



August 2002

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## 1.Club News

### Revamped Website

The Jhb Section has redone their website.Check out <http://jhb.mcsa.org.za>.Thanks to Chris Green, Kerry Feldman and Roland Magg for the upgrade.

There is bunch of new stuff on the website, including membership application forms, expedition application forms, photos etc.If you have any material which you wish to put on the website, speak to Roland.

In future we hope to have a "Pin-Board" up and running to post small classified ads on.Then there are also ideas about being able to update membership info on-line, and even things like payment of subs.But that may take a while and depends on costs.

**Membership:** We welcome the following new members Bronwyn Howard, Christian Prinsloo, Brett Nicholson (trf from KZN), Mark Millar, Kevin Rudham, Lauren & Kevin Phillips, Ian James, Ilse von Willich, Caryn Carstensen, Trevor & Nicola Coleman, Judy Beaumont and Sally Ferrington.

Transferred to Cape Town: Jacques Breitenbach; Trf to EP Ken Thrash and Patrick Reid.

Resigned: Don McLennan, Cathy Butterworth, Tamar Mason,

**Marriage:** Congratulations to Margaret Boyes on her marriage to David Hammond-Tooke.

Passed away: Geordie Strachan and Eva Langmore.Our sincere condolences to family and friends.

## 2.Land & Access

It has been brought to our attention that permit holders, trespassers or members (but I don't believe this to be the case) - have been playing radios loudly at Tonquani campsite.PLEASE if you come across someone doing this, throw the radio into the stream.Please point out to these characters that we do not allow radio, taperecorders etc and try to get genuine names and contact particulars.Also let them show you their permit or card as some people who claim to be members are not.

Please observe once again: one guest per member.Get permits for more than one guest. Opening and closing at Mountain Sanctuary Park winter 8h00 - 17h30(1 May - 31 Aug), summer 8h00 - 18h30 (1 Sept - 30

April)

Please always be courteous these are our neighbours.

## 3.Q & A's

### Formal Training of Meet-leaders put into perspective

Meets- leaders are a special breed of person. These people freely give of their time so as to lead others into the mountains and kloofs we all so enjoy. Many of these meet - leaders have years and years of rock - climbing and /or mountaineering experience. The question of their skills and abilities with respect to leading others in the mountains could not be called into question. However not all leaders have years of experience and yet are still prepared to lead meets despite their lack of experience. This situation could lead to a potential mishap or accident despite their best intentions. Thus whence, the meet - leader of today?

In response to the question of a meet - leader's skills and abilities the Johannesburg Section is presently debating the idea of formal training for meet - leaders. The potential training of meet - leaders would most likely be guided by the "Mountain Development and Training Trust" or MDT. The MDT was established to bring about internationally recognized standards in South African mountain - training. The MDT is an organization that provides such standards for training schools and courses. The MDT also evaluates the skills and techniques of those who have followed a training course.

The trainee may follow a course to obtain a particular level of expertise. Various qualifications\* exist in accordance to the level of skills acquired. Amongst these qualifications are Absell-supervisor, Single Pitch Supervisor and Rock -climbing Leader; for Rock-climbing, Basic Mountain Walking Leader, Advanced Mountain, Walking Leader for mountaineering (further details of these qualifications may be found by visiting the MDT website \* - <http://mdt.mountain.org.za> ).The qualifications obtained may be used by those who operate professionally (for gain) in the mountains. The relevant qualification for professionals would be the SAMGA (or South African Mountain Guides Association) award.

SAMGA is the body that is recognized by the South African tour-guiding industry. SAMGA guides must qualify in a broad range of subjects that are related to the tour - guiding industry. At the moment there is a lively debate by all of the interested parties in the mountain - guiding industry. Presently the SAMGA qualification has only a 14% emphasis on the technical aspects of mountaineering and rock - climbing. This situation has led to dissatisfaction amongst the key players in the industry and this has led to a lively discussion about SAMGA qualifications. This discussion can be followed on Yahoo - groups /Adventure guiding versus Tour guiding.

The MCSA whilst not a professional organization does recognize the need for some degree of competency amongst its leaders. In this regard the club will look at ways and means to better equip its leaders to lead others in the mountains. Perhaps by lectures, talks and courses we may go some way towards achieving this goal, so that we can all enjoy the mountains in safety.

