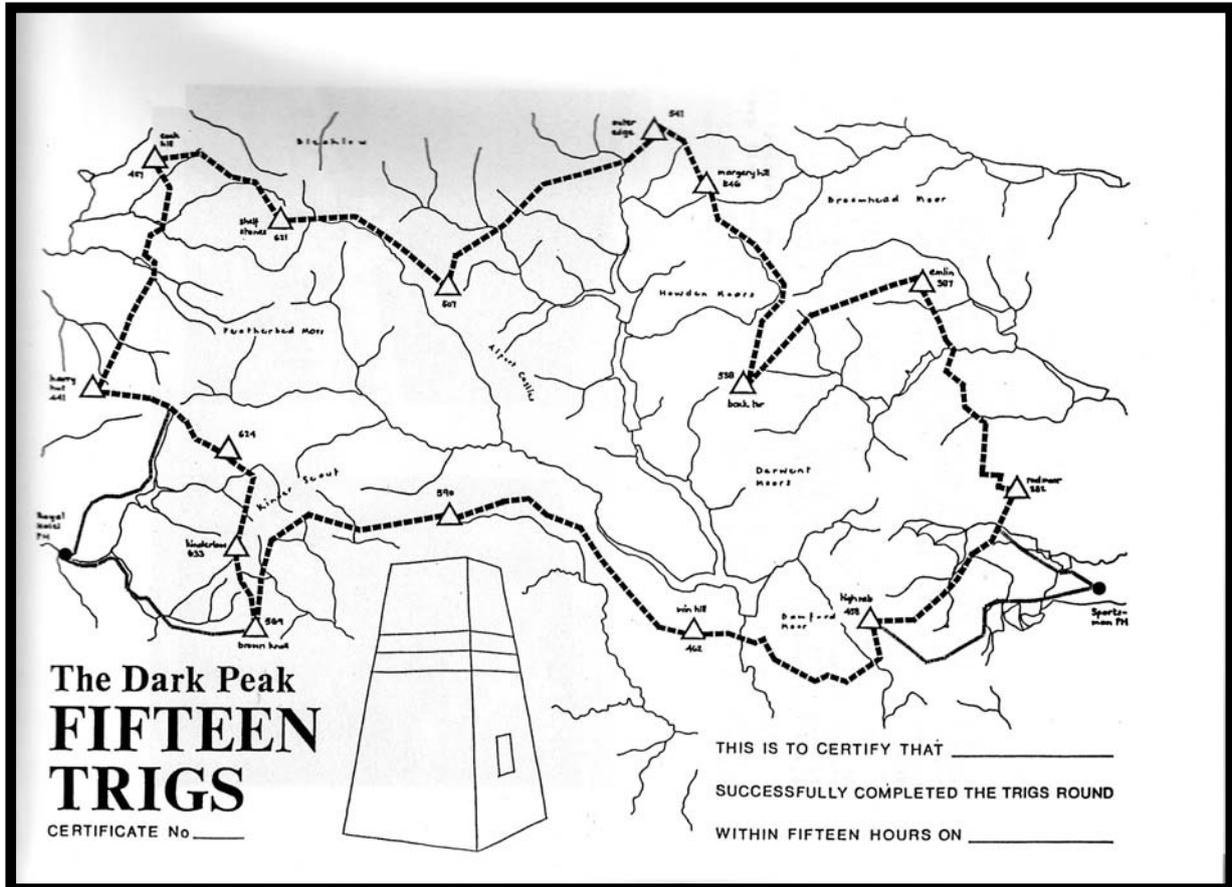


FIFTEEN BY THREE (15 TRIGS)

PER ORDURE AD ASTRA

BY PETER JONES, BOB SEGROVE, ALAN YATES



This exquisite little number, conceived in the abstract by Andrew Harmer and first performed by the undersigned on 7 July 1985, was associated from the outset with project's for DPFR's 10th birthday celebrations (see DARK PEAK NEWS, August 1985). Since then the '15 Trigs' has caught the imagination of local fell-runners and, as we anticipated, has entered the folklore as something of a classic. It therefore seemed appropriate to include an account of the first season's activities in the present publication.

The 'rules' are simple enough: to visit on foot, in less than 15 hours and without support en route, all the 15 trig pillars marked on the Harvey (KIMM 1984) Peak District map, beginning and ending at either The Sportsman at Redmires or The Royal at Hayfield. The stretch of road between Emlin Dike and Strines Dike is out of bounds: otherwise you can go as you please. The inaugural round fell beautifully into shape, and the minimal rules enshrine the improvisations of that memorable July day. Some explanation is offered here for posterity.

To begin with, we were several hours into our run before the 15/15 formula looked like a good day's agenda. We'd already done the Emlin-Back Tor slog (by the worst possible line,

along the ridge through knee-gripping heather) and we felt, with sadistic hindsight, that others should be enticed that way. Resorting to the road here would make it too easy! The stipulation, irksome to some, should be looked upon as a small idiosyncrasy, capricious but now institutionalised, of the kind that bestows character on an original creation.

While The Sportsman is just off the map, no justification is needed surely, for incorporating Club HQ in the circuit. We were over by Harry Hut when, mindful as ever of our Western brethren, we were struck by the idea that a comparable round could be embarked on from Hayfield - whence The Royal as alternative start-finish. Only when we were later scrutinising the map, with a view to designing certificates, did we realise that the two pubs are on virtually the same latitude. This fearful symmetry confirmed the value of the original inspiration, and the handsome certificates consecrate for all time these official termini. Experience has shown in fact, that the route from Hayfield involves a couple of extra miles and a few hundred extra feet of climb: the consolation, as experience has also shown, is to be had from the ineffable pleasure of the dawn approach to Kinder via William Clough. A pub as part of the day's outing is very much part of the spirit of the undertaking, especially when the two in question are situated on the same ley-line! Mam Nick (off the map) or anywhere else as start would not be attuned to the feel of the composition. You can do the Bob Graham Round from Dunmail Raise or Newlands Church, but you won't qualify for a certificate! (Another word to the soul-less: a swim at Slippery Stones was an integral part of the original round: be thankful that it's not stipulated as a standard requirement.)

