher than the previous year, and it was warming down after that race that I met an athlete who was going to be my model for all time. (Indeed as I write this I am on a train en route to Cambridge to run once again with Mike Turner. We did two hours at 6a.m.!) The mind was now sorted out for good.

That summer I raced a lot and in the autumn upped the mileage to 80 or 90 a week, most of it with my other mentor Ally Wood who was soon to do 2.13 for the marathon. The results followed. 1st in the Scotland v Scottish Universities cross country ahead of Ian McCafferty and Lachie Stewart, 6th in the British Universities at Nottingham, then 1st in the Scottish Junior cross country championships, again ahead of Ian and Lachie (who went on to become Commonwealth Games medallists).

A sterner test was the World Cross Country championships at Leopardstone Racecourse, Dublin, where I finished only 6th counter for the Scottish senior team, and 50th place. Still, I was only 21, and the hammering only served to harden my resolve.

A good summer followed, in the vest of Thames Valley Harriers. A 4.11 mile, 8.56 for 2 miles, 13.48 for 3 miles, the latter two times gaining me 2nd place in the Scottish rankings. It was coming, but the ominous signs of a lack of kick at the end of races were beginning to show. Lots of fast work didn't help.....if only I had

known the effect weight training would have had on my leg strength, for which 100 plus miles a week did no great favours.

I left Scotland for five years, first going to Cambridge University to meet up gain with Mike Turner who was on the verge of being appointed England's cross country captain.



1965 1st in Thames Valley Club 10 mile Cross Counrty

Early morning "10's" in the Cambridge mists and 16 x 800 in the evening produced a second place and a blue in the Oxford\Cambridge cross country at Roehampton, but my first major injury (I've only had 3) wrote off 1965. The dreaded Achilles tendinitis. Osteopathy in early 1966 fixed that and I made the Cambridge team for the 3 miles at White City versus Oxford.

There were four in the field including Henk Altmann the South African 3 mile record holder. I was tipped to finish third; a white-wash by Oxford. With 2 laps to go Altmann kicked hard and the question was posed "Try to beat him or play safe for second?". I opted for the former, and at the bell was only five metres down, but in the back straight my legs fell off and John Waterhouse of Oxford swept past. 3rd in 13.52, close to my best. At least I tried.



1964 2nd Oxford v Cambridge



1966 Oxford v Cambridge 3ml at White City l to r : Edwards, Baggley, Altman, Waterhouse

A memorable summer in Sweden followed, with Harry Wilson, later to become coach to Steve Ovett, and 5 other athletes including Henk. Lots of racing, the most memorable being a 5000 in Halsingborg, a world record attempt by the former holder Kip Keino of Kenya and West Germany's Harald Norpoth, the European record holder. The pair were to get gold and silver respectively at the Mexico Olympics 2 years later. I remember coming up to the bell as the main act entered the final straight behind me. No world record...Norpoth had stopped in mid-race to help a fallen Keino, who then proceeded to beat him!

It was off to Newcastle University in the autumn. More hard training and racing, and in the summer I broke Ron Hill's UAU 3 mile record at Loughborough. The Scottish 6 miles championship was a breakthrough. Lachie Stewart and I pulled away from the field and went through 3 miles in 13.57, only 9 seconds outside my best time for the distance, then through 4 miles in a Scottish record time (they had records at wierd distances back then). He pulled away gradually to break the Scottish record in 27.58 and I just missed it in second place with 28.27. I shuffled over to my watching father in the back straight and said "Never again". His reply..."I bet you do". As usual he was right.

However the AAA's 6 miles at White City was a nightmare. The uneven cinder track aggravated my Achilles and I was forced to drop out with 6 laps to go. Another POINT IN TIME decision. I was fed up with Achilles problems caused by speed work in spikes. Onto the roads! After mile and 3 mile races the longer ones felt easy, and I always recommend to aspiring distance runners nowadays that they sort out their speed before moving up in distance. I was soon doing 100 miles a week, and looking forward to a new challenge.

This was a time to experiment. I knew the longer distances required a "Give up? What does that mean?" attitude, so in July 1967 one day I did 5 x 5. Minutes? No. Miles. The first was at 6 am, and by 6 pm after 25 miles and 5 showers I may have been the tiredest guy in Aberdeen, but at least I was the cleanest.

The Aberfeldy 14 was my first long race, and I was 2nd to Don Macgregor, then a 2.16 marathon man, whom I had beaten in the Scottish 6. In September I did the East Hull 20 and enjoyed the tactics at the front. A comfortable win in 1.43 (5.10 miling) made me look for a marathon.

Fate played a hand. I was moving to Southampton to work and the Harlow marathon in Essex was 5 weeks away. I sent off my entry, piled in the miles in the greenery of Southampton, then set off on the train on the Friday night for the YMCA in central London. How about this for nutritional marathon preparation? I had 70 miles in already that week and was hungry for high energy sustinence, so demolished half a pound of barley sugar sweets in my bedroom as I studied the marathon rankings in Athletics Weekly. It would be nice to get into the top 20.

Saturday morning dawned. Out for a jog. I felt so good I didn't want to stop at 20 minutes. I arrived at my first marathon desperate to run, and after 5 miles decided to leave the pack and go for a time. It was a long lonely 21 miles, but the weather was kind; calm and drizzling. I averaged 5.18 per mile to come home in 2.18.24. My first place prize was a £7 camera, and I went home in the train chatting about running with Johnny Pocock of Essex Beagles who had finished last in 4 hours and a bit. A quick check of the rankings showed I was 4th in the UK for the year, but by the end of 1967 Derek Clayton of Australia had lowered the world best by over 2 minutes to 2.09. I had still a lot to learn, given the chance.

1968 was a big year, over 4000 miles, mostly in Southampton. I was pushing the boat out as far as possible to try to gain Olympic selection. Up went my weekly mileage to 122 at the French high altitude training camp at Font Romeu in the Pyrenees, and two weeks later that June I moved through the field in the Polytechnic Marathon from Windsor to Chiswick to finish 2nd in 2.19 in 75 degrees. But Kenji Kimihara of Japan, later to take the silver medal in the Olympics was 4 minutes ahead. Should I have done that one? The Olympic trial was the following month in Cwmbran.

Another stinking hot day and a three lap course. Many stopped after 2. Going into lap 3 I was 7th, but 4 in front of me had an option to do the 10000. If three took it there was still a chance of selection. "Jim Hogan's dropped out in front of you" What did that mean? Was he going for the 10000? Forget it. Bash on. 23 miles, and there was a pattering of Aberdeen feet behind me. "Sh..!" Ally Wood. "O.K. Don't speak you sod" Off he went, and I hung on. At 25 miles there was a short, sharp hill, and my legs went. God, they'll come streaming past. But no-one did. 7th in 2.21. Three in front opted for the marathon, two for the 10000, leaving Ally and I first and second reserves for the Mexico Olympics.

So near but yet so far. In October I watched them on telly, in Aberdeen, fitter than ever. The right timebut the wrong place. That month I averaged 120 miles a week, and still managed second fastest to Lachie Stewart in the 3 mile Kingsway Relay in Dundee.

1969 was a watershed year in more ways than one. This was the year when I gave it everything to get to the top of British distance running and that was of course extremely risky for long term health. I trained as hard as anyone in the country but this meant I was always a muscle tear away from oblivion. I was qualified on residential grounds to run for Hampshire and finished 2nd in their cross country championships, losing by 10 seconds after a 95 mile week. That same month, January I finished 2nd again in the Mitcham 15, by 10 seconds to Barry Watson who was later to run in the 1976 Olympic marathon. February was a good month in the build-up to the National CC, with 20th in the Southern at Reading, then a brisk 13.44 3 miles in the Hyde Park relay on top of a 105 mile week. Came the National at Parliament Hill Fields in London, and I had a blinder to finish 17th, 5 seconds behind Ron Hill and 13 seconds ahead of Roy Fowler, the World CC champion.

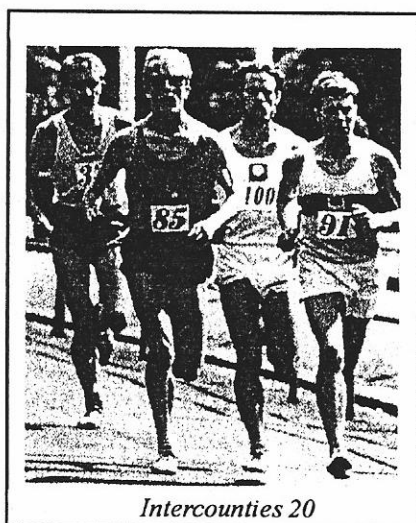
The summer came and I hit the roads with the aim of trying to make the marathon team for the European Champs. The inter counties 20 went well with a 1.43 for 5th place, then came the race which was to be influential in changing my career forever in the worst possible way. It was the Oxford 10 miles, and in the field was a certain Dave Bedford, aged 20, on 200 miles a week, months away from being World CC Champion, and 4 years away from becoming world record holder at 10K. I matched strides at the front with him for two miles, then he was off! In spite of me running faster than I had ever done over this distance, he was disappearing into the distance and at seven miles I reckon he was a minute ahead of

me, isolated in 2nd. He then gradually came back to me, and as I crossed the line I looked at my watch and could hardly believe I had been beaten with a time of 47.38. He was 42sec faster, and within 5min had set off for home and another training session!

The next day I set off on my usual Sunday 2 hours and during the run developed an extremely sore muscle strain near my groin, but foolishly carried on. Now,

some 28 years later I can still on occasion feel it. The Marathon trial for the Europeans was 3 weeks later and although I got to 20 in 1.47, I had to retire with the leg problem. I won a 10 in Reading in August with no trouble, and did another marathon a month after the trial in Enschede, Holland.

However Nemesis was nigh, and on returning to Scotland to work and to try to qualify for the Commonwealth Games in 1970 in Edinburgh, I hit big problems with the leg, for to all intents and purposes it would not function properly. Little was I to know that it would be a number of years before it would settle, and that the hills and mountains would be a career saving solution which would lead to a myriad of experiences and acquaintances, which I would have missed had it not been for the trauma of the injury. - But that is another story for the next edition of the Cosmic Comic.



