



SOUTH WALES
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
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Autumn (maybe Christmas) 2012 Newsletter

It's newsletter time again. Hopefully you've all managed to plough through the (late) Summer mountaineering bumper edition and are ready for more. This month, we've got some grit antics from Gwyn, Mick and Haydn on Stanage, and a write-ups of the meets in Pembroke. Finally there's a little article about alternatives to climbing when injured. As you can see, much shorter than the last one, so hopefully it won't be quite a mammoth task to plough through it all.

I'm still looking for folk to help with the guidebook. Now that the leaves are off the trees it would be an ideal time to photograph lots of the crags. If you are at all keen on photography, please drop me a line - comms@southwalesmountaineering.org.uk

Otherwise I hope everyone is coping with the switch to Winter well. Personally I'm rather mourning not seeing much of the sun. It'll be spring soon enough however. As always I really do need articles. If you have any ideas, please write the up and send them in. I'll publish anything that's sent to me really (well with in reason). I'm really keen to have some more write-ups of meets that have happened this year.

Some of you might have noticed that we now have a facebook page which is at www.facebook.com/southwalesmountaineeringclub. This isn't to replace the website or forums, it's simply to make people aware of information that's on the website or the forums. If you don't have a facebook account, don't worry you aren't missing out on anything even vaguely interesting. So no need to go and get one, your life is probably better off without it (says the man who spends far too much time on the place!). There will eventually be a twitter feed as well. I hope everyone has had a good Christmas and is looking forward to a good New Year.

Pembroke Meet 2012

Friday 20th July saw 20 SWMC members descend on Porthclais campsite for the annual Pembrokeshire meet, this year organised jointly with our westerly neighbours, The Pembrokeshire Rock Club. After putting up tents and meeting up with a couple of the Pembs club, everyone retired to The Farmers Arms for a sociable beer to plan the weekends' activities.

On Saturday 21st July, the agreeable tide times meant that the crags weren't free until 12pm. This required a leisurely and relaxed start to the day, sitting in warm sunshine with spectacular views to accompany coffee and breakfast. After the previous night's deliberations in the pub, smaller groups headed off to tackle their chosen adventures.

Steve Goaman, Jon James, Sara Davies, Tim Boothby, Becky and Peggy Hill joined our westerly neighbours of the Pembrokeshire Rock Club for an extremely sociable and sometimes raucous climb at the pleasant Porthclais. Given the number of people, there were climbers on every route at every stage of the day ranging from Vdiff to E1. However, the crag wasn't so busy that there were queues for routes. It was certainly an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other while making the most of such a classic climbing venue.

Amber Chaloner and Jane went to Initiation Slabs, while Tristram Hales (otherwise known as TC), Ian Goudge, Becky Athay, Tim Popplestone, Paul Griffiths, Andy Peterken and Gareth Thomas went to Carreg y Barcud. TC led Ethos (HVS) followed by a solid lead of Stringray, his first E2 (well done TC!). Ian Goudge led the excellent Sinecure (E1). Ian and TC later came along to Porthclais and TC led the classic Dream Boat Annie (E1).

Simon Hunt and Cynthia took advantage of the sunny weather and slight swell to introduce Simon's daughter to surfing. It's said that Simon believes that by introducing her to the sport at such tender age, he'll make an International champion out of her, just going to prove that every parent plays out their failed dreams through their children ;-)



The evening saw fine weather continuing into clear skies and a balmy summer night. Dinner was followed by the delights of warming weary muscles by the comfort of a roaring fire pit provided and fuelled by the Pembrokeshire Rock Club, who even kindly brought along marshmallows to roast. Thank you guys for a perfect end to a perfect day.



Sunday 22nd July was another sunny day. Joe Gallagher (SWMC's esteemed Chairperson) joined the meet after missing out on the previous day's fun due to work. Joe, Ian, Sara, Peggy, Tim and Becky abseiled into a breezy Porth Y Fynnon. At various times, there were various combinations of people on The Crack (VD), Rising Damp (Diff traverse across the crag), Brown Slab (HS) and Cracked Wall (VS). Ian Goudge was pleased with leading Grab the Slab (E1), which he concluded as being "considerably thinner than yesterday's E1".

