



Newsletter of the  
Johannesburg Section

November 2007

## 1. EDITORIAL

We are coming to the end of another year, my last news letter for this year, and my second last as editor. My four year term on the committee is almost up. How time has flown. At the end of the day, several things lurk at the back of my mind, leaving this feeling of "We have done nothing about it?". We are still perceived as a predominantly "Whites only" organisation, on behalf of our failure to attract members of other races to the club. Land and access issues still plague us, and fear of criminal attacks on members have been responsible for a faster deterioration of access than any other threat. A growing fashion towards indulgence in instant gratification. An expectation by new and prospective members to have the world of mountains and friends rolled out before them by a club run almost purely by volunteers. What ever happened to patient mentorship, of building friendships, and learning a craft from the bottom up. Have we become too selfish to teach and share, or too lazy to feed our passion? Perhaps we just don't have time anymore.

One thing I have noticed, is that the average age of people climbing on traditional climbing meets seems to be gradually increasing, and it begs the question, is traditional climbing slowly dying? Are the hard men (and women) who carry large packs up huge mountains, with lots of gear, and always with a story to tell, are they slowly becoming extinct? Is the culture of grit and determination being superseded by sport climbing madness. Alas, like so many things we deal with on the committee, it is a fight against human nature, against forces that affect our community at large, and often has very little to do with what we as a committee of a mountain club can do. I blame it on a culture of instant gratification, of clip and go, of pushing the grades, climb by numbers, easy in, easy out, more bang for your buck. I sound like an old codger, mumbling and can almost hear my grandfather echoing "when I was young" in the background, but still, at age 37, a time when your work life spirals out of control, your family life takes the lions share of what's left of your disposable time and your well used gear starts to gather dust between trips, I have never found anything to match that ecstasy of being at the sharp end of the rope, exploring new ground, and taking on the elements. Whilst I confess to occasionally clipping the odd bolt (for training purposes), I've even opened a sport route myself, I feel that the sport only fraternity are sorely missing out. What ever happened to the spirit of being the first to do something. Is there any thrill in traveling the road most traveled, clipping a worn bolt, or adding to someone else's skid marks at the friction crux, even if its grade 24! Does it leave you with that feeling of satisfaction that lasts a life time, a story to tell your grandkids, that even in this modern age, they will still be impressed, if not by the technical wizardry, but by head strength to pull through. When I first took up climbing, my father, a little concerned, asked our neighbour Ken Bennet (a previous MCSA chairman) about my newly acquired pastime. He said climbing is 90% mental, and the other 10% is also mental. And so it is, despite never being able to climb more than a 20 on sport, and realizing full well, that my days of being nimble and light, and being able to go past that point are fading, I feel stronger and more competent than ever. My head and heart are filled with memories of friends and conquests, and I know there will be more!

And so it is, I beseech you, flee from that worn out sport crag, get yourself some real gear, scare yourself sh\*tless, and lend yourself to unforgettable adventure. Know that it is not how many minutes we have, but how you spend those minutes that count.

This edition of the newsletter seems to have gone from the sublime to the ridiculous with reports of the first bionic ascent of Cabernet-Muscadel by a bunch of loonies with misfiring synapses, to a highly successful MCSA Rock-n-Road trip, where the youngsters climbed their age, and beyond.

It is with sadness we announce the passing away of one of the stalwarts of the club, Benno Magg. Benno had been suffering quietly from cancer for the last 7 years. Our thoughts are with Uschi, Thomas, Kirsten, Andre, Roland, Diane, Keane, Alek, Zennan and Veyda.

And so, from the editors desk, I wish you all a fantastic Christmas break. May your Christmas stockings be filled with all the latest gear, and your New Years wishes come true.

*Peter Adrian*

## 2. DEO TIBBA 6001m

Near Manali, Himachal Pradesh

Northern India, End June 2007

We were thinking of the European Alps for a mixed rock and ice challenge. But somehow, neither of us could get very excited about it. So Chris got onto the internet. He had this job in Vietnam, and wanted to do something on the way back. So Northern India it was.

Our base town was Manali, nestled in the Kullu Valley, some 600km northwest on Delhi. You do not want to be in Delhi end June beginning of July as it is pre monsoon and dreadfully hot and humid. But the mountains are much more agreeable. Manali is situated in the state of Himachal Pradesh; Himachal in Hindi means home of snow. And snowy mountains it has. There are scores of climbed and unclimbed peaks in the vicinity, including the Greater Himalayan National Park, some 50km to the north. Manali itself is far more relaxed than other areas in the north of India. The people on the whole give you space, and are relaxed, quite uncharacteristic of the rest of Northern India.

Deo Tibba is a beautiful 6001 meter peak situated in the Pir Panjal range, some 30km east of Manali. It consists of an extensive ice cap, and at just over 6000 metre, is higher than anything Chris and I had done before.

We had organized things through Sunshine Adventures, run by Anket. He had sorted us out with this whole expedition thing. Bikky was our climbing guide, with a cook, a horseman, 2 gofers and 5 pack horses. As we set out from the road head with only a day pack on my back, I felt that all mountain trips should be like this; I felt quite the pampered mountaineer.