Intercounties 20

LOST AND FOUND

BY EDDIE BUTLER

I recall Jon Broxap responding to a query from an interested passer-by at a hill race who asked what was going on. "We all bugger off into the mist and come back a couple of hours later." was his reply. However, some come back later than others, not through lack of ability or fitness but rather poor navigation techniques. I wonder what percentage of Cosmic members, or indeed the hill running fraternity in general, could say that in a long unmarked hill race, in poor visibility, that they would have no problem navigating round. That would be an interesting statistic if everyone answered honestly! We all make navigational errors but it is a question of degree, excuse the pun; well off course when cold, wet and fatigued could prove fatal. Have you ever found yourself at the wrong stream junction? Wrong valley? Wrong top? Wrong hill?

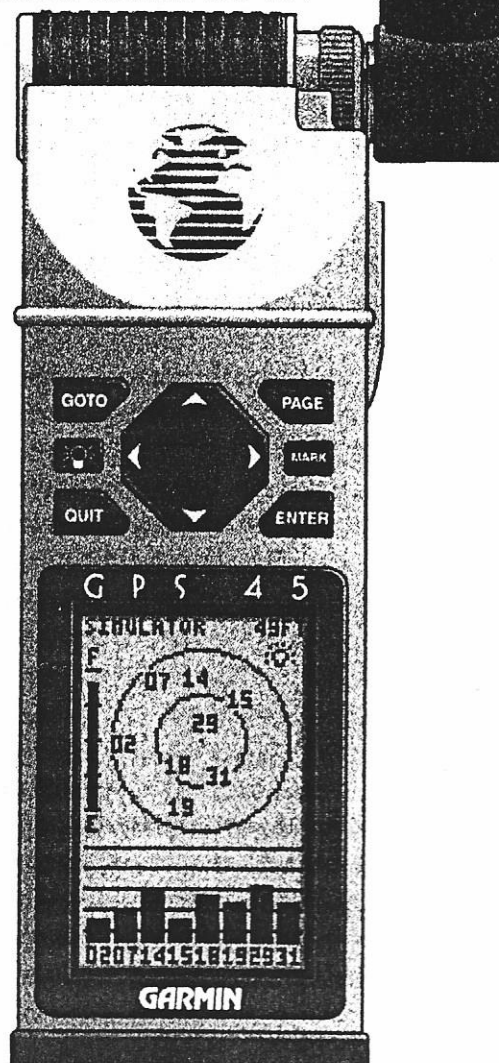
The problem I found was how does one learn to navigate in the mist without actually venturing into the stuff and possibly becoming lost sorry 'geographically misplaced'. Fine weather navigation is all very well but it's a different kettle of fish when you can't see your bloody feet in front of you! If you are expecting a quick solution, I haven't got one, other than practice in decent conditions or perhaps go on a course run by Glenmore or the FRA or go into the hills with an experienced route finder from Cosmics.

There is however another aspect of navigation that cannot be ignored - satellite navigation. I can hear the sharp intake of breath from some purists already! Well, there is more technology in hill running than one first suspects. Goretex suits, teflon coated waterproofs, tents that weigh only a couple of pounds, carbon soles with EVA mid sections, Polymide fleece etc.. We can't escape it. All this combined does make life on the hills that much easier. So who can argue about taking technology a stage farther?

Like the hills there is an up side and a down side. At worst this method of wayfaring could give the inexperienced a false sense of security and lead them into a situation that is potentially hazardous. Secondly, and I cannot stress this enough, satellite navigation cannot replace the trusty compass - no batteries and circuitry to worry about here.

However, for some there is a place, albeit a small one, for this 'beam me up Scotty' technology. To understand what I mean let me give you some background information.

There are several brand names on the market but as far as I can determine the 'best buy' is a unit called 'Garmin GPS 45'.

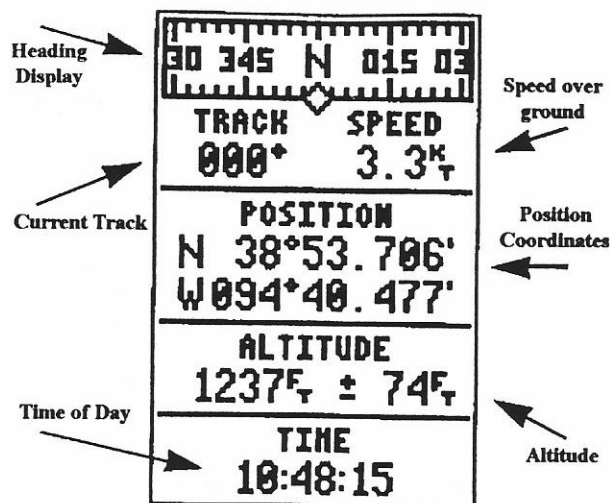


It retails at just under £200 (not cheap) and is available from Tiso. If you have any relatives or friends living in the USA or going over for a holiday they will be able to pick one up cheaper for you.

GPS (Global Positioning System) is a satellite based navigation system developed by the U.S. Department of Defence. It provides worldwide navigation coverage with accuracy at best up to 15 metres. The military, in their wisdom, have intentionally degraded the signal otherwise pinpoint accuracy would be achieved.

GPS navigation uses satellite ranging to determine your position in relation to a set of satellites orbiting the earth. The GPS constellation is made up of 24 satellites which continuously send radio signals containing precise position and time information for each satellite back to earth. By knowing the position of any 3 or 4 satellites and calculating various time differences between the transmitted signals, your GPS receiver can determine its position anywhere on earth. Once you are under way the GPS continually updates your position and provides speed and track information. The unit is about the size of a TV remote control (H 6.15" W 2" D 1.23") and weighs 10 ounces (with batteries). Battery life (4 'AA's) is 10+ hours or 20 hours in battery saver mode. The backlighting is the best I've seen providing bright even illumination over the entire screen. The unit is waterproof, and has a dry nitrogen filled case for all weather use.

When you first turn the 45 on it displays the satellite location and receiver status screen. It shows the position and relative strength of up to eight satellites at any one time. Under normal use it typically showed the location for eight and was able to lock on to five or six. The screen also displays a battery condition 'fuel guage'. Once it achieves a lock, it automatically goes to the position page showing your heading, speed, coordinates, altitude and the correct time synced from the satellites. Pushing the page button shows the moving map display which plots your course and route and also displays your bearing, track, speed and distance to selected points. Push page again and it shows the navigation page with a



road graphic, bearing, distance to waypoint, track, speed over ground, estimated time en route, velocity made good and course deviation. Push page again and you get the menu where you can manage your waypoints and routes and perform distance calculations. I have never received a sufficiently strong signal to get the 'Movie Channel' so there are limitations.

On the negative side there will be instances when there is a restricted view of the sky, not particularly good for GPS reception. In woods for example I found that performance was degraded proportionally in relation to the density of the canopy. Likewise high steep sided valleys restrict views of the horizon.

I have never yet had the occasion to use my Garmin in earnest. I found it is rewarding to navigate conventionally using map and compass and periodically stop and pinpoint on the map where I am, or think I am. I can then confirm this with the position coordinates on the Garmin. Doing this almost acts as a self assessment of ones ability and as confidence grows I feel sure map and compass work will improve. I would be interested to read, via the Comics letter page, the memberships' opinion on such earth shattering questions as :
 If used in races is it unfair competition?
 (I know of no rule forbidding their use).
 Is this technology gone wild?
 Does it make the hills a safer place?
 Does it make them more dangerous?
 Does it take out the purist nature of our sport?
 Is it a worthwhile 'safety net'?
 Why has there been four rises in the mortgage rate?
 Answers on a postcard to

MAMBO MENAGERIE

BY GREG DARDOUR

The first migration each year troops the Cosmic menagerie to the Pentland bash. After 5 hills of trivial trotting the real strutting begins. Under the watchful eye of the Owl and the Pussycat our little zoo makes merry.

Festivities commence with Parrot displaying the newest hair and plumage while inanely gossiping to the resplendent(as usual) Swan. This pair feign ignorance of the bellowing Bull who trumpets his recent victory to all. Others like the Fox, Cheetah, Roadrunner, Gorilla stalk the streets in search of food. Once the trough has been devoured the ceilidh is attacked. Typically the chicks take the lead, the Cuckoo grabs the Kangaroo and flings him round the room. The Koala invites the Cheetah, soon they are all laughing and cavorting. The Peacock has his feathers up and prances with the Rooster. Hen watches carefully but is taken by the Swan. Pussycat and Sparrow display their expertise. Fox hangs back stiffly but is lured by the voluptuous Cow. Heifer does not approve of Cow fingering her prey but is swooning over all men and rustles up the Roadrunner. Animals from other troupes fade to colourless insignificance, their dash is done their S.H.I.T is run and the ceilidh marks the end. But not the Cosmic menagerie, it is time to walk the mile, the calm before the storm.

The Mambo is loose and what a strange cocktail. Let me describe the state of play:

Peacock's wallet is troubling him, far too heavy for such a flashy bird. He prances with the chickadees who brighten by his warmth and daring. He also has time and drinks for the chaps. Look there I spy him, obviously with a close accomplice in the Fox, mesmerised both - on the rhythmic, sexy undulations of two black buttocks. mmmm... They will conspire over her for half an hour or more. The Fox is perceived a bit aloof and cunning but seems protective of the weak and arrogant competitive to the strong. There's the drunken Hory Bustad dribbling on the Parrot or any other Chickadee he can lay a hand on.....

The Heifer has bored of her parents and has taken up with a black panther from outwith the menagerie. The Heifer lacks experience(or does she?) and gropes the panther intimately. She is under the watchful eye of Cow and Bull who will not interfere ...yet. Conversely the Magpie must fend for herself against the clumsy advances of a fat native.

Parrot talks incessantly and preens her ageing plumes. The Wombat holds up the bar and entertains with dry wit. The Owl watches his charges casually and can be enticed to dance by the quiet Sparrow.

And there is the Cuckoo, wild and crazy still with the Kangaroo. The Rooster is with the Pussycat but seems to seek the Hory Bustad.(don't they all? not) The Swan is never extravagant but is always looking perfect and unnecessarily alone. The Cheetah has only eyes for the Koala both warm and cuddly. Behold the Flamingo gaily dancing, smiling whirling will she birdbath with another bird again?

Where is the Roadrunner? Ah... there closeted with a foreign bird in the dimmest corner...intense. The Ostrich is unimpressed with Roadrunner but cares not as she also has a foreign bird trapped.

The hours tick by, everyone is mixing, some stiff like the Hen, relaxed as a Gorilla, laid-back like the Kangaroo or Owl or exhibitionist like Bull or Peacock... but they get on like family.

