



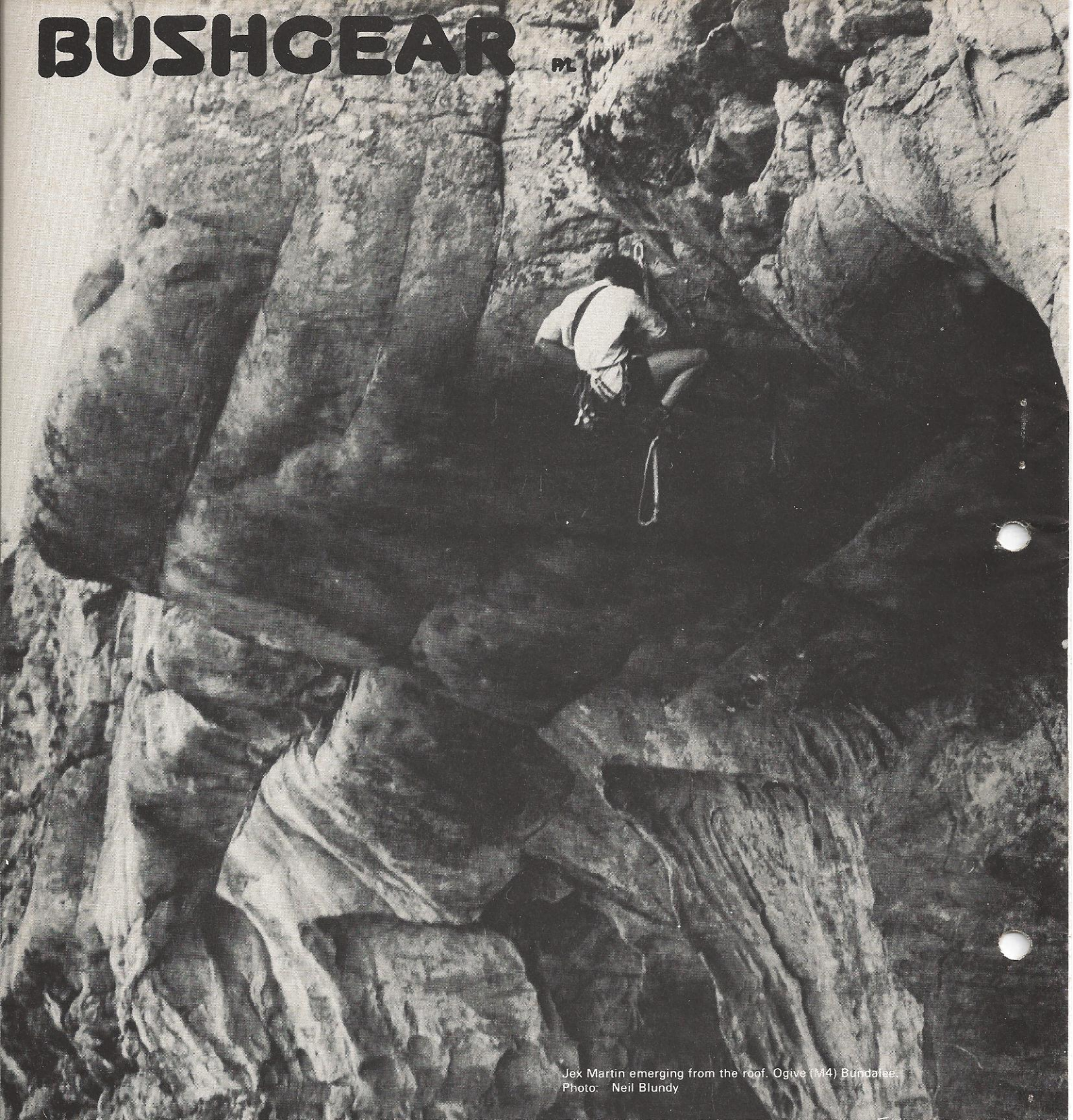
Jaffa Vale, Walls of Jerusalem, Tasmania.
Photo: John Chapman

MOUNTAINEER MARCH

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BUSHGEAR PT.



Jex Martin emerging from the roof. Ogive (M4) Bundalee.
Photo: Neil Blundy

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NEW NATIONAL PARKS IN VICTORIA

Michael Keller

Until recently Victoria has had the dubious distinction of having the worst national park record of any Australian state. On the 19th December, 1978, an act was passed by the Victorian Parliament. This act will result in the largest single increase in size in Victoria's park system ever. The total area of parks will almost triple - from 260,000 hectares to 775,000 hectares - and the number of parks will increase from 35 to 26 national parks, 9 other parks) to 55 (30 national parks, 25 other parks). The new parks are to come into being in two stages.

The first stage will occur on 26th April, 1979 when the National Parks Service assumes management of Baw Baw, Croajingalong, Snowy River and Tingaringy national parks, Discovery Bay, Gippsland Lakes, Mount Samaria, Cape Nelson, Coopracambra, Steiglitz, Cathedral Range, and the Pink Lakes parks, and the Big Desert wilderness park. In addition to these new parks there will also be extensions to Wyperfeld, Brisbane Ranges, Fraser, Mount Worth, Werribee Gorge, and Warby Range parks.

