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### **1. PRESIDENT’S MUTTERINGS**

As I enter the last year of being President (yes!!), I had been hoping to make it a very positive year and concentrate on the good things in life – like climbing! However, it looks like I am starting this last year with bad news all around.

The current pre-monsoon season on Everest apparently had a very narrow “weather window”. For those of you unfamiliar with the weather in the Nepalese Himalaya, these windows of (relatively) good, relatively calm weather occur between the end of the winter north-westerly gales and the onset of the monsoon which moves in from the Bay of Bengal to the south and brings wind and massive snow falls. This “gap” provides the weather windows” that provide the opportunity for people to get to the summit.

This year, the combination of a very short window and an unprecedented number of “adventure tourists” wanting to tick off the “Big E” led to serious over-crowding on the south-east ridge leading from the South Col to the summit. A bottle-neck occurred at the Hillary Step just beyond the South Summit and this led to serious delays being experienced by the large parties on the ridge. One “tour group” apparently had approximately 60 people! Inevitably, there were consequences...

It is an unfortunate fact that many of the people in that queue actually know very little of mountaineering as we know it. They are often people with large egos and even larger wallets who want to be able to say where they had been on their holidays. Yes, some of them are there for very good and altruistic reasons but many are not.

Part of the problem is that the “adventure tourists” bring in serious money both to the Nepalese government (375 people paying US\$11 000 each just for the permit!) and also to the local people, the Sherpa people, who have come to rely on guiding as a means to earn a living. This is a problem which the UIAA is now hoping to address together with all the stakeholders, in an effort to find a win-win solution. It will not be easy.

Elsewhere, a small news item caught the eye. The Tanzanian government is apparently considering the building of a cable-way up to about 3 500 metres on Kilimanjaro. This, in my opinion, could/would be disastrous. Imagine a mountain where already people going up it go from a low altitude up to almost 6 000 metres where they can now get up there in a few hours! How many people would go down with HAPO or similar? How much more pollution/litter would be deposited? The Club is taking a stance on this and hopes that members may join in the effort to dissuade the Tanzanian authorities from this course of action.

Elsewhere in the Club, there is indeed, good news! This year marks the Centenary of the KZN Section and they will be celebrating in some style. In June/July the Annual July Camp in the 'berg will be special – and I don't mean that I will be attending for the first time! It will be the National Camp for the year and will also feature a commemorative lunch. I am looking forward to this immensely! The other major event will be the Centenary Dinner, doubling up as the MCSA National Dinner. Another occasion I look forward to with some anticipation – not least because the after-dinner speaker will be one of my predecessors and old friend Professor Paul Fatti!

It is a curious, and gratifying, fact that during my presidency I have seen several such major anniversaries. The Cape Town Section (and National) 125 years, the Magaliesberg Section Centenary, the Worcester Section 125 years and next year, the Paarl-Wellington Section Centenary! I have been lucky!

The UIAA is busy streamlining and coming into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century after the protracted exercise of re-writing the 5-year Strategic Plan. The result should be a leaner, meaner organisation more capable not only of reacting to events, e.g. this year's Everest debacle, but also of being pro-active on a number of other things - watch this space!

Talking of strategic plans, we are also in the throes of producing one of these. It is an interesting exercise as our role in society has, of course, changed over the years and we also need to smarten up a bit. The Confederation of African Mountain Clubs ("CAMC") is one initiative that we will slot into the plan and we may well reach out to other, local Clubs to be able to talk with them more.

The CAMC is likely to be more effective as time passes. This year will see that Second Annual Pan-African Meet – this time on Mount Mlanje in Malawi. I have not been there but everyone I know who has, raves about it. Mark it in your calendars and give it some serious thought! Details are included later in this News Letter.

It is not often that climbers pray for rain but I think all of us in the cape would like to see a wet winter season. After last year's close shave, it would be good if the dams were full at the end of the rainy season! The rain also assists the fynbos to flourish of course and we must congratulate the Cape Town organisers for the iNaturalist City Challenge which Cape Town won in two of the three categories!

Maybe this year, the MCSA could enter the UIAA mountain conservation challenge. We never have and cannot but feel that we have the conditions and people in South Africa to mount a serious attempt at this prestigious award. Think about it.

## **2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - NATIONAL BODY**

The Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Club of South Africa took place on 11 May. The main business of the meeting was the election of the Executive - President, Secretary, Treasurer. The following members were duly elected:

- President – Greg Moseley
- Secretary – Jenny Paterson
- Treasurer – Lester Coelen

After this short, formal meeting, the National Committee of the MCSA met. The National Committee consists of the chairs of all the Sections (or their designated alternates). The meeting lasted several hours and discussed a number of issues of importance to the Club. Once the dust has settled, we will make a summary of the meeting available to members.

