

## Cosmic Bullsheet



The News Sheet of  
  
The  
Cosmic  
Hillbashers

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

**Issue No. : 48**

**Q4 : Sept. – Dec. 2006**

### Editorial : Peter Larkin

Greetings Fellow Cosmics,

Summer must officially be over ..... as I haven't seen daylight for over 10 days now albeit limited between the hours of 6 (pm) and 6 (am) at high latitude..... plus rumours of accumulators at King's can only add to confirm my assertion.

So, a fair summer by all accounts with the round of calendar and highland games races, along with the *ad hoc* foray to The Lakes, Switzerland amongst other places all concluded with varying degrees of success and delight. From the stories, fables and rumours filtering back, it seems that there has been a fair Cosmic representation both numerically and geographically – which can only be a good thing.

I understand that Cosmic numbers and attendance at races and events compared with the halcyon days of yesteryear is not as great. Perhaps with the showings over the summer, the corner may be being turned. This is coming from one who failed to

complete anything like enough races for the Cosmic Championship – my excuses are already prepared however.

Q4, No. 48 features only a couple of articles – unfortunately. Though many more were possibly forthcoming, they haven't quite made it into the Editor's In-Box .... Perhaps they'll be available for the next edition ?

The two articles featured ; Jonathon Bellarby's West Highland Way and Anita Hamilton's 'The Ben' are both poignant, informative and witty and will provide you all with some entertainment between here and the Cosmic Run Listings.

I'm still keen to encourage folk to submit brief accounts of the various races, preferably soon after the actual event. They don't have to be long nor the process onerous but just enough to capture the moment and allow others to read about it. So, fellow Cosmonauts – don't be shy!

The summer saw the inception of the 'Summer Series' which I think, all would agree, was a resounding success. The races organised by Cosmics, proved both welcome and popular. So much so, that there is currently lively debate as to how to develop the concept. I have not been around for any of the 'live' sessions but have followed events with interest by e-mail. I would urge you all to let your views be known, as they provide the potential platform for some fine competitive racing over the summer months .... and possibly beyond according to current discussion.

The summer has also seen a bit of a 'media frenzy' with a reasonable of coverage in various 'running' related publications - even to extent of some being afforded 'cover-girl' status.

For my part, I haven't been able to include the 5 years ago / 10 years ago retrospective largely on account of the fact that I've only been in Aberdeen for two of the last nine weeks. Not a whinge just a statement of fact.

So, as we move into the 'season of mist and mellow fruitfulness' and the crop-tops get buried at the bottom of kit bags in favour of the long sleeve hi-viz numbers, there are a few social events to look

forward to, courtesy of our Social Secretary.

Again, Fiona and Sean have put in good deal of effort in updating and maintaining the web site. For those who haven't already - do go in and take a look (<http://www.cosmics.org.uk>).

Thanks, once again to Ewen, Elaine and the other Committee members for keeping the Cosmic cogs oiled and turning. Once again, I'd urge you all to voice any opinions you have - through which ever forum, as it will help keep the club and it's membership dynamic.

Here's assuming I see daylight and you all before Christmas  
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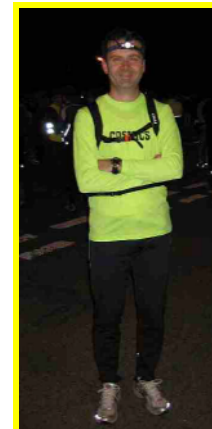
***If the hill has its own name, then it's probably a pretty tough hill***  
**Marty Stern**



## The West Highland Way : One Man's Tale

by Jonathon Bellarby

I entered this race back in January. Its reputation gave me sleepless nights, but training went well and Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006 saw me, Carl Pryce and over 100 other runners and their support teams gather at Milngavie railway station for the 95 mile West Highland Way race. Normally, a quiet suburb of Glasgow with the last train just departed, tonight the car park was a seething mass of lycra, head torches and nervous banter. Carl Pryce remarks that there is no one doing warm-up exercises! 0100 Hrs. and the race is off, through the pedestrian precinct and then out into the country.



