

# Mintcake



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Reg. Charity No. 259539

April 2005

## This Month

Editor's Comment .....	1
Tsunami Radio/Vehicle Update .....	1
Scottish Winter Training .....	2
Exercise Reports.....	4
Garburn Pass ETRO .....	4
Callouts.....	5
New2.....	6
Shorts .....	6
Contacts .....	6

### HELP NEEDED...

Base Spring Clean on 16 April at 10 am.  
As many people as possible are needed.  
Many hands make light work.

Contact Pierre to volunteer your services.  
Any unreconstructed male members of the  
team could usefully practise at home for a  
day or two first.

## Editor's Comment

So Easter has come and gone, bringing with it the not uncommon increase in callouts for a lot of the teams in the Lakes after what had been a very quiet start to the year. Patterdale, for example, had six callouts on Easter Saturday alone, while our own team was called out four times in three days. A busy time for all, so I'm grateful to all my contributors for taking the time to send me their articles, notes etc. when they could otherwise have been gardening or emulsifying a wall. We always need people to write up exercise reports in particular so take the opportunity to volunteer before you're asked!

**Les**



## Tsunami Radio/Vehicle Update

It seems ironic with the second massive earthquake in the region just days behind us that we have to report that the radios and our 4WD VW minibus will not be making their way to Sri Lanka, as hoped. Despite the huge amount of work put into trying to make this valuable equipment available to people who could make good use of it, it has not proved possible to find a sponsor member of the DEC, and without this there is no means of flying the equipment to the region. Instead, therefore, we are reverting to plan A for the radios, which is to donate them to a local air cadet organisation. The vehicle will remain here until our new Mobile 2 is delivered in the late summer or early autumn. Once we are sure that there are no teething problems with the new team vehicle, the VW will possibly move to another team. More news in due course.

## Scottish Winter Training

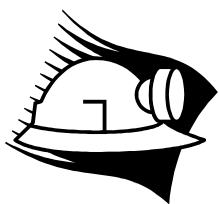


"They won't give us another bulb," reported Abby, returning from the bunkhouse reception. We were standing in the cold kitchen. "A previous group nicked the other bulb, so we'll have to make do with one." We were standing in the cold, dark kitchen. We lit the gas hob to get some warmth. Two of the four rings blew back, and started to burn underneath. The other two flickered feebly, as though the bottle was nudging empty. It can't be all bad, let's have a look round. After all, we're paying a tenner a night.....each! Upstairs were two bedrooms astride a central staircase with six beds apiece. They were within the slope of the ceiling, so two of the beds were a double bunk across the gable wall. Once the bags had been flung and the dust settled, I realised mine had landed on the top bunk. Not usually a problem, but here I found I could only get onto the bed by turning sideways on the stepladder and pushing my frame forcibly between the bunk and the ceiling. Suddenly there was a startled shriek from downstairs. We rushed down to see what was up. The girls had found the ablutions. Two bogs faced a single shower cubicle with a curtain. Adjacent were three vanity basins. For eighteen people. I could see getting sorted out after a day on the hill would take all night. The best room was the porch where we stored our gear. It was done out like a log cabin, was warm and dry, and had one wall supported by a copy of the Bible. Considering the amount of kit we'd have there, I was pleased to see security seemed tight. Barbed wire had been lovingly wrapped round the top of the perimeter fence. Entrance was by keypad only. The broken pane in the door just above the keypad was protected by a high security plastic bag and sellotape. The fanlight in the kitchen flapped in the breeze. Pierre fastened it with some gardening twine.

The compensation for the bunkhouse was the ten-minute walk to the Clachaig Inn, one of Scotland's finest pubs. I leaned against the bar, weighing up the choice of beer. I'll just have a pint of....."I'm nae talkin' tu yoo" the bar manager was a friendly local who'd somehow survived the Massacre. Eventually we got pints and settled in the side room called the Snug, where we could all sit together away from the hubbub of the main bar. I wondered how Dagmar was coping with the food order. "**Thirdy seveeen!**" A girl emerged from the kitchen with trays of food. "She's Canadian," said Kevin, stating the obvious, but with a nervous grin suggesting the fear of redundancy at the hands of a race which didn't require radios. Dagmar came back with our food tickets. Not bad, only a few numbers to go. I was starving. "**Fordy wuun in the Snuuug!**" My haggis arrived with neeps and tatties and a liberal helping of Canadian gob dressing. Before I could comment, a wizened head appeared through the hatchway. "There's nae charge for the dressing." Well, thank you, Mr MacDonald. Let's hope you don't meet any Campbells on the way home.