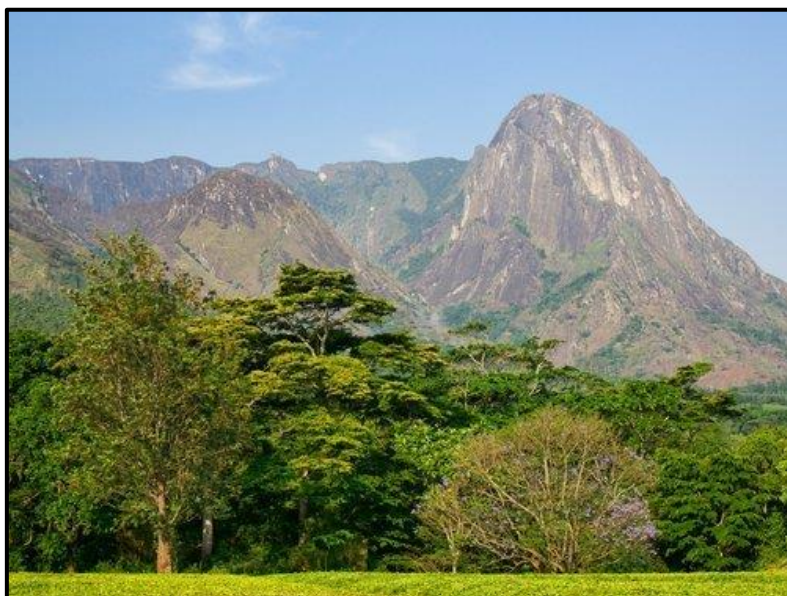
## **3. PAN-AFRICAN MEET 2019**

After last year's successful inaugural event in Uganda, the Mountain Club of Malawi is hosting this year's version of the Pan-African meet on Mulanje in August/September. The initial details are as follows:

- Arrival in Blantyre on Friday 30th August
- Start hiking on Mulanje Mountain on Saturday 31st August
- Descend from mountain and return to Blantyre on Saturday 7th September

From Sunday 8th September group members can fly home or continue their holiday in Malawi e.g. visit the lake, game parks etc.

This meet, as last year's, is in conjunction with the Confederation of African Mountain Clubs, - formed as a result of an MCSA initiative.



#### **4. KILIMANJARO – PROPOSED CABLEWAY**

This was noted in the Presidential Ramblings above and the Club has put out a statement concerning this matter:

##### **“PROPOSED KILIMANJARO CABLEWAY**

*It was with some disquiet that the MCSA and the Confederation of African Mountain Clubs (“CAMC”) and the Union Internationale des Associations d’Alpinisme (“UIAA”), the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation, came to hear of the proposal to build a cableway up Kilimanjaro, Africa’s highest mountain. Such a cableway will certainly have severe negative effects on the mountain and on the people hoping to enjoy the mountain environment.*

*Currently, several thousand people ascend Kilimanjaro each year and already, many of those people suffer from “mountain sickness” in one form or another – usually High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (“HAPO”) or High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (“HACP”). This can cause the sufferer great distress and, in some cases lead to the death of the person concerned. The immediate cause of these conditions is generally a too rapid ascent from relatively low levels to the high altitude on Kilimanjaro. People walking up the mountain generally take between four and six days and yet still a significant proportion suffer from altitude sickness.*

*Imagine then, if relatively unfit tourists are rushed up to high altitudes in a matter of three to four hours as opposed to three to four days. It is highly likely that significantly more people will suffer the effects of altitude and a concomitant number of them will not survive...*

*As the stated object of the cable way is to stimulate tourism and enhance the number of visitors to the area, the negative effect of a significant number of tourists falling ill and possibly dying on the peak, can well be imagined. The negative effects of such a cableway on the guides and porters who currently make their living guiding tourists up the mountain has also been highlighted.*

*Additionally, a cableway would undoubtedly bring significant infrastructure development with it. Possibly a road going higher up the mountain than currently and even a hotel being constructed on the saddle between Kibo and Mawenzi.*

*The collateral damage in the form of further serious environmental degradation of the mountain – already suffering under the burden of numerous visitors – can only be imagined. The increase in numbers would undoubtedly lead to increased littering on the already stressed mountain.*

*It is also noted that the glaciers on Kilimanjaro are in serious retreat due to the current phase of global warming exacerbated by the huge increase in greenhouse gases due to pollution. They may not see out the next 25 years. While there may be little we can do on the mountain specifically, there is no doubt that the proposed cableway with its environmentally damaging effects, would send negative signals out to the world and should be strenuously resisted."*

## 5. KZN SECTION CENTENARY – EVENTS

### 5.1 July Camp

This year marks the Centenary of the KZN Section of the MCSA so their annual July Camp in the Drakensberg will be very special!

