



To all my club mates and readers.

From Ade Orringe  
Editor in Chief

I guess it's that time of year when I know a lot of you are thinking ahead to next year. Broken New Year promises, training programmes left in the drawer and ambitions of "I'm really going to have a go this year" nothing more than fanciful flights of imagination...

But what's this ... NO!! I hear you cry "You're wrong this year Ade, I really mean it!" Abusive emails follow (tough luck chums I've got my spam activated). Then just to prove me wrong a trickle of feeble – I mean able – bodied folk turn up one Sunday morning to flog themselves around a windy / wet mountain and 'social chat'. The trickle becomes a steady flow and then it gets so crowded I have to get Mark to bring another jar of his delicious homemade jam.

Bodies are honed, legs work like steel pistons, feet develop sticky soles for wet slippery descents, what's this – a third lung!

But wait, what's all this for? To get away from left-over sprouts or dodge the all-seeing eye of shewhomustbeobeyed? No not at all it's to take on all challengers, to push and test us to our limits pitting ourselves

against the elements on rock or grass (more likely peat bogs and mud) over mountain terrain with driving rain, stormy winds, nil visibility, frozen and sodden bodies. Yes this is what it's all about!!

So now I've got you salivating and begging for more ... now you're straining in the starting stalls ... mind in overdrive ... flared nostrils ... (sorry getting carried away now!) Wait a mo while I go get a breath of air.



Right, that's better where was I? Oh yes, so you want to make plans for 2007? No FRA Calendar yet but should be out anytime now. Meanwhile I can give you some fixtures worthy of your consideration. In fact rather than belong to the 'flat earth society' why not come along with me and a few others on the cross-border raids 'up north'.

Talking of things to do in 2007 the intrepid duo of Dave Finn and Mark Palmer have decided to do the South Wales Traverse on Sat. 10<sup>th</sup> February. That's about 74 miles over all the summits from Llanddeusant to



Llanthony in 24 hours. They need you to help as pacers to carry food/water and supporters at road crossings. The more the merrier to keep the support legs short and it means

we get to enjoy the spectacle of the event at first hand.

So give Dave or Mark a call, they're working out the schedules, etc. now so get your name down for one of the 'easier' legs.

Have a peaceful  
New Year  
Ade Orringe



## Fixtures

### British Championships

Usual format of 4 from 6 races with one at each distance. Must be registered with Welsh Athletics or English Athletics or Scottish Athletics or N.Ireland Athletics. WFRA doesn't count as it's not a governing body and has no official standing. Nationality not an issue as it's for individual or team competition. Teams – 5 for open men, 4 for Vet O40 and 3 for open women. Well why not, let's go for it as a club, we've got enough people interested and I'm happy to arrange entries, etc.

Sat 31.03.07 Donnard Commedagh (medium 6.8m 3300'), N.Ireland  
Sat 05.05.07 Llangynhafal (short 4.5m 1500'), N.Wales  
Sat 02.06.07 Duddon Valley (long 20m 6000') Cumbria



Sun 24.06.07 Carneddau  
(medium 10.5m 4150') N.  
Wales  
Sat 14.07.07 Angus Munro  
(long) Scotland  
Sat 06.10.07 Great Whernside  
(short 4m 1555') N. Yorks

#### English

I make mention of it as some people can claim dual eligibility, the only point to remember is that you can only score in one national championship.

Sun 18.03.07 Edale Skyline  
(long 21m 4500') Derbyshire  
Sat 21.04.07 Paddy's Pole  
(short 4.5m 1100') Lancs  
Sat 18.08.07 Weasdale  
Horseshoe (medium 8m 2000')  
Cumbria  
Sat 06.10.07 Great Whernside  
details as above  
Sat 19.05.07 Fairfield  
Horseshoe (medium 9m 3000')  
Cumbria  
Sat 02.06.07 Duddon Valley  
details as above

#### British Relay

It'll be good to build on the success of 2006. We had a good laugh an excellent weekend, social atmosphere and club spirit. Be there in 2007, teams of 6.

Sat 13.10.07 Bowland area

#### WFRA

More a league and certainly not an official championship. Open to anyone and everyone to take part, again 4 to count from 6 races with one at each distance.

Sat 24.03.07 Llanbedr-  
Blaenavon (long 15m 4500')  
Sat 05.05.07 Llangynhafal  
details as above  
Sun 26.05.07 Mynydd Troed  
(medium 6m 2400')  
Sun 24.06.07 Carneddau  
details as above  
Sat 20.10.07 Rhinog  
Horseshoe (long 14m 5060')  
Sat 03.11.07 Sugar Loaf (short  
5m 1455')

I'm sure you're wondering about the official Welsh Championship but I'm informed that arrangements are still at the discussion stage.