As the feast draws to close the "family" prepare to leave. Owl and Pussycat leaders of the troupe are gone. Leaving Fox, Wombat and Peacock to guide the others safely home. But where is that Heifer?There with the Panther 2/3 rds down her throat. Cosmics close ranks the intruding cat is evicted and the Heifer herded home.

Cuckoo has grabbed the Kangaroos tail and he submits to dragging home. The Ostrich has made her mark! and plans to consummate. The Roadrunner and the foreign bird skulk off to a little aviary. The Swan is quietly friendly with the Fox. Peacock is noisily friendly with Flamingo but the Hen reclaims the Rooster. The Cheetah and the Koala never parted (probably never will) The Gorilla

dreams of Tartan Shorts and the Wombat is bored by the still chattering Parrot but humours her beauty.

Next morning shines too brightly- Pussycat and Sparrow are bright and breezy the others a little slow. But not too slow to eye the Roadrunner doing a runner from the Skoda birdwagon or the bleary eyed but glowing Ostrich showing off her new man or to listen to the Peacock pretending he has recocked the Rooster and the Flamingo "menagerie a trois" when he has only really cocked it up

alone! Fox and Wombat are not morning animals anyway and the Cuckoo has gone cuckoo at the hapless camping Kangaroo.

A great night had by all and gos for weeks to come. The closeness of the troupe confirmed for another year. Cosmic success assured no matter the running results as the "greatness" of the club is measured by the "sum" being greater than the "parts".

All the character assassinations entirely intentional but intended only to amuse not to injure.

Match the zoo?

Anne	Bob	Peacock	Hen
Brian	Catherine	Rooster	Parrot
Dave	Dennis	Owl	Pussycat
Elaine	Ewen	Fox	Swan
Greg	Ian	Bull	Gorilla
Janet	John	Ostrich	Cheetah
Kevin	Katy	Koala	Roadrunner
Margret	Phil	Magpie	Cuckoo
Sheryl	Ron	Sparrow	Wombat
Steve	Sue	Cow	Heifer
Tim	Tracy	Flamingo	Kangaroo
Zoe	Sonia	Hory Bustad (yes this is a real African Savanna bird, great name!)	

Two nameable foreigners
Two Unnameable foreigners.

Black Panther

You will notice that there is one more name than animal to make it a bit difficult.



Kath

The Scottish Coast to Coast Race 1997

Ballachulish to Aberdeen by foot , bike and boat.

It was a rash boast that started the episode while climbing at Reiff in late July. 'Why dont you do the Coast to Coast race?', I was asked. Knowing it was well past the closing date for entries I replied, 'Oh aye'.

Four weeks later at quarter to seven on an overcast Friday morning I found myself in a field alongside the Ballachulish Hotel, under a banner saying 'Start', along with a hundred others, most of whom seemed to have completed multiple Ironmen triathlons. I was a bit apprehensive. We started after being led by the race organisers in a 'Happy Birthday' for one of the competitors, with a run of two miles towards Glencoe village to the bike changeover. This split up the field a bit as on the first bike section drafting was supposedly prohibited.

The cycle climbed through Glencoe, across Rannoch Moor, Victoria Bridge, Tyndrum, Crianlarich, Lix Toll, Killin, north Loch Tay, steep climb up and over to Tummel Bridge, then north Loch Tummel to Killiecrankie, finishing at Blair Atholl Castle. I had never cycled 96 miles before. Glencoe in particular was unforgettable. Although overcast the sun was trying to break through and to feel that finally we were started and race through such stunning scenery was just amazing. Each layby was filled with support teams, encouragement was plentiful. I punctured at Tyndrum, losing about 10 minutes. Another first, I had never punctured in a race before. I was cut up by a van on the bend into Tyndrum and blasted along past Ben Lui fuelled by anger towards a Transit van. Luckily I passed it and was able to give the driver an earful. He had pulled over , rather than I was going particularly fast.

Half way was Killin and a welcome water station. Although the race entry is expensive (£120) there is a fair bit included such as two nights camping, and water bottles at the stations. I now have a collection of Coast to Coast water bottles. The first was collected while underneath my bike, as I made a fool of myself with the dreaded stuck in the toe clips routine. Not recommended in public. Again another first.

The rest of the ride was uneventful. I was relieved to arrive at Blair Atholl, and surprised at my time of 5 hours 40 mins in all. Perhaps the borrowed carbon bike made such a difference. However, my youngest brother, supposedly a support crew, had driven past waving while I was punctured and now was nowhere to be seen. I was rather desperate for some sugar and some clothes. Thank God for scrounged Mars bars. Eventually, Short Arse turns up, looking dozey, having been sleeping in a layby all morning. Eighteen year olds seem to be allergic to 6am starts. Meantime, I had been down to the first aid tent to have Killin roadside removed from my fingers, not much really, but I thought the blood looked impressive until I heard the stories of broadsiding stationary cars and either cracking ribs or getting up again, getting going and breaking the course record in 4hrs 22.

Katy Boo came down on the train from Inverness that evening. A few beers were had by most competitors in the local hotel. John Forsyth and I compared notes. Neither of us had been looking forward to the cycle particularly. The run next day was more like home territory; 28 miles up Glen Tilt, across to Geldie, then down via the white bridge to Linn of Dee. Just six miles more then , along the north of the Dee, past Mar Lodge to Allanaquoich then follow a track to the river, wade across, up the embankment, and the last mile to finish in the Braemar Highland Show grounds. Both of us were looking forward to arriving on familiar territory.

Again, another great day for running, cool and overcast. A steep climb between miles one and three, the course description read. I found myself running in a group with Jamie Thin of Carnethy, and after five miles we looked at each other and thought 'Climb?, Where?'. Soon

after that Jamie sped off into the distance. Crossing the watershed of Tilt and Geldie we had been warned not to lose the path and to look out for marshalls. As I approached the embankment I saw a vile pair of dayglo yellow tracksters. It didn't click at first but soon I realised-Steve Pryor! He had come across from Linn of Dee. It was great to see him, and get words of encouragement.

I went well between Geldie and Linn of Dee but then hit a bit of a wall and lost about 10 places. Never before have I had such a rejuvenation with jelly babies and after crawling the previous two miles I managed a sprint for a six and a half minute last mile. My target time had been four hours. Its just as well I shifted gear as I managed 3 hours 59 minutes and fifty six seconds. This time Short Arse was there with clothes and chocolate.

Again the course record had been broken in 3 hours 14 mins.

Day three started with a seven am one mile run to the bikes, then a 45 mile cycle from Braemar to the bridge at Potarch, then to Strachan and the Bridge of Feugh, continuing on the south Deeside road to the bridge at Durrus. Drafting was permitted on this section, so it would pay to ride in a group.

Prior to the start we were told of the death of Diana and Dodi Al Fayed, which caused a stir for a while. We were warned to watch out for paperazzi as we passed through Crathie. I was concentrating so hard on the wheel in front and optimising my drafting that I didn't notice the crowd gathered but apparently it was impressive. The early morning news bulletins spoke of a sleepy wee village waking in the glare of the worlds media who had gathered overnight, except for a cycle race passing through. My millisecond of fame.

Unfortunately disaster struck on the Ballater bypass, with a sickening hiss from the tyre. It wasn't so much the seven minutes lost as the prospect of the last 25 miles ridden on my own that was sickening. Working hard to maintain 20mph when we had been cruising at 28 mph in a group meant about 20 mins in lost time, and energy. I arrived at Durrus having missed the pack and the Steve, Katy and Short Arse were about to send out a search party. Any thoughts of finishing in a position resembling my overnight top 10 had diminished.

Its probably just as well really, because while its reasonably easy to run and cycle my kayaking was slightly less strong, and less practiced. In addition I had been talked into borrowing a 'fast river racer' for the event. For 'fast river racer' read unstable. Now, I had never raced in a canoe before and had been out once this year in a beginners boat (very stable.) So when I climbed stiffly off the bike and climbed into the boat only to turn turtle five yards off the bank it shouldn't have come as that much of a surprise to the others. Seemingly the look of horror on their faces was worth seeing. I was wading dejected through the water at the time though. Damp and stiff, I was swept under the bridge with 'RELAX!!!' ringing in my ears with strong welsh intonation. Thankyou Steve.

I went for a swim at the next bumpy bit. I would like to call it wild white water, but it was more sort of a ripple really. The next half hour was spent making slow progress, reassuring myself that one way or another the river ends up in Aberdeen. Fortunately no further duckings and soon I was relaxing and picking up speed. 'Every stroke is a support stroke,' I thought to myself. It must be the most painful sixteen miles ever encountered. By the salmon weir at Garthdee I had managed to get some food down and build up a bit of confidence. The boat was also emptied of water at the compulsory portage and much lighter I managed to pick up more speed and actually started picking off places. If only I had done some practice.

Team Suberb met me at the Rowing Club. I stepped out of the boat, had my bouyancy aid undressed from me, my race number placed on me, and suddenly my legs tried to work again.

The last section was a two mile run from the rowing club out to Girdleness Lighthouse. After such a great weekend, such a great event I felt absolutely fantastic finishing in Aberdeen.

My knees were crippling me, I think I might have sworn once or twice, but nothing was going to stop me from finishing. The punctures, the wall, the swimming, all made it more of an achievement. And what a support team gathered by the end. Through the gates, through the finish and wow.... Speechless. Thankyou world. What a country.

Fifteen hours and twenty minutes of hard graft and great fun.

Next year I hope to do it again, and do some more specific training.