The second stage will occur on 26th April, 1980 when the National Parks Service assumes management of Wabonga Plateau, Chiltern, Beechworth, Eildon, Mt. Samaria, Yea River, Lake Albacutya, and Murray River parks.

All these parks arise from Final Recommendations made by the Land Conservation Council for the Melbourne, Mallee, East Gippsland and Northeastern - Districts 3, 4, 5 Study Areas during the previous two years. The government has now approved of all the parks recommended by the L.C.C. to be managed by the National Parks Service in these 3 study areas except for the proposed 8500 ha. Moondarra park north of Moe and the 1200 ha. Tyers park north of Yallourn.

Undoubtedly this represents some of the best news we have heard in years. Substantial gains have been made. But we should also remember the substantial losses, particularly in East Gippsland where we lost an excellent wilderness area in the Snowy River region and where the overwhelming majority of the forests have been allocated to the timber industry. This includes some of Victoria's few remaining wilderness areas. We can only try to have this land allocated to the National Parks Service the next time it is considered by the L.C.C. It is something we must fight for.

Unfortunately the act of 19th December also contains some undesirable amendments to the National Parks Act of 1975. One of these amendments has the effect of allowing logging to occur within a national park subject to an agreement between the National Parks Service director and the Forests Commission. The logging can occur in areas specified by the L.C.C. and appears to be under the general supervision of the Forests Commission although the National Parks Service director must agree to many of the details first. One can only be extremely apprehensive about any involvement of the Forests Commission and logging in parks, given their record of mismanagement elsewhere. Previously there was no provision in the National Parks Act for Forests Commission - supervised logging within national parks. It is now abundantly clear that the L.C.C. will propose national parks in the alps but these parks will be subjected to logging in their most sensitive areas.

Another amendment makes further provision for hunting in parks and is against the interests of conservation. Although there are some flaws in the act, as discussed above, it is still one of the most important pieces of legislation seen in this state from our point of view. It should encourage us to fight harder for the alps and the remaining valuable areas in East Gippsland - we can achieve something if we try.

ON MOIR'S MATE

Nick Reeves

A GOOD CLIMB IN THE DARRANS, N.Z.

One of the classic rock climbs of the Darran Mountains is the Bowen/Allan Corner on Moir's Mate. This face contains steep slabs and lies above the Cheddar Valley and the Milford Road. The route is 1000' long and has pitches graded 15/16. The climb, two brisk hours from Homer Hut, commences from 9 series of terraces called the "Cheddar Ledges". Below these, steep rock and snowgrass falls away to the tunnel entrance; a delightful combination of grey and green.

Arriving in the Darrans after five days of storm Ed and I found the face with little snow but very wet. We soloed up easily for sixty feet across sloping ledges. It was a mistake to solo as it resulted in an uncomfortable belay position when difficulties suddenly appeared. Crouched in a poor stance, with my weight upon one toe, I cursed the slow nature of Ed's lead. Gradually he worked his way up the greasy, slanting crack, taking an inordinant amount of time for each move.

This early pitch needed care as its layback moves, generally wet, have thrown off many a climber. Only weeks before, the greasy holds had provided the essential stage props for a dramatic rendition of the seventy foot plummet by a bumbly Kiwi. However, Ed made a graceful exit over the bulge and we collected the additional bonus of an abandoned abseil nut and karabiner. Carrying the pack, this pitch provided me with hard moves. In the interests of speed (and my health) I hung onto jams at the bulge and chanted "tight rope!" Ed realised the subtle nuances of my shouts and moved easily, if slightly unethically, over the smooth wet ground.

It was my good fortune that Ed had led the difficult pitches on the lower section of the climb. I could roundly curse the slow leads and, basking in the security of the top rope, jauntily complete the difficult moves. Alas, traversing along the ramps heading up to the base of the corner by luck, like my climbing, ran slower.

From a small stance below a loose block, around which I had hopefully draped a sling, I gazed leftwards. The futility, no, stupidity of climbing this bloody wall, wet after snowfalls, became apparent. Ten feet away the ramp ceased; replaced by seventy feet of slimey slabs. Below was a long roof above which we were to traverse and beneath that was space and the Milford Road! Protection seemed sparse and the groove which provided the obvious route was a creek. As I traversed further from the bollard my face fell as low as the droop in the rope.

On a large wall when facing a large fall one cannot allow oneself the luxury of fright. Committed to any pitch, concentration is needed to work out the required moves. The absorbed interest thus gained is one of the great attractions of climbing.

The creek, upon inspection, revealed itself to be a mere trickle and the wet rock provided surprisingly good friction. A small angle peg provided a much needed runner and, after some tentative efforts, grateful fingers at full stretch curled around a vital jug. A ledge soon followed. A similar lead by Ed moved us towards the corner, and the finish of the dreaded wet ramps.

