



Chelmsford Mountaineering Club



2013 Newsletter

# Hello everyone,

Welcome to the Chelmsford Mountaineering Club 2013 Newsletter. This year has been great for me personally; I have got out climbing a lot with various club members, been to plenty of new places, pushed my grade a little, and most importantly, had a great time climbing.

This year's Newsletter contains a really diverse range of articles, two of which have been contributed by new club members. Extending the article specification to 'anything outdoorsy, preferably involving mountains' has yielded some pretty interesting results (with some a bit hardcore). Thanks to all who have submitted material. Hope you all enjoy reading it!

Your Newsletter Editor Guy,  
**Martin Bagshaw**

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Photo : Brian Clary on top of Aiguillette d'Argentiere, Chamonix

# Chairman's Ramblings

As with all clubs, they evolve over time with new members joining and older members leaving or becoming less active. It looked like the club was going to struggle this year, when at the AGM we struggled to form a committee and very poor turn-out at the meeting. We started the year without a meets officer, which was kindly filled later in the year by Tim Simpkins. The winter was cold and long this year and we had very few new members at the start of the year, which is very unusual. We also had a number of the more active members leave the area generally for more mountainous locations.

The 1st trip of the year, the normal winter walking trip, had approximately 15 members, lower than 2012, but still better than I had feared at the start of the year. This was despite of the extreme winter weather front that was scheduled and did pass through on Friday evening. Most members managed to get there ok, but the Chairman's party decided to take the Mondeo rather than the Discovery and eventually got in at about 1am, after lots of car pushing and navigating floods.

The next planned trip to Cornwall for climbing in the sun, fizzed out, due to poor weather forecast, with the winter weather lingering on. A small party did get out to the Lakes and met up with Danny and Sarah P, for some good winter conditions (See background and January photo in 2014 calendar)

1st May Bank Holiday was to North Wales with about 15 members turning out again. Although the weather was not perfect most people got some climbing done, with a nice time had by many at Holyhead Mountain.

2nd May Bank Holiday was to Patterdale in a new hut to the club, the George Starkey. The hut worked well for location and layout and we have therefore booked it again for Easter 2014. Again the turn-out was good with approximately 15 members attending. The weather was kind on the Saturday and Sunday with a good amount of climbing being undertaken. A few new members were introduced to the world of outdoor climbing, which I take as enjoyable as they have come back for more.

The next trip was to a club favourite location of the Eastern Peaks to sample some gritstone. This was classified as a new members' trip and several members took advantage to gain experience by some of the more experienced members.

With the warmer weather a few more new members joined and the club started to grow again. The club at the end of the year had

62 members, with some of the newer members being very active.

The August Bank Holiday was not a big turnout, but enjoyed by those who attended, as the weather was good and some great climbing was had in the fantastic setting of Pembroke. I managed to get my holiday booking wrong, as I was looking forward to this trip.

Swanage in September again was not well attended, but good climbing despite of the sea mist on limestone. Great to see Michael and Andrew Porter on the meet, especially by Bernie who was leant a top rope.

The final official trip of the year was the club's annual Christmas meet in November! This year was at Thorpe Farm bunk house near to Hathersage in the Eastern Peaks. This was our biggest turn out of the year with approximately 25 members. Even though the weather was not fantastic, some of our keener climbers managed to climb on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Generally everyone got out and about, although some just came for the evening do. Thanks to all those that kindly assisted with the cook-in and Danny for the entertainment!

Thanks to all those who turned up at the Anglia Ruskin University Riverside presentation on the speculative redevelopment. We've made contact with the Council Leader and the Head of Parks and Leisure, but had no response. The BMC have been most supportive with the BMC regional officer Lis Hurley attending the event and offering to support. We'll need to decide how to progress trying to encourage the council to setup an indoor climbing facility in the Chelmsford Borough.

I'm pleased to see that our club is still relatively open with quite a few unofficial trips organised by members. It's great to see open club emails inviting others on these trips. It's also great to see emails for other points of interest, such as talks and gear recalls.

For 2014, we have booked more outdoor trips to hopefully cater for when members are available and to increase the frequency of them. Hope to see you all next year, either at the wall, pub meet, but most of all outdoors.

All the best for 2014,  
**Ian Pegg,**  
**Club Chairman**



# CMC Annual Awards

Nominees and Winners of our Club Awards in 2013

In 2012, the award winners were as follows:

- Gavin** - Epic on Tryfan, climbing as party of 3 in winter
- Rourkee (Marion Rourke)** - Most Improved Climber
- Simon** - Club Member, general help throughout the year

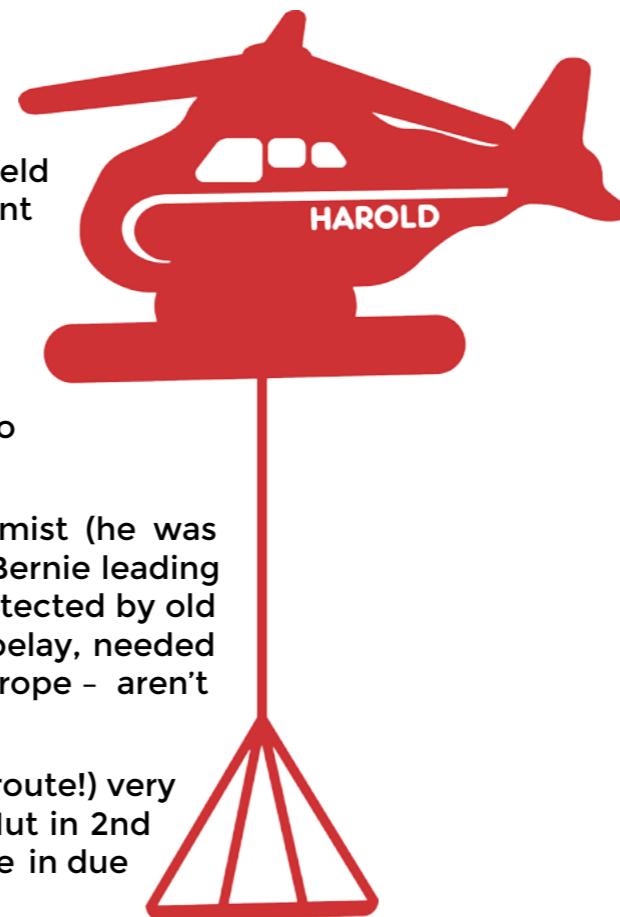
In 2013, voting took place on the well attended Xmas Peak District Meet. Award nominees and winners are as follows:

## The EPIC Award

A.k.a. the Danny Crump Award

I'm pleased to say the epics this year were relatively minor, as per last year, but they are a reminder of how easily things can go very badly in the hills. Keep safety in mind, whilst out in the hills.

- Bryan Clary** - Easter in Lakes for climbing above rest of party (Ian Pegg Belaying) and dislodging large boulder. Bryan then kindly held said boulder in place whilst rest of party went above.
- Richard Aphorp** - climbing above Bryan (holding said large boulder) and dislodging large slab of snow which slid down onto Bryan's head (Ian still belaying and hoping to get out alive.)
- Bernie Sosin** - Swannege leading VS in sea mist (he was obviously feeling brave) seconded by Terry. Bernie leading the second pitch moving past a slab area protected by old large peg, ended up back with Terry at the belay, needed to be rescued by Michael Porter with top rope - aren't routes always easier on top rope!
- Ian, Martin & Sarah P.** - (let's just do another route!) very late (around 12pm) back to George Starkey Hut in 2nd May Bank Holiday in the Lakes - can't phone in due to no signal, but curry ready on arrival!

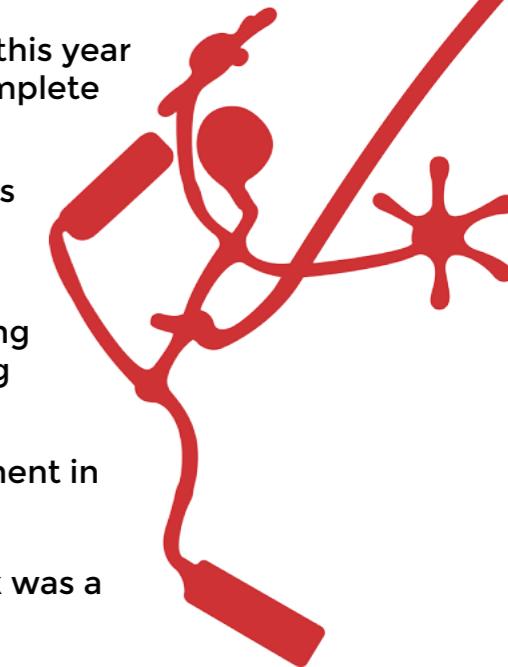


And the winner was - **Danny Crump!** He recounted numerous tales at the Christmas meet

## The MOST IMPROVED Award

- Martin Bagshaw** - Seriously got into leading 'trad' this year with several E's under his belt and nearly has a complete lead rack now + 1/2 an abseil rope!
- Jamie Vince** - General all round improvement in his climbing (Pushed on by Bryan/ boasted to a pulp)
- Bernie Sosin** - Has always struggled to climb consistently enough/ get his head around venturing beyond VS. He is now climbing at HVS and looking forward to all the great routes at that grade.
- Lottie Clark** - Added at the meet for the improvement in her lead climbing.

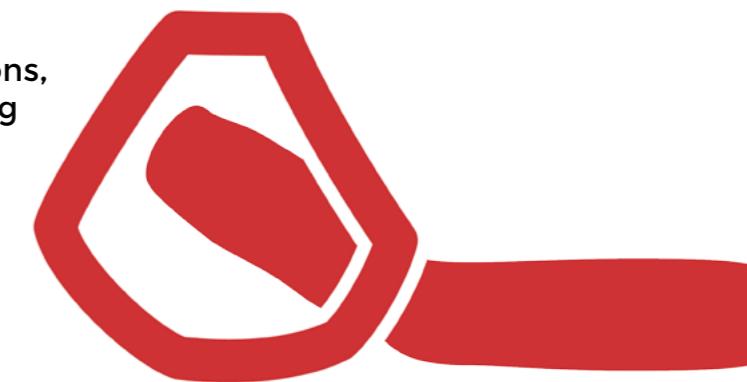
And the winner was - **Martin Bagshaw**, although Lottie Clark was a close second.



