

Three Peaks Challenge

29-31 July 2011

24 hours, 3 summits, nearly 3000m of ascent

- are you ready for it??

*****14 places available!*****



The DES Three Peaks Challenge 2011 is the original mountain endurance challenge of the UK: climb the highest peaks in Scotland (Ben Nevis), England (Scafell Pike) and Wales (Snowdon) in 24 hours. Join us this summer for a challenge that will push you physically and mentally – it's certainly one that you'll never forget!

Itinerary

- Drive up on Friday
- Overnight in Fort William
- Begin midday on Saturday and aim to complete Ben Nevis by 5pm to avoid traffic on the drive down to Wasdale Head
- Overnight ascent of Scafell from Wasdale Head, aim to complete by 3am
- Drive down to Snowdon, again avoiding traffic, ascent of Snowdon. Ensure completion by midday on Sunday
- Drive back to Weymouth Sunday afternoon
- There is approximately 500 miles (800km) of driving between the three mountains

In order to complete the challenge, the team must:

- Ascend and descend all three mountains, from car park to car park
- NOT break any national speed limits
- Follow designated footpaths in order to minimise mountain erosion
- Support local businesses where possible – we will make cafe/refuelling pit stops in Llanberis, Horton-in-Ribblesdale and Fort William in order to fulfil this point!
- Not rely on Mountain Rescue services: the group will be accompanied by a fully qualified Mountaineering Instructor who also holds appropriate first aid qualifications
- Not drop litter: the group will adopt a 'zero impact' approach to the Challenge

- Not make an inappropriate amount of noise: the group will take the time of day/night and other mountain users into consideration at all times and keep noise to a minimum

Which route will we take on each mountain?

Ben Nevis

- From Glen Nevis Visitor Centre we will follow the path which contours and gently rises at first before becoming a little steeper and heading to a lochan (Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe). From here we continue on the path up a number of zig-zags to the top of Ben Nevis at 1344m – a total elevation gain of approx. 1275m

Scafell Pike

- We will begin our night-time ascent of Scafell from Wasdale Head, following the footpath we will continue on towards Lingmell, across the ghyll and on up to the summit of Scafell Pike at 978m – a total height gain of approx. 800m
- Care must be taken on our second descent in the dark

Snowdon

- We start our ascent of Snowdon from the Pen-y-Pass
- From here we have the option of taking either the Pyg Track or the Miner's Track – if we are feeling good we can ascend via the Miner's Track and descend via the Pyg Track – lots of options!
- At 1085m, we will have made a total height gain of approx. 725m to climb Snowdon
- Standing on top of Snowdon means the final summit but the challenge isn't over yet...we must ensure that we have ample energy reserves left for the descent and the finish line!

Approximate timings

These are the timings that we will aim for. Any time left over at the end will be a bonus!

- Ben Nevis: 5 hours
- Scafell Pike: 5 hours
- Snowdon: 4 hours
- Driving: 10 hours

We will therefore aim to keep to the following timetable:

12pm Start Ben Nevis
 5pm Finish Ben Nevis, start drive to Wasdale Head
 11pm Arrive Wasdale Head, climb Scafell Pike
 4am Finish Scafell Pike, start drive to Snowdon
 8am Arrive at Pen-y-Pass, begin climb of Snowdon
 12pm Finish descent from Snowdon, complete Three Peaks Challenge!



Personal Equipment

Each individual participant will be required to have with them:

- Walking boots
- Two pairs of walking socks and two pairs of liner walking socks
- Walking trousers
- Thermal base layer top

- Warm, windproof top
- Gloves
- Woolly hat
- Waterproof jacket (with fixed, attached hood)
- Waterproof trousers
- Headtorch
- Personal blister kit
- Foil survival blanket
- Small day rucksack to carry personal kit while on the hill
- Waterproof liner for your rucksack (a strong plastic bag or two is great for this)
- Sun hat
- Sun glasses
- Sun cream
- Warm layer to put on if cold (e.g. heavy fleece)
- Whistle
- Waterbottle
- Appropriate food (see below)
- Water bottles to hold at least 2 litres of water (2 x 2 litre plastic bottles of water from the supermarket would be ideal!) – please make sure that you have more than one water bottle so that you can take one up the hill with you while leaving the other to be refilled for the next leg of the journey
- A basic compass



Optional kit:

