



May 2002

1.Land & Access.....	1
2.Club News.....	1
3.Q & A's.....	1
What is the WSSD and how is the MCSA getting involved?2	
What has happened to the Climbing Competitions in South Africa?2	
4.Expeditions.....	3
5.Climbing.....	3
6.Stories.....	3
Jy wil wat doen?!?!.....	3
Great Trek.....	4
7.Events.....	5
8.General.....	5
9.From the editor.....	5

## 1.Land & Access

**Dome:** At the Special General Meeting held on 17 April 2002 the meeting voted in favour of the purchase of the narrow strips at Dome.

Parking at Dome: parking is now outside the security fence of the van Staden's house.This is due to the disappearance of their dog.

Transgression:The transgression by a member who was reported on in the last newsletter for having taken a large group of non-members out without necessary permits was seen severely by the committee.A letter or reprimand was sent and the member requested to pay the permit fee plus a fine equalling that fee.

**Patrollers** needed for long weekend 15 - 17 June: if you are able to help patrol at Cedarberg/Tonquani please contact Uschi.

**Car Break-ins at Calabash.**Sadly we have had two further break-ins into cars parked at Calabash.Please do not leave any items of value in your car.

Parking at Mr Bertrams (Tonquani): please note that Mr Bertram will allow members to park near the house if you are spending the night at Upper Tonquani.Otherwise the usual parking outside the fence.

WEEK 24 AT HAMERKOP: members may book for part of the week the section now owns.The dates are 11 - 15 June.Please contact the Clubhouse and Huts convener Cheryl Devine for further particulars.

## 2.Club News

The new committee members for 2002/03 and their portfolios are detailed in this newsletter.

Congratulations to Harry Barker who will be 95 in June (*see Harry's article under Stories about his 'epic trip' to Tonquani*).

**Membership:**We welcome the following new members: Kurt Schmidt, Chris Jansen, Kerry-Ann Feldman, Tammy Viljoen, Sandy Geffen, Michael Abbott, Paul Inglis and children Jayme and Judge, Jonathan Joseph, Ian Cameron-Clarke, Janusz Warchol, Rory Lowther, Sean Mikula, Dermot Brogan, Derryth Young (trf from KZN), Andrew Pedley, Willem, Anna Hoek and child Kristof Hoek. Erin Haupt, Vanessa and Gregory Duthé, Steven Morrison and Michael Allport family members.

Transfer: Ian Cuthbertson transferred to Cape Town section.

Passed Away: Phil van Zyl passed away in March 2002.Our condolences to Jean and family.

Our sincere condolences to Cherie and Greg Peake on the passing away of their infant daughter Amber.

Marriages: Andrew Warren and Liz Boyes tied the knot on 4 May, Paul Jackson and Joanne Kirby as well as Kandy Turner and Gary Acres got married recently. Heidi Andersen married Keith Holmes and will be moving to 'down under'.Congratulations to you all.

### New Prospective Membership Procedure

A revised membership procedure is in operation.Prospective members are asked to come to the **talk at 8pm**, lasting 30 mins, every Wednesday at the Clubroom for the introduction video and talk.A **Card** replaces the old A4 piece of paper on which to get meets noted, as well as including important contact numbers.Prospective members are asked to pay **R60 in advance** to cover meet fees and admin expenses.Indemnities and personal particulars need to be filled out and along with the R60 given to the person giving the talk.Four meets are still required, although these can either be official club meets or private meets, yet it is highly recommended to do at least 1-2 official meets.Meets may also be listed retrospectively.Prospective members will receive newsletters and will have a mentor assigned to them should they have any questions etc.For anyone wishing to become a member, it is highly advised to go through this procedure and not just to pitch at a meet.

The new procedure is to 1. Help the prospective member through the process.2. To make it easier for people who have been on numerous meets and outings over an extended period of time, (but never got it together), to become members.

For detailed notes contact Andrew Porter.

### Rescue at Blouberg - Stop Press

Rory Lowther (19) took a plummet on Sat 11 May after losing balance whilst pulling down the rope after abseiling back to ground level, falling about 3-4m and landing on some sharp rocks.With suspected back injuries, the climbers called the search and rescue team for advice and help. Rory along with the rest of the guys spent a very cold and uncomfortable night whilst the rescue team made their way up from Gauteng, eventually arriving with a 24 man (and woman) strong team at 5am.It was decided that due to the possible injuries and the difficult carry-out, to rather

call a helicopter, which then took Rory to hospital in Polokwane (Pietersburg). Even the doctor was amazed that there were no broken bones and the patient was discharged the following day. We wish Rory a speedy recovery.

