

**Trip Report: Snowdonia****Date:** 23rd May 2010**Group:** Les, in charge of worrying; Mike, in charge of Les; Lynda, token hippie; Elaina, artistic interpretation; Colin, Scottish International envoy; Tony, Scouse international envoy; Sue, member of the Laid back party; Della, friend of the leader; Phyllis, interpreter; Chrissie, in charge of sanity. Of course we needed huskies and they were: Tilly (mad Black lab), Roxie (wannabee Black lab), Polo (wannabee Black lab)**Route:** Aber Falls**Total Distance:** Unknown**Total Ascent:** Unknown**Weather:** Unknown

The Carneddau (Welsh for the Carneds!) are a notoriously difficult range of hills to access, so what better reason than that to have a go at accessing them. Realising that I would need a strong group behind me to ensure the success of this intrusion into the hidden world of the Carneddau I put a team together with the capabilities to deal with the harsh, remote, environment we would be faced with.

Our difficulties began almost immediately on Sunday morning.

What part of LEAVING AT 7.30AM didn't Tony Q (name changed to protect the guilty) understand! He arrived at 7.40am claiming spousal neglect as an excuse!

Further problems soon presented themselves. Mike and Lesley had carelessly left their car in Waverton the previous evening and so we were all forced to detour there to salvage said vehicle.

Not satisfied with this delay they then insisted on depositing the vehicle in the Park and Ride Nr. Sainsbury's. So it seemed like the day began with a treasure hunt! Well at least we didn't end up at a car boot sale!

The tour of Cheshire completed we cruised down to "Aber" and rolled up at base camp ready to wander at about 9.30am.

The leader thought it wise to lull the team into a false sense of security by taking them up to Aber Falls by the "tourist" route, little did they know what awaited them after the falls!

The main problem we faced as we progressed was botanical.....bluebells everywhere, and lovely they were.

Soon however the hard work began and we crossed a stile to begin the ascent to the col below Moel Wnion.

This bit was tough, well not really, just a bit of a pull. Still there was lots of moaning and groaning, examples: "Oh I think I'm losing my voice"; "Oh I,m running on empty"; "Oh I think Polo wants a drink"; "Oh just get on

with it"; "What's the matter with you?"

As with all teams we needed a bit of friction to pull us together and so it was when we all sat down for a welcome break after the short sharp shock of the initial climb we were bound as one, a formidable climbing machine.

Camp 1 was at 500m.

Now you may wonder about the weather? Well it was 'ot.

The saving grace was that there was a cooling breeze and this helped reduce the occurrence of hyper thingamabob.

So!: Interesting observation, the first 450m (we started at 50m) seemed hard. Once we had had our break the next 500m seemed to evaporate effortlessly!

How does that happen? Well maybe it was the fact that it took us best part of  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to do the first 450m and 2 miles to do the last 500m! Say red backwards.....DER.

Mutiny, insurrection, civil disobedience, insubordination, call it what you will, it happens.

I never thought it would happen to me. I take full responsibility.....I let control slip from my grip, the subversive elements quickly took control and lead us to the wrong peak, Foel Grach!

How could this have happened? I couldn't care less.....It was a great place for lunch and I was hungry!

It was important to re-establish control of the group before anarchy prevailed so I tentatively suggested we by-pass the next top Carnedd Gwennllian (formerly Carnedd Uchaf and miraculously got away with it, they followed me to Foel Fras.

Descending grassy slopes we arrived at the next col faced with a decision! To follow the ridge (uphill) or to opt for the valley (downhill) look away now Jim if you don't want to know the result.

The vote was hung but I demonstrated my liberal tendencies by leading the group down into the valley. Much whooping and howling of joy from certain sections of the team.

A steady trudge along an access road lead us to an insignificant junction with a path leading to the river bank.

The path continued down delightfully past the remains of Shergar to the road head and our final descent to the cars. Not a bad day. England expected and England got! Well done everyone.

Regards

Richard