We generally headed up the Jagatsukh/Khanol valley towards our objective, steadily gaining height, starting at the road head at about 3000m and gaining about 400m a day. We were mindful of our ascent rate and acclimatization, drinking plenty of water and climbing high and sleeping low. The trek in took up a series of huge steepish steps and high altitude meadows, the latter often resplendent with carpets of small brightly coloured flowers. The scenery was getting more exciting, with progressively higher and more snow covered peaks.

However, as we progressed, the rain showers became more persistent. At first, we did not think much of it. This was our window of opportunity, what with work commitments, and we had to make the most of it. The full meaning of the Indian monsoon rains was yet to sink in. We had time enough, if we organized ourselves efficiently, perhaps even to have a crack at Indrasan 6223m, an as yet unclimbed peak, very close by.

Nevertheless, we should have sensed what was to come when, on the second night out, it pissed down, to the point that it felt we had a water mattress under the tent; such was to run-off at our camp site. I was up in the middle of the night digging trenches around the tent when the rain abated some. Fortunately not too much water had found its way into the tent and we were able to dry out our damp sleeping bags the next day.

After 3 days of walking in, we got to the top base camp at about 4500m. The ice-cap of Deo Tibba was a magnificent sight about 1500m above us, when the clouds parted. The excitement and tension of the final push was becoming tangible. However, the snow line was still above us, at about 5000m. So we had some altitude to gain before we were free of the rain.

We checked and rechecked our gear. The idea was to do the last 1500m over 2 days. We first had to ascend a formidable mixed ice and rock ridge, make a high camp, and then go for the top. After a day's forced rest, due to more rain, Chris, Bikky and I set out, only to get to the base of the ridge when it started to piss down again. We took shelter under a large boulder, hoping that the weather would clear in time. Eventually, we stashed the gear and returned to camp.

The next day started with rain, but when it cleared around 11.00, we were off. Collecting the stashed gear, we soon were at the base of the ridge. We decided on an ascent up a snowy section. We geared up for the slog up. Chris looked really cool in his new designer sun glasses. The snow was reasonably compact. Nevertheless, it was tough going, exacerbated by depleted oxygen levels. 5 steps, then rest. 5 steps, then rest. We were doing well, nearing the

top of the ridge. That is, until guess what.....it started to rain. Compounding our problem, Chris' brand new rucksack had developed a crucial fault at the point where the bag attached to the upper part of the frame.

Chris and I then took stock of the situation. Though we had waterproofs, I did not have full waterproofs to cover my legs. Chris' rucksack was stuffed. Bikky had a bad cold, and the thought of spending time in a tent with him and catching his germs was not very attractive. And we now knew that it would definitely rain some more. It was time to turn back.

Once we had made the decision, it was amazing how quickly we descended our hard earned altitude. We had got to about 5000m and the rest would have to wait for another trip. We now knew the lie of the land. The next Easter would see our return, well away from the rainy season.

Turning back is fine when you do it. The problem is that afterwards come the 'what ifs'. What if we had soldiered on, maybe we would have weathered the odds. This was the first time Chris and I had not achieved our objective on our trips together. We had still a good 1000m to go before our summit. What about others who turn back on higher peaks within a couple of hundred meters? Their dilemma must be greater. 'Don't even open that can of worms' was the advice of a good friend.

So next Easter it would have to be.

#### **Postscript:**

Our return domestic flight from Manali to Delhi was cancelled due to guess what..... the rain. This necessitated a grueling 14 hour drive down the 600km road from hell in order to catch our flights back to South Africa. Even then, once back home, the news was full of huge flooding in Northern India and Bangladesh.

CHZ

25<sup>th</sup> September 2007

### **3. INCIDENT AT MAGAGENI**

#### **Granny rescues stranded climbers**

**16<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

Granny Ulrike, John and myself were climbing 'Tin Can Alley' on the left side of the waterfall at Magageni. Two other climbers (names withheld for sensitive reasons) were climbing on the opposite wall, 'Knee Jam Blues' graded 17, a beautiful deep crack route that Ulrike and I had ascended the previous day.

As the 2 parties gained height, various packets of verbiage were hurled at each other, suggesting that there was still life in the mountain club. When we topped out, however, we noticed the other party having difficulty with their final pitch, a tricky corner with a crack in the recess. Try as they might, they just could not get through.

No worries, said granny Ulrike, we will come over and get you out; which she did. 'That is the first time that I have ever had to be rescued', said one of the rescued climbers.

It is interesting to note that granny Ulrike had lead the problem pitch the previous day, though she may have pulled on the odd bit of gear to get through.

Anonymous (Chris Ziranek)

### **4. MERVYN PRIOR'S 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY**

The 5<sup>th</sup> of September was Mervyn Prior's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. He decided we must climb Formosa Peak (1675 m) to celebrate it. On the 4<sup>th</sup> we had a lunch party for some of our old friends, including the van der Riets, Rod and Jane Green, Ronny Fox and friends from the Southern Cape section.

Five minutes before our guests arrived, our furry neighbours, who live in the forest, decided to join the party. Their leader was sitting on the pile of plates, happily devouring the nuts, when he was spotted. Luckily we got rid of him before too much damage was done. It could have been a disaster! During lunch Merv sang the well-known "Sylveste".

