

THE GWYDYR NO. 6 (MAY)

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Any month that has two bank holidays has to be good and for me at least it's been great and I'm really looking forward to the summer proper but perhaps not the Welsh 3000's !!!!!

Early this month saw the Harris's in the Lake District where, after setting out from the Old Dungeon Ghyll Pub, they walked and clambered over Crinkle Crag & Bowfell before descending back to the ODG. Apparently the weather was superb and the Isle of Man could be discerned on the horizon from the summits. Ross McGraw and Mike Davis went for a walk in the Carneddau including, inter alia, Llewelyn and Dafydd.

Dave Gray was in Scotland whittling away at his Corbett's with Hazel and Al, they were based in Knoydart and enjoyed a four day backpack with excellent weather. Dave climbed Ben Aden, Sgurr Na Ciche, Beinn Odhar, Beinn Chaorach, Can Chreag, Beinn na Uamha and Stob Coire a Chearchaill, this last hill was a repeat Corbett first done with Richard and Melinda in 2002 !

I managed an 'interesting' couple of days climbing in Wales with an old friend and we enjoyed a great sunny afternoon's climbing at Rhoscolyn. We climbed The Savage Sunbird (E2, 5b) which was very pleasant though the same could not be said of The Sun (E3, 5c) which was incredibly 'pumpy' and steep – especially when you struggle to get the runners out which had been placed really deeply within the crack. Thankfully the tide began to come in as we considered whether we could do another desperate (for me) climb and so the only thing we had left to worry about were the overly protective seagulls who were quite irate as we came too close to their nests while scrambling over ledges back to our sacks.

The next day was even more 'interesting' as we went to Craig Dorys on the Llyn Peninsula to climb a very loose and scary hybrid route called Knowing Her, Fascinating Witches and Scintillating Stitches (E2, 5b). It made little difference as to who was leading as there are two 80ft traverses on loose (ish) rock and were it not for a double rack of cams the climb would have been much scarier but at least we were largely in the shade as the weather was incredibly hot. After just one route our nerves were decidedly jaded and so we opted for the more relaxing prospect of Porth Ysgon boulders, this delightful Gabbro boulder beach has some great bouldering though once again the sea put paid to any prolonged climbing as the tide moved in very quick forcing us ever higher onto the beach.

The Lleyn Peninsula is well worth visiting if only for the lovely coastal scenery and delicious ice creams in Abersoch.



Steve Davis leading the 2nd Pitch of Knowing Her



Craig Dorys, the route lies on the wall half in the sun

On the weekend of the 15th May Geoff Brierley went on one of his long bike rides (60 miles) in preparation for his impending trip out to the Chapel 'off-road', Phil Earl went climbing on Stanage Edge with some non club friends and John & Carol went to Trevor Rocks above Llangollen for a good days climbing. Dave Gray & Steve Walker had a really good walk on the Mam Tor ridge high above Edale while myself, Neil Metclafe, Ronnie Davis and Andy Odger also went to Stanage (unaware of Phil's trip !) and climbed eight routes in a short day as we had to be back on the Wirral for Peter Vaughan's 50th birthday bash. On the Sunday Carol Boothroyd and I went and climbed Hope on the Idwal Slabs and then went over to Llandudno to have a look at Pigeon's Cave. Mike Gavin went for a walk and did the Wentworth Circle (wherever that is ?? – more info next time please !!!)

The following weekend Dave Gray went for a solo walk in the Southern Clwyds and Bryn Alyn.

The final Bank Holiday weekend saw lots of members out and Christy Miles with John went to the Chapel where they saw the sterling work carried out by Reg and Dave near completion. They went for a walk in the Carneddau with their nearly blind dog who bravely conquered Pen Yr Ole Wen. Carol Boothroyd went for a walk on the Bank Holiday Monday and did the Nantlle Ridge in glorious sunshine.

Clearly however this was all a mere sideshow to the main event (tongue very firmly in cheek!) as four members, including me, went to the Isle of Skye. Neil and I left Liverpool on Friday morning and drove to the Kingshouse in Glencoe where we managed to climb Beinn A'Chrulaiste before Andy Odger and Peter Vaughan arrived. Last orders was at 1.00am so we managed to get a couple of beers in before retiring to bed eager for the next day and the misty Isle of Skye.

