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## FRA LONG DISTANCE AWARD

Dear Member of the Long Distance Award Panel

I am writing to request a few minutes of your time with regard to the presentation of the FRA's Long Distance Award. You are probably aware that this award is presented annually to the person who is acknowledged to have completed the most outstanding long distance mountain running achievement/s. Performance in races are not considered when choosing the recipient. We hope to make the presentation for the year from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 -> 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008, at the Annual Fell Runners Dinner on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

Long distance achievements do vary considerably and it is difficult to compare performances or even to decide by which criteria they should be compared. Following last years debate, the consensus is that we would like to include long distance journeys mainly on foot by Brits anywhere in the world. The journey could include relatively small amounts of cycling, canoeing or climbing. The contender should be aiming to set as fast a time as possible, to beat a deadline or a record. For your information, I have attached a list of previous winners. There is a precedent for choosing to not make the award in a particular year, if no suitable recipient meets the criteria.

With regard to 2008, we are canvassing about 20 people with regard to a suitable recipient of the award. Like yourself, these are either long distance runners who at some time have set high standards in one or more areas of long distance mountain running or have an intimate knowledge of the sport and have followed its development closely over the years.

Please see the attached summary of long distance achievements of which we have been made aware. This is taken from the Long Distance News Summary. I would like you to have been able to refer to the Autumn Fell Runner for more information but you will not receive it in time. If you require more information, please contact me. If you are unable to decide a clear winner, could I suggest that you use the following criteria to make your judgement, awarding up to 100 points to each individual, subject to the weightings shown below:

Physical difficulty	25	Distance, climb, underfoot, weather, time on feet
Mental difficulty	25	Coping with setbacks, time on feet, solo, unsupported
Planning and Preparation	20	Training, reccying, organising of pacers & support, logistics, schedules
Aesthetics, Novelty & Ethics	30	General catchall - pleasing concept, new idea, pure approach, worthy of repeat
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	100	

Also remember that in any year you could indicate that you don't feel that there is a worthy recipient of the award and if enough people feel like this, the award will be withheld for a year. Please feel free to use any suitable selection method if you don't like the one above. We need to avoid a choice being made, which is based on hype rather than pure achievement!

I would be very grateful if you could read the enclosed articles, consider the achievements and try to decide which is most worthy of the award. **Please send me an email at [martin.stone@sportident.co.uk](mailto:martin.stone@sportident.co.uk) if possible by TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> October.**

Many thanks

**MARTIN STONE**  
RECORDER OF LONG DISTANCE  
MOUNTAIN RECORDS

**Voting:** Rick Ansell, Adrian Belton, Bob Berzins, Jon Broxap, Paddy Buckley, Charlie Campbell, Phil Clark, Mike Cudahy, Helene Diamantides, Wendy Dodds, Glyn Jones, Jos Naylor, Mark McDermott, Mark Hartell, Steve Pyke, Peter Simpson, Anne Stentiford, Martin Stone, Hugh Symonds, Yiannis Tridimas, Ronald Turnbull, Chris Upson, Rob Woodall

# Some Possibilities for the 2007/2008 Long Distance Award

These notes are taken from the three most recent Fell Runner magazines. I have not been made aware of any other notable achievements.

## **STEVE PYKE & LIZZIE HAWKER – EVEREST BASE CAMP -> KATHMANDU RECORD**

After an action packed climbing trip in Nepal during which members of the group climbed Island Peak and Ama Dablam, what better way to finish off the holiday than to "have two or three days off", followed by a 188 miles run back to Kathmandu on track and road dropping from 18,000ft to 4,000ft and climbing 27,000ft over mountain passes on the way. By any standards, this is an amazing sequence of events. The benchmark record of 3days 8hrs, set by Helene Diamantides and Alison Wright in 1987 was lowered by an hour 13 years later by a Sherpa. It is great news that record has now been reduced by Steve and Lizzie to 3 days 2hrs 36mins. You can read all about their incredible adventure elsewhere in this magazine.

## **JOHN FLEETWOOD – WINTER HIGHLAND CROSSING**

You can also read elsewhere in the Spring magazine about John's latest epic – a 3 day, 108 miles, 34,500ft traverse from Fort William to Aviemore via Britain's highest peaks. John reckons that this was one of his most committing outings and all the more satisfying because of it.

