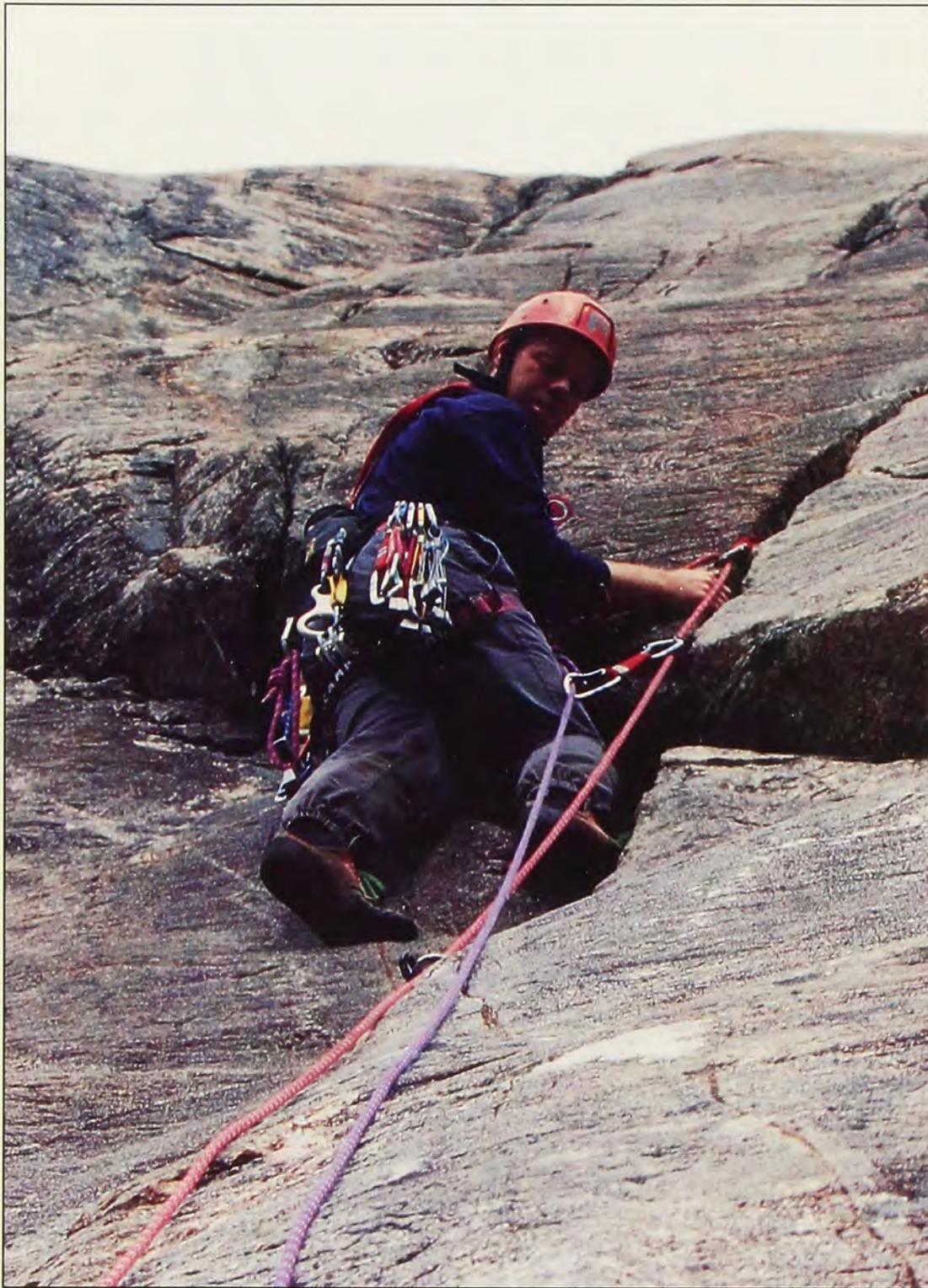




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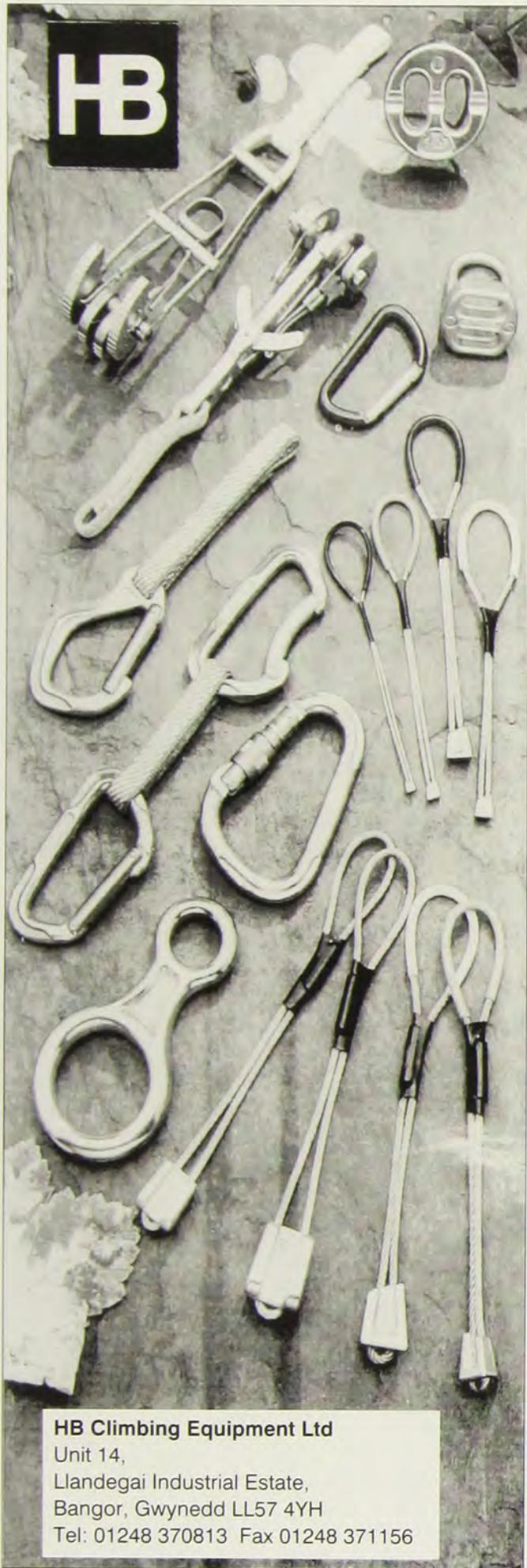
THE JOURNAL OF THE ARMY MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION



Spring 1995

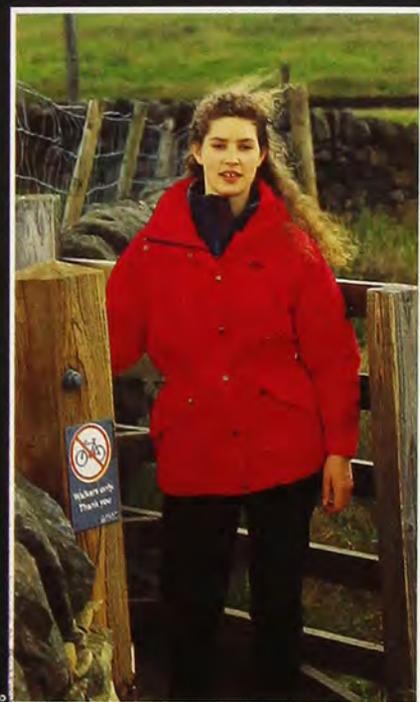
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ARMY MOUNTAINEER



THE JOURNAL OF THE ARMY MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION SPRING 1995

Message from The Chairman Major General RA Pett MBE



I regard it as a great privilege to be invited to become Chairman of the Army Mountaineering Association. I am no mountaineer, but over the last 35 years I have done a good deal of rock climbing in England and Wales, ski-mountaineering in Norway and trekking in Nepal. I therefore know enough about mountains to know that I am not an expert, and to admire those who are.

As a professional soldier I am in absolutely no doubt about the value to the Army of adventurous training and pursuits, and I rate mountaineering very highly in that respect. As a man, I also believe in the old saying: "Great things happen when man and mountains meet that cannot be achieved by jostling in the street."

I shall do everything that I can during my time as Chairman to support the Association and its members. I look forward to meeting more of you in the next few years and to hearing of your exploits. Go on to "great things"!

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Autumn 1995 edition

Please send your contributions for the Autumn 1995 edition to the editor by the end of July 95. Please supply articles on disc if possible (any leading word processor) accompanied by hard copy. If only hard copy is available please try to supply clear well spaced text. Photographs and slides (which will be returned) should be accompanied by a suitable caption. Sketches, maps and cartoons are welcomed and articles may be off beat as well as main-stream climbing/mountaineering.

ON THE COVER

Sgt Duke on the crux of Route 2, Diabeg, Torridan, Scotland.

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Sport Climbing

A New Army Sport

The traditional image of the rock climber in big boots, wearing an enormous helmet was firmly swept aside on the 20th of April this year. The Army held its first ever indoor "sport climbing" championship at St Werburghs church, Bristol. With almost one hundred competitors, as well as dozens of spectators and staff, this was one of the largest Army sporting events of the year.

The climbers were divided by ability into three categories which could loosely be described as novice, intermediate and advanced. With over £300 of prize money donated by our major sponsor Cotswold Camping at stake, competition was fierce from the start. The standard proved to be high, and as the day wore on it became clear that there would be a close finish in every category.

By early evening the honours in the two lower categories had been decided, with LCpl Duncan Forbes winning the novice category, and OCdt Franklin topping the intermediate section. Although few in numbers the ladies had competed directly against the men, and a very elegant performance by Capt Gail Waller had earned

her the ladies title. At 49 LCpl Graham Coff was by far the oldest competitor, however he showed many of the young lads how it should be done, finishing 8th overall and taking the veterans title with ease.

There now only remained the dozen or so anxious finalists who, brought out one at a time to attempt the climb, were cheered on by an exuberant crowd. The deciding climb proved to be a match for most of the finalists, with many being catapulted into the air on long, spectacular (though totally safe) falls. Eventually a super effort by Cpl Dave Bunting edged him in front of Maj Durben (2nd) and LCpl Richard Mayfield (3rd), and reaching the top of the climb earned him a huge cheer from the crowd, as well as the Army Championship shield.

If anyone had any doubts about "sport climbing" this event has shown that it is immensely popular within the Army, and that it is definitely here to stay.

Cotswold Equipment Presentations

Cotswold Camping, The Outdoor People in Shepherd's Bush have recently put together a number of equipment based lectures for the outdoor-orientated organisations in London and the South East. Their speaker is Paul Deegan who has completed climbs in Himalayas, Alaska and the Andes, and has led treks to Patagonia, Nepal and the European Alps. His pictorial presentations blend stories of hard-won experience with information on modern (and not-so-modern) outdoor equipment. To take advantage of one or more of the suggested titles on the list, or if you require a presentation on a particular subject area, telephone Paul Deegan on 081-642-1909. All the lectures are free of charge.

COLD WEATHER CLIMBING.

A specialist lecture on surviving ultra-cold temperatures. With advice on vapour barrier sleeping bags, cooking techniques and avoiding frostbite. Ideal for teams contemplating climbs in Alaska, Antarctica or the Alps and Himalayas in winter. Illustrated with slides taken on Mount McKinley, North America's highest mountain.

TREKKING IN THE HIMALAYAS.

Where to go, when to go, what to take. Advice on hiring porters and dealing with altitude sickness. Handling bureaucracy, dealing with national airlines. Where to go for medical treatment. Ideal for folk intent on embarking on their first Himalayan trek. Illustrated with slides of the Everest and Makalu regions of Nepal.

WESTERN EUROPE'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN.

Probably the most popular objective for first-time alpinists. A fully-illustrated lecture that describes the normal route of ascent, an alternative descent, the hazards to be aware of and the gear to take on an ascent of Mont Blanc.

THE LONG DISTANCE FOOT PATHS OF THE EUROPEAN ALPS.

An equipment check-list to deal with the vagaries of the somewhat fickle European climate is included in this lecture illustrated with shots of the Tour of Mont Blanc and GR5 - The Grand Traverse of the Alps.

PLANNING AN EXPEDITION.

Choosing a team, picking an objective, raising sponsorship, juggling budgets, transport, rations, medical considerations, buying equipment and dealing with success and failure are all covered in this talk, aimed at those readying themselves for that first mountaineering foray to the Greater Ranges.

BRITISH WINTER MOUNTAINEERING.

Choosing the right equipment for winter climbing in the British Isles. Illustrated.

TRENDS AND VARIATIONS IN OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT.

Alternatives to Gore-Tex, Buffalo clothing, eco-friendly polyester fleece, modern camming devices, satellite navigation systems, the latest rucksack back systems (including FGA and SA 7000), geodesic tents, water purifiers and filters, altimeter watches and Mountain Safety Research (MSR) stoves are all covered in this lecture.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS. If you're bound for a particular location or have questions on a specific range of equipment, Cotswold Camping can tailor a presentation to suit your requirements.

Dead Dogs and Chiggers

Exercise Always Westward - Ecuador 94

by Maj Tony Randall

I spluttered to the surface to be confronted by the bloated body of the dead dog JoJo had told everybody to avoid, "and at the bottom of the rapids is a huge, recirculating eddy - just like the 'spindryer' on the Dart, only much bigger - that has captured all the rubbish that has ever floated down the river" Cpl Johnstone had said.