This July Camp has been shortened to ten days and also, to accommodate many requests, the July Camp is starting on the Friday, thus giving campers two weekends with a week in between. **The dates are Friday 28th June to Sunday 7th July, 2019.**

The Camp will be held at Cobham in the Southern Berg, in the official Camp Site so that access to the Base Camp will be easy for ALL ages. You just drive up to your selected site, unpack your car, and promptly drive it to the demarcated Parking Place, return to your selected spot, put up your tent and ENJOY YOURSELF.

Further details are available from the KZN Section

### 5.2 National Dinner

This year the Annual Dinner is being combined with the KZN Section's Centenary Dinner. Details are on the invitation (below).



### 5.3 Big One Hundred Climbing Festival

The KZN Section is holding this event at Shongweni Dam over the weekend of 15 June.

**THE BIG ONE HUNDRED CLIMBING FESTIVAL**

The Mountain Club of South Africa KZN Section celebrates its 100th year, which has initiated the first gathering of rock climbers for the BIG 100 Climbing Festival at the Shongweni Dam. Whether you've only climbed indoors, never climbed before, or hit the rocks every weekend, this event is to bring climbers from all walks of life and all climbing levels together.

**R100 ENTRY FEE** **FIRST 30 GET FREE T-SHIRT**  
**CAMPING AVAILABLE AT THE DAM**  
**PRIZE GIVING AND AFTER PARTY**

REGISTRATION FROM 6AM, COMPETITION RUNS FROM 8AM - 5PM | BEGINNERS WELCOME

Details are available from:

Simon Vickers

Tel: 084 420 8230

Email: [mcsakzn.climbing@gmail.com](mailto:mcsakzn.climbing@gmail.com)

## 6. AAC TO HOST 12TH INTERNATIONAL CLIMBERS' MEET

The American Alpine Club is hosting its 12<sup>th</sup> annual International Climbers' Meet (ICM), to be held the week of 13-19 October, 2019 in Yosemite Valley. The event will include three days of education programming, host climbers available for guidance, and, per usual, an international cast of characters that will be crushing Yosemite.

Applicants should have intermediate or advanced level experience with:

- Placement and removal of protection
- Multi-pitch rope management
- At least two years of technical rock climbing
- The ability to follow sustained 5.8 granite

Participants provide their own transportation to Yosemite Valley, California. A full roster will be sent to all participants for coordinating ride sharing.

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### Discounted fee for International participants:

Early-bird fee until 31 July is \$495 USD per person.\*\* Beginning 1 August, the fee will be \$545 \*\* Your fee includes:

- Seven nights and six days of camping at secluded Yellow Pines camp ground.
- Three gourmet catered meals per day from Sierra Gourmet catering.
- Six days of climbing in spectacular Yosemite Valley.
- Three optional instructional days hosted by AMGA certified guides and instructor.
- Pre-dinner mini-clinics on a range of technical topics.
- One day of stewardship for Yosemite National Park.
- Nightly campfire for storytelling, socializing, and general carousing.
- Partner with other participants or experienced host climbers.

## 7. UIAA

### 7.1 GENERAL



The UIAA continues to develop its services for members and will be improving its web page to offer federations the opportunity to exchange more details about climbing and mountaineering in their own countries. A Donate page will also be available to members who wish to showcase initiatives and causes they are supporting. Both projects will be rolled

out during the first quarter of 2019. Members are therefore reminded of many existing resources, and some new ones, provided by the UIAA.

Members are encouraged to go to the UIAA web site <http://www.theuiaa.org/> to find out more about the UIAA's important activities.