The day dawned beautiful and the tops of all the mountains around us were clear save for the odd high wispy cloud though the desire to be away put aside any ambitions in this valley (for the time being) and with a short stop off for Breakfast at Morrisons in Fort William and a photo stop at Eileen Donan castle we drove over the bridge, in the rain, to arrive at the Sligachan campsite for twelve. With the tents pitched we decided on a short walk up Glen Sligachan with possibly an ascent of Marsco, we would just see how the walk went and what took our fancy. I often find that the best walks are the ones that just 'happen' and so it was on this occasion, we walked along the flat path of the valley floor with the mists lifting on occasion to show the magnificent Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr Nan Gillean in profile capturing our attention and promising a good day for tomorrow should the weather allow.

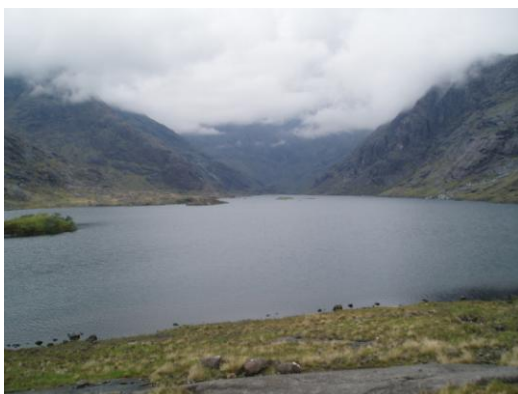
Not having walked along Glen Sligachan before I was under the impression that it would not be too far to walk to Loch Coruisk whose shores I had not trod before and only looked down upon from the ridge. So to Coruisk it was though Andy Odger elected to climb Sgurr Hain rather than descend the 1000ft to the loch shore (and the subsequent slog back up as time forbid a walk around the headland to Camasunary and back to Sligachan that way). The scenery was magnificent and there were a number of people wild camping on the shores of Coruisk, a more idyllic camp site could not be imagined and it was with some envy that we began the walk back in a now heavy rain shower to Sligachan.



Eileen Donan Castle



Peter & Andy in Glen Sligachan



The View up Loch Coruisk



The outflow from Coruisk to Loch Scavaig

After the 15 miles walk to Coruisk we were all pretty tired but with perfect weather forecast there was only one place to go and the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr Nan Gillean proved to be a perfect choice. Graded 'difficult' in the climbing guides it is little more than a scramble really with only the odd short section requiring a moment's thought and upon reaching the crowded summit the mists parted revealing some stunning sections of the main Cuillin ridge. The descent down the 'Tourist' route was a bind as it seemed to go on forever however a great bathe in the deep, cold blue pools of the Allt Dearg Beag cooled us nicely and neatly avoided the necessity of having a shower at the camp site.

Mention must be made of this site which is very good and only £5 per person per night, they are clean, the showers are excellent and you are only two minutes walk from the pub which has its own micro brewery.



Marsco from the Sligachan Campsite



Andy O, Neil Metcalfe & Peter V on ridge



Andy 'I've only ever abseiled from a tank' Odger



View of the Cuillin ridge from Sgurr Nan Gillean



Sgurr Nan Gillean, Pinnacle Ridge is the ridge half

In sunlight / shade on the left of the picture



Andy, Neil & Peter descending the Tourist

Route on Sgurr Nan Gillean

Forthcoming Meets:

As this newsletter reaches you Mike Mc's Pitlochry meet is well underway however perhaps the most important event this month is the scattering of John Huxley's ashes on Sunday 13th June 2010. We meet at 11.00am at the Powys boundary sign on the B4391 between Bala and Llangynog (GR : 017305 on Landranger sheet 125). It would be comforting to John's surviving relatives to see a good turn out from club members and if anyone needs further directions please contact Les Fowles at antonyfowles@btinternet.com

The weekend of the 18/19 June is the All Stretton YH Bunkhouse meet and there is just the one place left so please contact Dave Gray if you wish to go.

The final weekend of the month is our annual Welsh 3000 challenge and I have emailed everyone over this. So far there are four definite contenders / gladiators / fools intending to complete the whole walk and one or two who wish to do sections of the walk. I will email those concerned again in the next week or so however if you are intending to support us please let me know which stage(s) you are prepared to cover.

A PLEA !

You should now have some idea of the format the newsletter is taking so **please** send me emails with what you've been getting up to and pictures would be great as well. If you wish to write an article then send it to me as a word document and I will incorporate it into the following newsletter. Please note that if people don't respond I will begin to question the point of continuing the newsletter