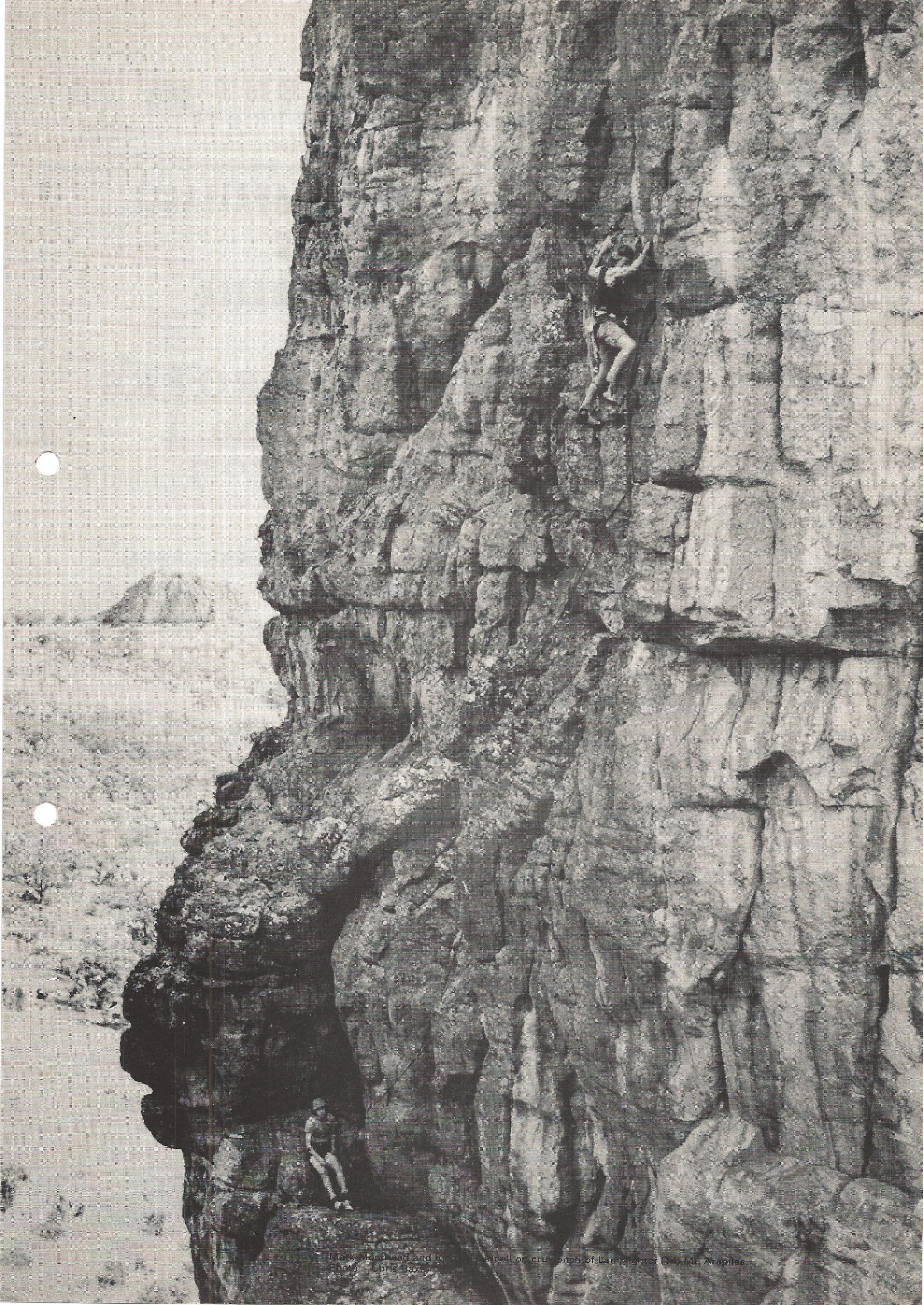
The final pitches of the Bowen/Allan Corner, by common acclaim, provide two of the best pitches of climbing in the Darrans. Certainly, these pitches would grace any crag. A clean corner with two bulges splits the short, but looming headwall. Compact rock with chiselled holds allows elegant moves in exciting positions.

Ed led the corner pitch, neatly laybacking the flakes, resting from the occasional good jamb. Each move enabled adequate holds to be reached for the next. The atmosphere was that of a crag. With excellent belays and protection we forgot the wet slabs below. There was blue sky and the top seemed close.

From a belay niche I moved onto a steep wall. Swinging moves on sharp incuts enabled a stance to be reached above the first roof. Jams swallowed my hands and the second roof succumbed. At a good ledge it seemed all over: but a slanting slab held a final sting. Feet scrambled for holds as laybacks were made with ever smaller holds. Just below the top, balance was lost and it took several attempts before the finish was reached.

At the summit we munched scroggin, drank our Refresh, and spoke of the climb. Darran peaks, covered with snow, were there to be gazed at. With a relatively easy descent the transition from the nervous alertness whilst climbing to a relaxed gutz on the summit is miraculously brief.

An ascent of the Bowen/Allen Corner, Moir's Mate by Ed Neve and Nick Reeves in February 1979.