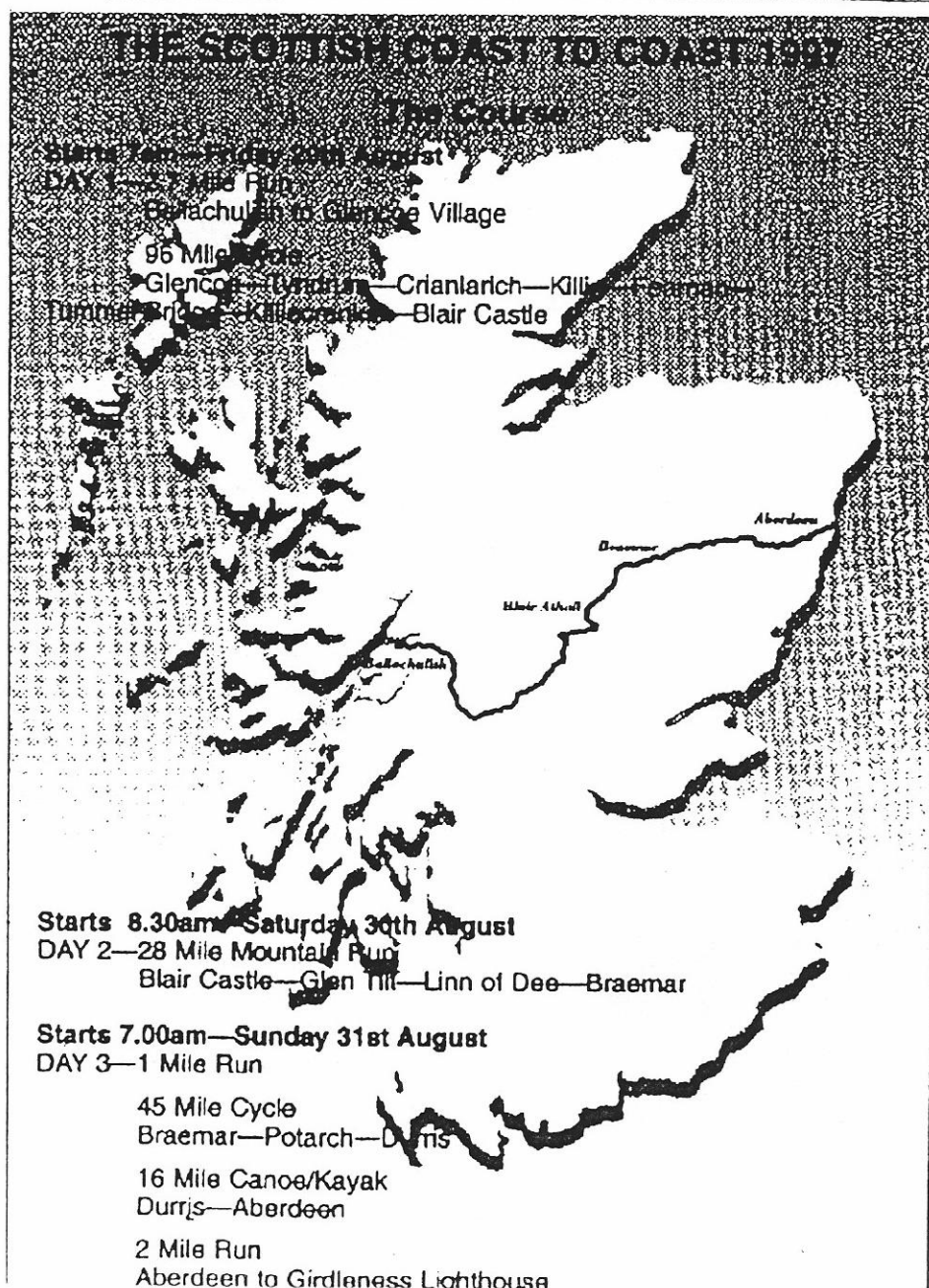
I am sure that with some better preparation it would not be difficult to improve on 18th individual overall.

I would really recommend the race to anyone willing to give it a go. Finishing in Aberdeen is just something special. I have not even touched on the camaraderie forged throughout the event, evident at the prizegiving and ceileidh at the Beach Ballroom.

Superb. Thankyou world. What a country.

And special thanks to Katy, Steve and Short Arse.

Kevin Campervan.



MIDSUMMER MADNESS

by KATH BOO

If you say it very quickly - 24 Munro's in less than 24 hours- the Charlie Ramsay Round doesn't sound that painful. When you actually stop to think about it, look at maps and work out schedules it all starts to sound completely impossible.

Either way the reality of what you're attempting never really hits you, until you actually set foot on the hill, by which time it is too late to back out.

So Saturday 28th June 11.00am saw several Cosmic "chicks" at the foot of the big bad Ben. Time to go!! Take a deep breath, only think about one hill at a time and concentrate on keeping a steady rhythm.



So after fighting our way past the crowds, Sonia and I were on top of the Ben in 1hr 30min - on schedule - thank you Sonia. One down twenty-three to go! Leaving Sonia on the top I carried on along the Carn Mor Dearg arete - trying to move fast without falling off or falling over.

I met Margaret and Catherine on top of Aonach Mor, with their own support team in the form of Steve Worsley. By this time the cloud had dropped so that visibility was very poor. However we had maps and compasses with us so we couldn't get lost, right? Wrong! You need to actually look at the map occasionally. We suddenly realised we were heading

180 degrees in the wrong direction. That's when we did look at the map. Better late than never, I suppose. Luckily Catherine and I agreed where we were and how to get back on course without coming to blows and we eventually got ourselves onto the Grey Corries. A beautiful ridge but unfortunately we got no views at all that day. Despite the dismal weather Catherine and Margaret did a brilliant job keeping me going at the same good steady pace, producing food and water and gossip whenever I needed it.

We got our reward for our perseverance when the clouds lifted as we hit the top of Stob Coire Easain. Unfortunately the glorious view showed me how many more hills I still had to climb. Time to get my head down again and keep plodding.

It's a glorious descent off the Easains to Loch Treig - a good path all the way. Sonia met me part way down and guided me to the end of the loch which made life even easier. Catherine and Margaret had stayed behind to enjoy a slower descent - obviously eight and a half hours on the hill isn't long enough for them. The whole team were there to meet me including my parents and more importantly, mums apricot flapjack. By this time I was an hour down on the schedule but as it was a 23 hour schedule it didn't matter too much and I was feeling good enough to carry on - especially with the thought of following Dennis's bottom for the next few hours.



The next section seemed to go in a blur. We didn't get lost thanks to Ewen's superb navigation (and possibly the perfect visibility!). Ewen and Dennis continued to keep me at a good pace and delivered me to Kevin and Steve at 1.00am Sunday morning, still on schedule for a 24 hour round. Just the Mamores to go!

Fourteen hours into the run and I was beginning to feel tired but Kevin and Steve were remarkably chirpy and I had Kevin's jokes to keep me going (or was I trying to go faster to get out of earshot?).

Steve was bribing me to eat by offering rewards of Satsuma if I ate a piece of flapjack first. So we began the third leg relatively well. Unfortunately I hadn't learnt any lessons from getting lost earlier on. Yet again we were hit by mist and yet again I didn't look at the map properly until we realised we were in completely

the wrong place. It took quite a while to sort out this mistake including Kevin throwing himself down the hillside a couple of times. Fortunately he didn't sustain any serious injuries. When we did get to the top of the right hill I felt completely exhausted and was struggling to find the motivation to carry on. However right at that moment there was the most dazzling sunrise I have ever seen. Inspired by this I found the energy to get going again and had the most amazing few hours I've ever spent on the hills. The clouds continued to put on a magnificent display; pouring over the colls like waterfalls and we saw three broken spectres - which helped to take my mind off

the pain. My legs were beginning to feel decidedly wobbly by this stage and each hill felt progressively longer and steeper. But I was making progress and we didn't seem to be losing any more time. It actually dawned on me that I was actually going to complete the round.

Suddenly, we were on top of Mullach Nan Coirean - all the climbing over and just the long descent into Glen Nevis and 2 miles on the road to do. Catherine and Sonia met us

part way down and Sonia did another excellent job of guiding me down. It's a long, long steep descent and my legs were screaming by the end.

Putting my road shoes on was bliss, they felt like slippers.

Then I was surrounded by nearly the whole support team - Ewen on a bike



Stob Ban

hurtling up and down; Margaret, Steve and Catherine running with me, Sonia drove past and my parents kept stopping to take photos and they all expected me to run down the road to finish in less than 25 hours. Steve kept saying "It's only round the corner." - the longest bloody corner I've ever been round. But what a feeling to finally stagger up the steps to the Youth Hostel and stop!! 25 hours 2 minutes after setting off.

Many, many thanks to Sonia, Margaret, Catherine, Ewan, Dennis, Kevin and Steve. It's an incredibly difficult route to support on as each leg is so long with so much climbing - and I'll see you all again next June!!

CHEATING OR BUREAUCRACY?

Well, that's another track season over with where we have seen some outstanding performances by foreign athletes. Unlike others, I am saying not a word about the performance of the British Team except to say that no matter what indexes one uses the performances have been disappointing.

No, the subject I want to address is the one of drug misuse or, to be more specific, the testing for drug misuse. After the fracas with Diane Modahl I felt fairly certain that the international athletics community would take a long hard look at itself and ask itself questions which, to my knowledge, have not been asked openly because it is obvious to most that the system as it stands does not work satisfactorily and does not enjoy the support or the confidence of the people who really matter - the sportsmen and women. But no - in Atlanta we witnessed problems with the drug control issue, there was a British sprinter competing in the Paralympics held in the drug testing centre for 12 hours, we had a crop of incidents in Athens including the spectacle of a once banned athlete anchoring a German ladies relay team to gold and, as yet, the issue has not been raised in any of the journals to which I subscribe. Here are some points to mull over.

1. There is a huge list, now, of drugs and chemicals which are on the restricted or banned list but in many cases there is absolutely no evidence that they offer any performance enhancing capability in man (or woman, for that matter). The list has to a very large extent been compiled by scientists (mostly chemists) who have been acting upon some obscure theoretical opinion. Let's take the case of the asthma sufferer of whom, I'm pleased to say, there are many in all sports. Exercise is a well known trigger for many asthmatics and one of the most effective drugs for use in this instance is Serevent (salmeterol). Unfortunately it is prohibited by the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF). This ban has been imposed with no real thought having been given to the dose required to produce the desired effect the abusers would be looking for. In fact the dose required would be really quite high and as anyone who lives with asthma will tell you, these reliever medicines, if used injudiciously, cause unpleasant side-effects such as flushing, headache and palpitations. These side-effects would negate, surely, the benefit so is it a drug that athletes looking for improvement would actually abuse? I think not!

2. Who reviews the list and on what basis are additions and deletions made? The simple drug, Codeine, which we are all familiar with and, no doubt, have all used at some time is on the restricted list. Why? It seems the answer to this is that it was used at one time to mask the other, more serious, opium-like substances - cocaine, for instance. Modern analytical devices can now find cocaine no matter what is used to mask it - as cricketer Ed Gibbins found out to his cost. Why is codeine still on the list? I have no idea but the female Irish 1500 metre runner who got into trouble in Atlanta by taking a simple headache tablet which contained codeine would dearly like to know!!

