

# ARMY MOUNTAINEER



The Journal of The Army Mountaineering Association



- Ice Monkey
- AMA Germany
- Photo Competition
- AMA reorganisation
- The Death of Adventure Training
- Inter Service Sports Climbing

**Winter 2001/02**



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# ARMY MOUNTAINEER



## The Journal of The Army Mountaineering Association

### Foreword

By Major Martin Bazire Chairman AMA



I am writing this Foreword as your new Chairman. The change of title to the post of Vice Chairman (which I have filled for the last 5 years), and my election to this new position, were two of the changes approved at this year's Annual General Meeting. My role in the AMA is unlikely to change much in the short term. I do see a number of Committee posts continuing to evolve, especially the new Vice Chairman and Publicity Officer positions. I have written previously about the reasons behind all these moves, so I will not dwell on them here.

However, for the record, and for the benefit of those who were unable to attend the AGM, our new Constitution is reproduced inside. This explains, in outline: the purposes of the AMA; its organization, membership and decision making; and a few other important matters. There is also a graphical representation of how I see the new AMA structure working in practice, by means of two diagrams which I hope are of interest.

The AMA continues from strength to strength. This is possible due to an active and expanding membership on the one hand, and a dedicated (yet voluntary) Committee on the other, without whom none of the recent changes would have been possible. I would also like to thank Brigadier Nick Cottam, who steps up as our new President, for providing exactly the senior influence we need. In turn, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Tony Streater, Sir Chris Bonington and Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) John Muston become our Honorary President and Honorary Vice Presidents respectively. We are most fortunate in having them all as our Presidents.

There are several important matters that the AMA Committee, on your behalf, will need to address in the coming months. In particular, we are looking at:

- Regularizing the post of the Membership Secretary at JSMTG
- Finding the best mix in our means of communication
- Promoting mountaineering, especially those ventures that require extra support
- Balancing our finances, while maintaining grants to assist worthwhile climbing activities.

These are all testing issues for the volunteer Committee members to consider, and I am confident that pragmatic decisions will be made, on behalf of the broad membership.

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On the Cover: Climber on Mt Hunter.

This edition was edited by Steve and Amy Willson.

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# AMA Expedition Radio Set and Digital Camera For Hire!



## RADIOS

The AMA owns a set of radio equipment for use by its members and others. The set consists of eight hand held Motorola GP68 VHF sets, one GM350 VHF base station, solar panels, video battery charger and all the ancillaries. This service has been provided by the AMA from the contributions you make as members of the association, therefore the equipment is yours and you should make full use of it. The set has been tested world wide and found to give excellent service in the mountains. The hand sets (5W output) provides a good line of sight service up to 5km and more when used with the base station's 25W output. The set, or part set, is available by booking it through the Publications Editor, Steve Willson, with the following conditions.

1. The radios must be insured by the expedition for the replacement cost, details on request.
2. A hire fee, to cover maintenance and renewal, of between £50, for part of the set, up to £150 for the whole set paid to the AMA on collection.
3. The expedition must book their own frequencies through which ever country they are visiting and then inform the Publications Editor to program the radios prior to collection.

The equipment is very good and it will improve the command and control of any expedition not to mention the increased safety cover.

## DIGITAL CAMERA

The AMA has added a Nikon 990 Coolpix digital camera to it's collection. This is a very high quality professional device that is capable of capturing impressive images that can be used for web pages, presentations or just snaps of your climbing. Any member of the AMA can hire this equipment for £25 (up to a month) or £50 (up to two months) for use on climbing/walking trips. The AMA Journal is also always in need of quality images and the camera will be available at AMA meets to capture the action. This will be at nil cost to the meet organiser.

If you have any questions about the radio set, digital camera or their availability please give the Steve Willson a call on 94256 8351 or 01865 255351 email [stevewillson@msn.com](mailto:stevewillson@msn.com) - Please make use of this kit!

# EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Winter 01/02 Journal. Firstly I must explain a few changes to the AMA publications. Unfortunately due to problems with the AMA membership database the Autumn Newsletter was not printed. This problem has now been rectified and all the entitled membership will be receiving the correct mailing. As you will see from this edition of the Journal we are now a full colour publication and the style of the Newsletter that accompanies the journal has changed to a single sheet flyer. This is now called the Newsletter Update. The new schedule for publications is summer and winter journals and Newsletter Updates and spring and autumn Newsletters as before. I hope the new format works for you, the membership, if not please give me a call.

Now to this edition of the magazine. There are a wide spectrum of articles in this issue ranging from accounts of climbing expeditions such as Ice Monkey and Shrivensham Santander to more factual and informative articles on adventurous training in the armed forces. Special thanks go out to Mark and Bridget Smyth for their contributions and superb collection of photographs that adorn the pages of their articles and others. It is really good to see that the AMA in Germany is alive and well, because that is where my own membership began in 1986. Thanks also go to the members that entered the AMA Photographic Competition. This is an essential source of high quality photo's for the magazine. If you have a picture that you think would look good in the folds of the journal then please send it in.

The wind of change has also swept across the AMA and the new constitution and structure are given at the back of the journal for your record. I know that there can sometimes be a culture of change for change sake, but I can definitely say that the changes voted in at the AGM are the result of intense and open debate by the committee that I am sure will stand the test of time.

Now it's time to remind you again to put pen to paper and produce material for the journal. If you are unsure of what is acceptable please give me a call. Once your life's work is complete send it to:

WO2 (AQMS) Willson  
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Falklands House  
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OX1 1RX

Finally my tenure as the publications editor is due to end in Sep 02. SSgt Sam Marshall has filled the post of sub editor and his help in reducing the workload attached to the job has been substantial. If you would be interested in taking up the post of publications editor on the AMA committee or have any questions about the post please give me a call. I hope you enjoy this edition and all the best for the festive season.

Cheers  
Steve Willson

## Inter-Services Sports Climbing Championships

By Mike Smith and Mick Cook



*The Army Team.*

On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001, climbers and spectators from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force gathered at "The Foundry" Climbing Centre in Sheffield for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inter-Services Sports Climbing Championships. Organised jointly by the three Service mountaineering clubs, the event was sponsored by Cotswold Essential Outdoor, Edelweiss Ropes, High Places and HB Climbing Equipment.

With two free climbing categories in the competition (Open & Under 25s) "dual dissimilar" (actually mirror image) heats were

used for the open category and a single heat for the Under 25s. To encourage a more friendly and social atmosphere for the competition, there was no isolation enforced for these heats and so to ensure fair play to the earlier competitors, the routes were demonstrated by British Climbing Champion Chris Cubitt and route-setter Kev Hill. As a mark of respect after the tragic events that had taken place in the USA the day before, a minute's silence was observed before the climbing started. The heats were then all run simultaneously and so with a potential for up to three climbers on the wall at any one time, there was no shortage of activity to entertain the spectators and to test the lyrical skills of event commentator Scott Derben.

Whilst the results of the heats were being worked out, we were all given an amazing climbing display by 14-year-old Hazel Duff from the British Climbing Team. The top eight competitors from the Under 25s and the top sixteen from the Open category were then selected for the final where once again we were all treated to some very powerful and in some cases technical climbing demonstrations. In the Open category final, the results were a lot closer than last year's event, this included a climb-off between the Army's WO1 Mike Smith and Capt Graham Carter who had both climbed to an equal 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Capt Carter eventually stole third place by the narrowest of margins.

*Route inspection prior to the final.*



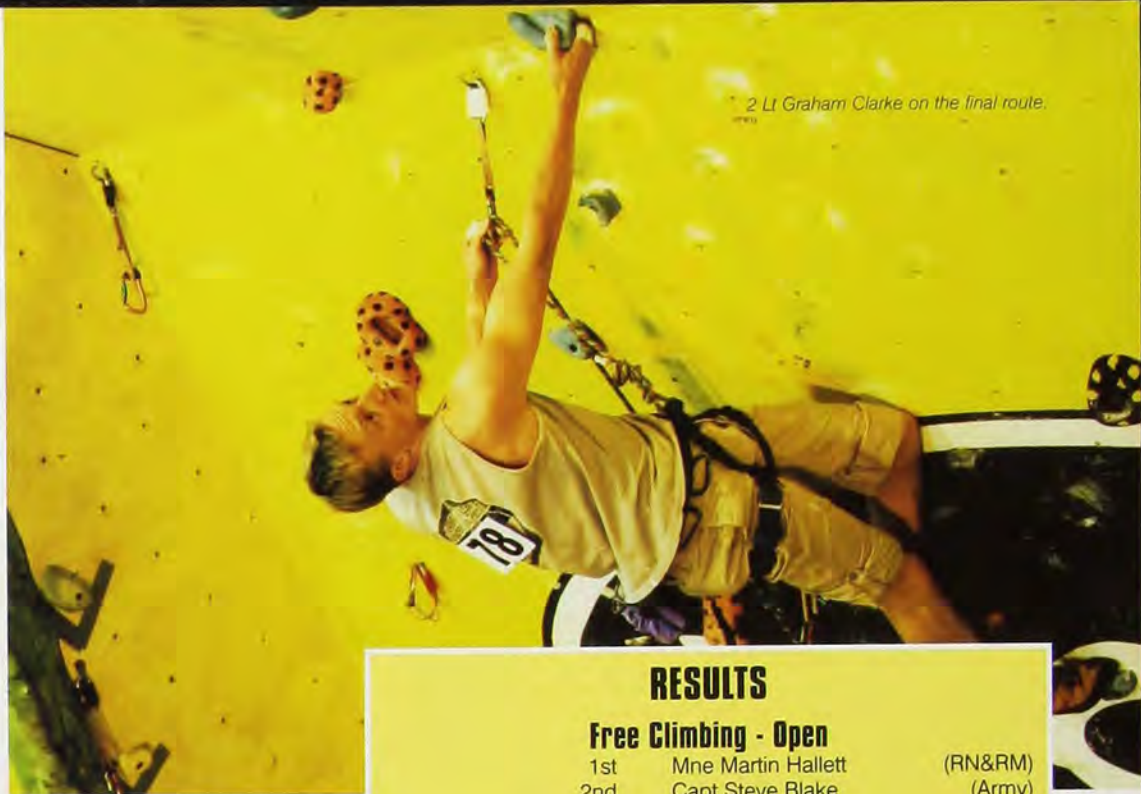
*Graham Carter flexing his muscles.*



*Cdr Steve Jackson handing over the trophy.*



Although the RN/RM and RAF teams tried their best to unseat the Army who were the current holders of both the Open and Under 25s team trophies, their efforts were in vain and Army competitors climbed exceptionally well to retain both trophies for yet another year. Best lady in the open category was Army team member Capt Leanne Callaghan who came overall fourteenth. Second place was the current Army champion Capt Steve Blake. The overall winner of the Open category was last year's Inter-Services winner and current RN/RM Climbing Champion Mne Martin Hallett, who with just one week to go before he leaves the Royal Marines almost topped out on the 7a+ final climb (touched the top hold but failed to clip the lower-off). Marvellous!



2 Lt Graham Clarke on the final route.

Commander Steve Jackson Royal Navy rounded off the Championships with the presentation of prizes and trophies. This was a brilliant competition, and credit must go to, Mark Pretty and Kev Hill for setting the awesome routes, "The Foundry" staff who co-ordinated the event and ensured impartiality on the day with their impeccable belaying and judging, Mandy Homer from "The Warehouse" Climbing Centre and Graeme Alderson from the BMC who was the Presiding Judge and Official Referee. Thanks must also go to the sponsors, officials, spectators and competitors for making this event possible.

## RESULTS

### Free Climbing - Open

1st	Mne Martin Hallett	(RN&RM)
2nd	Capt Steve Blake	(Army)
3rd	Capt Graham Carter	(Army)
Best Lady	14th Capt Leanne Callaghan	(Army)
Best Veteran	4th WO1 Mike Smith	(Army)
Best Super Veteran	2nd Capt Steve Blake	(Army)
Best Team	Army	

### Free Climbing - U/25s

1st	2Lt Graham Clark	(Army)
2nd	OCdt Tom Odling	(Army)
3rd	OCdt Daniel Shepherd	(Army)
Best Lady	12th Musn Sandra Jones	(RN&RM)
Best Team	Army	



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# WOOLLY HATTERS

By Sgt (SI) DK Godfrey APTC



Just hanging around on the new Kletastag.

I had just returned from some weird and wonderful REME exercise on Salisbury Plain and was certainly dreading the usual pile of paperwork that was sure to be in my in-tray when I got back to the office. After doing all my filing (honest!), I was delighted to

discover a letter from Capt Kev Edwards APTC advertising an exclusive Corps' Adventurous Training expedition. Based in the French Alps, it would provide a great opportunity for aspiring ATI 'wannabes', not only to gain high-level experience but also to achieve JSAT

The team in the Ecnin Alps.



qualifications. The activities were to consist of white water safety and kayaking, alpine rock-climbing and alpine mountaineering.

The French Alps seemed on balance far more appealing than further green training in Catterick or Salisbury and I thought this would be my lucky escape. I had to then convince the wife and then the Bn 2IC to release me for three weeks on the premise that any qualifications I might gain would also benefit the unit (little did I know what I'd let myself in for!).

The next step towards going on the trip was to beg, borrow and steal (I mean borrow again), all the personal and technical equipment on the comprehensive kit list. This was no mean feat! Many of the guys, especially the ones not at adventure training centres, bought their own equipment and the kit ranged from ice axes to kayaks and everything in between including an Alpine Reciprocal Rights Card which would give us discounted rates at the mountain huts.

The next letter to arrive in the post was the job list, allocating everyone with a task. These ranged from booking campsites, organising transport, photography and guess what, a Journal article!

With all my kit at the ready, I set off for the ASPT Aldershot picking up SSgt Iain Scott along the way from Harrogate. With the minibus packed to the roof already, we wondered how many Corps' guys we could get on a roof rack?

We arrived in Aldershot and met up with the remainder of the team, although some were making their own way to France. It became apparent that there was more equipment than Cotswold Camping strewn all over Hammersley Barracks. We then embarked on our first initiative task by squashing equipment and individuals into two minibuses. We had been right - it was going to be a tight squeeze.

Next on the agenda was the first of many daily briefings with Capt Kevin Edwards. He checked our logbooks, confirmed our qualifications and then we were paid our CILOR, not a handsome amount for three weeks worth of food. So we set off for Dover, fully laden, late in the afternoon on Saturday 2nd June 2001.

The journey was long, cramped and uncomfortable as we travelled through the night and long into the next day. As we travelled further south and into the Alps the scenery became more and more impressive, real snow covered mountains and high mountain passes - well worth the discomfort.

Eventually we arrived at the Camping des Cinq Valles, Saint Blaise, Briancon. This was to be our campsite and home for the first week of training. The initial phase would include white water safety and white water kayaking, or, in some cases, just scary fast water swimming and survival techniques, followed by white water kit retrieval.

After the ritual of the Safety Brief and Risk Assessment, which was to be a daily theme throughout the exercise, we spent two days on a white water safety and rescue course. Mr Paul O'Sullivan from the Welsh Canoeing Association (WCA) co-ordinated the training jointly with Capt Edwards and he must be the only civilian ever to put fear into the hearts and minds of hardened Corps instructors. Even seasoned veterans, like Capt Edwards, thought he was raving mad when he jumped in at the slalom course at L'Argentiere la Besse and showed us how to swim through a 'stopper', 'barrel-roll' out of trouble and make for the safety of an 'eddy'.

Swimming specialist, in more ways than one, SSgt Jim Darnbrook could not believe what he was seeing. After spending several years at the school coaching life-saving techniques and water safety this was well out of the scope of the ASA and RLSS books.

The course was very well run, and everybody certainly learned some useful new skills, both in personal survival swimming and improvised throw-bag rescue techniques. Mr O'Sullivan's contract fees were paid through the APTC technical training grant and it was money very well spent. (Paul, wherever you are, thanks for a painful but enjoyable couple of days.)

The rest of the phase was spent kayaking in ability groups, the 'kayak ninjas' and the 'frogmen'. While the 'ninja's' went posing on their first day at the slalom course and on the



River Gyronde, the swimmers headed off for the River Clarée and a river trip.

