

Route(s)	Beinn Dorain and Beinn an Dothaidh
Elevation(s) (ft/m)	Beinn Dorain (3,530ft /1076m) Beinn an Dothaidh (3,294ft /1004m)
Date(s)	September 7 2018
Partner(s)	Dave H.
Elevation gain/loss (ft/m)	+/- 3,865ft / 1178 m
Distance (miles/km)	8.66 miles/ 13.94 km
Total time (hours/mins)	5h 40m
Equipment	Trekking poles, snacks and water (3L today)! <i>Upgraded the rain jacket!</i>
Weather Forecast	Partly cloudy, partly sunny.
Weather Actuality	Partly cloudy, partly sunny.
Flora/Fauna	N/A
Wildlife	<i>Sheep!</i>
Starting Point/Trailhead	Bridge of Orchy train stop
Grade/Rating	Walking.
Accommodations	N/A
Tourist Attractions	N/A
Motto for the day	N/A

Day 1	
Daily 1 Distance	8.66 miles/ 13.94 km
Daily 1 Elevation	+/- 3,865ft / 1178 m
Day 1 Daily Time	5h 40m
Rise and Shine	Est. 7.00am
Depart Home	Est. 8.15am
Tyndrum	Est. 9.30am
Leave Bridge of Orchy	10.00am
Summit Beinn Dorain	11.55am
Summit Beinn an Dothaidh	<i>No idea. Somewhere reasonably between the times!</i>
Arrive Car	Est. 3.40pm
The Story	

We had a scare in the house. I nearly stepped on a massive spider in the bathroom, barefoot. There was screeching to be had. *The kraken was lose!* Fortunately, Kyle wasn't far and he grabbed the little handheld vacuum and shuttled it outside. It was big enough that I wasn't feeling particularly sympathetic. *It probably had the scent of our place and was just going to come back...* Ugh. I was very uncomfortable. And that residual freaked out feeling stuck around with me. So, the next morning, as I was loading up the car to drive out to Tyndrum to meet Dave, I hesitantly got in the driver seat and looked around. I did a pre-flight check and flipped visors and holders to make sure spiders weren't lurking. *This car has already had more spiders in its history than I thought was strictly reasonable...* Not seeing anything, I crossed my fingers and headed out. I was just outside of Doune when I realized I'd forgot my tech bundle back in the flat. *Clusterf*ck much this morning?*

I enjoyed the drive over. I was singing with my music, enjoying the scenery, and taking in the weather changes. I wasn't so fussed, but I was happy to see it was generally clearing the further I moved west.

My instructions were to meet Dave at the coffee shop in Tyndrum. Descriptive as that was, I was worried I was going to miss it, which meant that as soon as I entered into the town I pulled off to the side and ended up on this broken up road that had a vaguely derelict feel to it. *Clearly, I turned off too early.* Back to the main road... I was hesitant to drive too slowly, but fortunately, the shop was literally the next left in town. It was the first big coffee shop and I saw Dave's car, so I knew it was correct. *Phw!* I hopped out, loaded my kit in his car and we went in to grab Dave a coffee. Start the day right! Once back in the car it really didn't take long to get to the Bridge of Orchy station. I was informed that parking here isn't exactly encouraged, but generally overlooked. *Ha! Okay! Nothing like a little local knowledge to know when to bend the rules coupled with a foreign accent to plead ignorance!*

As I stepped out and began lacing my boots up, the midges came out. They were annoying, but not so bad. Possibly on the thicker side I've seen for midges so far, but all in all, they haven't been as horrendous as I've generally been led to believe. *Touch wood.* From the car we walked towards the station and then under the tracks. Once through the bridge the road curved slightly right, but the track veered left and headed immediately east uphill. The track stayed south of a stream and was generally easy to follow. Not long after we got started, Dave got a series of random messages and was messaging and calling while walking! I told him we could stop. I wasn't in a rush! *Haha!* But seems it wasn't necessary. *We have a multi-tasker!* I'd lost reception, but saw I had a message from Kyle asking if I'd met Dave and if we got off okay. I felt a niggling bit of guilt for not having got a note off to him previously, but the message I'd tried to send not long before hadn't gone through, so I was just going to trust in the fact that he isn't a worrier.

Dave and I chatted and leisurely made our way up to the bealach. *Hope I'm spelling this new Scottish word correctly!* There were some soggy patches, but overall it was fair. It was not the bog standard I've reluctantly come to expect when the weather is wet! The weather was actually sunny to start, and I took the opportunity to let my skin soak in some vitamins and stripped down to my tank top. But, by the time we reached the cairn at the pass, the breeze and clouds had returned with sufficient muster that I slipped my lightweight long sleeve shirt back on.



As we chatted and worked our way upwards, the clouds began to swirl in a little thicker and started to obscure our objective. We briefly got passed by a couple who were filming, as the woman worked on completing all the Murnos in a single, self-propelled, trip. She said it was a three month venture. The gent was taking photos and filming it by all appearances. We ran into them again at the top. Not the first cairn! Good thing Dave knew to go further. With the clouds and missing my GPS, it might have been hard to tell. After the first cairn there is a short dip and then a rise to the actual summit cairn. We again chatted with the couple before grabbing a snack and heading off. It was just starting to get chilly enough that I was considering pulling out my lightweight gloves. *Ooooh the seasons are changing. It's these little reminders that really make an impact.* The conversation turned deep on the way down, but by the time we reached the bealach it was all laughs again! Turns out we were raised with parents who attended similar schools of thought.

We had another quick snack at the pass and then worked our way uphill towards Beinn an Dothaidh. A few people passed us on their descent, but no one was overly chatty. *Is that a North American thing? A Washingtonian thing? Or just a me thing?* We followed the path up to between the summit and a false one. It branched and we originally veered left (northerly), and that is the true summit. But, once there, it was a bit of fun to pull out Dave's GPS and mark all three possible summits to find the correct one. As it turns out, the middle one is the summit. It was a leisurely jaunt and we relaxed on the last one with snacks and stories. We even tried to sweet talk a curious sheep into coming over. I kind of wanted to pet it! But alas! It was not meant to be. We cut a bit cross country, back down to intersect the trail a little bit above the cairn, and then followed the main path back down towards the cars. While descending Dave got some cryptic messages he was trying to get me to help him decipher. But considering I didn't know the person, it could be slang, a type, or just nonsense! I was no help at all. *Plus, how can he multi-task on his mobile while walking?!*

It was quick work back to the car, throwing on sandals and heading to the Bridge of Orchy hotel for a cuppa. The hotel was shockingly nicer than I was expecting! Dave had changed clothes..., so I looked like a ragamuffin sitting in the nice dining area smelling but trying to look like it wasn't me! Too bad I couldn't roll down the windows on the drive home because spiders live behind the mirrors on my car! *Haha!*



Lessons Learned

Dave needs to write a book of all the coffee shops in Scotland. Perhaps a Munro pairing compilation!