Rance Mc Intyre (Meets organizer 2002).

## 4.Expeditions

Greg and crowd is off in Pakistan.We await return for stories and photos.

Jenny's trip started with having to change flights due to a delayed Turkish Airlines flight. We hope they all made the connecting flights.

## 5. Climbing

### BMC Meet – Wales

The international climbing meet, organised by the British Mountaineering Council at Plas-Y-Brenin in Wales, was a full success in every aspect. From 5.5 to 12.5. 2002 some 90 climbers from 29 countries came together to climb, to get to know each other and make friends and to exchange ideas. During the day we went to various climbing crags around Wales, hurried back at night to the Brenin for a five-star supper and then attended talks or slide shows. The theme for this year's meet was "breaking barriers", such as might exist due to cultural backgrounds, age differences or disabilities. The BMC had made a point to invite disabled climbers. At some stage we had a party of three with only three legs and 17 fingers between them! For anyone who could witness here how hope and determination can overcome the most difficult handicaps, his own small aches and pains surely faded away into insignificance.

The main attraction however was the climbing. The weather allowed us to go out every day and climb at all the famous places, one day doing long county routes, the next climbing at the sea cliffs of Gogarth or the Thlyn Peninsula, another day enjoying the sporty crags at Tremadog or even competing bouldering. There was something for everyone.

What I brought back are not only memories of good climbs, of rugged mountain scenes and of smiles of friends, but also a few ideas of how we here in South Africa could run similar climbing meets. We have a lot to offer, not five-star accommodation, but excellent rock. Many overseas climbers would like to visit South Africa, but are not quite sure how to go about it. And our climbing community can only benefit from exposure to climbers from other parts of the world.

### World Cup Trip - Lecco, Italy

*by Joffrey Hyman*

Paul Brouard and I decided to enter a World Cup competition in Europe this year. June/July was convenient for both of us so we started planning to go to the Lecco competition north-east of Milan in Italy. We received sponsorship from the MCSA Johannesburg Section, MCSA Cencom, Rhodes University where Paul studies, Gecko and Scavenger almost covering the costs of the trip. We would like to thank all these sponsors for making the trip possible.

We arrived in Switzerland after a sleepless night-flight to pick up our rental car which was supposed to be a 3-door Reno. Fortunately the rental company had a new Golf that had to find its way back to France and we were the means. We decided to do our last training session at a gym in Zurich, a rather large one at that. After the training we headed for Cresciano one of the good bouldering areas in Switzerland that is home to the World's hardest boulder problem: 'Dreamtime sit start' which is an 8C/V15 problem! Paul gave the stand-start, a mere 8B/V13 a whirl and was actually doing fairly well. I was just stared in amazement as to how hard the sit-start was!

Arriving in Lecco was a culture shock; the town almost had a mafia feel to it. The competition itself was an excellent experience, not speaking or understanding Italian proved to be a bit of a problem as we could not find too many of the officials that could speak English! We started off with the speed event which was dominated by Russians, some of which did multiple one-arm pull-ups as their warm-up routine! Paul came 12th and I came 11th, the winners were blistering up a 12m wall which was quite steep and probably graded about 19/21 in 8-9 seconds. After two days of rest we entered into the bouldering which was very well attended with over 60 entrants. We were each given six minutes to try six problems. These problems were all extremely difficult, in the range 7A+/V7 to about 8A/V11, for the qualifiers. Paul did fairly well coming 22nd and I came 51st, only one competitor completed 5 of the 6 problems in the qualifier round. Malcolm Smith (UK) and Lisa Rands (USA) won this event.

The difficulty competition after only a days rest was hard work as we were pretty worn out from the bouldering. In hindsight it is better not to try all the disciplines in the same competition unless you are incredibly fit. The grade 30 qualifier route on the impressively steep wall spat me off quite easily but Paul was 3 grips short of getting into the semi-finals placing 48th out of 78 competitors. Alexandre Chabot from France cruised the routes to win with Katrin Sedlmayer winning the women's.

Overall the competition in the Cermenati square of the Lecco city was very well run with a huge crowd gathering around the wall for the finals. Good (Italian) announcers kept things exciting although we did not have a clue as to what they were saying. We learnt a great deal and would most likely be able to put that experience to good use in future competitions.