## **7.2 2018 UIAA ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE**

The UIAA, International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation, has published its 2018 Annual Report. The look and format of the Report have been revamped. Conceived for the digital environment it includes links to key resources – such as UIAA news articles, video content and multimedia assets. Contents include:

- President's Annual Message
- A Review of 2018
- UIAA General Assembly 2018
- UIAA Financial Report
- Details on UIAA member associations
- UIAA Office, Communication & Sponsorship reports
- Reports from every UIAA Commission (Access, Anti-Doping, Ice Climbing, MedCom, Mountaineering + Training, Mountain Protection, Safety, Youth) as well as the UIAA Rock Climbing Working Group. Each chapter identifies benefits provided by each Commission for UIAA members.
- Reports from the UIAA Continental bodies

The digital version can be downloaded at: <https://www.theuiaa.org/ice-climbing/2018-uiaa-annual-report-now-available/>

## **7.3 UIAA GLOBAL YOUTH SUMMIT EVENT TO BE HELD IN IRAN**

**Dates:** 20 July to 1 August, 2019

**Mountains:** Alam-Kuh and Damavand

**Place:** Tehran & Mazandaran Province, Iran

**Accommodation:** 2 nights in D/hotel, 1 night in Polour lodge, 1 night in Vandarbon lodge, 3 nights in Atour eco-camp in Alam-Kuh, 2 nights in Atour eco-camp in Damavand, 1 night in a villa. The rooms in lodges have bunkbeds and will be shared among mountaineers. The tents in both eco-camps will be shared by two or three people.

**Food:** all meals are included, warm freshly cooked meals will be served in mountain and lunch box is prepared for summit days. There are warm and cold beverages are available in the eco-camp which is also part of event services.

**Guide:** for every five mountaineers one guide will accompany the group. All the guides are members of Iran national team and instructors of mountaineering as well.

**Participants:** Mountaineers of 15 to 30 years old are welcomed to participate in this programme. The programme can be customized for families who prefer to accompany their children as well. ANY PARTICIPANT UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A GUARDIAN OR APPROVED MOUNTAIN GUIDE

**Equipment:** Trekking shoes, socks, sleeping bag, jacket and pants (Gore-Tex or Synthetic rain/snow/wind), backpack (plus a small attacking backpack), trekking stick, gloves (polar wool), hat (warm pile/wool), hat (should cover ears), balaclava, baseball cap, scarf, sun glasses, sunscreen cream (SPF 40 above), personal first-aid kit, water bottles, headscarf, camera, headlamp, Swiss army knife, travel clothes.

**Insurance:** Participants are advised to get themselves insurance for accident, rescue, and third-party liability which is valid for participating in the programme of climbing and trekking. It is not compulsory on our part. However, personal travel insurance is mandatory and should be obtained by the traveller.

**Visas:** The organizer will arrange for visa, providing visa code for all participants (and families) which would ease the process of visa issuance greatly. However, considering that the process of Iran visa is different for each country. For South Africa it is a long process, and includes specific medical information.

**COSTS:** there are three different packages:

- **Booking before 10 June 2019:**

Alam-Kuh only = €350;  
Damavand only = €330;  
Full package €670.

- **After 10 June 2019:**

Alam-Kuh only €380;  
Damavand only = €350;  
Full package €720.

**SPONSORSHIP:** Interested MCSA Youth Members can apply for some funding from the Centenary Journal Youth Fund. For further information and an application form and information about sponsorship, please contact: [jennyapaterson@gmail.com](mailto:jennyapaterson@gmail.com)

#### 7.4 UIAA ADVICE - TEN THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUYING CLIMBING GEAR

This important and interesting article is found at: <https://www.theuiaa.org/uiaa/uiaa-advice-ten-things-to-consider-when-buying-climbing-gear/>

#### 7.5 MOUNT EVEREST SEASON 2019

The big news of the moment is the disastrous season on Mount Everest where, up until 28 May, 11 people have lost their lives. Fortunately, as far as we know, there was only one South African on the mountain this year and Saray Khumalo managed to avoid the worst of the over-crowding and succeeded in summiting.





The UIAA has taken cognisance of the situation and issued the following statement which is on the UIAA web site:

#### **“2019 MOUNT EVEREST CLIMBING SEASON**

**All member associations of the UIAA (International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation) extend their sincerest condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives on Mount Everest recently.**

The UIAA views the tragic events on Mount Everest with considerable distress and disquiet. The majority of incidents during the 2019 climbing season have occurred due to mass overcrowding on the southern route on the Nepalese side of the mountain.

The UIAA calls for all stakeholders to engage in urgent dialogue to work towards a safer and more sustainable approach to climbing on Everest. This includes the tour operators, the majority of whom are recognised as vastly experienced and highly responsible.

Solutions should focus on supporting the communities who live and work in the region, increasing climber safety, improving the experience of climbing Everest, as well as protecting an increasingly fragile mountain environment, where the issues of waste and pollution have become chronic.