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### Lakeland Classics 2006 Ade Orringe



Wetherlam and Swirl How

A few of us thought it a good idea to do the Lakeland Classics during the year. This is a series of 6 races with 3 out of 6 to count, being at least 2 superlong and one long. As the name implies 'classic' races in the most beautiful mountain scenery in the UK. A 'must do' for anyone who calls themselves a fell or mountain runner with the successful completion of any one of them worn like a badge of pride.

The series consists of Duddon Valley (20m 6000'), Ennerdale Horseshoe (23m 7500'), Wasdale (21m 9000'), Borrowdale (17m 6500'), Three Shires (12m 4000') and Langdale Horseshoe (14m 4000'). Entries over the 2006 series varied from 125 – 320 runners of all abilities.

The Duddon Valley race is basically south – north up one side of a very scenic valley, turn at the top, then over Swirl How and back down travelling north – south. Underfoot conditions are mainly grassy with good runability all the way round, though it does get a little rock strewn towards the end. Crispin Flower turned up, with family in tow, on his way back from Scotland having done the Isle of Jura the previous weekend! "Just going to take it easy today" were his last words

to me as he disappeared up the ascent of the first mountain. Dave Finn had long gone so I settled into a steady pace thinking of the long haul ahead. Dave came in 12<sup>th</sup> in 3hrs 32mins, Crispin was 14<sup>th</sup> 26secs behind Dave and I fought a rear guard action in 56<sup>th</sup> 4hrs 6mins (the last 5 miles were a long way!).

Ennerdale followed the weekend after Duddon so no-one went to that party. I was dreading Wasdale, having heard some bad stories about it, but in fairness it was OK. Just start of slowly and slow down!! Dave and me took our families staying at Church Stile campsite, which I highly recommend. Mark Palmer joined us but had to stay at Wasdale Head campsite which again is recommended but a little far from a couple of good pubs.

Everything about Wasdale is impressive whether it's the views or the steepness of the rocky ascents/descents. Unfortunately Dave was running with an injured ankle and had to drop out mid-way. I didn't see Mark or Dave at the start opting instead to stay at the rear with a one-legged man and his dog. As it turned out Mark was in excellent form coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in 3hrs 52mins, top man! I tired ascending Scafell and trotted over the line 80<sup>th</sup> in 5hrs 20mins.



Great Gable

So that was the superlongs out of the way now all that was left were the longs. First up, Borrowdale. What a bitch!!! This was by far and away the worse, though in fairness I didn't do Langdale. It's the



underfoot conditions that get you, the first half is rocky and uneven going followed by grassy runability ending with an almighty climb over Dale Head. Again Mark and Dave were to the fore, as I stayed mid-field over Bessy Boot and up to Scafell. But the suicidal plummet down the scree off Scafell followed by the rocky Corridor Route did my legs. Then a long haul up and over Great Gable left me drained as I descended to Honister Pass. I nearly dropped out but well you can't do that, can you? I remember standing on top of Dale Head cursing, too much pain to be able to jog downhill, walking, pain, limping, pain, cursing and then there I was striding through the stream with Dave & Co. shouting encouragement. I limped over the line, collapsed in the car park and did I get any help – no the rotten lot buggered off to the pub! Did they bring me something nice to eat or drink – no and one of the culprits was my own wife! Just because I was a little miserable ...



Scafell screes

Mark once again came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in 3hrs 04mins how does he do it? Dave a very respectable 53<sup>rd</sup> in 3hrs 54mins having made the basic mistake of following local runners – the wrong way! All I can say is that I got round in 197<sup>th</sup> 4hrs 50mins.

So on to The Three Shires starting in the lovely hamlet of Little Langdale and with the bonus that this is the shortest race of the series. I was on my own at this one but had got to

know a few faces by now and met up with Brian Martin the statistician for the series and Chris Taylor from Mercia. I also knew the area we were running over as once again I flogged myself up Wetherlam and Swirl How (favourite routes for a lot of Lakeland races). I was going like a train, feeling strong and well ahead of a couple of old adversaries. Then the wheel came off – I fell descending Swirl How badly spraining my ankle. I rested and hobbled down to the Three Shires stone accompanied by a marshal who'd seen me fall and came up to see if I was OK – full marks to him! Anyway I thought I'd carry on ... now don't do as I did and if this happens to you pull out of the race where you can get support. If I had then I'd have had a lift back to the finish but did I do that, oh no, I carried on until I was forced to pull-up and had to walk from the top of Pike O'Blisco to the Blea Tarn road, where there were no marshals and down the road to the start/finish. It was a long, long walk and only caused more damage to my ankle that then took 2 – 3 weeks to repair.

So that was the end of my series but at least I'd completed enough Classics to score, ending up 61<sup>st</sup> overall.