We were on Phase 5 of a remarkable trip to Ecuador in August 1994. I'd been before 4 years ago with Captain Gerry Woods AGC (ETS), and a bunch of Apprentices from Princess Marina College. I now had another Educator as my 2IC, Captain Steve Crighton, but this time we were trying to be a bit more ambitious. The plan was "to climb to the highest point on the Earth's surface and then paddle to the lowest". This needs some explanation but the aim did attract sponsorship and the interest of the media. Before I continue I must mention Mr Carl Throgmorton of Westward Developments. A famous builder in the Totnes area of Devon, he has helped me to take young service personnel on four trips around the World!

Now what about this seemingly exaggerated claim? Mt Chimborazo, our target, is due to the Earth's bulge around the equator, 7,000 feet higher than Everest - if you measure it from the centre of the earth. It is 21,300 feet above sea level. Quite a prospect when you consider that Mont Blanc, Europe's highest, is only 15,000 feet and people can die from altitude sickness at just 10,000 feet - and sadly 10 people had been killed by an avalanche on Chimborazo only last year!

We then planned to, quite literally, jump in our canoes and paddle via the nearest river, ALWAYS WESTWARD, to the sea. And here we were thundering down the Andes in our Mountain Bats special high spec boats ordered from Pyranah and paid for indirectly by the lovely Mrs Shirley Fox at R D Thatcham.

This particular day was particularly 'hairy'. The so called experts amongst our team of 15 were tackling a stretch of rapids graded between III and V. To put the gradings into perspective grade IV is the sort of water your average canoeist or even a non - paddler would look at and say "No-one would ever go down there"! This means grade V has to be recced from the bank before you attempt it.

Earlier that morning we had portaged (got out and walked around) one section of canyon. A 20 foot chute led down to a "boiling cauldron" of water - and then it got difficult. Tim Bird our guest civilian instructor beckoned upwards. As we scrambled and dragged our canoes up the steep, jungly banks to a little village beside the road we realised that we were plodding ankle deep through the muddy, raw sewage oozing out from the collection of buildings above. No wonder the poor dog had died when he fell in!

Phase one had begun 3 weeks before with a drastic change of plan. I had paid KLM a small fortune to freight our canoes out on the same flight as us to make sure everything arrived together making it easier to get our kit through customs. Our agents, excellent chaps at INSTONE AVIATION of London, agreed that this was a brilliant plan as kit can often disappear, hidden under a country's



Cpl Jo Jo Johnson and Tim Bird, exhausted on Chimbo.

bureaucracy. However, we didn't allow for the exigencies of the airline. Apparently our plane couldn't take off with its load at Curacao in the Caribbean and so they took our canoes off. To fill in the time whilst we waited for our kit I brought forward Phase I to our second day in Quito.

As my head throbbed with the first signs of altitude sickness halfway up Mt Pichincha overlooking the capital, I realised I might be asking too much of our unacclimatised team! However, 13 of us made it to the top of the 4,700 metre peak - the summit a little like Tryfan in Wales only 12,000 feet higher!

Phase II took us and our canoes strapped to the roof of a bus to the spa town of Banos and an attempt on 5030 m Mt Tungurahua, Ecuador's 10th highest peak. Now, the book says wet in the area in August, but very little snow on the summit.

Fortunately we took our crampons and ropes with us to the refuge as at 5 am the next morning after a two hour slog up a horrible scree slope in driving rain we hit the snow-line, much lower than we expected. We trudged on, our members dwindling as team members were forced to turn back. Nine of us did reach the top, still in clag or 'Claggo' as they would say in Ecuador.

Well "El Claggo" wasn't enough to prevent a classic mountaineering problem for the unwary. The two most experienced members of the team, Mr Martyn Hastings from AAC Harrogate and myself got snow-blindness because we assumed the cloud cover was sufficient to protect our eyes. It doesn't hit you until later and only lasts in minor cases for 24 hours but I awoke back at the hotel with streaming stinging eyes. Cpl JoJo Johnstone and our medic Trooper Dave Sellers showed considerable concern and threw me a damp flannel!

Chimborazo was far far more demanding and the book got it wrong again! Windy but dry it said. Nine of us left the refuge, already higher than Mont Blanc, at midnight and trudged up the scree, donned crampons and gained the glacier and completed the first dodgy traverse before the main slopes to the summit. Martyn and I had been acting as back-up until this point for our main team

of seven. As they roped up and leant into driving wind we turned back. Several hours later they also returned, exhausted by the conditions with our two young marines, Neil Davis and Mark Farrington on the verge of collapse from the affects of altitude.

Fickle fate not logic dictates who is likely to go down with Acute Mountain Sickness. Headache, nausea and dizziness can lead to Pulmonary Oedema (when you cough up blood), Cerebral Oedema and death. However it made sense to allow only a small team of the strongest amongst us to have another go. Three days later, in equally bad conditions, Tim Bird, Sgt Andy Campbell (29 Cdo Regt RA) Cpl JoJo Johnstone SDG and Cpl Aaron Lowe RM, reached the summit. The rest of us had been camping and canoeing on the nearby RIO CHAMBO.

The more novice canoeists had been given the chance to have a go but we stumbled on a spectacular stopper where Trooper Dave Sellers was sucked in and spat out vertically so his canoe completely left the water. Hopefully the photograph of the tour!

Re-united we made for Quito to recuperate. Soon however we were bouncing in the back of a truck squeezed between canoes, descending a tortuous road down towards a deep gorge. The RIO TOACHI was 'paddleable' and we made camp. It was hot and humid and our movements disturbed swarms of tiny, vicious insects. These "Chiggers" were soon chomping on our bare legs - too late we covered up. Nights of terrible itching were to follow.

Phase 5 finished short of the sea but still heading Westward. Time was short and the troops needed some R & R. Our truck driver,



Sgt Andy Campbell, exhausted on Vientimillaaa Summit of Chimborazo.

Louis, agreed to drive us to Atmamas on the coast. There we surfed in our canoes and drank Pina Coladas at the beach bars. JoJo, Sgt Michelle Bristow RAF and I canoed to the village down the coast and stayed the night. A river lined with mangrove flowed gently behind our beach cabin. Pelicans roosted in the branches above the water, replete with fish after plundering the fishing boats as they returned after dark. On the surface a Pacific Paradise. On the river bank scavenging vultures and the tissue from the toilets!

Mountaineering and canoeing in the High Andes. What a romantic notion! But there are always "Dead dogs & Chiggers"!

D is for Diabeg and Delight

Sgt Paul Duke R Signals.

Diabeg is a tiny village on the shores of Loch Torridon in the North West Highlands of Scotland. Here lies some of the finest outcrop climbing anywhere in these islands.

The rock here is of excellent gneiss, it is quick drying, south facing, offers good protection and a superb outlook; what more could you want! Not only that but H is 15 mins walk from the car; never crowded and a mere 300 feet above sea level, guaranteeing for Scotland, some semblance of warmth.

On a fleeting visit this september Sgt Gomez Atkinson and I climbed the uninspiringly named Route 2 (HVS 220 ft) on the Main Cliff of Diabeg. Don't be put off by the unimaginative route names, this gem is worth every one of its 3 stars.

Access.

If you plan to climb in the N W Highlands seek a long range forecast first and try to coincide your visit with a dry spell: not easy! From the village of Torridon drive on the north shore of Loch Torridon, past Beinn Alligin, to lower Diabeg. Park in the spaces provided by the jetty, walk to the end of the road and follow the right of way sign through the garden of the last house. Follow the path right past an old stone barn now walking uphill. The obvious Diabeg pillar is on the right



Main Cliff, Diabeg Route 2. Sgt Atkinson pulling the abseil ropes through.

and below you. Walk up the wooded hillside - through a gate - and follow the undulating path for several hundred metres bypassing the very steep red wall; after a couple of hundred metres the steep south facing slabs are obvious on the left.

The Route.

Pitch 1 120 ft. Start: Just left of centre of the slab is a shallow left facing corner (Northumberland Wall E2 5C 5C). Start 10 feet left of corner heading for obvious vertical crackline, progress is made quickly for 20 ft until you reach an awkward pull up right into the crack (crux), protection is never far away to allay any nagging doubts and fears. The following 50 feet is a superb exercise in delicate footwork (the key to success at Diabeg). Suddenly the angle eases off enabling the climber to skip up the easy slabs, trending right, and belay on the grassy ledge using the in-situ slings.

The second pitch climbs the crackline directly above the belay. Surmount the overlap with amusement and continue up the crack with continual interest to the top and in-situ slings once more.

Descent.

By far and away the best descent is to abseil (double ropes necessary). From the stance abseil approx 100 ft to a large grassy ledge (not your first stance), slings should be in place. If, however, you abhor abseiling, traverse right from the cliff top and cross a gully to gain a vague spur, keeping to its left side (looking down), with muddy scrambling for the last few feet.

Location.

1 mile south of Lower Diabeg, Torridon, Wester Ross, North West Scotland. Map Sheet 24 GR 801 595.

Route.

Route 2, Main Cliff. 220 ft. HVS 5a 5a. ****

Rock.

Excellent Lewisian Gneiss, just less than vertical requiring good footwork; trust the rock the friction is brilliant!



Sgt Atkinson on the Easy Slabs on 1st Pitch.

Aspect.

South facing at an altitude of 300 ft, quick drying after showers, but may weep after prolonged rain.

Rack.

A normal rack should suffice with the exception of taking a couple of extra small to medium friends/camalots. Additionally, it may be worth taking some tat in case the in-situ slings look a bit aged.

Campina.

The nearest campsite is in Torridon next to the Youth Hostel; very cheap with all the facilities. The nearest social establishment is the Loch Torridon Hotel 2km away on the Shildaig road.

Bibliography.

Rock Climbing in Scotland by Kevin Howett.
Northern Highlands Vol 1 by the SMC.

JSam 94

This year's Meet was held in the Bregaglia/Bernina Alps, a quiet (in comparison with Chamonix and Zermat) and accessible area that boast's some of the best granite climbing in the Alps. HIGH Magazine May and June Issue give excellent descriptions. Over the two week period, 23 Jul - 6 Aug 94, a total of 46 military and 3 civilian AMA members attended the Meet.

As in previous years the Meet employed UK Alpine Guides, this year being Messrs Sandy Allen and Dave Walsh. Both did a good job on the first week introducing 15 Novices to the Alpine way of doing things. As a bonus this year enough funds were available to keep Sandy on for a further 5 days during which he took a party of three (RAFMA) up the N Ridge IV and a aspiring young Messner (2Lt Spike Cope) up the Cassin Route V+ on the Piz Badile.



Meet Leader on NW Ridge, Castello.

The weather was glorious for the majority of the Meet which caused some parties problems in that the burn out factor appeared earlier than expected. The main log book held 221 entries at the end of the Meet with at least 50% covering two or more routes. Some entries covered several day's and up to 6 routes completed. Luckily injuries were kept to a minimum with only two Navy climbers admitted to hospital.

The location in Vicosoprano proved to be first class although due to the good weather the campsite was crowded and flat site's at a premium. Apparently the local hotel owner orderd a new Mercedes following our departure, but that is what monopolies can do for you.

The abridged version of the climbing log gives you a feel for the type of routes done but a few people do deserve a special mention as you would expect following such a successful Meet.

Sgt Dunne and Lcpl Jones of the RGJ in Cyprus did well to remember their rope two out of four times on the hill. (I did promise that I would not mention this!)

Maj Penry and Capt Penry enjoyed a cosy bivvi below the Piz Castello (having spent two hours finding just the right spot away from the boy's) and then started the climb the following day with LCpl Rhys-Jones who forgot the rope. After returning for the rope Rhys-Jones then left his Mountain Technology Vertige axe at the top of the abseil off the NW ridge of the Castello. (Maj Small found it and exchanged it with the owner back in camp for lots of beer!) Both Penry and Rhys-Jones are in the Intelligence Corps funnily enough!



Cpl Rose on Lucia Di Mello (V) 150m.

Maj (Retd) Smith did his best to climb every mountain in the area and will be returning next year to finish off the one's he missed this year.

The Admin NCO Cpl Rose deserves a mention as he did a tremendous job watching over the JSAM camp and assisting with a miriad of problems that threatened to keep people off the hill. He also climbed 2 x 150m V's in borrowed stickies with Maj Small (the route was well bolted hence Small's involvement) and only swore 46 times! A remarkable achievement!

On the whole the AMA members were very well behaved and conducted themselves as one would expect from British Army climbers! I would like to pass on my thanks to you all for supporting the Meet and hope to see you on next year's JSAM.

AMA New Year meet at Tulloch

27 Dec 94 - 3 Jan 95

It is 4 pm on Monday 2nd January. Most of the AMA's membership are still recovering from their Hogmanay hangovers. I am 50 easy feet from the top of Comb Gully on Ben Nevis, being waved on past a belayed Pete Aldwinckle. As I reach flat ground, I am bathed in a pink sunset with no wind. John Barry may have soloed the route in 7 minutes, but I am content to have completed my first Scottish winter climb for 17 years. From the top of the Ben we can see for miles in the crisp clear winter air. Below all is in shadow as night arrives in Fort William, but I start down, extremely pleased to finish the week on such a high note.

The traditional AMA New Year meet in Scotland was held this year at the old JSMTC Scotland outstation at Tulloch, where the West Highland Railway leaves the mountains and starts to wind down to Fort William. A disparate bunch of climbers and walkers assembled by train and car on 27 December to meet their mentor for the week, Pete Aldwinckle, JSMTC veteran and general mountaineering layabout. We stagger into the centre through an inch of snow, to be given our bunks and shown the facilities.



