



SWMC Newsletter

Spring '08

www.southwalesmountainreering.co.uk



Hello From your new editor!

Here is the long awaited Spring 08 newsletter. Thanks to everyone of their contributions.

Deadline for articles for the next newsletter is May 31st

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First Lead Weekend

The first Lead Weekend took place in North Wales in July and the inclusion of a complete novice with less than five outdoor climbs to his name added an element of amusement to the weekend! This year the team consisted of two improvers Carl Childs and Bruce Sawyer, and two new leaders Eefu Thong and Andy White.



We all climbed under the fantastic guidance of Nik Goile, Ian Goudge and Jim Slater.

On the first day we made our way to a damp but deserted Tryfan Bach. Nik provided an overview of Trad lead climbing, demonstrating correct placements and setting up of belays.

Under supervision from Nik, the group divided into the improvers and the newbies, giving everybody the opportunity to notch up a couple of comfortable leads; and for Jim and Nik a number of easy Solo's.

The afternoon saw us moving onto a sunnier Milestone Butress, where everyone was partnered up with an experienced club member. Jim and Carl made rapid progress up "The Direct Route", whilst Ian, Eefu and me made our way up "Rowan Route".

The RAC boulders provided an early evening playground for us after a long days climbing; during which we attempted to boulder single handed, and eventually hands-free, this was to be surpassed by Nik speed climbing a boulder problem.

We headed out to Llanberis Pass on Sunday. While Carl and Bruce made their way off to tackle Crackstone Rib, the rest of the group scrambled up to Dinas Cromlech. After an extremely wet start, Jim and Ian decided against their route and chose to follow Nik, Eefu and myself up "Flying Butress".

Despite some torrential downpours we made good progress up the route. Eefu completed a further two leads alternating with Nik, including a fantastic 'swim' up the chimney on Pitch 4, quite literally swimming to the top of the route as a result of the weather.

Things took an amusing turn for myself, my inexperience eventually had the better of me towards the top of the route. After a few hours of climbing in the wet anything went in order to complete the route, including standing on Nik and Eefu's shoulders to get up! This eventually culminated in an embarrassing finale in front of the whole group, as I was hoisted out of the chimney, putting Nik's recently acquired self rescue skills into practice.

A big thank you to Nik, Ian and Jim for all of their encouragement and support. It was a really successful weekend, which has been best illustrated through all of us now leading on a regular basis.

So what are you waiting for? If you're looking for the opportunity to get out and lead then I would thoroughly recommend joining next years trip. Regardless of your experience!

Andy White

Sun in Sardinia

Over a few beers in the Glantaff after the first of many winter wall sessions, a trip was hatched to capitalise on the little fitness that we had gained throughout the summer. Bored with Benidorm, fed up with Finale it was the sun, sea and the promise of acres of pristine limestone of Sardinia that won the day for the quickie pre winter sun rock trip. The original nucleus of 4, Bob Brewer, Gwyn Evans, Alan Stone and myself quickly expanded to 13, a virtual club outing. A few hours spent on the web saw us all booked up with Easyjet to Olbia for around £50 return; with an apartment in Cala Gonone for another £60 this was going to be a cheap trip.

As only one of us had been before we took the first day at a leisurely pace. We started on the popular crag of La Poltrona just behind the village. The crag is a superb set of slabby walls in a huge amphitheatre overlooking the village with routes up to 6 pitches. Alan who is a bit new to all this leading business was soon gibbering 60m out, having passed the belay and was trying to understand what Gwyn meant by moving together! I told him to read the manual! Both Bob and I ended up in tears, he from my whingeing and me from the pain in my feet after crimping for six pitches on the three star classic of Deutsch Wall. The crag is a great introduction to the area albeit a bit popular and hence polished on the easier routes.



Bob Brewer on Deutsch Wall pitch 3, 6c

Katalina cooked the first night for our two apartments and set a high gourmet standard, hors d'oeuvres, main course, dessert and a posh bottle of wine; a bit of a change from the usual pasta with tomato based sauce washed down with a few beers, the basis of all our former trips. Competition ensued on the cookery front between the apartments for the rest of the trip.

We'd overdone it as usual on day 1, so the second was spent at the pleasant set of crags in the Cala Fuili Gorge; here you can mingle a few routes with a dip in the sea, lovely and warm at this time of year. However, Bob was on a mission and we had to complete our 10 pitches before I was allowed a swim. Revitalised following a quick dip, we followed Sylvia and Mike over onto the sea cliff, Sector Amelia, to crank out a few more before the sun finally disappeared and stopped play. A nice little wall with no polish.