## The CLUB MEMBER'S Award

- Martin Bagshaw** - Always ready for climbing, supported committee with new flyers, newsletter, and excellent calendar
- Bryan Clary** - Encouraged lots of outdoor climbing and been very open with the climbing offers
- Simon Clark** - Supporting the inductions, even after his knee operation, booking huts, etc.

And the winner was - **Bryan Clary**.

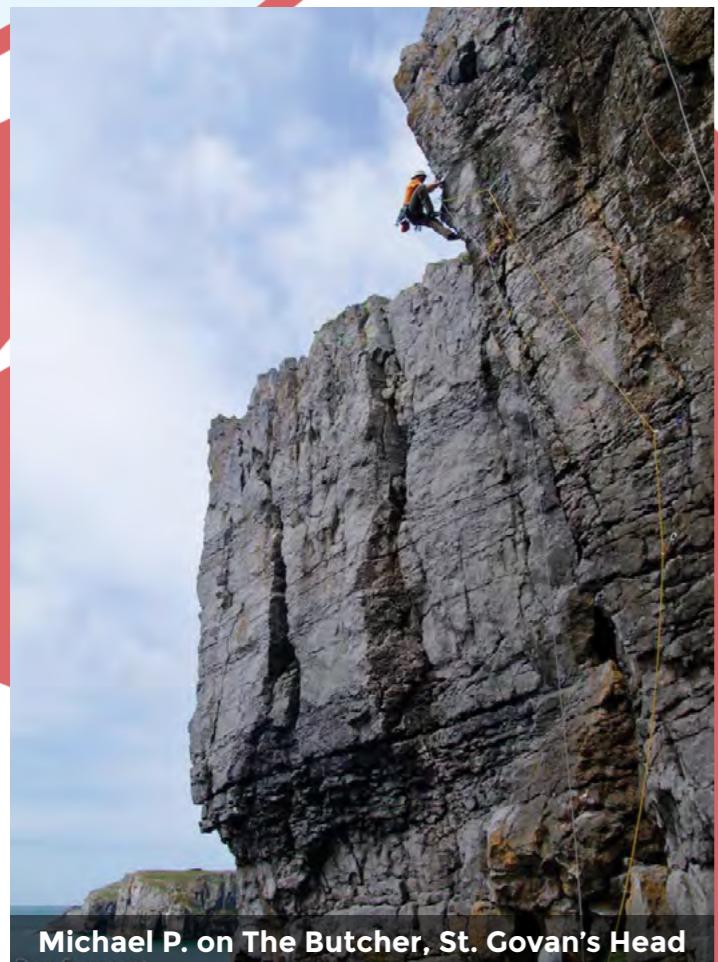


**Ian Pegg,  
Club Chairman**

# Calendar Competition Winners

The following photographs won the online vote for a place in the 2014 Chelmsford Mountaineering Club Calendar.





Michael P. on The Butcher, St. Govan's Head



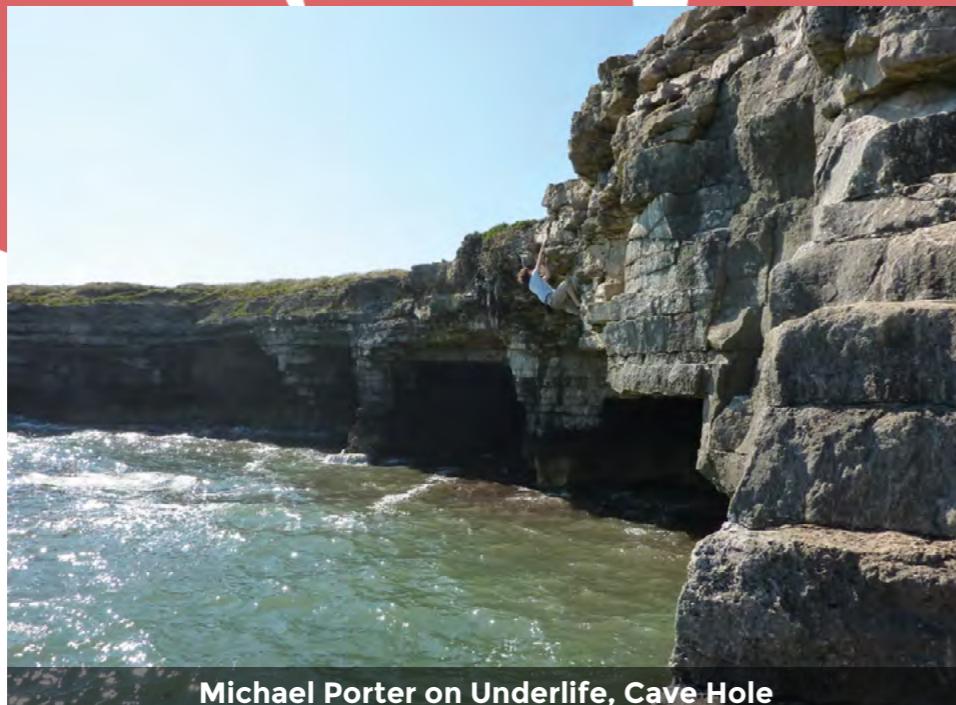
Piers Harley on Cold Couloir, Cogne, Italy



The Snowdon Horseshoe, Easter 2013



Rob Laird on Ellis's Eliminate, Stanage Popular



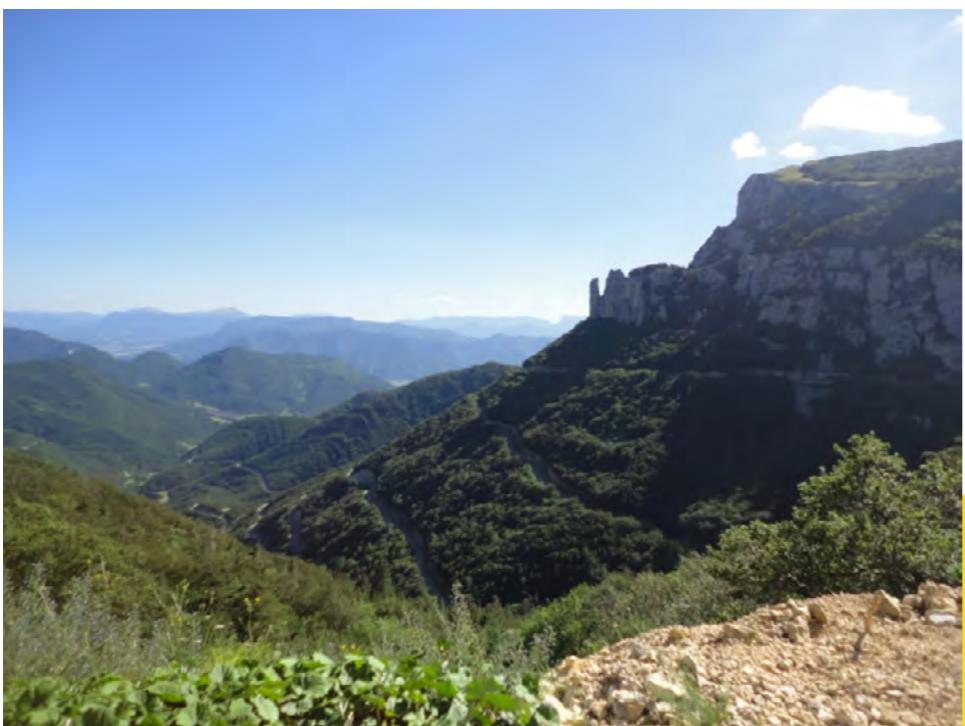
# More than one way to climb a mountain

From June to September of this year I took to the road in a pastry-powered bicycle tour from Harwich to Barcelona via Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland and Spain. Carrying all the equipment needed to ride, camp, cook and make minor repairs, I took in some of the finest cities and scenery these parts of the world had to offer.

There truly were too many wonderful places to mention, so I will share some of the highlights and those parts which may be most relevant to a mountaineering club, **for there is more than one way to climb a mountain.**



Among the first wonderful cols to be tackled were those in the Vercors region of France where elements of the French resistance had hidden during World War 2, hoping to use the region's Massif as a mountain fortress of sorts awaiting Allied support. Now, in more peaceful times, the hills and mountains afford fantastic views and habitat for wolves leading down in the lavender-draped region of Provence.