- Walking poles (highly recommended, helps sore knees on the descents)
- Mobile phone
- Camera

Kit to leave in the minibus:

- Trainers/flip flops (to give your feet a rest while we're driving!)
- Full change of clothes for on the hill (in case we get wet on the climbs)
- Comfortable clothes for the drive up to Ben Nevis and the drive home from Snowdon
- Spare waterproofs if you have them
- Food not required for each climb
- Sleeping bag
- Roll mat/therma rest
- Tent
- A loo roll each!
- Some music to listen to



Training

One of the most commonly asked questions about the Three Peaks Challenge is “How hard is it?”. I guess this is like asking “How long is a piece of string?” – Not the answer you want to hear!! However, we can safely say that the Three Peaks is hard, but by no means impossibly so and that if you put a little bit of time into doing some training beforehand you will find it easier, both mentally and physically.

The Three Peaks can be classed as an ‘endurance’ challenge – along with other similar events such as the Yorkshire Three Peaks or the Welsh 3000ers. As with all endurance events, you will benefit greatly if you have a reasonable level of fitness and do a bit of training to minimise the period that your body needs to recover from exercise. This will also help minimise injuries as well.

Stage 1

- ✓ Make sure that you have a good pair of walking boots that fit you well. If you suffer from blisters then consider changing your walking boots or seek the advice of a boot fitter - **make sure that the Challenge isn't the first time that you've worn your boots!**
- ✓ Make sure that your rucksack fits you properly and is comfortable – it would be very frustrating to have trained for the event, only to have to pull out due to back pain
- ✓ Consider using trekking poles: they take 000's of tonnes off of your legs over the course of the day and help your knees to recover on the descent. Most Mountain Guides in the Alps swear by them for improving their speed and prolonging their careers!
- ✓ During your training ensure that you wear the gear that you're going to be wearing on the Three Peaks itself – **get to know your kit!**



Stage 2

- ✓ The best start to work from is a reasonable base level of fitness. You can build this up by spending as little as 30-40 minutes 3-4 times a week going for brisk walks that raise your heart rate and progressing to jogging instead of running. You don't have to be doing things very quickly to complete the Three Peaks but you will need to be able to keep doing them for a long period of time.
- ✓ Once you have a reasonable level of base fitness, the best form of training for this type of event is to go for some long walks with a day rucksack (preferably the one that you will be carrying during the event itself). Head out for 4-5 hours at a time, varying the terrain that you cover. Ideally your practice walks should be over similar ground to that covered by the paths up Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon
- ✓ Look at the way you walk and try and make yourself more efficient – get used to really looking at where you place each step on broken ground (particularly in descent) and looking for potential obstacles ahead of you
- ✓ Make sure that you go out for practice walks in **all types of weather** and **do a couple in the dark!** This will help prepare you mentally if the weather is poor on the day of the event and for the climb of Scafell in the night. On a worst case scenario we will be climbing Scafell in the dark through wind and rain! Equally, if you've done some practice in poor weather and we get beautiful weather on the day, it will feel easy...

There is loads of information on the web about fitness for hillwalking if you want more info!

Food for the Challenge

Along with your training and preparation, food and water will be one of the most important factors in ensuring your success in the Three Peaks Challenge. By having a good amount of food the day before and on the morning of the event and keeping well hydrated with water, you will put yourself in a good position to start off.

Participants on endurance challenges often experience feeling dehydrated, sick and having a lack of energy. In the majority of cases, this can be avoided by giving consideration to your intake of food and water, before and during the Challenge. We hope that providing you with a few guidelines below will help you to look after yourself during the Challenge.

Before the Challenge

We will spend Friday driving up to Fort William from Weymouth and camp near Fort William that evening. It is **important** that you eat a good meal on Friday evening and a good breakfast on Saturday morning. This will set you up for the Challenge well. Ideally, you want both meals to be high in carbohydrates (pasta is ideal!) and you should aim to consume lots of water during Friday and Saturday morning.

How much food should I take?

It is rare that someone returns from an endurance event like the Three Peaks wishing that they had taken less food! You should eat approximately double what you would in a normal day in order to have the energy for the additional exercise and in some individuals this could be considerably more. As a rough guide, you should aim for around 4000 Kcal.

What should I consider when choosing what food to bring?


