

Simon's winter so far!

January seems like it will be hard to beat, lots of low level ice routes giving plenty of after-work exercise snatching rare gems like Cautley Spout, Low Water Beck and even a cross-border raid for Grey Mare's Tail in the Moffat hills as well as some local hidden gems that must remain a secret.

The high crags EVENTUALLY consolidated into good winter condition and the sun was out for long spells and seemed to shine most at the weekends, can february top all that? Last weekend was the highlight as Dom and I made use of limited time on the saturday to climb Bowfell Buttress (V, 6) in an afternoon - we were happy not to have to climb this classic testpiece with headtorches and thanks to the party who let us go on in front (I think they read Dom's body language exactly right!)

Next day was a much earlier start as we headed to Scafell where we found the Cold Climbs classics of Moss and Steep Ghyll weren't looking in the best nick so we jumped on another 3 star route called Pisgah Buttress Direct (V, 5) which is a memorable mixed outing involving an highly exposed traverse at mid-height and very thin climbing on the top pitch. Harder than BB we both agreed. We also agreed that we are old enough to know better than to race up to the crag at the speed we did. We were determined to get in front of everybody. Determined and very sweaty. Very sweaty and then very cold. One day we will be wise...come on february do your stuff!