

MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA



NATIONAL NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2021

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1. PRESIDENT’S RAMBLES

The highlight, for me, since our last newsletter was the MCSA National Camp and Annual Dinner organised by Paarl-Wellington section in celebration of their 125th anniversary. The exceptional organisation and commitment of the section and organising committee made for a remarkably successful Annual Dinner and National Camp, which were a fitting tribute to the celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the Paarl Wellington Section. The Camp was a celebration reflecting the true spirit of the mountains, the environment, the MCSA and the PW section. Although a highlight of the dinner was certainly the delicious food, the talk on “Risk” by Rik De Decker was thought-provoking and entertaining. We were also honoured by the attendance of the Office Coordinator & Safety Label Administrator of the UIAA, Stephanie Stettbacher (who attended in person), and the President of the UIAA, Peter Muir (who attended via Zoom) who were there to honour past MCSA President Greg Moseley for his contributions to the UIAA.

There are many great initiatives and collaborations which the MCSA is proud to be part of. Recently, I attended the pre-Kloof Fest (unfortunately I was unable to attend the Kloof Fest itself). This is a collaboration between the MCSA and Friends and Allies, an indoor bouldering gym. The initiative of the owners of Friends and Allies (who themselves are MCSA members) has as its purpose the introduction of indoor climbers to climbing on rock, trad climbing, the MCSA properties and the ethos of the MCSA. It was highly successful and impressively organised. I am also aware that there are a number of other initiatives which are worthy of mention in this newsletter as these will inspire others to follow suit.

At the National Camp, the National committee held a combined “in person”/zoom meeting to fulfil the decision to hold two meetings a year. The National committee consists of the chairpersons of all sections, and these are a dedicated, committed group of individuals who spend an enormous amount of time on the interests of the MCSA. The minutes will be circulated shortly, however, an exciting development is a secure MCSA mobile app, which has the potential to include, property management and permits, membership applications and management, electronic membership cards, hut bookings, patrolling, emergency contacts, and much more! A number of members have been working on the App and the initiative commenced as a collaboration between Magaliesberg, Johannesburg and Paarl Wellington. Watch this space!

Our member's attention is also drawn to a new "Partners" section on the national MCSA website. This section lists commercial partners/retailers who give favourable rates to MCSA members, sponsors who support various initiatives of the MCSA and sponsorships which lists persons and entities who receive financial and other support from the MCSA. For example, our sport climbing Olympians Chris Cosser (JHB member) and Erin Sterkenberg (KZN member). How awesome was it to see the "green and gold" emerge as the first climbers at the first sports climbing event of the Olympics? Members are thus encouraged to look at this page, to support those who support the MCSA and to ensure that they don't miss out on the available discounts!

Finally, my thanks to Greg for continuing to edit this newsletter.

Till next time.

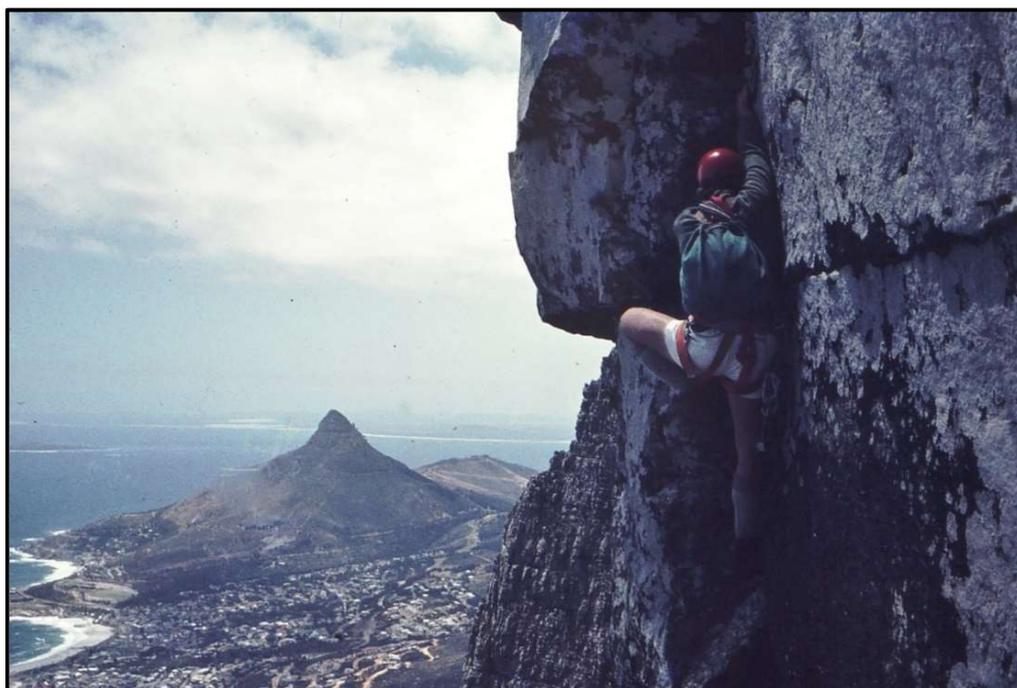
That's Me!

2. COVID-19 UPDATE

It remains unfortunate that this part of the National Newsletter now appears to be a permanent fixture. While the vaccine roll-out is proceeding apace, it is clear that we are not out of the woods yet. Indeed, the vaccines are creating their own minor difficulties for various segments of society – notably our own mountain society!

It comes down to how the various Sections of the Club will deal with vaccinated and non-vaccinated members. It is understood that some people object to the Covid vaccine on various grounds and, to an extent, this is their right. Why to an extent? Well, it is a scientifically, well-supported view that vaccination prevents infection or, at the very least prevents serious illness and potentially hospitalisation. Therefore, mixing with non-vaccinated people does carry some risks. So, what should we do about Club meets and events? It is an interesting argument.

