

THE FAN DANCE

BY

WEST HAM DAVE



**Ooops – not
this one !!!!!**

FIGHTING BACK

The SAS isn't the oldest regiment in the British army by a long way, but its Selection process has always been the one that offered the ultimate soldiering challenge... For over sixty years "Selection" has been a battle of survival, leaving only a few men standing at the end who have earned the right to wear the coveted sandy coloured beret and winged dagger cloth cap badge. The image carried by all who attempt, or witness Selection is this: one of broken bodies and broken dreams... Of men who are totally committed to prove that merely to finish is worthy of the honour, even if they fail while daring greatly. Recent images eerily reflect the old and despite an assault by modern technology SAS Selection has always fought back and refused to step into the modern world. Over the years the windswept slopes of the Brecon Beacons have been home to the Fan Dance and provided the canvas on which the regiment's image has been created. AEE have witnessed every facet of this sometimes unforgiving but incredible march, and are honoured to explore its history, origins and early format that inspired the march as we know it today.

A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

The Fan Dance march has historically been an integral and legendary part of the British SAS Selection process and was first introduced as an essential test in the decade following the World War II. At over sixty years old the Fan Dance and its Woodhouse route predecessor is the world's oldest and most famous Special Forces Selection test and the standard by which all others are set. Originally and still officially known as Exercise High Walk in its modern format, this test was designed by the Late Lt Col John Woodhouse, the architect and pioneer of the very first SAS Selection course. The rigorous systems he developed over three years provided the basis of selection and training of the modern SAS.

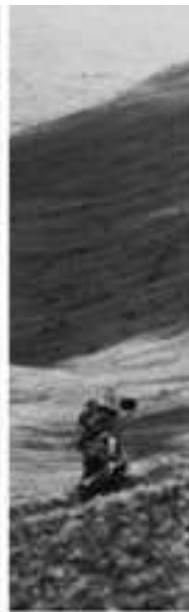
THE FAN DANCE

THE ORIGINAL FAN DANCE - EXERCISE HIGH WALK

Est 1953 - DELIVERED ONLY BY AEE

BRECON BEACON MOUNTAINS

SUMMER EDITION, 7 JULY 2018





You are one step away from being a part of the Fan Dance, a pilgrimage scored in the heart of every SAS soldier, a race like no other and one of the world's great endurance challenges. The greatest enemy of success is actually failing to turn up and make the start line, which many do. You have our commitment to make your Fan Dance experience a triumph, the odds are in your favour, history tells us as much, with over a 90% success rate.

TRAIN HARDER

Before completing registration please read the content below

POST MARCH MEAL

Your entry comes with a complimentary post march hot meal and cold drinks. Tickets issued with race numbers at base camp along with a free Fan Dance gift item. Hot drinks are also available at the march half way point.

MOUNTAIN SAFETY

Your registration fee supports the UK's first and only independent internal event mountain rescue team, complete with the highest grade of medical care and a dedicated patron radio network. AEE invest heavily in assets and personnel so that we can respond at speed to any emergency scenario. This allows us to deliver an authentic, concession free and unrivalled Fan Dance race experience befitting of the original SAS test.

PRE-EVENT SUPPORT

All registered athletes will receive a series of email information packs put together with uncompromising attention to detail and verve. They will cover all matters Fan Dance and will include but not be limited to:

- *Clothing & equipment check lists
- *Bergen/rucksack SAS packing techniques
- *Training Guide
- *March and finisher's patch history
- *Access and discounts to DS led training days across the UK

LAND USE PERMITS

Your registration fee covers land use permits which also at the present time includes free event parking.

REGISTRATION TIMES

Evening before: Load Bearing & Clean Fatigue 17:00 to 21:00hrs

Race Day: Load Bearing: 05:30 to 06:45

Clean Fatigue: 06:30 to 07:45

RACE START TIMES

Load Bearing march start time: 07:00

Clean Fatigue race start time: 08:00

CATEGORIES

LOAD BEARING

The Load Bearing category requires "Fan Dancers" to carry a weighted Bergen/rucksack and be self-sustained for the duration of the march. The Load Bearer's Bergen/pack must meet the stipulated weight requirements (see below) and must not be made up of "dead weight." The load must be made up of useful mountain safety items which will be provided in detail through email information updates. The Fan Dance Load Bearer must wear boots (military or civilian trekking type) for both summer and winter editions.



LOAD BEARING WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS

MEN: MAIN FIELD

16-45 years



35lb

+food & water

WOMEN: MAIN FIELD

16-45 years



25lb

+food & water

MASTERS: MEN & WOMEN

46+years (age on race day)



25lb

+food & water

CLEAN FATIGUE

Clean Fatigue is a military term of reference for parachuting without equipment. In the context of the Fan Dance it means that runners do not have to meet heavy weight carrying requirements as per the Load Bearing edition. This format is designed for fell and trail runners, those looking to experience the Fan Dance before committing to the Load Bearing category, and generally, anyone who doesn't fancy wearing boots and carrying a house on their back. Clean Fatigue runners are still required to carry a small pack containing specified basic provisions which will be provided in detail through email information pack. The Clean Fatigue Fan Dancer can wear trail/fell running shoes but normal running trainers will not be permitted.

Upon completing registration, the official AEE Clean Fatigue Clothing & Equipment list will be dispatched via email.