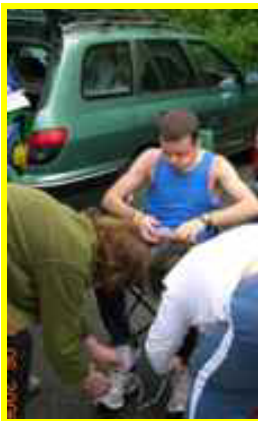
The pack slowly spreads out and after 5 miles I find myself alone. I was not at the front or back; have I gone the wrong way? The first refuelling stop at 6 miles confirms the right route - along the old railway line. The next 5 miles is also alone - where is everyone? Occasionally I hear the sound of gates bashing shut a few minutes behind or ahead, other than that a quiet, calm night. As it begins to get light for the climb over Conic hill, I am overtaken by several very fast runners - part of the lead pack that unfortunately took a wrong turning near Drymen and lost 25 minutes. One of them is



clearly very annoyed with herself (you might well know her)! The rough descent to Balmaha is busy, but goes without incident. I have a quick bowl of rice pudding and a flapjack (at 0430) and am away again – once gain alone.

I struggle somewhat in the constant up and down alongside Loch Lomond and the sight of the checkpoint at Inversnaid and some runners comes as a welcome relief. I perk up and enjoy the rough footpath North of Inversnaid and a bit of chat. I arrive at Derrydarroch in good shape and have moved up to 20<sup>th</sup> place. A typical pit stop involves replenishing energy bars, gels and juice from the rucsac, a bite to eat, and sometimes changes of socks, shoes and vest.

My team for the first half of the race is my wife Helen and father in-law and after Tyndrum it is my parents and brother and sister in-law – a whole family and superb teams. After stopping still even for a few minutes it is tough to get back into a rhythm, so my longest stop of the day is 4 minutes. Whilst I sit down to eat, the shoes and socks are replaced (3 identical pairs of road shoes, all worn in to around the 100 mile mark), and the rucsac replenished. An F1 pitstop couldn't be smoother. As I leave I shout back the requests for the next stop.



The next few stages all go very well and I'm beginning to enjoy myself. With one exception I see no other runners in the next 35 miles and the run over Rannoch Moor is lonely but exhilarating.



Bizarrely on the descent down from the moor I see a familiar couple ahead. It is my uncle and his wife walking the West Highland Way for the first time. Both parties are as completely surprised as each other, but 30 seconds later I leave them shaking their heads.

At Kingshouse I have moved up to 11<sup>th</sup> place – do I run with my eyes shut, that I can miss 7 runners? My splits confirm that I did overtake another runner (and someone I knew well) somewhere on Rannoch Moor. Not being in the top 10 means I can take advantage of a support runner and my dad (a veteran of many mountain marathons) joins me for the section to Kinlochleven. The descent down from the Devil's staircase is very tough on the quads and slow, but there is hot soup waiting and that goes down well. My support runner changes to my brother for the slow climb out of Kinlochleven.



My slow speed (this slowest section at 18 min/mile) makes me paranoid about being overtaken and dropping back to 11<sup>th</sup>. I constantly look back until this risks a trip – I ask my brother to do it instead! We also discuss the probability of the overtaking runner having a support runner. We could then get them disqualified for having a support runner whilst being in the top ten (logic was never my strong point).

A pizza takeaway awaits in Lundavra. It's cold and a bit midgy, but absolutely superb and I wolf down 4 slices of Hawaiian with extra topping of jelly babies. Beyond Lundavra however the terrain is still



rough and the stiles huge and the progress slow. With about 4 miles to go, we are climbing a very gloomy path in the woods when we hear voices behind – we are about to get overtaken? The pain, fatigue, and blisters disappear (adrenalin or delayed pizza effect?). I start to run up hills. I get faster and faster, I shout; I am a new man. The descent to Fort William begins and the speed increases; my brother can't keep up, I race along the road, across the roundabout, past my rather startled wife - "I'm being chased" I shout, and sprint to the finish! I break down in tears and a babble. Unbelievable! 21 hrs 34 mins, with the last 4 miles in 28 minutes; the chasing runner arrives 7 minutes later and my brother shortly behind. What an amazing day.