### 3. Q & A's

At the AGM in March a number of questions were asked from the floor, and in what will hopefully be an ongoing attempt to answer these and other questions, this section will become a regular feature of the newsletter.

#### What is the WSSD and how is the MCSA getting involved?

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) is to be held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002 and promises to be the biggest environmental symposium ever held in Africa. Ten years ago, civil society, business and government representatives met in Rio de Janeiro to discuss issues pertaining to sustainable human development and environmental management. The WSSD is a window of opportunity for civil society (like the MCSA) to critically review the Rio declaration, Agenda 21 in particular, and determine a progressive programme of action for the next ten years.

##### What is Agenda 21, Chapter 13?

Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development

Programme Areas under this chapter include:-

1. Generating and strengthening knowledge about the ecology and sustainable development of mountain ecosystems
2. Promoting integrated watershed development and alternative livelihood opportunities.

So A to a large extent incorporates research and education, whilst B involves developing land-use planning and management, and promoting income-generating activities.

##### MCSA Involvement?

To have exhibition space in the Civil Society element, (either alone, or with like minded bodies) the aims of which are to:-

1. enhance exposure of the MCSA, locally and globally
2. put across our viewpoint of how the mountains can be conserved and at the same time how local communities can benefit
3. as a networking exercise with like minded bodies.
4. possible donor funding
5. establish relationships with relevant government bodies

and to have side shows supporting the above, with the possible inclusions of presentations of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, Spitzkoppe as a income generating tourism site and Upholding legislation in sensitive areas.

If you are interested in helping design the exhibit, or helping etc, or for further info contact Roland Magg.

#### What has happened to the Climbing Competitions in South Africa?

##### Background

In the early 90's climbing competitions were becoming more popular, and various competitions were held on an ad-hoc basis. It was decided to formalise these and so the SCC&DT (Sport Competition Climbing and Development Trust) was formed. Jono Fisher was tasked with getting sponsorship and organising and running competitions which he duly did for about 2-3 years, terminating in 1996. The 1997/1998 competition circuit was still run but without big sponsorship. During these periods competitions were run nationally and competitors were ranked for selection in international competitions.

In 1999/2000, without there being formal national co-ordination, Praxis ran 2 competitions. There was however no ranking even though the competitions were billed as 'nationals'. At the point when Praxis ran their first competition in 1999 they publicly criticised the MCSA at the competition.

Due to a number of reasons the usual people who were actively involved in running and organising the competitions lost interest. GYSCA (Gauteng Youth Sport Climbing Association) literally disappeared after the first Praxis comp. GYSCA have not run any further 'national' competitions, only small regional competitions at the Barn venue.

In the last two years there have been no major competitions in South Africa, but a few local bouldering contests have been held.

##### The Way Forward

*Comment by Joffrey Hyman – who ran comps in Gauteng 1997/1998*

I feel that a strong and dynamic body of active 'plastic' climbers needs to exist which can set the framework and standards to which competitions must be run nationally. They should maintain the rankings, do the selection of teams and outsource the marketing and sponsorship. I believe that until the event is taken to a professional level it will keep collapsing as both volunteers and sponsors lose interest.

Of course due to the circuit being dead the last few years the pool of active competition climbers has diminished badly. Setting up a framework to re-establish the circuit would require the following:

- Forming an organisation to control the standards, rankings, selection of teams and structures. This would have to be a national body.
- Setting up regional organisations to run competitions as a basis for growing the sport, training, maintaining interest.
- Involving schools and existing sport climbing and bouldering clubs into the regional structures.
- Supporting and involving existing venues.
- Outsourcing the sponsorship and marketing for the events and bodies.
- Investigating opportunities for setting up new venues for top-class competitions.
- Concentrating for a few months to re-establish interest and expertise to run professional competitions.