Pete Wardman suggested a trip up into the mountains to a crag called Surtana. A bit of a drive and an hour long walk up some steep ground leads you to a superb lost valley. Bob and I did a 3 pitch 6b Trans Surtana Express up the front of Buttress 10, superb rock and positions well worth the ***. Gary Lewis, Pete and Nicola did a long trad route up Buttress 9 which looked good, whilst Chris and Kat, Mick Learoyd and Graham Royle, Gwyn and Alun, Mike and Sylvia along with half of Switzerland did the three star 5 pitch classics of Paradiso and The Sound of Silence, although there was not much of it with that bunch on them. Bob and I nipped up these two after all the crowds had disappeared. By far the best bit of the

day was the swim in the cool waters of the Rio something or other complete with naked Swiss mum..... and Gary of course.



Katalina on "The Sound of Silence" Surtana, pitch 4. 5c

A rest day was called for, a late start, few routes on a short crag followed by a swim was planned. We chose Margeddie as it was near the sea for the swim. 13 pitches later, no swim, we descended in the gloom straight to the pub, another good day! Well!!! The routes were too good to leave undone.



Definite rest day today, fingers too sore to climb much. Went to Dorgali, 5 minute walk in, unfortunately the routes were good, again! Superb steep walls covered in jugs well! Most of them anyway. A dozen routes later we staggered into the pub. Another full day.

There is a famous pinnacle about an hour's boat trip from Cala Gonone called Cala Goloritze. Being stingy we saved the 30 euros each on the boat and decided to drive. Bad move, after 60k of hairpins and a number of stops for various people to disgorge the contents of their stomachs over the crash barriers we arrived at the start of the walk in. An hour of fast downhill walking saw us roping up at the foot of the tower. 3m up the first of 6 pitches, the heavens opened and the lord said thou shalt not climb here today and he meant what he said. Reluctantly we beat a retreat back to Dorgali to snatch a few routes after the rain stopped. Alan and Kat meanwhile hitchhiked to find a medieval underground village above Surtana, this went well until they were given a lift by a local farmer who looked like a character from Royston Vasey and whose car doubled as a chicken coup; the guys considered themselves lucky to escape and were still itching days after.

Haydn on "Route 18" Buchi Arta, 6B+

The wine flowed that evening at the local restaurant; Pete tried to argue with a potted plant and came off worse. Luckily Alan does a bit of healing when not out on the hill and as luck would have it had his suture kit with him, ready for such eventualities. An hour later with Pete's ear stitched back on, Alan (should you really be stitching people up after a bottle of wine?) along with a host of others were celebrating saving the day by swimming half a dozen lengths of Cala Gonone bay at midnight.

The final day we went to a new crag called Buchi Arta. The drive along the dirt track proved interesting (make sure you take out the damage waiver on the hire car). The crag is excellent, giving dozens of steep wall climbs on good rock if a little repetitive after a time.

Although our week in Sardinia went too fast our fingers were trashed and I for one was glad to step onto the plane if only to have a rest. Sardinia's a great place to climb, go there in the autumn when the water's still warm, buy the English Cala Gonone guide when you get there not at the end of the week like us and "Don't argue with potted plants!". We only scratched the surface of climbing on the island, if you can climb 6a and above there's a load to go at, we certainly will be back.

Haydn Griffiths



Coaching Weekend

Day 1

Sixteen of us put our names down for the training weekend and duly made our way up to the North Wales Hut. Alan Rossier and I travelled up together on the Friday and left early to allow ourselves a quick climb en-route at Llanymynach Quarry. There are some great routes there but I recommend you take a 60m or 70m rope.

We arrived at the hut and met up with the rest of the participants: Chris Wyatt, Emma Ridgill, Gareth Tucker, Ian Gould, James Jarret, Phil "AKA Johnny Dawes" Mohr, Rebecca Athay, Thomas Kuehn.

On the first evening we spent the time getting to know John and Anne, asking lots of questions about their climbing experiences.

The next morning we met, as tradition we met for breakfast in Pete's Eats, and ate.

John and Anne discussed the weekend plans, handing out a questionnaire to assess our aims and objectives.

One part of the questionnaire asked the difference between your on-sight grade and the grade you could climb after work. Most people's response was a couple of grades difference.

We set off to the Cromlech boulders. First up we did some Bouldering, to look at methods of resting and using a variety of different climbing techniques. This was really useful stuff with John demonstrating several techniques and each one of us having a go in turn.