3. Are all sports consistent in how they treat their drug misusers? Lets stick with Ed Gibbins for a moment. He was given a 20 month ban from 1st class cricket for cocaine use. No thought was given to his particular circumstances. Is he a cocaine addict? I don't know. If he is, then it is treatment and support that he needs - not the removal of his livelihood. If he is not an addict then the basic question is 'does cocaine enhance the performance of a cricketer?' I think the answer must be no; on the contrary it probably detracts from his performance. (Another daft element here is that although he has been banned from playing for Sussex he has been offered a place in the

Eastbourne side. This is like allowing a banned sprinter to run the anchor leg of the relay but not the 100 metre final.) Some of you will no doubt remember the case of a well known English 1st division footballer the season before last who was found to have a cocaine habit. Again it is hard to imagine how cocaine use would enhance a footballer's performance on the park. He wasn't banned but given time, rehabilitation and support both by the Football Association and his Club. This player is now back playing for his Club and, more importantly, his career, and hence his livelihood, was not precipitously ended - saving both him and his family extreme hardship.

4. What thought has been given to the legitimate medical use of banned substances. Take the diuretics (water tablets). This group of drugs are widely used for all sorts of medical conditions but most commonly in the control of high blood pressure and for the simple problem of fluid retention many women experience before their monthly period. Why are these drugs banned? They can be misused to mask the traces of anabolic steroids (not very successfully) and to help boxers, wrestlers, judo players and jockeys to make the weight for competition. Why on earth, then, should an archer face a ban for taking a diuretic prescribed by his GP for his high blood pressure when there is no possible reason for him to use it as a performance enhancing agent? I don't think the authorities who control drug misuse in sport have the right to demand that the legitimate drug regimes of our athletes should be altered just because the drug in question may enhance the performance of a sportsperson in an entirely different context. It also introduces medico-legal problems for the prescribing doctor. Should the doctor change his first choice of medication simply to allow the patient to compete in sport, thereby possibly providing a less effective treatment regime to satisfy the requirements of a ban which may have no real evidence in science to support it?

5. I have already alluded to the loss of income. There is a huge amount of money at stake in sport today and if an athlete is banned for drug misuse then this has serious ramifications for that person's livelihood. To go back to the Modahl case. She was banned and lost more than a year's income despite her vehement denial that she had done anything wrong and there being strong evidence which suggested that testing procedures were less than watertight. What redress does she have? That question has no answer and those of us who are interested are watching closely the outcome of her legal battle with the British Athletics Federation. If she wins her battle for compensation this will be a watershed in dope control history and will have a major impact on other sports. It will also make more sportspeople far more ready to take on the drug enforcing authorities.

In the worlds of commerce, civil liberties and jurisprudence great care has been taken in developing an approach to substance abuse in all its forms. Drug testing in industry and the collecting of samples from a suspected drunk driver have to follow a very rigid protocol and the law behind this is very specific. In the world of sport, however, a few scientists and officials have put together a mishmash of opinion and come up with a system and a list which is at best unfair and at worst may even be illegal.

No-one wants or supports drug misuse in sport (probably not even those who misuse them) but before we can hope to succeed in its eradication the whole issue needs to be re-evaluated so that the problem can be approached in a pragmatic as well as scientific manner.

Derek A Bisset

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN ?

by Steve Rivers

It sounded like a good idea at the time. Sat in a café in Penicuik the morning after the Melrose 2 hills race and a night out in Peebles, Neil Wilkinson (Salford Harriers & Scotland) and I finally decided that we would do the Seven Hills of Edinburgh race (14 miles, 1400 ft). That left us 1 hour to find the start, which we accomplished by asking two of the Challenge entrants, who'd started 30 mins ahead of the race.

So we set off from Calton Hill towards the Castle and within 200 yds had to descend a flight of stone steps. Suddenly 2 runners beside me shot into a shopping arcade, then as I turned the next corner, popped out 20 yds in front. I began laughing as I realised that this was to set the trend for the race. From the Castle we slid down a grassy bank onto Princes St and weaved through the shoppers and traffic and went west.

A long slow slog to Murrayfield golf course and I was feeling the effects of the previous day : sore legs, dehydration and a greasy breakfast. Then the runners up ahead were stopped by a barbed wire fence. "Oh well, all part of the fun" I thought as I went straight over and soon reached Corstorphine Hill and a drink station.

The next few miles were a blur as I tried to keep the runners ahead in sight, while we zig-zagged our way through the Edinburgh. Then climbing up Braids Hill the TV cameras were there. Whilst I grovelled up the hill, one HBT guy jumped around like a lunatic, just to get on TV - at least it worked.

I could see the next hill, so went straight for it, down through some woods to a river. Unable to see a bridge, I jumped straight in, waded through the thigh deep water and started climbing again. Nearing the top I saw the runners I'd dropped on the previous descent and realised I'd not chosen the best route.

The mathematics meant the next hill was the one I'd been dreading. Arthur's Seat. After more blind road running I reached the base and started walking. On the summit, I clipped the last checkpoint and raced off in the direction of Calton Hill and the finish. As I left Holyrood Park my lack of local knowledge meant that yet again I had to slow for the next runner to show me the way up this last hill. I somehow managed to hang on behind him up the climb to finish in 16th position. By this time Neil had given his post race interview to Channel 4, having sat with the leaders using their local knowledge before racing off up the final climb.

This is certainly one of the strangest races I've ever done. I'm sure someone just decided to turn their Sunday morning training run into a race, but it's definitely some sort of classic, if not a true 'fell' race - though I'd advise taking an A-Z of Edinburgh.

MEN

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Neil Wilkinson | Ron Hill |
| 2. John Wilkinson | Shettleston |
| 3. Des Crowe | Shettleston |
| 4. Martin Flynn | Carnethy (V) |
| 16. Steve Rivers | Cosmic |

WOMEN

- | | |
|----------------------|------------|
| 1. Joyce Salvona | Livingston |
| 2. Sally Clive | HBT |
| 3. Deborah MacDonald | HBT |
| 5. Hilary Quick | u/a (V) |

THE TRIAL OF STEVE RIVERS

The sun beat down as we stood on the start line, about to do 7 miles and 3 laps of one hill in the Pentlands, a seemingly ludicrous course considering the number of other hills in sight. The logic being that the course profile matched that of the World Cup course, and that was all that seemed to matter.

I set off steadily, knowing that the field would be strong since the race was both a Scottish Championship and the World Cup trial. I slogged away up the first climb, dropping further back through the field. I was suffering already and not relishing the idea of another 2 laps. Finally I hit the descent and went racing off to try and pull back some of the places just lost. This was accomplished fairly easily because the field was still close-packed.

Then it was back to the climb and I watched helplessly as those I had just passed slowly came up from behind and left me in their wake. Fortunately, although I was reduced to a walk every 10 yards to try and recover some energy, so were most of the others, but it still took longer to catch anyone on the second descent. During this I tried to go past one of the two Gurkhas in the race, who was absolutely determined not to concede another place and by the bottom we were both flying along, then we started the third lap and he soon left me for dead.

By this time the field was well strung out, so I plodded alone up the final climb, even managing to pass another runner at the top. Then it was downhill all the way to the finish, except for a sneaky little climb they threw in, about halfway down, and I even managed another place to eventually finish a slightly disappointing 38th. My only consolation was that Ewen hadn't caught me, which I thought was a very real possibility the way I was running. Afterwards he said that he probably would have done had it not been for a toilet stop.

The women's race beforehand consisted of 2 laps of the same course. Unfortunately I missed it, but Cosmics managed to field a team. This consisted of Elaine Stewart and Ann Duckworth, who'd made a break from the Edinburgh Festival, and Tracy Brindley who ran her way into the Scottish squad, which was selected that afternoon.

This caused controversy when in the men's team, Tommy Murray was selected on past performances despite not being a regular on the hills, nor attending the Trial. As expected the rest of the teams were composed of the leading runners in each race.

MEN

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. Neil Wilkinson | Ron Hill |
| 2. Colin Donnelly | Eryri |
| 3. John Wilkinson | Shettleston |
| 4. Mark Rigby | Westerlands |
| 5. David Rodgers | Lochaber |

- | | |
|------------------|--------|
| 38. Steve Rivers | Cosmic |
| 55. Ewen Rennie | Cosmic |

WOMEN

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. Angela Mudge | Carnethy |
| 2. Helen Diamantides | Westerlands |
| 3. Tracy Brindley | Cosmic |
| 4. Joyce Salvona | Livingston |
| 5. Sue Ridley | EWM |

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 17. Elaine Stewart | Cosmic |
| 18. Ann Duckworth | Cosmic |

Capricorn Two Day Mountain Orienteering Competition

Langholm, 19-20th July 1997

When is a mountain marathon not a mountain marathon? When you can pitch your tent in a nice flat field and come back to it to eat and sleep on the Saturday night! So is it a hill race or an orienteering event? Who cares? Certainly not the Grampian Orienteers and Cosmic Hillbashers who ventured south for this event. In practice the majority of people registered were from orienteering clubs but many, including the local contingent, hold dual membership so we had five joint Cosmic/Gramps (Tim Nash, Richard Oxlade, Tim Griffin, Bob Daly & myself) and one Hillbasher (Niall Watson).

Although most folk opted to travel down after work, I took the easy way out and had a quiet saunter down during the day arriving in time to pitch tent and cook tea before it got busy. Slowly the number of tents pitched in our field just off the A7 burgeoned but I was driven to the confines of my tent by the midges before the rest of the North-East contingent arrived. I'd like to say that the time was profitably spent studying the map for the rigours of the following two days but.....

Saturday morning dawned with the promise of another scorcher to follow the previous day's excellent weather. Bob Daly wandered over to find me with his breakfast cup of tea and we had plenty of time to discuss strategy before the start, with me first away amongst those doing the Score Class at a leisurely 10am. Even by this time the sun was seriously strong and despite the visual attraction I was moved to question the sense of two young ladies who were intent on doing it in bikini tops!

All the Day One courses were on the east side on the main road with the start only some fifteen minutes walk from the campsite. The usual start through the boxes and then it was a cruel two minute jog up the hill before collecting a list of the active control sites (all controls were premarked on the map). With only a thirty minute start on Bob, and with four hours for him to hunt me down, I opt to save a few seconds by omitting to mark the control values for the active sites - not a good idea! Disregarding contours and other such features I plot a nice circle in my mind which I hope will leave me with the option of adding some more controls if I seem to be have time to spare later on.