The snow in Glencoe was all above about 400 metres. From the lay-by on the A82, the plan was to ascend Stob Coire nan Lochan by the most direct route, stopping on the way for some avalanche awareness training (and to make us aware of any avalanche danger!). This we did on a flatter section of the generally steep ascent, which in the summer is the site of three lochans. We split into two groups, one instructed by Howie and the other by George. The weather forecast warned of a category 3 avalanche risk, but our snow pits showed it to be a bit better than that, with the only discernible layer being the top inch of wind slab. George demonstrated how to form a quick personal pit with an ice axe, so we could easily keep checking for changes in snow conditions during our climb.

From here we split into three parties. Howie led one up the ridge on the left, agreeing to meet the rest of us on the summit for lunch. Abby led the "girlies are best" group up through the severest rock and ice, followed by Larissa and Kevin – Kevin? – in a flail of ice axes and crampons. The rest of us followed a snow-filled gully up the centre straight to the top. Someone called this Easy Gully, but with the footholds breaking up due to the sugary snow and the steepness, I was knackered when I emerged on the top. I don't know what happened to George, but I do know he saved the life of a Welshman, who was about to plunge off the summit in the wrong direction. "Are you from the Lake District? I was ice climbing on Great End last week-end," he claimed. Of course you were, mate! "He didna hae a cloo," confided George. By now George was passing himself off as a local guide by a) not wearing a team jacket, b) showing off his encyclopaedic local knowledge (thirty five times on Aonach Eagach, George, have you considered counselling?), and c) a half-decent attempt at the local accent.



Most of the rest of us were wearing our team kit, though helmets (not supplied by the team) left scope for some individuality. Indeed the variety could have filled a kit test in TGO. "KISS ME" and "BELLA BELLISSIMOOOOO" adorned one. The possible advantage of this design could be to demonstrate to a passing nymphette that the wearer has an interesting personality. The disadvantage is that the design dissuades any nymphette from risking an encounter with said personality. One of our female team members confirmed this to me, though obviously in the tradition of all great investigative journalism, I promised not to mention Larissa by name. Mine's an old fashioned design from a discount evening, slightly resembling a First World War French steel helmet. Advantage: cost. Disadvantage: may achieve a kiss, but out of sympathy rather than lust. Jonathan's was the opposite, ultra modern, matching his ice axes. You know the type, drop them in

the snow, and you're not quite sure which end to pick up. Advantage: likely to persuade nymphette wearer is the business, unless the wearer is Jonathan. Disadvantage: worn by Jonathan. George had the lightest one of the lot, a sporty blue number vaguely reminding me of a cycling helmet. Advantage: could save money on a cycle helmet. Disadvantage: looked rather odd without accompanying bicycle. But it was Abby's which won the prize for being the most attractive, as it was cunningly disguised as a Bolivian woollen hat, complete with pigtails. Advantage: 8 out of 10 for 'Wow!' value, persuading others you really have climbed in Bolivia, apart from those who've come across the stall that sells them on Keswick market. Disadvantage: unless you're fortunate enough to be Bolivian, it doesn't offer much head protection, as it is in fact just a woolly hat.

Night time. Shoehorned into my bunk, I dread the moment when I can't hang on any longer. Paul nips out for a quick slash. It's all right for him, on the ground, right by the door. I picture the journey I'll have to undertake. How can I manage that in the dark without waking anyone? It's no good, I've got to go! I shoehorn myself out of my bunk and across the room, tripping over the sofa in the middle of the room. Sofa? Why? It's facing the wall! That must've woken somebody. Down the stairs, across the cold concrete floor. Relief. Don't fart. Please! "If not here, where else," my backside complains. Flush. A flush that could be heard in Glasgow, like a steam train emerging from a tunnel. I scurry back upstairs and into my bunk. Ten minutes pass. The great white telephone rings again. It's someone else's turn.

