

Bob Graham Detailed Notes

These notes are intended to provide a short summary of the best line to take in terms of time and effort.

The notes are meant to be read in conjunction with the OS Explorer OL series of maps:- OL4, OL5, OL6 & OL7. However there is a new (as of 2005) map at 1:40,000 scale of the whole Lake District on one sheet. The map is produced by the [BMC](#) in association with [Harveys maps](#). The map is printed on plastic so it is tear resistant and completely waterproof! Someone at the BMC must have known about the Bob Graham Round as, although the main map finishes just to the north of Skiddaw, Great Calva appears on an “insert” on the back.

Grid references are in parentheses and are preceded with GR: (GR123456). Summits are not generally given grid references in these notes. Also some spellings may be different to those in common use: particularly the use of the correct “gill” as opposed to the pretentious “ghyll” introduced by Wordsworth and Southey.

Bearings are also in parentheses but are preceded by MB-: (MB-256). All bearings are magnetic rather than grid. The magnetic variation is taken as 3 degrees.

If anyone has any corrections or additions to make to these notes then please send them in.

There are several points on the round where there are alternative routes. These are indicated by the word (*alternative*) in the text. Hold your mouse over the word to see the variation.

Section Times

The table below shows expected times for each section for a number of schedules.

Clockwise

Schedule (hrs)	23	22	21	20	19	18
Keswick - Threlkeld	4:02	3:48	3:38	3:27	3:18	3:06
Threlkeld - Dunmail	4:41	4:22	4:09	3:58	3:44	3:34
Dunmail - Wasdale	6:20	5:55	5:37	5:22	5:04	4:49
Wasdale - Honister	5:19	4:59	4:45	4:32	4:18	4:05
Honister - Keswick	3:00	2:50	2:43	2:34	2:27	2:18

Section 1 Keswick to Threlkeld

Leave the Moot Hall and cut through one of the ginnels to the central car park. Cross to the main road and take the road to the left of Keswick Cycles. About 50m along this there is a footpath to the left. This leads to the footbridge over the river Greta. From here, go diagonally left across the park and through the wood by the path. At the road turn right and in 100m turn left onto a bridleway. This around Latrigg to join the road to the carpark at(**GR-280253**).

From the car-park at Latrigg, follow the motorway of a path to the summit of Skiddaw. Continue in the same line to (**GR263296**) then cut down right and cross the fence to gain a set of quad-bike tracks. When these begin to bear left, cut to the right to follow a slight path which leads over Hare Crag to the Skiddaw House track at a small bridge (**GR283303**). From the road crossing follow the beck on the righthand side for a hundred metres or so then bear right along a faint track to gain the main path on the ridge. (**Alternative:** From the stream head straight for the summit of Great Calva, an improving path these days.) There is a solitary fence post on the ridge at this point. Follow this to the summit of Great Calva (**MB-050**).

From the south end of the summit plateau follow a bearing of (**MB-147**) through increasingly high heather to gain the bridleway/track. (**Alternative:** Follow the fence eastwards from the S. summit into the valley bottom, turn right, cross the Caldew and head up onto Mungrisedale Common) A couple of hundred metres of very rough ground leads to the River Caldew at around (**GR296297**) at the big bend in the river. There is a sheepfold on the other bank about 200m from the river (not marked on the OS map). If the river is in spate, then head upstream until the fence crosses the river and use this. Now strike up onto Mungrisedale Common aiming for the cairn marked on the map. The ground is steep at first but eases to provide a steady ascent. You are likely to miss the cairn if your navigation is not accurate. There is a path leading towards Blencathra from the cairn but this fades as the ground begins to rise.. Take care not to veer too far to the right, you need to aim for the left end of the summit skyline (**MB-117**). Just before the ground steepens there is another sheepfold on the left (again not marked on OS map) and the path fades away. About 200m after the fold, bear right finding the best way through the screes, then in the same line to the summit of Blencathra.