Dave and Mark went on to complete the last race in the series, the Langdale Horseshoe that by all accounts is as bad as Borrowdale so no regrets on my part that I wasn't there. Mark again finished in tremendous form with 3<sup>rd</sup> place 2hrs 10mins and Dave 17<sup>th</sup> in 2hrs 23mins. Unfortunately neither could count in the Classics series as they hadn't completed the minimum races. So once again the old bugger has outdone the youngsters because at least I did limp, hobble and yes, run, round two superlongs and one long Classic race.

Looking back I can only say that the experiences I had over the four races were unforgettable and not to be missed. The mountains and valleys, weather and views, camaraderie of other runners, the challenge and my resilience, they were all there and more. I hope I can be there next year, now I know what to expect.

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### British Fell Champs Relays Ade Orringe

Last bit from me in this issue, can someone else please write something for the Newsletter!!

October and a band of 6 intrepid club folk travel north to Yorkshire to battle it out with 118 other club teams in what used to be called the FRA Relays now the British Relays.

Near disaster strikes before we set out Dave Finn phones me on the morning to say some toffee-nosed senior hoity-toity officer has pinched the mini-bus. Frantic phoning round trying to resolve the situation, Dave stuck in South England somewhere but making his way having got a lift, local car hire company laughs when I ask for a mini-bus like now! Mark comes up trumps with a company near him, so all is well except we're still a man down with Dave somewhere on the M4. Eventually we scoop up the team in the mini-bus and head over to Dave's house. *"Hello Mrs Dave we thought we'd wait here, got a brew? Never mind the mess my house is just like it, honest – oh is that a packet of biscuits?"*



Then finally all assembled, into the bus and away to go. Navigation got a bit tricky en-route as Mark decided on a 'short-cut', having got that one wrong we end up on the M6 stuck in traffic heading south!!

We get to the campsite dead of night, pitch tents by the headlights of the bus, "Watch that bloody pole!", "Shove over I haven't enough room." Tom has some sort of hoop thing that pops up in seconds but at only 12" high seems a bit cramped. Anyway off to the pub just in time before last orders.



Start and Changeover

Relay day arrives, yes we get lost on the way I think this time it was courtesy of Tom. A 12-point turn in a quaint looking courtyard and we're back on track. The event centre looms being located at a reservoir on a private estate, very nice. Someone didn't bring the brand new tent so we had to change alfresco – well I didn't want it to get dirty!



Mark Leg One

Mass start, Mark Palmer doing leg one. All the big names present, no-one missing from this one and famous sounding clubs to the fore. Including us as a Mynydd Du vest is spotted

near the front! Mark has a blinder, he's 8<sup>th</sup> at the midway point but looking tired, no worry he's got it sussed and gets to the changeover in 6<sup>th</sup> place, we start to get a bit nervous! He handed over to Dave Finn and Harry Matthews for leg two, a pairs leg. Off they go chasing and being chased by such clubs as Dark Peak, Horwich, Mercia. All we can do is wait, it's a long leg. A bit of site seeing around the valley, bit of jogging, envious looks at Wilfs Café cakes, then back to the changeover. It's Crispin Flower and yours truly next, a pairs navigation leg.

The run-in passed the vans and stalls isn't too clever but I just make out Harry sprinting down the lane with Dave right behind, we change in 8<sup>th</sup> position. Now I said at the time and I'll say it again, a MV50 shouldn't be in the team, there are better runners in the club than me. You can therefore imagine that I was anxious not to lose too many places but fully expected to drop down 12 or more by the end of our leg.



Crispin - "Come on Ade"

We had to run a few hundred yards before we got our map and then had to navigate around the checkpoints in any order, no paths but straight line routes over tussock and bog.

I tried to hang onto Crispin as he dashed over the tussocks but it's only my breathing that got faster not my legs! We begin to lose places. We decide to take a short-cut down a steep sided gully, slipping

and sliding, other teams have stayed high and gone round. We cross the dam, where is everyone? Last hill and down to the changeover in 14<sup>th</sup> place, only lost 6 places.

Last leg over to Andrew Jones, he seemed pumped up for it as he sprinted out across the dam. I left the others to try and spot him midway. Changed and refreshed via Wilfs Café I got back to the finish just in time to see Andrew pushing up the last hill and to cross the line in 13<sup>th</sup>. He's put in a blinder because there wasn't any sign of the team in front of us when we changed.



Andrew at the midway point

So we finished 13<sup>th</sup> team out of 118 beating clubs a lot larger and well known than ourselves. I think next year we can easily get inside the top 10 and get a ladies team out!!

The evening went very well, lots of beer and food via the event centre prize giving and local pub. Too much talk can cost lives so I'll leave it at that. Suffice to say some people signed up to do some ridiculous long distance challenge events next year, we all promised to do the relays again and went home very pleased with ourselves.



Merry Christmas

