

Trip Report: South Pennines

Date: 15th August 2015

Group: Tony (leader), Lynn, Caryle, Colin, Mike H, Mike W, Selina, Steve, Sarah, Dave C, Dave F

Route: Hollingworth Lake, Rochdale Way, Under M62, Pennine Way, Over M62, Blackstone Edge

Total Distance: 12.9 miles

Total Ascent: 2200 ft

Weather: Dull with light showers at first, brightening up later in the afternoon.

Time: 6 hours

A last minute step-in for me as Lesley couldn't make the planned Lakes trip, and not wanting to drive over 2 hours all the way up the M6 I thought it would be a nice to do a South Pennines route we did many moons ago, older in fact than the earliest blog entry, but not quite as my old dog Tilly who has some unhappy memories of Blackstone Edge...

It was good to see Dave C as a last minute walker and good to see Dave F at our Hollingworth Lake meeting point at 9:30 - as planned, and sorry to hear Mike A was full of cold and couldn't make it.

The first part of our walk followed the Rochdale Way around the edge of the lake and across a rugby pitch (thankfully no match was on), a short ascent and under the roaring M62 viaduct and onto a very confusing (well for the leader at any rate) crossroads around Tunshill Lane (one path arrow even pointed towards the heavens).

I thought the Rochdale Way looked a bit dull and obvious ;-) and so decided we'd head up hill under the pylons and a not so obvious grassy track on to the Ogden, Kitcliffe and Piethorne reservoirs and to make things even worse the rain then started. But luckily it had petered out by the time we reached the valley floor and we could enjoy a lovely coffee stop in sunshine by the water.

The trail took us alongside Hanging Lees reservoir and upwards to the A672 by the Rams Head Inn (no stopping now) and then along the busy road for half a mile to join the Pennine Way and northwards along the firm but uneven Pennine Way flagstones and we passed White Hill trig-point (1529 feet).

A footbridge carried us across the M62 and it was great to escape the roar of the traffic and we soon had Blackstone Edge in our sites. The skies were starting to clear a bit now and so this seemed like a good spot for lunch at 13:40 (or as Selina called it afternoon tea!).

Amanda had provided some lovely base camp Scottie Dog biscuits and we played 'guess the power-station' while we munched.

The views of Manchester were marvellous from the Edge, and Lynn, Caryle and Selina performed gymnastics on the trig point (1549 feet). Our gradual descent was along a Roman road and the Aiggin Stone bearing the letters "IT" which Mike H tells us no-one understands - bit like my code.

We then had an odd walk through the grounds of a golf-course, a lovely wood, and past a just-married couple posing for photographs by a stream. We arrived back at the lakeside car-park having covered the advertised 12 miles, a new one for me - walking the mileage that was promised.

The late sun must have gone to poor Colin's head as he was trying to tell me Everton had just beaten Southampton 3-0.

Just over an hour later and we were in the Yew Tree for a lovely beer or two.

Now, has anyone seen my dog?

Tony