The certificates themselves deserve particular mention. The idea of thus commemorating our own epic in conjunction with the Club's anniversary celebrations also rose spontaneously, somewhere between Kinder Low and Win Hill. Bob Segrove's inspired art-work brought to light the elemental harmony of the round. 15 trigs in 15 hours suggested quite naturally, in the closing stages of an autumn meeting of the Crookes Philosophical and Philharmonic Society, the notion of offering 15 illuminated and numbered certificates for documented completions during the anniversary season, subsequent successes to be recorded with simple black-and-white versions. The limited-edition stimulus seems to have had the right effect in promoting interest in the challenge and a degree of competition.

So much for the background to the 15 Trigs. What remains is to give some account of response to the challenge issued in the DP NEWS of August 1985. The bare facts can be tabulated as follows:-

Cert	No	Date	Performers	Clockwise/		Time
				Anti-Clockwise		
1	3.5.86		Mike Hayes	A		13h 56m
2	10.5.86		(Roger Baumeister	A		14h 57m
3			(Jeff Harrison			
4	31.5.86		(Alan Ireland	C	(Hayfield)	14h 37m
5			(Ian Roberts			

6	28.6.86	Pete Lewis	C		14h 08m
7	28.6.86	Alan Sanders on	C		14h 59m
8	5.7.86	(Peter Kohn	C		13h 34m
9		(Howard Swindells			
10	6.7.86	(Colin Henderson	C		14h 47m
11		(Ben Hodges			
12	19.7.86	Will McLewin	C	(Hayfield)	14h 39m
13	27.7.86	Dave Moseley	A		13h 07m
14	24.8.86	(Gerry Goldsmith	C	(Hayfield)	14h 45m
15		(Neil Goldsmith			
16	30.8.86	Bob Berzins	A		10h 58m

There is a certain delicious irony (which Bob Berzins will be the first to acknowledge) in the fact that the really outstanding achievement in the above list is Bob's sub-11 hours effort which won him the first, and so far only, non-illuminated certificate. We originally observed that 15 hours would represent a 'rewarding experience', while under 12 would be 'something extraordinary'. Bob has blown a hole in that, and thrown down the gauntlet to the Club's other superstars who have been a bit reticent about contending.

Alan Ireland and Ian Roberts claimed success with a Mam Nick start on May 4th: when informed of the 'rules' they came bouncing back, to their credit, with the inaugural completion, in vile conditions, from Hayfield. Several near misses have been reported: Colin Henson's on May 10th, after accompanying as far as High Neb the Baumeister/Harrison tandem (who had to sprint from Wyming Brook), inspired a six-week special training regime for the July 6th effort with Ben Hodges. Nick Forwood and Peter Dyke narrowly failed on the first under-water attempt. Pete Jones is the only man alive to have completed the round TWICE in OVER 15 hours. Gerry Goldsmith has set a pioneering example to the other wimmin.

Alan Sanderson (14h 59m 45s!) concluded his report with the characteristically laconic observation that 15 hours is 'not an overgenerous allowance by any stretch of the imagination'. Most people (except Bob B) made a point of concurring with this (as is borne out by the recorded times) along the lines of Will McLewin's 'the time allowed is just about right - it needs a determined effort but there is a bit to spare'. Both Mike Hayes and Pete Lewis would have had time to ponder, as they trudged painfully to The Sportsman, on the unwisdom of the flying start. As well as pace-judgement, conditions are obviously a crucial factor (as Dyke and Forwood will confirm); Summer '86 has, in fact, been relatively favourable for fell epics, if not for much else. It's interesting that July 27th - the day of the Glossop Fell Race - saw Dave Moseley's 13.07 and a record Derwent Watershed by Pete Lewis in 6½ hours.

Will McLewin's report waxes lyrical about 'a truly wonderful day', considering the round to qualify as a candidate for 'the ultimate day out'. Not everyone was quite so enthusiastic. 'Never again!' snarled Ireland and Roberts, while Neil and Gerry appear to have missed the point altogether by declaring that 'a circuit leaving out Emlin and Rod Moor is a better day out, though not the same challenge'.

Some of their exasperation appears to have been born of the frustrated delusion that drinkable water is to be found at the top of Jagers Clough! Two points here: the first (as alluded to in DP NEWS, August '85) is the need for a knowledge of water-sources en route (or a bloody big bottle!); the delicious Harry Hut spring has been a life-saver and joyous discovery for many. The second is that Emlin ('the forgotten trig') is the crux of the round, whichever way you go. We contend, again, that it's one of the principal features that give character and uniqueness to the 15 Trigs. Certainly, the Hayfield starters have a stiffer challenge, in increased distance and climb, and also probably in enjoying less familiarity with the intricacies between Emlin and Rivelin, but their reward, we repeat, is correspondingly greater.

As other people's experience is aggregated with our own, the 15 Trigs round grows in status and in charm. It is a nicely representative cross-section of Dark Peakers who have so far made their own contribution to the legend. We're sure that others will follow in their footsteps (or not, according to whether the clag is down over Bleaklow). We think it's proved to be a fitting way to celebrate '10 Years on the Bog', and we're gratified to have been involved in it.



Alan Yates in charge



Will McLewin in hard training