## **ALEX PILKINGTON – FAST MID-WINTER BOB GRAHAM**

Alex writes the following about his mid-winter journey. "The winter round was a bit of a 'spur of the moment' thing for me, the good weather and full moon was the deciding factor - I put the Christmas festivities and chores on hold for week. My intention was to start on the evening of Friday 21st December, however due to the impending change in weather I decided to bring it forward 24hrs. It was my overall intention to be as self sufficient as possible, as I did not want the difficulties of arranging the support logistics (and most will agree I think that this can be as hard as doing the round in itself!).

A quiet departure was made from the Moot Hall at 8pm, heading in a clockwise direction. I used a 23hr 30mins schedule as a loose guide and charted the summits with a photo. Good progress was made on the first 2 legs, the bright moon and clear skies made route finding pretty straight forward and it was really exhilarating running on the empty mountains under the stars, the temperature was well below zero, in fact cooler in the valley bottoms (-8degC at Threlkeld) . The ridges of Helvellyn were quite snowy, as too was the section over Steel Fell and to the Langdale Pikes.

The moon eventually set at 4am as too did my drive! some time was lost as I slowed to negotiate the Pikes and Martcrag moor, mainly down to my body wanting to go to sleep - it was a very lonely 2hrs!, I recall Laurence saying as he left me at Codale head to 'just hold on' and 'as soon as the sunrise comes you'll get going again ....' Which indeed when it eventually came was true, seeing the sun rise over Ingleborough in the far distance was just the uplift I needed. The day although at its shortest for the year was perfect and it wasn't until Pillar was reached that I passed another sole - quite a record for the Lakes and that was after 17hrs out (albeit 12 of them in darkness). Apart from the 'sleepmonsters' bit, no real bad patches were experienced on the round, although it was good to have some company from Black Sail on to the finish and also a couple of short sections from Dunmail to Codale Head and a boost up Yewbarrow, the rest was just me and my rucksack packed with a few supplies, clothes and a survival kit.

The dry conditions favoured my tour, however the concrete like ground meant that the soles of my feet got a real pounding. With everything frozen solid I only got my feet wet once and that was crossing the river Caldew, maybe another record!!! General good progress on the hill meant that a more relaxed stop could be made at the two important points of Dunmail and Wasdale, the other two points were just tea and biscuit stops. For the record my time was 23.09. Many say a winter round is daft, but if you want an adventure and the conditions are good, it is far more rewarding and exciting. The biggest downer was not being able to stomach my pint in the Dog and Gun afterwards - I had to ask for milk!!! Thanks go to my support: Roger Pilkington, Laurence Ormerod & John Murfin."

## **SIMON HALLIDAY – FIRST SUB-24 WINTER BOB GRAHAM ON SHORTEST DAY**

Simon's journey, a day later, was very different. He was determined to make his attempt so that he would travel through the shortest day, despite the forecast of deteriorating weather on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Alex Pilkington had brought his attempt forward a day because the forecast for Saturday wasn't good. Simon travelled anti-clockwise starting at 4am, at the same time and in the same direction that Pete Simpson and I made the first ever Winter Bob Graham attempt in 1980. A hardy band of Clayton Harriers were gathered to help Simon. The weather was clear and good progress was made to Honister, although there were hints that a front was approaching. From Honister onwards the conditions underfoot were much icier and visibility was decreasing through to Gable. A fast start had meant that it was still not light by Gable and they needed torches over Kirk Fell and as far as Black Sail. Despite a few navigational issues in poor visibility, all went well as far as Wasdale, which was reached a few minutes ahead of schedule.

It was on the climb up Scafell that the weather broke and after struggling up the long climb, the team encountered freezing rain driven by gale force winds on the summit. The rocks were becoming verglassed and an epic followed as they failed to meet up with a member of the team who had headed off to reccie the top of Deep Gully and Lords Rake. After a period of desperate searching and feeling the onset of mild hypothermia, with thoughts of having to call out the Mountain Rescue Team, Richard was located and they managed to make it to Scafell Pike without further incident. The weather and

conditions underfoot remained foul on the long journey to Dunmail and although weak, Simon was buoyed up by meeting supporters with hot drinks and the general good humour of his excellent pacers. The brief period of daylight was over by the far side of the Langdales, the poor weather having made the daylight period even shorter.