*Andre Schoon (National MCSA President) comments*

1. The UIAA still looks to the MCSA to promote competition climbing.
2. I think there is also still sentiment among the young climbers that the MCSA should promote competition climbing.
3. The reason the SCC&DT has not and is not working, is that there appeared to be an expectation that the SCC&DT Trustees had to make things work, whereas that initiative should have come from the young climbers themselves at SCC&DT management level. The Trustees obligation is simply to ensure that the SCC&DT's objectives are faithfully implemented by management, not to manage the SCC&DT themselves.
4. I believe the SCC&DT is still an appropriate vehicle to promote competition climbing in South Africa. I would like to hear what the young climbers feel about where they want to go with competition climbing and their feeling about tailoring the SCC&DT to suit these needs.
5. There is still some money in the SCC&DT account.

If you want to know more, or get involved, it would be best to get into contact with Joffrey Hyman.

## 4. Expeditions

Greg Devine is organising the trekking expedition to Pakistan in August this year. For anyone still wishing to go along, contact Greg.

Jenny Paterson is leading a trekking expedition to the Altai region. Jenny receives R3500 from our section to go some way towards organising the expedition.

## 5. Climbing

Mark Seuring and Alard Huefner were once again busy opening lines on Spitzkoppe over April. Along with Voitec Modrzewski they opened Active Side of Infinity 25 A0, 11 Pitches. The route is on the SW wall on Spitzkoppe in Namibia. It starts to the left of INXS, climbs parallel to Herero Arch, crossing INXS 3 pitches from the top. As the route is predominantly face climbing it was bolted top down. The first 2 pitches have 3 meters of aid each.

Mark Seuring and Dermot Brogan did the second ascent of Eckhardt Haber's new route on Pontok 4.

Voitec and Dermot then opened another new line on the SW wall called: Beyond Suntan Lotion 22 A0, 10 Pitches. This route climbs the obvious crack right of the SW route. It uses the 1 pitch of the SW route and the second pitch goes up the cracks that were bolted by some British climbers a few years ago. The bolts on this well protectable trad crack have been removed. The main cracks of the route are large so take big friends!!

Duard Le Roux did the second known ascent of Lammergeyer, the aid route in the Drakensberg, rope soloing a number of the pitches.

Peter Lazarus is back into climbing with a vengeance. Some might recall that a year ago he tried to help a little old Spanish lady in getting her snatched handbag back, and after giving chase was 'helped' into a wall at high speed by one of the thieves which left him with a broken wrist. A year later and Lobster is back doing 24's, even though two weeks previously he couldn't pinch lift a brick.

Merve Prior, well into his 70's, showed the young guns, Rory (18) and Gary (15) Lowther that there are still routes to be opened in the Magaliesberg with their joint opening ascent of "Last Touch" (17) in Cedarberg Kloof, before heading off to the Cape. This route starts 20m downstream of Adam and Even, and "for fans of NAUGHTY DAUGHTER, this climb is closer, longer and possibly more exciting." - MP

Paul Brouard (the top climber in the country at present and a member of our section) together with Joffrey Hyman will be heading North to attend the International Climbing Competition in Lecco Italy in June. They have received sponsorship to the amount of R6000 from Jhb Section and R2000 centrally. We wish them all the best.

Remember, most new route descriptions are to be found on [www.saclimb.co.za](http://www.saclimb.co.za)

## 6. Stories

### Jy wil wat doen?!?!

(Climbing at Wellington's Dome – Limpopo Province)

Some years ago while driving past Potgietersrus Platinum Mine on one of my boring sales visits up North, I first noticed the striking granite domes, which are now known as Blinkkoppe or Wellingtons Dome. I stopped at the local general dealer – which is a typically dusty, little all-purpose country shop not unlike any you might find in the Magaliesberg - to make enquiries regarding ownership and access. It was here that I first met Japie.

I walked into the well frequented little shop and noticed a well-nourished, Khaki clad man sizing me up from behind the counter. He saluted me jovially and gave me some background on the area. After explaining with great complexity that he and all of his brothers together with some organisations owned most of the surrounding land, he politely enquired about my interest in the place. In broken Afrikaans I tried to explain that I would like to have a closer look at the domes as I rather fancied climbing them some time, to which his incredulous response was "Jy wil wat doen?!"

It was not until six years and much nagging later that I could finally persuade someone else to accompany me on a recce visit to the place. My brother Darryl and his cronies, having tired of the Manouts area, finally decided to give the place a chance. I think they were rather sceptical at first but were pleasantly surprised by its sport climbing potential. Japie is a perfect and most gracious host. He treated our small party as if we were royalty and his hospitality knew no bounds. It was he who loaded us up onto his trusty farm bakkie and by a most tortuous route, all the while balancing our gift of a bottle of Wellingtons on his knee while tipping back glass after glass like cool aid, conveyed us to the base of the domes for our first close up view.