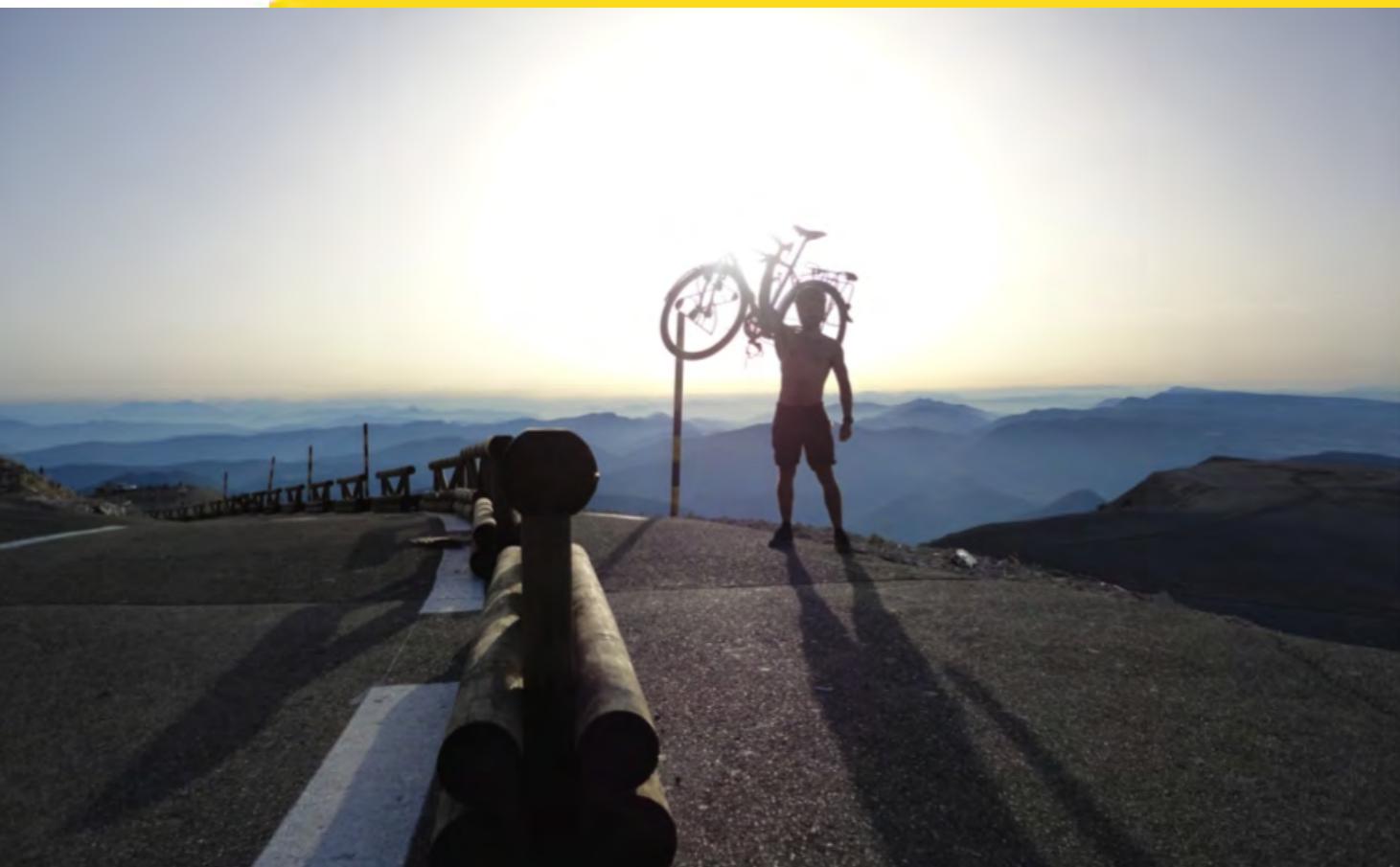


The wonderful Col De Roussett. A smooth, switchbacking descent into Provence

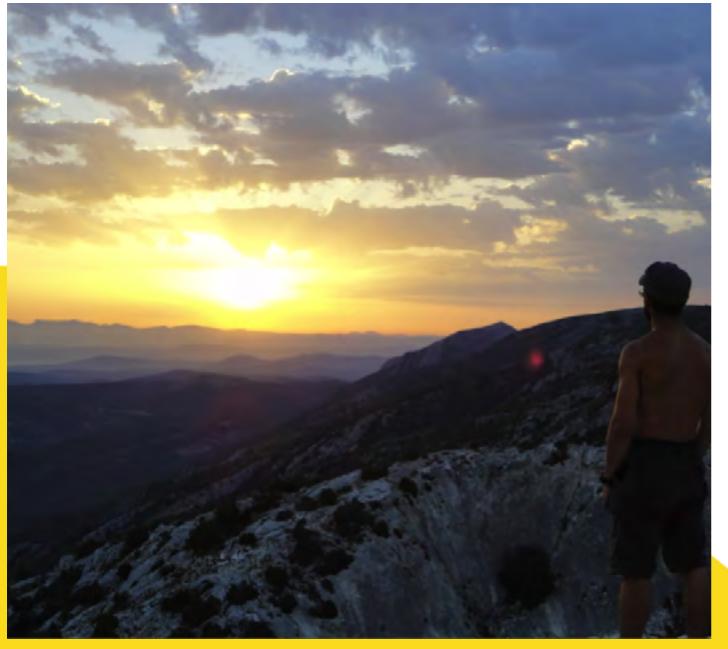


Lavender fields in Vercors, a common feature in Provence

From here I rode on through gorges and apricot groves to tackle the Giant of Provence, Mont Ventoux. The mountain, around 2000m high, is famous for its inclusion in the Tour de France and is clearly visible for miles around. Rising at 5am to beat the swarms of cyclists who would later descend upon it, I ground my way up through the unmistakable lunar landscape around Ventoux's summit as first light spilled inky-blue over the surrounding terrain. Then came the seemingly never-ending, brake-melting descent.



Mont Ventoux summit



Montagne St Victoire. View from above mountain refuge

weather accompanied me as I inched up towards the mountain pass near Pic du Midi before dropping down at barely controllable speed through a cloud layer which reduced visibility and raised heart-rates, undoing several hours effort in next to no time.



Happy camping at Cirque de Gavarnie



Donkey track into the Cirque

A constant, testing series of climbs and exhilarating descents continued as I made my way over the Pyrenees into Catalonia where my journey would come to a close in Barcelona. The bustling city was a far cry from the many nights I had

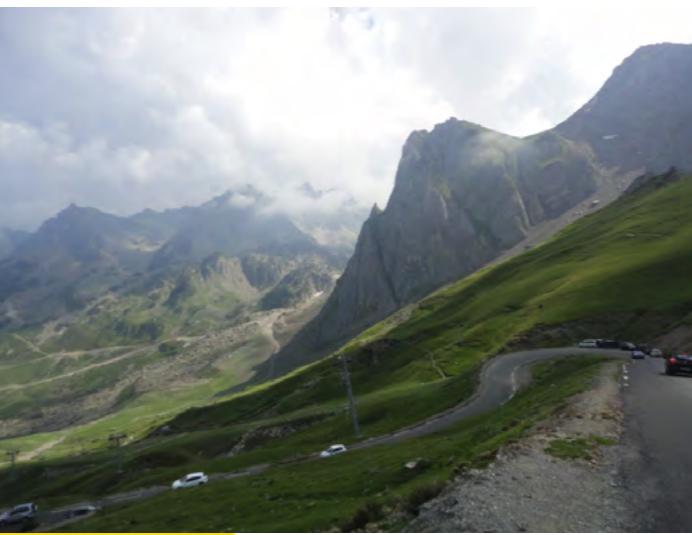
Fast-forwarding now through Provence, through countless croissants and coffee consumed in town squares, past the masses of tourists on the Mediterranean coast and the flamingos of the Camargue, we come to the Pyrenees. Deciding to take another of the classic Tour de France climbs over the range, I went to the world famous Cirque de Gavarnie, a towering amphitheatre of stone, before tackling the challenging climb up the Col du Tourmalet. Spectacular

now spent camping in woods and national parks, besides sleepy canals and in secluded areas in the hills and made for an exciting contrast.



Cirque de Gavarnie

Some interesting art to encourage you up Col du Tourmalet >



< Some pleasant scenery to distract you from the sense of impending death on the descent of Col Du Tourmalet

Looking back a month after I have finished my ride, I can safely say that it was a fantastic experience, but, as is the nature of things, I feel as though I only scratched the surface and it has in fact given

me a greater desire to revisit some of these fantastic locations and experience them in more detail. One thing is for sure, next time, I'll be taking my boots and rock shoes. Catch you out there.

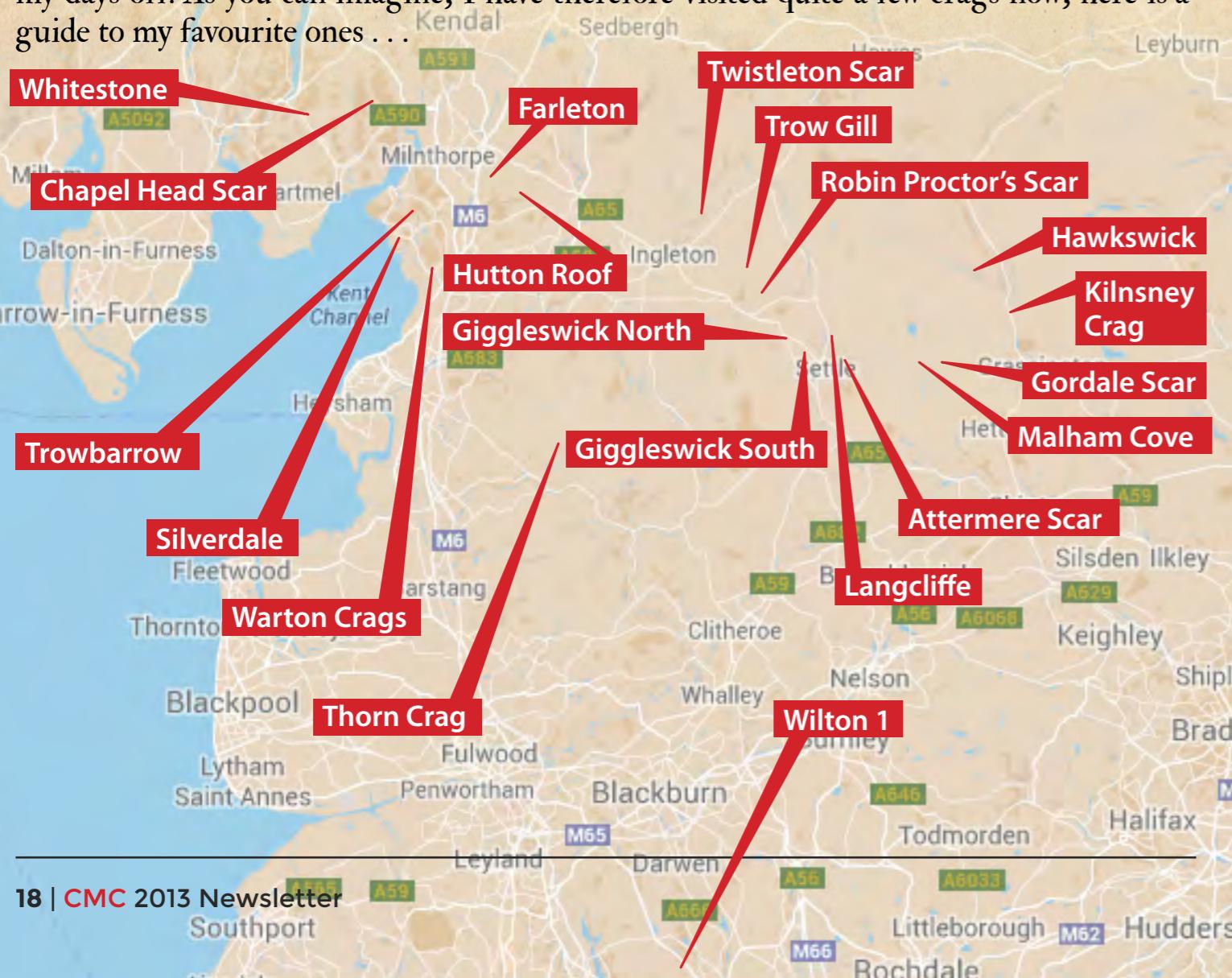
John Andrews 



# There's more to the North-West than just the Lake District

On 24th-26th May next year, the CMC will be heading north once more. This time, instead of visiting the Lakes like countless previous years, I suggested the club try out the climbing on offer in West Yorkshire and Lancashire. Therefore, I thought I'd write an article to bring your attention to some of the great climbing to be had in the area.