The worst of the front was through by Dunmail but the conditions had left them well behind schedule. As they climbed towards Dollywagon the visibility improved and although making slow progress, they lost little more time on the way to Threlkeld. Most would have retired there with only 4hr left to cross the Northern Fells at night, in winter and feeling very weary. Simon's stubborn streak came to the fore and he resolved to give the bleak final section his best shot. After an interminable struggle, the team reached the top of Skiddaw, still with an outside chance of reaching the Moot Hall within 24 hours. It was a mad descent, with layers of kit being shed with gay abandon for his pacers to scoop up but a triumphant Simon and his team reached the Moot Hall in 23hrs 56mins 56secs. A combination of Simon's gritty determination and the dedication of his pacers and support team had made the run possible.

## **SHANE OHLY – RAMSAY ROUND WINTER RECORD**

Shane set off from Glen Nevis at 08:30 on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February and returned at 14:30 on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> February having set a new record for the Winter Ramsay Round in 29hrs 59mins. The previous winter record was 33hrs 48mins by Gary Tompsett in 2003. Shane completed the round solo, unsupported and largely 'on-sight' as his recce efforts earlier in the winter were consistently thwarted by poor weather. This is all the more remarkable a baptism of fire as Shane had never before run further than on an Elite MM, nor had he ever completed a long solo run. Shane chose to travel clockwise taking in Ben Nevis and the Aonachs first. He wanted to get the highest and most technical section of the round completed first, when he was fresh, and he also didn't fancy descending the stony path down Ben Nevis at the end of the round. Shane carried about 7.5KG of food and emergency equipment, including a short ultra-light ice axe which he needed to carry in his hand for much of the route. He wore orienteering shoes with short tungsten studs and minimal clothing to keep warm. His attempt took place during the settled period of high pressure enjoyed by the entire UK in mid-February and so the weather was near perfect with crystal clear skies and very light breezes.

Some of the heavy early winter snows had melted but there was still a covering on many parts of the route and Shane was able to cover significant distances on consolidated snow. Coming from an elite climbing background, Shane was able to cross steep and difficult ground with minimal equipment at speeds that would not be possible for the average mountain runner. Even so, there were challenging moments on dangerous ground. It became dark as he climbed Chno Dearg having completed Ben Nevis, the Aonachs and Grey Corries to Loch Treig. It was then that Shane realised he was no longer moving fast enough to complete the round in under 24 hours. The darkness persisted until he was half way along the Mamores. As a safety measure, Shane sent a text to his girlfriend as he reached each of the 24 Munro summits and in order to prove that he had completed the route, he recorded a GPS track of his route with timings that can be overlaid onto products such as Memory Map.

Shane writes "The first 10 hours or so were a joy. I chatted with walkers on the summits, felt fresh and was comfortably keeping within my sub 24 hour schedule. Then my body died. I've analysed my food wrappings and calculated that I ate less than 5,000 calories the entire time I was out! I was basically 'bonked' for the last 2/3 of the round. I don't know why I stopped eating but it's something I need to think hard about before my next attempt. The last 1/3 of the round was truly painful. I was seeing sleepmonsters (think mythological creatures) and hearing music (despite being alone on the hills). In the final stages, cutting down through the forest near Achriabhach, I caught myself on some brambles and nearly burst into tears. As for winter conditions, I was hoping for the hills to be 'whiter' than they were. However, I am happy that the Round was sufficiently wintry and in keeping with the other winter rounds of the Ramsay.

I definitely believe that a sub-24 hour Winter Ramsay Round can be completed and I have already decided to have another go next year. The whole experience was fantastic with the long night section being particularly memorable....and cold! I'd really like to thanks Gary Tompsett who provided me with invaluable information about the route."