After lunch, in spite of the gentle but persistent rain, 8 of us geriatrics set off to climb the peak from the north side. The Greens, who live at van Wyksdorp, joined us at Louterwater. We found a very pleasant camp site in the farmers empty shed. Protected from the rain, we soon had a camp fire going. The mist was so thick that Ann van der Riet and Jane Green wanted to know where the mountain was.

Next morning we woke to brilliant sunshine and a clear blue sky. What luck! Starting at 8h00, we reached the summit at 12h00. There we worked out that the average age of the party was 75.

To our great astonishment, we found that Bill Turner had carried up a bottle of champagne, plus glasses! He put on a bow tie over his dirty shirt and proceeded to pour the champagne. We toasted Mervyn.

The views from up there were tremendous: Babiaans range to the north, Plett to the south and over the sea we saw huge black clouds rolling up towards us. We started to descend hastily. Merv had a length of half-weight rope (Hugh called it dental floss) and we were all very pleased to have him belay us 1 by 1 down a short, steep, very exposed area in the gully.

We all got back safely to the cars, exhausted after the long, steep descent, during which I suffered a wet backside after slipping in the bog. Jane Green declared that it was the best birthday party she had ever been to!

Jean Prior

### **5. FATTI AND ERENS CLAIM FFAAA OF MUSCADEL-CABERNET**

On Saturday 29 September 2007 Paul Fatti, Gordon Erens – visiting from Sydney, and Duncan Peters – visiting from Auckland, climbed Muscadel-Cabernet at Wilgepoort. Since Paul was climbing with his titanium hip, replaced a few years ago, and has recently had cataracts replaced with artificial lenses in each eye, while Gordon has had ceramic knee replacements on each knee, they feel that they can justifiably claim the FFAAA – the 'first fully artificially aided ascent' of the climb. Duncan, who tagged along evidently severely handicapped without artificial parts, cruised up the climb in fine style (although he did confess to have experienced a few missing synapses of late). The only difficulties experienced were on the last pitch. Instead of climbing the standard straightforward third pitch Fatti's artificial eyes spotted an alternative off to the left. Obviously they are not working as well as he thought as the variation conspired to be a real grunt, much harder than the second crux pitch.

At the end of the day all participants agreed that another international expedition should be planned for the future at some stage when we had all acquired sufficient artificial parts and lost enough brain cells to try for a FFFFFAAA – 'frail forgetful farts' first fully aided artificial ascent'.

Gordon Erens, 1 October 2007.

Gordon and Duncan are both long-standing members of the Jo'burg Section (too long for their own good?) and Gordon was Chairman in the early nineties.

### **6. MCSA QUIZ**

Once again, the quiz Terri-ble appears. This is traditionally dished out with glee to those competing in the MCSA adventure race, and is the final mind bender when you have just run, climbed, kloofed, orienteered, abseiled, and prussiced your way through the Tonquani complex. Due to poor weather, this year's adventure race had to be cancelled, and so why be selfish with the unused prizes, and this magnificent feat of mountaineering trivia. Lets share it with the whole club. Four prizes are on offer, consisting of a pack of 12 session cards for entry to the newly opened Wonderwall climbing Gym, at KyaSands. The first 4 complete (if you can) entries will be honored. Complete entries can be e-mailed to Uschi Magg (admin@jhb.mcsa.org.za) please use the subject line "Quiz" and write the correct answer next to the question number. Entries close on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2008.

**1. Edu Marin (Spain) tested positive for drugs on 16 June 2007 at the IFSC World Cup in Zurich Switzerland, and was banned from international competition for two years. What was his drug of choice?**

Testosterone

Cocaine

Snickers bars

Caffeine

Steroids

**2The Huber Brothers have just completed El Capitan (1000m) in a record time. They spent four weeks training and testing different tactics. What was their time?**

23 hour 52 mins

1 hour 59 mins

11 hours 13 mins

5 hours 01 mins

2 hours 45 mins

32 mins (wind assisted)

**3Who was the first Englishman on top of Everest?**

Chris Bonnington

Edmund Hillary

John Hunt

Doug Scott

Tony Blair (amongst other amazing feats)

**4Leonardo da Vinci climbed to a snowfield in the vicinity of ....? ..... to make scientific observations. Where?**

Rochemelon

Mont Ventoux

Val Sezia

Mont Aguille

Chamonix

**5Once difficult to access, the Jungfrau cog railway now runs inside the Jungfrau, up to the Jungfraujoch railway station at 3,454 m (11,332 ft), the highest in Europe. Jungfrau means "virgin". When was she first climbed?**

1800

1792

1815

1811

1821

**6What is the local name for Mount Everest?**

Chomolungma

Qogir

Dapsang

Lampa Pahar

Kecthu

**7The Sirimon route is a popular route on which mountain?**

Mt Blanc

Aconcagua

Mt McKinley

Mt Kenya

Mt Kilimanjaro

**8The Petzl Croll can help you out of a tight situation. What type of climbing equipment is it?**

Descendeur

Belay assist

Bolt clip

An extendable arm that allows you to place

gear up to 3m above you

Ascendeur

Harness

**9What is an Atom Smasher?**

Haul sack

Tiny bolt

Aid hook

Wire Nut

Type of nuclear technology

Move made by ladies on men making unwanted

advances

**10A mini traxion is a:**

Climbing boot

Haul sack

Pulley

Cam

Non-slip cooker rest

**11What was Don Whillans' favourite vice?**

Entertaining ladies of negotiable affection

Beer

Gambling

Collecting Barbi Dolls

Chocolate

**12K2 is the second highest mountain of earth. How high is K2?**

8722m

8521m

8611m

8689m

8862m

**13On August 9, 1977 Ichiro Yoshizawa (Japan) led the second successful ascent to the top of K2; with Ashraf Amman as the first native Pakistani climber. How many porters did they use?**