As you probably already know, I have lived in Lancaster as a freelance climbing instructor for over a year now. I've had the opportunity to lead people in the mountains for several companies and outdoor centres, but primarily I instruct at Lancaster Uni climbing wall teaching students how not to drop each other. When I first moved here I assumed I'd spend most of my time travelling to the Lakes, but on closer inspection, I quickly realised that a crag can be reached in any direction within half an hour, it takes a whopping 50 minutes to reach Langdale after all so why bother going that far? With an abundance of fit but lazy student bums at my disposal, it has never been that hard finding a 'belay bunny', mid-week, usually during lectures, to accompany me to a crag on my days off. As you can imagine, I have therefore visited quite a few crags now, here is a guide to my favourite ones . . .



## Thorn Crag Grid Ref (SD 595571)

Guidebook - Lancashire Rock

My local crag, 8km east of 'The Ranch'. After the disappointment of discovering that the boulders 2km from my house were the size of pebbles, I had to scout out the next closest thing. Thorn crag sits high on the hillside overlooking the bleak yet beautiful Trough of Bowland. It's at least 30 mins walk in and is not a large crag, you probably wouldn't spend more than a day there. But with tons of bouldering close by and harder routes to top rope, it can easily be a long day. What makes this place special is the rock. Imagine what [Bamford](#) is like compared to [Stanage](#), now imagine what a natural gritstone crag must have been like before the first climbers ever set foot there, welcome to Thorn Crag.

**Top Climbs** ... The Fireman's Slippery Pole HVS 5a

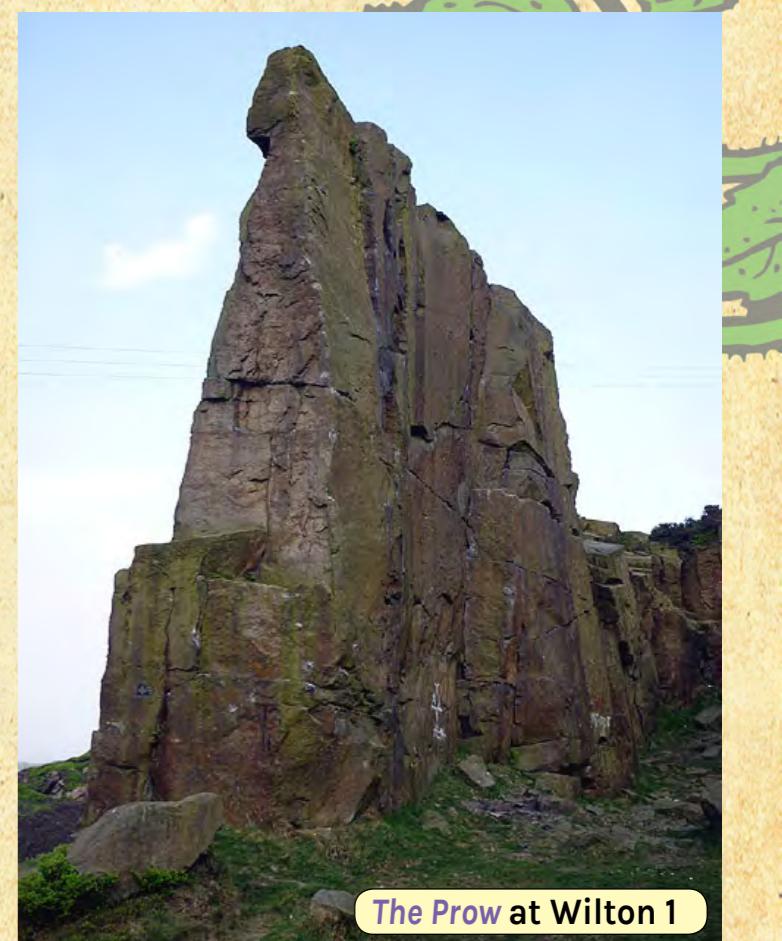
## Wilton 1 Grid Ref (SD 699133)

Guidebooks - Western Grit, Lancashire Rock

35 minutes south of Lancaster, on the approach to Bolton lie Wilton Quarries 1, 2 and 3. Parking at the Wilton Arms, Wilton 1 is quickly reached up a steep slope behind the pub. With over 200 routes, the climbing here is varied making it probably the best venue in Lancashire. The centrepiece is [The Prow](#), a 20m high, 40m long slice of grit protruding from quarry side with climbing up both sides and up The Prow itself. On a hot day, it is possible to alternate, a climb in the sun, a climb in the shade although belaying from the top provides zero protection against the sun if it shines. The other 2 quarries, both with equally good climbing, contain enough routes to keep even the locals occupied for years and I have been here many times now. I'd go tomorrow if it wasn't raining.

Possibly a great stop off on your way home from a soggy Lakes weekend. [Denham Quarry](#) is also worth a quick visit to climb the ridiculously named 'Top 50' VS, [Mohammed the Mad Monk of Moorside Home for Mental Misfits](#), but watch out for broken glass, locals and dogs after your sandwiches.

**Top Climbs** ... Cameo E1 5a, Blackout VS 4c, Wipeout E2 5b, 999 HS 4b



The Prow at Wilton 1

## Silverdale & M6

Moving a whole 20 minutes north of Lancaster lies Silverdale. I live high on the moors edge with views over Lancaster, Clougha Pike and north to Ingleborough and the Dales NE, Morecambe bay then beyond to the Old Man of Coniston and Langdale Pikes NW. I have a simple and obvious rule; if I can't see the lakes from home, don't go climbing there. Often though, while the far northern horizon is lost in grey nothingness, [Silverdale](#) and [Morecambe Bay](#) have the tendency to still be bathed in sunlight. Being so low and near the coast, the weather just doesn't seem to develop here. **Many wet (warm in winter) days have been saved by a trip to the limestone crags at Silverdale.**

## Trowbarrow Grid Ref (SD 480757)

### Guidebooks - Lancashire Rock, Northern Limestone

[Jean Jeanie](#) (VS 4c) is probably the best single pitch route I have climbed at this grade along with [Scavenger](#) in the Gower. A wide crack line up the centre of the impressive, steep, 30m main wall which contains several other more difficult and thinner crack climbs, [Cracked Actor](#) (E2 5c) being the most prized. [Assagai](#) (HVS 5a) and [Coral Sea](#) (VS 4c) further along the quarry are also great routes. Opposite these climbs lies a crag hidden in the trees, [Red Wall](#). Limestone pavement up-ended to form a vertical face about 20m high. The climbing here is serious, shit your pants scary and not my cup of tea at all. There are however some tree belays at the top and most people top rope here. A sign from the BMC pleads to climbers not to bolt it. In my opinion it would make sense, it's only limestone after all. The low-level traverse of Red Wall however is highly recommend, I've nearly got the bugger.

**Top Climbs** ... Jean Jeanie VS 4c, Cracked Actor E2 5c, Assagai HVS 5a, Coral Sea VS 4c

If you get bored of Trowbarrow, Silverdale has many other outcrops and crags, some of which are worthy of a visit, others have access issues and some not worth the effort. I've been to them all now so here are the ones that are worth it:

## Warton Upper and Warton Pinnacle

([Not Warton Main Quarry, unstable petrifying climbing, trust me](#))

Bit of a walk up but a great outlook over Morecambe bay. Many routes at both crags, south facing and quick drying, pub at the bottom, what more do you want!

## Farleton & Hutton Roof

These two crags are ideal if you are looking for some easier climbing. Short routes, 'good' (for limestone) gear and loads of belays so also the perfect venues for teaching leading. In fact, I don't know an instructor up here who didn't do at least one day at either of these crags during SPA training. There are also many short but stiff routes in the VS 5a category and beyond but anything in the E's is generally a shit hard solo. [South America Wall](#) at Hutton Roof is the unmissable starting point and away you go. Farleton can be seen northbound high on the right just before you leave [junction 36](#) of the [M6](#) to Kendal. Both crags require some route finding to get there and some careful parking.

## Yorkshire Limestone

Conscious of the guidebook supplement I have just written, I'll keep this short. The [A65](#) runs from [M6 exit 36](#), east all the way across the Dales towards Harrogate and the gritstone climbing of Brimham, Almscliff etc. From Ingleton, there are limestone crags to the north of the [A65](#), at intervals almost all of the way. From Twistleton Scar in the west to Malham Cove eastwards. I haven't explored all of them yet, but armed with my 'Yorkshire Limestone' guidebook, I'm getting there. The climbing here is easy to describe, some routes are long, some are short, some bolted, some trad but it's all limestone.