The river trip was meant to be grade 2/3, but within seconds of us entering the water more than half of us had capsized and swam. The water seemed massive and was really shifting. We managed to sort ourselves out, got back in the boats and were soon on our way again.

I then noticed a pattern, which seemed to stay with us whenever we entered moving water! SSgt Jim Darnbrook would nearly always capsize first, closely followed by WO2 Mark Crisp. Then Sgt Dave Turton and myself would simultaneously breakout in sympathy and also capsize. This would then set Sgt Ross MacDougall into a near miss, while the others who were minding us would set off chasing all our kit. The kayaking was fast and furious, although a couple of us were well out of our comfort zones, the paddling came on and everyone improved.

We got to use our new found rescue skills on the River Ubaye when a university group from Britain went swimming past us and we ably assisted in their rescue. A few of us had bumps and bruises, and a little kit was lost, including a kayak (no names WO2 Mark Crisp!) otherwise nothing else was dented apart from our pride.

We spent the evenings of phase one on coaching theory, ending on the last night with a 'paddlers' quiz and farewell drink for Paul.

On Sunday 10th June, we commenced the alpine rock-climbing phase. The immaculate weather had taken a turn for the worst and so we carried out a climbing workshop within the campsite. The HBF's SSgt's Nick O'Shea and Dave Bunting and SSgt's Mark Hedge and Paddy Logan took the lead on this. Again it was extremely worthwhile as it created an open forum to discuss different techniques and practices.

The next day the weather cleared. We had a session on the Chamandrin sport crag, which provided great entertainment. In the late afternoon it was then time to pack up and move up the valley to the campsite at La Vallouise. With WO2 Tony 'The Interpreter' Leese and his impressive grasp

of the local 'lingo' finding out all the information on where to eat and so on, we were soon settled into our new temporary home. The campsite was well situated with a great many good climbs within a ten-minute drive.

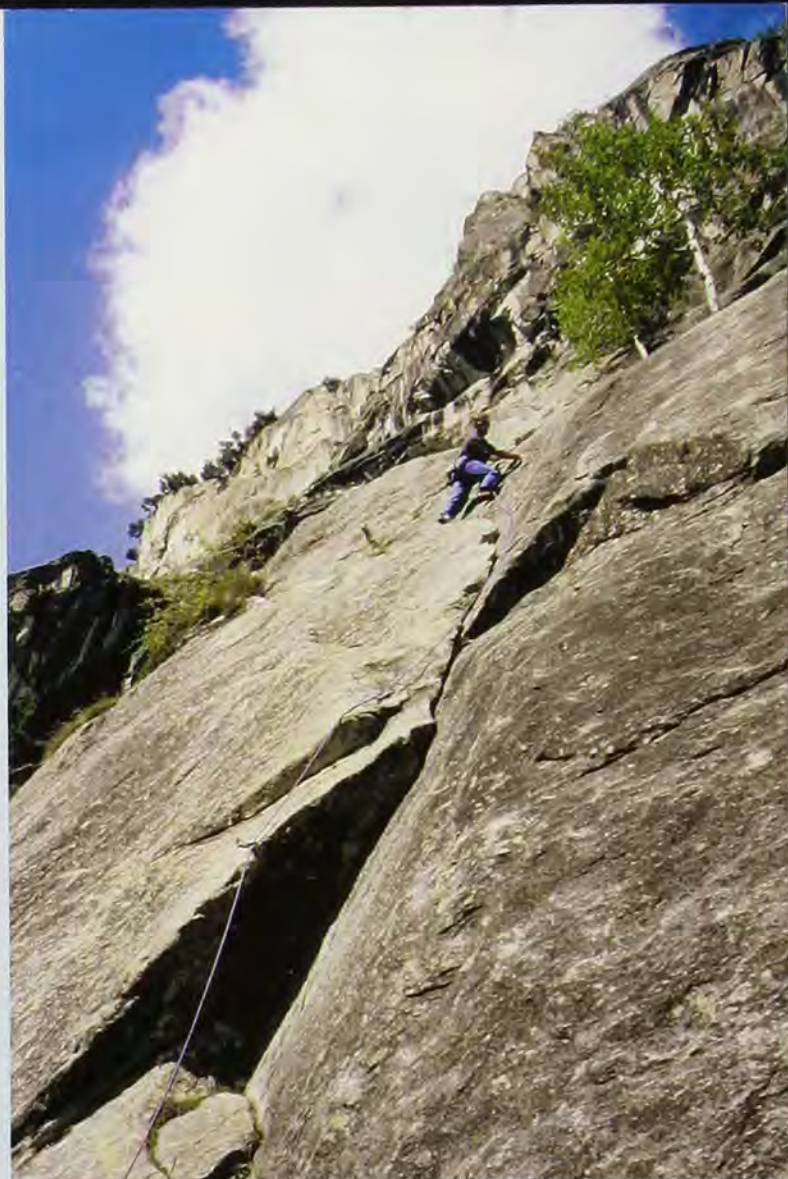
Once again we split into groups depending on experience and qualifications and carried out some awesome climbing in wonderful scenery.

One climb will always stick in my mind. It was our first multi-pitch route. Capt Edwards was leading with Sgt Ross MacDougall and myself taking it in turn to second. It was a 12-pitch route and Sgt Martin Kenyon, SSgt Nick O'Shea and WO2 Mark Crisp were following close behind. We each had a massive rucksack full of food, emergency rations, more food, some spare clothing and a torch. This was not the alpine way - travel light, we were told. We ended up taking the bare minimum, a packet of biscuits, camera and a tin of fish and shoved it all in Capt Edwards's tiny rucksack.

The climbing was going really well, if a little slow and it had been a gorgeous sun soaked day. We soon realised though that if we did not get a move on, the light would soon go. We climbed as hard and as fast as we could but the darkness was already starting to descend and as the sun tucked in behind one of the peaks, the temperature dropped dramatically. We were soon starting to feel the cold.

By this stage we had reached the summit and were preparing to abseil off. The French guidebooks were a little confusing at times and finding a safe place to abseil from was getting harder, especially in the fading light. To be honest it was pretty exciting; we were moving well as a team and soon had a slick operation running. We eventually got back to the minibus in the pitch black, tired, hungry and freezing cold but with a strong sense of achievement and a few stories to tell the others. Not to be outdone, all the other groups had stories to tell, especially Sgt Shaun Dutton who can spin some really good climbing 'dits'.

With the climbing phase coming to an end we finished off with a climbing quiz and another trip to the local restau-



Rockclimbing in the Filefroide area.

rant where the 'walkers platter' was a speciality. It was now time to test out our mountaineering equipment.

On Sunday 17th June, we set off on a long slow walk up to the Refuge des Ecrins at 3175 metres via Glacier Blanc. The

Refuge des Ecrins is a mountain hut on the side of the glacier, and this would be our home for the next few days and the final phase. The hut was very basic and completely packed out with various groups and day visitors. There were no washing facilities and the

Alpine slope in the Ecrin.





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only toilets were outside and consisted of a small hut, hung over a cliff. Needless to say care was needed, especially when the wind got up. Meals were provided, but these were costly.

The advice for alpine mountaineering is 'small pack, large wallet'. In true British tradition we had 'large packs and small wallets'.

With glacier training and acclimatisation underway, we were soon looking forward to the ascent of the Barre des Ecrins at 4102 metres. This was what it was all about, as far as I was concerned, I had certainly never been anywhere near that kind of altitude, and I was looking forward to the challenge. The ascent began with an early wake up on Tuesday 19th June and we were on our way by 0300hrs. Travelling light for speed in true alpine fashion, we soon arrived at the start of the harder climbing. Glacial travel at that time of day is relatively straightforward as the ice is hard and easy to move on. There were many other groups heading the same way, and we hoped that they were not going to crowd our route.

We were all making good progress but the climbing was becoming increasingly difficult. The front group consisting of Sgt's Geordie Taylor and Hans Felder, and SSgt's Mark Hedge, Iain Scott, Paddy Logan and Dave Bunting were all doing a gallant job of racing ahead and breaking the trail through knee-deep snow. It took three hours of exacting work to forge a track through to the base of the summit pyramid. A couple of the local guides were heard to comment on how impressed they were with our efforts.

At the base of the summit we were faced with the final assault. Three routes were chosen. The front two groups of trailbreakers climbed two direct variations of the north face, while the rest of us climbed the north face and ridge. The ridge was very tricky and was exposed to the full force of the icy cold winds, which were now hammering into us. The temperature had dropped considerably and by now we were in far too much of a precarious position to do much about it. We had to carry on or retreat. It was difficult to move up or down because someone was either ahead of you or behind you and tied on. We had to wait to move one at a time, then belay, take-in and so on. I was frozen to the bone and doing everything I could to stay warm which is particularly difficult when you are balancing on ice and rock. One by one, we carefully began to retreat off the ridge. This again seemed to take forever and it was so cold. Tempers had frayed, but only marginally. We really had to move and move fast. It would have been irresponsible to carry on given the conditions but I was disappointed at not making the summit. The rest of the descent was just as difficult as we abseiled down, one by one and then waded back through the snow. The plus side was that the strenuous activity gradually warmed us back up.

The day had turned into a 14-hour struggle, with only the two lead groups achieving the summit. It was however a tremendous effort on everyone's part. We had all come back in one piece and for me the attempted ascent was the highlight of the exercise. We were glad to be back at the hut and slept well that night.

The following day we packed up and started the descent back down the glacier, stopping off to practice such skills as crevasse rescue. By mid afternoon we were back at the campsite in Vallouise, hungrily awaiting our 'walkers platters' at the local restaurant.

The final day of training on Thursday 21st June was a free choice day. Some went rock climbing, some paddling and Sgt's Phil Harris, Sean Dutton, Martin Kenyon and myself opted to try out the local Via Ferrata, in the Durance Gorge. It was a good choice and an amazing route, with excellent exposure in the gorge. It was the perfect activity to finish on, at the end of an outstanding exercise, which we rounded off with a team dinner at a local restaurant. All that remained now was the journey back to the UK, which did not seem half as bad as the journey out.

Special thanks to Capt Edwards for making it happen, and also to Sgt Andy Johnson for putting up with me while sharing a tent. (or was it the other way round and you did not get a mention on the script - sorry!).

# AMA (Germany) Summer Meet 8-10 Jun 01

By Mark & Bridget Smyth

Whilst UK was 'shut down' due to disease and pestilence, Germany was open for 'business as usual' for all the outdoor enthusiasts. It had been a number of years since the last AMA Germany meet and SSgt Dave Reith set the ball rolling before handing the weekend to Maj Bridget and Capt Mark Smyth.

On the afternoon of the 8th June, 18 people descended upon Sonnenburg Lodge in the Harz Mountains. An excellent turn out considering the number of exercises and Op Tours that were ongoing. The experience varied from "What's a Crab??" to "Oh I think that last one was a grade 8!", and there was plenty to keep people occupied.

A small break-away group made it to the crag on Friday evening, for a bit of top-roping. Chris Campbell had the dubious honour of being first to 'blood the rock', when one of his 15 points of contact irrevocably failed on him. No serious damage done, but his fingers were sore for the rest of the weekend.

The next morning dawned bright a clear, and after a slap up breakfast we all set off for the 'Marienwand' in the Oketal. Even though it was relatively early, a group of Germans had got there before us, and stitched a lot of the best climbs. Well they had put up top ropes, and weren't using them! So in true European style, we just climbed over them - which is exactly what they would have done to us! People paired off according to their abilities (or lack of), leaders did their best to try and interpret the guide book and work out which route was where, and soon everyone was climbing. Some flew up their selected route and others patently wished they had checked out the guide a little more thoroughly. Around about 11 o'clock people took a natural break, and Mark got talking to another climber. He turned out to be a Brit soldier, who had recently bought some

climbing kit, and had turned up on speck, hoping to meet some other like-minded lunatics. So he was duly invited to join us, and stayed overnight in the Lodge. The group split up to find other routes, and a slightly less crowded crag. By mid-afternoon we had all migrated to the 'Sleeping Lion', which we had to ourselves. Some people were still pushing out the grades and attempting the impossible, whilst a select few battled away on a bit of gear that was firmly wedged in a particularly tight crack (we've all been there...!)

In the evening we improvised a barbecue stand in the garden of the Lodge, and had a superb alfresco meal with everyone eating hot off the coals as things were cooked to their liking. Stretch, our rock climbing chef from 26 Regt RA had done us proud with the CILOR, and we had food coming out of our ears, not to mention enough beverages to last the evening...

The next morning we all pitched in to clean the Lodge so it was as pristine as when we arrived, then drove down to the Oketal again and this time headed up the hill towards 'Eschwegefelsen' Crag.

The weather was not so good, (it was raining!), but some of the routes were quite sheltered and only damp in places. 'Drop a grade and climb in big boots' was one option! The group split into two with some heading off for a full traverse of the 'Grosser Treppenstein' - where an excellent climb but a minor epic was had. The rest of us enjoyed the complaints from Ian, are you sure this is the right route, Phillips as he grunted and swore his way up an innocuous looking grade 4+. His partner Kath, I'm sure that is not a recognised point of contact, Stephens helpfully advised him whilst safely sat at the base of the climb.

A most excellent weekend was had by all, and we will certainly be making the Germany Summer Meet an annual occurrence.

**"Drop a grade and climb in big boots"**



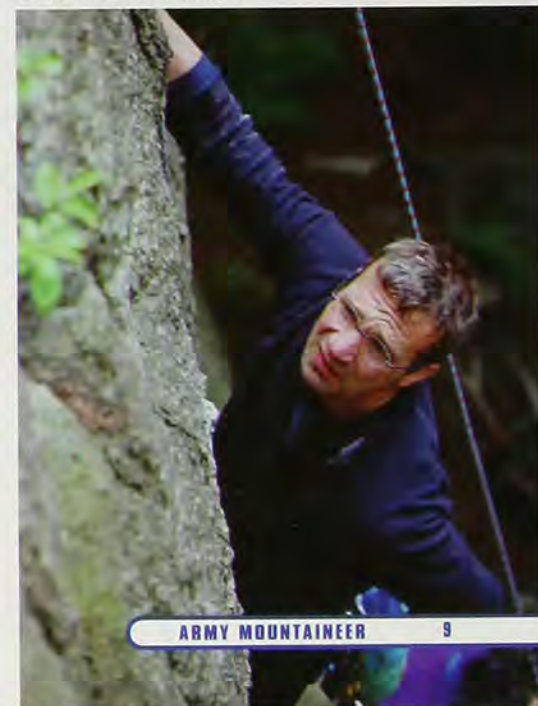
What are you doing?



Above: Bridget Smyth on day 1.  
Below: John H-W Thinking!!!



Chris Campbell on day 1.



**S**o, you're looking for some inspiration for a trip somewhere. Look no further. I'm now going to attempt to do what so many members of the AMA are brilliant at ie talking a good exped !! I've tried to pick a selection of objectives to cater for all tastes, budgets and abilities, hoping that this article might just sow the seeds of some future trip. I've included basic details such as duration reqd, cost and location. The rest is up to you, but feel free to call for more information or a pointer in the right direction. If I don't know the answers to your questions I'll probably know someone else who does.

### Walking/Trekking

The Cape Wrath Trail from Fort William to Cape Wrath takes you through some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in the UK. It also gets you away from the crowds. Ideal for a unit exped with a tiny budget. Two weeks should be enough and MLT will probably be ok for Div as long as the holder has been to the West coast of Scotland before. Avoid summer when the midges are a killer ! For any MLTs hoping to go for their ML this would be a perfect way to beef up your log book.

The GR 20 in Corsica is a big walk through the mountains and over high passes. It takes you up steep terrain and into the heart of the hills. Cost could be kept down to under £100 per head for a two week trip. ML(S) would be needed or an MLT who'd been there before. Great trip for Troop/Platoon Adv Trg. Avoid Summer when it gets extremely hot.

Klettersteiging in Bavaria takes you into positions with massive exposure in relative safety. The bonus of Bavaria is that it's cheap and simple to organise with both accn and eqpt aval from the Military Lodges. Adv JSME(L) is reqd however, and these can be hard to get hold of - book early to avoid disappointment.