- **How much energy will the food give you?** You should have a look at the information label on the packet and see exactly what it provides your body with.
- **Will it give you the right type of energy?** For example, a Mars bar will give you an instant energy boost but this will be followed by a significant drop in energy. A Mars bar may therefore be appropriate for getting you up the final 100m to the last summit of the Challenge but it will not sustain your energy levels consistently and you may experience an energy slump once you are at the top. Compare this to eating nuts: these don't give you the instant energy 'high' but they also won't give you the energy slump either. They are classed as a food which releases energy more slowly and consistently and would be more suited to endurance events like the Three Peaks.



- **What food, when?** As a general rule, try and stick to eating slow release energy foods when moving on the hill, or just before you go out (think of them as your staple fuel to get you up the mountains). Quick energy boosts (like Mars bars) can then be used when you need a little boost to 'top up' your energy or want a treat on the minibus driving between the peaks (think of them as **additions** to your staple fuel). Special energy bars and gels can also be very useful but

make sure you have used them in your training/practice walks – gels especially don't always agree with everyone!

- **Food that you like...** Most importantly, you've got to actually like the food that you've brought with you. Bringing food that you don't like just because you think it will do you good means that zero calories will go in as you just won't eat it, not good!

<u>Examples of 'slow-release' energy foods</u>	<u>Examples of 'quick boost' energy foods</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts/seeds, dried fruit • Cereal/muesli bars • Pepperami • Wholemeal pasta/couscous (mix up with a nice sauce and bring in a tupperware box to eat on the bus in between peaks) • Wholemeal sandwiches with your favourite fillings, wholemeal pitta bread or oatcakes with hummus • Flapjacks – Make up your own the day before and add some raisins/chocolate/nuts/dried fruit – whatever you fancy • Bananas – Just make sure they don't get too squashed... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate – dark chocolate will not melt as quickly as milk chocolate if you like it • Sweets – boiled sweets can be carried easily in your pockets for a quick bit of sugar or Haribo are always a winner in the minibus (as a hint, I like the really sour ones best...) • Biscuits (Jaffa cakes are always good for this type of thing) • Cake • Anything else that you fancy really! 

Water/hydration

It's all very well having a great food plan for the challenge that will provide you with loads of energy at the right time but did you know that food is useless to the body without water? Water is needed in the body to break food down and convert the important bits into energy, without water the body cannot do this.

While driving up on Friday you should aim to consume 2 litres of water as a minimum. On Saturday morning you should aim to consume another 1-2 litres before setting off up Ben Nevis. We will ensure that water bottles get refilled for you while you climb so that you have some water to come back to and are never empty.

Getting food along the way

We will make pit stops along the way, either at service stations when we need to refuel the minibus or near each mountain in order to support the local economies. In order to complete the Challenge within the time limit, these stops will need to be **as brief as possible** so please try the food that you think you will need in advance and know what you want to get when we stop to make things swift.

We will, of course, make stops when people need the loo! (but again we need to think about keeping our stopping time as minimal as possible).



Cost

The cost of participating in the weekend is **£140.00**

This cost includes:

- All minibus hire, fuel, parking and driver costs
- Professional Mountain Instructor as your guide throughout the challenge (what's a Mountain Instructor? See here: <http://www.mltuk.org/awards.php>)
- Full briefings at the beginning of the Challenge and at each stage
- Laminated map sections of each area for your use and to keep afterwards
- Camping fees for Friday night campsite in Fort William
- Challenge t-shirt
- Certificate of achievement on completion

What is not included in the cost?

- Your own personal equipment
- Your food for the challenge (we don't want to make you eat what you don't like!)

Fundraising

The aim of the Three Peaks Challenge is for each participant to complete the Challenge within 24 hours **and** for each participant to raise a minimum of £100.00 sponsorship for the **Dorset Expeditionary Society** to use in their **Young Leader** and **Disadvantaged** funds. Within 24 hours we will climb the highest peaks in each country in mainland UK **and** raise a minimum of 1200.00 for the DES which goes directly back in to helping **you** fund your adventures – fab!!

Got a question?

If you need any questions answering about the Challenge then get in touch:

- Lucy Wyman – DES dorsetexp@googlemail.com
- Cat Freeman – Adventure Expeditions (Mountain Instructor for the event) cat@adventure-expeditions.net



How to join us?

Fill in the attached application form and email/send to Lucy @ the DES with your payment.

Payment is either by cheque or bank transfer – details are on the application form.