At least with it being a Score Event I don't have to worry about who to follow! No-one seems to be going my way. Is this good or not! The terrain was rough with many tussocks, heather and the odd boggy bit despite the heat - and that's before you put in the contours! I don't run very much so at the far end of my loop when I enquire of a couple on the D-Course how long it's taken them to get there from the start I realise that I'm going to have to push it all the way back and thoughts of extra controls were rather fanciful to say the least.

Tim Griffin opted for a different route but ended up with the same problem - only he made it back in time. Bob Daly and I both pick up penalty points at the end of Day One but at

least we're left with significant positive scores unlike some! One person ran up 120 penalty points!

In the Elite Tim Nash didn't enjoy the heat or the terrain and pulled out half way round whilst on the B-class Richard Oxlade is well placed (2nd) after a powerful run whilst Niall Watson takes 6 1/2 hours and decides to retire before Day Two with badly blistered heels.

Before that of course there is the night-life of Langholm. Well actually, being well-trained finely honed athletes the two Tims, Bob and myself have only made it in for a meal as we're too lazy to cook. You can't do this sort of thing on the Karrimor! Not being fully conversant with Ronnie Maughan's theories on rehydration everyone except me also the seems to restrict their beer intake - or did I just sweat more? The midges drive us out of town square at about 10pm. It looks as if the real night life may have just begun.

Day Two dawns just as warm and Tim G and Bob have to cope with early starts.(Well early by Capricorn standards but nothing like Karrimor early). I have the disadvantage of one of the latest starts, in the full heat of the day as I later explain as my excuse for not going for the road-runners ploy to beat the planner and grab the high scoring controls via the campsite and the dirt track. Instead I opt for another small safe loop and do it too well finishing quarter of an hour inside the Day Two three hour time limit despite doubling back on myself twice to reach the first two controls! Tim has taken it just as easy and almost pays for his arrogance as Ron Caves of Dark Peak grabs 25 more points and closes to within five points. Bob is third highest scorer on Day Two but still has to be content with fourth overall whilst I manage the top third of the field.

In the B-class Richard again records the second fastest time for second overall.

Results - B class

1	Robert Frost	NOR	3-56-04 + 2-32-29	6h29m33s
2	Richard Oxlade	GRAMP	4-03-19 + 2-38-35	6h41m54s

Score

1	Tim Griffin	GRAMP	170 (4hr) + 130 (3hr)	300
4	Bob Daly	GRAMP	145 (-2) + 135	270
31	Ewen Rennie	COSMIC	100 (-4) + 90	186

Verdict - Mountain marathons have much to offer both hill-runners and orienteers. In events such as the Capricorn and the Phoenix, the solo running aspect means adds to the fun as you have no-one to blame but yourself (but you have to be reasonably confident with map and compass). Having an overnight base camp means that you don't have to carry all the gear (and you can even "cheat" at some of these events by eating out as we did).

Ewen Rennie

BEN RINNES - 26.7.97

A good clutch of Cosmics turned out for this long, tough race. The usual hot sunny weather threatened before the start with most of us plastering on the sun-tan lotion although some barely had time to put on their shoes having arrived rather late (didn't you Katy and Margaret!).

Tim Griffin made a welcome returning to racing and started brightly battling with Steve Burns for the lead. Kevin Canavan and Dennis McDonald were battling out for Cosmic team honours with Ewen also in the fight for the team honours until the descent off Meikle Conval. Like Ewen, Margaret Stafford found this bit difficult and had to concede a lot of ground to Katy. Meanwhile Bob Daly had started his charge up the field. By now the sun had disappeared and we were running into clag.

The heather on Meikle Conval didn't seem as in previous years but the dampness didn't help. Off Ben Rinnes Kevin shared his adrenalin rush with us all as he shrieked his way down, scaring Elaine amongst others.

By now the Lochaber loon was ahead of Tim but beginning to crack as he paid for not drinking at any of the feeding stations. Tim finally caught him on the way up Little Convil then buried him off the top. The split times for them (and all the other Cosmics make interesting reading). At the finish it was Cosmics first and last with most of us falling into the second half of the field but who cares - we enjoyed ourselves! Katy took first ladies prize (to have her name engraved beside Miss Mudge) and Cosmic Ladies took the team.

Cosmics in attendance were Tim Griffin, Bob Daly, Dennis McDonald, Kevin Canavan, Ewen Rennie, Katy Boocock, Margaret Stafford, Andrew Johnston, John Forsyth, Dave Yertz, Christine Mowat, Elaine Stewart, Steve Pryor and Ann Duckworth.

Place	Name	Time	LC-MC	MC-BR	Brup	Brdown	MC-LC	Finish
1	Tim	2h03m13s	25m39s	15m46s	27m20s	14m01s	20m12s	20m16s
13	Bob	2h21m20s	29m36s	19m21s	32m53s	14m40s	21m58s	22m52s
14	Dennis	2h23m07s	28m13s	19m07s	33m58s	14m02s	24m17s	23m30s
15	Kevin	2h25m17s	28m04s	19m08s	32m48s	14m57s	24m33s	25m47s
23	Ewen	2h39m24s	28m41s	20m43s	33m56s	19m34s	26m31s	29m59s
28	Katy	2h49m06s	32m57s	21m54s	36m55s	19m07s	28m07s	30m06s
30	Margaret	2h52m51s	32m59s	22m58s	37m43s	20m02s	29m06s	30m03s
32	Andrew J.	3h01m48s	33m17s	21m52s	38m11s	20m58s	32m26s	35m04s
34	John	3h04m54s	32m28s	22m35s	38m17s	23m44s	34m55s	32m55s
38	Dave Y.	3h11m10s	34m25s	23m08s	40m27s	21m47s	35m04s	36m19s
39	Christine	3h15m00s	36m31s	25m14s	42m29s	20m31s	36m23s	33m52s
40	Elaine	3h20m01s	37m46s	26m33s	41m26s	24m47s	34m17s	35m12s
41	Steve	3h24m10s	41m03s	25m30s	44m17s	20m34s	34m53s	37m53s
42	Ann D.	3h28m29s	39m24s	26m33s	44m31s	25m31s	35m05s	37m25s

Ewen Rennie

BY TRACEY BRINDLEY

I was delighted to be selected for the World Trophy team for the first time this year. The races were held on 7 September at Upice in the Czech Republic.

We set off on the Friday, flying to Heathrow and then on to Prague. The journey was a nightmare I left my flat at 5.30am and didn't arrive at Upice until 11.30pm! The time delay was not helped by having to wait 6 hours at Prague Airport for a non-existent bus. We ended up hiring a bus for the Scottish and Irish teams. When we finally arrived at our destination, hungry and tired, we found that no food was available until the next day - how would I survive?

We got up very early on the Saturday morning for breakfast - only to find that it consisted of red meat and more red meat! Not much good for the vegetarians! Every meal was the same so I was forced to survive the weekend on a diet of chocolate. It was tough going!

We then went on a 'reccce' of the course, which was very fast going with steep climbs and a gentle grassy descent. Upice itself was awful, very rundown and polluted (I had breathing problems for three weeks after coming home). On the Saturday night we went to the opening ceremony which, thankfully, was nice and short then had an early night.

Sunday was race day and the weather was very hot - not too good for us Scots. The juniors were off first and all ran well, especially the girls who finished fourth in the team placing's. It was our turn next and after a furious fight to get round a 90 degree turn after 50 metres, we settled down into the race. The race was won by Isabelle Guillot of France and first Scot home was Angela Mudge (Janice's sister!). I was third Scot in 23rd position - far higher than I had expected. Our team finished an excellent 6th. Next was the men's race in which the Scot's team finished 5th, inspired by one of our juniors playing the bagpipes at a strategic point on the course.

With the races over there was only the closing ceremony left, with some 'bunny girls' in skimpy outfits going down a treat with the men. Unfortunately no sexy men for us girls to ogle! An open disco followed and frantic tracksuit swapping left me and the junior women with no Scottish kit whatsoever. However I was all nicely kitted out to run for the USA! Hopefully we'll be back next year - when it's held in the exotic island of Reunton!

1997 EDDIE CAMPBELL MEMORIAL BEN NEVIS RACE

Phil Kammer

Driving rain, low visibility and summit temperatures near zero degrees Celsius failed to dampen spirits at this year's Eddie Campbell Memorial Ben Nevis Race. The race attracted 381 runners which committee members saw as a justification for maintaining the event on the day of Diana, Princess of Wales's funeral. Summit judge, Calum MacDonald placed a wreath at the top of the Ben and the race was preceded by a minutes silence as a mark of respect for Diana and the late Eddie Campbell.

The first runner home in a time of 1:27:45 was Lake District sheep farmer Gavin Bland. Gavin, 25 years of age from Thirlmere near Keswick, first won the event 5 years ago. At the finish line this year he expressed delight with his time but insisted that Kenny Stuart's record of 1:25:34 was beatable. Echoing many runners' feelings, Gavin said "It never gets any easier, everything moves under your feet. It was very misty and near freezing at the summit so I am very pleased with my time but the record can be beaten".

Second home was Lochaber's John Brooks in 1:28:10 followed by Rob Jebb of Bingley Harriers in 1:32:12. Steve Jackson of Horwich RMI Harriers proved age was no barrier by taking the veteran's title with 8th place overall in a time of 1:40:15. First junior runner was Billy Brooks of Lochaber in 9th place just 20 seconds behind Steve.

The women's title fell to Angela Brand-Barker of Keswick Athletic Club for the fourth time beating Lochaber's Julie Anderson and six times former women's winner Ros Evans.

As usual the race organisation was excellent. The rescue team had to deal with only one incident - runner Tony Bradley suffered cramp and hypothermia during his descent and had to be carried to the Half-way Locaan where he was evacuated by an RAF Helicopter from Lossiemouth. Only two Cosmics made the trip to Fort William for Scotland's biggest hill race so make sure you get your entry in in good time for the 1998 race. Taking part in a Ben race is always memorable!

1	Gavin Bland	Borrondale Fell Runners	1:27:45
2	John Brooks	Lochaber AC	1:28:10
3	Rob Jebb	Bingley Harriers & AC	1:32:12
4	Gary Devine	Pudsey & Bramley AC	1:35:05
5	Billy Rodgers	Lochaber AC	1:38:11
103	Phil Kammer	Cosmic Hillbashers	2:01:44
163	Rick Allen	Cosmic Hillbashers	2:11:27

CAIRN WILLIAM HILL RACE

13 SEPTEMBER 1997

By Sonia Armitage

The day started off fairly sunny although rather cold. The weather helped with the continuing race preparations both as organiser and competitor. Preparations, although hectic, seemed to go fairly smoothly - no fields of bulls in the way at the last minute! Now I am starting to feel a bit nervous - haven't felt like this for 7 or 8 months! My first race since February - will I manage to complete the course.