Mark Mond lead and Chris Daxell on crux pitch of Lampighter (14) Mt. Arapiles.
Photo: Chris Daxell



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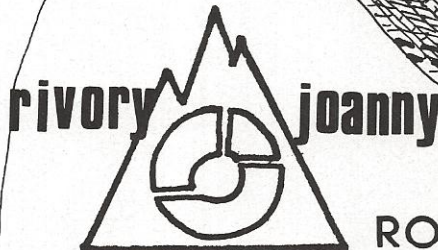
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TIMBER SUPPLIES IN THE VICTORIAN ALPS

Michael Feller

In the Victorian alps the major force against national park reservation is the timber industry. Representatives of this industry have vociferously claimed that the hardwood eucalypt forests in the alps are absolutely essential to supply Victoria's future timber needs.

In the Land Conservation Council's Alpine Study Area Report on P.197 appears a figure which plots the estimated future supply and demand for sawlog timber in Victoria. This figure shows a large gap between future supply and future demand, thus emphasising the need to have as much forest area as possible available for timber production to minimise the anticipated imports which would be needed to bridge the gap between supply and demand. This figure was supplied to the L.C.C. by the Forests Commission.

The projected future demand has been criticised by many people because it assumes that the future per capita consumption will be exactly what it was in 1975, despite the fact that all other published estimates from forestry sources estimate that the future per capita consumption will be lower than at present. Thus, the expected difference between supply and demand would be less than that indicated in the figure.

The projected future supply is made up of softwoods (pines) and eucalypts (hardwoods) which, to a large extent, are interchangeable. Thus, the more softwood we have, the fewer hardwoods we need, and vice versa. The figure in the report estimates both the future softwood and the future hardwood supplies. Many people were completely astounded by the projected future softwood supplies in the figure because they were greatly different from all other published data. They were much less than all other such data. For example, ³ for the year 1980, the L.C.C. figure indicates a softwood supply of 203,000 m³ compared to figures of 440,000 - 530,000 m³ from 4 other reports. By showing such low softwood supplies, the figure in the report has the effect of emphasising a "need" to have the hardwood eucalypt forests of the alps remain available for logging.

This anomaly was pointed out to the L.C.C. by many people, and was also pointed out in the F.V.W.C. submission. It resulted in numerous complaints to the Forests Commission and government ministers involving accusations of the Forests Commission "rigging" figures for the benefit of the timber industry. Among all the letters sent out was one by Dr. John French of the Native Forests Action Council, to the Forests Commission seeking clarification as to which figures were correct. A reply to his letter, dated the 26th October, 1978, was sent by R.J. Grose of the Forests Commission. This letter stated that supply figures were currently being revised but - "Pending the outcome of this revision the estimates presented (by the Forests Commission) to the Industrial Assistance Commission in 1977 would be appropriate for you to use as a reference in preparing your submission to the L.C.C."

The Industries Assistance Commission softwood availability figures are several times higher than those in the L.C.C. Alpine Report and the Forests Commission has now conceded that the I.A.C. figures are to be preferred, i.e. that the data in the Alpine Report is incorrect.

This severely weakens the timber industry arguments against an alpine national park and points out yet again that information presented by the Forests Commission cannot be trusted. In recent years such information has been found to be blatantly false and biased to favour the timber industry. Finally, however, we may be forcing out the truth.

ORIENTEERING IN THE WET

BRISBANE RANGES EVENT 10TH NOVEMBER 1978

John Turner

Although threatened by two petrol strikes and the prospect of a 'Total Fire Ban', MUMC orienteers turned up in strength on the Saturday, Kathy Liley drove all the way from Sale, just for the event.

Mike Waterfield had checked the anti-venene at Bacchus Marsh Hospital. The first sign of problems ahead was when the Met. Bureau contingent (a third of MUMC's strength) turned up with gum boots and parkas whilst the rest of us were dressed in shorts, t-shirts and runners!

It started to rain in earnest about three o'clock Saturday, but it also brought with it a thick mist which made it difficult to put the markers out by 5.30.

After a good attempt at jocularly around the fire everyone went to bed early.

At 6.30 a.m. the rain was still pounding down and we found we were camping in a lake at the end of a new watercourse. All the tents had suffered. The Registration and Finish were flattened and everything stored safely inside the night before was now awash. We were later to find that over 100mm of rain had fallen overnight - surely a record for a Victorian event.

The first arrivals on Sunday walked three miles from a section of flooded road but we had 26 helpers for a total of 73 competitors. Surely a record ratio!

However, amongst this select few (the VOA hardcore?) we had two interstate competitors, one from NSW (Garingal) and one from SA (Tintookies). They both declared their intention to try a Victorian event and we did our best to assure them that this was not typical. Both declared themselves pleased with their day's orienteering.

We also had one only first-time competitor and he enjoyed it so much that having completed the novice course he went out again on 'C' course. We have obviously offered him a free membership to MUMC!

Streams had of course appeared overnight but a waterfall with a control in the middle was asking a bit too much so we moved that one. Most people found the others, even those nine-tenths submerged. Only the Editor took literally our instruction that course 3 included a three mile swim - against the tide!

The rain finally stopped 24 hours after it started. The final bizarre sight was of one hundred gallons of drinking water, transported from Melbourne and placed round the courses, and now being poured onto a landscape already suitable for rowing boats.