Gloom at Aonach Mor.
L to R. SSgt Mac McLaughlin, Maj Andy Edington and SSgt Andy Gallagher.

The 16 AMA members present include 3 women and come from Regular and TA units all over the UK, with even one from BAOR. Ambitions include walking, climbing and even ski-mountaineering. The area has everything we can wish for, from the high cliffs of Ben Nevis and Creag Meagaidh to remote and challenging munrobagging in Ben Alder and the Grey Corries. Weather will be the only limit to our achievement.

As the week unfolds, a creditable amount is done. The weather starts as mediocre, but steadily improves. The drying room is well used, but intrepid parties venture off to remote bothies. We go to a slide show in Fort William to hear how Mick Fowler defied gravity on an impossibly steep peak in the Indian Himalaya. We have our own slide show, to see what Carrie had to put up with in Peru, and a mouth watering commercial for the 1995 AMA trip to the Annapurna Sanctuary.

Various groups manage an extended outing, staying away from the centre in one of the mountain bothies in the area. By New Year fresh snow falls. Hogmanay is fairly restrained because most people have had a hard day on the hill and are planning another on January 1st. 1995 starts with good weather and is better yet on the 2nd. We finish with a meal out in a local hostelry and depart on the 3rd, Christmas presents tested, wallets largely intact, new friendships made and ample enthusiasm for the next New Year meet. This is planned for Newtonmore on Speyside next year - see you there!



SSgt Andy Gallagher on step ground on Squir Gaibhre

Mountaineer v The Midge

For those of us who have done most of our walking and climbing in Scotland, the dreaded midge is well known. How is it that it manages to find that one small area you've missed with repellent? and is there nothing more guaranteed to spoil your day, then being stuck on a crag, while your climbing partner dithers on a stance, and you're providing the blood for a midge feeding frenzy? If you're ever likely to be in such a situation, you will find this article invaluable.

For collectors of useless pieces of information there are 34 different species of midge flying around Scotland. Twenty of these have a taste for blood, of which five have a preference to human blood. The main culprit in the human blood sucking variety is *Culicoides Impunctatus*, and is a relative of the mosquito. Similar to most biting insects, only the female of the species suck blood. The male midge is a vegetarian and gets its substances from nectar and plant juice. When we breathe out the female home's in, attracted by the carbon dioxide gas in our exhaled breath. She sticks her hollow, needle like nose into the tissues below the skin and sucks up our fluids and blood. There is little doubt that humans are her favourite grub! The female midge's mouthparts are like hypodermic syringes. After injecting anti-coagulant she sucks up her fill of blood. It is the reaction to the anti-coagulant that makes the bites so irritating. We are not alone in being their targets for blood meals. Horses and cows are just as liable to find themselves under attack. The midge starts life as an egg. After hatching the tiny worm like larva spends 10 months in a non feeding state before starting to develop into a pupa. The process from pupa to arrival at adulthood, is completed within a few days. As many as 80 eggs are produced in this way thus showing how the midge population can

keep on expanding even without voluntary donors. Scotland is the worst affected country in the world from midges. Apart from the winter months, only May and June are midge free, with late June to the end of September being the worst months. Bites can range from being a persistent irritant to causing large, painful and unsightly sores.

Well it now seems that help is at hand. The defeat of the midge, which one distinguished Scot once remarked was the Everest of Entomology, may well be brought about by the humble Bog Myrtle. Researchers have discovered that this plant, common throughout Northern Scotland yields an oil that can act as an effective natural insect repellent.

Of course there are many flying insects from hell that can transmit serious diseases. None of the following diseases are common in UK, but maybe common in a country you are planning to visit.

Mosquito.	Malaria, Yellow Fever, Dengue and other Arboviral Fevers.
Flea.	Plague, Endemic Typhus.
Louse.	Epidemic Typhus, Relapsing Fever.
Mite.	Scrub Typhus.
Sandfly.	Sandfly Fever, Leishmaniasis.
Tick.	Relapsing Fever, Tick Borne Encephalitis, Tick Typhus, Lyme Disease.

There are various methods of preventing diseases from insect bites including the use of repellents, prevention of insect breeding, destruction of adult forms, and immunization. The most successful strategy is that of combining methods, as no one technique can guarantee 100% effectiveness, particularly drug prophylaxis.

This part of the article concentrates on methods of bite prevention and drug prophylaxis as these appear to be the most neglected.

The current insect repellent is 32% DEET Extended Duration Cream Repellent NSN H1/6480-01-284-3982. This should be spread over exposed areas of skin and each application is effective for about 8 hours. However it should be noted that DEET only repels, it does not kill. Furthermore it is neither designed for use on equipment nor on the ground. The wearing of long sleeved shirts and long trousers throughout the day will reduce the chance of insect bites. Although this may not be practicable, it should be enforced during dawn and dusk when biting insects such as mosquitoes are most active. Clothing material needs to be thick enough to resist biting through by insects. The wearing of boots and closing the gap between trousers and footwear will help prevent attack by mites and ticks.

Items of equipment such as tents and mosquito nets can be impregnated with Peripel (Permethrin) NSN H1/6840-99-300-0661 before departure. This treatment will kill insects, ticks and mites when they land or crawl on impregnated fabric.

Treatment.

Dilution rate is one part Peripel to 50 parts cold water (15ml peripal/750 ml water)

One net will absorb just under 750 ml of liquid.

Dip net(s) for 2 minutes then drain and hang up to dry with the skirt uppermost.

Each treatment lasts for about 6 weeks.

It is important that the instructions on the container label are carefully read, and that rubber gloves are worn by personnel carrying out the treatment. Contact with the eyes should be avoided.

Although DEET is cleared for normal carriage by air, Peripel, in bulk, is Dangerous Air Cargo and expeditions proposing to use flights will need to refer needs to JSP 335, the Manual of Dangerous Cargo Regulations. Indents for repellents and insecticides must first be submitted to the District/Formation Environmental Health Team (EHT) before it is sent through ordnance channels.

The methods discussed above will help control biting insects but much can be done in Base Camps to reduce to the minimum, the chance of being bitten. Mosquitoes for instance, breed in water and the removal of mosquito breeding sites such as water lying in blocked gutters, old tins, tyres and broken bottles will help restrict breeding sites. Control of adult mosquitoes can be carried out using Swingfogs (NSN H1/1040/12/155/0898) with a suitable insecticide such as Reslin 25SE (H1/6840-99-131-0286). The RAMC Training Centre at Keogh Barracks runs several courses designed to teach soldiers the principles of pest control which includes, anti-malarial duties. Additional advice can also be sought from the District/Formation EHT.

Even with all possible control methods people will still get bitten. It is therefore vital that during any planning, health briefs of the areas to be visited are obtained. These will give information about any prevalent diseases in that area/country. Perhaps the most important consideration is whether the area is malarious and the need to take anti-malarial drugs. It is important to remember, how-

ever, that no drug offers complete protection from this disease hence the equal emphasis above on protection from bites.

The standard anti-malarial drugs are Chloroquine (Avloclor or Nivaquine) and Proguanil (Paludrine) normally taken in combination. This combination of drugs is the safest and most effective for Service purposes worldwide on land. In certain circumstances it is necessary to deviate from the standard prophylaxis regime. The special alternatives outlined below relate to specific circumstances and have been developed with special local conditions in mind. They are only to be employed in the context for which they were designed:

Areas of Known Resistance.

Papua New Guinea. Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

In these locations there is significant resistance and a Pyrimethamine and Dapsone combination (Maloprim) plus Chloroquine is taken. Maloprim one tablet weekly (6505-99-212-0152 pack of 28 tablets), plus Chloroquine 300 mg (ie 2 tablets) weekly (6505-99-899-2618 pack of 28 tablets)

Cambodia.

Currently the only effective prophylactic is Doxycycline (Vibramycin). Doxycycline 100 mg (ie one 100 mg capsule) daily (taken with the evening meal) (6505-99-211-5221 container of 50 capsules).

East Africa (Kenya. Malawi, Tanzania! Uganda, Zambia).

In these locations visitors of less than 3 months duration should take Mefloquine (Lariam) due to the emerging resistance. Those excluded from taking Mefloquine should continue to use the standard regime. Mefloquine 250 mg (ie one tablet) weekly (6505-NC-100-0166 pack of 8 tablets)

Standard Regime.

Proguanil 200 mg (ie 2 tablets) daily (6505-99-211-1817 strip of 14 tablets), plus Chloroquine 300 mg (ie 2 tablets) weekly (6505-99-899-2618 pack of 28 tablets)

In a few circumstances advice may need to be varied as the malarial parasite continues to develop resistance to the common and classical anti-malarial drugs. Chemoprophylactic regimes, other than those described above, are not to be used without MOD authority which can be sought through normal single Service channels to the Defence Medical Services Directorate (Health 2). It is advisable to confirm that the standard or special regime is still extant prior to setting out to a malarious area.

Anti-malarials are to be started one week before entering a malarious area. The course must be continued for 4 weeks after returning from malarious areas.

So as you plan your next overseas expedition to an exotic country, pause for a moment and ponder on the many exotic disease's you and your team can contract. Schistosomiasis from contaminated water, Echinococcus granulosus through contaminated food and Rickettsia Mountain Spotted Fever from ticks. In some countries, even the air you breath may be unsafe.

Do not despair though, help and assistance is always available from your District/Formation EHT. Even better why not invite one along on your next EXPED, my telephone number is....

"DER ITH"

"ITH" is the collective name given to the group of rocks just past Hameln. In fact Ith is the name of only one of several ridges that run North South in the area that is correctly known as "Die Felsen des Weser - Leine - Berglandes" or, the crags between the rivers Weser and Leine. The area is approximately 25 square kilometres in size and comprises of the following groups of crags: Luerdissen, Holzen, Bisperode, Kanstein and Selter. The rock in all areas is excellent Limestone, however, there are occasional bands of poor rock sandwiched between the more compact layers so beware! Many people wrongly perceive Ith as a pure sport climbing area, but this is not entirely true. Most routes up to grade 6 require leader placed protection. As well as this it is always wise to carry a few wires on bolted routes as the distance between first and second bolts is often a bit disconcerting.

Climbing on the Ith crags has been recorded as far back as the late forties but the biggest explosion of activity was in the sixties by Richard Goedeke and Hans Weninger. Amazingly they were still active in the eighties putting up routes where no one had previously dared venture, this however was in part due to the arrival of the expansion bolt and the staple bolt. Although the greatest number of routes can be attributed to these two the most notable climber in the Ith area was Milan Sykora. He was the main force behind introducing the new sport climbing and training techniques which were put to good use on his many red points. The eighties also saw the arrival of the likes of Guido Köstermier who is responsible for many of the desperately hard test pieces in the area such as Magnus der Magier 10- on Keule and Directes Dach 10 on Ultra Dacher (has to be seen to be believed).

There is a lot of climbing in the area, well over 70 crags with around 700 routes, far more than could possibly be described in a short article here. The main aim is just to give a few recommendations so time is not wasted on a first visit.

The first crags most people visit are the Luerdissen group. This is due to the ease of access and the proximity of the Ith campsite. From the campsite a path follows the crest of the ridge Northwards for five minutes. From a junction the path then descends the West slope to the crags. Depending on the descent path used the first crags reached are usually Krokodil and Twägerstein. Krokodil is the more striking of the two and almost looks like a modern competition wall. The Southern aspect of Krokodil has probably the best route of its grade in the whole area, Anakonda. The route leans back at an alarming angle and has a fierce boulder problem start. The overhanging wall is breached by a devious series of moves culminating in a crux which has to be completed on devastated forearms. Anakonda is a serious undertaking and would probably be graded E4 6a in UK, its UIAA grade is 7.

The next crag along, Hexenkanzel, has some of the easier climbs of the area and is often swarming with groups of Dutch novices or German children. A place to be avoided on a summer weekend. Although if quiet Ka-Schlüpf 4+ and Rechter Riß 3 are worth doing.

From here the most unmistakable crag in the area can be seen, the Kamel, so named because of its huge protruding block overhang.



Although the South West aspect carries few easy routes there is a superb grade 5, West Kante, which climbs the North face. This starts easily but finishes on a slab seemingly suspended in mid air! Another excellent route starts at the same place but passes under the Kamels head. A stance is taken under the roof, a rarity in these parts, to avoid rope drag. Typical Ith climbing then leads past the roof to the top. This route is Briefkasten 5+/6-.

Teufelstrichter is the next crag to head for. This crag features an obvious chimney bisecting the main face. Mittelweg 4, is an Ith classic. A long chimney, two overhangs and a breathtaking airy finish add up to produce a fantastic route. Other routes on this crag such as Dachweg 5 and Sud Wand 4+ are of equal quality. Sadly, this crag also gets very busy.

Another crag a bit further along the ridge, after passing Pilzstein, Wilhelm-Raabe-Klippe, Breite Wand and Wechsverschnidung (route of the same name takes the obvious corner at 6+) is Harderturm, this has a good selection of all grades but Plattenweg 6-, West Kante 4+, Directe W-Kante 5+ (harder than it looks) and Zentrale S-Wand 7- are especially worth trying.

If you still have energy left on the way back to the car Hang or Hang not 8- on Pilzstein will finish you off completely. Pilzstein has the most spectacular roof at Luerdissen. After a hard move to gain a rest below the roof the true magnitude of the final move can be appreciated. The lip is a good two metres away! Fortunately the bolt is a bit closer and is probably the most swung on bolt in Germany. Definitely more terrifying for a second.

