

North Wales Meet – Ty Powdr, nr Llanberis, September 2013

Mike, Ben, Jon, Jeff, Richard & Jamie arrived at drive to the hut on Friday evening to be faced with the Fortress like entrance procedures through the farmyard to the hut. There are 2 locked gates and an intermediate gate to pass through before entrance to the car park is gained. Unfortunately Mike, not realising the significance of the shapes of the 8 keys provided, supplied the early arrivals with the hut key but not the gate(s) key. An hour or so later Mike, Ben, Austin and I (Colin) arrived with a full complement of keys and we made our way slowly to the hut. Shortly afterwards John arrived none the wiser.

Plans were hatched; Jon, John and Jeff were planning somewhat of a slate fest given the predicted good weather for Saturday, Mike and Ben were planning some scrambling and easy climbs, Richard was planning some epic run somewhere and Jamie and I were set to attempt the Welsh 3000's we were already up against it but were still confident given the good weather forecast. So dinners were eaten, whisky was drunk (by some) and Jamie and I were still planning at Midnight and finally got to bed at about 1am only to be up at 5 for an early start. What a life!

As the morning broke it seems that the weather men got it wrong – the predicted sunshine was instead replaced by a low mist and rain. Ever the optimists Jamie and I had breakfast and departed the hut more or less on time at 5:55 (well 25mins late actually) and proceeded to get out of Fort Knox in the dark. Half an hour later we were at the start on a dank and horrible morning. Not to be deterred by such trifles as rain we set off towards Crib Goch stopping to chat to anyone who passed our way.



We reached Bwlch y Moch to some spectacular views (mostly of the rain coming in from the east) and the promise of rain for some hours. Anyway we soon got going and despite a few wrong turns in the mist arrived at the top of Crib Goch a respectable 1:30 later.



Continuing along the ridge and up to Garned Ugain we met several parties, who we would meet later, going the other way after either camping on Snowdon (no sleep whatever) or starting early from Llanberis. Snowdon was reached 5mins outside the target time of 2:45hrs – not bad considering the conditions. Then it all started to go awry!

The Snowdon café was indeed inviting on a cold and damp morning and had just opened so we decided we would have a coffee and a 10min stop. 30mins later or so we left the warmth of the café and started the next leg to Nant Peris. All was going well we were chatting away and rattling down the hill at some pace. Unfortunately for us the wrong way – a schoolboy error – you could say navigational error but we weren't even navigating! So when Jamie said "I can hear the train but where is the track" we decided to have a look at the map & gps which told us we had walked for 45mins down the ranger path. After several minutes of "I can't believe it" and other well-known mountaineering language we decided we would have to retrace our steps back up (200m lost) and got back on track having lost another hour or so. However the view toward the Garnedds was opening up and we could nearly see where we were going.