We intended this to be an unusual type of event and it turned out to be just that. For those unfortunate enough to miss it, we intend running it again in the autumn, virtually unchanged, weather permitting.

Page Missing

It has been traditional for bushwalking parkas to be a compromise. The oiled japara long revered by New Zealanders and Australians was a greasy, messy garment which inevitably lost its waterproofness at the most unfortunate times. The coated nylon fabrics, eg. Cagjars seemed to keep out the weather more effectively but were often uncomfortable to wear due to excessive condensation inside.

Goretex has changed all this. It allows a garment to be waterproof and yet breathe freely. Goretex is in fact a very thin membrane of a PTFE resin which has some 9 billion pores per square inch. These pores are so small as to effectively block liquid water and yet large enough to allow vapour through. Vapour escapes from within a Goretex garment by virtue of body warmth creating a driving force to drive the vapour through.

On its own the PTFE Glue is too light and fragile to be useful. It is therefore laminated to a variety of fabrics to create a 'sandwich' construction, the Goretex being in the middle. This creates a useable fabric. Since first used in 1975 it has been used to make a vast array of equipment: tents, parkas, sleeping bags, overpants, gaiters, overmittens and even hats!

Fabric Comparison Chart

	<u>Water Entry Pressure</u>	<u>Breathability</u>
Gore-tex laminate	65 p.s.i.	4800 g/m ² /day
Ventile (100% cotton)	2 "	4900 "
Coated Nylon	40 "	500 "
Uncoated Nylon	1 "	5800 "

Gore-tex in the Field:

In November 1977 I purchased a Gore-tex parka and started some field testing. After some 14 months use in all conditions likely to be encountered in Australia I have come to the conclusion that with appropriate design, preparation and maintenance a Gore-tex parka is very nearly the perfect garment, but it does require care.

Design: Seams: Once a seam is sewn in Goretex, the waterproofness is lost. The seams do not self-seal as do seams in cotton garments. The best design is that which, apart from being comfortable has the minimum number of seams.

An alternative to sewn seams is a welded seam. This gives a strong waterproof seam but has the disadvantage of being weak once a tear has started. The result can be catastrophic.

Preparation: All the sewn seams on a garment must be sealed both inside and outside using an appropriate sealant (e.g. K-Kote). Failure to do this will lead to a small amount of water penetrating the garment.

Maintenance: Core-tex laminates can temporarily lose their waterproof properties when they come in frequent contact with certain oils (e.g. cooking oils, sun-creams, mosquito repellants, oils in oiled sweaters and body oils borne in perspiration). These oils act as wetting agents (lower the surface tension of water) and cause catastrophic loss of waterproofness.

Regular laundering (every 3-6 months) in a pure soap (e.g. Lux flakes Velvet) and thorough rinsing should prevent the accumulation of these oils. Severely contaminated Gore-tex can have its original properties restored by scrubbing the effected areas with methylated spirits, and then immediate laundering. To clean the entire garment in methylated spirits, place in plastic with about 1 litre of spirits. The garment must be washed till there is no trace of methylated spirits.

All seams must be periodically resealed to keep the seal intact.

Performance: Gore-tex is no more breathable than the material to which it is laminated. It does have a maximum vapour transmission rate and condensation will occur if this is exceeded by your sweating rate. The main function of sweat is to cool you by evaporation when you overheat. The best way of doing this is to not overheat in the first place. This is achieved by making full use of the parka's ventilation system (under-arm zippers are very effective).

In a hot, very humid atmosphere Gore-tex will not work very efficiently as there will be a low driving force to expell excess water vapour. It will not leak however.

In almost all conditions in which I have used my parka (from -10°C through 0°C blizzards to summertime thunderstorms) I have found it to be a most delightful garment to wear - I actually felt comfortable, not clammy and sweaty. In fact, even when it stops raining I feel little compulsion to remove my parka.

At one stage I did get my parka severely contaminated (through not washing in pure soap!) and it took a thorough washing in methylated spirits and then washing in Lux flakes to restore it to its original state.

For those who can afford such a parka I can thoroughly recommend them. They are expensive, do require some care but should perform better and last longer than any other parka on the market today.

The white-out on the Bonar Glacier and surrounding peaks saved us the decision of picking on the last part of the west ridge on Mt. Avalanche; described in the guide-book as "pleasant climbing on loose slabs". We had left our packs with four days food and other gear on the Bonar at the base of Mt. French. We knew that there we would find shovels used by Geoff Wyatt's mountaineering courses. The trip back to the packs, across the smooth neve was made easy by following our earlier crampon tracks.

On emerging out of the whiteness we saw that Andrew and Mark were not yet back from the south-west ridge of Mt. Aspiring. No doubt they would be expecting to snow cave when they returned, as we had previously planned.

As we commenced to dig with the best of the four shovels the wind picked up and snow started hurtling past. Some figures emerged out of the whiteness, and turned out to be Geoff with some people on a course. They started digging nearby, with the other shovels. Geoff advised us to dig out blocks of snow and use these to build an igloo around the snow cave entrance.