The second day dawned cold and sunny to the average crop of injuries as a result of the day before. Keith succumbed overnight to Canadian gob stew, and decided to leave early. He arrived back in Kendal and recovered in time to attend two callouts before the end of the week-end. He thus finds himself the proud receiver of the Membership Secretary's special 'No Points Award', his two Scottish training points being nullified by his two call-out points. This is based on the incontrovertible logic of the impossibility of being in two places at once. Well done, Keith!

Mike recovered overnight from the cramp he'd suffered on yesterday's descent. Did I mention that? Oh well, you can't have everything. Hamish, who we discovered sleeping in the porch (by stepping on him), ducked out due to an ankle injury he claimed to have sustained climbing with Jonathan on Thursday. But I have to say we had some serious doubts. Firstly, we were unsure whether he had been banished to the porch for snoring or whether he had gone there willingly to avoid it. The only clue was that John Everett woke up covered in wallpaper, the claim being that his snoring had dissolved the adhesive.....in this case Blutac. Secondly, there was the Thai Girl Guide group who tried to gatecrash breakfast. And thirdly, only a few hours later he was keen to complete the Aonach Eagach ridge at night. We returned from our day's training to find him constructing an ankle splint out of a Karrimat. Eventually George persuaded him to give it a miss by promising to accompany him later in the year. (Thirty-six? I think I'll have to raise this in committee.)

So only fifteen of us set off up Buachaille Etive Beag. The idea was to practise ice axe braking and snow belays on the ridge below Stob Dubh. This we did, split into two groups as before. George's group learned the original method of ice axe braking without the axe. Those left after round one were then handed an axe halfway down the slope.....or in Jonathan's case weren't handed an axe halfway down the slope. Perhaps he didn't know which end to grab. I'm not sure as I was in the other group, failing to stop with an axe from the top. We'd set up our slide in an area littered with snow burrows. This was too much for Pierre. Soon all we could see was his backside poking out from an excavation. We all caught the mood, frantically searching for a slope with sufficient snow depth for a proper snow hole. Pierre led the way to a virgin patch near the edge of the ridge, closely followed by Howie. The snow crumbled easily under their attack – perhaps too easily? Pierre suddenly dropped two feet. "Oh no! Water" he exclaimed. Howie elegantly pirouetted out to avoid wet boots. Pierre spent his lunchtime wringing out his socks.

We descended Stob Dubh the quick way, off the ridge into Lairig Eilde, which necessitated traversing steep snow slope. Dagmar & I helped George and Howie with some short rope practice for their Winter ML. After a while Howie handed me over to Jonathan, swapping rucsacs to save disturbing the rope. Cascades of ice covered the rocky outcrops piercing the slope. These were admired by the ice climbers among us for ice climbing, we assumed. But no, Howie emerged below the snow line with an iceberg poking out of the top of his rucsac. "For the whisky" he grinned, as he triumphantly handed the weighty sac back to Jonathan to lug to the car park. By Sunday there was still plenty of ice left in the kitchen sink. But no whisky.

**Ian Johnson**

## Exercise Reports

### Wednesday 9 March – Orienteering

Dan Shiels organised an evening's happy orienteering in the dark on Potter Fell. I'm sure a good time was had by all, though the appointed correspondent hasn't managed to get a report to the editor...

### Sunday 20 March – Rescue and Evacuation

Hamish and Paul broke the news to a select group gathered at base. They had planned for a day of training with a 'twist'. The group looked pensive – these twists are rarely good news for the participants. Cinematographer Hamish Spielberg would be manning a camcorder, and we would then review all the footage at the end of the day to give a unique perspective on our performance. Lead roles were quickly cast. John Everett was running the show with Keith side stage to assist. George would control the casualty scene, and Dave Ritchie was cast as the medic. The lead actors struck off with the remainder of the cast in Mobile 1 for some on-location filming.

We had been advised that a female fell runner was injured on sunny Farleton Fell, and she was swiftly located near the top. The casualty was found to have an open fracture right tibia and fibula, left shoulder injury and was getting hypothermic. Naturally, she was firmly wedged in some rocks. And she was deaf. Sadly, the camera wasn't on hand to record Dave R's initial reactions but needless to say by the time the film crew arrived he was in complete control. She was given oxygen and morphine, her cervical spine immobilised and she was transferred with care to the stretcher. We negotiated the six-foot stile, found a heli site, let off some smoke and let the air ambulance take the strain. We then stood back and waited for the credits to roll. Sadly, it soon became apparent that mutual backslapping was a little premature.