Choose which type of climbing you are after from the list below:

Nice crag, some easier sport climbing ...  
[Robin Proctor's Scar](#),  
[Giggleswick North and South](#)

Trad, Trad, Trad ...  
[Attermire Scar](#), [Hawkswick Crag](#),  
[Twistleton Scar](#)

Trickier sport, pulling some moves ...  
[Kilnsey Crag](#), [Giggleswick](#), [Trow Gill](#)

Trickier trad, shaky leg stuff ...  
[Langcliffe Quarry and Skyline](#),  
[Malham right wing](#)

Shit ya pantz ...  
[Malham Cove](#), [Gordale Scar](#)



An obligatory shot of Malham Cove

## The South Lakeland fringes

Guidebook - Eden Valley & South Lakes Limestone

If you can't resist the urge to head towards the lakes, here are two suggestions close to but still outside the national park. Again the weather here can be far more reliable on an unsettled day than further north.

### Chapel Head Scar Grid Ref (SD 443861)

The **A590** heads south west a few miles before Kendal and skirts around southwest of the lakes. After several miles a right turning towards Witherslack hall leads you to Chapel Head Scar. The climbing here is steep, sometimes overhanging, well bolted sport from 6b+ upwards.

### Whitestone Grid Ref (SD 388847)

A few miles further along the **A590** brings you to Newby Bridge. On the low fells 2km before Newby lies Whitestone. I have never climbed on Silurian Siltstone before but was pleasantly surprised. It can be compared to the grit at **Thorn Crag** in places and offers superb friction on steep slabs.

I hope this article has been informative and you have all learnt something new about the climbing available in the North-west.

Danny Crump



Alec Cook on Moose (HS 4b), Whitestone



The author belaying Alec Cook on Moose

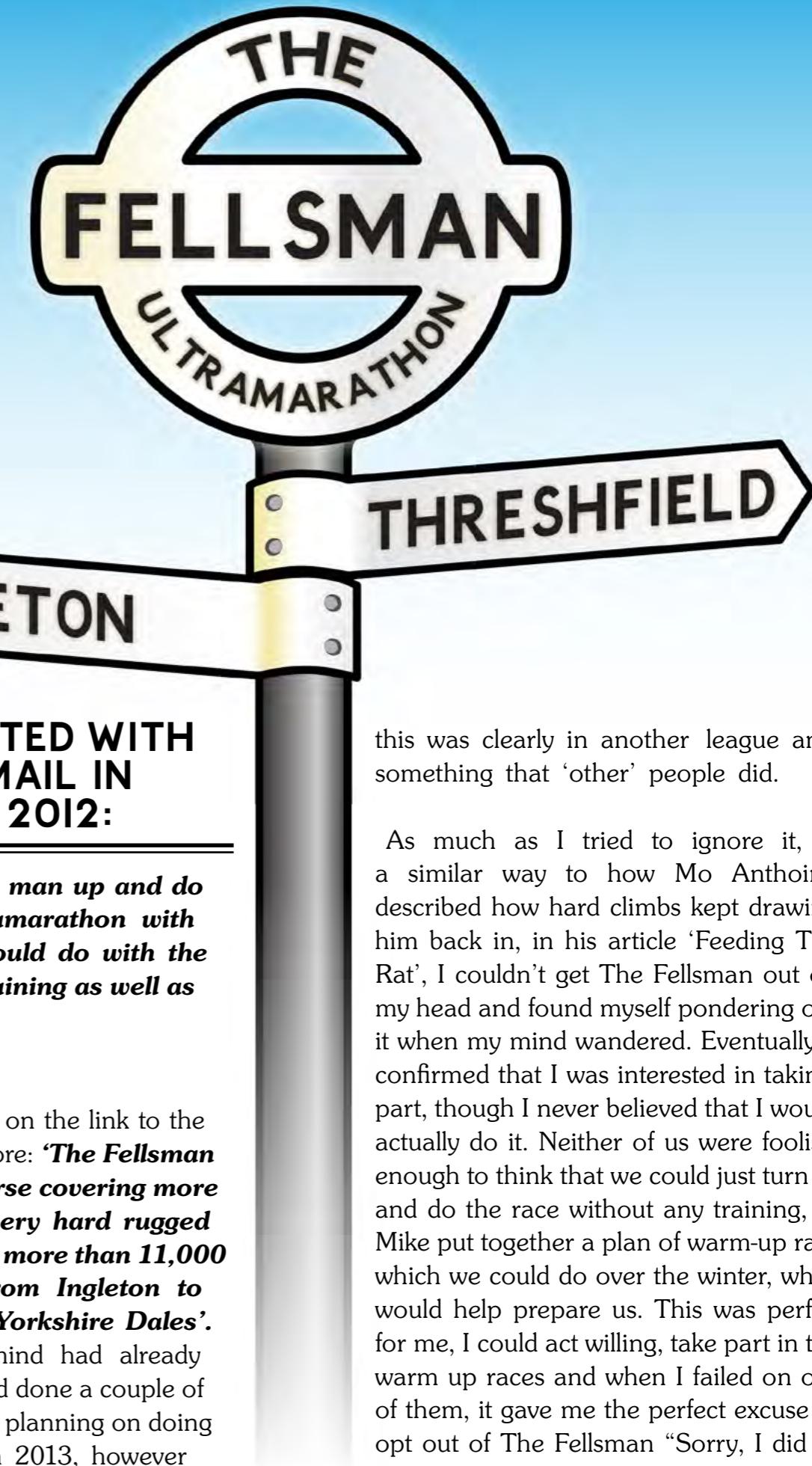
## IT ALL STARTED WITH A SIMPLE EMAIL IN SEPTEMBER 2012:

*'Rich, if you like it, man up and do The Fellsman ultramarathon with me next April. I could do with the company for the training as well as the race,  
Cheers, Mike.'*

Tentatively, I clicked on the link to the website to find out more: **'The Fellsman is a high level traverse covering more than 60 miles of very hard rugged moorland, climbing more than 11,000 feet in its path from Ingleton to Threshfield in the Yorkshire Dales'.** By this point my mind had already switched off, yes, I had done a couple of marathons, and I was planning on doing my first marathon in 2013, however

this was clearly in another league and something that 'other' people did.

As much as I tried to ignore it, in a similar way to how Mo Anthoine described how hard climbs kept drawing him back in, in his article 'Feeding The Rat', I couldn't get The Fellsman out of my head and found myself pondering over it when my mind wandered. Eventually I confirmed that I was interested in taking part, though I never believed that I would actually do it. Neither of us were foolish enough to think that we could just turn up and do the race without any training, so Mike put together a plan of warm-up races which we could do over the winter, which would help prepare us. This was perfect for me, I could act willing, take part in the warm up races and when I failed on one of them, it gave me the perfect excuse to opt out of The Fellsman "Sorry, I did try



but I'm not fit enough/my iliotibial band has flared up again/ I'm just not cut out for this." Running on similar terrain to the race, I went from half marathon, to marathon, to ultramarathon, along with numerous local trail runs as training. In this time though, something strange was happening, not only was I enjoying it, I hadn't failed, I hadn't fallen apart, the excuse that I was waiting for hadn't come.

## I COULDNT GET THE FELLSMAN OUT OF MY HEAD AND FOUND MYSELF PONDERING OVER IT WHEN MY MIND WANDERED

Through the training, I was finding myself achieving 'flow', head up and shoulders relaxed, breathing strong and steady, legs turning over, not fighting the ground. This was the point when the training was the easiest and I started to believe that I could do it. It wasn't always this way though, running along main roads just to get the miles in after a long day at work or setting the alarm for 5:45, so I could get an hours run in before a day at work, only to find the weather grey and drizzly was harder. All through this, there was a goal I was working towards to keep me driving on. **Also knowing Mike was putting the effort in meant that I couldn't quit.**

As the race drew nearer, we knew that we would have to train on the course itself and run sections of it. This was partly to strengthen our ankles in due to the tuffly nature of the ground and also so that we could recee the course, so that



**A very snowy Anglesey. The marathon was cancelled but they still let us out on the 10km course.**



**Running over the Seven Sisters - Sussex Trail Marathon**



**Snow in the Yorkshire Dales, April 2013**

we knew where we were going, without having to navigate off of the map the whole time. This training coincided with the heavy snowfalls which came down across the county in April and turned the Dales white. **Whilst never as serious as Scottish winter, there were times when I was using skills I learnt in Scotland** such as kicking steps into consolidated snow (in flimsy trainers), but most importantly it reminded me of the mantra of 'If you think you should be arsed to do something, then you really should be arsed'.

We knew that the fast and light approach was going to be the required one and although the organisers did specify the minimum kit requirements each competitor had to carry, it quickly became clear that this was the only kit we were going to carry. Careful packing and repacking of my 15L bag followed, checking the weight of items and swapping bulky items out for smaller and more lightweight ones. It was only when doing a final check, did I realise that I hadn't packed socks in my kit, simply because the organisers had not listed socks as mandatory kit. Clearly not their fault, but a reminder to me to not get so lost in the detail, you lose sight of the bigger picture.

## MOST IMPORTANTLY IT REMINDED ME OF THE MANTRA OF: 'IF YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE ARSED TO DO SOMETHING THEN YOU REALLY SHOULD BE ARSED.'



**The snow stayed in drifts on the lower slopes, with full coverage on higher ground.**



**The approach to the climb at Ingleborough**



**The start of the climb at Ingleborough**



**Getting a tally punched at a checkpoint.**

**Before long I found myself driving up to Yorkshire, this time for race day.** A nervous night in Ingleton awaited, where we were both calm, but so eager to get going, if they would have let us out onto the course that night, we would have gone there and then, rather than wait for the official start the next day. Arriving at the event base the next day, there was a sea of lycra and Gore-Tex milling around. After dropping our bags off and collecting our tallies there was nothing more to do than wait for the race start. After a quick welcome speech we were set off on a brisk April morning.