3pm and a record number of competitors (52 in all) are off along the road out of Monymusk to Pitfichie Castle. After that a tough relentless climb to the top of Pitfichie Hill. No wasps this year! Martin Flynn was clearly the first to the top of Cairn William with a lead of 30 seconds. However John Buchan's flying descent of 16.37 minutes - the fastest of the day - made for an exciting finish but wasn't fast enough to rob Martin of a 7 second victory. Rob Taylor finished in 3rd place ahead of Dave Armitage who had a very good comeback race following knee surgery earlier in the year.

After puffing my way up Cairn William, what a joy it was to skip down again at full speed without having to worry about falling over. I managed to finish in one piece and was first woman into the bargain, although my time was slower than last year. Ruth McKenzie had a strong descent to finish in 2nd place. Margaret Stafford who is quickly coming back to form after an injury finished in 3rd place setting a new veteran's record.

It is reported by certain race marshalls that towards the end of the field there was some serious discussion about what the apres race activities would be - "Fit ye dein the night??" But isn't it the camaraderie we have in this great sport that keeps us going?

Cairn William Hillrace 1997

Place	Time	No.	Name	Club	Category	Split Up	Split Down		
1	0:43:48	239	Martin Flynn	Camethy HRC	VM(1)	0:26:48	1	0:17:00	2
2	0:43:55	252	John Buchan	Cosmic HB	SM(1)	0:27:18	2	0:16:37	1
3	0:45:01	248	Robert Taylor	Cosmic HB	SM(2)	0:27:50	3	0:17:11	3
4	0:45:17	201	David Armitage	Cosmic HB	VM(2)	0:28:00	4	0:17:17	5
5	0:46:07	221	Stephen Rivers	Cosmic HB	SM(3)	0:28:47	6	0:17:20	6
6	0:46:19	215	Mark Johnston	Camethy HRC	SM(4)	0:28:34	5	0:17:45	8
7	0:47:08	237	Dennis McDonald	Cosmic HB	SM(5)	0:29:30	8	0:17:38	7
8	0:47:11	258	Malcolm Cunningham	Cosmic HB	SM(6)	0:29:56	10	0:17:15	4
9	0:47:43	230	Forbes Duguid	Deeside R	VM(3)	0:29:38	9	0:18:05	9
10	0:48:28	229	Colin Laidlaw	Ferranti	VM(4)	0:29:58	11	0:18:30	10
11	0:48:31	261	Francis Duguid	Deeside R	VM(5)	0:29:01	7	0:19:30	14
12	0:49:51	220	Graham Milne	Cosmic HB	VM(6)	0:31:09	14	0:18:42	11
13	0:50:07	205	Ashley Jermieson	Fleetfeet T	VM(7)	0:30:44	12	0:19:23	12

contd....

14	0:51:07	203 Henry Ferguson	Unattached	SM(7)	0:31:00	13	0:20:07	18
15	0:51:59	211 Dick Hobson	Cosmic HB	SM(8)	0:31:56	15	0:20:03	17
16	0:52:00	212 Francois Migeon	Aberdeen AAC	SM(9)	0:32:28	18	0:19:32	15
17	0:52:20	202 Sonia Armitage	Cosmic HB	SL(1)	0:32:51	19	0:19:29	13
18	0:53:19	254 Gordon Yule	Cosmic HB	VM(8)	0:33:01	20	0:20:18	19
19	0:53:40	251 Stephen Willox	Cosmic HB	SM(10)	0:33:37	21	0:20:03	16
20	0:53:51	249 Rick Allen	Cosmic HB	VM(9)	0:32:26	17	0:21:25	24
21	0:54:38	236 Kevin Canavan	Cosmic HB	SM(11)	0:31:58	16	0:22:40	33
22	0:54:53	247 Sandy Hastie	Peterhead AC	VM(10)	0:34:01	22	0:20:52	22
23	0:55:15	240 Ruth MacKenzie	Deeside R	SL(2)	0:34:49	24	0:20:26	20
24	0:56:19	260 Alan McCourt	Unattached	VM(11)	0:35:30	28	0:20:49	21
25	0:56:29	242 Bill Ogg	Metro	VM(12)	0:34:30	23	0:21:59	28
26	0:56:50	209 Graham Marks	Cosmic HB	VM(13)	0:35:51	31	0:20:59	23
27	0:57:13	246 Ian Duguid	Peterhead AC	VM(14)	0:35:28	27	0:21:45	26
28	0:57:16	227 Margaret Stafford	Cosmic HB	VL(1)	0:35:26	25	0:21:50	27
29	0:58:20	228 Katy Boocock	Cosmic HB	SL(3)	0:35:47	29	0:22:33	32
30	0:58:25	206 Robert Trahan	Garioch RR	VM(15)	0:36:42	35	0:21:43	25
31	0:58:30	214 John Bruce	Unattached	SM(12)	0:36:25	33	0:22:05	29
32	0:58:33	213 Keith Greenwood	Cosmic HB	VM(16)	0:36:09	32	0:22:24	31
33	0:58:40	204 Diana Jermieson	Fleetfeet T	VL(2)	0:35:27	26	0:23:13	37
34	0:58:54	224 Dave Yersz	Cosmic HB	SM(13)	0:35:49	30	0:23:05	35
35	0:59:46	253 Ron Pratt	Cosmic HB	VM(17)	0:37:03	37	0:22:43	34
36	1:01:24	255 John Rowland	Unattached	VM(18)	0:36:40	34	0:24:44	41
37	1:01:33	245 Jack Sim	Thainstone	VM(19)	0:36:46	36	0:24:47	43
38	1:01:43	259 Pat Donald	Deeside R	VL(3)	0:37:50	40	0:23:53	39
39	1:03:05	219 Pete Harrison	Cosmic HB	VM(20)	0:38:13	41	0:24:52	44
40	1:03:45	217 Anne Thomson	Cosmic HB	VL(4)	0:37:30	39	0:26:15	48
41	1:03:47	223 David Wilkinson	Unattached	VM(21)	0:38:37	42	0:25:10	45
42	1:03:56	241 Liz Bracegirdle	Cosmic HB	VL(5)	0:39:10	44	0:24:46	42
43	1:04:07	216 Pete Martin	Deeside R	VM(22)	0:41:00	47	0:23:07	36
44	1:04:12	244 Ian Searle	Cosmic HB	SM(14)	0:39:38	45	0:24:34	40
45	1:04:20	250 Elaine Stewart	Cosmic HB	VL(6)	0:38:44	43	0:25:36	47
46	1:04:51	208 Steve Pryor	Cosmic HB	VM(23)	0:42:35	49	0:22:16	30
47	1:06:02	232 Neil Mordock	Aberdeen AAC	VM(24)	0:37:25	38	0:28:37	51
48	1:06:11	243 Alf McKay	Cosmic HB	VM(25)	0:42:55	50	0:23:16	38
49	1:07:59	256 Lionel Mann	Belgrave H	VM(26)	0:40:18	46	0:27:41	50
50	1:08:41	218 Clare Martin	Deeside R	SL(4)	0:43:18	51	0:25:23	46
51	1:08:43	257 Ann Duckworth	Cosmic HB	VL(7)	0:41:22	48	0:27:21	49

Retired

210 Rowland Jolly

Hunters BT

SM

Callander Highland Games Hill Race

Part of the Callander World Highland Games and sponsored by Caledonian Country Wear this short sharp lung bursting race is under 20 minutes duration up Cock hill but manages to cover road, rough terrain, landrover track, even rougher terrain, open field, and a tunnel with water flowing through. Great atmosphere at the finish with large crowds. Good prizes. Once the games field, at Claish Farm, is clear I can recommend the pony trekking there. Why not make a weekend of it. Contact the sponsor for the Games date in 1998.

2 BREWERIES & 18 MILES

Friday night 6.30pm precisely and Cosmic Hillbashers were off to the Borders for the 15th Two Breweries Race. With more picked-up on the way and early Aberdeen starts for some, by Saturday morning there was an impressive total of 24, with 18 entered in the race, at the old school-house in Tweedsmuir, our base for the weekend.

After large breakfasts all round, especially Steve Pryor's Sustain and porridge concoction, we checked out the maps, a large one on the wall which was traced continually by Dennis and colour laminated ones provided by Steve P. for each of us to carry. I tried, with limited success, to recall the route from 2 years before. Meanwhile Tracey, ever the martyr, indulged in a blatant sex session in an attempt to ruin Mark's race chances.

The race itself starts in the impressive grounds of Traquair House, has an initial long climb followed by a steep descent/ascent through heather, then a long descent to the halfway point. From there it climbs through a forest, descends to a road, drags up to Trahenna Hill (with a sharp climb to the summit) and finally drops into Broughton and the brewery after 18 miles.

Cosmics arrived at Traquair and raided the teashop for carrot cake, although I would have preferred the brewery in the House instead. After a thorough kit check we were off. I decided to follow John Blair-Fish on the first climb, but quickly realised his route choice was useless, so I abandoned that and followed the majority, keeping close to Dave Armitage all the way up. Then because of Dave's knees, I pulled away on the heathery descent. On the mirror-image ascent I took the opportunity to start eating and had demolished a muesli bar before the top.

After a bit of contouring the second descent brought us to halfway and a welcome water station, because although the day was cloudy, it was very warm. Here good sense prevailed as Dave and then Steve retired from the race for knee and fitness reasons and were taxied to Broughton by Bloss Greenwood. Up and over the next hill and I was inside the top 20, but was dreading the finale.

There is a long, slow incline on a disused railway, which leads onto clumpy grasses before rising sharply for a hard climb up Trahenna. This last part became the scene for a great many cramp attacks, with bodies lying about in agony, so close to the finish. And what a relief it was to get there. Even though I did get out-sprinted by Des Crowe (lots of speed-work required this winter), I was 20 minutes faster than in '95.

With all Cosmics safely back, the first port of call was the village hall for food and more importantly the free beer, followed by the presentations. Then back to the school-house to get tarted up for the serious business of the ceilidh to be held in the same hall. Dennis and Alison were very fashionably dressed in matching Black Watch tartan trousers, while Ewan, an obvious veteran of these events, took a towel and spare T-shirt. These were both needed later in the evening as Cosmics danced continually for hours, and Encarna and Laura were "picked-up" by Dick Wall, and swung round and round in one unknown dance.