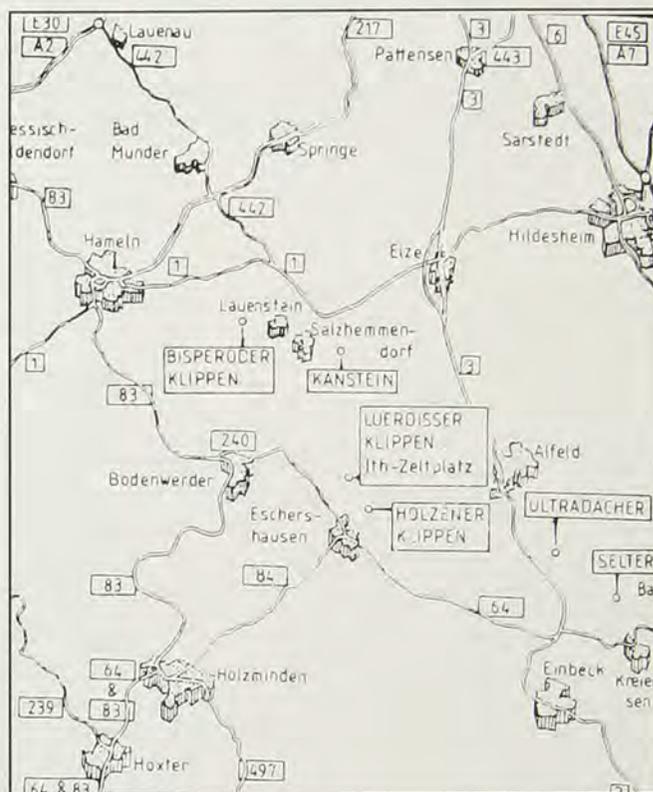
If the thought of crowds is off-putting Holzen is probably a better choice. A rising traverse climbs up from a recently erected notice board. The first junction along the path leads to Himmelsleiterwand, continue on up to the second junction and eventually to Baumschulenwand. The short wall gives several routes of all grades and an excellent introduction to this area. On some climbs care must be taken with protection so initially climb a grade or two lower until you get the feel of the rock.

Holzen has more guide book stars per crag than the rest of the area, albeit in the upper grades, so it is difficult to single out individual climbs, however, Drachenwand has two which are worthy of a mention. Segelflieger used to be an easy 7- but has now been downgraded to 6+. This takes nothing away from a route which requires good footwork and a sound grasp of the situation. Seek and you shall find the key to the exit from steepening corner! Segelflieger finishes on a ledge but above an overhanging arete can be followed at 7+ for an exciting finish.

One of the easier test pieces on this cliff is Drachentöter 7-. Crack this on-sight and you deserve a pat on the back. The climb is split into three distinct sections with rests in between, if you know how to use them. The initial corner delivers you to the first proving ground, a steep crack. This requires subtle layaway moves to achieve upward progress. Many are ejected here with tails between their legs. Persevere, but once the move is cracked it is tempting to continue climbing straight up, don't! Avoid climbing too high, and instead traverse delicately across the wall until below a superb groove. Take a moment to reflect. Awkward moves allow the groove to be entered. Then all too soon the final barrier is reached, a small but daunting overhang. The crux is a long way from the ground, it tests stamina, guts and determination. Once the lip has been crossed there is no let up until the huge ring bolt at the top is reached.

Däumlingswand has a large number of grade 3/4 routes but all require a sound knowledge of leader placed protection.

Other areas require a longer approach march but are generally much quieter. Bisperoder has only four crags but is definitely worth a days visit. Climbs of note are Diagonalweg 5+, Blow Up 6



and Metastase 6+. The other areas of Kanstein and Selter face East so often give shelter from cold Westerly winds in Winter, however, Selter has very few easy climbs. There is one other crag which is worth mentioning as a wet weather venue. In the Selter group, but much further North, is Ultra Dacher. This is a huge roof which offers climbing protected from the elements. To take advantage of this cliff you need to be climbing at least 6+. If you are lucky you might spot some of the top climbers attempting the massive roof.

Anyone requiring more info on the area or any other climbing area in Germany can contact WO2 (CSM) Mike Smith at CS Coy, 3 BN REME, Detmold.

FACT FILE

GRIDS	MAP	PARKING	CRAG
ITH CAMPSITE	HOLZMINDEN L 4122	445 574	
LUERDISSEN	HOLZMINDEN L 4122	445 574	442 577
HOLZEN	HOLZMINDEN L 4122	459 549	459 550
ULTRA DACHER	EINBECK L 4124	597 530	606 523
SELTEN	EINBECK L 4124	626 497	627 500
BISPERODE	HAMELN L 3922	355 703	360 710
KANSTEIN	HAMELN L 3922	440 684	438 676

FACILITIES

- Ith Campsite.....Very simple field with limited facilities - water and toilets.
- Ith Hotel..... On crest of ridge between Scharfoldendorf and Capellenhagen. Usual hotel facilities including a very good bar and restaurant service (reasonable rates).
- Shops & Garages..... Eschershausen

GRADING COMPARISON UK = UIAA (Taken from "Rock Climbing" by J Barry & N Shepherd)
 (4a = 5) (4b = 5+) (4c = 6-) (5a = 6) (5b = 6+/7-) (5c = 7/7+) (6a = 8-/8) (6b = 8+/9-)

Anyone requiring more info on the area or any other climbing area in Germany can contact WO2 (CSM) Mike Smith at CS Coy, 3 BN REME, Detmold.

GUIDE BOOKS (Both are topo style and very easy to use)

- "LEBEN IN DEN FELSEN" by Götz Wiechmann ISBN 3-925997-00-8
- "HOCH IM NORDEN" By Peter Brunner & Hans Weninger ISBN 3-926807-10-5 (Also includes Okertal)

SCRAMBLE

We were lucky with the weather. It had been very wet for several days and it began raining again soon afterwards, but the weekend itself was fine.

The excuse was provided by the AMA AGM in North Wales and I was lucky enough to get away on the Friday morning. I booked in at the Capel Curig Training Camp (CCTC) at midday, when there was a sharp downpour. Undeterred, I drove on to Llyn Ogwen and parked beneath the North Ridge of Tryfan - my first objective. I set off at 12.30 pm and started the ascent. The views opened up as I gained the ridge proper, at which point the scrambling began. The rock was dry, but as height was gained, a chill wind picked up. I realised I was approaching the summit when Pen yr Ole Wen appeared across the valley beneath the lifting clouds and seemed little higher. Suddenly, there were no more false crests: I had reached the top in just over the hour. Having satisfied myself I could jump (or stride in my case) from Adam to Eve (or vice versa?), I asked another walker to take my photograph for an action replay.

I paused as I wondered "What next?". Bristly Ridge was the obvious continuation, but I was intrigued by the Main Cliff on Glyder Fach. I worked my way over and found the Alphabet Slabs, above which rose Main Gully, a weakness to the right of the East Buttress. This gully provides a descent route following climbs on the cliff, but I carried on upwards. It proved to be a satisfying scramble which finished close to Glyder Fach and the Cantilever. At times the views were splendid with good visibility and some sunshine.

I continued past the Castle of the Winds to the top of the Y Gribin Ridge which leads back towards Ogwen. There is scrambling in the upper section, and there are good views right into Cwm Bochlwyd and left into Cwm Cneifion (the so-called "Nameless" Cwm!). (Incidentally, the Cneifion Arete is an excellent way to gain the Y Gribin Ridge, which I experienced exactly 2 years before.) I descended below Llyn Bochlwyd and made my way back to the car.

That evening I met up with other AMA members who were all asking the same question, "What are you doing tomorrow?". I had already made a plan (I recommend the second edition of Steve Ashton's "Scrambles in Snowdonia"), and I soon found 7 were keen to join me. Saturday morning began with a drive to the Pass,

where we parked below Garreg Wasted at about 500 feet. It was going to be a long ascent: our route was the Clogwyn Y Person Arete (the Parson's Nose). It was hot going to reach the foot of the ridge, but the wind soon strengthened to cool us down. The ridge, particularly in the lower section, provided excellent scope for individual variation. It was a most satisfying scramble, which brought us onto the Crib Goch Ridge, about 3/4 of the way along. We stopped at Crib y Ddysgal for a bite.

It was getting chilly, so we dropped down to the obelisk and continued on to the summit of Snowdon, just as the train disgorged another crowd: we did not stay long. Rather than return via the Cwm Glas Ridge or the Crib Goch Ridge, we continued down the upper reaches of the Watkin Path. It certainly would be a flog to come up that way. We carried on to reach the top of Lliwedd, from where we could still see for miles. We descended to the Miners' Track, taking us back to Pen y Pass, from where a couple more miles led us to our transport. The company had helped make it a most enjoyable day.

The weekend had its socialising times as well. The Annual General Meeting itself was the shortest in memory, which meant that the buffet was a relaxed affair, after which we had time to enjoy ourselves in the Tyn y Coed. Seven speakers with slides each talked for 5 minutes or so, recounting a wide range of interesting experiences.

There was still time on the Sunday morning to get on the rock, so I headed back to Ogwen and the Gribin Facet. We climbed 3 easy grade climbs. They were all pleasant and satisfying, particularly Angular Chimney: I can certainly vouch for the guide book description requiring one to "wheel away upwards".

This was a fitting end to a superb few days on the hills: I had enjoyed quite a bit of scrambling during 7000 feet of ascent. CCTC is very well placed for mountaineers, rock-climbers and hill-walkers, and all those attending had an excellent time. It may be described as the AMA AGM Weekend, but you should not let reference to a meeting put you off. It is possible to pack quite a lot into a short time, helped by a little planning and good weather. I encourage you to make a note of the dates for next year (Fri 15 - Sun 17 Sep 95): I hope to see you then.

AMA Members to the Rescue

A note of thanks must be made to AMA Members who were involved in the rescue and evacuation of seven injured climbers from Coire and an t-Sneachda during the Cairngorm Meet. At least two of the casualties owe their lives to the prompt action of the AMA Members and other climbers involved in the rescue.

Ex Inca Heights

29 Jun - 6 Aug 94

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Maj L Owens AGC(SPS) | 2. Capt J Owens RE |
| 3. SSgt C J Clark RE | 4. Sgt M Chapple APTC |
| 5. Cpl Kent RE | 6. Cpl Read RE |
| 7. Spr Loeb RE | 8. Spr Bedford RE |

Ex INCA HEIGHTS 94 was a mountaineering and trekking expedition to the Bolivian Andes region known as the Cordillera Real. The trip was planned and organised by Capt J Owens RE, from 3 RSME, the Royal Engineer Training establishment, and had a general expedition aim of taking novices above 6400m.

The team consisted of 8 personnel including 5 novices and due to various commitments was unable to assemble more than 24hrs prior to departure. This caused no initial problems and following an issue of equipment the long flight to La Paz was commenced. This involved a 24hr stopover in Buenos Aires which became the first field test of every ones fledgling Spanish !!

Following a spectacular arrival at La Paz International airport, El Alto (4018m), it readily became apparent that a period of acclimatisation would be necessary as everybody's lungs had ceased to function correctly!! This was achieved by utilising the first week in country to instruct the novices in the basic arts of mountaineering and more mundane tasks such as organising transport and a courtesy visit to the British Embassy.

The second week was spent in two separate mountain treks, one of 2 1/2 days and one of 4 days. These were designed to allow everybody a shake out period and to ensure legs were ready for some serious mountains. It also provided an opportunity to see a cross section of the country surrounding the Cordillera Real and allow all to experience mountain passes at a height of 5000m. These treks were later to prove their worth in the acclimatisation process and all benefited from them.

By the third week the team was ready to tackle some snow and ice mountains and improve individual icecraft skills. A base camp was set-up at the foot of Huyuna Potosi (6088m) and 2 days were spent on the glacier and surrounding peaks practising techniques on the glacier and ice climbing. The next day meant an early start to gain the high camp for a summit bid on the towering Huyuna Potosi, and an even earlier start the following day cumulated in 6 of the group topping out around midday to be rewarded by some spectacular scenery and the looks of the 4 novices who had just successfully negotiated a tricky ice knife edge to get there. Following the obligatory photographs, and a masterful balancing act on the summit ridge, all descended to the high camp and then on down to the base camp and transport back to La Paz.

A day of admin saw all ready to tackle the second mountain objective, the 6460m giant that overlooks La Paz city, Illimani. As a

group of 4 Austrians had, the previous week, suffered 2 casualties and 2 deaths on the same route an element of apprehension had crept over the group, particularly the novices. Despite this final arrangements were made and following a particularly scabrous journey to an outlying village and portage into the base camp we all settled down for the next days move to the Nidio de Condors (Nest of the Condors) a rocky perch to the side of the glacier at 5600m. All of the party made this and the following day saw 5 heading for the summit. A 2hr ascent of a narrow snow ridge led to a large icefall which was climbed to its left to gain the summit ridge, at 6000m this was a lot harder than first imagined but all eventually gained the summit for another skillful balancing act and photographs.

By this time the effects of the cheap, rudimentary accommodation in La Paz and the culmination of the daily massive temperature changes on the mountain were beginning to affect the teams performance and all were suffering from flu like symptoms and altitude related chesty coughs. It was therefore with some trepidation that the group set off for the next mountain objectives, Condoriri, a 5648m technical peak and Alpomaya Chico at 5400m. After the now obligatory gut wrenching journey in and ensuing hike into the base camp area all felt decidedly unwell but it was decided to continue if only with a decidedly more cautious and open mind. A day was spent on the glacier improving ice techniques and soaking up the sun in readiness for a 2 day attempt on Condoriri the next day. A slight change of plan saw the team splitting into 2 parties, one to attempt Condoriri and the other to assail Alpomayo Chico. One team reached Condoriri high camp (5300m) and spent an uncomfortable night there before returning to base camp. The other team made the summit of Cerro Jisthana (5380m). A slow return was made to the pickup point the following day and all returned to La Paz.