In the afternoon we climbed on a crag called Wonder Wall at Lower Pen Trwyn. We got several routes ticked between us.

So, tired and hungry we made our way back to the hut to meet the other half of the group. We spent the evening eating, drinking and chatting to the Arrans who gladly answered all our questions and told tales of high adventure and daring. Anne then handed out a series of training programs and how we could structure our winter training. All good stuff.



Day 2

We woke up to grey skies and rain so headed straight off to V12. We decided to go to Tremadog as the weather can often be dry there when it's wet in the pass...it wasn't, but John was keen, so off we went. Chris guided one group off to do some multipitch climbing. The rest of us went with John and Anne to look at the use of technique on routes. John climbed an E3 in the torrential rain, with two bits of gear - respect! He then got Gareth, Al and I to top rope it. Al got stuck in the tree half way up and proceeded to rip it apart limb by limb until he had untangled himself.

Anne's group laid siege to an innocuous looking HVS which proved to be very trying. Anne did offer to lead it for them but her group were made of sterner stuff and insisted on having a go on the lead.

After several lead attempts and a lot of gear testing someone finally got to the top. By this time everyone was wet through and so we scuttled off to the café. The afternoon was saved by us finding a perma-dry bouldering wall not far from the main crag. John set about making up problems.

As the afternoon wore on, people started heading back South until just Al and I were left. We spent another hour or so there trying to do problems that John made up with Anne joining in with us. Al pulled off an impressive mantle shelf problem that Anne and I couldn't touch. We eventually called it a day and said our goodbyes.

On reflection we had rotten weather but made the most of it. I for one learnt a lot from the weekend and would recommend it to others.

Paul Rogers

The club and fixed gear



Gary Lewis put it like this : 'To bolt or not to bolt that is the question' Well we've been discussing the matter for ages and while the discussions go on nothing gets done, people get frustrated and there is a danger that people will do their own thing out on a limb.

As a club we need to provide a home for a wide spectrum of climbers and mountaineers

The committee has therefore made the following decisions:

The Drill

Last year we bought a super duper drill from Mr Bosch. The rules for members using the drill are as follows

- * Only club members may use the drill
- * Use of the drill is agreed with at least 3 committee members (including the chairman if he/she is available)
- * A logbook will be provided with the drill. The logbook needs to be filled out whenever the drill is leant out
- * Use of the drill must be legal, ethical and have first ascensionists permission (where possible). Use must also be in line with the South Wales bolting policy
- * User of the drill must know how to use it safely without risk to themselves or others
- * If any existing traditional route is to be bolted, first ascensionist's permission must be given
- * SWMC takes no responsibility for injury occurred while using the drill or from result of the drill's work
- * If someone is lent the drill, they cannot lend it to any other person. Drill keeper will be the only person to lend the drill
- * Users of the drill must return it to the drill keeper promptly when period of loan is over

Paul Rogers is the drill keeper.

The Bolts

The club has purchased £500 worth of fixed gear (Bolts, hangers etc)

This is to be used for one purpose only ie the replacement of sub standard fixed gear on established sport routes. If you want to put up new sport routes then buy the bolts yourself or get hold of some from elsewhere! The aim here is to make the popular sport climbing areas in South Wales safe!

A) Al Rosier is the keeper of the bolts. He will advise and consult the committee (acting as a focal point for collection of data and collate finances),

B) Replacement of fixed gear will be on a point for point basis except where lower offs are required,

C) This should be within the current bolting policy,

D) All equipment will be stainless steel.

The Bolting Policy

This is the key to it all. We need consensus in South Wales and the bolting policy defines that consensus.

There is a meeting at Dynamic Rock on 17th April at 7.30 to discuss it

(<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/News.aspx?id=2464>). The aim of this meeting is not to redefine the bolting policy however I would recommend you attend particularly if you have views on the subject.

So that's a snapshot of where we are. If you want to get in touch to discuss anything raised here. Please feel free. My number is 01792 539904, Chris

Club Finance Policy



A number of people have made the point that the club should use its money rather than just pile it up in ever increasing heaps. Others have made the equally valid point that the clubs funds have been developed over decades and should not be 'squandered' in a short period. The club constitution also bans individual members of the club from receiving pecuniary gain from their activities in the club.

These issues have been discussed in both the committee and the AGM. The club's policy for spending money has been agreed by the committee in principle. What follows is my wording for that understanding.