### Rock Climbing

The Ardeche region in Southern France has a host of sun drenched, bolted crags that are ideal for novices and hard core climbers alike. The area is also very popular with paddlers and could easily be combined with a canoe trip to satisfy the CO's desire to take as many soldiers as possible ! Low budget, easy organisation and the weather make this venue hard to beat. Scope here for RLT and upwards to conduct quality adv trg.

Corsica is a haven for rock climbers with high quality routes to suit all abilities. Why not combine this with the GR 20 for a great unit trip ? Low budget, simple to organise and a sunny venue should ensure popularity with the troops ! JSRCL suggested as a minimum qualification. £100 per head personal contribution should be a realistic planning figure.

### Winter Mountaineering

Get stuck in, in Scotland. Yes, good old Bonny Scotland is still hard to beat when the conditions are right. Why not increase the enjoyment by booking your accn in the CIC hut on Ben Nevis. As affiliated members of the BMC you can book it and it's cheaper than a Fort William Bunkhouse. So, do the walk in once, and spend a few days ticking off 2-3 classic routes each day from the comfort of the Inner Tabernacle of Scottish Climbing. Qualls depending on what you're doing and who you're taking, but ML(W) would be a basic requirement. This would also be an ultra low budget trip. If booking the CIC remember that demand is lowest during week days and may mean that less unpleasant comments about "Sassenach bas\*\*\*\*ds" are received in the hut.

Ice Climbing in Norway is a great alternative to Canada. It's cheap to get to, easy to organise, and the icefalls are effectively roadside. Both Hemsedal and Rjukan Valley offer a massive array of single and multi pitch (up to 10 pitches!) routes of all grades. The locals are very friendly and the routes rarely have queues. As for the prices when you get there, don't believe the hype. You'll pay more for a beer in London than you ever will in Norway and you can stock up in the duty free on the way over. 2 weeks is an ideal length of time (incl travelling). Budget on £100-150 personal contribution. As for qualifications you'll need WCL or WCI if you're taking novices, or appropriate caveats in your cse reps if you're experienced winter climbers. Dec-Mar ideal.

Peak Bagging in Bolivia. A mountaineer's paradise of 5,000m peaks, Bolivia offers something for all abilities. Whether you want big snow plods or hard technical routes Bolivia has it all. It's cheap once you're there and there's an excellent guide book written by Yossi Brain. Don't try and contact him personally however as he is now watching the potatoes grow from underneath after an accident. Bolivia is fast becoming the number one spot in South America for quality winter mountaineering. Ask why you should flog yourself up a 6,000m peak when you could go to Bolivia and really enjoy a 5,000m peak. For a decent trip you'd need 3-5 weeks and a personal contribution of about £400-500. Suitable for an AMA trip or an ambitious unit exped, you'll need ML(W) as a minimum, possibly with an SGL depending on the routes you want to climb. Spanish speakers are a bonus. Spring and Autumn are ideal times to be there.

# Ten Ideas For An Exped

By Stu Macdonald (Expeditions Advisor)

Mount Saint Elias in Southern Alaska is 19,000' high and is the 2nd highest peak in the USA. It's also renowned for being a real bugger to climb due to the maritime climate that affects it. It's remote location ensure that it is far from crowded and any expedition going there will have an amazing experience whether or not they summit. A ski plane drops you off below the peak and collects you again after the climb. The climbing is committing requiring multiple camps and a strong team. This would be most suited to an AMA or JS expedition. Personal contribution would be £500-600 and 4-6 weeks would be needed for the trip. May/Jun is the best time to be there and you'd need ML(W)s and SGLs as a minimum.

Greenland is a climber and skier's fantasy. There are still copious amounts of virgin peaks left to climb and plenty of scope for new routes. Remoteness is a feature of any Greenland trip and access is either by ski plane or yacht (for the really adventurous only). Movement around is on skis and there is scope for all grades of climbing. 4-5 weeks reqd. That's about all I know about the place, so the rest is up to you.

### And a few places worth avoiding.....

Mont Blanc (Gouter Route). If you enjoy queuing with hundreds of foreigners on a well trodden (down trodden?) Alpine Classic then this could be the route for you. If you really are determined to climb Mont Blanc then why not do the traverse from the Cosmiques Refuge?

Mount McKinley (West Buttress). Of all those who climb in Alaska, 90% climb in the Alaska Range encompassing Denali National Park. Of these, 95% climb one route only. Yes, you've guessed it - the West Buttress. In May 1999 there were over 400 people on this route on the same day!! Is that what you go to the hills for? Why not try the West Rib (Alaska grade III, instead of II) or the Muldrow glacier route (II). The Muldrow approaches from the North and usually has no more than a handful of ascents per year. It also involves a 3 day ski approach into the 'Wild Side' of the Range.

The West Highland Way. Well come on, it's not mountaineering is it? If you really do want to do battle with the midges and the crowds you should also sew a cloth badge onto your knapsack and buy the naf T shirt.

Ecuador. Mind numbing slogs up dormant volcanoes are about as much fun as pan frying your privates. There are reputed to be some quality high altitude treks (if you're a trekkie), but these are filled with American tourists. If you want to go to South America then Bolivia has much more to offer.

Ross McDougal enjoying a route in the Aillroide area.



A view of south Georgia.

## Shrivenham Santander

By Maj D C Masson RHF

Exercise Shrivenham Santander was a mountaineering exercise conducted in the Canadian Rockies in August 01. The aim was for a 10 man group of RMCS students; Majors, Lts and OCdts, to go on a demanding mountaineering trip. The plan was to capitalise on the settled condition and good quality mountain routes available, hopefully including a mix of snow and rock routes. The expedition was pan RMCS, involving an equal mix of undergraduates and Majors. This did not appear to be a particularly attractive grouping however it worked very well in practice with 5 Majors, 1 Lieutenant and 4 OCdts. The trip had to be during the Majors' summer leave and, as the RAF could not be sure about CNFP flights with foot and mouth raging, the flights were with a commercial carrier. This was expensive however Canada 3000 paid little attention to our 90 kg of excess baggage. Our fare was £560 per head.

We flew out on 31 Jul, arriving early afternoon local time. Two 7 seat mini vans had been reserved in advance. We drove straight to Canmore despite pressure to 'pull in' to Mountain Eqpt Co-op. The first day was designed to be a short shake out on Mount Edith, a peak close to the road and near the campsite. All ten of us were pretty well 'shook out' by the time we had climbed 900m on the trail to the Cory Pass. The route then toiled up a few hundred metres of steep scree before the north summit was reached by climbing a short rock band. A convenient chimney, of about difficult standard, proved a good ascent route. The way to the centre peak involved a backtrack then a slightly easier buttress. From the centre peak the south peak looked horrific and we decided that it would need a whole day to itself. The descent was far harder than expected with Rockies 'rubble' in abundance. Martin Rudd's five abseiled into the South/Centre

col whilst the other five retraced their steps to the Cory pass. The next day was another shake out, this time on Mount Norquay overlooking Banff. The day started with a 500m slog up a black ski run. The first obstacle was a short rock band, one group took the easy scramble, the other made a single pitch of V Diff to get to the top. After this the way to the summit was over 300m of extremely steep scree and a small tower. The goats that lived up there were gambolling around with abandon, the human visitors were not quite so sure footed.

The tower proved to be 'difficult' although quite exposed. Two abseils, one on a particularly precarious stone, were required on the descent. We were now well shaken out and moved the camp up to Lake Louise. The first target was Mount Niblock, the higher of the pair of peaks that overlook the Chateau. After a pleasant one hour hike we climbed a miserable scree cone to the base of a rock band. There

was a weakness by a waterfall that allowed a scramble of about two rope lengths. After this the fun really started. The scree had been eroded down to hard packed gravel of about 50 degrees. It was the most unpleasant ground and a fall, or at least a slide, seemed very likely. An ice axe was pressed into service but this was little use. Above this the way was easier, following boulder covered ramps and ledges up to the Niblock / White Col. From the col there was a short ridge to the summit. This was firm but very exposed, the black lava like rock and the exposure was similar to the Cuillin Ridge. The summit views were spectacular with a few avalanches coming off Mount Victoria.

The way down was straightforward until the gravel gully. An abseil was essential although the stonefall was horrendous. A lone climber was spotted and Martin Rudd, a very gallant fellow, gave her his helmet and some abseiling instruction. Without this help she would have been in a lot of difficulty. The seriousness of the terrain was demonstrated by Mike Dooley who scraped

**"It was the most unpleasant ground and a fall, or at least a slide, seemed very likely."**



Summit Ridge.



Above: Santander Team.

Below: Lefroy summit.



Mount Temple.



off a lot of skin off when slipping only 6 feet. Day 4 and we had a day at Main Crag at the end of Lake Louise. Much of the rock was bolted but a couple of parallel cracks offering severe routes were found to allow the whole team to climb with each other. Day 5 was a walk up Mount Temple, the 3rd highest peak in the southern Rockies at 3505m. The route climbed 1800m through 3 bands of black, yellow and red rock. None of the bands were hard although the way up the black band was a steep snow filled gully. The top was cold and a bit crowded, this being a bank holiday Sunday, but the views were well worth the effort. The descent was slow and tiring. We took out a rope at the snow gully and a few grateful civvies sidled up for a lower to avoid a late season toboggan ride.

Day 6 focussed on multi pitch climbing at Kid Goat Crag near Canmore where most of the expedition climbed a 2 pitch 'Severe' route. This was an excellent day and allowed an element of selection to take place for the attempt on Yamnuska. The rock was of better quality than higher in the valley but still a bit loose for aficionados of solid granite. Sean Lang and Clive Masson drove to the Goat Range for a crack at Big Sister, an imposing peak of 2900m that overlooks Canmore. The route was straightforward although desperately loose, a lack of concentration on the descent resulted in an unplanned trip down a rather smooth and unprotected gully, the least said the better! Days 7 and 8 saw the expedition split in half. Sean Lang took the 3 who were being assessed for the SMP award on an overnight navex in the Hidden Lake area, the other five made an attempt on Mount Lefroy, 3306m - a Rockies classic. The walk in to the Abbot's Pass hut involved a 700m gully of unbearable rubble. The hut, however, is fantastic with propane and wood flown in by helicopter. The weather at dawn was still and clear and we got away at 5:30. The route was straightforward, the snow was in excellent condition at about 50 degrees and, moving in ropes of 2 and 3, the 500m to the summit took just under 2 hours. The route would be a Scottish Grade 2 although the hut

register showed that few parties had been as fortunate with the weather and conditions - some taking 6 hours from the hut. Being north facing the route was in fine condition until the sun came on it at about 9.30, by which time we were back at the hut for an early lunch.

The penultimate day was spent on Mount Wilcox which overlooks the Columbia Icefield. The team started late in the afternoon, the route involved an 8 km walk in through a beautiful forest then alpine meadow. The lower slopes of Wilcox were an easy walk however the last few hundred metres were loose, steep and exposed. The plan had been to make a bivvy high on the hill, the beautiful weather made this a very attractive prospect. The bivvy site was on a wide ledge about 100m from the summit. A perfectly clear, frosty night and the full moon allowed everyone to savour the fantastic views of Mount Athabasca, Andromeda and the Columbia Icefield. This route proved to be an excellent way to wrap up the trip. Although not technical the scenery and ambience make Wilcox a worthwhile trip. The last day saw another split. Martin Rudd, Andy Power, Mike Dooley and Terry Denton drove south to Canmore to climb on Yamnuska, a scorching south facing cliff. The route was 'Easy Start' a seven pitch 2 star climb, it was graded as Canadian 5.5 and would rate as British 'Severe.'

**"The last few hundred metres were loose, steep and exposed."**

The climbing was hard and rewarding although exceptionally hot. All 4 led pitches. Sean Lang, Dean Steptoe and Phil Carrotte, Carl Wilson and Dan Knowles went white water rafting on the Kicking Horse river. As the Yamnuska climb had gone well we were back in Calgary with enough time to clean the gear and have a good, if expensive, night in town before flying home.

Exercise Shrivensham Santander was an excellent mixed mountaineering trip, the whole team were stretched on rock and big hills while Mount Lefroy satisfied the alpinists. Dean Steptoe, Terry Denton and Carl Wilson were awarded SMP. The weather was fantastic with only 15 minutes of rain in 2 weeks.

Major Masson.



Mt Lefroy.



Above: Mt Edith central peak.

Below: Maj Rudd and OCdt...



## 'Mama' Wilson Goes Wild

By Major LM Wilson



Mt Meru peak and crater from Miriakamba hut.

Scaling the soggy peaks in UK can be challenging any time; 'dragging' the RLC TA kicking and screaming to Chamonix this summer was tremendous; but providing the instructor cover for 11 Royal Engineers to pop up Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest point on the African continent, was ... well ... something else! As a senior colleague pointed out, 13 years of co-ordinating Ex Deep Ranger and having gained all these mountaineering qualifications, mostly courtesy of HM Forces, there have to be some perks. My only organisational

contribution to this expedition was a risk assessment presentation to S02 G3 PAT 4 Div... a novelty. My RLC TA instructor mates couldn't oblige these guys on this occasion so I just had to succumb to the pressure and assist! Join the Army Mountaineering Assn. and you get these kind of opportunities.

From RHQ 1 RSME, Chatham, Kent, one CO, ten men and... me, left for Gatwick on 17 Sep 01 for departure to Nairobi. After the trauma of New York and the Pentagon, security was a nightmare and having so

much as a nail file on you threatened a life sentence. In Nairobi, security was... interesting, but not as intriguing as the form filling necessary for passage through Kenya, then again for Tanzania; reminding me of a good day at the DHSS office. Furthermore, the frontier was an experience not to be missed with every conceivable type of vehicle and character seeking access across the border. The dry heat hits you as the tour bus gained momentum alarmingly on the straight road across the African plains, negotiating donkeys, cattle, sheep, goats

Major Wilson's descent from Kili Summit, with Mawernzi peak behind.



and an ostrich at a speed I dare only imagine. Seven hours later we arrived at the Kilimanjaro Lodge, Moshi, home for 3 of our 11 nights in Africa.

The first four days were to be taken up on the acclimatisation peak of Mt Meru, a very respectable 4566m in height and renowned for being more 'interesting and less commercialised' in comparison to its larger neighbour. Steep grassland and bush from the start at Momela Gate, took us past grazing cape buffalo and giraffe to Miriakamba Hut for night one. As well as the tour company rep. Gideon, and 14 porters, we had an armed guide (in case of encounters with elephants)! Accommodation much like the alpine huts in Europe, toilets about the same quality and meals like something out of... Africa I suppose. Day two was spent in the mountain rainforest ascending steeply to the Saddle Hut at 3570m. Lots of elephant poo and monkeys, before we broke out into giant heather that makes Scotland's hills look like a walk in the park. Everyone was wheezing well by the time we reached the Hut. Fitness ironically doesn't come into this high altitude trekking half as much as pacing yourself and "poley poley" (Swahili for 'slowly slowly') proved to be sacrosanct. Another phrase was "akuna matata" meaning 'no problem', which became increasingly relevant as we realised that however keen we were, the locals worked to 'African time' and it put a whole new perspective on the TA philosophy of 'rush and wait'.

Sleeping at 1700hrs is difficult but the guys seemed to manage it no problem, typical regular soldiers I guess! We were awoken at 2400hrs to commence the final stage to the summit of Meru in darkness. An interesting experience with a headtorch, scrambling over what in UK would be Grade 1 ground up a ridge around the volcano crater rim to reach the summit at dawn. Four regrettably succumbed to altitude sickness(AMS), but fortunately with enough porters to accompany them back down to the Hut, the remainder didn't have to abandon the climb. Photos of dawn over 'Kili' were impressive and returning in daylight, I now know why they do the Meru final ascent at night. Any sensible unprepared tourist would sack it long before the top given the 12





*Climbing a steep forest ascent to saddle hut on Mt Meru.*

false summits, unforgiving scree, precipitous drops and soaring temperatures soon after sunrise, a most demoralising climb as some Germans were experiencing... as we passed them en route down... tee hee. We returned to the Saddle hut for an African idea of breakfast at 1000hrs, collapsing briefly, before commencing the knee jarring descent back to Miriakamba hut. Next day further to more popcorn and monkey nuts we set off for the base Gate, a certificate, back to the Lodge, a shower and real food.

