

Route(s)	Stob a'Choire Mheadhoin and Stob Coire Easain
Elevation(s) (ft/m)	<b>Stob a'Choire Mheadhoin</b> (3,625ft /1105m) <b>Stob Coire Easain</b> (3,658ft /1115m)
Date(s)	July 26 2018
Partner(s)	Dave H.
Elevation gain/loss (ft/m)	+/- 3,937ft / 1200m
Distance (miles/km)	10.6 miles / 17.06 km
Total time (hours/mins)	5h 30m
Equipment	Trekking poles, snacks and water.
Weather Forecast	Mostly sunny with the potential for winds up to 30 mph
Weather Actuality	Sunny and mostly clear, with more clouds in the afternoon and strong gusts for the majority of the day (in particular on the ridge)
Flora/Fauna	N/A
Wildlife	N/A
Starting Point/Trailhead	Parking area near Fersit (parking on West side of River Treig before Fersit)
Grade/Rating	Walking
Accommodations	N/A
Tourist Attractions	A random café and coffee shop. I thought it was adorable!
Motto for the day	N/A

Day 1	
<b>Daily 1 Distance</b>	10.6 miles / 17.06 km
<b>Daily 1 Elevation</b>	+/- 3,937ft / 1200m
<b>Day 1 Daily Time</b>	5h 30m
Rise and Shine	6.55am
Depart Dunblane	7.35am
Leave car	10.00am
Summit of C. Mheadhoin	12.10pm
Summit of Stob Coire Easain	12.55pm
Arrive car	3.25pm
Home, home	6.30pm
<b>The Story</b>	

Dave dropped me a line asking if I was free and interested in getting out today. He had two Munros in mind. *Guess I'm predictable after only one meeting!* Of course I was! The day before the trip we were figuring out the logistics as Kyle was using my car while his was out of commission. Fortunately for me, Dave said he was going to take the A9 North and could pick me up in Dunblane. Otherwise, it greatly reduced my odds of being able to get out as we'd have to meet at a train or bus stop somewhere along the way.



The day arrived, and Kyle being the gem that he is, helped make breakfast while I gathered the last of my things in a very slap-dash fashion. Dave showed up, I briefly introduced them, and away we went! It took just over two hours for us to reach the start near Fersit. On the way we chatted and admired the blue skies! So far the weather looked nice, but Dave had warned me to expect fairly high winds. *So be it.* From the trunk I started to get my kit together, and as I went to put on my boots, which delightedly had been sitting in a bag since I last wore them, I realized I'd

left my stanky socks in the boots from the last time and I hadn't brought socks this time. *Sigh.* The first thought that crossed my mind was, 'How comfortable would it be to wear boots without socks for most of the day?' quickly followed by, 'Guess I'll wear the dirty ones and hope I don't get some sort of a foot rash,' only to find hope in the thought that I might have a spare pair of socks in my spare clothes bag in my rucksack. I immediately set about digging through my dry bags in search of the spare bag of change of clothes I keep squirreled away for emergencies. *Clever me!* In point of fact, I should probably be thanking my father, as he was the one who indoctrinated the old Boy Scout methodology of always carrying a change of clothes for emergencies. *Hallelujah.* I wasn't about to be asking for favors from higher powers, but I was still happy to have found a pair of socks! With those on, boots laced, and pack on, we locked up and headed out.

From the parking area a gravel road heads south along the River Treig. Follow the road until it forks. At this first fork, stay right and continue gradually uphill. Not long after that the road forks a second time, stay left here. The road should take you right past the Dam and walk briefly along the side of Loch Treig before climbing some in elevation. At approximately 275m the road is intersected on the right by another road. Keep walking. Immediately after this there is another fork on the right and this is the beginning of the trail to gain the ridge. The trail crosses a small stream and then climbs up past an old sheep paddock and then up towards a trig point. The trail is fairly good, and easy to follow. It was around this point that I realized I'd left my headband in the car. *For the love of Mary! What a clusterfuck! It wasn't dire, but my big ol' forehead tends to get more sun so I try to wear a headband. Ah well. I'll just write this off as some much needed sun and hope for the best.* We had kept up a fairly solid stream of conversation up to this point, but once the uphill kicked in, my breathing was all over the place. Best just to focus on the steps and the occasional words! Dave kept trying to trick me by saying outrageous things. Sometimes I could pick out the nonsensical statements, like "that old tree trunk is ten thousand years old". But, there were statements I had no frame of reference or knowledge on, so couldn't really gauge. As I've said before, my ignorance is both frustrating and amusing on occasion. Usually more frustrating for me I think, and in this case, amusing for Dave! And I freely admit my knowledge of Scotland is shockingly limited, at the moment. I have a fair idea on the historical overview, but I haven't delved into a lot of the minutia.