For a follow-up on Sunday morning we entered Dick Wall's Black Meldon races, a quick 1 mile blast up and down the fore-mentioned hill and a relay which we tactically altered to 1 up, 1 down, 1 up & 1 down. With Dave and Ewan as the climbers and Dennis and myself the descenders and despite the previous days' exertions Cosmics won the relay. And to complete the duplication of the Saturday, Steve's car stereo was cranked up, and with the appropriate music playing, we had a Cosmic Ceilidh in the middle of the country road.

Results

1	Graeme Bartlett	Forres	
2	Andrew Davies	Borrowdale	
3	Steve Birkinshaw	Northumberland	
7	Andy Lewsley	Keswick	1 st Vet
24	Steve Rivers	Cosmic	
26	Angela Mudge	Carnethy	1 st Lady
29	Brian Waldie	Carnethy	1 st V50
31	Mark Johnson	Nearly a Cosmic	
36	Tim Nash	Cosmic	
43	Andy Pearle	Cosmic	
68	Tracey Brindley	Cosmic	Joint 4 th Lady
72	Ewan Rennie	Cosmic	
85	Bob Daly	Cosmic	
86	Dennis McDonald	Cosmic	
99	Andrew White	Cosmic	
101	Katy Boocock	Cosmic	
111	Margaret Stafford	Cosmic	
113	Encarna Matuzane	Cosmic	
116	Andrew Johnson	Cosmic	
128	Elaine Stewart	Cosmic	
132	Anne Thomson	Cosmic	
137	Keith Greenwood	Cosmic	
1??	Colin Lavery	Cosmic	

Steve Rivers

"RUNNING SHOP" MORVEN HILL RACE

SATURDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 1997

CAT - AS

POS	NAME	CLUB	CAT	TIME
1	Dan Whitehead	U/A	MS	45.40
2	Greg Barbour	Cosmic HB	MS	45.47
3	Jamie McDonald	Central AC	MS	47.44
4	Steve Rivers	Cosmic HB	MS	48.06
5	Craig Love	Dundee HH	MS	48.33
6	David Armitage	Cosmic HB	MV	48.51
7	Alasdair Anthony	Central AC	MS	49.01
8	Martin Laing	Fife AC	MV	50.07
9	Paul Targett	Clayton-Le-Moors	MS	50.27
10	Forbes Dugid	Deeside R	MV	50.57
11	Denis MacDonald	Cosmic HB	MS	51.13
12	Bruce Moroney	U/A	MS	51.45
13	Peter Orr	Highland HR	MS	52.15
14	Andrew Pearce	Cosmic HB	MS	52.38
15	Alan Smith	Deeside R	MS	52.54
16	David Hirst	Deeside R	MS	54.03
17	Charlie Love	Dundee HR	MSV	54.32
18	Stephen McArthur	Central AC	MS	54.53
19	Bob Daly	Cosmic HB	MS	55.03
20	Sonia Armitage	Cosmic HB	FS	55.12
21	Phil Kanmer	Cosmic HB	MV	56.11
22	Warren Burgess	Deeside R	MV	57.43
23	Andrew White	Cosmic HB	MS	57.57
24	Rick Allen	Cosmic HB	MV	58.14
25	Iain Firth	Deeside R	MS	58.34
26	Ian McNulty	Dundee HH	MS	58.34
27	Ron Milne	Forfar RR	MV	58.56
28	Ruth MacKenzie	Deeside R	FS	59.49
29	Bill Ogg	Aberdeen Metro	MV	60.03
30	Graeme Marks	Cosmic HB	MV	61.21
31	Encarnacion Maturana	Cosmic HB	FS	61.51
32	Margaret Stafford	Cosmic HB	FV	62.12
33	Keith Greenwood	Cosmic HB	MV	62.26
34	Ron Pratt	Cosmic HB	MV	64.15
35	Iain MacKenzie	Deeside R	MS	64.28
36	Pat Donald	Deeside R	FV	65.01
37	John Bruce	?	MS	65.07
38	Billy Bannerman	U/A	MS	68.15
39	Anne Thomson	Cosmic HB	FV	68.48
40	Christine Mouat	Cosmic HB	FS	70.15
41	Elaine Stewart	Cosmic HB	FV	70.29
42	Alex Hamilton	Cosmic HB	MSV	71.20
43	Steve Pryor	Cosmic HB	MV	71.55
44	John Wilkins	Arbroath F	MSV	72.30
45	Tracey Targett	Clayton-Le-Moors	FS	72.36

46	Sam Connelly	Dundee RR	MSV	73.50
47	Clare Martin	Deeside R	FS	73.52
48	Arnie Mouat	U/A	MV	74.16
49	Lionel Mann	Belgrave H	MSV	80.46
50	Bing Kerr	Cosmic HB	FV	81.16
51	Shona Manson	Cosmic HB	FV	90.06

Thanks to our sponsor the Running Shop, Aberdeen

Thanks also to **Scottish National Heritage** and **Dinnet Estates** for permission to run the race and the **Profeits Hotel** for allowing us to hold the prize-giving there.

Thanks to all the helpers and the marshalls particularly Thane and Brian on the summit, Phil at the col, Terry and Liza at the start/finish and Hilda and Janet at registration. Thanks to Phil Kammer who never gets much credit but is a help with all aspects of the race and his caravan is a great base for registration.

We could not have asked for a better day, with glorious sunshine persisting right through to the presentation of the prizes at the Profeits Hotel, Dinnet. Over 50 runners ran the race which is a healthy number although obviously down on last year's championship race.

The descent from the summit of Morven was significantly changed this year. Replies to the short questionnaire indicate that most of you believe it was a change for the better. Personally, I still like the old finish, but the path was beginning to get very loose in sections and I believe that we have found a good alternative.

The finish of the race was very exciting. Dan had a huge lead at the summit but Greg whittled this down to 7 seconds by the end in what was almost a re-run of the 1996 championship event when Mark Rigby's wild descent almost caught Dermid McGonigle who just managed to hold on. This year, however, the fields of bleating sheep were well secured and the runners were able to descend unimpeded.

Dan's effort was particularly impressive because he doesn't run very often being, instead, a committed mountain-biker.

Thanks for turning out, I hope you enjoyed the race and will return again next year to our neck of the woods.

BL

	Neil Martin	2h52m22s	0-34	0-34	1h29m	2h05m	2h19m	2h33m	2h41m
Dennis	3h01m54s	0-37	0-57	1h41m	2h15m	2h33m	2h49m	3h01m	
Andrew	3h48m38s	0-40	1h02	1h47m	2h35m	2h58m	3h19m	3h41m	
Ewan	4h01m30s	0-39	1h05	1h55m	2h43m	3h04m	3h24m	3h42m	
John	4h16m35s	0-41	1h06	1h55m	2h49m	3h13m	3h36m	3h55m	
Dave	4h16m35s	0-42	1h09	1h55m	2h50m	3h15m	3h37m	3h54m	
Blaine	4h18m51s	0-49	1h19	2h18m	3h17m	3h43m		4h21m	
Keith	dnf	0-44	1h12						

Postscript - There is usually an excellent array of sheep prizes - so it's worth stopping for the prize giving. I even didn't and missed out. Ann Thomson would never do that!

East Rannoch

GLEN CLOVA HILL RACE - 3.8.97

A reasonable sprinkling of Cosmics turned out for this classic which is likely to be a Scottish Championship Race next year. Several hardy souls had featured in the previous week's Ben Rinnes (Dennis McDonald, Ewen Rennie, John Forsyth, Dave Yertz and Elaine Stewart) whilst others (Andrew White, and Keith Greenwood) were being more circumspect or sensible in only doing one long hill race in eight days.

The forty-nine runners in the main race were joined by a solitary female for the junior race. Modern youth are wimps! However Alison proved she was no wimp by reaching Green Hill (her turn around point and our first checkpoint) ahead of Elaine and Keith.

Meanwhile Dennis was leading Cosmic with Ewen and Andrew not far behind. Visibility was good but already the gaps were growing. By checkpoint two the order was clearly Dennis, Andrew and then Ewen with John not far behind but a missing marshall for checkpoint three saw the field bunch up, wander in circles and generally act lost! Some charged on confident that the marshall was missing, some charged on oblivious to the lack of a marshall whilst others struggled to relocate in the peat hags. Not having had map or compass out until this point proved a bit of a handicap (both John and Ewen were guilty of this) but eventually everyone made it down to the road and the crossing point. Elaine was almost timed out but carried on whilst Keith had to retire with a sprained ankle.

The dash up Dreish saw Ewen reopen the gap on John and Dave but he was unable to claw back Andrew and Dennis. Indeed Dennis was beginning to fly and he would eventually finish 8th but only just ahead of Helene Diamantides!

At the finish everyone got a goody bag with apple, Mars bar, porkpie, bag of crisps and a can of juice and not everyone was as ungracious as a certain Carnethy veteran in declaring that he didn't eat this and that and that... What does he eat?

Place			Green Hill	Wester Balloch	Red Craig	Coire Farchal	Dreish	Hill of Strone	Cairn Inks
1	Neil Martin	2h52m22s	0-34	0-54	1h29m	2h05m	2h19m	2h33m	2h41m
8	Dennis	3h11m54s	0-37	0-57	1h41m	2h15m	2h34m	2h49m	3h01m
23	Andrew	3h48m58s	0-40	1h02	1h47m	2h35m	2h58m	3h19m	3h34m
29	Ewen	4h01m30s	0-39	1h05	1h55m	2h43m	3h04m	3h24m	3h42m
37	John	4h16m35s	0-41	1h06	1h55m	2h49m	3h13m	3h36m	3h55m
38	Dave	4h16m35s	0-42	1h 09	1h55m	2h50m	3h15m	3h36m	3h54m
45	Elaine	4h48m51s	0-49	1h19	2h18m	3h17m	3h43m	-	4h21m
	Keith	dnf	0-44	1h12					

Footnote - There is usually an excellent array of spot prizes - so it's worth stopping for the prize giving. Ewen didn't and missed out. Ann Thomson would never do that!

Ewen Rennie

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Mark and Janet go out of their way to make your stay a pleasant one. Prices range from £10 to £12.50 which includes continental breakfast. There are no extra charges for linen, electricity or showers. Laundry facilities also available. Fancy a cycle after a hill race to ease those legs - mountain bikes for hire £3 per half day. Book early to avoid disappointment - yes it's that popular!

Eddie Butler.