In terms of the rest of team SWMC, Amber and Jane went to Porthclais which was slightly less busy than the previous day. Paul, Andy, Gareth and Tim moved on to Stennis Head in South Pembrokeshire. Becky, Simon Hunt and Freya decided that sampling the delights of St David's ice cream was needed as a result of the brief Welsh foray into summer sunshine.

All in all, this meet was as popular as ever and is becoming an eagerly anticipated staple in the annual meet cycle. For 2013, a repeat joint meet is already being talked about, with a suggestion of something along similar lines on the Gower as well.



If you weren't at the Dinner what did you have?

by Gwyn Evans



Standing under a street light in a dingy Sheffield back street eating a Chinese curry out of a tin foil tray I thought of all those people in Swansea enjoying the annual dinner. So why was I here - and aching? As Mick is still working his free weekends are few and far between, slotted in to his Institution, family and business commitments, so we'd booked a long weekend away for the end of November, quite a while before the dinner date was announced. Once he got wind of it Haydn, who always finds time for a trip away, despite also being in work, decided he was going to join us. As for me I've got all the time in the world, allegedly, so it was no

contest.

My day doesn't usually start at 6 am but needs must. At eightish I was waiting while Mick wrote out the itinerary for the weekend from Classic Rock. This book has become something of a To Do list for us in the past few years starting with the Lake District Classic Rock tour of 2010, a 100 km walking trip starting on Coniston's Dow Crag and finishing on Borrowdale's Black Crag six days later with seven of the fifteen routes ticked off; the other eight were visited but were rained off though we did pick up one of the missed ones, Little Chamonix, last year completing it in the rain before sloping off to the café.

Itinerary in hand we pick up Haydn and set off, under some dark skies. A lunchtime brew and teacake at the Roaches tea shop and we were ready. Unfortunately, the weather decided otherwise and I was reminded of my early visits back in the late 60s 'the Roaches is like litmus paper, if there's any damp in the air it goes green'. Technical Slab was to be the first objective, HS 4a** (up from Severe in Classic Rock). 'A brilliant exposed route, high in the grade due to its technicality and seriousness. ...' [Niall Grimes, The Roaches BMC Guide]. As I teetered unprotected and wind buffeted about 15 feet off the ground Mick pointed out the luminous green colour of the bulges near the top. Discretion is the better part of valour and I returned to the ground. Haydn meanwhile had soloed Right Route '... novices may be unnerved by some of the frictionless footholds.' [Grimes]. This went by without too much problem but the cold was seeping into the bones and the boys decided some plastic was required.

Satnav out and we were on our way, passing by Hen Cloud's entry in the book of fame, to The Edge. Well it's dry and stays light until well into the evening is about as much as I want to say about it, but needless to say I wasn't going to waste my £5 entry fee by not doing anything hence the aching. As is usual with clip ups I don't remember anything about what we did that evening except the Chinese meal.



Sunny but cold was the outlook next morning so a south-facing crag was called for, fortunately Classic Rock came up with Birchens, it may be short but you can get some mileage in and three ticks from The Book, Sail Buttress, Topsail and Powder Monkey Parade. Bold statements about soloing the ticks were soon dispelled and we were all happy to put the rope on and get one lead tick each. The other 25 routes were mostly soloed but didn't have the same cachet as those three. This time we retired after pasta in cream sauce, two bottles of wine and a DVD.

Monday, should be getting up for work but we had other thoughts. Clean the hut? Suppose we'd better. Then it was a return match with Stanage,

this time to the Popular End. Flying Buttress, 'a classically varied route ... with the polish to prove it ...', was cold and more taxing than I remember from my youth. April Crack ought perhaps to have been left for that warmer month and Hargreaves Original on Black Slab was similarly testing. Not wanting to waste any time we found a couple of VSs with which to occupy ourselves before the temperature drove us to the fleshpots of Hathersage and then home by way of a couple of service area coffees.

A trip to Stanage resulted in a cold solo and walk along the edge before the plastic called again. The Foundry this time. We marvelled at the ripped couple who were lapping the severely overhanging back wall (a quick look at the grades suggested they were 'well 'ard' but very impressive all the same). The pint in the Grouse was so good we stopped for a meal and another pint before a couple of bottles of wine in the hut.