The summit of Blencathra is at the top of Halls Fell Ridge. Descend this (**MB-154**) (**Alternative:** Doddick Fell provides an easier if slightly longer descent.) there is some exposed scrambling after a couple of hundred metres. Follow the path down the broader lower slopes before bearing right to the fell gate (**GR325263**). Straight down the bridleway, past a farmyard, to the minor road, follow this down to the A66.

Section 2 Threlkeld to Dunmail Raise

Cross the A66 and take a small road (**GR325254**) that leads down to the Greta and crosses it at Mill Bridge. The continuation is open to the public so carry on to

Newsham house (**GR331247**) and take the gate on the right to the open fell. Head for the end of the left hand ridge (**MB_128**) until a track is reached that traverses the hillside. (**Alternative:** head for the far edge of the woods on the right, go through the gate and follow a dry path to the old coach road. Now climb steeply up the front face of Clough Head) There is an old railway van at the foot of the ridge. Cross the fence and up the ridge (**MB-208 then MB-212**) to the summit of Clough Head.

The path in general is well defined from now on and the running is good. Head towards Calfwth Pike (**MB-194**) at which head towards Great Dodd (**MB-143 to Little Dodd then MB-077**). From the summit of Great Dodd head south west until the ground levels out

At the first slight rise a faint track heads rightwards (**MB-251**) to Watson's Dodd. A further faint track leads back to the main path just before the rise to Stybarrow Dodd. The main path contours round the summit area so head up left to the summit cairn. From the cairn, do not go to the cairn to the SW, but aim in a straight line to the left of this and drop down to join a good, wide, path that descends to Sticks Pass. This continues up Raise until the ground becomes rocky, where a path winds its way in the same general line to the summit.

The track turns right on the summit of Raise and is faint for a while but then good paths lead to White Side where a sharp left is made, then up to Helvellyn Lower Man and on to the top of Helvellyn.

Turn due south and follow the motorway until a junction at the first col, take the left branch and climb up onto the flanks of Nethermost Pike. The summit is the second of two cairned tops that can be seen from the main path.

From the summit take the grassiest route back to the main path and drop into the col. Where the main path skirts round to the right, keep close to the edge on the left and go over a rocky rise before climbing up to the summit of Dollywaggon Pike.

Keep close to the edge again where it is grassiest and gain the top of the zig-zags. There is a single fence post (actually an old gate post for the path to pass through the long-gone boundary fence) (**GR345128**) on the right that marks the line of an old fence. (**Alternative.** Follow the main path down to Grisedale Tarn, cross by the outflow and take a direct line up the face to the summit plateau of Fairfield) In the ground can be seen a groove which is the line taken by the fence. Follow this down, keeping to the right of the wall in the lower section, to the path that follows Raise Beck from Dunmail to Grisedale Tarn. Go round the obvious track on the far side of the tarn to the col between Fairfield and Seat Sandal. Leave sacks and bum-bags here (there is an old field) and climb the scree slope to Fairfield

From the summit of Fairfield head back down the route of ascent to the col and pick up sacks before climbing the ridge to Seat Sandal and follow the obvious path up the scree to an easing in the angle to the summit.

Take a line towards the north end of Steel Fell (**MB-293**) to a patch of reeds on the top of the steep part of the ridge to gain a trod that leads the lower end of the path dropping down by Raise Beck and so to Dunmail Raise.

Section 3 Dunmail Raise to Wasdale

There are two shallow gullies descending from Steel Fell. The left hand one is directly in front of you as you cross the stile. Head straight up this to (**GR322116**). An intermitently defined path leads left to the top of Steel Fell. (There is a boundary fence along the ridge to follow.)

Follow the path next to the fence, moving left to avoid a small crag at one point just after a bog bridged by some old fence posts. When the fence turns 90 degrees to the right, continue in the same line on the well defined path that keeps straight ahead past soft/boggy ground before bearing left to Calf Crag.

A good path leads to the pass at top of Far Easedale. Straight on over the “crossroads” following the vague path that follows a line of old fence posts. The path keeps to the left of the beck, (good water source) at one point heading up a subsidiary gully well to the left. The posts stop around 200m short (**GR289091**) of Sergeant Man, straight on to this. (**Alternative:** from a few hundred metres after the “crossroads” bear right up an open grassy gully and take a straight line to High Raise.)