## **GAVIN WILLIAMS – CUILLIN INTEGRALE**

Gavin, a member of DPFR, completed the Cuillin Integrale on 30<sup>th</sup> May. He travelled solo in a clockwise circuit from Sligachan. In 20 hours he climbed all the major peaks of the Black Cuillin ridge, Sgurr na Stri, Blaven, Clach Glas, Garbh-beinn and all major peaks of the Red Cuillin. The weather was superb and he had to take a swim in Loch Coruisk to cool down! Gavin writes "I had originally planned to attempt a clockwise circuit, starting with an ascent of Belig from Loch Ainort, but this was such a lonely, midge-infested spot that I opted instead for the anti-clockwise round from the fleshpots of Sligachan. When I reached Garbh-bheinn I decided to omit the dog leg to Belig since I was concerned about impending darkness. I also feel that if Belig is to be included, then a good case can be made for also including Sgurr Thuilm. Both are fine peaks but in my opinion detract from the elegance of the line. For time pressure reasons I also omitted the east (highest) top of Sgurr nan Each. I also omitted the first two minor top of the Black Cuillin (Sgurr Beag and Sgurr na h-Uamha). Again, these fit more logically into a clockwise circuit. Next time..."

## **CHRIS NEAR – PADDY BUCKLEY ROUND RECORD EQUALLED**

You can read elsewhere in the Summer magazine about Chris Near's excellent Paddy Buckley Round. However it isn't a new record as Chris managed to equal Mark Hartell's record set some 17 years earlier, to the nearest minute, Chris set off from Capel Curig at 4am on 4<sup>th</sup> May attempting a fully supported clockwise round. He was using an 18 hour schedule supplied by Steve Birkinshaw that Steve used for his 2007 attempt. The weather was generally very good apart from a 2 hour slot in the middle where things turned particularly nasty! By Llanberis Chris was almost an hour up on the schedule but knew

the times for the Glyders and Carneddau were going to be tight. The clock stopped at 18 Hours 10 minutes and 25 seconds. Transitions were very rapid and Chris used minimal kit throughout.

## ROB WOODALL – LEVENTON’S LINE RECORD

Rob writes elsewhere in the Summer magazine about his journey along Leventon’s Line on 26<sup>th</sup> April. The route takes in 8 trig points between Llangollen and Barmouth, a distance of 56 miles with 14,500ft ascent/descent. Rob successfully reduced the record to 15hrs 23 mins.

After a few weeks off, Rob completed a Ramsay Round mostly solo, in 22:38 on 17-18<sup>th</sup> May, with valley support by Chris Armour. Ramsay’s Round was the last of the Big Three on Rob’s to-do list since July 2001, when in poor weather, he bailed out with knee problems. This time the weather was just about perfect, with high cloud, light winds and a little sunshine.

## ROB WOODALL – RIGBY ROUND

It had already been a great month for Rob, but a spur of the moment idea and the long period of settled weather spurred him into action again for the third time in five weeks. Rob had studied the Rigby Round some years ago, having got hold of Mark Rigby’s original article, and even devised an extended version which took in all the associated Tops and a Corbett. The route includes 18 Munros and was first completed by Mark Rigby in 1989. The route has also been completed more recently by Bob Berzins and Phil Clark. It’s a route with a significant number of major route choices and summits have been visited in different orders.

Rob’s attempt followed only two weeks after his successful Ramsay’s Round. He set off from Loch Morlich YH at 02:05 on 31<sup>st</sup> May. The weather was “sunny-and-breezy” and it was a great day for Munro bagging. He travelled solo, unsupported throughout the round and the night was cool, clear and midge free. During the journey he met a number of people and it was only when he was alone during the night that he succumbed to sleep. On the final climb to **Bynack More** he dozed on a bed of Crowberry for a few minutes, before being woken by Ptarmigan calling nearby. He had missed the sunset but could still see a fine red glow in the NW. He arrived back at Loch Morlich in a time of 22hrs 56mins in not too bad shape and very glad to have seized the opportunity. Ramsay and Rigby within a month, both in perfect conditions.

	Location	Elapse	BST	Split time
	Loch Morlich YH	00:00	02:05	
	Lairig Ghru	01:12	03:17	01:12
1	Braeriach	02:24	04:29	01:12
2	Sgor Gaoith	03:48	05:53	01:24
3	Mullach Clach a'Bhlair	04:41	06:46	00:53
4	Beinn Bhrotain	06:35	08:40	01:54
5	Monadh Mor	07:07	09:12	00:32
6	Sgurr an Lochain Uaine	07:55	10:00	00:48
7	Cairn Toul	08:11	10:16	00:16
8	Devil's Point	08:45	10:50	00:34
	Corrour bridge (9 mins rest*)	09:10	11:15	00:25
9	Carn a'Mhaim	09:58	12:03	00:48
10	Ben Macdui	11:00	13:05	01:02
11	Derry Cairngorm	11:42	13:47	00:42
12	Beinn Mheadhoin	12:46	14:51	01:04
13	Beinn a'Chaorainn	13:41	15:46	00:55
14	Beinn Bhreac	14:24	16:29	00:43
15	Beinn a'Bhuird	15:42	17:47	01:18
16	Ben Avon	16:32	18:37	00:50
	R Avon footbridge (NJ126059)	17:24	19:29	00:52
	Fords of Avon	19:01	21:06	01:37
17	Bynack More	20:11	22:16	01:10
18	Cairngorm	21:54	23:59	01:43
	Loch Morlich YH	22:56	01:01	01:02