Our informant had wandered off and was now also missing. He was, of course, diabetic (another of those twists). We searched across the top of Farleton and it wasn't long before we found an unconscious male fell runner. A quick ABCDE and secondary survey didn't suggest any injury and given the history of diabetes he was treated for hypoglycaemia and hypothermia. Some IM glucagon, a dash of hypostop and a modicum of casbag action and he was looking much perkier in short order. A quick stretcher carry to the vehicles and our director, Hamish Scorsese, called a wrap.

Back at base we settled down to enjoy the matinee. There was no time for editing so we were able to enjoy the director's uncut version in its full reality TV glory. To the credit of all it held together very well, giving a good overall impression of the rescue. It was useful to see a fuller picture of a rescue from several perspectives and added interest to the exercise. We will look forward to the sequel - *Nightmare on High Street* perhaps?

**Euan Lawson**

## Garburn Pass ETRO

The pass has been closed for repairs since October 2004 and will remain so until finished, but as from 25 April 2005 an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) will be in place. The ETRO will restrict the use of motor cycles, 4x4 and carriage drivers to limited periods controlled by the issue of permits. Mountain bikers, walkers and horse riders will still have complete access.

The ETRO applies to the section from the junction with Dubbs Road on the Troutbeck side (grid 421032) to just before the junction with the tarmac road in Kentmere (grid 455043), the order also states that the route can only be used in one direction, from west to east, i.e. Troutbeck to Kentmere.

Although it's possibly as quick to get to the Pass summit from the Dubbs side, (not having to travel the full length of the valley), I shall seek permission to access the Kentmere lower slopes from the Kentmere side if required in an emergency. The lock combinations will be issued monthly, just the same as those for Gatesgarth Pass. As this system seems to work OK, I see no reason to alter it.

Full details of the ETRO will be on the main noticeboard at base for all to see.

**John Everett**



### 5 March

Just when you thought that maybe spring was approaching... a heavy snow storm in Langdale stopped a couple of climbers on White Ghyll slabs from completing their route and caused them to become benighted. Luckily for them, their torchlight was seen, and LAMRT was alerted. Since they were still involved in a very lengthy rescue elsewhere, Kendal was asked to assist. 14 members of the team responded. Andy Dell abseiled down to the climbers who were then hauled to safety. The helicopter (our good friends in Rescue 177) that had been called earlier then flew the cold but uninjured casualties and team members from the fell top to the valley bottom.

### 6 March

A man walking with his wife and daughter on Shipman Knotts complained of chest pains. Two vehicles containing 14 team members were dispatched up the track. At the same time a call for assistance was made to the North West Air Ambulance. By the time the occupants of our first vehicle were in sight of the casualty site, the helicopter was already on scene. The casualty was then flown directly to hospital, and his family walked down to their car in the valley.

### 24 March

A despondent man in his 30s went missing from home, and the police were concerned for his safety. LAMRT had already started a search the previous night. A number of team members and Search Dog Kess were airlifted to a fell top near Blea Tarn before sweeping back down to the road. The search was called off shortly before dusk.

### 25 March

The search from the previous day resumed in the morning, this time involving some six teams and a number of search dogs. Kendal team members and the team's dog were asked to search in Greenburn to the north of Wetherlam. Although the search again proved fruitless, the man was found alive on 26 March after three nights out.

### 26 March

A walk in the Fairfield area turned into a bigger undertaking than expected for a family with a couple of young children. When the family failed to arrive as scheduled, Patterdale MRT asked for assistance from LMRT who in turn sought our help. SARDA was also called. The family turned up safe and well before the team could be deployed on the hill.

### 26 March

9pm and the pager went again. A man had separated from his two walking companions somewhere in the Great End area. The friends were concerned for his welfare and alerted the police. LAMRT members were already involved in another search so asked for Kendal's assistance. After enjoying LAMRT's hospitality and toast for some time, the searchers were about to be deployed when the man called the police from a pub in Langdale to say that he was off the hill and safe, so we stood down and headed for home.