The aim of the club includes development of climbing and mountaineering in the South Wales Region and the support of its members in their personal climbing and mountaineering goals. In order to do this the club should:

- 1) Support and fund environmental work on local crags. This may include re-equipping. The club will provide funds for these purposes subject to clear proposals being made and the committee's approval*
- 2) Support the development of skills and coaching within the club by organising and underwriting numerous courses, training initiatives and coaching sessions. The aim is that these initiatives should be planned as cost neutral but that if a small loss is made, the club will make it up.*
- 3) Develop the hut by investing in new facilities and modernisation. In the long term the hut should pay for itself*
- 4) Develop information sources on climbing in south Wales. This means underwriting the cost of guidebook production and any web based information sources. Overall these activities should pay for themselves.*

Obviously as we are a democratic organisation, all are clear to voice their opinions on this. (We will listen) and of course, committee decisions are always up for grabs in November! But this encapsulates where we are at the moment.

A note from our Member ship Secretaries:

 PLEASE REJOIN THE SOUTH WALES MOUNTAINEERING CLUB 

Please note that this only applies if **not paying by Standing Order** (but see below)

There are two very important reasons why it is essential to renew your SWMC membership as soon as possible each year.

Those who join **any time** before 1 November need to renew on 1 January the succeeding year.
Those joining **after** 1 November will get membership to the end of the succeeding year.
(Constitution)

- 1** As you are no doubt aware we have affiliated membership with the British Mountaineering Council (BMC). This BMC affiliated membership gives you third party liability cover and this runs from 1 January to 31 December each year; and as stated in the club's Constitution, "Annual subscriptions are payable on the 1st of January and are valid until the end of December that year. Any member failing to renew their subscription within one month will no longer be a member".

The BMC are aware that it takes a finite time for Club secretaries to update their records at the beginning of each year so they "hold" membership until 1 March each year.

Anyone who is (re-)notified to the BMC before that date gets a free copy of the Spring issue of the Summit magazine, which includes an invitation to the BMC Annual Dinner and Conference both of which you are entitled to attend. Over 17s may speak and vote at the AGM.

- 2** **AND** it saves the membership secretaries a whole lot of work if people just "pay up"!

Please make sure you do this before the end of January to stay within the club's Constitution!!

If the details on your application form have not changed greatly then no new form is required, just the relevant subscription. If there are any small changes a note will do.

THEN

If you are over 17 and you haven't already done so, may ask you to get your skates on and sign on to the Bulletin Board (BB) on our web site, this is how we communicate!!! The BB gives you the low down on what the club members as individuals are doing or what groups of individuals are doing or maybe are thinking of doing! You can of course have your own "input".

Also by signing on to the BB you will automatically receive the club's newsletter by email.

Any problems with signing on, then please contact Tim Hoddy (see web site) who is our I.T. whiz kid.

NOTE:

For those paying by standing order please note that you mandates should be for £12.75 full or £10.75 concessions/Junior. Junior applications/renewal should be done through John Marshall.

John & Tim.

Meets

In addition to the meets listed below, club members are active throughout the year. Look at the SWMC bulletin board www.southwalesmountaineering.org.uk for details of less formal meets

Beginners' day East – 26/04/2008 – Chris Jones

Beginners' day West – 17/05/2008 – Chris Wyatt

1st Lead Weekend (North Wales) – 07-08/06/2008 – Ian Goudge

Love the Hut – To be arranged – Sara Davies

Pembroke Virgins – 28/06/2008 – Chris Wyatt
An introduction to the joys of Pembroke Climbing

Lundy – 13-16/09/2008 – Chris Wyatt (Fully booked)
Granite adventures in a beautiful setting

Crag Clean up – John Custance will tie in with BMC

Classic Rock weekend – 26/07/2008
Training weekend for lower grade climbers. Details tbc

Evening Meets take place every Wednesday throughout the summer. Please see the bulletin board for further details

Also of interest to club members:

Bolts in South Wales: When Where and Why?

Dynamic Rock, Swansea, 7.30pm Thurs 17th April

Refreshments provided everyone welcome!

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/News.aspx?id=2464>

Next issue...

Trip reports

Yoga for climbers

New Crag in the Swansea Valley

If you have anything to contribute, email [\[tuckergd@hotmail.com\]](mailto:tuckergd@hotmail.com)

Vacancy

Due to work and Family commitments Bryan Smith has had to resign as barn warden. First I would like to thank Bryan for the good work he has done and/or arranged. I think the hut definitely feels like our home from home due to his efforts. Cheers Bryan!

Anyway we now need a volunteer.

You do not have to be an expert in DIY – just a good organiser.

Anyone interested should contact me (07890828031)

Chris