Knowing that the best guide to how you are likely to perform in a race is by taking an honest look at your training, **our goal was simply to finish within the 24 hour time limit and not destroy ourselves doing so.** Therefore our plan was simple, take it steady and walk when we needed to. Mike had warned that on his previous attempts at the Fellsman he had been sucked into running up more hills than he had planned early on, something that you then pay for many times over later on in the race. We agreed that we weren't going to do this, however upon arriving at the foot of Ingleborough,



**Things eventually picked up, heading up Arten Gill with a cup of tea**

the first major hill, I enquired "I thought you said there was a hill we needed to walk up before we got here?" to which Mike responded, "Uhm, yeah, we just ran up it" – Race day excitement!

## **ANOTHER GREAT THING ABOUT THE FELLSMAN IS THE SUPPORT THAT YOU GET AT THE CHECKPOINTS...**

**The exact route which competitors take is largely left up to themselves,** though you do have to visit a series of 25 checkpoints in order, which forces your route into a horseshoe shape. At each checkpoint every competitor had a hole punched in their tally, a disc of plastic card with every checkpoint marked on it, proving that they had been there.

Due to the number of competitors, the early part of the race was simply a case of following the person in front, as a long trail of people made their way across the Yorkshire Dales. It was at this point, early on that I found the hardest, having been running for a couple of hours we were around the 10 mile point. On any other day, we could have been heading off to the pub for beer and lies, however looking at the tally around my neck, it only showed a couple of holes punched and another 50 miles to go. All though this time my head was full of thoughts of how much further we had to go and what lay ahead. Knowing that self pity wasn't going to get me anywhere **all I could do was keep on running and eventually my mind started to switch off, leaving me to be able to run far more freely.**



**On the summit of Great Whernside at first light.**



**Arriving at the Redshaw checkpoint for hotdogs, the race ended up being a bit of a mobile picnic.**

Another great thing about doing the Fellsman is the support that you get at the checkpoints. Whilst many of them have water and biscuits available, at around every 10 mile point there were major checkpoints at which you could get a hot meal to keep you going.

By early evening competitors were really strung out across the course. The leaders were close to finishing, but me and Mike were only a little over halfway round the course. It was also at this point we knew that we needed to start thinking about the night section. In order to aid competitor safety, all competitors still on the course as dusk approached were put into compulsory groups of four, which had to remain together throughout the night. During the afternoon we had been running a bit with a guy called Andy, who we asked to join us making three. At a checkpoint we then gained a fourth guy, Tim so we had our four.

**Leaving the checkpoint we knew that we were heading into the hardest section of the course, 10 miles of open moorland peppered with shake**

**holes, deep ditches and ravines, all of which we had to deal with in the dark.** The head torches of other teams could been seen in the distance, though it was impossible to tell whether they were coming towards or away from us, let alone whether they were going the right way or not. By this point fatigue was really kicking in, and whilst our minds were OK, our legs were aching, forcing everyone to walk from now on. Time also lost all bearing with the only priority being finding the next checkpoint. After what was probably around 5 hours to cover little more than 10 miles we eventually made it off of the moorland, only to be faced with the final hill, Great Whernside, for which the only sensible option was to go straight up the side of it, crossing more contour lines than

anyone should have to face at that stage. As we pulled onto the ridge which led to the summit, colour started to appear in the sky again and within the space of 5 minutes, the night section was over.

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## TRAINING AND RACING WITH A GOOD FRIEND MADE THINGS EASIER, NOT ONLY FOR THE MOTIVATION AND COMPANY, BUT TO KNOW SOMEONE ELSE WHO WAS GOING THROUGH THE SAME THING TOO.

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Once off of Great Whernside the route eased and descended to rolling fields, by now we only had a few miles of the whole race left to go. Normally this would have taken less than an hour to cover but the combination of tiredness and aching legs meant that we weren't going anywhere very fast. Eventually we arrived in Grassington, getting strange looks from a few people who were nipping out early to collect the Sunday paper. One last short hill remained and we made it to the school hall in Threshfield & the finish.

**Summing up the experience, the main thing which I learnt is to set yourself big goals.** Initially, I thought there was no way I'd be able to complete a race like The Fellsman, however with a sustained build up I was amazed by what I was able to do. Also, training and racing with a good friend made things easier, not only for the motivation and company, but to know someone else who was going through the same thing too.



Finished - 23hrs and 11min after starting

## MY TOP 5 E1S

This year, I have been getting better acquainted with the E1 grade, having made my debut with *Fool's Gold* on the slate of Bus Stop Quarry, on the North Wales Christmas trip last year.

Although I didn't get on any until mid June, from my limited experience on E1s, I have found they often provide more pleasantly technical climbing, as opposed to burly climbing, found at the lower grade of HVS.

The following reviews are of what I consider to be the most enjoyable E1s I have climbed so far. Go give them a spin.

## great peter

- Lawrencefield, Derbyshire, The Peak District

This was a really good climb. I did have to pester Rich A. and Efe to stop snoozing and give me a belay for a bit, mind. The climb followed a series of crimps and sidepulls up the centre of a gritstone face, which was a bit broken, having a couple grassy ledges near to the top and bottom.

**Great Peter was no one move wonder**, with sustained and pumpy moves that flowed really well on lead; a couple of times, as the arm pump was beginning to get to me, I looked down to unclip my set of nuts, and find a foothold to help relieve my arms at the same time. I'm pretty sure at one point, I placed a nut, rested my arm, unclipped my nuts from the rock and put them back on my harness, rested my arm again, clipped a draw to the nut, rested, then clipped the rope.

At the top, and with at least a couple photos in the Eastern Grit Rockfax guide promoting the practice, I decided to give a standing belay a whirl, something I'm sure my seconds were a bit annoyed about, for my crouching when they rested lost them a couple of feet each time. Not done that since...

## AAROS

- Shepherd's Crag, The Lake District, Cumbria

On my approach to Aaros, a geordie guy who I previously chatted with at the campsite remarked on the climb: "that's as bold as brass, that." He was not wrong. I think I reached my first runner (a green size 0 microcam) at around 25ft or so, after the proper climbing had come on. The next piece was a small nut, about size 1, 6ft further up. After that, gear kept coming, and the climbing was fairly sustained, with a few interesting moves on a face that went slightly diagonally up and to the right also twisting to the left a little, and over a slight bulge. Overall, this face climb was similar to Great Peter, though exchanging arm pump for boldness.

At the top, I spoke to a guy who had just climbed the adjacent VS, Arduus, and found out that aside also originating from Essex, he had placed a warthog I had clipped a few months previously when climbing with Ian and Sarah on a terrible upper pitch of Scrubby Crag, in the Eastern Lakes.

## THE PADDER

- Eastby Crag, North Yorkshire

Eastby Crag is a small but unusually tall venue, with some climbs at around 30m in length. A good place to check out, especially if paying a visit to the more extensive nearby Crookrise Crag. I went here when visiting Danny in Lancaster for a week, also meeting and climbing with Tony Wood for the first time here.

This well named climb, **The Padder**, offered great, grippy, slightly runout and sustained padding, and stone pulling (pebbles are smaller than that) up what appeared to be a slight water-cut groove in the centre of a blankish slab. It could be interesting to compare to Froggat's **Three Pebble Slab** when I get around to climbing it some day.

The initial traverse, and committing to the final runout after placing a 'daisy chain' of quickdraws (think I was lacking a massive sling) were the hardest parts of this 'psychological' route.

## The Arrow

★★ - St. Govan's Head, Pembrokeshire, South Wales

This was a relatively soft E1 I think, though quite polished in places, or 'Polished,' as my Eastern European second described the state of some of the rock at St. Govan's earlier on in the day, much to our amusement.

The climbing followed a right-trending crack/groove line that was not particularly steep, with very good, juggy holds for most of it. The section after the starting scramble was the steepest and probably most intimidating section, and being a bit of a sadist who likes climbing wide cracks, I began to gravitate left towards the adjacent HVS. I then realised the error of my ways, and got back on The Arrow.

A flowstone thread about two thirds of the way up was a nice find, as I was well into a double-ish set of nuts which I was beginning to ration. Other than natural gear, climbing by the sea in the heat of the sun while vast swathes of Southern Essex were getting submerged made it a great day out. That and watching fit looking women (at least from a distance) waltz up E4s...



## CAMEO

- Wilton 1, Lancashire

Another face climb, this one entirely justified my recent purchase at the time of three Black Diamond Microcams, with my plugging of all three into the climb probably making it a lot less bold than it should have been. I remember the climb following a thin seam, and having a couple of bendy moves (though that was probably just my weird style of climbing coming through again). Belaying on top of The Prow was kind of cool, as was finishing just as the rain that had been looming all day started coming down.

## FOOL'S GOLD

- Bus Stop Quarry, Gwynedd, North Wales

Yes, I am past five climbs now, but my first is well worth mentioning, as I think it made a great first E1, having a distinct crux not too far off the floor, and straightforward hand-sized crack climbing before and after the crux.

Shortly before starting, my surrogate mother, Bernie Sosin, who had just got off the first HVS he had done in years, tried to scare me off Fool's Gold with the line, "That's a serious proposition, dude."

Unperturbed by maternal concerns, I set off on the line I had been eyeing up since arriving at the crag, discovering that it was just as described in the above paragraph. My only mistake was going right past the bolt and chain anchor when I initially got to the top to look for gear!

## WHAT I HAVE LEARNT

- E1s are fun, go do them; you are pretty much guaranteed a 'proper climb.'
- Microcams and nuts are often very useful on them.
- Though more consistent than HVS, there are still some stinkers to watch out for (none of which are in this article, honest!)