Much had been achieved thus far, notably the successful scaling of 2 peaks over 6000m involving 5 novices, two of whom had only just joined the Army, and it was therefore decided to return to UK and not tempt our fate with any more mountains. The last 3 days in Bolivia were spent at Lake Titicaca, exploring the origins of the Inca Civilisation and marvelling at this massive body of water located at 3810m with an area of some 9000sq km. Last minute eating and farewells to the Embassy precluded the start of the marathon journey back to UK and the 1000m peaks of Wales and Scotland.



Summit Huyana.

Ex Inca Heights



Summit Rioch.



LCpl Neil Greenwood & Spr John Evans approach the top.



That Summit Shot - The Author

Trekking in Nepal



Naya Kanga 5890m.

How to Climb a Trekking Peak in

NEPAL

by Sgt Robbo Roberts

Of all the "trekking peaks", Naya Kanga (5890m) must rank as one of the most accessible. A short hike into the Langtang Valley leaves you craning your neck at the snowy profile of a truly impressive peak, to the south. This image would be fulfilling if it was not for the daunting mass of rock and snow of Langtang Lirung (7200m) to the north which changes your perspective. All the same, our peak holds the attention, and from these early views, promises to be a worthy expedition aim.

So two days later sitting on the lawn in front of the guest house with the jingling of yak bells in the background (oh no, that is why this lawn was so comfortable), the dud chiya (milk tea) flowing freely and that distinctive smell of wood smoke mixed with wafts of stronger smells from the near toilet, there was no mistaking I was in the Himalayas.

My arrival at this local metropolis was a relatively straight forward saga, the planning had rested squarely on Maj Pete Aldwinckle, who had spent the month preceding departure climbing over heaps of kit piled into his office, he had done a convincing job of juggling - we were ready for the off from Heathrow with all the kit, people and paper work at the right place and time.

Now bear with me here, I will get round to replying to the heading, but firstly allow me to get through the nitty gritty of the story.

It was with a fond backward glance that I left the village of Kangjing Gumpa along with the team and made the now familiar upward plod towards the proposed base camp - some 200m below the Ganga La (La being the nepali word for Pass). The 'Dhal Bhat's' were substituted by Compo, apple pancake replaced by apple flakes (Yum! Yum!), gone are the constant flow of smiling children's faces and the chant of "One eschol pen" and "One rupee" (some peace at last), gone are the porters - Oh no Gone are the porters!

Some of the team thought it a practical joke, expecting the porters to reappear as we tried to attempt to lift our packs which contain a fair amount of weight at this stage of the proceedings, what with tents, ropes and climbing gear, 6 days food which had thankfully been made lighter by removing most of the chocolate content!! So, as I say it was a shame to be leaving the valley and the porters were never seen again.

Three days later saw us ready for an attempt on the summit, this would include all but Chin Chinnery and Jim Jones both of which

were experiencing the joys of poor acclimatisation, enjoying a rendition of the 1812 overture within their own heads (what a saving on walkman batteries!!), for now they would be content to feast on a cocktail of drugs and plan to improve sufficiently for a later summit attempt in a couple of days.

The push to the summit included an overnight bivi at 5350m with an early call for the remaining four hour push up steep snow and ice onto a fantastic snow summit ridge, well, fantastic to look at, sheer death to attempt to climb, or so I deciphered from Neil Greenwood when he returned down having attained a point some 5 meters below the top, on further inspection it was apparent that the heavy corncicing and obvious fracture lines were a bit of a give away!

Conveniently there is a summit like cone some 50m short of the true top, and little height difference that would do me nicely thank you very much. Two full weeks from setting out from Heathrow.

I had climbed with Gus and a firm handshake at this point signalled it was time to descend, we all seemed to arrive near the summit at around the same time, as I turned to complete the descent my tiredness was overcome by comparing myself to the state of Rick Gannon who looked like death and I was sure he would keel over and croak as I looked on! I thought to myself "maybe I'm not feeling that bad after all", how at times of physical stress, seeing others suffering reduces the pressure!

Rick had suffered with a sore throat for a couple of days and he confided in me later that he had forced himself to continue above the bivi after a rough night. He had drawn on his body reserves and it would take him three days of resting in the valley before he was well enough to contemplate any further physical effort.

Meanwhile the concert in full swing at base camp was approaching a crescendo with the drums being played in Chin and Jim's head being severe enough to warrant a descent to the valley to alleviate the condition. The team would have to be content with 8 out of 10 on the summit.

So how do you climb a trekking peak in Nepal?

Keep it simple, and do not be confused by the term Trekking Peak. Grab a copy of the exercise PXR from the meet secretary and all will be revealed!

What Price a Summit

A Family Holiday in the Peruvian Andes

by Pete Aldwinckle

This is not the story of an expedition; it is personal recollections of my summer holiday. Having been told by the Foreign Office in no uncertain terms that I would not be going to the Parmirs; Carrie, my wife, and I decided it that would be better to just head off and leave a note of where we had gone. Peru seemed like the sort of country that would upset the FO bureaucrats. With a leave pass for a month and an address of "Peru, S America" in my out tray we headed to Lima. No ATFA, no year of planning, no Thatcham kit, no AMA grant and not a clue on the language; although Carrie is very good at charades.

We emerged from Lima airport 24 hours after closing my office door. Your worst nightmare, we had more luggage than we could move in one lift and it was approaching midnight. Much to our surprise we survived the night. The following morning we hit the South American Explorers Club in the centre of Lima. A well spent \$40 secured membership for a year and sanctuary from the madness that is Lima for a day. We also managed to sort out transport to the Cordillera Blanca and get a full update on the opportunities to get robbed, kidnapped, mugged or enrolled in a drug cartel.

The 8 hour bus journey was memorable because it was so comfortable and appeared to be safe (perception is a wonderful concept). We arrived in Huaraz at 3050m feeling out of breath and astounded by the incredible view of the surrounding mountains. After 4 days in and around this busy cosmopolitan town we felt ready to take on our first peak. Pisco, 5752m, was selected as our objective. It had no reported technical difficulties, it is not steep and it is a popular acclimatisation peak.

Nigel Mansell's S American cousin drove the colectivo (minibus) that we endured for 2 hours before changing vehicles in Yungay; a town only just rebuilt after all 18000 inhabitants had been killed by an earthquake. We shared the back of a truck with fellow travellers for a dusty 2 hours before starting the walk in. 4 hours of uphill toil in the heat of the day with heavy sacks jolted the body back into mountain mode. The following day the toil continued up scree slopes and across the mother of all moraine fields and then more scree. High camp was reached in late afternoon. It was a cold forbidding place in the shadow of a broken glacier. At 5000m our heads were pounding and life was not comfortable.

Alpine starts are usually not easy, this one came as a welcome distraction from the pounding cranial Thrash Rock. At the toe of the glacier we prepared to kit up by torch light. Carrie's crampons were repeatedly rejected by her boots. It dawned on us that they were adjusted to a pair of ski mountaineering boots tucked in a cupboard in England! Without a spanner one of us was staying cramponless.



Carrie on the summit of Pisco.

Carrie fitted my Grivels and I tried to warm to the idea of a long day of step cutting. This would test the truth about this being a route without technical difficulties. The glacier posed few problems and we quickly gained the col at 5350m as the first hints of dawn rose from below the horizon in the East. It was extremely cold. The wind penetrated our gortex and fleece layers making each stop a race to don duvets and rewarm our hands and faces before the cold numbness of hypothermia overcame us.

Our progress slowed as the effects of the altitude and the cold drained our strength. Twenty steps and stop; twenty steps and stop. The steps grew progressively shorter and the stops corresponding longer; but we continued. Each rise became a battle of will, our own Hillary Step. We gingerly crossed two yawning crevasses on thin fingers of snow. The belaying partner looking vacantly at the rope joining us together, condemning us to the same fate. "Touching the Void," type of thoughts percolated through our clouded minds, but we continued. A last steep section and we pulled ourselves through the cornice onto the summit. Waves of immense satisfaction came over us. The Andes unfolded below us as the sun light swept down the valley sides.

Photographs, half a flask of Ribena and then descent. We collected our tent as we passed through the high camp and then descended over the scree and glacier to our base camp of two nights previous. Here we met one of the Dutch we had shared the pick up truck to the start of the walk in. He was planning to move up to the high camp the following day. We were exhausted and short of conversation, he was full of enthusiasm and eager to learn from our experience. Our company parted the following day. His methodical footsteps passing our tent at seven in the morning taking him to a unknown and lonely grave, undiscovered by all that would have given him a decent burial and a few kind words to help him on his way.

We were hurting now, three hours of plodding up this featureless glacier in the heat of the day after spending the morning climbing white slabs. Our rucksacks creaked under the loads filling them. Forever had real meaning now. In silence we plodded on and up. The four days relaxing in Edward's Inn and around Huaraz seemed an eternity ago now. We had selected Huascarán Sur, 6768m, as our next objective. Even by the normal "Garganta" route it had a reputation as a serious mountain. The route took in avalanche prone lower slopes, steep serac walls to climb or by-pass; before leading to the "Garganta" at 5900m. Here, many parties attempts on the mountain turn into a battle for survival, trapped in their tents by storms while their retreat route is racked by avalanches. We were three days into the route now. Mules had carried our equipment and eight days food and fuel to the start of the rock slabs. From here Shanks' pony took over.

At four we stopped and dug the tent in. Out of the sun it was cold, really cold. The race was on to get into the tent and start recovering in preparation for the next days effort. This would be a recce on the route through the seracs. We listened to them creaking during the night. Talking in deep tones, preparing themselves for the following days amusement.

Without the heavy rucksacks we made swift progress. We climbed together through the steep ice and crevasses. It was hot work in the sun but the temperature dropped rapidly when we moved under the great curls of overhanging ice. Our progress was barred at the last line of ice defences. A 10 m wall of over hanging ice. A belay fixed and I stepped over the yawning edge of the crevasse onto the wall. Ten minutes of shoulder wrenching and lung busting effort and I was able to pull myself onto easier ground. I fixed a snow stake and lay gasping over it. The route to the Garganta opened out in front of me. That would have to wait as it was now early afternoon and our tent would soon be in the chilling shadow.

Twenty four hours later we hauled our sacs up the wall and then started the rising traverse towards the Garganta. Carrie led; twenty steps and stop. The rope pulled tight on her as I feebly mumbled and shuffled through eighteen, nineteen and twenty. There was a silence apart from our lungs feeble efforts to satisfy our bodies with more oxygen. The cloud swirled in again obscuring the route, the snow and the sky blended together for a moment and then it would clear. We plodded on and up. The ice was hard and required continuous concentration. Then another crevasse and more avalanche debris to cross. Drills pushed themselves to the front of my mind; right angles or was this loosen rucksack straps and undo belts? We continued until at last it was a change of effort - hacking at the blue ice to fashion a platform for the tent.

This place is a freezer. It is in the safe shadow of a hundred foot high serac which protects us from the worst of the wind but it meant the sun would never see this camp. Carrie is crying with frustration as she fights to put her boots on the correct feet. The ice under the tent grated as it descends another few mm down the hill. Summit day at last, about 900m of height gain and several km to cover. We crawl out, over the frozen noodles and soup, into the enveloping clouds and cold.



Huascarán, ascending frozen avalanche debris.

Four hours later we emerge into the searing raw sunlight. Our toes are numbed by front pointing up granite hard ice, our breathing is now deep and painful. Upward progress is not possible through the curtains of ice and swirls of improbable cornices. Traversing to the right brings us to a huge yawning, hungry crevasse. I have more "Voicl" like thoughts as I gingerly step on to the delicate bridge that leads to the upper mountain. We continue upwards where possible, but long traverses to avoid ramparts of overhanging ice are eating up the time and energy.

The ground eases, it is late afternoon and we have emerged onto the huge summit bulge. Carrie is very weak, the will to go on is there but her body, drained by the sustained effort of the last week, inadequate food, dehydration and the sun, is telling her, "it is time to stop." Her mind says, "keep going to the top." Three steps later her body says, "NO, this is serious, I mean it, STOP NOW! You are not half way yet." She falls into the sun softened snow gripping her axe for support. "Go on, I will stay here until you get back," I am instructed.

An hour later I am floundering in porridge. My head is spinning with fatigue. The sun and dry air has sucked the moisture from my body. A repeated wave of nausea washes over me but I lack the energy to be sick. I am standing at 6760m, the subsidiary summit, staring across a flat shimmering plateau at the furthest point from the centre of the Earth. Below me the clouds are defying gravity as they roll upwards in a dark tumbling wall. There is an hour of light left, we are both exhausted and separated by the mountain.

All thoughts of the summit are gone, life matters now. Can we survive a night in a storm without bivi equipment? I know fear, I am tasting it now.

We plunge back into the cloud. Our clothes freeze in an instant. Gravity and the desire to reach the tent before the storm strikes assist us in our downward flight. Flurries of snow chase each other in front of us. The sky and the ground are now one. We follow our fading foot prints back to the sanctuary of the tent. There is another party trying to dig a snow hole near by. We have not got the energy to join them and select an emergency crevasse to move into if the situation requires.

The shaking and rattling of the tent is continuous. Only the banging of the really severe gusts startle me now. The wind rises to a screaming crescendo, the frozen wall of the tent is pressed against me. There is a ripping sound, the snow valence? Although the tent is well dug in; snow stakes, ice

screws and axes are pinning the storm guys out, but the storm may still win by ripping the tent apart. We start get dressed in preparation to depart into the frozen darkness. The rest of the long night will be one of frightening anticipation and the relief of anti-climax. Our pathetic existence is to be controlled by nature.

