

The Lakes 24hr Record Tops

WORK IN PROGRESS!!

The criteria for what's a valid top to include in a record attempt is necessarily arbitrary. Over the years this arbitrariness has been refined. Unfortunately this has meant that the current record, and many of the preceding records, visited tops that today would not be considered valid if they were to be included on any future attempt.

The progression of requirements was as follows.

- 1904 – Any top over 2000ft
- 1971 – The same summits in a faster time or add any top over 2000ft
- 1978 – The same summits in a faster time or add any top over 2000ft with at least 50ft of ascent on all sides.
- 1989 – The same summits in a faster time or add any top over 2000ft with at least 250ft of re-ascent and being at least 0.25 miles from any other top on the round.

The re-ascent figure is interesting in that it's slightly different from the geographic term “prominence”. Prominence means there is that much descent before climbing to a higher peak whereas re-ascent is just the smallest drop between any neighbouring peak regardless of whether that peak is higher or lower, the topographical term here is “key col”. As an example Bowscale Fell (2303ft) has a prominence of 285ft since that's the ascent needed coming from Blencathra (2848ft) but a re-ascent of only 183ft since that's the ascent needed from the col between it and Bannerdale Crags (2241ft). Re-ascent is not cumulative so given a ridge with peak A at 2500ft, a col at 2300ft, a top at 2450ft, a col at 2350ft then peak B at 2500ft gives 350ft of climbing but only 250ft of re-ascent since the lowest point between A & B is at 2300ft.

The table below lists all those tops on the basic Bob Graham Round, those that are also part of the men's 24hr record, those that are also part of the women's 24hr record and those tops which may be considered in extending either of those records.

The columns are:

Name of the top

Valid: Whether the top meets the 1989 criteria. This has been applied to all the tops

BGR: Indicates the top is part of the standard Round.

Mens: Indicates the top is part of the current men's 24hr record

Women's: Indicates the top is part of the current women's 24hr record.

Notes: reasons for non-validity

The shaded cells in the men's and women's columns indicate those tops that may be used to extend the respective record, i.e. not currently visited and is valid according to the 1989 criteria.

Name	Valid	BGR	Mens	Womens	Notes
Lonscale Fell			Y	Y	164ft of re-ascent
Skiddaw Little Man			Y	Y	200ft of re-ascent
Skiddaw	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Sail How				Y	30ft of re-ascent

Little Calva			Y		49ft of re-ascent
Great Calva	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Great Sca Fell			Y		43ft of re-ascent
Knott	Y		Y		
Coombe Height			Y		20ft of re-ascent
Carrock Fell	Y				
Bowscale Fell	Y		Y		183ft of re-ascent
Bannerdale Crag			Y		121ft of re-ascent
Blencathra	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Clough Head	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Calfhow Pike				Y	30ft of re-ascent
Great Dodd	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Watson's Dodd		Y	Y	Y	36ft of re-ascent
Stybarrow Dodd		Y	Y	Y	223ft of re-ascent
Raise	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Whiteside		Y	Y	Y	138ft of re-ascent
Helvellyn Lower Man		Y	Y	Y	59ft of re-ascent
Catsycam	Y		Y	Y	
Helvellyn	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Nethermost Pike		Y	Y	Y	95ft of re-ascent
Dollywaggon Pike		Y	Y	Y	164ft of re-ascent
Fairfield	Y	Y	Y	Y	
St Sunday Crag	Y				
Red Screes	Y				
Sheffield Pike	Y				
Hart Crag			Y		157ft of re-ascent
Greatrigg Man			Y		102ft of re-ascent
Seat Sandal	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Steel Fell		Y	Y	Y	Only 1814ft
Calf Crag		Y	Y	Y	Only 1762ft
Sergeant Man		Y	Y	Y	39ft of re-ascent
High Raise	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Thunacar Knott		Y	Y	Y	89ft of re-ascent
Pavey Ark			Y	Y	49ft of re-ascent
Harrison Stickle		Y	Y	Y	174ft of re-ascent