Next day... (I didn't plan this itinerary), Sun 23 Sep, saw us departing for Mt Kilimanjaro in remarkably good spirit given the aching circumstances. I never established if my nickname of 'mama' which became apparent, courtesy of the porters on Meru; was attributed to my generous nannying nature or just a term of endearment, but it stuck throughout... unfortunately... bless them all! In comparison to the Momela Gate on Meru, Marangu Gate was seething with trekkers from most places except the USA! We 'clocked in' and started the steady incline through rainforest on a track which leaves most British efforts at path building standing (but then they don't have our inclement weather), to Mandara Hut for night one. Six days on Kili meant we were ascending roughly 1000m per day for three days plus a rest/acclimatisation day. Entertainment was provided by a mad Italian who reminded me of Manuel in

Fawly Towers and was clearly on a mission 'to climb without a shirt on' apparently. Next day, the forest thinned out to more giant heather, then open moorland as we wove our way up to Horombo Hut at 3700m; home for the next 24hrs, a rest day and a real flushing toilet with a view! I don't think I have ever slept on MTDs so much in my entire TA career but the justification for rest and becoming accustomed to the thinner air was lost on me, preferring to talk to other trekkers, and drink copious tea while the others pushed out more zzzzz! We did ascend 500m, with the mad Italian in hot bare chested pursuit past Zebra Rocks (funnily enough stripy rocks), to acclimatise and overlook the saddle of Kili between Mawenzi peak and Kibo before descending again to... yep you've guessed... sleep? However having learnt some valuable lessons on Mt Meru about pacing and not racing, everyone was determined to maximise their chances of reaching the summit and apart from dubious card games there's nought else to do after darkness at 1900 hrs.

Day four was a desert ascending to Kibo Hut (4700m) over a barren moonscape. The early sun gave way to predictable mid-day fog (just like Snowdon on a good day), and we finally arrived to prepare for another night ascent to 'Kili' summit. Gideon, our mandatory guide awoke us at midnight to yet more popcorn and soup... yippee. The night was alive with

headtorches, resembling caterpillars in their silent groups, weaving their way up the unforgiving zig zags, of the final stage like some cult on their way to a sacrifice... surreal. Exhausted bodies littered the steep trail as trekkers succumbed to the altitude, and despite all efforts to go 'poley poley' we still overtook most parties as we trudged ever upwards to reach Gillmans Point, 5680m at 0500hrs. Many call it quits at this point since technically on the crater rim, you are at the top, but the RE, much like the RLC do little by halves and we led the way around the arête to finally reach Uhuru Peak 5896m at 0615hrs 27 Sep, defeating the law of averages in everyone achieving the peak. Huge receding glacial fields of ice hung off the flanks of this impressive volcano on three sides, (a sad sign of global warming), but ironically, apart from the frostbite and altitude implications, my JSME(L/W) qualification was superfluous to requirements since crossing snow would have been well nigh impossible at this late stage in the dry season. Another month and 'the rains' at this height it will be covered thickly in the stuff. It was however -13°C and too late to sack me.

Photo calls done, I was keen to shepherd every one off fairly quickly since some were clearly suffering and the rest of the world was arriving. The descent back to Kibo Hut was the scree run of your wildest dreams resembling skiing on

Cairngorm without the snow but with the equivalent in dust, taking only 2hrs down compared to the 5hrs of ascent. Meeting the mad Italian en route up, perspiring enough to warrant his predicted lack of a shirt, just served to double our summit elation. We chilled at Kibo to help the knees recover before moving on wearily down after our 36hr working day, to Horombo. Next day down another 2000m past Mandara, through the forest to the start and our certificates. Everyone slept on the bus back to Moshi... can't think why. I couldn't even get a "Jambo" out the CO! The shower of a lifetime was needed to eradicate the dust layers and poignant aroma after six days on the mountain. Next morning the bus reversed the seven hour route back to Nairobi; past Thomsons gazelle, camels, eagles and infinite horizons of wilderness... but then the regulars missed that because they were... asleep. The wanderers finally returned to Chatham at 0930 Sun 30 Sep having climbed one of the 'seven summits' and indeed stood on the Roof of Africa... s'pose I'll have to 'drag' some RLC TA explorers kicking and screaming out there next... hey "akuna matata". OK maybe next year... but then that's African time! I wonder if they'll sleep as much! Oh and I must indent for a mad Italian... just wouldn't be the same without him... maybe we could take a... beaver?

# The Death Of Adventure

By Capt Tania Noakes

**M**any of you may be considering what an awful title this is to an article in the Army Mountaineering Association Magazine. Adventure Training in the military will be a subject that all of us feel very strongly about. Whatever angle you come at this article from, whether you agree with what I write here, or disagree strongly, I aim to provoke a little thought on a deeply concerning issue.

I believe that the rot has set in to Army Adventure Training and if we aren't careful we will find ourselves eliminating the very aspects of the activities which make them so rewarding to service personnel. Or perhaps I should say if we are too careful... I lose count of the times that I have been in a group joking about being unable to do such-and-such an activity because I haven't got my 'Stove Leaders Qualification' and now it's getting awkward because the joke is cutting a little too close to the truth.

I almost laughed out loud when I found out about the new Mountain Bike Leader Award scheme that Glenmore Lodge is running these days. In order to qualify for your training course you need to have done twenty 'quality mountain bike rides' entailing some personal navigation and use of your puncture repair kit! Then I sat back on my mental haunches and thought about the military qualification quagmire. The new Winter Climbing Instructor Award is a prime example. In order to go on the training course you have to first be a Winter JSMEI and a JSRCI. In other words you have to hold two very high-level awards in the first place. In fact taking this one step further if you start at the bottom rung of the Joint Services qualifications ladder and get the time off to do one course every year and gather the necessary experience in between it would take about ten years to become a Winter Climbing Instructor. Ten years into your military career and the chances of you being reliably released to instruct on expeditions is pretty slim, even more so if you are pretty serious about your career. The future is that the only qualified and experienced people

**"You emphasise safety, but you don't kill the risk."**

will be instructors in the PT Corps or is that the idea of all these changes?

In the past the Military has always been associated with adventurous undertakings, they were seen as playing a great part in preparing Service personnel to 'stand up to the shocks and strains of war.'

Now, in modern day life there are few legal activities where we as human beings can take tangible physical risks with our lives. We need good quality adventure training which takes very real risks and accepts that as with anything that involves risk sometimes there is a price to pay. The true aim of adventure training is to allow Service personnel the chance to develop a coping strategy in the face of real danger. A renowned adventure educator William F. Unsoeld spoke on the subject of risk as an educational tool in 1974.

'I've got to put in a pitch for risk. Because, somehow, I see our youth of today being conditioned in the other side of the tracks too much, being warped over here to the conviction that, if it's risky, it's bad. I think that you pay too great a price when you exercise risk from your total economy. We used to tell them in Outward Bound, when a parent would come and ask us, "Can you guarantee the safety of our son Johnny?"

And finally we decided to meet it head on. We would say, "No. We certainly can't Maam. We guarantee you the genuine chance of his death. And if we could guarantee his safety, the program would not be worth running. We do make one guarantee, as one parent to another. If you succeed in protecting your boy, as you are doing now, and as its your motherly duty to do, you know, we applaud your watch dog tenacity. You should be protecting him. But, if you succeed, we guarantee you the death of his soul!'

This quote strikes me as something that we need to remind ourselves of in our modern qualification obsessed world. I am by no means suggesting that there should be no regulation, just that more judgement should be used with respect to these activities. It is important to have regulation but not to tie the hands of instructors

and leaders with so many rules and threats of dire consequences that no one is prepared to take any risks anymore.

I have a friend who faces court-martial for an accident that occurred during an adventure training exercise for which they were responsible. The problem is that the accident occurred on an activity that was impromptu and not strictly within the bounds of adventure training. Was that a sharp intake of breath I heard? If it was, then you might as well just put this article down now for adventure has already died in your soul. A soldier jumping into water from a height not dissimilar to something that could happen in your swimming pool was the cause of the accident. But it wasn't a recognised adventure training activity you see... So because my friend was responsible for soldiers doing an adventurous activity and outside their strict remit they are now the subject of a Court Martial. This horrifies me, because it's not just another nail in the coffin of adventure training, it's a whole damn box of them! We are taking judgement away from the very people who we are training to take responsibility for life or death decisions in the course of their jobs. In addition we seem less and less prepared to accept that accidents happen sometimes through no fault of the individuals concerned, but simply because truly adventurous activities contain real danger. There seems to be little support when an accident occurs, just a blame culture that searches to find the negligent individual and penalise accordingly.

The fundamental point here is that we seem to have lost sight of why Adventure Training is a core military activity. We've become mired in a bog of 'nice to haves' in the form of team building, interpersonal skills and the like. The reason Adventure Training is so important to us as military personnel is because it exposes us to real danger and we have to learn to accept that and carry on. We have to learn ways to cope when faced with the very real possibility that we may be seriously injured or die and get on with the job in hand. This is precisely why military Adventure Training can never be the same as civilian adventure training because we're aiming in different directions right from the start.

I don't believe that it is just me that feels like this so who is it that ratifies this disabling policy? I don't know a single person who joined the Army saying "High Ho! A life of Health and Safety,

# Adventure Training

Manual Handling Courses and cotton wool for me please!" What will it take to stop the rot- ironically the threat of legal action perhaps. If we don't run realistic training for our soldiers and they do not come back from the battlefield will we face legal action for not adequately training them for the job of war in the first place? Surely (as has been pointed out before) the Army needs risk takers to fulfil its primary function. Nobody is surely going to insist that we make the enemy identify all possible trip hazards for our infantry before they can assault their position.

We've crossed a line and it seems to me that everyone knows it but is either unwilling to stick their necks out or unable to stop the monolithic problem of the civilianisation of our military. I digress perhaps onto a deeper rot within the system that anyone who has ever served at a training establishment will know only too well.

The moment we started insisting that experience could not be taken alongside qualifications we began to undermine Military Adventure Training. There are only so many weeks in the year and you can either sacrifice some of your time to follow the military qualifications ladder or you use that time to build up your experience.

In an increasing litigious and risk adverse society where does that leave us with activities which by their very nature are designed to contain very real risk indeed? I believe if we're not strong and don't resist some of these fundamental changes not far from the death of Military Adventurous Training; In fact not far from 'AT' standing for Activity Training and nothing more. I am not suggesting that we should forget the duty of care as instructors of less experienced individuals but that this has to be balanced with judgement. We have to forever view it in the context of why we chose Adventure Training as a tool in the first place. Once again William F. Unsoeld reminds us what we seem to be trying so hard to forget.

'You emphasise safety in a high risk operation. You emphasise safety, but you don't kill the risk. You emphasise safety as a rational man's effort at survival, but we're going to go right ahead and stick our head in the noose that's the game. But we're going to be so careful in doing it,

at the same time and that delicate balance, you know, I think it just has to be transmitted all the time. We don't do anything stupid. There's enough out there to get you anyhow.'

If we succeed in taking the 'adventure' out of Adventure Training we are cheating our soldiers out of preparing them for the unique demands placed on them in combat situation. Preparing them to cope with the fact that through the course of their jobs they run the risk of severe injury or death.

**"We seem to have lost sight of why Adventure Training is a core military activity."**

As I come to the close of this article I remember the chain of events that set me on the path to writing it in the first place. I am due to leave the Regular Services this August. I had planned to organise a rock climbing expedition in the North West Territories of Canada as a farewell piece for the soldiers of my Corps. I initially envisaged a group of six climbers, three experienced and three less experienced in order to pass on skills and at the same time challenge the instructors themselves. Over the months of nursing it to life I have undergone a strange sort of 'mission creep' which took me further and further from the expedition aim. I chose a demanding activity, Big Wall climbing and a challenging area. Perhaps in hindsight I was too ambitious for the Services but that just underlines my point. I am a cautious climber and many who know me will without doubt back that up. I have a reasonable amount of experience in rock climbing and some aid climbing but no Big Wall experience. What I encountered was a catch 22 situation in that I required JSRCIs with considerable Big Wall experience. For an expedition that I had originally meant to take a capable team with some experience through a structured sequence of climbs so that they too would be considered to have that necessary caveat of 'Big Wall' experience. Very quickly it became evident that I would probably be the least experienced on the trip if the trip went ahead at all. To take a group of six already accomplished climbers off on a trip that could be done in their own time was never my intention at all. In the end I required such an experienced team that everyone was so senior that they could not be released. End of expedition Lotus Flower Dragon may she rest in peace. The ironic thing is that when I leave this summer I will simply buy a plane ticket and go and do it anyway!



Photo by Mark and Bridget Smyth

# Ice Monkey 2001

By Lt Al Steel

Ice monkey 2001 was made up of a mixed group of nine, professionals, aspiring amateurs and me! As we met in Terminal three of Heathrow on the third of March, I was slightly concerned about my own preparation for the trip. We were going to Canada and I couldn't even line dance!!! What was worse, I hear that it is a regular Saturday night feature at JSMTC Ballachulish. The flight into Calgary was relatively painless apart from a forced march across Chicago airport to get our connecting flight. That is, forced for everyone apart from Mat Waterman, who decided to point out once we'd eventually found the correct terminal that we could have checked in our bags as we collected them. We eventually arrived at Trails End Camp, the BATUS adventure training centre, and our base for the next two weeks.

The first two days were spent locally at the Junkyards, a popular practice area of 20 – 60 metre climbs just beyond the Canmore Nordic centre. With a good variety of 45 to 85 degree ice it was an ideal place to revise or learn new skills. In the centre of the bowl was what was called the Scottish Gully, slightly strange given there was loads of ice, plenty of gear placements and not a bit of frozen turf! Further round still there was some great climbing with a running waterfall immediately to our left. Little did we know that a week later we would be climbing with a waterfall running underneath us!!

The striking feature of the Canadians is that they are so friendly. At the Junkyards we got talking to a local guide, 'What's the difference between a Canadian guide and a twelve inch pizza?' He said quite out of the blue. 'A twelve inch pizza can feed a family of four!!'.

Given that he obviously wasn't doing it for the money we got as much free information as we could out of him! With the guaranteed ice and weather conditions quick progress was being made within the groups so we decided to move on.

Having two vehicles allowed us two key advantages. Firstly, it meant we could split the groups and secondly, if you were really cunning, meant that you could avoid listening to Wayne Shakell's 1960s theatre hits!!! We split into two groups on the third day. Uisdean MacDonald, Kate Young and I went

into the Kananaskis valley towards the impressive Mt. Kidd to head for Sinatra Falls (350m, III, 2), an easy but pleasant climb and ideal for our first day leading. While the climb itself seems long it was only necessary to pitch three rope lengths. It was even more of a bonus to make it back to the car without being mauled by a bear after an 'interesting' woodland diversion!

The guide at the Junkyard had suggested we go towards Golden and into Kicking Horse Canyon so the next day we left early for the long drive. This was made slightly more bearable for those in the back when I realised that the clutch on our automatic was in fact a brake! Pretty nuts (180m, II 4), our chosen route, was as close as you get to being a roadside crag with a exhausting one minute walk in. The climb itself, whilst a little wet, was a great three pitch route. Dave Bogle decided that the challenge was not sufficient so sheared off his pick so that he was only climbing with half a pick head!!! If only roller skates and boxing gloves hadn't been left off the packing list! At the same time Brian Parry, Gaz Davies and Mat had opted for the ten minute walk in to climb Essendale Right (120m III 4+) which was also wet but had the added bonus of medicine ball sized ice chunks falling from above, causing the climb to be abandoned after the 1st pitch.

**First delicate pull-up and 'dink... aaahhhh'!!!**

Day Five saw the group split again. Uisdean, Kate and I went to Grotto Mountain, just short of Canmore. A bemused Kate was left trailing behind as we opted not to take the blatantly obvious track that would have taken us straight to the foot of the climb. Never trust an officer with or without a map! The approach to Grotto falls is worth a trip in itself. Five hundred metres up a frozen stream, a polished ice path with steep rock faces on each side, finally brings you out into a unexpected open area. The falls (55m, II, 3) lie hidden at the top end and some short rock and ice sections are climbable in the bay. Of note, His (12m II, 3), Hers (12m, II, 4) and a dry tool route to the left of Hers. The latter kept us entertained for a good few hours as we watched two of the locals have a go. One explained that it was the first time that he had attempted the route since breaking his nose on it the previous winter!! They looked impressed when Uisdean on-sighted it without gloves! Especially since they had barely got off the ground. As it came to my turn I remembered the locals advice to be careful that the axes didn't flick off the rock and into my face. Did it make any difference? First delicate pull-up and 'dink...aaahhhh'!!! I got up on the second attempt.