Two days later Carrie and I form the "The completely f***ed off walking down hill club" as we lumber down the forest track towards the valley. Our occasional chat is of rock climbing on road side crags and not of mountains and summits. We had got so close, but at least we could return to try again next year. Getting to the top is only half way and as our Dutch travelling acquaintance had discovered the price of some summits is just too high.

We are planning to return to Peru next July. Anybody interested in meeting us at Heathrow for the onward journey to Lima please give us a ring on 0993 842636.

Mount Kenya The Ascent of Batian 5199m

9 - 11 September 1994

North Face Route - Grade IV 550m

Team

Major T Coulding APTC
 Captain A Brancher STAFFORDS
 Cpl P Doughty
 SSgt D Feest

Major D Iffland RA
 WO1 K P Edwards APTC - Guide
 LCpl R Connah
 LCpl S Evans

One of the stated aims of Exercise Territorial Dragon was an ascent of the two highest summits of Mt Kenya; Neilion 5189 mts and Batian 5199 mts. On completion of the ascent of Lenana 4995mts with the main group of thirty mountaineers a small group of nine climbers would attempt the standard South Face route. However, on inspecting the south side of the mountain from Austrian Hut the South face was found to be in semi winter conditions. An ascent of this route had not been achieved for some time as the upper half was dominated by snow and ice. Very few of the climbers had experience in the technicalities of snow and climbing. By mutual agreement any attempt to climb the mountain would have to be launched from the Northern side. This decision in fact would present the team with a demanding multi pitch severe rock climbing route at high altitude.

Following the ascent of Lenana, which proved to be invaluable as part of the acclimatisation programme, the team descended to Shiptons Camp to prepare. The now customary weather pattern dictated that we could expect clear weather from sunrise until midday followed by cloudy, misty conditions, gradually deteriorating until nightfall. The assault on Mount Batian began on 9th September 1994. The first problem that was encountered began in locating the start to the route which was not helped by conflicting guide book descriptions - two hours were wasted. Once the climb began in earnest two factors were immediately apparent, firstly climbing at altitude (16,000'-17,000' feet) and climbing with heavily laden ruck-sacks. The route followed an extremely loose couloir in the early stages with pitches of Grade III - IV, this led to an amphitheatre at 16,500' where the group decided to bivouac. An hour of snowfall was followed by a spectacular sunset and a rela-

tively comfortable night. An early start was made the following day in a lightweight dash for the summit. However, the climbing became successively more difficult and sustained until the summit ridge was attained. The exposed ridge offered a series of blind alleys to overcome until at 1338 hrs the summit of Mount Batian was reached, the highest point on Mount Kenya.

Time was now of paramount importance due to the deteriorating conditions and the necessity of regaining the bivouac site before nightfall. Descending was to prove more time consuming than anticipated. Some unroped down climbing was necessary. In the fading light abseil stations had to be manufactured with equipment being left behind. Finally in complete darkness the ropes were left for later recovery in a last effort to regain the bivouac site.

It had been a long day, 14 hours of sustained effort with little food or water. The following day began by recovering the ropes and equipment in preparation for the remaining descent. The final stages of the descent were less of a strain although moments of tension were experienced with so much loose rock.

The team felt great elation, satisfaction and well deserved pride in what they had achieved. They had remained in high spirits throughout the ascent, showing great determination and skill. A rapid descent was made to Shiptons Camp with the thought of food and fluid uppermost in their minds. A final glance back at the mountain reflecting on a great route and creditable team performance.

Mountain Huts Available to Members

This list gives details of huts maintained by mountaineering and climbing clubs who are members of the BMC which they are prepared, if there is room, to make available to member clubs and associate members.

Hut Equipment

Unless otherwise stated huts are available for both men and women and equipped with beds or bunks. If details are not given in the list it is advisable to check with the Hut Booking Secretary regarding fuel, blankets and cooking facilities. Members should take their own food and a sleeping bag.

Booking

Members wishing to make use of these facilities should approach the Booking Secretary in good time. Some clubs insist that hut bookings should be made through the Secretary of the club wishing to use a hut; if possible the Club Secretary should write to request the use of a hut.

Fair Treatment of Huts

Members who stay at the huts of other clubs do so by courtesy of the club concerned and are under an obligation to keep the hut clean and tidy. Failure to do this would bring the list and the entire arrangements into disrepute. In particular, visitors should adhere to the rules exhibited in the hut, or otherwise made known to them, and the methods of payment prescribed.

Using the Hut

If there is any difficulty in contacting the Booking Secretary at the address given on the list, the best course would be to write to the Club's Hon Secretary (addresses available from the BMC office).

England

CLUB ABMSAC/Tuesday Climbing Club
HUT George Starkey
LOCATION Patterdale, Cumbria
GRID REF 396160

20 places mixed. Drying room, bedding, cutlery, crockery, fridge, hot water, showers, flush toilets, slot meters, electric light, cooking & heating by gas and electricity, access by car £3.50 per night for BMC club affiliated members. £4.00 non-affiliated. Payment in advance. Club/group bookings only (min 8).

APPLICATIONS TO John Murray, 4 Sunny Point, Crook, nr Kendal, Cumbria LA8 8LB. Tel: 0539 821754.

CLUB Achille Ratti
HUT Dunmail
LOCATION Dunmail Rise, nr Grasmere, Cumbria
GRID REF SD 328119

Primarily for the use of parties, preferably on a weekly basis, but at off-peak times weekend bookings may be available. 38 places, fully equipped, calor cooking, flush toilets, showers, drying room, new generator installed for lighting, limited parking, bus stop. Fees available.

APPLICATIONS TO Dot Wood, 114 Aldrens Lane, Lancaster. Tel: 0524 67535.

CLUB Barrow Mountaineering & Ski Club
HUT Coppermines Cottage
LOCATION Coppermines Valley, Coniston, Cumbria
GRID REF 289986

15 places in 3 separate bedrooms. Showers, electric cooking, coal fires, flush toilets, cutlery & crockery. Access parking by car. £2.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr M W T Simpson, Station Gates, Bank Top, Ingleton, via Carnforth, Lancs LA6 3HG. Tel: 05242 41920.

CLUB Carlisle Mountaineering
HUT Newlands
LOCATION Newlands Valley, Cumbria
GRID REF 229177

16 mixed, cutlery, crockery, flush toilet, gas lighting & cooking, coke stove, access by car. £3.00 per night - parties only. £20 key deposit required.

APPLICATIONS TO Clive Barnett, 52 Keble Way, Blurton, Stoke on Trent ST3 2EY. Tel: 0782 316364.

CLUB Fylde MC
HUT Little Langdale

LOCATION 2, Newhouses, Little Langdale
GRID REF NY 315030

2 dormitories, 10 beds & 6 beds, drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, shower, flush toilets, electric light, gas cooking and fire, fridge, access by car. Parties only.

APPLICATIONS TO Cherry Earle, 15 Moorfield Ave, Carleton, Blackpool, Lancs FY6 7QE. Tel: 0253 893076.

CLUB Fylde MC
HUT Stair
LOCATION Stair, Cumbria
GRID REF NY 237210

2 dormitories, 15 & 6 beds, drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilet, electric light, cooking and heating, fridge, access by car. Parties only.

APPLICATIONS TO Cherry Earle, 15 Moorfield Ave, Carleton, Blackpool, Lancs FY6 7QE. Tel: 0253 893076.

CLUB K Fellfarers
HUT High House
LOCATION Seathwaite, Borrowdale, Keswick, Cumbria **GRID REF** LD Tourist Map 235119

18 + 7 places, drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, fridge, showers, flush toilet, electric light, calor gas and electric cooking, access by car. Parties only. £60 per night.
APPLICATIONS TO J H Taylor,
 Netherfield, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7BT.
 Tel: 0539 724343.

CLUB Lancashire Caving & Climbing Club
HUT Tranearth
LOCATION Torver, Coniston, Lakes
GRID REF 281957

20 male, 12 female. Blankets, drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, electric heating and cooking. Parties only. 3.00 per night.
 12 weeks booking notice (you must enclose an SAE).

APPLICATIONS TO Lyn Dyson, 79
 Whittle St, Walkden, Manchester M28
 5NX.

CLUB Lancashire MC
HUT Blea Tarn
LOCATION Langdale
GRID REF 295048

Sleeps 15+. Mattresses, crockery, cooking utensils, cutlery, heating, cooking and lighting by gas included in the charge.

APPLICATIONS TO Derek Miller, 35
 Lightfoot Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs.
 Tel: 0772 864753.

CLUB Northumbrian MC
HUT Bowderstone Cottage
LOCATION Borrowdale, Keswick,
 Cumbria
GRID REF LD Tourist Map 255164

20 places mixed. Three-tier alpine style bunks, cutlery, crockery, cooking utensils, gas cooking, hot water, separate flush toilets, shower, mains electricity. Parties only (min of 4 persons). £3.50 per night including electricity.

APPLICATIONS TO Ray Hepplewhite, 61
 Dominies Close, Gibside Heights,
 Rowlands Gill, Tyne & Wear NE39 1PB.
 Tel: 0207 545443.

CLUB Rucksack
HUT High Moss
LOCATION Seathwaite, Cumbria
GRID REF 237967

14 places mixed. Bedding, drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilet, electric cooking & light, solid fuel heating, access by car. £4.00 per night. Parties only.

APPLICATIONS TO D W Ashworth,
 Ashdean, Grassgarth Lane, Ings, Kendal,
 Cumbria. Tel: Staveley 821779

CLUB Yorkshire Mountaineering
HUT 3 Irish Row, Coppermine
LOCATION Coniston, Cumbria
GRID REF 293985

18 male, 12 female. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, electric/gas cooking, coal fires, flush toilets, mattresses, access by car. £2.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO M Lomas, 73 Booth
 Street, Cleckheaton, W Yorks BD19 3QA.
 Tel: 0274 870051.
CLUB Yorkshire Ramblers Club
HUT Lowstern
LOCATION Clapham, Lancaster
GRID REF 736691

12 places. Drying room, cutlery, crockery.
 £3.00 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr D M Martindale,
 1 Bede, Ave, York YO3 6ED. Tel: 0904
 654060.

CLUB Yorkshire Ramblers
HUT Low Hall Garth
LOCATION Little Langdale, Cumbria
GRID REF 309029

12 men. One large dormitory, drying room, cutlery, crockery, access by car. £3.00 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr D M Martindale,
 1 Bede Ave, York YO3 6ED. Tel: 0904
 654060.

PEAK DISTRICT

CLUB British Mountaineering Council
HUT Don Whillans Memorial Hut
LOCATION Rockhall Cottage, The
 Roaches
GRID REF 119 Map no. SK 007622

Max of 12 people, mixed, in two rooms. Full cooking and dining facilities, electric cooking, hot and cold water, drying room, showers, electric fire in lounge. No dogs, no smoking, no camping. Parking in lay-by approximately 400 yds. £3.00 per night. No person under 12 unless supervised by an adult. Payment plus £10.00 key deposit required.

APPLICATIONS TO Dave Brown, 22
 Chelmorton Drive, Normacot, Longton,
 Stoke on Trent ST3 7SA. Tel: 0782 332097.

CLUB Climbers Club
HUT R O Downes
LOCATION Calver, Derbyshire
GRID REF 249772

14 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, cooking facilities, access by car. £4.50 per night. No person under 12.

APPLICATIONS TO M H Burt, 14
 Hanbury Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton
 WV4 4BW. Tel: 0902 338282.

CLUB University of London Graduate MC
HUT Fallcliffe Cottage
LOCATION Grindleford, Derbyshire
B6001
GRID REF Peak SK 240771

15 places mixed. Electric lighting & cooking, living room, 3 bedrooms with alpine bunk beds, kitchen, washroom with shower and flush toilets. Access from road - car park. £4.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Ivor Delafield, 17
 Ellington Rd, London N10 3DD. Tel: 081
 833 7460.

CORNWALL

CLUB Climbers Club
HUT Bosigran Count House
LOCATION Pendeen, Cornwall
GRID REF 422365

15 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, cooking facilities. £4.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO M H Burt, 14
 Henbury Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton
 WV4 4BW. Tel: 0902 338282.

CLUB Achille Ratti
HUT Tyn Twr
LOCATION Bethesda

20 places. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, electricity light and cooking, blankets provided, (bring sheet or sleeping bag), flush toilets, male and female dorms and wash-rooms with electric showers, drying room, parking. £5.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Anne Wallace, 28
 Cecil Street, Sutton, St Helens WA9 3LB.

Wales

CLUB Anabasis
HUT Peter Llowarth Memorial
LOCATION Capel Curig
GRID REF 700569

15 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, flush toilet, gas lighting and cooking, access by car. £2.50 per person per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr P Metcalf, 2a Annesley Road, Wallasey, Liverpool L44 9BZ.

CLUB Bowline Climbing Club
HUT Dinorwic Mill Cottage
LOCATION Brynrefail, nr Llanberis
GRID REF SH 563625
APPLICATIONS TO Owen Merrick, Woodland Drive, Brownstone, Leicester LE3 3EA. Tel: Leicester 897067.

CLUB Bromsgrove & Redditch MC
HUT Tremadog
LOCATION Tremadog, Porthmadog
GRID REF 576405

Max 15 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, flush toilets, electric light and cooking, no blankets, access by car. Parties only.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr S Christian, 4 Spetchley Close, Walkwood, Redditch, Worcs B97 5NB. Tel: 0527 545330.