The remainder of the trip we travelled from Italy to France visiting some of the best climbing spots in Europe. In Italy we went to Arco, a climbing mecca where the whole town is about climbing, the humidity made it hard to get much climbing done there. In France we went to Ceuse, Orpierre, Bauchet, Verdon and Fontainebleau. Ceuse and Verdon were the best crags, Ceuse having an hour hike up a steep hill to get to some awesome limestone cliffs. The harder routes there were really good but the easier ones tended to be sharp and unpleasant. For easier routes the Aiguines area near Verdon and Orpierre would be far better. During our stay at Ceuse Paul onsighted two 7C+/29 routes and repeated the classic Rosanna 30 in 2 tries. Unfortunately a huge flapper stopped the 8B/32 & 8C/34 redpoints Paul was working hard on getting.

Verdon and Bauchet were also incredible in a very beautiful and exposed setting. If you enjoy lots of air and good scenery this is the place to climb! We ended the trip bouldering in Fontainebleau in rather wet weather. In spite of the bad conditions we got plenty of climbing in, Paul managed a repeat of 'Salle Gosse' a 7C(V9-10) boulder problem in full sun. The forest there is famous for its slopers and repeating problems is often a matter of friction.

We will be giving a **slideshow on the 4th of December** to show you all the slides and tell the full story.

## 6. Stories

### Tom Bright

Having read Harry Barker's article about that scamp Tom Bright, I thought that I should, perhaps contribute a few more anecdotes. Here they are:

Tom was a student at Wits when he performed his famous Post Office climb in aid of Rag Funds. He threw himself into the inter-varsity war with the same intensity and was forever scheming and hatching devilish plots to confound the "Tukkies", our arch-rivals.

About half way to Pretoria, on the main road, there was a large sign advertising Pretoria Zoo. It consisted of a cut-out silhouette of a baboon. Tom and his co-conspirators painted a Tukkies rugby jersey on it.

According to reports, they also somehow managed to get a jersey on one of the real baboons in the zoo, though how this was done I cannot imagine.

Tom's crowning achievement in this field came when he was "captured" by the enemy. Together with his accomplice, he was paraded in front of the enemy hordes as a war-cry practice at Loftus Versveld stadium. His appearance was greeted with hisses and boos. Tom reciprocated by holding his nose to show his opinion of them. Then, to show how strongly he felt, he put on a gas mask. The crowd roared with laughter. This did not last long. Tom tossed a few tear-gas bombs among them and walked out while they were crying!

Bright met his match one day in the old "Laughing" du Toit, the farmer at Castle Gorge. The Nationalists had just won the election and Tom said,

"Ek hoor skaapvleis gaan nou baie skaars word."

"Hoe so?", said du Toit.

"Al die skape gaannou die Parlement in!", said Tom.

"Maar varkvleis sal nou volop word!", retorted du Toit.

After months of hard work and soft talking I had persuaded a very attractive girl whom I fancied, to allow me to cook her a meal in my room at Mount Rydal, an old block in Hillbrow which was largely inhabited by Club members.

I laid on a delicious wine, cooked up "crayfish thermidor" to be followed by a chocolate mousse, lit the candles and put on soft, romantic music to suit the occasion. With both of us in a mellow mood after supper, we settled down to the serious business of the evening. Things were really starting to hot up when we were interrupted by a thunderous knocking on the door and Bright's voice following my name. We froze, hoping he would think I was out and go away. No such luck!

"Open up!", he bellowed hammering at the door until it seemed that it would be smashed to matchwood, "I know you're in there, and I'll bust this bloody door down!". By then half the building must have been awake and listening. I went to the door.

"Tom, you swine; bugger off!", I hissed desperately. This only spurred him on to fresh efforts. I opened the door with murderous intentions. In a flash he was inside, bringing with him Abe M'Shigane. Abe worked in the Wits library, part time, and I knew him slightly. He was one of those perpetual students who never quite succeed in getting their degree. The two of them planted themselves on my bed and made themselves thoroughly at home.

I don't think the young lady had ever been in the same room as a black man before, unless perhaps it was the kitchen and her eyes were like saucers! Having totally ruined a beautiful evening, the ungodly pair departed and I took the girl home. I only saw her once after that. That was when she told me never to speak to her again.