Martin Bagshaw





THE AUTHOR ON SEA MIST

From the safe and secure ledge, the first section of the climb was a traverse. This was across the top of an overhang that jutted some 10 metres or so into open space. gingerly easing my way onto the rock, I found the climbing not too hard, but the exposure was something to be reckoned with. I carefully picked my way across to the arete of the headland, my toes finding nothing more than small 1 inch cups in the rock to be used for purchase. Leaning out onto the rock and looking down the sight that met me was immense. 100ft above the sea floor, with nothing below me but the tiny footholds I had eked out, the angry waves crashing over and over the cliff face beneath me, making the most unbelievable roar, and my heart pounding in my chest, over and over, every part of my instinct warding me away. The huge blue - green creature roared, looming beneath me. It stamped its feet angrily in a futile attempt to intimidate, its enormous jaws chomping and chewing at the stern rock beneath, the foam and froth from its mouth spitting up to reach me.

Taken a little aback by this breath taking view, I took a second to steady myself and absorb this incredible feeling, before logic dictated that I must move on. There was a chill wind blasting up from the sea, far beneath my feet that, buffeting me against the rock. For this reason alone I pressed on. Reaching the arete of this incredible sea head I can only describe as blissful as the real climb began. The scarred face of this unusual pockmarked stone was idyllic. Where the seawater had sprayed the limestone, the rock had slowly dissolved over hundreds of years and become jagged and sharp. This leaves for the most incredible material to climb on, as the opportunities for tiny

pinches and crimps exist literally everywhere. Even if the slab looks somewhat empty of holds, simply pressing your hand against the rock and allowing all the tiny sharp fragments to bed into your skin allows the most incredible of grip. With such an angry sea beneath you, every inch you climb upwards feels incredible, one inch closer to safety, no matter what it takes.

As I tore up the arete the rock lead me to one side and then to another, switching from slab to corner and back again, and all the time the fantastic view beneath me. As I ascended it was hard to keep my mind on the climb at times, the beast below beckoning. Although strenuous, the majesty of the situation propelled me to an incredible finish. Out of breath, but alive I sat atop the cliff with a slightly smug sense of defiance. Climb of a lifetime!

I had climbed about 30 foot and suddenly got to a section that was too much for me to manage. I had tried it a few times, and was getting worse and worse at every attempt. A short down - climb to



## TAKING GEAR OUT OF SEA MIST

safety - found myself perched on this tiny rock with no way up and a very dubious way down. After crapping myself for a while and trying to come to terms with how high up I was and the sudden realisation of how scary the climbing really was, I secured a nut in the rock, the one placement I could find. After feeling secure, I went back up again for one more try at the tricky bit above me, but my resolve had already faulted and not recovered, so back down to my ledge, I signaled to my belayer that I had to retreat. After a nod of

understanding, I lowered myself down, hanging only on this one tiny little piece of aluminium rammed into the rock. 'Wow', said a climber next to me as I reached the bottom, 'You must have really trusted that gear placement!' That nut, my mum had bought me two Christmases previous because she, and I quote, 'quite liked the color.' Sometimes gifts can be more than what they seem at first!

ALEC COOK

# A year in the life of a novice

Hi folks! To show our appreciation for the awesomeness of the club (and help Martin out) we figured we might just pop a few words in the newsletter. We ‘joined’ the club last November... after meeting folk at the **Rose and Crown**, and after our initial screening process by the CMC, it appeared like the club for us. Unfortunately we didn’t commit fully to the club until the following March as we were a bit busy (doing our ‘stuff’) ... **but then with gusto we got stuck in and clambered our way through the unknown territory of noviceland much to the enjoyment of our fellow climbers** (not naming names... you know who you are 😊). We struggled and mastered with our baby routes and gradually overcame a fear of heights along with the thrill of our first controlled and also not so controlled fall courtesy of Tim Simpkins.



After our induction we began the task of climbing without Simon... daunting though it seemed it was an odd experience as although on our ownsome, we felt like we hadn’t a clue, were totally stuck or providing comedy relief climbing for everyone... a voice would come in the distance... generally really helpful and sometimes not so helpful 😊 ... with tips and advice such as: “just stand up,” “just rock”, “just transfer your weight”... or “just go up!” But the feeling of being a part of something bigger was always there. **Then we dared to go outdoors... eek!!!** We were acquainted with the early awakenings and epic faffing that only the CMC can do... but would not have it any other way. All in all, an awesome group of people with a passion for a fantastic sport. We are very chuffed we met you all.

Fi and Katie

## GETTING DOWN TO IT

**ONE OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT WILD CAMPING** is that time in the evening when you slide into your sleeping bag and snuggle up for the night, enveloped within a warm cocoon of down.

The elements can be severe, winds howling, snow falling, temperatures dropping, the tent buffeted from every direction, but you feel secure and warm, your mind drifting through the days adventure as you drop off to sleep.

I have enjoyed many nights like this but there comes a time when you realise your bag isn’t quite what it was, the general grim of tents and huts with other bag abuse factors taking their toll.

The first thought was its time to replace my bag, I’ve had it a while and it’s done well, but looking at possible replacements the more I liked my bag the others didn’t quite come up to spec and I decided the simple alternative was just to clean it.

Checking the various forums and internet info, there were many horror stories of what could happen, how easy it was to wreck the down with many folk advising against it.

There are a number of companies offering down cleaning services, so I contacted one with good write ups, three weeks later they hadn’t replied so I emailed again, only to get a reply saying that the guy had gone on an extended winter climbing trip and wasn’t back til February. This was somewhat inconvenient as I was departing for the desolate howling wastes of Scotland and I wanted to refurbish my bag beforehand.

It was then that I thought it can’t be that difficult, surely I can do it myself?

So putting all the horror stories to the back of my mind I started to prepare. There are some very useful sites with good advice, but also some complete nonsense talked on well known internet forums, **SO HERE IS A STEP BY STEP GUIDE ON HOW TO CLEAN A BAG AND SOME TIPS I PICKED UP ALONG THE WAY...**

**1./** First be prepared, allow enough time, it will take most of your day (approx 5 hours). Get the right cleaning products, there are specialised down cleaners such as Nikwax down wash, and Grangers down cleaner, these are ideal. You don’t need to use a down water proofer, such as Nikwax down proof, these add a waterproofing agent to the down which could be useful in excessive damp or humid conditions, but in this case it may be better using a synthetic bag. You can also use Nikwax tech wash, just dilute it a bit.

**2./** You need somewhere big to wash it, a bath is ideal, particularly if it’s a massive old cast iron Victorian one.

**3./** Make sure your wife, partner, girlfriend, hasn’t just cleaned the bath. Why??? Well obviously you don’t want any nasty cleaning products on your fragile down bag, and you won’t believe the grim that will come out.

**4./** Fill the bath with warm water and add the cleaner, not too much as you will repeat this process.

**5.** Now submerge the bag and wet it out. This I thought would be easy, we have all heard the horror stories of how down gets wet and turns into a sodden mass of clumped feathers with the thermal properties of a wet t shirt.

Well this is the most difficult part of washing the bag, the nylon outer readily dispels water and refuses to absorb any. I tried holding one part under only to find the other air filled section popped up well above the water. The next 10 minutes was a game of cat and mouse looking similar to a Tom and Jerry cartoon, as I pushed one section under, another would just pop up; the air in between the down filaments is incrediblly difficult to get out, allowing the down to wet fully.

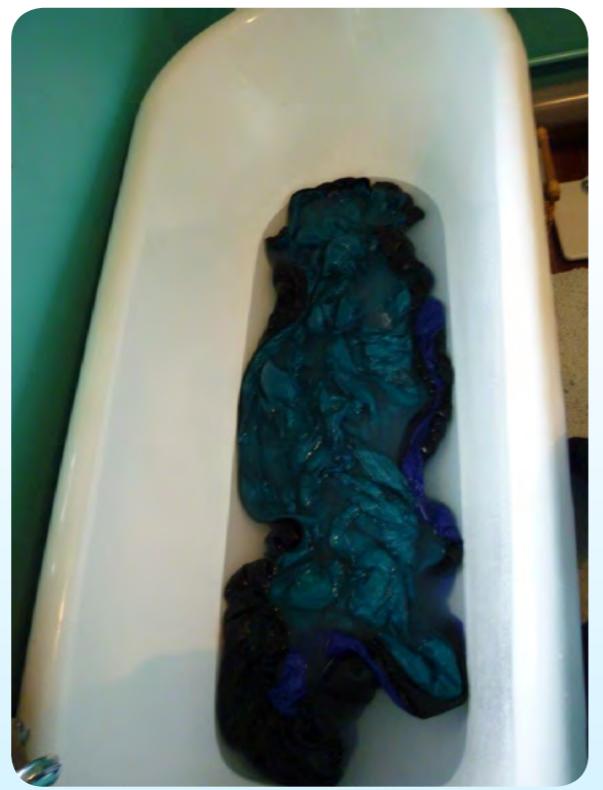
I was beginning to despair as I wasn't winning, then a brain wave: I needed to squash it all at the same time, the most effective way to do this would be to lay on top of the bag in the bath. Then reality took over imagine being found naked in the bath on top of your wet bag and trying to explain that one!

After another 5 minutes I had managed to make some progress as the bag began to lose its loft

Great care has to be taken when doing this, as one of the big dangers is ripping the internal baffles which stop the down migrating inside the bag. So handle it very gently squeezing the water in and supporting the weight when you lift it. I then left it soaking for 30 minutes so the cleaner could get to work.

The dirty water was then drained, new water and cleaner added and gently worked into the bag then left again.

This process was repeated 3 times, til the water was clean, the water was drained and the bag rinsed with clean warm water, it is important to fully remove all the cleaning product so several rinses are needed.



**6.** Once rinsed, drain as much water out as possible, then carefully lift the bag out supporting it, and put in a suitable basket, preferably not a wicker one as you leave a trail of water all the way down the stairs through the kitchen and into the utility, it's a good idea to realise you have done this before sitting down for a coffee!

**7.** Drying the down is also very important and has to be done correctly.

Obviously the more water you can remove the easier it will be, but a lot of people had advised against spin drying. Seeing no real alternative in the middle of January I tentatively loaded it in to the washing machine, put it on the lowest spin speed and pressed the start button, pondering on the cost of a new bag if this went horribly wrong.

The bag whizzed around and everything seemed to be going well, so I increased the spin speed, the machine hummed away happily so again I increased the spinning, all seemed to be going well, and then the machine clicked off.