I'm happy with the result, but the winner was in a totally different class with a staggering record time of 15 hrs:44 minutes - Jezz Bragg from Solihull.

## Ben Nevis 2006

By Anita Hamilton

Also known to aficionados simply as "The Ben". I guess I was a bit impressed when I read in the programme that we were racing up and down the highest mountain in Britain. It had seemed a good idea when I had entered back in January – the race fills up so quickly (the limit of 500 entries was reached by end of February apparently) that it rather skews the composition of the field – not the usual suspects - a lot of people come up from South of the border (*and I don't mean Mexico way – Ed.*) and only those prepared to plan well in advance can get in. This year 8 Cosmics were in; Ian Wilson and I were first timers (Ben virgins? *Wilson – virgin on the ridiculous perhaps? Ed.*), Elaine and Shelley had done it once before, and Alfie, Dennis, Jason and Carl numerous times. Anne Griffiths came in support.



Saturday morning in Fort William was distinctly damp. We sent Anne off up the hill and convened for coffee and cake. By the start time (at the Highland League stadium) it was warming up with the sun was breaking through and conditions for the race were great

with little wind (*I thought Wilson was racing ? Ed.*) , but this did not prevent the usual debate and pfaaf about what to wear. Carriage of full waterproof body cover was compulsory (though no one actually checked).

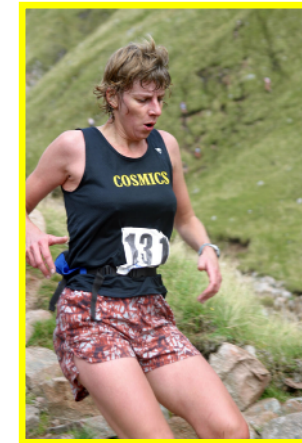
Prior to the start, the runners lined up and paraded behind the pipe band, then suddenly we were off. Along the road I tried to stay behind Shelley and Ian, but once on the narrower track decided that this was wasting too much energy. The field gradually thinned out a bit and I was able to make steady progress overtaking a few people. There was no marked route, you had to decide for yourself whether various "short" cuts on the path were advantageous or not (some were, some not). Unusually, we had been issued with 2 numbers each for front and back –this made it more interesting as you could more easily recognise those in front of you.

It was also a good opportunity for a shoe survey as you spent most of the time looking at your own and everyone else's feet. Eventually as we neared the top (everyone around walking by now) we saw the leaders coming down. Jason, Carl, Dennis, Shelley and Ian all went past – but everyone was concentrating intently on their own feet and the terrain, no time to look up. Shelley looked magnificent as she flew over the rocks! The weather had closed in by the time the summit plateau was reached – this was almost the worst point for me, as I felt I should have been able to run and couldn't raise the energy.

There were loads of people up there – including what seemed to be a brass band with their instruments. Oh no! I thought I'm going to be beaten to the summit by a man with a tuba on his back! However I did get there first (don't know if they played up there or what?) and handed in my tag, setting off back down with relief - and trepidation. The rocky bit at the top was not too bad – I picked someone to follow who looked like they were taking a reasonable line, on the "green wall" I slipped onto my bum a few times, then across the stream, it was on the rocky path that I really lost the plot, co-ordination and language degenerating in concert – after a few falls I was bruised, scraped, bleeding and covered in mud (i.e. as normal) – and many places further back (Bill Gauld passed me at this point).



The mile of undulating road was hell and the final circuit of the field was worse (sorry Anne no matter how much you cheered me on my legs would not go any faster) and I finally finished in 2.30.41. Jason, Carl, Dennis and Ian had already finished in 1.51.58, 1.54.00, 1.55.06, and 1.23.46 respectively. Star of the (cosmic) show was Shelley – 4<sup>th</sup> woman in the superb time of 2.13.46.