CLUB Ceunant MC
HUT Tyn Lon
LOCATION Nant Peris
GRID REF SH 608582

15 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, w.c., showers, electricity, access by car. £4.00 per night. Can accommodate 30 people mid week bookings.

APPLICATIONS TO Mrs V Beddard, 49 Vicarage Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge, West Midlands. Tel: 0384 373105.

CLUB Chamois
HUT Chamois Mountaineering Centre
LOCATION Llanrug
GRID REF 532608

40 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilets, electric light, gas cooking, access by car. £4.50 per night. 3 weeks booking notice.

APPLICATIONS TO M Pinnington, 1 Mauretania Rd, Liverpool L4 6SR. Tel: 051 525 3425.

CLUB Chester MC

HUT Pen Ceunant Uchaf
LOCATION Llanberis
GRID REF 581591

18 places mixed. Electricity, gas, coal fire, hot water, flush toilets, shower, drying room, fridge, cutlery, crockery. Vehicle access and parking. Weekend (excluding Bank Holidays) bookings £120 for 2 nights. Midweek bookings by arrangement.

APPLICATIONS TO David Kingham, Mountain View, Quarry Lane, Kelsall, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 0NJ. Tel: 0829 51275.

CLUB Climbers Club
HUT Helyg
LOCATION Capel Curig
GRID REF 694601

12 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, cooking facilities. £4.50 per night. No person under 12.

APPLICATIONS TO M Burt, 14 Hanbury Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4BW. Tel: 0902 338282.

CLUB Climbers Club
HUT Ynys Ettws (R W Lloyd)
LOCATION Nant Peris
GRID REF 623568

12 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, cooking facilities, access by car. £4.50 per night. Not available for weekend bookings. No person under 12.

APPLICATIONS TO M Burt, 14 Hanbury Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4BW. Tel: 0902 338282.

CLUB Coventry MC
HUT A T Reeve Memorial Hut, Aberderi
LOCATION Machynlleth
GRID REF Sheet 124 757078

8 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilet, electric lighting, cooking and heating, access by car. Minimum charge weekend/week £20. £3.00 per night plus electricity.

APPLICATIONS TO M Wiles, 144 Blackberry Lane, Stoke Heath, Coventry CV2 3JS. Tel: 0203 686695.

CLUB Gloucestershire MC
HUT Cefn Hoch
LOCATION Deiniolen
GRID REF SH 5833 6252

18 places, drying room (slot meter), cutlery, crockery, male and female washrooms with showers, coal fire, no blankets. Access by car, limited parking.

APPLICATIONS TO Richard Hampshire,

3 Blakes Road, Thornbury, Bristol. Tel: 0454 413401.

CLUB Gwydyr Mountain Club
HUT Tan Y Garth
LOCATION Capel Curig
GRID REF 737567

20 places mixed. Mains electricity, storage heaters, hot water, showers, flush toilets, drying room, gas cooking and heating, cutlery and crockery for 20, access by car. Weekends £2.50 per night (min £50). Midweek £2.00 per night (min £20). £10 deposit for key.

APPLICATIONS TO Paul Jensen, 75 Palm Grove, Oxton, Birkenhead, Wirral L43 1TG. Tel: 051 652 7413.

CLUB Hereford Mountain Club
HUT Ffordd-Las
LOCATION Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons National Park
GRID REF MR 26738

16 places mixed. Some mattresses, crockery, cutlery, cooking facilities, gas lighting and cooking, wood fires, elsan, car parking 500M. £2.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mac Davies, 65 Westfaling St, Hereford HR4 0JE. Tel: 0432 276557 (h) or 276558 (w).

CLUB Herefordshire Scouts
HUT Coetmor Mill
LOCATION Bethesda
GRID REF mr 611677

44 places mixed. Some crockery, but personal crockery required, drying room, hot water, showers, flush toilets, heating, mattresses, gas cooking. £2.20 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Mrs P Hall, Little Croft, Roestock Lane, Colney Heath, St Albans AL4 0QW. Tel: 0727 821113.

CLUB Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland
HUT Glanafon Cottage
LOCATION Glanafon St, Bethesda, Gwynedd, North Wales

15 places mixed. Additional floor space, cutlery, crockery, pots and pans etc, hot water, gas fires, electricity light, washroom, two toilets, fridge, hot shower, car access. Kindred clubs £1.50. Other £3.00.

APPLICATIONS TO Peter Whitechurch, 1 Dale Cottages, Tangier Lane, Frant, Tunbridge Wells TN3 9HE.

CLUB Karabiner Mountaineering
HUT Ty Powdwr
LOCATION nr Deiniolen overlooking Llanberis, Gwynedd
GRID REF 585609

17 places weekends in 2 rooms. 23 places midweek in three rooms. Alpine bunks, fully equipped, gas and electric, hot showers, male and female toilets, drying room, large lounge, ample parking. £3.00 per night. £40 deposit. Recognised groups only. 8 weeks booking notice. Midweek use especially welcome (special rates may be available).

APPLICATIONS TO Mrs M R Williams, 25 Hampton Rd, Chorltoncum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LA. Tel: 061 881 8314.

CLUB Lancashire MC

HUT Beddgelert

GRID REF 598487

Sleeps 15+. Mattresses, crockery, cooking utensils, lighting by gas.

APPLICATIONS TO Derek Miller, 35 Lightfoot Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs. Tel: 0772 864753.

CLUB Liverpool MC

HUT 18 Cwmorthin Road, Tan y

Grisiau, Blaenau, Ffestiniog

LOCATION **Moelwyns**

GRID REF 684453

10/12 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, wc, hot water, electric cooker, mattresses (no blankets), electric light and heating, drying rack, access by car. £2.50 per night. £10 per night minimum charge. £5 key deposit.

APPLICATIONS TO David E Savage, 124 Inner Forum, Norris Green, Liverpool L11 5BQ. Tel: 051 226 9660.

CLUB London MC

HUT Fronwydyr

LOCATION **Nant Peris**

GRID REF 606588

12 places mixed in 2-6 bed rooms. Mattresses & pillows, drying room, cutlery, crockery, fridge, hot water, shower, flush toilet, electric light, gas cooking, storage heaters, private parking for cars or minibus. Minimum booking 6 places; bookings accepted up to one year in advance. £10 deposit required with booking. Fees (per night inclusive of gas and electricity): Adults £3.00. Under 18s £1.50.

APPLICATIONS TO Mrs K McElligott, 5 de Clare Court, Buckingham MK18 1XD. Tel: 0280 815409 (ansaphone).

CLUB Merseyside MC

HUT Cae'r Fran

LOCATION **Llanberis**

GRID REF 570596

13 places mixed. Drying room, bedding, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush

toilet, access by car. £2.50 per night. 6 weeks booking notice, unused pre-booked beds half price.

APPLICATIONS TO D Graham, 4 Muncaster Drive, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 8NR. Tel: 074488 3306.

CLUB Mountaineering Club of North Wales

HUT Tal y Braich

LOCATION **Capel Curig**

GRID REF 700604

10 male, 4 female weekend. (12 and 6 mid week). Bunk beds and mattresses, cutlery, crockery, flush toilets, slot meter for lights and hot water, electric light, gas cooking, car park. £2.50 per night (please check). £20 key deposit. 12 weeks booking notice.

APPLICATIONS TO Nigel Harvey, 14 Broad Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1NG. Tel: 0584 878479 or 75293 (e).

CLUB Mynydd Climbing Club

HUT Blaen y Nant

LOCATION **Llanrwst**

GRID REF 738603

26 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, electric shower, flush toilets, electric light, gas cooking, access by car. £3.00 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO J Horsey, 21 Keinsington St, Gee Cross, Hyde. Tel: 061 368 1200.

CLUB Northamptonshire Mountaineers

HUT 3, Gefnan, Bethesda

LOCATION **North Wales**

GRID REF SH 607654

16 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilets, access by car. £80 per weekend - 2 nights for 16 persons. Smaller groups on application.

APPLICATIONS TO R Phillips, 16 Blandford Avenue, Kettering, Northants. Tel: Kettering 512318.

CLUB North London

HUT Bryn Brethynau

LOCATION **Capel Curig**

GRID REF 737572

30 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, shower, flush toilet, electric light, gas cooking and wood stove, car parking 100 yds. £3.00 per night and £30 deposit required.

APPLICATIONS TO Allen Bordoley, 18 Ravensdale Ave, North Finchley, London N12 9HS. Tel: 081 445 9484.

CLUB Oread MC

HUT Tan Y Wyddfa

LOCATION **Rhyd Ddu**

GRID REF Outdoor Leisure 17 - 571535

16 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, showers, flush toilet, electric light, gas cooking and heating, access by car. £1.50 per night with reciprocal rights. Other guests £4.00. £30 deposit required.

APPLICATIONS TO Colin Hobday, Einhorn, 28 Cornhill, Allestree, Derby DE22 2FS. Tel: Derby 551594.

CLUB Oxford MC

HUT Cefn Garw

LOCATION **Pentrefoelas**

20 places. Alpine bunks, mattresses, no blankets, gas cooking, cutlery, crockery, hot water, 2 flush toilets, multifuel stove heating, slot meter for extra electric heating and drying, access by car. £3.00 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO Ray Humphreys, 8 St Leonards Court, Reading Road, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 9EY. Tel: 0491 839414

CLUB Rockhoppers MC

HUT Garth Barn

LOCATION **nr Plas y Brenin, Capel**

Curig

GRID REF 701571

15 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, gas cooking, tilley lighting, coal/wood stove, no bedding, karrimats required, access by car. Camping, water and toilets nearby. £2.00 per night. 4 weeks booking notice. £5.00 deposit for key. Recognised group bookings only.

APPLICATIONS TO David Bone, 2 Wentworth Road, Golders Green, London NW11 0RX.

CLUB Rucksack

HUT Beudy Mawr

LOCATION **Nant Peris**

GRID REF 616576

11 places mixed. Bedding, drying room, cutlery, crockery, flush toilet, hot water, shower, electric lighting and cooking, access by car. £4.00 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO P Roberts, 63 Houghton Lane, Swinton, Manchester M27 3DZ. Tel: 061 794 3724.

CLUB Rugby MC

HUT Cwm Eigiau Cottage

LOCATION **Cwm Eigiau, above**

Dolgarrog

GRID REF 714638 SH 115

12 places mixed. Bedding, cutlery, crockery,

gas cooking and lighting, coke stove. £3.00 per night. £20 booking deposit.

APPLICATIONS TO N J Morris, 4 Willowmead, Northfield Road, Laleham, Staines, Middx. Tel: 0784 462707.

CLUB Shrewsbury MC
HUT Clwt y Bel
LOCATION Deiniolen, nr Llanberis
GRID REF 592630

15 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, electric light, hot water, meter, shower, flush toilet, pot stove in common room, gas cooking, car parking. Groups only.

APPLICATIONS TO M S Jones, Breidden House, Alderbury, Shrewsbury. Tel: 0743 884592.

CLUB Solihull MC
HUT Bryn Golua
LOCATION SH860153 Dinas Mawddy, southern Snowdonia

16 places in two rooms, mattresses, cooking utensils, gas lighting and cooking, shower, wood stove, drying area, large living room.

APPLICATIONS TO Jan Freeman, 5 Rodney Rd, Solihull. Tel: 021 722 3039.

CLUB South Wales MC
HUT Llety Llwyd
LOCATION Deiniolen, nr Llanberis
GRID REF 581650

2 bedrooms 8 + 16, drying room, shower, gas central heating and cooking, electric light, car parking 100 yds. £3.50 per night. £3.00 mid week per person. £30.00 deposit.

APPLICATIONS TO Hut Warden SWMC, 37 Mortimer Road, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF1 9LA. Tel: 0222 344621.

CLUB St Helens MC
HUT Capel Garmon
LOCATION nr Betws y Coed

10 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, gas cooking, electric light and sink water heater, open fire in kitchen, portable gas heater, chemical toilet, car park 600 yds.

APPLICATIONS TO A Wallace, 28 Cecil St, Sutton, St Helens, Merseyside WA9 3LB.

CLUB The Mountain Club
HUT Bryn Hafod
LOCATION Dinas Mawddwy
GRID REF 853194

18 places mixed. Drying room, cutlery, crockery, kitchen utensils, shower, w.c, hot water, generator, electric light, gas cooking, coal fire, no blankets, car parking 10 mins. £2.50 per night. Official club meets only. Minimum 6.

APPLICATIONS TO A Cox, 1 Manor Cottage, Wood Eaton, Church Eaton, Stafford ST20 0BB.

CLUB University of London
HUT Caseg Fraith
LOCATION Capel Curig
GRID REF SH 684601

30 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, flush toilets, central heating, hot water, shower, electric cookers, access by car. Non members £5.00 per night. Club bookings in advance only no individual bookings. Often worthwhile checking late availability
APPLICATIONS TO Dr John Terry, 19 Chantry Close, Chapelgarth, Sunderland SR3 2SL. Tel: 091 528 6467.

CLUB Vagabond MC
HUT Pant y Fron
LOCATION Nant Peris
GRID REF 606588

21 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, flush toilet, electric lighting, gas cooking, coal/wood fire, mattresses but no blankets, coal store outside, access by car with parking. 3 weeks notice for bookings.

APPLICATIONS TO C Thomas, 41 Lloyd Drive, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside L49 1RQ. Tel: 051 678 0928.

CLUB Wessex MC
HUTP en y Clogwyn
LOCATION Betws Y Coed
GRID REF 795556

12 places mixed on alpine style bunks. Cutlery, crockery, cooking utensils, calor gas cooking and lighting, hot water, flush toilets, shower, drying room. Phone booking accepted. £2.00 per night. £10 deposit required.