Loft Crag			Y	Y	72ft of re-ascent
Pike O'Stickle		Y	Y	Y	177ft of re-ascent
Pike O'Blisco	Y		Y		
Cold Pike			Y		151ft of re-ascent
Ullscarf	Y				
Swirl How	Y				
Coniston Old Man	Y				
Dow Crag	Y				
Grey Friar	Y				
Wetherlam	Y				
Harter Fell	Y				
Little Stand/Red Howe			Y		82ft of re-ascent
Crinkle Crag	Y		Y		
Shelter Crag			Y		102ft of re-ascent
Bowfell	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rossett Pike		Y	Y	Y	131ft of re-ascent
Esk Pike	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Allen Crag			Y		
Glaramara	Y				
Great End		Y	Y	Y	184ft of re-ascent
Ill Crag		Y	Y	Y	184ft of re-ascent
Broad Crag		Y	Y	Y	189ft of re-ascent
Scafell Pike	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Scafell	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lingmell			Y	Y	236ft of re-ascent
Yewbarrow	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Stirrup Crag				Y	108ft of re-ascent
Red Pike		Y	Y	Y	203ft of re-ascent
Scoat Fell	Y		Y	Y	
High Stile	Y				
Haycock	Y			Y	
Seatallan	Y				
Great Borne	Y				
Steeple		Y	Y	Y	79ft of re-ascent and within 0.25 mile of Scoat Fell
Pillar	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Looking Stead				Y	66ft of re-ascent
Kirkfell West	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Kirkfell (East)				Y	118ft of re-ascent
Great Gable	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Green Gable		Y	Y	Y	164ft of re-ascent
Base Brown			Y		125ft of re-ascent
Brandreth		Y	Y	Y	200ft of re-ascent
Grey Knotts		Y	Y	Y	52ft of re-ascent
Fleetwith Pike	Y		Y	Y	
Dale Head	Y	Y	Y	Y	
High Spy	Y				
Hindscarth		Y	Y	Y	233ft of re-ascent
Robinson	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Aiken Knott			Y		Under 2000ft
Scar Crag			Y	Y	180ft of re-ascent
Causey Pike			Y	Y	131ft of re-ascent
Sail			Y	Y	105ft of re-ascent
Crag Hill (Eel Crag)	Y		Y	Y	
Wandope			Y	Y	98ft of re-ascent
Whiteless Pike			Y	Y	118ft of re-ascent
Grasmoor	Y		Y	Y	
Sand Hill			Y	Y	56ft of re-ascent, within 0.25 mile of Hobcarton Pike
Whiteside			Y		128ft of re-ascent
Ladyside Pike			Y		92ft of re-ascent
Hobcarton Pike			Y		121ft of re-ascent, within 0.25 mile of Sand Hill
Grisedale Pike	Y		Y	Y	
High Street	Y				
High Raise	Y				
Harter Fell	Y				
Caudale Moor	Y				
Ill Bell	Y				
Froswick	Y				

Branstree	Y				
Rest Dodd	Y				
Tarn Crag	Y				
Place Fell	Y				
Totals	57	42	78	64	

Notes.

- It may be seen that 22 of the 42 peaks on the standard BGR would not be acceptable as extra peaks for the 24hr record!
- There are anomalies: Helvellyn doesn't meet the absolute criteria for re-ascent due to the height of the "col" between it and Lower Man but it's obviously the pre-eminent summit.
- Hopegill Head/Hobcarton Pike would be a valid extra top for the women's record if Sand Hill hadn't previously been claimed as a top.
- Hobcarton Pike and Sand Hill are only 350 metres or 375 yards apart but were used in the men's record attempts prior to the 0.25 mile requirement being introduced.

Moving Forward?

As written the current requirements are ambiguous in a couple of ways.

1. Is the height gain cumulative or is it the height difference between the lowest point on the ridge between two peaks and the summit?
2. Is the height gain just from the previous summit or both that and the next?

What is readily apparent from the above table is the lack of scope for the women's record, realistically there's only six, maybe seven, more peaks that could be added. Plus it's hardly fair that peaks on the men's record list aren't available to the women.

I'm proposing a reset. This will undoubtedly upset some (many?) but it will provide a common set of peaks for both men and women. While visiting the same tops as the existing record makes sense in that the old and new records are obviously comparable it also means that there's no scope for innovation. As an example look at the Munros 24hr record – all attempts were in the Glen Shiel area until Jim Mann looked at those in the eastern Cairngorms and broke the record.

Maps have been metric for decades so I think the requirements should also be metric thus the proposed requirements for valid summits are:

1. Over 610m in height (2000' is 609.6m)
2. No peak on the list shall be closer than 500 metres to another valid peak.
3. All peaks have a drop of at least 50 metres between themselves and any other peak on the list.
4. Peaks with historical significance are included in the list even though they may not meet the previous requirements.

There's no suitable list: Wainwright included lots of “tops” that were obviously just book fillers – I found this out when I decided to complete them! Marylins, Hewitts, Birketts and the like just use height gain, not even that with Birketts, they are just named points. The topological definition of “prominence” only works one way: lower peak to a col to a higher peak.

The attached spreadsheet may be used to “play around” with various distances and re-ascent values, it's been saved with 500m and 50m respectfully. The workings are pretty harsh and applied to the absolute letter of the rules – Helvellyn is omitted if Lower Man is considered as a potential top despite being the dominant hill. There are also some peaks that have a claim to be included for historical reasons, Steeple is probably the most dubious of these – very close to it's parent fell and very little re-ascent but it's a lovely little summit.

The list omits Watson's Dodd and Nethermost Pike out of the original 42, there's no criteria that could be applied to include them that wouldn't also include a myriad of other pimples.

Omitting Helvellyn Lower Man, Sergeant Man, Loft Crag, Sand Hill.

A “Key Col” is the highest low point between two peaks, i.e. if the sea level rose that would be the last piece of land joining the two before they became islands.

RH (Relative Height) is the difference between the height of the key col and the peak.

The distance has been calculated using 6 digit grid references and the following formula ($\wedge 2$ meaning squared or to the power of two):

$$d^2 > a^2 + b^2$$

Where 'd' is the distance between the two peaks, 'a' is the difference in eastings and 'b' is the difference in northings.

I propose the following rules/requirements.

1. The record must be completed on foot within 24hrs. No mechanical assistance of any kind.
2. Start and finish at the same point. This may be anywhere on the attempted circuit.
3. Only peaks from the published list may be considered as part of the record.
4. No peak may be added if the route thus formed causes other peaks to fail the criteria.
5. The peaks and the order in which they are attempted are left to the contender.
6. There is no requirement to visit the Moot Hall.