Elaine followed soon after me in 2.40.43 (she was annoyed because she had not looked at her watch and this was apparently 1 min slower than last time). We enjoyed the tea and cakes provided in the marquee while waiting to cheer Alfie home in 3.32.06.

The greatest navigational problem of the day was finding the prize giving held at 8 pm that evening, but we did make it in time to see Shelley awarded her bronze medal and £20 (Alfie was a bit disappointed not to receive a wooden spoon). Certificates for all and printed results were also ready. All in all a well organised race, and a tough course even on a good day. Everyone should do it once (*What is it the Japanese say about climbing Mount Fuji? Ed.*) – but I'm hoping it will be easier the second time round!





**Cosmic Social Events – Quarter 4 Year 2006**  
**Social Secretary's – Elaine Stewart**

**Social Retrospective :**

**July**

Thanks to Stuart Hunter for inviting us all round to his house to celebrate his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**August**

The first of the house warming parties was at Dennis & Fiona's new abode, thanks for a great BBQ and homemade burgers.

This year's Cosmic bike ride went well, with Keith Varney, Colin Larmour, Mike & Anne Stone plus myself taking part. It was a circular trip starting at the Keiloch, round the back of Balmoral, up the Glen Sheil road to Corgarff, off road to Inchrory, Loch Bulig round the side of Culardoch and back to the Keiloch, 42 miles in all.

**September**

The **Comrie relays** was a great day out, and I was glad that Fiona persuaded me to do it. We had perfect weather, good runs, showering facilities at Fiona's parents house followed by tea & cakes while we waited for Dennis to finish leg 3, then back to the finish in time for Bob coming in from the last leg, followed by the BBQ at the finish. Cosmics came in first for the mixed team and we all went home with a bottle of wine.

**Ben Nevis**

Shelley Farrar gave a stunning performance at Ben Nevis coming 4<sup>th</sup> lady, other Cosmic results...

Jason Williamson	:	01.51.58
Carl Pryce	:	01.54.00
Dennis McDonald	:	01.55.06
Shelley Farrar	:	02:13:46
Ian Wilson	:	02.23.16
Anita Hamilton	:	02.30.41
Elaine Stewart	:	02.40.43
Alfie McKay	:	03.32.06

**World Masters Mountain Running Championships**

7 Cosmics went out to participate in the above event at Ovrannaz, Switzerland. There were 2 courses : 7.9km for the 55 year olds and above and 9.5km for the 35year olds to the 54 year olds.

Keith Varney was the fastest 'Scot' covering the course in 55:59. The fastest veteran was an American who did it in a time of 48:58. Anita had an amazing performance by beating her close rival Joceyln Scott and Elaine had a sprint finish to pass an Austrian to gain another position.

Other results...

Ashley Jermieson	:	00:58:50
Anne Griffiths	:	01:47:00
Keith Varney	:	00:55:59
Anita Hamilton	:	01:14:00
Lois Noble	:	01:18:00
Elaine Stewart	:	01:21:00
Peter Larkin	:	01:24:00

Forthcoming Features

**October**

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>**

Pentland Skyline Hill Race

If anybody is interested in a day out to Edinburgh for the above race.

The race is 16 miles, 6200ft and it's a £3 entry on the day. Starts from Hillend Ski Centre at 11:00am

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>**

**FRA relays Calder Valley, any takers!!**

**November**

**Grampian Beer Festival at The McClymont Halls, Holbourn Street**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>**

Meal out at Panino's (Italian), 281 George Street. I will book a table for 7 o'clock, let me know if you want to come along.



**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>****Meall a' Buachille Hill Race**

This race is usually combined with the SHR 'Annual Do', have not had any info on this yet but will let you know. The race starts from Glenmore Lodge at 12:30pm, it's 6 miles 2000ft and £5 to enter.

**December  
Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Trip to the 'Carron' Art Deco Restaurant in Stonehaven.  
<http://carron-restaurant.co.uk/>

Everybody is invited back to my house after the last training session at King's, date yet to be confirmed. Take along a nibble and your own drink, hopefully some party games will be organised.

