

All-Vegan Team Completes U.K. Three Peaks Challenge!

Andrew Knight

From 13:02 hours on May 2 to 12:27 hours May 3, 2009, an all-vegan team completed the famous United Kingdom Three Peaks Challenge.

They climbed the highest mountains in Wales (Mt. Snowdon), England (Scafell Pike), and Scotland (Ben Nevis), in less than 24 hours. They walked, ran, and limped, some 25 miles (40km), climbed around 10,000 feet (3,050m), and drove nearly 500 miles in the three countries, averaging less than two hours sleep!

Fortunately however, the climbers did have one important advantage. All are members of the Extreme Vegan Sporting Association, which means that as well as being naturally skilled at doing extremely silly things, they are committed vegans, and therefore enjoy certain important advantages over meat-eating mountaineers, such as higher antioxidant status—which speeds exercise recovery. The vegan guarana tablets also helped, as did the super-comfy vegan boots, and energizing vegan *sheese* and flap-jacks, supplied by their kindly sponsors on this all-vegan

expedition. Non-vegan food or equipment was banned.

One reason the team climbed these mountains was to raise money for Animals Count — a U.K. political party for people and animals. They raised £1,300, to help Animals Count contest the European Union elections on June 4 2009.

It was the first time a U.K. political party for animals contested these elections. Animals Count aims to increase the consideration given to animal issues by all political parties.

Team Vegan minimized their environmental impact during their Three Peaks Challenge by leaving no litter, using mountain paths, and neutralizing the carbon emissions created on their trip by purchasing a resource conservation portfolio at www.carbonneutral.com (no sponsorship funds were used for this).

Most importantly, however, they and their equipment were entirely vegan! Why is that important? Because animal agriculture is one of the largest



The Team - Andrew Knight, Jules Howliston, and Andrew Taylor, on Mt. Snowdon climb

contributors to global warming and species loss, producing more greenhouse gases than the entire transport sector combined.¹ It is, of course, also frequently cruel to animals, and bad for human health.

Further information about these important issues is available from organizations like The Vegan Society (U.K.), Vegan Outreach, and American Vegan Society.

See photos and a video of this story online: www.vegan3peaks.info. The snowstorms on the summit of Ben Nevis, Scotland are particularly dramatic.

Photos for story on these pages provided by Andrew Knight.

¹Food and Agricultural Organization

VEGAN HIKING BOOTS: The Snowdons



These vegan hiking boots proved to be hard-wearing, waterproof, and very comfortable. Despite walking (and running) 25 miles, and climbing around 10,000 feet, in less than 24 hours, the team developed only mild blisters. These boots are made of high-tech breathable synthetics.

—Andrew Knight

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The Snowdons are available from dealers in the United States, including Moo Shoes (www.mooshoes.com), NY, The Vegetarian Site (www.TheVegetarianSite.com) CO, and Vegan Essentials (www.veganessentials.com) WI

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Andrew on a Ben Nevis cliff

Andrew Knight BSc (Vet Biol), BVMS, CertAW, MRCVS, FOCAC completed veterinary training in Australia (2001). Now he practices veterinary medicine in London, England, where he did postgraduate studies. Papers he has written on animal experimentation and other bioethical issues have been published in scientific and medical journals.

A Critical Assessment of The Value of Animal Experiments to Human Healthcare

An abstract regarding the paper, **Systematic reviews of animal experiments demonstrate poor contributions toward human healthcare. *Reviews on Recent Clinical Trials* 2008; 3(2): 89-96** stated:

Widespread reliance on animal models during preclinical research and toxicity testing assumes their reasonable predictivity for human outcomes. However, of 20 published systematic reviews examining human clinical utility, located during a comprehensive literature search, animal models demonstrated significant potential to contribute toward the development of clinical interventions in only two cases, one of which was contentious. Included were experiments expected by ethics committees to lead to medical advances, highly-cited experiments published in major journals, and chimpanzee experiments—the species most generally predictive of human outcomes. Seven additional reviews failed to demonstrate utility in reliably predicting human toxicological outcomes such as carcinogenicity and teratogenicity.

Results in animal models were frequently equivocal, or inconsistent with human outcomes. Consequently, animal data may not generally be considered useful for these purposes. Regulatory acceptance of non-animal models is normally conditional on formal scientific validation. In contrast, animal models are simply assumed to be predictive of human outcomes. These results demonstrate the invalidity of such assumptions. The poor human clinical and toxicological utility of animal models, combined with their generally substantial animal welfare and economic costs, necessitate considerably greater rigor within animal studies, and justify a ban on the use of animal models lacking scientific data clearly establishing their human predictivity or utility.

This and other publications by Knight, with citations, available at www.aknight.info. Andrew interned at American Vegan Society HQ in 2003.

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