Often when you go to the domes, you will find Japie and his wife, Amanda at the base of the dome with a pair of binoculars each in one hand and a glass of Wellingtons in the other shouting encouragement and expressing their approval prolifically.

We can thank Darryl, Lofty and Alard who were mainly responsible for the bolting of the 14 existing routes on the domes.

#### FACTS:

Setting: Rustic African, large Euphorbias, raptors, locals.

Rock Type: fine crystal granite; excellent friction, delicate footwork on small edges.

Angle: On angle (*brilliant for women!!!*)

Temperature: Hot in summer, just right in winter. Main crag goes into shade after midday.

Height: Up to 150m high

Grades: From easy (11) to hard (24), 14 Routes in total, but growing.

Equipped: Fully bolted, rap chains every 25m

Drive: 3hrs from Jhb – tar, last 6 kms dirt of which last few kms require car with clearance (*like Chris Z's merc...*)

Camping: At Japies Place, hot showers, toilets, Lapa and braai facilities R30/night Or at base of crag (no water)

Check out [www.saclimb.co.za](http://www.saclimb.co.za) for descriptions of routes.

Neil Margetts, Gareth Frost

Don't miss the meet there at the end of June – see Meetsheet for Particulars.

## Great Trek

If I live until early June 2002 I shall be 95 years old. Hence there's no denying that I am old, and old people readily lose self-confidence. So, when Jenni Millward suggested that to celebrate Christmas 2001 I should spend the day in the Magaliesberg my response was "It's beyond me now." But there is nothing like a clever woman to persuade a man to alter his opinion, especially

when she says that Petro Grobler and Dries Bekker (equally clever and equally keen on seeing me on the top of a Magaliesberg slope) want to come to. Therefore, eventually, this old man, flattered by such interest, agreed to "give it a go" on January 12<sup>th</sup>.

It is odd that when members of the Mountain Club, both women and men are enjoying themselves in Central Asia on the roof of the world, an old man's trek up a Magaliesberg slope would be deemed worthy of notice: but then, as they say in Yorkshire "There's nowt so queer as folks". I had forgotten that the path is strewn with a million loose boulders each one capable of upsetting my fragile balance. Nevertheless, reassured by Dries or Petro or Jenni close behind to catch me if that balance failed, I commenced to climb that slope at about 8h30 on 12<sup>th</sup> January, my eyes firmly fixed on the ground for every step. Well, I made it without a fall, and when we turned eastward on to the sunwarmed expanse of High Tonquani and Petro's keen eye caught the horns, ears and head of a klipspringer limned against the blue of the sky away to the south, we all felt rewarded. Later, curiosity getting the better of him, the buck climbed the rock over which he had been peeping and showed us his whole form in silhouette.

We lunched beneath an overhand with a view embracing the sources of Tonquani and Easter Kloofs. Then we made the downward trek at a pace so sedate that those my good companions will remember it for the slowest journey ever undertaken by them. I was again well-watched, again reassured, and again did not lose my balance. Those three companions had enabled me to rise above myself.

Then, as we sat and quenched our thirst in the light of the westering sun I thought of the words of my song:

I have seen Alpine splendour,  
Forests green and pearly snow,  
Wandered through lovely Lakeland  
Where the daffodillies grow.  
Wondrous beauty lies among them  
But wherever I shall be,  
In the Transvaal kloofs and krantzies  
There you'll find the heart of me

January 2002

Harry Barker

## 7.Events

### Birthday Celebration

Harry Barker will be 95 in June. We have planned a birthday celebration **at Cedarberg on 9 June at 11am**. We invite members to join us. This will be a bring and share - Brunch/Champagne Breakfast. Please contact Uschi 807 1310

### Slideshow from International Rescue Guru

**When:** 26<sup>th</sup> June

**Where:** Clubhouse, Waverley

**Entrance Fee:** R20, bookings phone Uschi, unreserved seats.

Dr Anthony Jones, MBE, who has been involved in some 870 mountain rescue operations around the world, has accepted an invitation to be one of the MCSA's international guests for 2002. Dr Jones' "rescue career" started in Cape Town in 1954, when he lived in Cape Town and joined the MCSA, and has continued virtually uninterrupted since he relocated to the United Kingdom in 1964. An honorary life member of the MCSA, Dr Jones has been vice-chairman of Britain's Mountain Rescue Council since 1985. His presentation should appeal to all those involved in the mountain environment in general.