None

150

380

490

500

More than 1500

**14What is the highest mountain known to man?**

Everest

K2

Olympus Mons

Kerridge Hubble feature (Saturn)

Kilimanjaro (or you'd think so to talk to some people who've climbed it)

**15What is the longest mountain range on earth?**

Himalayas

Andes

Rockies

Mid-ocean ridge

Drakensburg (or does it just feel that way?)

**16Where is the popular climbing area called "The**

**Gunks"?**

Near New York

Near New Dehli

Near Chamonix

Near San Diego

Near Mt Kenya

**17What is a highball problem?**

A problem with your cocktail (send it back)

A form of climbing without rope where water will break your fall

A form of down-climbing

Where you are bouldering too high to be safe if you fall

What you get after dealing with an Atom Smasher

Soloing at high altitude

**18Climbing chalk (Magnesium bi-carbonate) is useful stuff. Apart from making it easier to climb by reducing moisture and slip it is also:**

A mild hallucinogenic

An aid for indigestion

A mild anaesthetic

An insulator from the cold

A glue: (When mixed into a paste)

**19A new climb has been opened by a Spanish team of four on Cerro Adela (2,938m) near Cerro Torre in Patagonia on 10 October 2007. They climbed this route because:**

They were off route

They were driven off Cerro Torre by bad weather

They had planned to do it

They thought they were on Cerro Torre and only found out later they weren't

They were drunk when they started

**20How were the Himalayas formed?**

Isostatic uplift

Collision between India and the Asian mainland

Sedimentary deposits remaining after extensive erosion of surrounds

Volcanic activity

Because they are there

## 7. ROCK RALLY 2007

The Roc Rally of September 2007 at Waterval Boven turned out to be somewhat different than previous years in more ways than one. Firstly, the usual popular format changed quite drastically and then the event proudly shared the venue with the first MCSA Rock and Road trip.

The unique handicap system for this competition attempts to allow climbers that do not climb high grades to be in with a fighting chance, as long as they run a round and tick many routes on the day. Basically, you need to present your best climbing performances over the last year and ever upon entering. These figures give you an average and then we subtract 2 grades just to make everybody feel good about their given event handicaps. The score sheet has a list with all the routes allowed with higher bonus scores for doing longer routes or climbs further away from the race start. Visiting climbers could benefit by scoring flash bonuses as well. To complicate our database even further, extra bonuses are given for the amount of crags climbed at on a sliding scale.

As usual we have a few friendly scientists from NASA, the CSIR and Bill Gates himself to compute this radically involved scoring system. That is just for day one.

For day two, we decided that climbers need to get out on the rock and climb just one hard route. So basically get out there and work on a route in true sport climbing style until you finally manage to lead it without resting to claim the redpoint. If you manage to flash a route (climbing it the first time ever with having seen somebody else or having prior information about the route), you get to add an extra bonus grade. An onsight flash (first time up it without any beta) scores 2.5 extra grades. So if you redpoint a grade 20 you score 20, a flash would score 21 and an onsight 22.5.

The next challenge for us was to try and match or equate performances from day 1 where accumulative scores reached over 3000 with grades up to 28.5 from day 2. Enter clever Cape Town computer engineers and voila! We had results.

The Tranquillitas camp site up in Wonderland quickly took on a festival atmosphere as climbers from all over the country started arriving on the dusty Friday afternoon. At the start of the race, in true festival fashion, there were bumble bees, cats, belly dancers, whores, twisted sisters (koeksusters?), Red Indians, batty women, super men, banana boys, many from the ultimate extreme and loads of hippies. The gun went off at 10h00 on Saturday for a gruelling 8 hours of running, changing to climbing shoes, tie in, climb, lower, change belay, climb, clean, lower, next route, run, run, run. Then drink some, walk back, buggered. By 6 o'clock that evening, most of the 192 climbers that entered the Roc Rally 2007 knew that they used every single climbing and walking muscle available to the human body.

After day one the top scoring team climbed 59 routes on 10 different crags at an average grade of 20.37. Perhaps the fact that they are 'Boven regulars, experienced big wall and alpine climbers and seeing that they already won the Roc Rally 3 times counted in their favour? Well, the Roc Rally is not just a matter of climbing lots. There is a lot of strategy involved and the regular top teams will tell you that they learn to cut corners every time they take part. There are subtle techniques to make you move faster, handle belays more efficient and choose your goals realistically. Obviously preparation forms a key part and a few visits to the playing fields of Wonderland prior to the end of September will increase your chances of getting your fitness up and familiarizing yourself with the new routes.