I first applied to join the Club around 1948. Rob Latham, who applied at the same time, was accepted but I was blackballed by the Chairman's wife who objected to certain songs I sang at campfires. This did not worry me unduly. I continued to fraternise with the members and sing the songs. It was only in 1950 that someone notices that I was using the Club's amenities without paying my subs and suggested that it was time I joined.

I collected an application form at a Trident weekend. Having done a climb with Tom and Dawie, I was unwise enough to mention that I was applying. They immediately offered their help to fill in the form, telling me that it was necessary to make the application as witty and humorous as possible if I hoped to become a member.

There can be no doubt that the result of their efforts was both witty and humorous. When the chairman told me that I'd been accepted he added,

"You were lucky; a couple of the Committee members were in favour of banning you for life for your damned impertinence!"

At that time Tom and Dawie were good friends. Later they became implacable enemies.

But that is another story and I don't know if I dare tell it without first consulting a lawyer or risking a libel suit.

Merve Prior.

## 7.Events

24/25 August **Family Meet** at Maretwane (Castle Gorge) North. By kind permission of the owners of Maretwane we have a joint meet with Magaliesberg section. Bring and braais, sing-song, car camping.

People on Peaks: 14 September- Melville Koppies for the 'oldies' contact Margaret Bijes or Uschi

21 - 24 September trough out South Africa

6 October: Castle Gorge 'The Geology and History of the Magaliesberg' by **Vincent Carruthers**. Booking essential. Contact Penny Ludwig 082 959 1112.

12/13 October: **Annual Campfire**, sing song and Family Meet at Cedarberg.

18-25 October: **OLD Toppies** climbing meet

Venue: the Restaurant, Waterval Boven

Contact: Keith James 073 220 1515

29 November: **Dinner/Dance**

When :Friday 29 November

Venue: Holy Rosary Sports Club

Adjutant Road

Elma Park Edenvale

Cost: R75/person

Price includes meal and disco. Cash bar is available. Tickets will go on sale in September. Awards of serious and dubious nature will be presented. For further information contact Uschi or Cheryl.

## 8.General

### FOR SALE:

**International Year of Mountains 2002 T shirts** for sale R135. All sizes . Colour blue made of Wick Dry fabric. Embroidered with the IYM logo.

Available from Uschi, club evenings.

**Map books** of the Magaliesberg R80.00 contact Uschi

**Gear:** The following and other gear was donated to the club. If you are interested and would like to make an offer, contact Uschi.

Down Jacket, Down Sleeping bag, Dachstein Boots, Tent

### Hiking Meet Leaders

There have been numerous requests for there to be a hiking leader in addition to the climbing leader at meets. Would anyone interested in leading hikes on meets or even leading separate hikes, please contact Rance.

**Journals:** many journals that were posted have been returned 'unclaimed' or 'address unknown'. Please, members we go to much work (and cost) posting them to you and would appreciate it that if you have not received your 2000 Journal or for that matter also of the previous years, please contact Uschi (011 807 1310) to make arrangements to collect them.

### Route Books:

Andrew Porter is compiling route books for sport areas in and around Jhb. Keep your ears open for when these hit the shelves.

#### Vacuum Cleaner

A break-in at the club occurred and the trust vacuum cleaner was stolen.If anyone has an old one they could donate to the club, please contact Uschi.

#### 9.From the editor:

The Winter season is almost over and Spring is most certainly in the air.Fortunately or unfortunately we don't actually have a real winter season here like in Europe or America, but enough club members made use of the colder weather to get out there and do some ice-climbing and skiing.The good thing about having some form of defined seasons, is that it allows one to take a break from one activity whilst indulging in another.And then when that season is over, one seems to have more enthusiasm and energy to get back into the activities of the other season.There is also the disadvantage that ones arms turn into pulp whilst one is playing around in the 'white stuff'. In any case, with Spring coming around, this is a good opportunity to check out the meetlist, get on the meets and get cranking hard.To blast-off there is the People on Peaks project which is the final bash for the International Year of the Mountains initiative, and should see a huge number of mountaineers bagging peaks around the country.If you are not on a peak bagging mission, then get your act into gear and either book your own peak, or join up with someone who already has booked a peak.

An initiative is under way to facilitate First Aid Courses for members.The first course starts early September, and depending on demand, other ones should be run, roughly every few months.This forms part of an ongoing initiative to upgrade members skills, particularly meetleaders and trainers.

See you outthere!

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