Cutting blocks through icy snow layers with a curved shovel blade was not easy, especially as we were tired after being on the move for about twelve hours. Progress was slow until we perfected cutting blocks out of nearby snow using an ice-pick. Playing with these oversize building blocks was fun, particularly as it kept us warm and there was nothing else to do for the rest of the day (about nine hours of daylight left).

Andrew and Mark arrived back in mid-afternoon. Conditions had not improved. We were relieved to see them, but not pleased, because the snow-cave and igloo were still not big enough for two. We had thought they might go to Cohn Todd Hut at the base of the north-west ridge of Mt. Aspiring. The shovels were much in demand as another group of people on a course had also arrived, but progress on the igloo was swift with Andrew and Mark to help. Digging out the cave was slow and it progressed from being "three at a squeeze" to "four at a squeeze" as we became more tired of digging. At last we piled in with our gear, leaving ice-axes and some other gear outside. Needless to say, the snow-cave/igloo was not done in even the worst text-book style, and a diagram illustrating construction method will not be reproduced. It was not possible to stretch out fully, nor to sit up fully.

The storm continued unabated for four days during which we spent three nights in the snow-cave. On the second night a spectacular thunderstorm, with lightening illuminating the cave better than daylight, brought some rain which weakened the igloo. Rain on the third night washed out the igloo roof and the four of us retreated to the cave, leaving some gear in the igloo area. It then snowed and gear was buried and frozen in under a foot of snow, while my sleeping bag got a good cover too. Our bivvy bags were being used as ground-sheets up till then, and only after much trouble did we get the saturated sleeping bag inside. Thank goodness for fibrefill duvets!

The lee of the igloo was the closest protected toilet spot, and unfortunately Mark had left his ice-hammer and helmet there. Two feet of snow had accumulated, in which was embedded considerable amounts of frozen excrement. He managed to find his helmet, but on the fourth day as we hurried to rope-up with rapidly freezing ropes we were not sympathetic when asked to help excavate for the ice-hammer. Needless to say, Andrew had already lost his ice-hammer, again.

I huddled under my wet sleeping bag and stretched my legs. It felt very cold. I drew up my legs back and glanced at the white ceiling close above my head. Still in this snow-cave! I looked up again, and realised I was on the top bunk in Cascade Hut down in the valley floor. It was five o'clock in the morning and the sky was clear: the second good day since we walked in eight days ago, and the only day which stayed good.

An account of a celebration of New Year 1979 on the Bonar Glacier, Mt. Aspiring National Park.

On the 400m. long course 35 gates were placed on the route. The weather was generating an extremely windy and difficult event.

The main feature of the course was "The Bonar", a steep ridge involving a drop of approximately 50 ft. in the middle of the course. This was a very difficult section and the gates were placed in a line across the ridge.

Of less obvious danger to paddlers was the "Whitewater", which formed the final stage. This was a steep drop with a very fast descent and extremely shallow and irregular in this section. Paddlers had to be very careful as the water was very turbulent and the gates were placed in a line across the drop.

There were very few injuries to paddlers, but many were very tired. In addition, there were many injuries to the spectators. The main cause of these injuries was the high and fast-moving water. The water was very turbulent and the gates were placed in a line across the drop.

Due to the extreme weather and shallow water, the water was very turbulent and the gates were placed in a line across the drop. The water was very turbulent and the gates were placed in a line across the drop.

Despite the dangers to paddlers and spectators, the event was a success. The paddlers were very tired, but they had a very good time. The spectators were very happy and the event was a success.

The paddlers were very tired, but they had a very good time. The spectators were very happy and the event was a success. The paddlers were very tired, but they had a very good time.

The paddling in most events was of a high standard and it was a pleasure to see the efforts of the two international competitors. The event was a success and the paddlers were very tired, but they had a very good time.

Two boats finished within 0.17 sec. of each other. The event was a success and the paddlers were very tired, but they had a very good time.

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW		TRANS K.I.	
JACQUES K.I.		(12 boats)	
1st	2. Whitbread (GB)	1st	1. Boddy/Scott/Whitbread (GB)
2nd	3. Hobbs	2nd	2. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
3rd	4. Hobbs	3rd	3. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
4th	5. Hobbs	4th	4. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
5th	6. Hobbs	5th	5. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
6th	7. Hobbs	6th	6. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
7th	8. Hobbs	7th	7. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
8th	9. Hobbs	8th	8. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
9th	10. Hobbs	9th	9. Banks/Kerr/Sutton
10th	11. Hobbs	10th	10. Banks/Kerr/Sutton

AUSTRALIAN SLALOM CANOEING CHAMPIONSHIPS - BRADY'S LAKE, TASMANIA.

Bill Cruickshank

Slalom canoeing is the very popular competitive side to whitewater canoeing and as such is a good test of paddling skill, strength, and of course the current state of equipment design.

This year the Australian Slalom Championships were held in Tasmania on the infamous Brady's Lake course. This course is entirely artificial and is a bulldozed channel in the spillway between two Hydro pondages, Bronte Lagoon and Brady's Lake.

The gradient of the channel is quite severe causing the current to flow at high speed and have only a shallow coverage over the rocky bed.

On the 400m. long course 30 gates were spaced on the grade 3 & 4 water generating an extremely tricky and difficult event.