On day 2, our team of local heroes, Alard Hüfner and Mark Seuring also did not hold back. Mark was desperately clenching onto ripples and dents to manage *Ants In Your Pants* (28) while Alard did *Paradise by the C* in a fairly grumpy state. He worked the route the previous weekend knowing that his level of 27 should pose no problems. Except that due to popular consensus, the route was downgraded to 26!

This definitely did not influence the standings on the podium and Team Eating Pap took the honour for the 4th time in five years (16170 points). Second was Team Nog Ein Bergheil with Douard Le Roux and Voytec Modrzewski (13570 points) and in third place Carl Kritzinger and Eric Riemann (12880 points), calling themselves The Road trip Rejects after being eliminated from the Rock and Road trip finals.

On the female side, Monique Bermeister and Kirsten Meyer of Team MSG Spot from Cape Town, wiped out the opposition to reach an impressive overall 4th place (12240 points). Watch out for these girls next year, guys! The mixed section was won by Ralf Miller and Kaja Kopkow and called themselves Team Ralf & Kaja The Germans (12040 points).

*Gustav Janse van Rensburg*

## 8. ROCK AND ROAD TRIP

In September this year we invited the strongest climbers in the country to gather in Johannesburg, and at the top Northern crags, to pit their strength and endurance against revered test pieces. This was called the MCSA Rock and Road trip. It all came together even better than we expected, between Sportex, Fernkloof, and Waterval Boven we saw some of the most amazing climbing in a long time.

Here are our original objectives:

- Grow the sport in SA.
- Boost the climbing/outdoor retail industry.
- Raise SA climbing standards.
- Expose our climbers to the top sportsmen and sportswomen in the field.
- Expose SA climbers to the aims of the MCSA

Looking at some of the comments we have received from the participants, it is quite clear, we met everybody's expectations, and met our objectives.

*Neil Margetts*

'Ok, so after a good hot shower the Boven dust is out of my nose, the dirt is out from under my fingernails and the champagne is out of my hair. I'm finally clean enough to be acceptable at work but I wish I was still grubby and in Boven on the coolest (Rock and) Road Trip ever.

To our climbers - you guys have thanked us so much for organizing the trip but I want to say a huge thanks too all of you too. Your enthusiasm and energy was what made such an amazing vibe for the trip. From the quiet to the (very) noisy, you guys were great. So thanks for the endless entertainment, the good times and, last but not least, the **totally** inspiring climbing. What an awesome bunch of people - I wish the trip had been longer so that I could have got to know you all even better.

Oh yes - it was really cool to get a present from you! Thank you so much for the wine. I promise I will use my bucks as they were intended - to buy myself more wine!

Anyway, I hope you all had a good and a safe trip home and that you found your lifts ok and that you're busy making plans to come back to Boven. Let me know if you're going to be in the area.'

*Bronwyn Smith*

'Dankeschoen!!!!!!...it is 6am on Tuesday morning, I slowly wake up and begin to realize that I am no longer in the Brown House, that I won't bump into Karl on my way into the kitchen to make a big cup of coffee and that I don't have to wait eagerly for my first turn in the bathroom. My palms begin to sweat because just like me they have not realized that I won't go out to the crag today to climb with some amazing people. Very slowly it sinks in that the rock-n-road trip is over and I can't help but feel very sad and empty.

To Bronwyn, Andrew and Neil, we tried to say thank you to you on Sunday night but I am not sure if you can comprehend what you have made possible to all of us. Thanks to your energy and your ambition everything was so well thought through and organized that we just could go out there, play and get inspired by the others climbers. Seeing everyone so motivated and determined (despite bleeding fingers, humongous tic bites and sneaky viruses) I could not help

but try to push as hard as I can. And whenever I was in doubt there was someone who said: Come on you can do it. Thanks! Watching everyone climbing I got so excited that I probably burned as many calories as if I had climbed myself.

This past week will stay unforgettable for me and has been one of the biggest highlights in my climbing; needless to say that this has little to do with the ranking in the competition.

To all: Should you come to Durban you can always stay with me and should I get deported back to Germany then you are welcome there too.

*Nadine Methner*

'What an amazing trip, Tuesday morning was a real downer, it felt so lonely! Huge thanks from me to Neil, Bronwyn and Andrew for all your efforts and energy! Also to the Road-Crew for their superb filming and complete dedication. I'm on holiday till end of January so if anyone is planning a trip, or looking for a climbing partner in Cape Town then just gimmi a shout.

... and thus begins the training for next year's Rock 'n Road trip!

*kazza (aka karen)*

'I even managed to get my muscle shirt clean!! Just need to work on the guns now...

My top 10 (off the top of my head at least):

1. The eternal game of Hacky sack
2. The fact that only one of my beers got misappropriated the entire trip
3. Drinking red wine until 03:30 (Thanks Bron)
4. Being on Snapdragon at 06:40
5. Nadine's super excitement
6. Rule number 1 (no whingeing)
7. Andrew and Karen fetching my draws on Monday morning (big up, I was a little under the weather)
8. Partying until after 04:00 in the morning
9. Cheering the loudest for ourselves during final prize giving
10. Hands free bouldering with Matt, Stu, Wes and Erica (+ 02:00 in the morning)

and one more:

So many truly happy smiles! I'm still psyched!!

*Scott Sinclair*

'Just got back last night after two extra days in Boven. The place was not quite the same after everybody had left - like a big wave of energy had gone.