[Here the Editor interjects with a personal note. I would rather not attend a Club meet/event where non-vaccinated people are present. Consequently, I will enquire as to the vaccination status of the other participants and decide whether to continue or not based on their replies.]



Your editor also has the “advantage” of reviewing the Covid situation world-wide through the UIAA Covid working group. These findings and a review are to be found on the UIAA web site should you be interested to know more.

But to end this piece with my usual exhortation:

PLEASE STAY SAFE!!!

And look carefully at the guidelines and (necessary) regulations so that we can all enjoy the Club and its amenities.

3. MCSA JOURNAL 2021

This is a call for contributions for the 2021 Journal (No 124). Please download and familiarise yourselves with the Guidelines, StyleSheet and use the Photo Template on the MCSA National website, to be found on this link: <https://mcsa.org.za/about/journal/>

The deadline is 31 January 2022.

Please do take note that submissions are to be as WORD documents (not formatted), and please take note of the procedures for photographs. Send to jennyapaterson@gmail.com

Thank you and looking forward to some super contributions!

4. MCSA NATIONAL MINI-CAMP AND ANNUAL DINNER 2021

During the first week of October the Paarl/Wellington Section held the national Minicamp at the Hawequas Scouts Adventure Centre.

Thinking back on this exciting week filled with mountains, exploring and connection, I am filled with gratitude again for the amazing places we get to visit and the people I have met through the Mountain Club.

Some quick stats: 16 hike leaders, 21 day visitors, 53 campers and 3 Hut stay overs. We did 29 hikes (of which 3 were overnights), a tasting tour at Upland Organic Estate, and 5 camp fire evenings.

At the Annual Dinner on Saturday, which hosted 70 people, our new President, Paul Carstensen, gave a very appropriate and inspirational opening address. Dr Rik de Decker was a most entertaining guest speaker causing most of us to reflect on the risks involved in extreme sports. During the evening the UIAA awarded Greg Mosely for exceptional work and service to the UIAA.

During the week we asked Minicampers to enter their photos in our MiniCamp Photo Competition. The winners were:

First place - Wim Morris, for capturing the context of mountaineering, the greatness of the environment and the vulnerability of man with an element of spirituality given by the beams of light reaching toward the mountain. Prize - 3 nights for 3 people at Kromrivier Hut. This picture is included below.

Second place - David Newton, for a stunning simple macro of the diversity within our floral kingdom. Prize - 2 nights for 2 people at Kromrivier Hut.

Third place - Paul Carstensen for capturing a beautiful panoramic with iconic Cape Floral Kingdom proteas in the foreground. Prize - 1 night for 2 people at Kromrivier Hut.

Thanks to Cleeve Robertson for judging! More competition photos at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/ivfvtB2nedQ4Yd9e7>

Thank you to all who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this week possible, especially

- Gaye Hosking (Minicamp Convenor),
- Brenda Liebenberg (Annual Dinner Convenor),
- Nardus Cronje (Meets Convenor) and
- Kuba Miszewski (Camp Convenor).



5. UIAA UPDATE

The UIAA continues pretty well all of its normal activities with numbers of initiatives on the go. Members are urged to go to the UIAA web site - <https://www.theuiaa.org/> - for more information plus a load of other useful data.

5.1 2021 UIAA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD ONLINE

The UIAA – International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation – recently confirmed that its 2021 General Assembly, 23 October, will take place online.

It will be the second year running that the GA is held virtually. Owing to the continued impact of Covid-19, particularly on travel and the huge differences in the progress of vaccination roll-outs across the world, the UIAA made the decision that the safest solution is to hold the GA online. The verdict was made somewhat easier by the success both of last year's GA and the recent online formats of Commission and Management Committee meetings and Mountain Network Series events.

The MCSA President, Paul Carstensen, will be representing South Africa at the General Assembly while past-President, Greg Moseley, will also attend the meeting as a retiring member of the Management Committee.

As soon as the situation allows, the UIAA looks forward to bringing delegates together in-person. The 2022 UIAA GA is scheduled to be held in Banff, Canada and hosted by the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC).

5.2 UIAA MEDICAL COMMISSION – TRAINING COURSE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Many countries offer regular courses in mountain medicine. The medical commissions of the UIAA and ICAR, together with the International Society for Mountain Medicine (ISMM) established minimal requirements for a formal diploma course in August 1997 (Interlaken, Switzerland). Many course organisers adopted these standards and the resulting Diploma in Mountain Medicine (DiMM) has become a widely respected qualification. The regulations have been updated to reflect developments in mountain medicine, and to ensure that the high standard of the DiMM is maintained. It is the intention of the UIAA Medical Commission to bring these courses and training opportunities to all parts of the world, and possibly where such courses are not on offer yet. In 2022, MedCom is planning to run a dedicated course alongside its annual meeting, scheduled to be held in South Africa. It is due to take place in Stellenbosch with the intent to cover topics specific to the needs of the country.

6. FACEBOOK AND WEB PAGES

6.1 National: abbreviated link for the national MCSA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/MCSA125/

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

7. NEWSWORTHY ITEMS

Please send any newsworthy items for inclusion in MCSA National News Letter to Greg Moseley at: moseleyg@zsd.co.za

These have been distinctly lacking over the last years – so please remember to send any items that may be of interest to the broader, national membership for inclusion here.

QUOTABLE QUOTES:

“In the mountains there are only two grades: You can either do it, or you can't.”

Rusty Baillie