Dave's Taxi pulls up



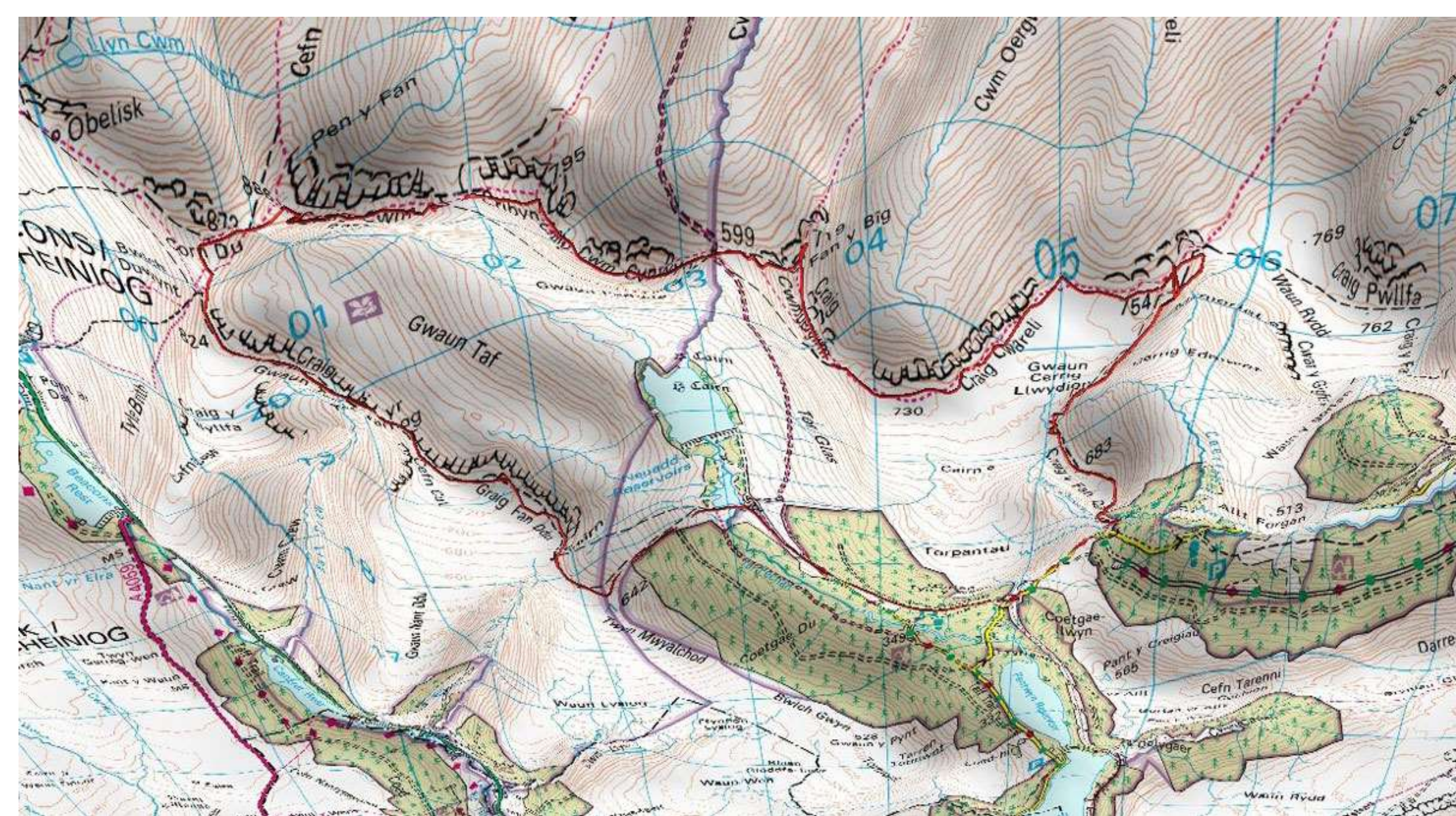
THE FAN DANCE ROUTE

Starting at the iconic old red phone box the 24km race goes vertical from the off, with a demanding climb around Corn Du up to the summit RV (Checkpoint 1& 3) of Pen Y Fan, whose outline is said to be engraved onto the heart of every SAS man. After descending the south facing slope, the race passes through the aptly named Windy Gap junction onto the Roman Road, a rough dirt and stone track that ends at the edge of Taf Fechan forest. A narrow water crossing at the foot of a gully guards the way onto the narrow forest path, which leads to RV Two (half way check point), located at Torpantau, the highest point and last stop on Brecon Mountain Railway line, still serviced today by an old steam train. After a brief tea stop, Fan Dancers take the route in reverse, with the long and gruelling return leg back up the Roman Road before the battle for the Jacob's Ladder, a brutally steep and unrelenting path back up to the summit of "the Fan," which is by far the hardest and most dramatic part of the march. After logging in at the mountain RV (checkpoint) again, meaningful time gains can be clawed back by bombing downhill to the FRV (final checkpoint) at the old red phone box. At the finish line a warm hand shake from the DS and a coveted Fan Dance cloth finisher's patch awaits.

The route is an absolute lung buster that throws everything at you and can also be a real battle against the elements. There are steady slopes that allow a solid jogging pace, shocking inclines that have you almost on your hands and knees, loose stone tracks that require cautious foot placements, stream crossings and a forested off-road vehicle track that allows for some rapid going. Even SAS & SBS candidates at the height of their physical abilities regard beating the clock in this military time trial as a serious challenge, and all know its capacity to hurt. Aside from the race aspect of this life changing event, just getting to the end is an accomplishment and something to be immensely proud of.







Ready for the off





**This looks a bit
of a doddle**





**Not quite so
sure now**

Bloody Hell !!



Come on lads – no slacking







These hills just keep on coming





Let's hope there's oxygen at the top

















The End –
well almost.....