'Needless to say it was an amazing trip! To Bronwyn, Andrew and Neil: I know you have been thanked a bazillion times already but I'm not quite done. What made this trip exceptional was what you guys gave of yourselves - all your energy, your little touches like water for the semi's and final, Neil and Bronwyn sticking with finalising my ticket which was a monster mission. You were with us 100% of the way - amazing.

Some of my top 10 favourite moments...

1. Andrew wondering whether we could pull on draws SUBTLY so that we could get to the top of the routes for the crowd in the final - classic
2. Ben taking his shirt off mid-route - nice one
3. Arjan following suite with his bikini number
4. The amount of beer we drank and still managed to climb
5. Mat playing jembe while abseiling down a route
6. Film crew interviews after the party on Sunday night
7. The table of topless dancers (mainly boys - some would think that rather unfortunate) on the table at the party
8. The bridge swing - jislake I was terrified
9. The Matrix....
10. Oh yes and THE CLIMBING!!!!

*Gosia Lipinska*

'It was one of the most magical experiences of my life, definitely life changing!

About a month ago, just before JuzH went overseas, he sat me down and gave me a low down on what a wuss I am, and how I should be climbing much, much harder... its not a matter of skills, but of psyche he said! One of the first times I met H, he told me this exact story, not of power, nor of skill, but of sheer determination and fight... the thing with this 'small' man is, he climbs with his heart... and oh boy, does he have a 'big' heart!

This trip, I saw people climbing with flu, with severe tick-bite fever, agonising elbows and blood oozing tips... I haven't seen 'IT BEING BROUGHT', on such a sheer scale, everyone climbing from within... So here I take my hat off to all on the trip that gave it everything, and lived from the heart, and made pure magic!

I salute you all!

*Arjan De Kock*

'The trip was BRILLIANT! Hard to describe exactly why, everything and everyone just gelled together to form this unstoppable force of psyche and camaraderie... what a success!

To the organizers: Bronwyn, Neill and Andrew, and everyone else who played a part, Thank you, and all the best for the organisation of the next one!

*Mathieu*

'WOW!!! You guys have pulled off something totally amazing and I feel privileged to have been part of it. Thank you all for making these 9 days some of the best climbing days I have experienced.'

*Eric Riemann*

'A big huge thanks from me too!! know it was a huge effort to pull this off, thanks Andrew, Neil and Bronwyn!!! We all really really appreciate being part of this trip! I had such a great time and am so inspired, I can't wait to climb again and try just a little harder, and maybe somehow build forearms like Nadine! think we all

are very amped and can't wait for the next one - maybe we can get Andrew to compete. I hear he climbs a little...  
Can't wait to see Scott in his muscle shirt again!!!

*Naureen Goheer*

'For most of us it is back to normal and back to the grind after an amazing ten days on the Rock and Road Trip. The last 4 days has given me time to reflect on, what was for me, a very different and special experience. It gave me a chance to see and be a part of the climbing scene, instead of looking from the outside in. Thanks go to Neil, Bronwyn and Andrew for allowing me to be a part of the trip and thanks go to fellow climbers for making me feel part of the whole thing. Playing hackie sack, laughing around a fire and talking climbing talk and some other stuff too, is something I do not take for granted and it was great to feel that youthfulness, joy and freedom. This is why I climb, this is what I seek, this is what gives me fulfillment.

As for the climbing, well, I wasn't able to make the most of the opportunity that I was given to show off "the guns" that I still have. What did happen, is that I now have the desire to go back and reload those guns and come out firing. For this small group of climbers it IS a numbers game, we are not happy with "not pushing the limits", 35 is waiting, 31 and 32 is waiting for me. The ten days that we spent together will have created a synergy within which each of us can feed and find the energy to go to the next level. Without the trip this would never have happened. Let's all keep in touch and follow on from where we left off on Monday. May those good bye hugs and hand shakes not be the end, but a beginning of a fellowship that will bring the efforts of climbers in JHB, Durban and Cape Town together to create a strong South African climbing scene.

Thanks guys, with your help I will soon be climbing my age too and hopefully avoid acting it ☺'

*Stuart Brown*

'I had an amazing time on the trip and I really appreciate all the time and effort that was put in to make the event such a huge success. I must say, after bouldering exclusively for the past 3 years, the trip got me psyched to climb some routes again!!! I can't wait to see everyone again next year, and for the CT locals - I'll be seeing you guys in montagu!

*Marijus*

### **9. FIVE GERMAN GENTLEMEN**

When I joined the Transvaal Section in 1982, there were five German gentlemen of note within the Section. They were Erwin Müller, Hermann Vögl, Helmut Liebsch, Herbert Seuring and Benno Magg. They were very active and it didn't seem possible to go to the Clubhouse, into a kloof or on a Section Sunday meet without encountering one, some or all of them. They all had that certain 'magic', that ability to inspire others. I was in awe of their abilities, their friendship, their love of the mountains and their ability to sing at the drop of a hat. How many of us have been given some advice, loaned equipment from, been taken on a route or on a hike, by them? Countless.

Now they have all gone, and the Section is a poorer place for their passing.