The UIAA believes access management, climber experience, training and self-responsibility are amongst the key topics to address. Working with both its international and local partners, the UIAA, together with its member associations, will collaborate to this fundamental process. The time to act is now.”

## **7.6 UIAA MOUNTAIN PROTECTION AWARD**

The UIAA Mountain Protection Award (MPA) was created in 2013. During its six years of existence, the annual UIAA Mountain Protection Award (MPA) has made a tangible difference to mountain lives, communities and the environment. It has enabled people to raise finances to build key infrastructures, conduct vital research and fulfil pending goals; it has provided an international showcase and communication platform for projects to raise awareness and exchange ideas and initiatives. Not only has it supported local communities, it has fostered its own global community. The Award celebrates innovation and a desire to make a difference.

The award consists of a platform where selected mountain protection projects are showcased and promoted, as well as a prize which is awarded to one winning project every year. The UIAA MPA projects platform is open to all UIAA member federations, as well as other associations or institutions whose activities are directly related to mountaineering and mountain-based sports. To apply for the UIAA MPA, projects must correspond to at least one of the following categories:

- **Conservation of biodiversity – including flora and fauna**
- **Sustainable resource management, such as energy or water**
- **Sustainable waste management and disposal**
- **Adaptation to/mitigation of effects of climate change**
- **Protection of the environment through culture and education**

Visit <https://www.theuiaa.org/mountain-protection-award/> for more information.

## **7.7 UIAA TRAINING SERVICES CONTINUE TO FLOURISH**

One of the UIAA’s core services and direct benefits it offers member associations comes courtesy of its training qualifications and programmes which are both supported by a rich library of practical information.

At October 2018's UIAA General Assembly, details on the impressive collaboration between the UIAA, The Petzl Foundation and members worldwide in translating versions of the UIAA Summer Skills Alpine Handbook was presented. Since the GA, work has continued to evolve at an impressive rate.

The Handbook, available internationally as a digital download (price as of March 2019, 3.99 GBP/4.63 EUR/5.22 USD), is regularly updated with anyone purchasing the publication able to access new chapters and information. A section on Trad climbing has recently been completed, one on canyoning is in progress. Anyone interested in purchasing the Handbook is encouraged to view the dedicated [UIAA Skills series](#) which features extracts from the guide.

The Handbook is designed to help mountain leaders and climbers develop their skills, whether reinforcing lessons learned and not yet fully assimilated or to increase technical knowledge and reduce the risks inherent to the activity. The advice is wide-ranging covering subjects as diverse as the weather, rescue operations, adapting to the environment, teamwork and equipment advice. It covers alpine hiking, climbing and alpinism.

The Handbook complements the range of training accreditations that the UIAA provides for members to demonstrate adherence to recommended practice for teaching personal skills, leaders and instructors/coaches. This is now an integrated system that will empower instructors qualified by an accredited federation to deliver personal skills training to novice and intermediate hikers, climbers, mountaineers and canyoneers according to their qualification(s). After completing a UIAA accredited personal skills training course, students will be able to download a certificate of attendance bearing the UIAA logo, showing that the course fulfilled the UIAA requirements for provider, syllabus and contact hours. This service can also help federations to assist countries that have not yet developed their own federation. These services will be delivered through the federations, who can add their own branding and charging for services if they choose.

## **8. FACEBOOK AND WEB PAGES**

**8.1** National: abbreviated link for the national MCSA Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/MCSA125/](http://www.facebook.com/MCSA125/)

**8.2** Links for all the sections' web pages are on the MCSA national webpage.

## **9. NEWSWORTHY ITEMS**

Please send any newsworthy items for inclusion in MCSA National News Editor, Ineke Moseley at: [inekemos@zsd.co.za](mailto:inekemos@zsd.co.za)

## **10. SNIPPETS**

**10.1 Science Friction:** The Truth Behind Perfect Climbing Conditions. Some thoughts on rock climbing <https://www.climbing.com/skills/science-friction-the-truth-behind-perfect-climbing-conditions/>

**10.2 A different climbing venue,** Puerto Rico see <https://www.climbing.com/places/be-welcome-here-exploring-puerto-ricos-climbing/>

**10.3 Climbing on sea cliffs.** See <https://www.climbing.com/places/photo-essay-the-best-of-the-british-isles-endless-sea-cliffs/>

## **QUOTABLE QUOTES:**

*"When one is young, one trifles with death."* Graham Greene, prolific British writer.