\* many other brief stops for photos and to deal with food + 2 naps!

## JON CHAPMAN & DIGBY HARRIS – COMPLETING THE THREE UK ROUNDS

Jon Chapman writes elsewhere in the October magazine about completing the Bob Graham (3<sup>rd</sup> May – 22:25), Paddy Buckley (4/5<sup>th</sup> July – 23:20) and Ramsay Round (13/14<sup>th</sup> September – 22:37) over a four month period in the 2008 summer season. These were his first attempts at any of the rounds and this may well be the first time anyone who hasn’t made previous attempts has completed the rounds within a single summer. Digby Harris, also of Macclesfield Harriers, completed his third round this summer and all of his three rounds were completed within a year.

## **STEPHEN FRY – COAST TO COAST**

At the start of 2008, Stephen thought he would train hard for a medal in his age class at the Masters 1500M championships. It's a far cry from the epic journey of 180 miles that he was to embark on a few months later. The change of direction resulted from a phone he received one day from Joss Naylor. Stephen had written to Joss, asking him for information about his Coast to Coast record set many years earlier.

Stephen started at St. Bees at 5am on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. He was aiming to complete the journey within 3 days, running alone but being re-supplied at bag drops along the way and met by friends, family and club mates. On the first day he crossed the Lake District, covering 57 miles and 10,000ft of ascent before spending the night at Shap. On the second day he reached Maersk, near Richmond. Stephen had opted to cross the North York Moors on the Lyke Wake route to finish on the coast near Ravenscar. This is about 10 miles shorter than Wainwright's Route. The third day was wet and misty and his progress was not as good as he had hoped. Some time was lost at the end of the day and he spent an unpleasant night trying to sleep in a car high on the North York Moors. Stephen completed his journey in fairly good shape just before lunchtime on the fourth day.

## **MARK HARTELL – 11 FELLSMAN HIKE WINS**

Following his 11<sup>th</sup> win, Mark becomes the most successful and consistent Fellsman competitor in the history of the event. He has also won the 2008 Vasque UK Ultra-Running Championships with wins at the Fellsman and Pumlumon races, also very good performances at the Wuthering Hike and Calderdale Hike.

## **TOM GIBBS – CARDINAL SUMMITS OF WALES RECORD**

Elsewhere in the October magazine Tom has written an article about his journey on the 8<sup>th</sup> August. The four Cardinal Summits are Snowdon - the Highest in Wales, Cadair Idris - the most Magical, Plynlimon - source of the Wye and Severn and Pen y Fan - the highest in South Wales. With cycling in-between the distances work out at 22 miles and 8000ft of climb on foot, over 110 miles and 9000ft of climb by bike. Tom knew the route from having done the route South to North back in 2001 with good friend and one time Welsh Ironman record holder Keri James in the current record of 14hrs 26mins. This time would be North to South and Tom reduced the record by a huge margin to 10hrs 57mins.

## **PAUL MURRAY – 65 SUMMITS AT 65**

Edwin Coope has written an article in the October magazine about Paul Murray's continuous traverse of the 65 highest Lakeland summits. The journey was a celebration of Paul's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday but deferred for a year because of poor weather, by which time he was 66 years old. The challenge took place on 17/18<sup>th</sup> May and Paul covered 93 miles and 36,000ft of ascent/descent in 46 hours 17 minutes. Paul began his traverse on the Duddon side of the Walna Scar Road and as you can see from the article, his huge journey took him to all corners of the Lakes – Wrynose, Esk Hause, Buttermere, Braithwaite, Threlkeld, Kirkstone and finally to Hartsop.