[The alternative way to High Raise](#)

Good path leads in almost a straight line (**MB-325**) over sometimes boggy ground to High Raise. (**Alternative:** Do this in the opposite direction if doing High Raise first, then countour westwards to gain the path between High Raise and Thunacar Knott)

An almost straight (**MB-200 (approx)**), well defined, path leads to Thunacar Knott. Good running terrain. When the main path bears left at the first rocky section, keep straight on to the cairn at the summit.

Head straight towards an obvious small crag on the north side of Harrison Stickle. Pass this on the left then bear right to gain a broad gully from where an easy scramble gains the summit situated at the North end of the summit area.

Return via the scramble and broad gully to gain a grassy area. Bear round to the left and drop steeply down to the top of Dungeon Gill where a series of stepping stones are encountered. Follow the recently renovated path to the top of the stone shoot just before Pike o' Stickle then take the first line leading up left to a small shoulder from where the summit is easily gained.

Descend from the summit by the same route. Follow the wide footpath heading towards Langdale Combe (**GR262084**) at the top of Stake Pass. As you drop down

onto Martcrag Moor a faint path can be seen to the left of the main track. This leads in a direct, but boggy, line to the top of the steep bit of Stake Pass. Cross the beck (good water) and then leftwards up to gain a diagonal shelf (several small cairns) that leads to the col (**GR 255080**) between Rossett Pike and Mansey Pike. Follow the ridge to the summit of Rossett Pike.

Head (**MB-260**) to the top of Rossett Gill.

On the Langdale face of Bowfell are two parallel, diagonal shelves, similar to the one just used to get to Rossett Pike. Go straight ahead over broken rocky ground to gain a spring near the bottom of the upper shelf. Follow this, keeping to the grassy bits, to its end and go straight across to gain the continuation of the lower shelf where a faint path may be found (small cairns). Eventually you emerge onto the summit plateau of Bowfell at (**GR244069**). Gain the summit of Bowfell.

From the summit of Bowfell take the well marked path down to Ore Gap (**GR240073**) and so up to Esk Pike. Continue on the path to Esk Hause (**GR233081**)

Follow the main track that heads towards Scafell Pike until it turns leftwards carry straight on to the summit of Great End. The summit is the nearer top according to Wainwright.

Head back to the main track and follow this across very rough ground until a line may be taken to Ill Crag. Now head NW to Broad Crag then to Scafell Pike. Take care on the descent from Broad Crag.

Take the track (**MB-240**) down to Mickledore. Down and left of the col is a narrow chimney in the rockface. This is the start to Broad Stand. Squeeze through the gap to a platform. Most will require the assurance of a line (Rock gear needed) for the first two rock steps. After this the going is easy over smooth slabs leading up right. The summit lies around 400m away (**MB-220**).

If you decide that Broad Stand is not for you then drop down left from Mickledore and, keeping at the foot of the East Buttress, skirt round to the south to gain the path leading to Foxes Tarn. The line that loses least height is about 100ft below the main rocks. From the tarn (a very small pool) a worn path with some repaired sections leads up the scree to the summit plateau. Turn left for the summit

Follow the steep path leading down the bowl (roughly **MB-290**, **MB-247**, then **MB-310**) gain the Wasdale-Eskdale "Corpse Road" near to Brackenclose (**GR184070**) and follow this to the campsite and NT carpark (**GR183075**). It is possible (but I do not know if it is a legitimate right of way) to descend from (**GR192067**) to a stile in the corner of the field below and to follow the fence down to join the Brown Tongue path just above Brackenclose at (**GR186072**). Note that the carpark is locked between the hours of 2000 & 0700.