Once at the trig, the track veered south and up the ridge. Essentially, stay directly on the spine of the ridge, slightly left (east) towards the sharper side. The track tended to tend in that direction. But, in general, it wasn't hard to follow and the terrain wasn't so difficult that going off piste would be overly difficult. That, of course, is being said during the dry summer months. Today though, with the relatively dry earth and sunny skies, the only thing really detracting from the pleasant day was the strong winds. The forecast had suggested it might get up to 30mph and that seemed fair. There were several

instances where I had to brace against the wind or felt myself get buffeted a bit to the side. I even thought that I felt the skin on my eyelid move once. But, that seems a bit fanciful! *But, this is Scotland...* I've come to appreciate the fact that it can be a windy! So we forged on. We hit the first summit, Stob a'Choire Mheadhoin, at 12.10pm. Dave gave me a celebratory handshake. *Let's not get too crazy!* We touched the rock cairn and continued on in a southerly direction off the summit. There is no obvious track here because of the rocky terrain, and presumably because people fanned out a bit. But, once you drop down the southern side a bit, you can pick up the track easily enough. In general, it stays right (west) and meanders through a short boulder section. From the beallach (col), the trail picks up and is very obvious up Stob Coire Easain.

We stopped at the beallach, tucked up just on the north side of Easain. A spot that provided a little reprieve from the wind. All said and done, we were quite lucky that the weather was so mild. I was in a tank top despite the wind and was fine. It was only after we stopped that I decided to put on a lightweight long sleeve top to cut it a little. It wasn't strictly necessary though. Fed and watered, we started off back uphill. Dave skipped along quite well and made me feel like I was really dragging. It's good to get out with other people to help push myself. I think I'm a little too used to being able to go my own speed and mosey along, that I'm not as used to being 'pushed' so to speak. So, although it is hard to feel slow and out of shape, it is ultimately a good thing. *Well, you know, if people will still go out with me and I can hack it!* We reached the summit of Stob Coire Easain at 12.55pm. I shot Kyle off a text, and Dave and I sat again to enjoy the views. He pointed out some of the summits and names of different groups of peaks, and told me the last time he'd been in this area it'd been a white out. We sat facing North, with the cairn to our backs so it blocked the wind a bit. Therefore, it was a surprise when we moved to leave and the wind came back full force.

That was to be the last of the breaks. From there, we put on our rucksacks and headed out! *Move out!* The wind continued, but at least now it was to our backs. I briefly lost the thread of the trail, right before we arrived back at the low trig point on the ridge, but only briefly. Then, we were back on the track and moving quickly downhill. We saw a few lovely dragonflies hovering about near the sheep, who paid us no never mind. Back to the road near the dam, we observed that the water levels had dropped since that morning. The loch seemed shockingly low. I'm not familiar with what to expect with the snow pack, snow melt, water levels etc. in Scotland, but this was startling, and a bit unnerving. We are only halfway

through summer and this was clearly extremely low. We could see all of the rings along the loch shores from where it'd dropped incrementally. Dave also pointed out some old metal tubes in the rock that he told me were used to blast the rock. Quite cool. Right before we made it to the car, I tripped over my own shoe laces, which had come undone on my right foot and caught on the hook on my left. *What a bumble!* Oh well! When we got to the car, Dave pointed out the bikes on the back of someone's car and said steel frames were no good, just loud enough that I'm sure the person sitting in the driver seat, with the door open, probably heard.

It took less than ten minutes for both of us to change our clothes, store the packs in the trunk, hop in the car, and head off. We ended up stopping at a lovely little coffee shop and café off the A889. It simply said something like coffee, pottery, and a whole bunch of other words on the sign. I didn't quite catch a name, so how about 'That Place'. We grabbed a quick snack. The place was fairly empty. We were the only ones, and the young gent working there was trying to clean up so he could leave right at 5pm. I can't say I blame him. It was still sunny out! I liked it though! I'd come back! Ahead of the arguably moderate schedule, we had we hopped back in the car and headed south. All and all, another great day out!