*Berg Heil, gentlemen!*

*Russ Dodding.*

### **10. BENNO MAGG**

When a man I'd never met before, but with whom I shared a lift to Magaliesberg meet, asked me to sign his application form, I was embarrassed. I didn't like him very much, but didn't think I could refuse. Afterwards, I had to suffer members saying, "Why on earth did you sign his form? He's ghastly." From that moment I vowed to stick to the rule of only signing the forms of those with whom I had camped or climbed before.

It was unfortunate that the next prospective member who approached me was Benno Magg. My self imposed ruling applied, I declined his request, despite the fact that he was a nice guy. Later we became very good friends, and Benno never let me forget this!

He was our climbing leader on three attempts of the amphitheatre wall. The first time someone dropped a rucksack, grazing a girls leg as it bounced past, and finally settled in prickly bush below. On the second attempt, we went horribly off route, and I accidentally kicked over a Billy can of stew. I was not popular, as we were benighted, and forced to spend the night both hungry and thirsty. The third attempt was successful. These adversaries unite people. Benno was young and full of nonsense. I remember him thrusting some snow down Sybil's neck in his exuberance on reaching the top. "Benno! Do NICE things!" shrieked Sybil.

But my most memorable was the first SA ascent of Mt Kenya after Mau-Mau. Benno, the youngest of the party, was second to Ronnie's leadership. There was much to say about this, but a story in itself, in which Benno is one of eight. More bindings of friendships.

Of Benno's later years I can but say that with such sadness we saw his strength deteriorating with non-complaining patience.

*Marian Forsyth*

### **11. MCSA MINI-CAMP IN CEDERBERG**

Despite the poor weather, leading to the cancellation of the adventure race, the weekend campfire meet was a great success especially for the younger generation. Here are a couple of comments from those who attended.

"I noticed that that I was younger than the mean age of majority the camp participants. It made me realise that if we do not make a concerted effort to bring younger members into our club, it's survival will be threatened. Again I ask whether we could extend our campfire weekends to at least twice a year (April and September, outside the rainy season), as this is a very appropriate event to attract whole families, and an assortment of people to the mountain club. I would rather that our younger generations get 'hooked' into nature and the mountains than anything else detrimental to them. So thank you to the organisers of the abseiling event. My children absolutely loved it.

*Tineke Wulffers*

"We went abseiling in the Cedarberg this last weekend. My children had a wonderful time. Vernon was incredibly patient and when the going got too tough for my little one he tandem abseiled her down. They played in the rock pools in the gorge and are already asking when they can go back again. "

"There where 2 abseiling sails. One was short and easy, the other was long and steep. There was a 'roof'. Which was scary. It was really, really, really, really, really fun".

*Joseph Sideras Haddad (13 years old)*

"We did abseiling. It was really fun. The hard one was scary the first time, but after that it was really fun. I hope we abseil again".

*Hayley Wulffers-Davies (almost 12 years old)*

"the abseiling was scary ,but very, very exciting!"

*Michael ( 11 years old)*

"I thought it would be very scary, when you go down, but it was very fun. I didn't like the part when you step off the edge. "

## 12. MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**We welcome the following new members:** Paul de Stefanis; Trishya Owen-Smith; Lynne Owen-Smith; Allan Pincus; Kent Nicholls; Ilze Wagener; Robyn John; Ursula Wong; Chantal Hendriks, Shirley Higgins; Eileen Fisher; and family members Liam Kirchmann, Emily Wedepohl, Adam and Gavriel Pincus, Zac & Joseph Nicholls.

**With regret we advise the passing of:** Benno Magg, Helmut Liebsch, Kevin Jacobs, Andrew Hofmeyr. Our sincere condolences to their family and friends.

## 13. CLUB NEWS

**New fees for 2008:** The General Committee advises that subscriptions for 2008 will be increased +/- 6.06 % (rounded off to the nearest convenient figure). This was decided at their committee meeting held on 29 October 2007.

### Fees:

Entrance Fee R280.00 per person

Single R350.00

Married R525.00

Single Country R265.00

Married Country R330.00

Senior R175.00

(over 65 years and 20 years membership)

Senior married R263.00

Honorary senior R free

(over 70 years and 20 years membership)

Fulltime students: R175.00

Juniors (13- 18 years) R90.00

Family members R20

(members children up to the age of 13 years)

**Permits:** for the Magaliesberg areas we administer. R30 per adult per day. R20.00 high school scholars and students; R10 for children under 13 years. Commercial operators have to pay more and have to be members of either the Magaliesberg Section or the Johannesburg section of the MCSA.

**Hut Fees:** Wolkberg R20 per member per night/R30 non member per night. Hamerkop houseduring our week 22, R40 per member per night and R50 non-member per night with a minimum of R100 per night. Half for children.

**Please note:** clause 19.5. of the our section's Constitution: any member may resign from the Section on giving notice in writing to the Secretary, but shall remain liable for any subscription or subscriptions which fell due prior to the date of receipt of such notice be the Secretary.

### Committee for 2008

**Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Club Of South Africa, Johannesburg Section will take place on the 5 March 2008 at 20h15 at the Waverley Girl Guide Hall, Scott & Stirling Str Waverley.**

If you are able to /wish to serve on the committee, please let us know. Nomination forms from Barbara or Uschi.

