
FROM THE ARCHIVES: "ODE TO REAL COLD MEN"

So I thought I had seen and done it all vis a vis running in strange places for insanely long distances. Then the farmer called to remind me of Mt Greylock and his plans to conquer the beast in sneakers. I looked out the window that morning and groaned. True dead of winter stuff here, folks. Driving through northern Mass I looked over at the grin on this guy's face and knew I was in for it. I mean he's Fitzcarraldo, the windmill dude, Dr. Strangelove, all of the above when he gets this look in his eye. I knew there'd be no stopping him on this quest.

We arrived at the visitor center around 9 in the morning and dodged obnoxious snowmobiles as we walked toward the hospitable lodge. I sat on the couch and admired the pretty park ranger while Ed ran his hands over the diorama of the Mountain, mentally tuning his Zen state for that morning's fun. No kidding now. This was really the last place on earth I wanted to be. At least that's how I felt when I saw that Ranger Sally had a wedding ring. Then our fellow ghouls straggled in and I could see that this was a for real event. So I disappeared into the bathroom to write some graffiti on the wall and hoped against hope that Ed would forget I had driven up with him.

SADDLE UP, EASY RIDER! His voice shook the stall. I fell off the seat. Here we go again. Fortunately the crew had left 5 minutes earlier in pansy ass sneakers. We Bulls would be lashing Snowshoes for this trek. Only problem was that I had never worn snowshoes. It wasn't a pretty sight. The first 7 miles to the base of the summit were, however, quite beautiful. Ed and I even managed to smoke Dion, Joe and the boys. I should have relished the moment. It'd be the only Moment that day. Because Lord Greylock was readying some payback for the proud.

Leaving the protection of the trees below the summit was like getting hit in the chest with a sledge hammer. Naturally, I wore my 1930's issue wool hunting uniform and I was soaked in sweat. 50 mph gusts of arctic wind sift through those fibers and find your very white blood cells in no time. I knew my number was up at the summit, mile 8. Bob Dion joined us at the top, allowing me a chance to pullback from the duo a little while I waited for the downhill section. So I waited and waited and waited. Mile after mile after mile and the damn mountain wouldn't go down. Truly dispiriting. So I did the old, walk, trot, jog, walk thing until I met up with Ed and Bob coming back up the turnaround. They looked like Chechen Rebels home from a night at the front.

"You don't want to go there. Don't do it," they warned. I would have gone, really would have done the upright thing, finished the steep section, real man and all that. But they had good food. I thenceforth trailed them like a beggar, picking up scraps they'd toss over their shoulder. Believe me you lose your pride pretty quick out in no man's land. That's why they call it no man's land.

It was a mutually beneficial run from there. Bob and Ed set the pace just ahead, providing me with a little motivation to put one weary foot in front of the other. And I gave them that healthy fear of failure, of being passed by a highly competitive opponent breathing down your neck. Yea right.

At the junction leading back to the summit, we stopped to discuss making the extra 3 mile run to the top and back. I fiercely argued that we had to go the extra yardage and finish the quest or we couldn't live with ourselves. Ed said something about bad luck visiting a mountain top twice in a day. Bob kept looking down the hill with an insane smile on his face. I decided that this crew really didn't have the *je ne sais crois* necessary to reconquer Greylock so I took command and ordered my men down the mountain. Of course I trailed at a good healthy distance in case either of them fell by the wayside. A really good healthy distance.

Bob and Ed bounded down the hill like kids at the final bell. I stayed behind and ran to the summit on my own. And I did it extremely fast. Extremely. Extremely enough that I ended up finishing the race in about 7 hours. The latter hour of which found me crawling on my hands and knees as women in thongs and fine tan lines whizzed by on flaming green and red snowmobiles. I must have looked pretty scary because nobody stopped to pick me up. By the time I hit the parking lot, Bob and Ed were fast asleep in their cars inhaling carbon monoxide. I pulled off my socks in Ed's truck and watched as my toenails came off in the process. Seems the crusty buggers had snagged on my wet wool socks. I hadn't felt the pain because of the frostbite.

So here's a healthy Bronx cheer to those of you who decided to opt out of the Greylock quest. I'm going to say that you really missed out on the time of your lives, a unique opportunity to test your primal bounds, to run with the wolves, to gasp on the edge of being, to wake up around oh.... 11:00 on a Sunday morning, lounge on the couch in the sunroom and browse through the paper, enjoy a piece, two pieces of cinnamon raisin toast, take a nap, take another nap, watch an old movie with a pint of ice cream and some cute thing. Ahhhh heck. So maybe I made all this up. But maybe I didn't. If any of you get a mouthful of hair when some freak streaks by you this coming season, just look down at his mangled toes. You'll know where you should be next February.

Georgie Hendricks

2nd Annual Moby Dick Marathon **February 18, 1996** **Lanesboro, MA**

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| 1. | Edward Alibozek | 28 Miles / Snowshoes | 6:16:43 |
| 2. | Georgie Hendricks | 26 Miles / Snowshoes | 7:07:00 |

4th Annual Moby Dick Marathon **February 1, 1998** **Lanesboro, MA**

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| 1. | Edward Alibozek | 28 Miles / Snowshoes | 6:19:40 |
| 2. | John Scalise | 28 Miles / Snowshoes | 6:19:40 |
| 3. | Konrad Karolczuk | 16 Miles / Snowshoes | 6:29:00 |

This was a semi-official event from the Lanesboro Visitor Center to the summit of Greylock and all the way to North Adams and back. It would be nice to bring this back somehow, even as a do-it-yourself (DIY) type event where a person could go out with a buddy or two and keep their own time any day they wished? We could keep records of it even.