En route back we stopped off at the Kananaskis hotel for the now routine hot tub, sauna and thanks to Uisdean's bright idea, somersaults in the snow, much to the bemusement of the paying guests!

The three hours driving a day was becoming wearing so we hatched a plan to stay up in Banff for a days climbing in Lake Louise at the falls and our first rest day. Dave Neely, came down from Medicine Hat to destroy any of our thoughts that we were beginning to climb well. Louise falls were the most impressive Ice we had seen yet (110m, II, 4+/5). The opposite side of the Lake from the equally impressive hotel, it draws



Wayne Shakell topping out.

a fair few climbers. This can lead to serious problems with ice fall. Sure enough, at the first belay a block of ice narrowly missed Uisdean. No sooner had I began to laugh at his near misfortune than a bigger bit hit me square in the face!! Other than a couple of cuts I was fine. With ice climbing there is always an element of tempting fate. I was just hoping fate held off long enough to get a few more climbs in!

Above us another climber (not part of our exped) had fallen and broken his ankle. By the time he had been helped and lowered to the bottom by Wayne and Mat, I had reached Dave just under the third and overhanging pitch. As he began what is about a Scottish grade 6 pitch, the rescue helicopter arrived. Completely unnecessarily and quite recklessly it came right into the wall to lift out the injured climber instead of landing on the Lake. Unfazed, Dave had completed an outstanding lead to get to the top leaving me a slightly less graceful second! We headed off the climb and back to Banff to the Youth Hostel. Renowned for his legendary ability to hold his ale Dave agreed to stay around for a much needed night out!

So that everyone could benefit from the varied experiences of all three instructors the groups changed around. The following day Wayne, Mat and I headed up the Kananaskis highway to Wedge Smear (30m II, 3/4), a short steep wall with the view to improving our leading in a less exposed environment before going onto the big walls. The guide book suggested that the climbs were only a short distance off the road and that's what we maintained until Gaz Davies and Kate decided to go later in the week. In reality it was a nightmare trek through a forest!

Given the value for money of the Youth hostel we had stayed at in Banff and the continued warm weather we decided to move up north towards Jasper and stay for a couple of nights in the Rampart Creek Hostel. The road parallels the Rockies and afforded the best scenery of the expedition so far. The hostel was basic but ideal for our needs, especially the log burning sauna! The aim was to climb the Weeping Wall, which, studying photos made Louise falls look slightly inferior. Before attempting that we headed to Mt Wilson mainly so we could put Lady Wilsons Cleavage (300m, III, 3) in our log books! With a couple of delicate short pitches it was really an alpine route completed mostly moving together. Once at the top the gully neck revealed Wilson Major (50m III, 4/5) an impressive 100m long wall. While Brian Parry put a good grade 5 route in, I opted for a line to the right of him which looked deceptively easy, we both reached the top exhausted.

Tuesday 13 March, the ninth day of climbing, saw us at the foot of the Weeping Wall. There was a stunned silence in the car. The wall, in two tiers, rose up with 300 metres of vertical ice. We could barely make out the three climbers on the route. Finally we started gearing up. It was snowing hard.

The climbing was as sustained as it looked and all the belays were hanging. On pitch three Kate put in a great lead but was not overly happy with the belay. It did Uisdean's confidence wonders to hear 'don't fall off' half way up as the second. Next to Kate, Brian was weaving his way up on a different line. The



Above: Kate Young and Wayne Shakell on "Pretty Nuts"  
Below: Uisdean MacDonald on "Hers" Grotto Canyon.



sound the ice was making was less than healthy! Once he reached the top of the pitch, I was glad to get moving again and stop getting pelted with ice. I was dismayed after a few metres to learn the reason why the ice had sounded so hollow. It was! There was a waterfall running directly under the ice. Worse still, as I climbed the bulge just short of the belay I noticed that the section I'd just moved up didn't seem to be attached to anything!!! A rope length later I was at the top and a few abseils took us back down to ground level. An awesome day.

Our penultimate day staying at Rampart Creek took us to Panther Falls (60m II, 3-4) a comparatively small, yet impressive route which was led in good style by our supposed novice climbers, Gaz, Dave and then Paul and Mat. We then wearily made our way back to Trails End. Our final outing was to Professor Falls (280m, III, 4) a much talked about route that had been one of the first climbs to have made it onto the expeditions hit list. Because of its proximity to Banff, Professors attracts a wide range of climbers including novices literally getting dragged up the route. Our early start was not early enough and we got stuck in the queue. Entertainment was provided by an American and Spanish pair while we waited to get on the second pitch. The Spaniard had climbed through us, set up his stance and began to belay his second. Meanwhile the American hadn't tied on at the bottom and it wasn't until the Spaniard had belayed all the rope through and he saw the untied end minus partner!! They didn't try to climb through us again! A couple of hours later the whole group arrived at the foot of the final pitch, the crux, 40 metres hard grade 4 Dave for the second time with half his pick head missing!! Most of the guided groups had called it a day. If they hadn't they soon did when they saw Uisdean's new route on the left hand side which almost took the whole climb down!! The last lead was very strenuous. The vertical ice was brittle and potted and could only be climbed by hooking with the axe. Before long the whole group stood at the top of the route.

A trip to Canada would not have been complete without a trip to Calgary and a trip to Calgary would not be completed without a trip to Cowboys! By the time we got to the club I could have believed that I was one!! The polite bouncers saw it slightly differently and I was politely ejected from the dance floor for not line dancing!!!!

Thanks must go to Trails End Camp for their significant help and advice throughout Ex Ice Monkey 2001. For those planning to visit Canada it should be noted that they are very busy all year round. It is also worth looking into using the Youth Hostels more extensively than we did, purely to save on time spent driving.

Finally, all of the group is indebted to Brian Parry for organising the expedition and to, Wayne Shakell and Uisdean MacDonald's enthusiasm and commitment thus ensuring each member of the group got as much as they could out of it.

## Other Information

1. Approximate drive times from Trail End to:  
Calgary 90 mins, Canmore 45 mins, Galatea Creek parking (Kananaskies) 60 mins, Banff 80 mins, Lake Louise 130 mins, Golden 200 mins, Rampart Creek Hostel 220 mins.
2. References:
  - a. Hostelling International - [www.hostellingintl.ca](http://www.hostellingintl.ca)
  - b. Waterfall Ice - Climbs in the Canadian Rockies (3rd Ed), Joe Josephson, Rocky Mountain Books ISBN 0-921102-33-X.

The Alpine Club of Canada, [www.culturenet.ca/acc/](http://www.culturenet.ca/acc/).  
E-mail: [alpclub@telusplanet.net](mailto:alpclub@telusplanet.net)

## May Bank Holiday In Cairngorm

By Malcolm Gilbertson

It was all the fault of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease really. The early part of the year was laced with cancelled trips to Wales and the Lake District. At the Castle climbing centre in London, the regular haunt on weekday evenings of Chris Howard and me, groups of enthusiastic climbers suffering from withdrawal symptoms were pouring over guide books to Fontainebleau and the Ardennes, carefully calculating the cost of the ferry if they squeezed five people plus gear into a Fiat Punto.

Secondly, it was all Chris Howard's fault. Brilliant climbing partner he may be, but when he breaks a leg just as the news is out that Scotland is open for business, you have to question his timing. He was very apologetic but I told him not to worry and promised not to tell anyone outside the AMA that he broke

his leg falling off a child's swing. Weather centres were predicting something unusual for a bank holiday weekend in Scotland - sun. Dave Smith was raring to go. A quick call to Tim Bird to fix accommodation at his Ardenbeg outdoor centre in Grantown on Spey and I was roaring northwards from London to pick up Dave at Newark. It is a long flog northwards but Dave introduced me to the delights of the truckers rest in Penrith. Everyone in the AMA should know about this place that serves great food at rock bottom prices. Everyone probably did know about it apart from me. Tim had mentioned that Stu Macdonald would be arriving at sometime during the weekend but there was no sign of him yet. An arrival at Grantown in the early hours ensured a leisurely start to our first day. Nevertheless we were away from the Coire Cas car park by 1030 and heading up the ridge to the

Dave Smith in a T-shirt leading off on the final section of Central Buttress Lochnagar, May 2001.



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west of Coire an Lochain. There was still lots of snow but ahead of us was a crocodile of over twenty people beating out a track for us. We overtook them, with some difficulty, on the final slope of Ben Macdhui. We really had to push hard to overtake this group of old age pensioners who were setting such a pace that they gave me hope that I might one day still aspire to a reasonable level of fitness.

Two skiers were descending from the summit. The first was making beautiful telemark turns in the spring snow, the second more tentative snowploughs. We envied them their chosen mode of transport. The snow cover across the Cairngorms was complete from Coire Cas nearly to Braemar and the number of skiers in the hills equalled the number of walkers.

The view from the summit of Ben Macdhui was fantastic. How many times do you go to Scotland and all you see is your map in one hand, your compass in the other and the bit of ground round your feet? On the summit we were surprised to see a snow mobile driving round. It turned out to be part of the ongoing salvage operation to recover the two American aircraft that had crashed a few weeks before. There was a RAF Puma based in Braemar that was lifting out materials from the crash site.

We turned northwards towards Cairngorm. Whilst still covered in snow it was difficult in these pleasant conditions to relate to the stinging blizzard that accompanied my last trip across this featureless plateau. It was even more difficult to think of the plight of those caught up in the 1968 tragedy in this area. We plodded along chatting and in no time had reached the rim of the northern corries. At this point a climber on skis went past us heading in the opposite direction. You will

understand the difference between "a climber on skis" and "a skier". Dave said, "I am sure that was Stu MacDonald."

Back at the bunkhouse we made ourselves comfortable and agreed on a meal out. Stu Macdonald arrived and we promised that we would not reveal what he looks like on skis. (To anyone outside the AMA that is!) The hostelry we chose for our meal asked whether we had a reservation because they were booked out that night. We hadn't, but we did drop Tim Smith's name and, all of a sudden, it wasn't a problem. It is good to see that he is already a respected part of the local community.

Next morning saw the three of us intent on exploring parts of Cairngorm that we had not visited. We worked our way up over Bynack More and down to the Shelter Stone but what happened on route was definitely all Stu MacDonald's fault. He is a difficult guy to walk behind because he has legs twice as long as anybody else's. Following him through a boulder field, my little old legs could not keep in rhythm with his and I took a tumble. He promised not to tell anyone outside the AMA how clumsy I am. It was amazing that Loch Avon was frozen solid and yet the sun was belting down. We plodded up a long and unstable snow slope to regain the plateau and finally dropped down through the building site of the new funicular railway. This would appear really ugly to anyone but a railway enthusiast so Stu and I had to promise Dave that we would not to tell anyone outside the AMA that he is a real anorak. Tim and his family arrived back that evening and we were treated to a tour of the Ardenbeg Centre. We promised to tell everyone in the AMA how good it is.

Our plan for the last day was to visit Lochnagar on our route

south. The enlarged car park at the end of Glen Muick, complete with attendant and ticket machine, was filling up rapidly. There was an incongruous mixture of people heading for the hills from those in trainers to those like us with ice tools, ropes and helmets. The path is like a motorway that aided speedy progress but we were not prepared for the sight of Lochnagar still covered with snow and the lochan frozen hard. The marks of the major rockfall in the Parallel Buttress area could clearly be seen. Dave and I climbed Central Buttress, a great route of mixed snow and rock. We soloed at the bottom, pitched it a bit in the middle and then moved together on the top sections. It was delightful moving from jug to jug in fine positions with quite some exposure. The top snow slope was a delight and it was remarkable to be able to

climb good snow under a blazing sun in a T-shirt.

From the top of the climb we walked round to the summit of Cac Carn Beag looking for Stu who had gone to solo Raeburn's Gully. Stu has plastic boots in the most environmentally unfriendly colour possible. They are also size 15 so impossible to miss even he is a kilometre away. He reported an epic ascent with poor conditions affecting him just as it got steep and narrow at the top. Don't you just hate it when that happens?

It was time for an overnight dash to London. What a way to spend a bank holiday weekend in May! The routes, the conditions, the accommodation and good mates made the miles of travel to Scotland for such a short visit and the bleary eyes at work the next day very worthwhile.

Stu MacDonald and Dave Smith bask in the sunshine on the summit of Cac Carn Beag, Lochnagar, May 2001



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# What Did You Do On Your Leave?



Carlos heading group at Gurnacht



Arriving at basecamp, Aconcagua.



Arriving at Pastakova Rocks.

This year one couple from Herford, Germany climbed both Aconcagua (6973m) and Elbrus (5642m) during their leave! Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the Southern Hemisphere, is renowned for its high winds and extreme cold. The 'normal' route is not technically difficult with the hardest section being the infamous 'Canaletta', a 500m steep scree field from 6300m to 6800m! The less popular 'Polish Glacier' route requires a reasonable standard of crampon and ice axe proficiency, whilst the South Face is about as hard as you can get. The easiest routes equate to TD and are constantly raked with stone fall and avalanches.

Bridget and Mark Smyth climbed the normal route and summited on Aconcagua on 14th January, exactly 104 years after its first ascent. It had taken 8 days from the trail head at Punta del Incas to the top of the mountain, and a further 2 days to descend. In addition to the weather, acclimatisation causes a lot of people problems. It is advisable to spend at least 3 days trekking to base camp at Plaza des Mulas (4200m), before starting up the route. The next 5 days are required to inload Camp 1 and 2 and then move up to Camp 3 before making a summit attempt. This is the absolute minimum time required to allow the body to cope with the lack of oxygen, and if it is possible to extend this acclimatisation period, it is well advised.

Mount Elbrus is the highest mountain in Europe. It is an extinct volcano that overlooks the main Caucasus Ridge in Southern Russia. Its twin peaks and gently angled slopes make it a very distinct mountain that differs greatly from the steep and jagged summits of the rest of the Caucasus. The 'normal' route is a long glacier trek with a short steeper section up onto the summit block. Any fit person with a



Elbrus dawn.



basic knowledge of crampon and ice axe skills would be able to climb the mountain and therefore it is becoming a popular destination for Eastern European walkers. By comparison the mountains of the main Caucasus Ridge are far more challenging. They are similar in character to the steeper Western Alps such as the Bernese Oberland, except there are FAR less people!

Political clearance is required for Russia but was easy to obtain by just filling in the right form and giving details of the trip. Bridget and Mark flew into Moscow and then allowed a British adventure tour company 'EWP' to arrange all of the admin. An outstanding service was provided including; transfers to the Baksan Valley (the heart of the Caucasus), hotel, hut and tented accommodation, food throughout the exped, and an English speaking Russian Guide. During the two week trip, the couple spent 7 days climbing minor peaks and acclimatising prior to moving up to the new Pruit Hut (4150m) on the slopes of Elbrus. A further days acclimatisation at the hut and the couple were ready for the long slog up. At 0300hrs on 1st August, Bridget and Mark set off for the summit. Whilst lighting flashed over the high peaks of Georgia the dark sky remained clear over Elbrus. The wind from 5000m upwards was biting and spindrift stung exposed skin. In just 7 hours the pair had climbed 1500m and we standing 'on top of Europe'. The descent to the hut is far quicker. With a sturdy pair of trousers and confident use of an ice axe, its is possible to 'bum-slide' your way down the majority of the route, therefore summit to Hut in just 1 hour!!!

So what did you do on your leave ???

If you are interested in more info on either of these trips call Mark Smyth on Hereford Mii 3246.