**Patrollers needed for Tonquani/Cedarberg:** December and especially the Christmas period. If you are available to patrol during this period, please contact Uschi or please just patrol. Thanks.

**International Climbing Meet, Hosted by Johannesburg Section:** Ulrike is planning another international climbing meet over Easter next year. The meet will run from 15.3.2008 to 24.3.2008. Anyone interested in joining the meet and acting as climbing partner cum guide for our guests or willing to help in any other way, especially with transport between the climbing areas, must please contact Ulrike Kiefer at [ukiefer@icon.co.za](mailto:ukiefer@icon.co.za). More details will be available on the MCSA website <http://www.mcsa.org.za/>.

**2008 National Meet Wolkberg:** The Johannesburg section will be hosting the annual national meet in the Wolkberg from the 25th of April until the 4th of May 2008. Stay as long as you like, and members can join the meet at any stage. However those attending should plan to join the catered formal dinner on evening of Saturday the 26th of April. Available activities include hiking (day walks to several days), climbing and a guided walk by a prominent horticulturist. Camping facilities include hot water showers, fire wood and toilets. A commemorative T-Shirt and song book will be available.

**Search & Rescue call –out procedure.** In the event of a mountain rescue emergency Please dial: 011 315 0203 . If the incident is in the North West Province please use 082 571 5089. This number can also be used if the first number is not able to respond. The following names and numbers are people on our search & rescue squad. They can be contacted in case of an emergency:

Rob Thomas -082-652-1490

Arthur Morgan- 082-457-5948

Teresa Morgan 082 731 1106

Gert van Schalkwyk - 083-230-1104

Victor Rundle - 082-465-3027

Jacques Tredoux- 083-376-8373

Mike Grant 082 940 9493

Jenni Comins 082 449 5782

## 15. APOLOGY



The editorial committee of the Diamond Years publication would like to apologise to Voytek Modrewski for omitting his name from the photo on page 39. I have covered any errors and omissions, in the Foreword to the Diamond Years, viz.' ....(those that you can blame)'. We don't live in a perfect world. As the book was a one-off, no erratum will be published. Kindly accept these apologies through the medium of the Section's Newsletter, complete with the detailed correction. The caption on the photo on page 39 should read:

"The magnetic force of the 1200 meter high, vertical east face of the Central tower Paine attracted a strong South African team to it in 1973/74. 30 years later that same attraction drew Alard Hufner, Mark Seuring, Voytek Modrewski, Marianne Pretorius, Mike Mason and Dermot Brogan to it, for the second ascent of the South African route on the East face of the Central Tower of Paine"

*Russ Dodding*

#### **16. FOR SALE**

**Diamond Years Johannesburg Section 1931 2006 Publication** – we still have copies of this commemorative booklet. Price R75.00. Please contact Uschi if you would like to purchase one.

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T Shirts** – we still have many of these T shirts. , colours white or royal blue. Selling at a special price of R70.00 short sleeves; R75.00 long sleeves (not all sizes). Contact Uschi.

#### **17. SUBMISSION INFORMATION FOR THE MCSA JOURNAL**

1. Each article submitted *must* have a TITLE, AUTHOR NAME, FULL AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS.

2. Photographs, if submitted, must be submitted *at the same time as the article* (not months later). No more than TEN photos may be submitted and they must be submitted immediately in HIGH RESOLUTION, as jpg or tiff files (min 1.5 Mb per photo preferably). Photos *must* be accompanied by AN MSWORD TABLE WITH PHOTO FILE NAME, CAPTION AND PHOTOGRAPHER for each photo. If there are particular photos you feel it is essential be included in the article, please indicate as much. Photos are *not* to be submitted embedded in the Word document – we cannot print from such format.

All material can be emailed to the editor, so long as individual messages do not exceed 5 Mb. Please use the Style Sheet on the website at [http://www.mcsa.org.za/cent/11\\_media/journal/journal.php](http://www.mcsa.org.za/cent/11_media/journal/journal.php) as a guide to *spelling conventions for mountaineering terms* and especially for *route description style and layout*. Route descriptions submitted which deviate significantly from the guideline format will be returned to authors for correction. Please be very clear in route descriptions – they often present many problems and much to 'ing and fro'ing with authors. Check route descriptions in previous issues of the Journal.

We would prefer ALL material to be submitted in electronic format: if you have prints or slides, please could *you* get them scanned (at 300 dpi resolution) (all photographic shops now offer scanning services). Nonetheless, high resolution digital images copied to CD, prints (must be very good quality and sharp for use in publishing) and 35mm slides may be posted to: The Editor - Journal 2006/ C Henderson; PO Box 413828, CRAIGHALL 2024.

Please remember that contributions for the 2007 Journal should reach the editor, Cally Henderson (callyh@envmc2.co.za; 011-326 3150; 082-600 8795) by 31 January 2008. Late submissions will not be accepted after 31 March 2008, and submissions missing information as requested below will also be returned to authors.

**WISHING YOU ALL A JOYOUS FESTIVE SEASON AND ALL GOOD WISHES FOR 2008. TAKE CARE OUT THERE.**

#### **12 December Club evening**

This is also to be an opportunity for parents to meet and to discuss the starting of a Youth Meet /Youth section. Your support would be appreciated. If you cannot come please send your ideas to us, if you are able to help we would also like to hear from you.