This was the moment of truth. I undid the door and removed the bag, carefully turning it over and expecting to see irreparable damage, but it felt remarkably dry, it was a lot lighter most of the water had been removed. I was beginning to feel confident, just one last hurdle; the drying process.

**8.** It's important for the down to loft fully, as the air trapped inside keeps you warm. An industrial sized tumble drier is recommended, as are tennis balls to lob in which stop the down clumping so it dries effectively.

So it was down to the laundrette with my tennis balls and sleeping bag, I was filled with a bit of apprehension and felt well out of my comfort zone. Selecting the biggest drier I loaded it all in and pressed go. The assistant who spoke really good Italian and broken English said it would be good, really and did I play tennis, she was very bemused as I carefully explained they broke up the down and it dried better. No not necessary she replied, it dries fine, but watch the heat, that drier gets really hot. Horror struck I turned it off and opened the door; one of the big problems can be excessive heat melting the nylon outer. It was really hot but still intact so I turned the heat down to low and continued.



**9.** After about 30 minutes the bag seemed to be really dry and puffy, so I put it on one last warm heat then a cold one to be sure it was fully dry.

**10.** My bag was like new, it was a lot cleaner and definitely had more loft. If you are contemplating cleaning your sleeping bag or down jacket, go for it, actually it's really not too difficult. There is a lot of rubbish talked on internet forums by people who have definitely not tried it themselves, give it a go.

**I SLEPT IN A SNOW HOLE IN SCOTLAND TWO WEEKS LATER WHEN IT WAS -18 OUTSIDE, IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST NIGHT'S SLEEP I HAVE HAD.**

# WINTER CLIMBING IN THE TATRA MOUNTAINS

There are few reasons why I decided to write about climbing in the Tatras. First of all, Tatra Mountains (at least as far as I know) are not a very popular destination for British climbers. Secondly, I have never seen any guidebook for these mountains written in English and therefore it is difficult to find any information about routes, climbing areas etc... Thirdly, there are quite a few routes that I would like to climb soon and I need partner for that. I thought that perhaps this article will motivate some CMC member to join me on my next trip.

## SOME GEOGRAPHIC STUFF...

The Tatra Mountains are located more less on the border between Poland and Slovakia. They are a part of larger mountain range called the Carpathian Mountains. They occupy area of about 300 square miles but only about 22% lies on Polish side (I don't know the Slovakian part too well so in this article I only write about the Polish part). The Tatras originate from the, so called, Alpine orogeny which means that they are relatively young mountain formation, of similar age as the Alps. In terms of the landscape, they are also a little bit similar to the Alps although much smaller and without glaciers. Rocks are mainly granite. Weather is largely affected by continental masses of air. Compared to Scotland, it is a lot drier with much colder winters and hot summers (temperatures can range from -30°C in winter to 30°C in the warmest summer months).



MYSELF CLIMBING AN EASY ROUTE, 'KOCHANCZYK'

## CLIMBING IN THE TATRAS

Summer climbing in the Tatras is almost all trad. You might come across a single bolt or peg now and then or some old sling for abseil but there are so few of them that you should mainly rely on your own gear. In my opinion, winter is the best time to climb though. Specific climate conditions cause that routes become similar to the alpine ones. Climbs are mainly mixed stuff. There are years when really good icefalls form but, to be honest, these mountains are not the best place for those who specialize in ice climbing. The main reason for this is the fact that dry air and large amplitude of temperatures cause that ice, if it forms at all, is often very hard and crunchy ('dinnerplates' falling off when you're hitting it with an ice axe).

There are two major climbing areas in the Polish part of the mountains:

**HALA GASIENICOWA** - A valley with a lake called 'Czarny Staw Gasienicowy' surrounded by mountains - good place for climbers at various levels, there are many relatively easy routes for beginners (with good descents as well) but also some difficult ones. Hala Gasienicowa seems to be the best place for a climbing party because it offers wide range of routes for climbers at various levels. Some of the most popular routes in this area:

'Kochanczyk', grade III (all grades I mention here are in Polish scale which is almost equivalent to UIAA scale), 110m - good warm-up route.

'Klis', grade V, 110m - great climb, 3 pitches out of which first two are quite easy and the 3rd one is really tricky - a kind of chimney graded as V.

**The Right Rib of the Granaty Mountain (2240 m)** - grade III, 250m - Nice climb with superb views from the summit ridge - I did the climbing part but did not do the summit ridge (more less equivalent to PD+) because it required bivouac on the mountain for which I wasn't prepared - hopefully next time.

**The North Pillar of Swinica Mountain (2301 m)** - grade IV+, 350m - a classic climb with stunning views from the summit, also a very long day out; according to guide-books it takes 5-6 hours in good wintery conditions but I saw teams that struggled for 14 hours, everything depends on conditions... (I haven't done this route yet but it is on my list of targets and I'm looking for a partner so if anyone is interested in joining me please let me know!)

**MORSKIE OKO** - Another valley with a lake in the middle ('Morskie Oko' is actually the name of the lake which is right in the middle of the valley), bigger walls; usually quite difficult with trickier descents, in this area you can ascend the highest mountain in Poland - **Rysy (2499 m)**.

**IN TERMS OF GEAR**, apart from a 'normal' winter rack, it is always worth to have at least few turf screws (warthogs). The reason for this is the fact that there are many places where you get really solid protection by hammering a screw in a frozen turf. Apart from this, pegs and hammer are essential. Some ice hooks might also be very useful.

February seems to be the best month for winter climbing although January and March often give some really good climbing conditions too.



GRANATY MOUNTAIN, 2240 M



PROJECT FOR NEXT TRIP - THE NORTH PILLAR OF SWINICA MOUNTAIN

## LOGISTICS AND ACCOMMODATION

The nearest airport is in Krakow. There are lots of cheap flights departing from several airports in the UK to Krakow. The city itself is really nice and, if you have a spare day, it is definitely worth to have a look around. From the airport there are trains to the city center, where you need to catch a bus to Zakopane which is probably the biggest ski resort in the Tatras. It takes about 2 hours to get there. The only way to get from Zakopane to both valleys that I mentioned above is on foot. In both cases these are long walks that take about 3 hours in the winter. On the other hand though, there are really pleasant footpaths going through forests and mountain valleys so if you don't mind walking, you should really enjoy it. There are mountain huts in both valleys. They offer accommodation for reasonable price, good food and local beer (bear in mind that Polish beer normally has at least 5.6% of alcohol). In the winter they also serve famous drink called 'grzaniec' which is basically a hot beer with honey and spices (does a great job after long day out).

## WHY TO GO?

In conclusion, I should probably mention some reasons why I think it is worth to go there. To start with, the Tatras are small but pretty mountains that give great climbing opportunities, especially in the winter. Apart from this, they are still a lot cheaper and less crowded than the Alps. Finally, large number of cheap flight to Krakow cause that the access to these mountains becomes relatively easy these days. There are still some inconveniences related to lack of information about climbs but if anyone is interested I would be more than happy to share my knowledge, guidebooks etc. If anyone is interested in joining me in the future please let me know.

RAFAL MALCYZK

# CHALK CLIMBING - DON'T DO IT.

As the young and impressionable baby of the CMC, I am writing to report that I was persuaded into going chalk climbing not too long ago, an activity that I'm sure is part of Piers Harley's grooming of me into going winter climbing.

In spite of getting a fairly deep cut under my lip when an axe pinged out, and spending bloody ages cleaning the crampons Rob Laird kindly lent me, it wasn't too bad an ordeal. Having never swung an ice axe, nor worn and walked in mountaineering boots and crampons, it was certainly unlike anything I had ever done before.

At the ridiculous hour (for me on a sunday at least) of 7am, Piers arrived at my house, and we headed down towards Saltdean, a few miles east of Brighton. The cliffs offered accessible bolted climbs of up to around 30m high, finishing at lower-offs, along with a few more traditional lines that topped out, protectable by warthogs and bulldogs. As Piers had neglected to bring a second hammer for me to retrieve the hammered-in gear with (something which looked equivalent in weight to three full trad racks - oh well), we stuck to the bolted stuff.

Starting off on a C5 (apparently similar to a winter grade IV), I started by carefully placing my picks, though with the lower half of my body made the bendy movements that I probably do all the time on rock, something to be avoided apparently. This approach made the steep start of the climb feel easier than the mellower top, with me feeling less secure probably a result of not kicking and swinging my metal hard enough into the choss.-

The next climb, also a C5, involved less bridging than the first, and a bit more loose rock, with Piers getting some in the eye on lead. After a third route, we headed further down the beach to find a lone devotee, a Hungarian guy by the name of Szil (pronounced Seal). Szil had a rope up on a new route of his, so Piers and I took the



opportunity to fall off of it a couple of times, before watching Szil show us how it was done. Although Szil reckoned it was C5, it was way harder than the previous climbs.

The climb started with a nice pocketed face section, but soon got harder, when moving into the groove. I fell off once, then gave it another go. Not finding a higher axe placement to help bring my feet up to a ledge, I pulled up to face height on two axes, having the one with the sharp rear bit (Adze) ping out and smack me in the face, and some blood spill. So, I said "fuck's sake, Piers," put on a blister plaster he kindly gave me, then went traversing, making sure to swing at and kick the stupid chalk a bit harder this time.

After backing off of the impressive (and needless to say,) dubious looking arete of Turbo Buttress due to lack of DIY tools, we headed back to our original spot where Piers failed to start a thuggy looking route without many foot placements, and I did my first chalk lead, a C4 I believe. Having learnt from my previous mistakes, I hacked my axes and crampons in a bit more on this slightly more chossy looking climb than the previous, making smaller movements with my legs, and moving more tenuously, testing placements a bit more.

Although I can't say I'm inkling to go chalk climbing again, it was a good experience overall, the climbing style completely new to me, and not too dissimilar to winter climbing, which I hope to start doing soon.

Sorry about the title, Piers.

## MARTIN BAGSHAW.