*Camp Canada.*



*Mark Bridget and Ian on summit.*



*View of Confluenzia.*

## Do You Want Better Travel Insurance?

By Major Paul Edwards

The AMA executive committee has for some time been investigating the value of travel insurance policies offered to our members. During this period it has become clear to us that some policies offer cover that is inadequate for the risks involved in mountaineering, whilst other policies are prohibitively expensive. It also became abundantly apparent that serving members were having difficulty in obtaining adequate cancellation and curtailment cover for circumstances where their military obligations resulted in leave being cancelled.

After careful consideration the executive committee has decided to endorse a new policy provided by Torribles Insurance Brokers. Torribles are one of the United Kingdom's leading "special risks" insurance brokers and already run major policies for organisations such as "the Rough Guides" and "Snowboard UK" magazine. More importantly however, they also run a policy for the New Zealand Alpine Club and the "Foundry" in Sheffield and therefore they have considerable experience of this type of policy.

The cover provided by the new policy is at least equal to that offered by either the BMC or Snowcard but is on average at least 10% cheaper. Family policies, which include two adults and any number of dependant children under 23 and in full time education, cost just 2.5 times the standard adult premium and children under two are included free. Importantly (unlike the BMC's policy), you do not have to be a member to take out a policy, in fact anyone who wishes to can take out a policy under this scheme.

The policy, which is to be known as the "ADVENTUR-

OUS PURSUITS TRAVEL INSURANCE" policy is available for a variety of risk levels ranging from Trekking, through Alpine mountaineering and extending to climbing in the Himalaya and greater ranges. It is available in periods ranging from ten days to one year.

The Executive Committee has also negotiated two special clauses in the policy. The first is a clause for "Cancellation or Curtailment" which allows a policy holder to claim any un-refundable costs incurred if their leave is cancelled "due to the exigencies of HM Forces", whilst the second clause provides cover whilst involved in "voluntary training". This second clause provides cover for any sporting activity named on the policy undertaken whilst deployed on a military exercise (United Kingdom or abroad) as long as the trip is greater than 5 days duration. This is designed to provide cover for R&R whilst on exercise.

The AMA Executive Committee strongly recommended this policy to our members, their families and their friends. It has been specially negotiated to be a cost effective means of providing top quality insurance from a reputable company, whilst providing the additional cover required by serving soldiers at no extra cost. In addition to providing excellent cover to our members Torribles have also agreed to rebate 10% of the premiums for every policy sold. So by taking out a policy with Torribles you will also be helping to fund your association and keep subscriptions down.

Policies can be obtained by calling Torribles on 0117 921 1806 and asking to take out an "ADVENTUROUS PURSUITS TRAVEL INSURANCE" policy.

## Adventurous Pursuits Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance Policies Designed for People who want to be a little more Extreme on Holiday. We will cover you, no matter what you want to do and how extreme you want to be. Cover Includes Medical Expenses, Cancellation, Baggage, Money and much more. Premiums are competitive with the best in the market today.

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The Insurance is conditional upon the trip or journey not being booked or commenced by any person to be insured contrary to medical advice or to obtain medical treatment or after a terminal prognosis has been made.

**Money Back Guarantee** If, within 10 days of taking out this insurance and before the date of departure, you discover it is unsuitable, your premium will be refunded to you in full, provided you have not made a claim and you return your certificate to the Broker/Agent who issued it.



Torribles

# Argentina

By David Hughes

**M**irador Ebor was a 10 man Joint Service expedition to the Aconcagua National Park in the Andes and to Northern Patagonia. The expedition was planned and organised by Headquarters 2nd Division. The Patron was Major General Plummer, currently Director General Training Support, and an accomplished climber.

The expedition took a year to plan and mount, work-up training was carried out at Dundonnell and Sennybridge. The Joint Services Expedition Trust gave financial support and the Royal Geographical Society advised on a research project.

The expedition had a strong team of instructors that included WO1 Ewen Martin Army Physical Training Corps and Petty Officer Physical Training Calum Bremner (hot foot from the Atlas Mountains).

Because of good relations between the Defence Attaché in Buenos Aires and the 8th Mountain Brigade in Mendoza, the expedition was hosted by the Argentine Army.

There were 2 phases. The aim of Phase 1 was to climb Mount Aconcagua 6,950m by two routes – the Polish direct and the false Polish. The plan for phase 2 was a glacial trek in Patagonia.

Dr Hugh Montgomery, a Consultant and Research Fellow at University College, London was the team doctor. Hugh has

Himalayan mountaineering experience and goes on an Antarctic expedition later this year. He treated several casualties on Aconcagua including a Brit climber from another team who was suffering from High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema and would probably have died without proper medical assistance.

Major Hugo Martina, an Argentine Military climber, who summited Mount Aconcagua, was Liaison Officer with the team.

Major Chris Robinson RA was responsible for equipment, all of which was drawn through service channels at Bicester. Technical gear like ropes, crampons, ice axes and ice screws were taken to Argentina. One of the most important items of equipment was a decent sleeping bag for temperatures of around -35°C. The down filled bags we used were custom made for the team by RAB.

The team departed UK on 29th January 2001 and moved directly to the Aconcagua National Park where they were accommodated in the Military Barracks at Punta de Inca. Equipment was sorted, our mules were loaded and off we went - 15 Brits and Argentines together, slowly, slowly up the Vacas Valley on the 50km approach to Aconcagua. Day-time temperatures were hot, often over 30°C. The scenery was spectacular, high mountains on both sides of the valley and deeply coloured mineral deposits. We shared Base Camp at Plaza Argentina (4200m) with several other international teams. The banter was good particularly by those who had just "knocked off" the mountain.



Maj Chris Robinson and Fusilier Rab Andreucci at high camp 5900m.

Load carrying to Camp 1 and on to Camp 2 at 5,900m was slow and arduous. After 17 days on the mountain we were finally in position to summit. As luck would have it, the first winter snows fell early and effectively ruled out the Polish direct route. The plan was for the whole team to tackle the false Polish - a long but non-technical route. Eight hours into the climb, at a height of 6,500m, one of the team collapsed with High Altitude Cerebral Oedema, a potentially fatal condition that required emergency evacuation. Fortunately the patient recovered within a couple of days at low altitude. Bad weather and exhaustion prevented most of the team from a further summit bid. Hugh Montgomery and an Argentine NCO, however, were able to summit a few days later using Plaza de Mulas Base Camp. In total four climbers – one Brit and three Argentines, summited.

Safely off the mountain, the team enjoyed a short visit to Santiago

in Chile, followed by white water rafting down the Mendoza River.

The plan for Phase 2 in Patagonia had been to carry out a high altitude glacial trek. Tragically the week before we arrived in Patagonia, 6 Argentine soldiers were killed in a climbing accident near Bariloche. On the advice of Defence Attaché, we curtailed high altitude work and instead visited the Mountain Training School and several military units. In every instance we were greeted and treated in a very friendly way. The return journey through Buenos Aires was memorable. 20 years on, the Falkland vets among us, met and drank coffee with General Menendez, who led the Argentine invasion force. The team were hosted by the Presidential Guard and taken to see Boca Juniors beat a top Colombian football team.

Argentina, as a place to carry out adventure training would be hard to beat!

**The scenery was spectacular, high mountains on both sides of the valley and deeply coloured mineral deposits.**

**Argentina, as a place to carry out adventure training would be hard to beat!**

River crossing on the approach.



South East approach to Aconcagua.



## Risk Management In Adventurous Training

By Captain (MAA) K P Edwards APTC SO3 PAT LAIT



2001 Photo Competition 3rd Place Mountaineering Category by Rachel De Kelsey.

### For Expedition Mountaineers, Climbers, Skiers and Canoeists

The purpose of these notes is to provide readers with straightforward advice and guidance on risk management in adventurous training. If we connect the following statements that have been extracted from AGAI Vol 1 Chap 11 and JSP 375 Leaflet 11 - Safety in Military Training and Exercises, there is an underpinning theme in presenting personnel with challenges that contain inherent risk as a fundamental training tool to develop and enhance personal operational effectiveness. The aim of Adventurous Training (AT) is to "develop through challenging pursuits and within an outdoor environment, leadership and the necessary qualities to enhance the performance of military personnel during times of peace and war". The definition of AT is "a form of outdoor training for Service personnel requiring participation in challenging pursuits which contain an attendant risk to life and limb. The training is designed to test and develop some or all of the qualities of fitness, self-reliance, physical and moral courage, initiative, powers of endurance and interdependence".

"Military personnel are required to undertake training that by the very nature has an inherent risk in order to provide personnel with the best preparation for the roles they may undertake in times of conflict"

Risk is defined as the probability of exposure to injury or loss.

Whilst it is widely recognised that AT has a profound value in the development of Service personnel in a whole range of skills having a direct link to the operational environment, there should be a transparent safe system in place so that those being trained are faced with the risk and learn to manage it without actually coming to harm. The balance is obtained by identifying the potential hazards and implementing the necessary controls to minimise the risks. There is no inferred desire to sanitise AT or to attempt to suggest that the risks should be wholly eradicated, as this would devalue the experience. The unpredictable nature of the outdoor environment, the inherent hazards and the

exposure to the risks present the challenges and are the very essence of why we participate in adventurous activities. However, readers will appreciate that AT should be conducted in a safe manner with best practice uppermost in the mind of the leader/instructor. As an expedition leader or instructor in AT activities, you have a responsibility for the safe management of those in your charge by applying a safe system of training approach. It is essential that:

The expedition or activity leader/instructor is deemed competent by virtue of his/her appropriate JSAT qualifications, current in the level of skills required and suitably experienced for the nature of the environment.

The type and number of specialist equipment items is available, suitable for the task and has been maintained to correct safety standards.

The leader/instructor applies the principles of safe practice in accordance with Service and National Governing Body (NGB) regulations and guidelines. Ensure that the essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is issued, worn by all personnel and that training in the correct use of PPE and additional safety equipment is completed.

The site is suitable for the level of training to be conducted and/or the expedition area is appropriate for the level of ability and experience of the group.

### Risk Assessments

The main tool for leaders/instructors in the management of safety is a risk assessment ideally carried in the back pocket. Risk assessments should not be viewed as a burden as they are merely intended simply to focus the mind of the leader/instructor on the inherent and potential hazards and the pragmatic measures to effectively minimise, control



Climber on Mt Hunter, Alaska, by Stu Macdonald.

supervise and monitor the risk. Having completed a risk assessment it is essential that all personnel involved with the activity or expedition be given a safety briefing to apprise them of the hazards, alert them to the control measures, evacuation plans in the event of an accident and raise their awareness towards their own personal safety.

Risk assessments may need to reflect some or all of the following aspects (the list is not intended to be exhaustive):

Environmental hazards - rock-fall, water hazards, crevasses, avalanches, altitude (an acclimatisation programme should be attached to the risk assessment), local diseases, water contamination, insect bites, wild animals.

Climatic hazards - precipitation (excessive rain or snowfall), heat, cold, wind, sun (snow blindness, sun burn), dehydration, lightening

Equipment hazards - stoves (fire and burns), crampons, ice axes, transport accidents. The equipment list should include the essential safety items that have been identified as a result of the risk assessment i.e. group shelters, personal locator beacons etc.

Medical - compile a comprehensive list of medical supplies. Specific medical training may need to be arranged in the administration of drugs, recognising the signs and symptoms of altitude related illnesses, heat injuries, cold injuries etc.

A risk assessment should include an evacuation plan that outlines the following detail:

Communications - what methods of communication are available in the event of an accident? for example mobile phones - is there coverage in the area? Sat phones may be an alternate option! Radios for communication between separate locations or perhaps marking on the map where the nearest effective communication link is located.

Medical support - where is the nearest hospital or first aid post? What are the contact phone numbers? Are there any other forms of medical assistance available to you such as hyperbaric chambers sited in the expedition area.

Rescue assistance - what rescue services are available to you? i.e. helicopters, mountain rescue teams etc. How are they contacted?

Access - where is the nearest access point for vehicles or helicopters? On a journey you may need to plot a number of escape routes to link up with the nearest access point.

Risk assessments are intended to be living documents as they may need to be adapted to incorporate unforeseen hazards due to the unpredictable nature of the environment. What they do provide is the best possible preparation to deal with most of the eventualities you might encounter. Remember the adage that "prevention is better than cure".

The following list of main Service documents will provide you with the essential information on the regulations for the safe conduct of AT activities:

- AGAI Vol 1 Chap 11 - Adventurous Training (revised 2001)
- AGAI Vol 1 Chap 18 - The Hazards of Water
- JSP 375 Leaflet 11 - Safety in Military Training and Exercises
- DCI JS 83/99 - Cold Injuries in the Armed Forces: Prevention and Treatment
- DCI JS 122/01 - Heat Injuries in the Armed Forces: Prevention and Treatment
- JSP 419 - Joint service Adventurous Training Courses

Rules for use of climbing walls and mobile climbing towers (updated version, check out the new rules on the scope of the RCP award).



2001 Photo Competition, 1st place Mountaineering Category by Al Steel.



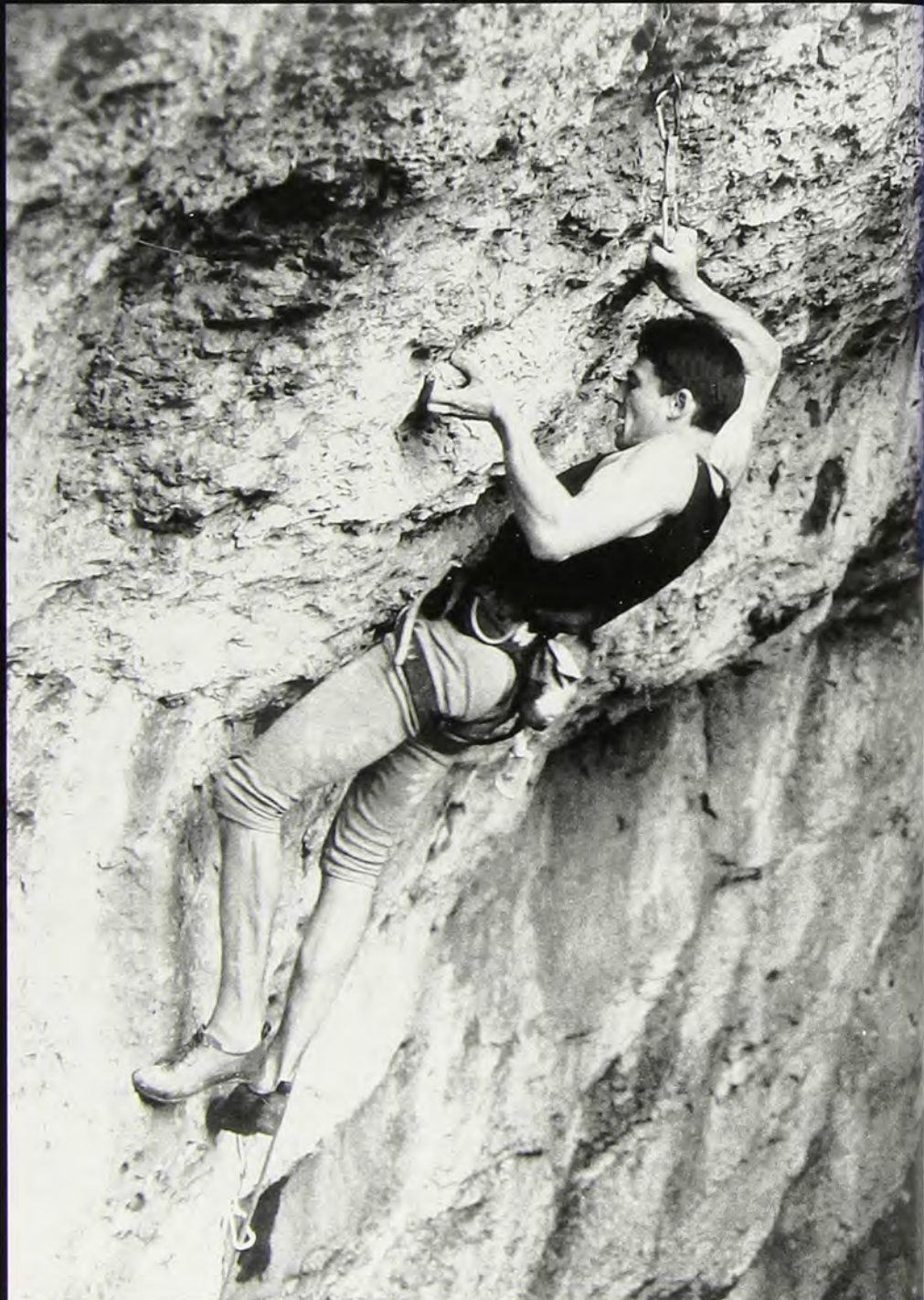
2001 Photo Competition 3rd place Mountaineering category by Stu Macdonald.

