

Trip Report: Snowdonia**Date:** 23rd May 2008**Group:** Mike A (leader), Lesley, Chris (student guest), Jim G, Sue, Richard, Frank, Chrissie, Jill**Route:** Snowdon Horseshoe**Total Distance:** 7.46 miles**Total Ascent:** 3000 ft**Weather:** Dry with high cloud well above Snowdon's summit**Time:** 6 hours

Yes - it's official. The weekend now begins on Friday. At least it did on this occasion with a mixture of the retired, some sciving workers and the odd student. The reason for Friday was to give an opportunity for some first time Dolomitters to discover if they really have a head for heights without the usual weekend throngs giving them a hard time in the Crib Goch queues.

The plan worked reasonably well except that Lynn had to cry off with a bad back, however we were lucky enough to have the company of Sue and Chrissie, who were keen for a bit of excitement even though not coming to Italy.

The weather was dry but distinctly murky as we travelled westward towards Snowdonia, so we were amazed to find all the highest summits of Snowdonia visible as we approached. The forecast was for the possibility of rain by the afternoon, with lightening thrown in for good luck, so we thought that we would at least be able to do the first half of the Horseshoe in decent conditions and then it wouldn't be so desperate if conditions deteriorated for the remainder.

The second big advantage of a Friday was the space available at the car park. However, Richard somehow forgot to organise his "pay and display" and spent the rest of the day wondering if they had a clamping policy as tough as the speeding policy in North Wales. (Now, that would have made him late back at the Dysart!)

We followed the traditional route up the Pyg Track and took the right hand junction up towards Crib Goch without incident, however after a while, Jill began to feel the pace with all the ascent having come right from the start. It transpired that she had been popping travel sickness pills and whilst she managed to get through the car journey without feeling sickly, the walking was creating a few problems.

We slowed the pace a little and arrived at the start of the Crib Goch ridge in good shape and with perfect conditions - the rock was bone dry and there was little wind.

With yours truly at the front and Jim at the rear, we kept everyone together for the ridge and scrambles up to the summit of Carnedd Ugain. Everyone coped well and seemed to enjoy it. Jill certainly won't have any problems on the Ferratas (as long as we can get the ski lifts up to the them!).

We continued up to the summit of Snowdon (which is still a building site) for the obligatory photos and quickly moved off down the South Ridge to find a sheltered lunch spot which we achieved without too much trouble. It was then as far as the solitary standing stone which marks the start of the South East Ridge to continue the Horseshoe. Where do they get these standing stones from!

As is usual on these occasions, it was claimed that the hardest part was over, downhill all the way etc etc so Chrissie was threatening mutiny when told she had to make the summit of Y Lliwedd after all that descent! We were all well strung out by now, but conditions were still great (no lightning) so we regrouped at the summit and by now everyone could see where we were headed almost back as far as the car park, but more impressively, everyone could see where they had been for the first half of the walk.

We came off the ridge and headed down to meet the Miners Track and then back to the car park. No prizes for guessing where the next stop might be. Yes, it was Friday and that means happy hour at the Dysart from 18.00 - perfect timing!

All agreed it had been a great day out and all novices and non scramblers can feel proud of their achievement. It may not be a mega walk in terms of distance but it is for good reason one of the classic mountain walks in the UK

Mike A