



Here are three accounts from intrepid Harriers who took part in this year's OMM. The 'media' did its best to look for disaster stories but failed miserably. All they got was a soaking and lots of smiling competitors.

For the official press release from the event organisers, and some interesting statistics, visit:

[www.theomm.com/assets/files/PressRelease/OMM\\_PressRelease2008.pdf](http://www.theomm.com/assets/files/PressRelease/OMM_PressRelease2008.pdf)

## Serendipity in the OMM

Most Toddies will now be aware, from an array of sources, that Dave and I received some remarkable press coverage of our exploits in the OMM last month.

This was entirely due to our being in the right place at the right time. It could be said that we were the only team that actually finished properly – by coming off the hills in the proper way at the proper time. The fact that we missed out the overnight camp was beside the point.

Our arrival coincided with that of the national press, who had finally managed to locate the Event Centre in Seathwaite, but failed to find any body bags, or maimed and bloodied survivors. So we had to do instead.

We were also in the right place at the right time the afternoon before, when our route to the day one finish took us to the door of Black Sail Youth Hostel. This came at a time when our points tally was moving into negative territory, and it had become obvious that there would be no chance of finding a camping spot in Buttermere where we could comfortably pass the night.

Whether it was our age or good looks that persuaded the Warden to offer us hospitality and a bed for the night we shall never know, but it certainly transformed the rest of the day and night, and gave us a good story to tell. Drinking beer and whisky in front of a hot stove definitely has the edge on wondering how long the tent will stay up, or where the first leak will appear.

On reflection, the pivotal point had occurred a couple of hours previously, when we arrived at the right place at the wrong time. The right place was a checkpoint, a boulder on a promontory high above Wasdale. We reached it after a long traverse across a very nasty, steep scree slope, and I was most chuffed to hit it spot-on in the mist. The joy was short-lived, as we had taken too long to reach it, and it was a long way from home. The direct route to the overnight camp was back down the slope and across some very inhospitable terrain, especially as the hills were alive with water, and the wind and rain showed no sign of abating. So we played safe and took a good track down to Wasdale Head, aware that we had blown any chance of getting back to the finish in our allotted six hours.

For over four hours of continuous wind and rain we had been totally committed to navigating and finding controls, gaining points; then suddenly this was no longer relevant, as these hard won points were all going to disappear. The focus of the day changed to choosing a sensible route to the finish, and enjoying (yes, really) the spectacle of the volume of water pouring off the hills, the streams becoming torrents, the scale of which I have never seen before in the Lakes. Not just a spectacle, you were part of it, totally involved in it. Congratulations to the OMM team for not taking the easy option, and cancelling the whole event.

Trevor Smith, Nov 2008.