## What's On

### Tuesday 5 April

Base & Vehicles Working Group 19.30h

### Wednesday 6 April

Ops & Membership sub-committee 19.30h

### Wednesday 13 April

Training: Downed Aircraft 19.00h

### Saturday 16 April

Base Spring Clean 10.00h

### Sunday 24 April

Training: Personal Crag Skills 9.00h

### Wednesday 27 April

Equipment Working Group 19.30h

### Saturday 30 April

Collection: Marks & Spencer 9.00h

### Wednesday 4 May

Main committee meeting 19.30h

### Wednesday 11 May

Training: Water Safety 19.00h

### Wednesday 18 May

Equipment Working Group 19.30h

### Saturday 21 May

Collection, Tebay Services

### Sunday 29 May

Training: Steep Ground / Security 9.00h

### Tuesday 31 May

Base & Vehicles Working Group 19.30h

### Wednesday 1 June

Ops & Membership sub-committee 19.30h

### Saturday 4 June

Collection: Westmorland Centre

### Wednesday 22 June

Equipment Working Group 19.30h

### Saturday 25 June

Collection: Asda

### Wednesday 6 July

Main committee meeting 19.30h

### Saturday 9 July

Collection: Killington Lake Services

### Saturday 30 July

Collection: Asda

### Wednesday 3 August

Ops & Membership sub-committee 19.30h

### Saturday 13 August

Collection: Booths

### Saturday 27 August

Collection: Asda

## New2

### Update

B&V working group have finalised all the bits and pieces that go into the conversion of a production vehicle to one that is almost bespoke. Switches, interior lights, gear cage, stretcher carrying etc. have all been considered and a detailed quotation has been accepted in principal. The New2 has been ordered and a space allotted on the production schedule of O&H Conversions; delivery should be around mid to late summer, and as yet, still within budget.

### Old2

Original 2 must last until, and beyond, the delivery of its successor, New2. A plea, an official request or instruction - call it what you will: I am asking all drivers to continue to treat M2 with the care and respect you have shown over the last fifteen years. The New2 will deplete funds considerably, and we don't want any large repair bills just to maintain M2 for what may be only a few months. So, please, no racing starts, racing gear changes or wheel spins, just good smooth steady driving.

Thanking you in anticipation  
**John Everett, Vehicle Officer**

## Shorts

- George Robertson wonders whether anyone found a pair of spare socks in Scotland. If so, please point them in George's direction and let them walk home.
- Personal first aid kits are available in the Equipment Room for all those who recently passed the MRC Cas Care exam for the first time. Help yourself to a kit and tick your name on the list.
- The new-style cas cards are now available. Help yourself from the white box in the Equipment Room.
- What goes around, comes around. Having helped pile the agony onto all those who did the Cas Care exam in the latter part of 2004, Dave Winchester recently had to take his periodic paramedic requalification. Cas Care blood, sweat and tears revisited ten-fold on him. No gloating, now. Anyway, he's not looking for a new job, so he must have passed – congratulations!
- Overheard at the start of the March training session, just after being told that Hamish would be using a video camera during the day as a way of having a feed-back session. Dave Ritchie: "If I had known I was going to be filmed, I would have arranged my hair." Dave Winchester: "If I had known I was going to be filmed, I would have grown some hair."
- Lest Keith's nomination for a POTY award mysteriously goes missing, let it be noted here that Keith Pittman was nominated in the "Oops, they were in my rucksack all along" category on 5 March. While repacking vehicles and generally clearing up after the callout on said date, Keith was puzzled as to where all the slings had gone, leading to dark mutterings about "probably been left at L&A's base" etc. All was revealed when he lifted his own rucksack up to find that it was even fuller than usual. At least he can truthfully claim on this occasion that he hadn't put them in there himself and simply forgotten doing so, as we SAGA-card-carrying members are wont to do...
- Those nice people at the Outdoor Shop in Stony Stratford on the mountainous outskirts of Milton Keynes – used to be my local outdoor equipmentsshop until I moved to Kendal – have set up a discount scheme offering up to 30% online discount to all MR and SARDA members if you register with them by visiting <http://www.theoutdoorshop.com/Outdoor/ProductDetails.aspx?language=en-GB&product=Stat076>.

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