### PEOPLE ON PEAKS

**14/15<sup>th</sup> September-21/24<sup>th</sup> September 2002**

If you haven't yet booked your peak for this exciting project, please do so soon!

Contacts:

Local co-ordinator: Jenny Paterson (011) 888-3693 (a/h) / [jennyp@telkomsa.net](mailto:jennyp@telkomsa.net)

National co-ordinator: Petro Grobler [petrogrobler@icon.co.za](mailto:petrogrobler@icon.co.za)

Check on our website for further details (or contact Jenny!) of the peaks still available and those already booked:

<http://mcsa.org.za/fym-events.html>

Please note that we have a special outing planned for the 14<sup>th</sup> to **Melville Koppies** for the older members of the Club, for those who have difficulty walking, and also for anyone pushed for time and can only participate on one day. Join Margie Boyes and Jenny Paterson for a special outing!

### MCSA Annual Dinner – Cape

As in the previous year the committee has decided to sponsor 4 tickets and provide assistance for petrol money in getting to the annual dinner in the Cape to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> September this year, being hosted by the Hottentots-Holland Section. For those interested in going down, please contact Greg Devine.

### Jhb Section Dinner-Dance

As a wrap-up for the International Year of Mountains, the Jhb Section will be having a dinner-dance, scheduled for the **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2002**. We shall have an award evening 'Johburg section's Oscars'. Further news in the next newsletter.

## 8.General

From Uschi: as the person who answers the club phone and am often asked questions, am asked for advice etc.

From the usual 'how to become a member', to what meet is there this Sunday. Even being phoned on a Sunday 'where is the club going today'?

How can I get fit to go to Kilimanjaro? What food should I take? What can I do not to get altitude sickness?

But a few are beauties: 'is ..... married, he is so cute and I don't want to get involved if he is married.' Do you hire out snow-making machines? Do you arrange wedding catering? Do you arrange children's parties? What trails can you suggest for the not so fit? What is the nearest hiking club to Potchefstroom? Is that the Mountain Bike club? What do you think the weather will be on Saturday?? Can we buy lunch at Tonquani?

I'll always try to help. **Members please note the phone number to use for club matters is 011 807 1310** weekday mornings preferably between 8 and 10 am. *My private number only in an emergency.*

## 9.From the editor:

I often ask myself whether we are a mountain club, or a land and access club. Especially if I look at the Agenda and Minutes of our committee meetings. Without a doubt, Land is one of the most important facets of our club, but I believe the members must not lose focus of that fact that first and foremost our club is there to further mountaineering. There was an overwhelming vote for the purchase of 3 strips of land in the Dome area recently, and not that I am against it, I just would also like to see similar amounts of money being spent say on a bouldering wall, that a lot of members will use on a continuous basis. And that sport climbers might also be more attracted to the club, and not come with, "what will the club do for me?" Actually, this last statement is heard rather often, and I believe one needs to explain over and over again to people that a club is not something where you pay money and get benefits. Rather a club is the joining together of like minded bodies in an attempt to achieve goals that would be impossible to achieve on one's own. So for sport climbers, it is not 'what can the club do for them', rather 'what can we achieve when we are together'.

And from an old newsletter, just in case some people have forgotten "In the introductory documents sent to prospective shareholders, one of the Hamerkop Mountain Trust's (Pty) Ltd objectives was given as "providing MCSA access along the road in the climbing kloof".

What are your thoughts? Maybe some letters to the editor to be published on matters like this would stir up some debate, and maybe even see some action.

Rock climbing, mountaineering and all other forms of outdoor activities are inherently dangerous and carry significant risk of personal injury or death. Any activities undertaken in conjunction with or on the property of the MCSA are participated in at own risk. The MCSA, its members, the occupiers or owners of any land on which such activity takes place accept no responsibility for any loss injury or damage to person or property, howsoever arising, whether through negligence or otherwise. The MCSA does not recommend that anyone participate in these activities unless they are experts, seek qualified instruction or guidance, are knowledgeable about the risks involved and are willing to, and do, personally assume all responsibility.