The main feature of the course was "The Cruncher", a steep rapid involving a drop of approximately 10 ft. in little over the same distance. This rapid generates two large twin stopper waves in which all paddlers submerged.

Of less obvious danger to paddlers was the "Mellifort St." rapid forming the final 100m. fling into Brady's Lake. This section was narrow, fast flowing and extremely shallow and capsizes in this section involved a wild struggle down the river bed unless an eskimo roll was quickly executed.

There were many injuries to paddlers, several serious, including broken ankle, dislocated shoulder and 2 paddlers who were knocked unconscious. In addition there were numerous minor injuries ensuring that the St. John's Ambulance First Aid centre was not forgotten.

Due to the extreme current and shallow water, damage to kayaks and paddles was high and late-night repairs were often essential.

Despite the dangers to paddlers and equipment the Brady's Lake course is a good slalom course, much harder than anything existing permanently in Victoria.

The practice days saw most of the damage and injuries occurring and by the time of the official scoring runs the field had thinned out slightly.

The paddling in most events was of a high standard and it was crowned by the efforts of the two international competitors, Norbert Sattler (Austria) the 1978 Europa Cup Champion and Albert Kerr (U.K.), the current World Champion who showed just what it takes to be among the best.

They both finished within 0.17 sec's. of each other.

RESULTS OF INTEREST:

LADIES K I (10 paddlers)

1st.	S. Whitebrook (Qld).	291.02
7th,	Prue Dobbin	793.92

MENS K I (70 Paddlers)

1st	N. Sattler (Austria)	206.53
2nd	A. Kerr (U.K.)	206.70
10th	Stuart Dry	270.61
28th	David Danks	349.24
	Bill Cruickshank	419.74
	Jol. Shelton	558.6
	Neil McGilp	587.04

TEAMS K I (29 teams)

1	Bodycott/Strazdins/Nelson (NSW)	300.11
3	Danks/Kerr/Sattler	329.03
18	Cruickshank/Runting/Empey	863.2
21	McGilp/Wood/Pearson	956.13

1. WILDERNESS CONFERENCE

The Second World Wilderness Congress will be held in Cairns, Queensland, on 9-13 June, 1980. Anyone remotely interested in attending can obtain further information from The Secretariat, Second World Wilderness Congress, P.O. Box 102, Manunda, Cairns, Queensland. 4870.

2. SNOWMOBILES AND HELICOPTERS ON THE BOGONG HIGH PLAINS

After much prodding we have finally received answers about our protests over the use of helicopters and oversnow vehicles for commercial skiing purposes last year. The situation is as follows:

- a) Under Section 110 ((ea) to (ef)) of the State Electricity Commission Act, the Falls Creek Tourist Area Management Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the SEC and make decisions about land use on that part of the Bogong High Plains which is controlled by the SEC. Thus, we have the absurd situation in which the Falls Creek Management Committee has no representation from bushwalking or wilderness oriented cross country skiers and yet it is allowed to make decisions about land use in areas in which bushwalkers and wilderness-oriented cross-country skiers are the major user group.
- b) Helicopter joy flights from Falls Creek will be permitted from now on providing:
 1. They occur only over the Falls Creek tourist area
 2. They do not land on the snow of the Bogong High Plains for purposes of passenger skiing.
 3. A shuttle service for skiers between Falls Creek and Hotham occurs without any intermediate landings.
 4. All flights start from an area outside the Falls Creek village/residential area. (Does this mean Rocky Valley dam area with resulting clearing of the road in winter?).
- c) Motorised oversnow tours will be permitted anywhere on the Bogong High Plains except the area around Mt. Nelse which is east of the Bogong High Plains road.

Authorities competent to issue permits for these tours on the High Plains would be:

1. Falls Creek Management Committee for the defined Falls Creek tourist area.
2. SEC for the Kiewa Crown Grant area (this consists of the Mt. McKay - Pretty Valley area and the area around Rocky Valley reservoir as well as the Langford Gap area and Langford East and West aqueducts.
3. Department of Lands for all other surrounding areas, but in respect of the Kiewa Works Area (virtually all of the High Plains and Mt. Fainter area) the permit applications are to be submitted to the SEC first for comment.
4. It was also recommended that consultation with the National Parks be required as the L.C.C. had recommended that the National Parks Service manage a major portion of the High Plains.

In addition, regulations include:

1. Vehicles shall avoid times and places used primarily by alpine and nordic skiers. This is interesting as nordic skiers tend to use virtually all of the High Plains!

2. Vehicles shall not be permitted on less than 30cms. snow cover and 45 cms for vehicles in excess of 1.5 tonnes gross weight.

Then there are many regulations concerning safety and legal aspects.

- d) Snowmobiles were considered to be a very complex issue and we have been told that the Falls Creek Management Committee is currently reviewing its policies towards their use.