## AMA Climbers in Action



Climber at the Joint Services Climbing Competition.

2001 Photo Competition 1st place Best Rock Climbing category by Rachel De Kelsey.



## Book Reviews

### I Chose To Climb

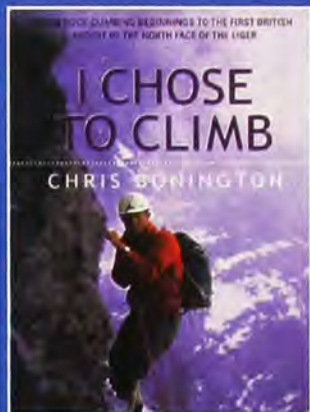
This is probably the cheesiest title ever selected for a climbing book title but don't be put off. This was Chris Bonington's first foray into the world of climbing books, and this is only the second, long awaited reprint. The young Bonington is not instantly recognisable on the front cover, his characteristic beard has almost become the trademark of Britain's most professional climber. I first read this book over twenty years ago, a borrowed copy from a library. It was then as it still should be essential reading for any novice mountaineer.

The book follows a classical progression of epics and achievements from the humble first encounters with North Wales and Harrison's Rocks to the Himalayan Giants of Annapurna II and Nupste. This is a rich account of not only Chris Bonington's early achievements but of the golden era of British Mountaineering. Although not ethically correct in today's arena of first ascents this was also the age of the piton and wooden wedge, the essential equipment of the day.

As well as documenting his own first achievements in an unassuming and modest way the characters of Hamish MacInnes, Ian Clough and Don Whillans are also introduced. Hamish MacInnes leading Scottish Winter routes in socks is testament of just how hard these men were. But, in contrast the selection of the Eiger Nordwand as Chris's first Alpine route suggests a special kind of naivety unique to brilliant climbers of that era. The story culminates with the successful first British Ascent of the North Face of the Eiger, which also ended an awesome season of Alpine climbing for Chris that year which included ascents of the North Face of the Piz Badile and the Walker Spur. Remembering of course that this was 1962.

The book, although a bit pricey, is a "must have" for any self-respecting rock climber and mountaineer. It is an essential chapter in British climbing. If you didn't acquire it first time round now is your chance. If you can't buy it, borrow it.

Mike Smith.



### 'Conquistadors Of The Useless'

By Lionel Terray.

First UK Edition 1965. Revised Edition 2001. Baton Wicks £11

I could make this review very short by saying that this book is the finest piece of mountain literature ever written, penned by the greatest expeditionary mountaineer of his generation, possibly of all time but that would be too subjective and not very enlightening!

Before the sixties, professional guides, even those at the top of their profession, were not given to writing autobiographies - they left that to their clients - but those few great guides that did bother - Roche, Gervasutti, Terray and others - produced works that inspired whole generations of budding mountaineers. I found this re-issue of Terray's book just as electrifying today as it was when I first read it as a novice climber in the late Sixties.

Terray was in the forefront of so many new ventures. His first ascents in the Alps and Himalayas would have made him one of the all-time greats but he will, perhaps, be best remembered as the man who opened up the New World - from Patagonia to Alaska. The sheer breadth of his achievements is sometimes hard to take in

and yet he was only 44 when he died. The book covers that prematurely shortened life packed with adventure and achievement. It is written with what seems to me just the right mix of élan, matter-of-factness and humour to keep most readers absorbed to the end. But it is also a work of literature in the fullest sense. I do not know of another book that provides so much insight into what it means to be a great mountaineer and so much inspiration to like-minded spirits. It is all the more remarkable for being written by a man who made no claim to literary accomplishment and regarded himself as 'just a mountain guide'.

So often in modern accounts of climbs we have to wade through pages of execrable dialogue or pathetic navel-gazing when all we want is the story plainly told. This book also has its philosophical moments but they are judiciously chosen, utterly relevant and devoid of self-indulgent padding. There is something wonderfully homespun yet almost poetical about Terray's style that carries you through the kaleidoscope of scenes from childhood climbs right through to his 'New World' period without any feeling of discontinuity. He seems equally able to handle the failures and successes. Whether describing the great Himalayan or New World first ascents - Annapurna, Makalu, Jannu, Fitzroy, Chacaraju, Huntingdon (the list goes on!) - or some desperate day in the Alps with a difficult client, he has you hooked. Kind to the non-climbing reader - with careful descriptions of approaches and techniques - he keeps the seasoned mountaineer enthralled. You cannot ask for more.

### Supplemental

This book is just one of a series and the time has come to acknowledge the debt we all owe to Ken Wilson at Baton Wicks in getting so many of these classic mountaineering works re-issued. Many of them are scarce in their original form, some so scarce that you would get little or no change out of £100 for a 'First' in good condition. Ken has given us access to the best of 20th Century mountaineering literature for £11 a time. Not only that, in re-issuing the books he has also added the results of his extensive research, in the form of previously unpublished material and photographs. 'Hurrah for Ken' I say - and that's not just because he's a diehard reactionary like me, for whom defiling traditional climbs with bolts and top-ropes is anathema!

Tim King, May 2001.

### Climbers Guide To West Cornwall Bosigran, Chair Ladder, The Lizard

Edited by Nigel Coe.

This is the essential guide to England's truly Atlantic coastline, with its granite, greenstone and killas cliffs, deep zawns and dangerous waters. Here the old wartime and 'commando' classics are mixed with the desperate ventures of today's hard men. The Climbers Club has built on the best of the past, adapting a well-established and successful formula to produce a guide that will be a favourite for years to come.

Because there are over 2,000 climbs in the guide it is split into two books - North Coast and South Coast - each of which can be used independently of the other, sleeved, binding, in the same style as the Avon and Pembroke guides. It would not be an exaggeration to call this a work of literature. It is well researched, well written, a joy to read and comprehensive - for example, the History section alone covers 36 pages and is fascinating.

I particularly like the beautiful and highly accurate drawings done by Don Sargeant. They are some of the clearest route diagrams I have ever seen and are comparable in artistic standard to those wonderful engravings in the Lakes guides of the 40's and 50's. It is many years since I climbed with Don and he never struck me as the artistic type - just good at bridging up Swanage corners - but for me his drawings raise the guide from very good to outstanding.

The quality of the guide over such a large number of routes has been sustained by using twelve authors, each covering a specific area of

the coastline, under Nigel Coe's editorship. The descriptions and drawings are dotted with many colour photographs of climbers in action – not just on the harder routes. In each book there is a comprehensive list of first ascents, with some useful commentary on route changes, and an index of climbs. The star system for route quality has been used, with 'open' stars for first assessment and solid stars for the consensus view. Sensibly, the authors have not been too liberal with stars. Each crag has the rock type shown at the start of the section – a particularly useful feature, for example if you find slate off-putting and want to stick to granite.

As many readers will know, there is a local aversion to the use of bolts and other aids and this makes some technically reasonable climbs objectively terrifying. A typical example is Three Score Years and Ten, Amen, a single 120 foot pitch horror, requiring a focussed effort 'on a protracted runout from a mediocre RP-cluster at half height'. The boldness of many of the first ascensionists - Biven, Littlejohn, Cannings, Livesey, etc - is hard to exaggerate and local climbers are keen to preserve this purity of approach against the tide of bolters, pre-placed protectionists and other unwelcome products of the Nanny State. There are hundreds of well-protected routes of all grades and no need for most climbers to venture onto the frighteners but if you want to try them, then unless you are prepared to climb with scant protection on long runouts from dodgy belays, don't bother.

For a guide of this quality and comprehensiveness (it is after all at least two guides in one), £17.50 is a snip and I suspect that another guide will not be forthcoming for many years. Ask auntie to buy it for you now before it goes out of print.

Published by The Climbers Club, distributed by Cordee and available from them at 3a De Montfort Street, Leicester, LE1 7HD.

Tim King, June 2001.

## Fontainebleau Climbs – The Finest Bouldering And Circuits

By Jo and Françoise Montchause and Jacky Godoffe  
Translated by Sue Harper

Published by Baton Wicks at £15.99 and available from Cordee, 3a De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7HD

The forest of Fontainebleau has provided a centre of recreation for Parisians for centuries. In the 13th Century it was boar hunting, in the 18th Century it was horse racing and in the 21st Century it is bouldering! However this is not bouldering as we know it, ie a couple of large rocks at the foot of Dinas y Cromlech: we are talking about a very large number of enormous sandstone boulders linked into circuits that are as taxing as a long day on Skye gabbro.

The guide is well organised, and very compact – an amazing amount of information has been carefully packed into something that can still be carried on the routes. There are grades for all abilities but be warned – even doing the easier circuits will leave you feeling drained at first. It would be wise to try a few selected routes before progressing to a full circuit. In between, (eg while your personal masseur is beating you back into shape) you can read all the interesting historical snippets in the guide.

All the important areas are covered, from the old favourites such as Apremont to the relatively new Drei Zinnen. Alpine climbers who want to develop their stamina could do no better than stop off here for a week of 'Bleau' circuits. They will be following in the footsteps of the great Parisian alpinists and many other top climbers for whom a regular visit is 'de rigueur'. Then, perhaps, they could move on to the limestone crags of NW Burgundy or the granite of the Morvan before heading off for Chamonix or Zermatt. Crag rats can just carry on bouldering at Bleau because only the long term unemployed or retired-at-40 types are ever likely to climb everything there. The rest of us can rest assured that we will never run out of routes.

It is perfectly possible to reach 'Bleau in a day via most of the channel ports and there is plenty of accommodation in the area, including camp sites. Getting round to the SE of Paris is the only bit likely to cause pain. Non-climbing family members can enjoy the forest walks, historic sites and gastronomic delights of Brie country (the best Brie is made in Melun in the heart of the Forest), so there is something for everyone.

Buy this guide if you want to discover the best of bouldering and you won't be disappointed.

Tim King, June 2001.



# Conserving the Wild

**Y**ou've started working for which Trust? This was the usual response when I said that I had begun a new job back in 1993. Some were vaguely aware of the man who had something to do with National Parks in the United States, but John Muir, often called 'the father of the modern conservation movement', is really an unsung hero in his native Scotland and the rest of the UK. So who was John Muir and what is the John Muir Trust?

John Muir was born in 1838 in Dunbar on the east coast of Scotland and emigrated with his family to the US when he was eleven. As an adult he spent many years exploring the wildest parts of America - most famously in the mountains of the Sierra Nevada in California. He came to know and love Yosemite Valley and the whole 'range of light' and made the first ascents of several mountains over 10,000 ft. Revisiting Yosemite after some years' absence he found meadows destroyed by the 'hoofed locusts' (sheep), and ancient stands of giant redwood felled. In a time when the word 'conservation' was unheard of, John Muir campaigned for the protection of Yosemite and other wild areas as National Parks and helped set up the Sierra Club – an environmental organisation which now has over 600,000 members.

John Muir wrote 'Do something for wildness and make the mountains glad'. This vision inspired the mountaineers and environmentalists who created the John Muir Trust in 1983 in the UK.

Here are a few of the questions people often ask about the John Muir Trust.

### What does the Trust do?

The Trust saves and conserves wild places. One of the ways we do this is by owning and looking after seven superb areas in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland including most of Ben Nevis, Bla Bheinn and most of the Red Cuillin on the Isle of Skye, part of the wild Knoydart peninsula, the Sandwood Estate in the far north west and Schiehallion in Perthshire. On these lands we plant native trees, fix footpaths, clear litter and repair drystone walls – working alongside the local communities. We have also become a voice for the country's wild places and campaign for their protection.

### Where does the Trust find the thousands of pounds needed to buy land?

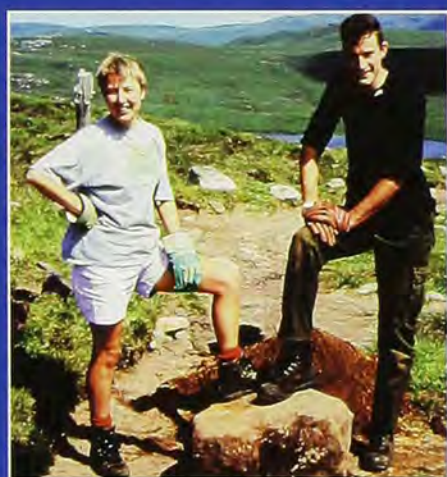
We have around 10,000 members and supporters who give donations or fund-raise, for example by running the London Marathon or doing sponsored climbs. We also receive support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as donations from Charitable Trusts and Companies.

### Will the Trust only purchase land in Scotland?

No, the Trust has a UK remit and will consider buying an area outwith Scotland.

### What is the Trust's policy on access to land?

We welcome visitors to all our areas and there is no restriction of access to visitors on foot. These beautiful



places are here for everyone who wants to find them.

### What can I do to get involved?

You can join the Trust and receive all the latest news. Or why not join our conservation activities in stunning surroundings. If you love being out in the wild, mountaineering or climbing, it's a great way to 'give something back'.

More information from: [www.jmt.org](http://www.jmt.org)  
John Muir Trust, Freepost, Musselburgh, EH21 7BR.  
Tel 0131 554 0114 - Email: [promotions@jmt.org](mailto:promotions@jmt.org)

Katie Jackson  
Information & Promotions Manager



# AMA Annual Weekend 2001 By Tim Bird

During the final weekend of September over 93 AMA members joint together at JSMTTC Indefatigable at the annual weekend. The end event started on Thursday with people arriving to enjoy the last of the Indian summer, many good routes and quality mountain days were logged on Friday while the committee met in the afternoon.

By Friday night the majority of people were beginning to arrive having finished work. Because of renovation work to the main bar at indefatigable an impromptu Bar was set up in the main foyer. When everybody had gone to bed by half past 12, I turned to look at the half full fridge and wondered whether I would sell enough to break-even.

Saturday breakfast saw around 90 mountaineers Old young and younger still, organising themselves in order to catch the good weather before it finally deteriorated as forecasted. By half past nine the last of the late risers were just leaving the gates, packed lunches in hand. During Saturday, 11 members were escorted into the hills by he experienced AMA members. Their activities ranged from hill walking to rock climbing and also specific rock coaching prior to a rock leader assessment!

By 1745 most of the members had been to the Bar at least once and were assembled in the main lecture already for the AGM. A pre-AGM presentation followed given by myself, this outlined the major events of the year and provided photographs and a light hearted look at the year just gone and plans for the future. After this the AGM followed chaired by Brigadier Nick Cottam, and an hour later the committee had been redesigned the chairman became the President and the Vice Chairman became the Chairman in line with the other services' mountaineering associations. A barbecue was served at 8 o'clock and entertainment followed into the early hours of the morning. One of the highlights for the evening included the Communications Officer, Andy Parsons, beating out his message from another position as drummer with the performing band. During the evening some of the Bangor association members

arrived and many JSMTTC staff too bringing the total to around 115 members. It was great to see so many friends, old and new, having a good time together. I needn't have worried about the fridge, I had to refill it on at least four occasions!

After Saturday comes Sunday, after the calm comes the storm, volunteers were asked to track down and recover the barbecue tent. The tent, which was doing laps of the garden in the wind, was duly recovered and the building was put to rights before breakfast had finished. In light of a poor and deteriorating weather pattern most had decided that the bouldering competition was the best option. Thanks to Bangor fire service for turning on the hoses spot-on time. JSMTTC has its own indoor climbing wall, which is staffed by a local climbing shop, called the Great Arête. Anna, the Manageress, and her team hosted 35 competitors for an informal bouldering competition. An hour and a half later, and with some dodgy climbing, dodgy marking, and some even dodgier adding up three people had won prizes; not necessarily in the right order.