Section 4 Wasdale to Honister Pass

Go out to the valley road, turn left along and after about 100m there is a gate marked "Private" to the right. Go through this into the field and bear leftwards up to where the wall is replaced by a wire fence. There is a stile over the fence. Keeping the beck to the left go straight (or as straight as possible) up the fellside until beneath the final screes. Bear right towards a square boulder and gain a path through the screes and continue rightwards until a small cairn is reached. Now go directly up to the summit of Yewbarrow.

Continue northwards along the summit ridge but do not climb onto the north summit, but bear left at a cairn on the broad col and contour/descend round to pass beneath the end crags of Yewbarrow and so to Dore Head. (**GR174095**)

Take the well worn path rising on the other side of the col to gain the summit of Red Pike. Continue along the ridge towards Scoat Fell. Do not head towards the summit but keep to the left. This takes you directly to the end of the connecting ridge for Steeple. Go out and back along this ridge. Now follow the old stone wall (leftwards) along the ridge past the top of Scoat Fell.

Continue along the ridge, at first on the Ennerdale side, then after the first col take the right-hand path which leads to a small cairn, move to the Wasdale side and follow grassy rakes with some scree to gain Wind Gap. The climb up from here is very rocky until it broadens and rises to the summit of Pillar. The going now gets easier on the long descent to Black Sail Pass (**GR191114**)

Climb steeply up the rocky shoulder above the pass following a line of old fence posts to gain easier ground on the summit plateau of KirkFell. The summit is around 1/3 of a mile (**MB-155**), though it is as easy to continue to follow the old fence posts. From the summit head towards KirkFell tarn (**MB-050**) and pass it on the right to rejoin the main path. Now drop down to Beck Head via Rib End. Keep on a bearing of (**MB-085**) to take the path up Great Gable's NW ridge. This is all very stoney but it is the last big climb of the round.

From the summit of Gable descend the steep rocky path to Windy Gap and the short pull up to Green Gable. The going now becomes much easier.

From Green Gable follow the wide stoney track that leads down into Gillercombe, but after about 100m bear slightly left on another wide track. This becomes rocky as it drops to the tarns filling the col before Brandreth. The main path swings to the left but continue in a direct line for the summit of Brandreth. This way is grassier and easier going than the path.

Continue in a northerly direction, to cross a new fence at a stile. Follow the fence to Grey Knotts. The summit ridge is a rocky whale-back on the Borrowdale side of the fence, it is easiest to run along it than come in from the side. Back across the fence but do not follow it but go straight on before bearing left down a grassy trod. The ground

steepens and goes down a spur. At the foot of this spur, head right along a path until a further spur drops down to the quarry road. Go through the buildings to the car park.

Section 5 Honister Pass to Keswick

There is a wire fence leading from behind the youth hostel. Follow this for around 1 Km. Continue up the broad ridge of Dale Head. From the summit of this follow the narrowing rocky ridge (**MB-286**) that marks the head of Near Tongue Gill, at the narrowest point the path lies on the south side of the ridge. The summit of Hindscarth lies away from the main path so make a detour to reach it.

Take a narrow track that leads down and right from just south of the summit (approximately **MB-219**). This almost joins the main path at LittleDale Edge. At this point keep parallel to the main path until the slopes of Robinson begin to broaden, bear right to reach the summit of Robinson (The last top!!).

Take the NE ridge, there are two options: either drop down on the eastern side of this just before a steepening. Follow the path down to Scope Beck, with a steep section just before the valley floor. The track leads along the valley bottom to High Snab (**GR221189**). Alternatively: keep on the ridge (there is a rock step when level with the dam in the valley) until just before the intake wall it is possible to drop down right to the track. The remainder back to Keswick is on roads.

Go down the farm track, keeping right at the first junction and straight ahead at the second (by a chapel) to (**GR231193**). Pass through Little Town and continue to Stair. Straight over the cross-roads to the pub at Swinside. A short climb through the woods leads to an undulating descent to Portinscale.

Turn right at the chapel in Portinscale and go down the road to cross the river via a footbridge. After a short distance take the footpath on the right across fields then playing fields to enter Keswick close to the museum. Turn right and follow the main road to the bottom of the market square. Take the last climb to the Moot Hall. Well Done!