APPLICATIONS TO G Hemsley, 26 Canford Avenue, Wallisdown, Bournemouth BH11 8RX. Tel: 0202 531330.

CLUB Wolverhampton MC
HUT Tal y Braich
LOCATION Deiniolen, nr Llanberis
GRID REF 587625

12 places mixed. Cutlery, crockery, hot water, shower, mattresses, flush toilet, gas cooking, coal fires, access by car. £2.25 per night. No person under 16.

APPLICATIONS TO Mr M Burt, 14 Hanbury Cres, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4BW. Tel: 0902 338282.

Scotland

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland now produces its own list of Scottish club huts which is available from the MC of S National Officer, Flat 1R, 71 King St, Crieff, Perthshire PH7 3HB. Tel: 0764 4962. The price to non-members is £1.

CLUB BMC and MC of S
HUT Alex Macintyre Memorial Hut
LOCATION North Ballachulish
GRID REF 044612

16 places. Mattresses, drying room, hot water, showers, electric cooking, cutlery, crockery, coal provided 1st Oct to end April, electric heating in dormitories - 50p meter. Microwave in kitchen. £3.00 per night. Payment to be made at time of book-

ing. Bookings only accepted from clubs and individuals affiliated to MC of S, BMC and their guests.

APPLICATIONS TO Brent Eggo, 2 Ormond Crt, Larbert, Stirlingshire, FK5 4PE. Tel: 0324 554452.

CLUB BMC and MC of S
HUT Glen Brittle Memorial Hut
LOCATION Glen Brittle, Isle of Skye

GRID REF 412216

18 places. Bedding, drying room, showers, slot meter (50p), all electric. Hut open 1st April to 31st October and at other times by arrangement. £2.50 per night.

APPLICATIONS TO: J Simpson, 15 Branks Avenue, Chapelton, nr Strathaven, Lanarkshire ML10 6RL. Tel: 0357 300533).

Alternative Accommodation in Bunkhouse Centres, Houses etc.

WALES

ABERCRAVE OUTDOOR PURSUITS CENTRE, Heol Tawe, Abercrave, nr Swansea, Tel: Abercrave 252. Centre available to parties wanting accommodation only and self-catering - sleeps 29.

CECIL LODGE OUTDOOR PURSUITS CENTRE, Spa Road, Llandrindod Wells, Powys. Contact Sue or Mike Colton. Can cater for groups up to 32 in twin-bedded rooms.

JESSE JAMES BW KHOUSE, Penisarwaun, nr Llanberis, Gwynedd. Grid Ref: 566638. Independent hostel with accommodation for 24 in 3 dorms in main bunkhouse, plus 8 in chalet. NO SMOKING. Fully equipped kitchen, gas fire, showers, washrooms, B & B or meals by arrangement, flush toilets, offroad private parking. MIAC Warden. Approved director and base for ML courses. Also semi-det cottage and flat. B & B or menus by arrangements. Tel/Ansaphone 0286 870521.

OLD SCHOOL BUNKHOUSE, Bwlch Derwin, Pant Glas, Gwynedd LL51 9EQ. Grid reference 456 474. Sleeps 16+ in two rooms. Well equipped kitchen area with gas and electric cooking, electric lighting and gas heating. Drying space, hot water, wash basins, flush toilets. Ample off-road parking. Camping also available. Provisions can be bought at the house. Contact Terry or Joan on 0286 660 701.

OUTDOOR ALTERNATIVE, Rhoscolyn, Anglesey. GR SH 278752. Quality outdoor centre sleeps 36 persons (max 6 per room); Excellent facilities, catered or self-catering, also camping. Close cliffs. Contact Ian and Margaret Wright, Cerrig yr Adar, Rhoscolyn, Holyhead, Gwynedd LL65 2NQ. Tel: 0407 860469.

ENGLAND

LAKE DISTRICT

BLENCATHRA CENTRE, 1,000ft up on the slope of Blencathra. Contact Blencathra Centre, Threlkeld, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4SG. Tel: 07687 79601. Offers, self-catering, hostels and cottage.

BROOKWOOD HALL, Whicham Way, nr Millom, Cumbria LA8 5JS. Tel: 0229 772329. High quality Norwegian Lodges, sleeping up to 6. Self-catering, all facilities.

BROTHERSWATER INN B WKHOUSE. Contact Mrs Livingstone on 08532 350. 8 bunkbeds, hot and cold water, shower and toilet.

CATHOLES FARM. 1.5M from Sedberg. Grid Ref: 20334. Contact J S Handley, Catholes Farm, Milnthorp, Sedbergh, Cumbria. Tel: 05396 20334. Bunk accommodation up to 15 in 4 rooms, all facilities.

KILN HALL BARN. Superior hostel accommodation on east side of Bassenthwaite Lake, 7 miles from Keswick, 23 miles from Carlisle. Contact Mr & Mrs J K Armstrong, Kiln Hall Barn, Bassenthwaite, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4RG. Tel: 07687 454.

LAKELAND CAMPING BARNES. 6 camping barns spread throughout Cumbria. £2.00 per person per night. Contact The National Park Information Centre, 31 Lake Road, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5DQ. Tel: 07687 72803, Fax: 07687 73790 Tel: 07687 79601.

STRIDING EDGE HOSTEL, Greenside, on the slopes of Helvellyn. Contact The National Park Information Centre - as above.

YMCA NATIONAL CENTRE, Bell Cottage, Greenside Mine, Glenridding, nr Penrith, Cumbria - self-catering cottage sleeping 16. Grid Ref: 367174. Bookings through YMCA National Centre, Lakeside, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8BD. Tel: 05395 31758.

YORKSHIRE

BARDEN TOWER, Grid Ref: 40504572. Contact R D Hodgson/J M Parkinson, Barden Tower, Barden, Skipton, N Yorks. Tel: 0756 720616. Bunkhouse, sleeps up to 20, all facilities.

DUB COTE FARM. Sleeps up to 14 in bunks, all facilities. Contact Mrs J Glasgow, Dub Cote Farm, Horton in Ribblesdale, Settle, Nth Yorks. Tel: 072 860 238.

GRANGE FARM. Grid Ref: 929780 in lower Langstrothdale. Contact Mrs A Falshaw, Grange Farm, Hubberholme, nr Skipton, Nth Yorks BD23 5JE. Tel: 0756 760259.

THE PUNCH BOWL INN. Grid Ref: 987984 Swaledale, Reeth/Muker Road. Sleeps 10 in bunkhouse accommodation,

all facilities. Group rooms available. Pub attached. Contact Pete Roe, The Punch Bowl, Low Row, Upper Swaledale, Richmond, Nth Yorks. Tel: 0748 86233.

WEST END OUTDOOR CENTRE, Whitmoor Farm, West End, Summerbridge, Harrogate HG3 4BA. Sleeps 30 people in 9 bedrooms with bunk beds, including leaders en suite accommodation with private cooking and lounge facilities. Well equipped main kitchen with electric Aga cooker, fridge and freezer, full central heating, toilets, wash basins and showers, drying room, dining room, bar lounge (bring your own beer), pool table (small charge), conference/training room. Ample car parking. £6 per night. Sole use of Centre £160 per night Bank Holidays, £150 any other night. 50% deposit on confirmation of booking. Contact John and Margaret Verity on 0943 880207.

PEAK DISTRICT

FIRST YOUTH SELF CATERING CENTRE, Ashton Lane, Hope, Sheffield. Tel: 061 273 7364, Fax: 061 273 5748. Selfcatering accommodation for groups up to 19, available all year round. 5 miles from Edale.

HOPTON COTTAGES (12), THE WHARFE SHED (28), GRIN LOW COTTAGE (16). Contact County Planning, Highways Officer, Derbyshire County Council, Matlock, Derbyshire. Tel: 0629 580000. Fully equipped.

ORCHARD FARM, Cauldron, nr Waterhouses, Staffs. Grid Ref: SK 082494. Sleeps 58 in six rooms. All facilities. 20 minutes from The Roaches. Contact Mrs I R Mansfield, 38 Cross St, Ware, Herts SG12 7AH. Tel: 0920 462863.

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK CAMPING BARNES. You will need normal camping equipment, except tent! Tel: 0433 620373 for free leaflet and booking details. Losehill Barn, Castleton. Sleeps 8. Key from Losehill Hall. Grid Ref: 153838.

Abney Barn. Sleeps 8. Key from Ivy House Farm. Grid Ref: 198798.

One Ash Grange Barn, Monyash. Sleeps 12. Key from One Ash Grange. Grid Ref: 169642.

Cotefield Farm, Edale. Sleeps 8. Grid Ref: 132860.

Upper Booth Farm, Edale. Sleeps 12. Grid Ref: 103854.

Bank Top House Farm, Bakewell. Sleeps 8. Grid Ref: 210681.

Barn Farm, Birchover. Sleeps 10. Grid Ref: 241622.

Nab End Farm, Hollingsclough. Sleeps 16. Grid Ref: 077662.

Fenns Farm, Butterton. Sleeps 15. Grid Ref: 087561.

Fenns Farm, Butterton. Sleeps 6. Grid Ref: 083564.

Tanyard Farm, Old Glossop. Sleeps 12. Grid Ref: 048948.

The Woodlands, Taddington. Sleeps 6. Grid Ref: 145710.

PINDALE FARM OUTDOOR

CENTRE. Contact A Medhurst, Pindale Farm, Pindale Lane, Hope, nr Sheffield S30 2RN. Tel: 0433 620111. Comprises The Engine House - self contained unit for up to 8.

The Barn - six independent self-catering units (two to sleep 10, four to sleep 8, some accommodation for disabled people). Plus camping 16 pitches = 64 people.

SOUTH WEST

COMPASS WEST ADVENTURE,

Sennen, nr Land's End, Cornwall. Tel: 0736 871447. Bunkhouse available only during May and June.

Sang Froid or Myopia

In the summer of '80 I was with an expedition on the NE coast of Greenland. We had landed at the head of Bessels Fjord and then climbed and trekked our way east and south. Every ten days or so we arrived at a supply of rations and fuel which the RAF had kindly airdropped a couple of months earlier. It was an idyllic way of life.

Towards the end of July some of us had reached the southern part of Hochstetters Forland just inland from Peters Bugt where yet another supply drop had been positioned. Derek and I enthusiastically investigated the first pallet we reached while Tim wandered further down the gentle slope to investigate the second. With the expectation of one or two luxury items in the load the attention of Derek and I was totally on what we might find as we unpacked it. However I did sense that someone was standing patiently near.

Among his many other attributes 'Tim is a gentleman to his fingertips and he would not have dreamt of interrupting someone until there was a suitable pause in their activity. However I stopped my rummaging and straightened up. "Er, John, I think there's a polar bear at the other pallet, but I'm not sure. I couldn't see very well and it might be just the white parachute billowing in the wind."

At the words 'polar bear' Derek and I grabbed for our cameras and set off half running in the direction of the other pallet. Tim, who in addition to being a gentleman also has a lot of prudent commonsense reached for the rifle we were carrying as an anti-polar bear device. I am not much into weapons but someone said it was

a .308 Winchester Safari rifle. As far as I could make out you had to load each round separately and then it went bang and the bullet 'thingy' came out of the end of that bit of piping which most weapons seem to have.

As Derek and I ran forward Tim was following us and trying to load the rifle at the same time so that the bear could be discouraged if the need arose. I am told that it is better to have people with loaded weapons in front of one but neither Derek nor I had done the right course at the School of Infantry so we were obviously bullet proof and it didn't matter.

The 'billowing parachute' was, in fact, a bear who looked up at our approach, did not like what he - or perhaps it was she since it is difficult to inspect the genitalia of a polar bear at a distance - saw and shambled off but with many a baleful, backward look. Arriving at the pallet we understood why the bear had directed 'looks that could kill' at us. He had found the packets of sugar and boiled sweets and to a bear those must be second only to honey (remember Pooh ?) as an attraction.

We had no more visits from that bear but heard later from another member of the expedition who had met one while engaged in that most delicate of operations which requires the adoption of the Asiatic squatting position with ones trousers round ones ankles. He was caught short in more ways than one but perhaps that bear was also a gentleman and looked the other way to avoid embarrassment to both parties. John Muston.



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The Mountain Leader Training Board has been providing training for leaders, instructors and supervisors for thirty years. Its awards are recognised by the Department for Education and by many other civilian organisations. While the services have always maintained strong links with the MLTB, the two organisations have recently been working towards harmonising military and civilian awards.

Mountainwalking Leader Award

It is now possible to attend Unit Expedition Leader and Joint Services Mountain Expedition Leader courses as an MLTB candidate. Provided you have already registered with the MLTB, the UEL course will count as training for the Mountainwalking Leader Award and the subsequent JSMEL course as assessment. Even if you didn't register with us but have got a UEL or JSMEL award then you could be eligible for exemption from training for the ML scheme.

Single Pitch Supervisors Award

The Single Pitch Supervisors Award, introduced in 1992, is available to anyone with a genuine interest in climbing and group supervision. While the military and civilian awards are not yet harmonised, JSRCI, Rock Leader or even Top Roping & Abseiling awards would be considered as part of an application for exemption from training for the SPSA scheme.

Mountain Instructor Award

If you already have a Mountainwalking Leader Award (Summer) and substantial rock climbing and instructional experience then you can apply to register with the MIA scheme. For registration details and further information on any of these awards, complete the coupon below and send to:
MLTB, Capel Curig, Gwynedd, LL24 0ET.



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