

Peaks CMAT winter weekend. 1st and 2nd February 2014.

The weather forecast could not have been worse: gales, rain, snow, but we're sensible folk and armed with a flask of hot chocolate (and avoiding the coffee) we headed for the hills. Despite all the predictions of the apocalypse, Saturday morning was beautiful and pinching ourselves hard we sped off to Edale to make the most of the sun before the inevitable rain arrived. Edale was resplendent in the sunshine and the valley sides provided shelter from the wind as we climbed up to Hollins Cross. Simon managed to smartly catch his flat cap as it Frisbeed off his head towards the valley floor when we popped above the parapet and headed along the ridge towards Mam Tor. The sun continued to shine, although the wind was picking up, and we carried on past some incredibly fast remote-control gliders (apparently flying at over 100 m.p.h.), taking shelter from the wind using the dry stone wall along Rushup Edge for a spot of lunch. Finally the clouds darkened and the snow whizzed in, but we were in just the right place and slid back into Edale, walking around the valley head and joining the Pennine Way at Upper Booth. The warmer air of the valley actually made the going tougher, as our Explorers swapped 'dancing on ice' for their favourite pastime 'mucking around in mud'! Needless to say Ben was soon caked in mud from toe-to-head, but nothing that some magical spaghetti Bolognese and apple crumble couldn't fix. The other groups soon made it back to Glenbrook too and we gobbled down our dinner to tales of who had fallen into the deepest bog and how the mud had reached up to Stumpy's nose!

The evening's storm blew through and Sunday was a much more civilised affair. We headed straight up the hill from Glenbrook with the Explorers navigating their way up Winhill Pike. The views out to Ladybower Reservoir, Kinder Scout and our hills the previous day were fantastic and we finally hit some mud-free ground up towards the summit, a perfect spot for an early lunch. Roly's group of Explorers soon arrived, racing along the final ridge and we headed on making the most of another amazing day. We arrived back at Glenbrook amidst scenes of furious work. We finally achieved a 'Guide-standard' of cleanliness in time for Denzel to be presented with his well-deserved Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service.



Heading up Mam Tor (note the lack of hats!)



Mucking around in mud.



The stunning panorama from the summit of Winhill Pike



Neil Bolger and Denzel