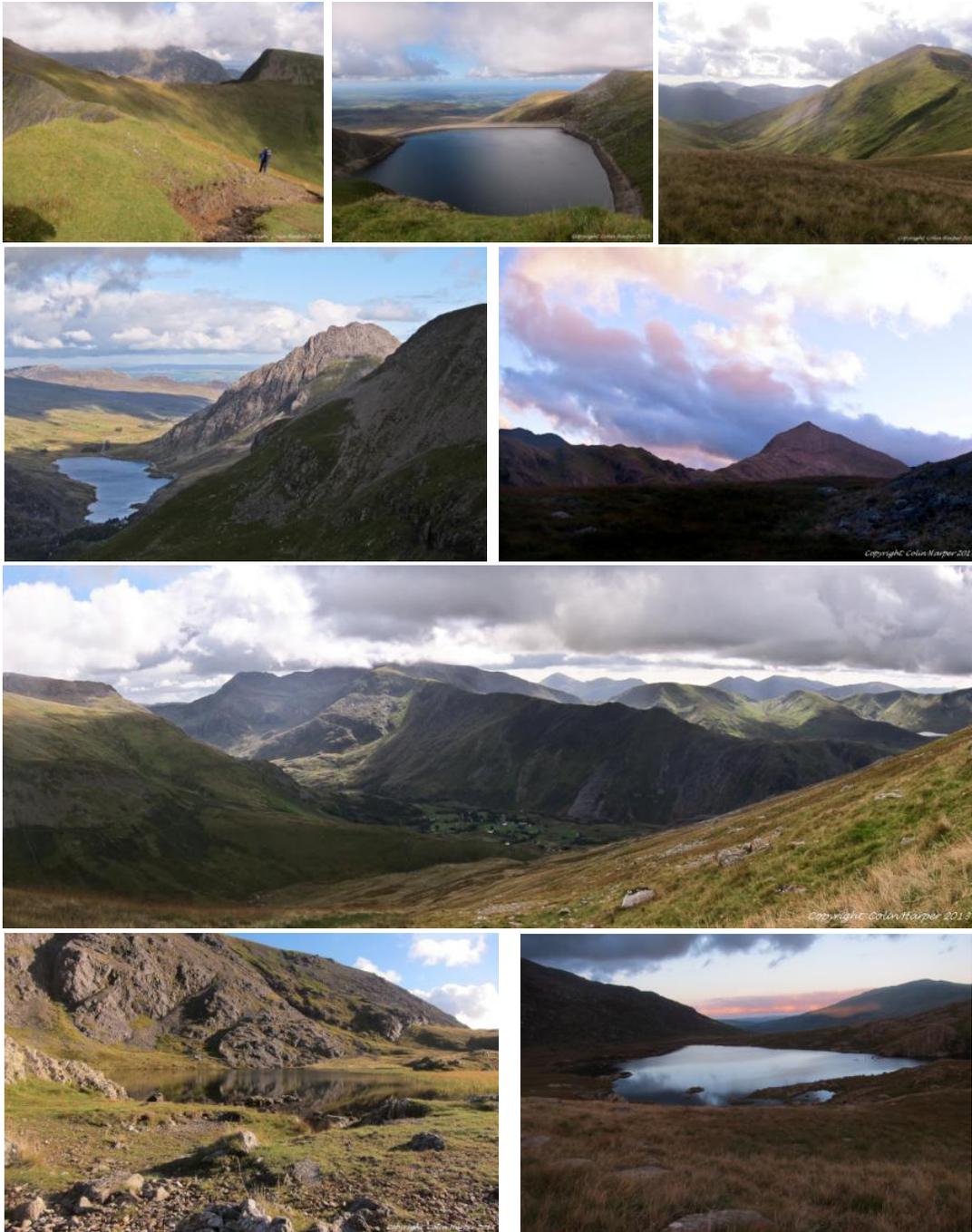


The drop into Nant Peris was easily the worst part of the trek – steep, boggy, tussocky, no path. All part of the fun but not when you are up against it. We eventually arrived at our food stash near the camp site in Nant Peris about 2hrs behind schedule and decided to have lunch just to make it 2 and a half hours. After a welcome break and some restocking we set off in the baking sunshine on the slog



up Elidir Fawr. Jamie made some new friends who offered us a lift but we declined gracefully. The views from the slopes of Elidir Fawr were spectacular in the now afternoon light. Cloud still remained on Snowdon as it often does but was clearing quickly. At the summit of Elidir Fawr (reached 15mins faster than predicted) we met up again with one of the groups we crossed paths with on the Crib Goch ridge – we thought we were doing OK until we saw how slow they were walking. We set off after 10mins rest

towards Y Garn with spectacular views of Tryfan and the Carneddts but unfortunately it was crunch time. Nearing 4pm we realised that Ogwen was still 3hrs away which would have meant plodding on late into the early hours of Sunday morning. We decided that this was not fair on Mike who had offered to pick us up so we cut short the attempt and instead finished a very enjoyable round back at Pen-y-pass.



We arrived back at the hut around 7:30 to find out what others had been doing but it was deserted – only Austin had returned from his walk into Llanberis. The others were still out! Inspection of the visitor book revealed that Jon, John, and Jeff had only booked in for one night and had not intended to return. Mike and Ben walked in shortly afterwards having had a great afternoon around the Llanberis area.

They had originally planned to climb the Llanberis cliffs but were thwarted by greasy, wet rock so diverted to the Llanberis pass and climbed Parsons Nose (diff) which usually goes in the wet (but was somewhat greasy) followed by an excellent grade 3 scramble on the Clogwyn y Person Arete.



Jon, John and Jeff ended up on the Skyline area of the Llanberis slate quarries where they completed seven good routes. Their plan was to get as much as we could on the Saturday, before going home as the forecast was not good for Sunday.

It was decided that the Skyline Buttress, in the Australia Level offered the best option for dry rock, getting the most of the sun and breeze going.

Despite some light rain, Jeff, John and Jon managed to get seven routes done. These were a mix of trad VS/HVS and 3 fantastic 40m long sports climbs; 'Ruby Marlee meets Dr Holingsworth', 'Plastic Soldiers' and 'Clash of the Titans', all F6a and worth looking up if you are in the area. Amazingly Clash of the Titans requires 16 quickdraws. The photo shows John on Clash of the Titans on the right, the climber on the left is on the harder Plastic Soldiers.