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

**Tuesdays : Cosmics at King's**

**Training Sessions at King's College Pavilion start on 4<sup>th</sup> October  
Warm-up starts 18:15**

Date	Session
03 <sup>rd</sup> October	Reps : Acceleration Accumulator
10 <sup>th</sup> October	Reps : 3 x (400m / Jog / 1000m / Jog) Hills : <a href="#">Seaton for Cathedral Hill Reps</a>
17 <sup>th</sup> October	Reps : 300 / 600 / 900 / 1200 / 900 / 600 / 300m Hills : <a href="#">Hilton for Hill Reps</a>
24 <sup>th</sup> October	Compulsory Hills ; <a href="#">Seaton for continuous hills</a> [Hi-Viz / Reflective Tops please !]
31 <sup>st</sup> October	Reps : 3 x (600 / 300 / Jog / 900 / 300m / Jog) Hills : <a href="#">Seaton for Cathedral Hill Reps</a>
07 <sup>th</sup> November	Reps : 10 x 400m / Jog Recovery Hills : <a href="#">Hilton for Hill Reps</a>
14 <sup>th</sup> November	Reps : 300 / 600 / 900 / 1200 / 900 / 600 / 300m Hills : <a href="#">Seaton for Continuous Hills</a>
21 <sup>st</sup> November	Reps : 3 x (600 / 300 / Jog / 900 / 300m / Jog) Hills : <a href="#">Seaton for Cathedral Hill Reps</a>
28 <sup>th</sup> November	Compulsory Hills ; <a href="#">Seaton for continuous hills</a> [Hi-Viz / Reflective Tops please !]
05 <sup>th</sup> December*	Reps : 300 / 600 / 900 / 1200 / 900 / 600 / 300m Hills : <a href="#">Hilton for Hill Reps</a>
12 <sup>th</sup> December	Reps : 3 x (400m / Jog / 1000m / Jog) Hills : <a href="#">Seaton for Cathedral Hill Reps</a>
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Reps : Acceleration Accumulator

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to  
all +**

Note : Anyone is free to join either group on any night. Reps groups may split.

\* : Important Birthday

+ : Invariably *ad hoc* training runs will be organised over the festive season



## Saturday Runs and Races

All runs meet at 09:45 for a sharp 09:50 start

Date	Location	Grid Ref.	Time
Sat. 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	<b>Millstone</b> [from Donview Car Park]	NJ 672 190	0945
Sat. 01 <sup>st</sup> October	<b>Bennachie Hill Race</b> [Nr. Oyne]		1400
Fri. 06 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Proms First 3K</b> [Beach Prom]		1300
Sat. 07 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Bennachie</b> [from Rowan Tree Car Park]	NJ 685 245	0945
Sat. 14 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>South Durris</b>	NO 788 892	0945
Sat. 21 <sup>st</sup> October	<b>Kerloch</b>	NO 698 916	0945
Sat. 28 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Carn Mon Earn</b>	NO 768 924	0945
Fri. 03 <sup>rd</sup> November	<b>Proms Second 3K</b> [Beach Prom]	<b>N. E. Beer Festival !</b>	1300
Sat. 04 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Mither Tap</b> [from Visitor Centre]	NJ 698 217	0945
Sat. 11 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Green Hill</b> [from White Stone Car Park]	NJ 654 131	0945
Sat. 18 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Bennachie</b> [from Rowan Tree Car Park]	NJ 685 245	0945
Sat. 25 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Glentanar</b> [n.b. £2 for car park]	NO 479 964	0945
Fri. 03 <sup>rd</sup> November	<b>Proms Third 3K</b> [Beach Prom]		1300
Sat. 02 <sup>nd</sup> December	Back of <b>Clachnaben</b> [from Glen Dye]	NO 649 868	0945
Sat. 09 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>Mither Tap</b> [from Visitor Centre]	NJ 698 217	0945
Sat. 16 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>South Durris</b>	NO 788 892	0945

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year  
to all**

