

OMM, 2008. Borrowdale

By Patrick Bonnett

Seven members of DFR took part in the Original Mountain Marathon (the OMM), starting in Borrowdale in the Lake District. The event combines fell running and orienteering over mountainous terrain with an overnight camp and teams carrying sufficient equipment including food, a tent and emergency gear to be self sufficient for two days.

Rob McSherry, Jason Allinson, Steve Lumb, Mike Mallon, Mark Beven, Alan Hunt and Patrick Bonnett competed in teams of two as part of a 2,500 strong field which enjoyed testing conditions due to some wet and windy weather. All the DFR members enjoyed good runs on day one and many completed their courses before the organisers took the decision to abandon the event - the first time this has happened in 41 years.

DFR members were then somewhat bemused to discover the amount of international media attention that the event had received whilst they were dodging puddles on the Saturday (and in the case of Alan celebrating his 50th birthday at the same time).

Unfortunately, the vast majority of reporting was sensational in nature and misrepresented the events of Saturday - for a much more balanced discussion read Richard Askwith's article in the Independent: <http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/general/others/the-extreme-world-of-mountain-marathons-975372.html>

Despite the weekend unfolding in ways that could not have been foreseen, all involved came away having had a weekend to remember and compare with the 1998 Howling Howgills KIMM.

Whilst the events of the weekend will be discussed amongst those in the fell running community and others for some time and there will be a variety of views as to "who did what when and should they have done?", there is no doubt that the mountain rescue services did a magnificent job.

There is an opportunity to say thank you to the teams through the Just Giving website. The vast majority of OMM competitors and DFR members did not need them over the weekend and (hopefully) will never need them, but they are there if required and you never know....so visit (and don't forget to Gift Aid): <http://www.justgiving.com/theomm08-mrtdonation>.