Here in the correct order to avoid confusion,

- First place Mark Stevenson - another chalk bag for your trouble,
- Second place Steve Blake - Originally given 3rd, oops sorry Steve
- Third place Mike Smith - Originally placed 2nd, Steve Blake originally 3rd oops sorry Steve
- First Female Rachel Kelsey - Well done (By absolutely miles !)

p.s. Mike put a skirt on you might win something!

During this time the photographic competition prizes were handed out, and by 3 o'clock the last survivors from the weekend were thinking of home. Eight people stayed on Sunday night topping off a fantastic weekend.; Kevin Edwards has taken over as the meets co-ordinator, thanks to all of you who have been there when asked to help and support for the last five years. Thank you again to everyone who attended, I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend as well, hope to see you all again next year.

# AMA Organization By Major Martin Bazire, Chairman AMA

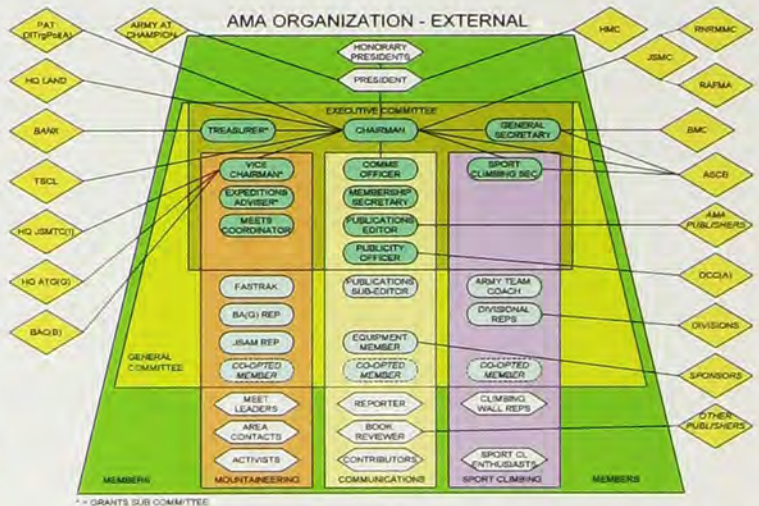
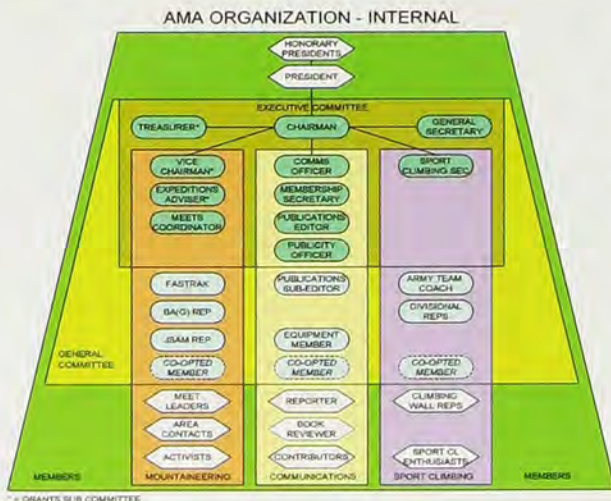
The two charts that follow portray the revised structure of the Army Mountaineering Association, based on the Constitution that was approved at the 2001 AGM.

The first diagram shows the internal elements of the AMA. It aims to distinguish between the two committees: the larger

General Committee will meet once per year, prior to the AGM, while the Executive Committee will normally meet a further three times. The three sections (titled Mountaineering, Sport Climbing and Communications) represent the main areas of activity in the Association. The second diagram aims to set the AMA in a wider context, by showing the major links to

external organizations. The normal routes for communication in and out of the Association are shown. You may wish to note those on the Grants Sub-committee: Vice Chairman, Expeditions Adviser and Treasurer.

AMA Committee Members have found these diagrams helpful: it is hoped that the broad membership will also find them useful to explain the structure and work of the AMA. Questions should be directed to any Committee Member.



# Revised AMA Constitution

For the record, here is the revised version of the AMA Constitution, as approved at the AMA Annual General Meeting on Saturday 29 September 2001 at JSMTIC Indefatigable. The phrase "to promote military efficiency" at Paragraph 2.3a, subsequently endorsed by the Committee, is necessary to meet charity requirements: formal approval will be required.

## Constitution of the Army Mountaineering Association

### 1 Name

- 1.1 The name of the Association shall be the Army Mountaineering Association (AMA). The official address of the AMA shall be:

Army Mountaineering Association, JSMTIC Indefatigable, Plas Llanfair, Llanfair PG Anglessey, LL61 6NT

### 2. Scope and Objectives

- 2.1 Scope. The AMA embraces the wide range of mountaineering activities, including: use of climbing walls, sport climbing (see below); hill-walking; rock climbing; summer, winter and Alpine mountaineering; ski mountaineering; polar exploration; and expeditions to the greater ranges, including high altitude mountaineering.

- 2.2 Sport Climbing. Sport Climbing, an approved and officially recognised Army sport, is defined as: "competitive climbing on artificial climbing walls".

### 2.3 Objectives. The objectives of the AMA shall be:

- To promote military efficiency by encouraging mountaineering in the Army and to develop among members a high standard of mountaineering competence by:
  - Organising climbing meets and supporting mountaineering expeditions.
  - Giving advice and assistance to the Chain of Command, units and individuals on all aspects of mountaineering.
  - Providing a link between active mountaineers.
- To advise Headquarters Adjutant General and Headquarters LAND on mountaineering matters.
- To promote and develop Sport Climbing in the Army.
- To represent the interests of Army mountaineers across the services, and on the British Mountaineering Council (BMC).

### 3. Presidents

- 3.1 The AMA shall have one serving President, one Honorary President, and one or more Honorary Vice-Presidents.

### 4. Committee

- 4.1 The affairs of the AMA shall be managed by a General Committee and an Executive Committee, collectively referred to as the Committee.

- 4.2 General Committee. The General Committee shall meet once per year, prior to the Annual General Meeting. The General Committee shall comprise the Executive Committee plus the following:

BA(G) Representative	Divisional Representatives
JSAM Representative	Equipment Member
FASTRAK Co-ordinator	Publications Sub Editor
Army Team Coach	

- 4.3 Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall normally meet at least 3 times per year. Except as otherwise shown in this Constitution, the Executive Committee shall have power to act on behalf of the Association. The Executive Committee shall comprise the following:

Chairman	Sport Climbing Secretary
Vice Chairman	Communications Officer
General Secretary	Membership Secretary
Treasurer	Publications Editor
Expeditions Adviser	Publicity Officer
Meets Co-ordinator	

- 4.4 Committee Organization. The Executive Committee may co-opt further members. The Executive Committee shall organize itself into 3 sections, namely: Mountaineering, Sport Climbing and Communications, headed by the Vice Chairman, Sport Climbing Secretary and Communications Officer respectively. Each section may include General Committee members, and other AMA members. The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint sub-committees for any specified purpose, and to dissolve such sub-committees when necessary.

- 4.5 Non-voting Members. The Executive Committee shall have power to invite up to 6 non-voting members to attend meetings. These would normally include representatives from the Joint Service Mountain Training Centre (JSMTIC), the Army Sport Control Board (ASCB), Headquarters Adjutant General, and Headquarters LAND.

- 4.6 Appointing Committee Members. All Committee Members shall be members of the AMA. They shall be elected at the AGM and must be re-elected annually. Further Committee members may be appointed at the Annual General Meeting. The Executive Committee shall have power to fill, until the AGM, any vacancy occurring from among its members. Persons wishing to propose members for election to the Committee shall forward details of the person to the General Secretary at least 14 days prior to the AGM. The details shall include the names of those proposing and seconding the nomination and the written agreement to serve of the person being proposed.

- 4.7 Committee Meetings. An authorized Committee Meeting shall be one for which the General Secretary has circulated the date, time and place to all members of the Committee at least 7 days beforehand. The quorum is three Committee Members.

### 5. Membership

- 5.1 Entitlement. AMA Membership is open to:

- Serving officers and soldiers of the Regular and Territorial Army.
- Retired officers and soldiers of the Regular and Territorial Army provided they have previously been a member during their service and continued their membership.
- Serving officers and soldiers of Commonwealth or foreign armies for the period

they are attached to a British Army unit for any reason.

- Civilians employed by the Army Department and currently on the strength of a unit or establishment.
- Retired civilians who have been employed by the Army Department and have previously been members during their service and have continued their membership.
- The spouse and/or children of any member.

- 5.2 Honorary Membership. Honorary Membership may be granted to anyone who, through past or present activities, has rendered or is rendering outstanding service to the AMA. Such membership shall be approved at the AGM on the recommendation of the Committee. No subscription shall be payable by an Honorary Member.

- 5.3 Withdrawing Membership. The Committee shall be empowered to withdraw membership from any member should it be considered necessary.

- 5.4 Subscriptions. Except for Honorary Members, there shall be one level of subscription, which is to be approved by every AGM for the following year. Subscriptions shall be payable on joining and thereafter on 1 January annually. The subscription paid by new members joining after 1 October will cover the period to the end of the following year. Members who have not paid their subscription by 31 March shall be deemed to have resigned their membership.

### 6. General Meetings

- 6.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM shall, in addition to any other business: Receive the Committee's report, covering the previous year and future plans. Award Army colours for Sport Climbing. Receive and approve an audited statement of the accounts. Establish the level of subscription for the following year. Elect or re-elect members of the Committee. The General Secretary shall give 28 days notice of the AGM.

- 6.2 Extraordinary General Meeting. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called:
  - On the decision of the Committee, or
  - Following receipt by the General Secretary of a request to that effect signed by no fewer than 15 members and specifying the object for which the meeting is to be called. The meeting shall be held within 42 days of such a request being received.

The General Secretary shall give 28 days notice of such a meeting.

- 6.3 Chair. General Meetings shall be chaired by the President, or, in his absence, the Chairman, or Vice Chairman. In their absence, the Committee may elect a Chairman.

- 6.4 Voting. Only paid-up members may vote at General Meetings. The Constitution of the AMA may be altered by a majority of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting at the AGM or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose.

### 7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1 Affiliations. The AMA is affiliated to the JSMTIC and the ASCB. The AMA shall be represented on the JSMTIC, normally through the Chairman. The AMA is affiliated to the BMC and enjoys its privileges. The AMA shall represent the interests of Army mountaineers on the BMC, either directly or through the JSMTIC.

- 7.2 Branches. Subject to the approval of the Committee, branches in specific geographical areas may be established. Such branches shall be financially self-supporting, and shall draw up a constitution in line with the Constitution of the AMA.

- 7.3 Army Training / Mountain Leader Training Boards. It is the policy of the AMA to encourage members: to take part in the mountaineering training organized by the Army; to maintain logbooks as a record; to obtain appropriate qualifications sponsored by the Army; and to obtain the various certificates of the Mountain Leader Training Boards where appropriate.

- 7.4 Environmental Issues. The AMA considers the environment in which its activities take place to be a valuable and irreplaceable asset. All expeditions and meets sponsored by the AMA shall give due consideration to their impact on the environment and ecology of the area in which they are run. Sponsored expeditions shall endeavour to leave no evidence of their activities.

- 7.5 Publications. A Journal shall be published regularly to record articles submitted by members. The main means of communication within the AMA shall be a Newsletter published as required. The views expressed in these publications shall not be deemed to express any official view of the AMA or of the Army unless this is specifically stated.

### 8. Finance

- 8.1 The funds of the AMA shall be utilised by the Committee for the purpose of furthering the objectives quoted in paragraph 2 above and, at the discretion of the Committee, may be used for other mountaineering purposes. The AMA accounts shall be audited annually. The powers of the Committee in financial matters shall be by resolution at the AGM.

- 8.2 In the event of the AMA ceasing to exist, any funds remaining after settling all outstanding liabilities shall be paid to the ASCB for the furtherance of other Army adventurous training activities and sports.

### 9. Information

- 9.1 Anyone requiring further details should direct their query to the General Secretary via the Membership Secretary, at JSMTIC Indefatigable on 95581-7964, or at the address at Paragraph 1.1.

- ASCB 158.322 dated 26 Mar 01.
- The Association acknowledges the more commonly accepted definition of Sport Climbing as rock climbing solely on bolted routes and with no leader placed protection, and accepts it as an activity under the more general heading of Rock Climbing. The Association emphasises that it does not support or acknowledge competitive climbing other than on artificial surfaces and therefore uses this narrow definition of sport climbing.

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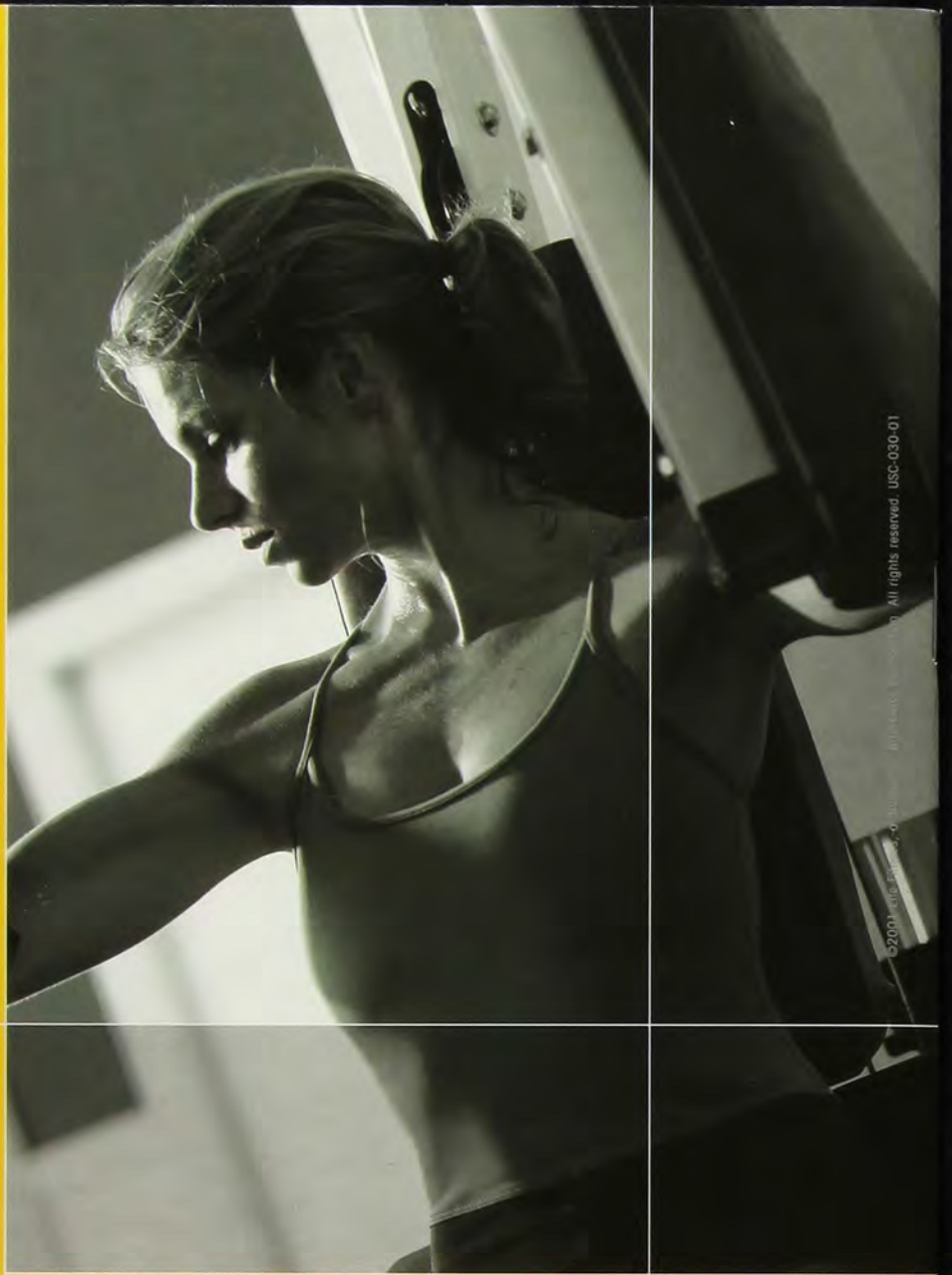
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