The whole issue of helicopter/oversnow vehicle use on the High Plains is yet another example of a cancer which, if not stopped, will eventually take over all of the High Plains destroying them for us in winter. We only have to look at the history of land use in the area - Ten years ago the High Plains were used only by bushwalkers and a few cross-country skiers in winter. Then snowmobiles appeared and began to harass the walkers/skiers. The use of snowmobiles has continued to increase displacing many walkers/skiers who began to go elsewhere to avoid them. Then, for the first time last winter, a helicopter and oversnow vehicles suddenly began using the High Plains for commercial skiing purposes. Following protests the SEC/Falls Creek Management Committee have drawn up a policy which controls helicopters to a slight extent but which now allows oversnow vehicle tours over most of the High Plains effectively squeezing the walkers/skiers into the small section around Mt. Nelse - remember that only 10 years ago we had all of the High Plains to ourselves in winter. Now we find ourselves crowded into one corner frantically trying to escape vehicles and crowds. The Falls Creek Management Committee and the SEC have never ever given us a fair go. From their absurd restrictions on camping to their development - oriented policies we have lost out every time and we still have no representation on the committees which make decisions about the use of land which is not only ours but of which we are the major user group! What will happen next year or the year after - you can be certain that the SEC/Falls Creek Management Committee will grant permits to any oversnow vehicle owner who wants to run a tour. Once there are enough of them then Mt. Nelse will go too - of that there can be not the slightest doubt. WE MUST STOP THEM COMPLETELY AND RIGHT NOW.

These tours seem completely incompatible with government policy. For example, Mr. Hamer, the Premier, stated in his last election (1976) speech that the government has "... frozen all disposal or change of use of all public land in Victoria while the new Land Conservation Council reviews it region by region". How then can the Bogong High Plains, currently being studied by the L.C.C., be subjected to a completely new land use - commercial oversnow vehicle tours - which displaces us, the traditional users of the area in winter?

The only way we can stop these vehicles is to write to politicians so we implore you all to write to:

1. The Hon. R.J. Hamer,
Premier, Parliament House, Melbourne.
2. The Hon. W.A. Borthwick,
Minister for Conservation,
P.O. Box 41, East Melbourne. 3002.
3. The Hon. J.C.M. Balfour,
Minister for Minerals and Energy,
Princes Gate East, 151 Flinders Street, Melbourne. 3000.

The F.V.W.C. has already done this urging these people to prevent the occurrence of any further motorised oversnow tours claiming that it is incompatible with government policy (see above) and that we have not been given a fair go, particularly since we have no representative on the Falls Creek Management Committee which makes the decisions.

MAKE THESE POINTS YOURSELF - PLEASE WRITE NOW.

3. AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS

The proceedings of the first national wilderness conference organised by the Australian Conservation Foundation in Canberra, October 1977, have now been published in an attractive fashion and are available from the A.C.F. for \$6 per copy, postage included.

4. NEW SKI LIFT AT MT. BAW BAW

The Ministry for Conservation has reviewed the Environment Effects Statement for the proposed new lift at Mt. Baw Baw and has concluded that "... a number of environmental effects are of concern, but that these are capable of being controlled". The Ministry then made some recommendations to avoid damage to a moss-bed and creek in the lower section of the lift, and to avoid damaging the physical environment and aesthetic quality of the area with the location of the top and bottom stations.

5. FORESTS COMMISSION ROAD CLOSURES

The Forests Commission has recently announced closures, or rather in most cases - continuing closures, of the following fire access tracks:

A. Grampians - Victoria Range area (until 31/12/81).

1. Hut Creek fireline
2. Cave of Hands Track
3. Deep Creek Track
4. Track up No. 1 Creek.
5. Victoria Range Track, southern portion (the Northern portion is also closed in winter).
6. Waterworks Creek Track
7. Brown Creek Track

B. Grampians - Serra Range (until 31/12/81)

1. Serra Range Fireline.

C. Lake Mountain area (until 31/12/81)

1. Echo Flat Track
2. Lake Mountain Track
3. Snowy Hill Track
4. Boundary Fire Trail No. 2

D. Mt. St. Bernard area (until 31/12/81)

1. Mt. Murray - The Twins - Mt. St. Bernard Track

E. Upper Wonnangatta area (until 31/12/81)

1. The deplorable new track pushed through in rather dubious circumstances last year in the upper Wonnangatta.

F. Snowy Plains area (until 31/12/79)

1. Macalister Springs Track
2. Riggall Spur Track past Lake Tarli Karng.

TRIPS PROGRAMME

MARCH 31 CANOEING
Coulburn River
Beginners' Trip - Easy
Leader: Doug Haig - 876 1802

MARCH 31 WORK PARTY
APRIL 1 MUMC Hut, Mt. Feathertop
Leader: Andrew Walker - 361 9044
860 2568 (W)

APRIL 13 - 16 BUSHWALKING
EASTER Bryce's Gorge - Mt. Darling
Leader: Ian Moore - 373 1182

APRIL 13 - 17 CAVING
Buchan
Leader: Sue White - 328 4154

CANOEING
Indi-Swampy Plains River or Shoalhaven River
Standard: High
Leader: Bill Cruickshank - 80 3719

APRIL 20 - 22 CANOE BUILDING
Canoe Shed (below main oval scoreboard)
Leader: Doug Haig - 876 1802

Other Contacts: CLIMBING
Nick Tapp - 874 1171
or
Jim van Gelder - 347 2077

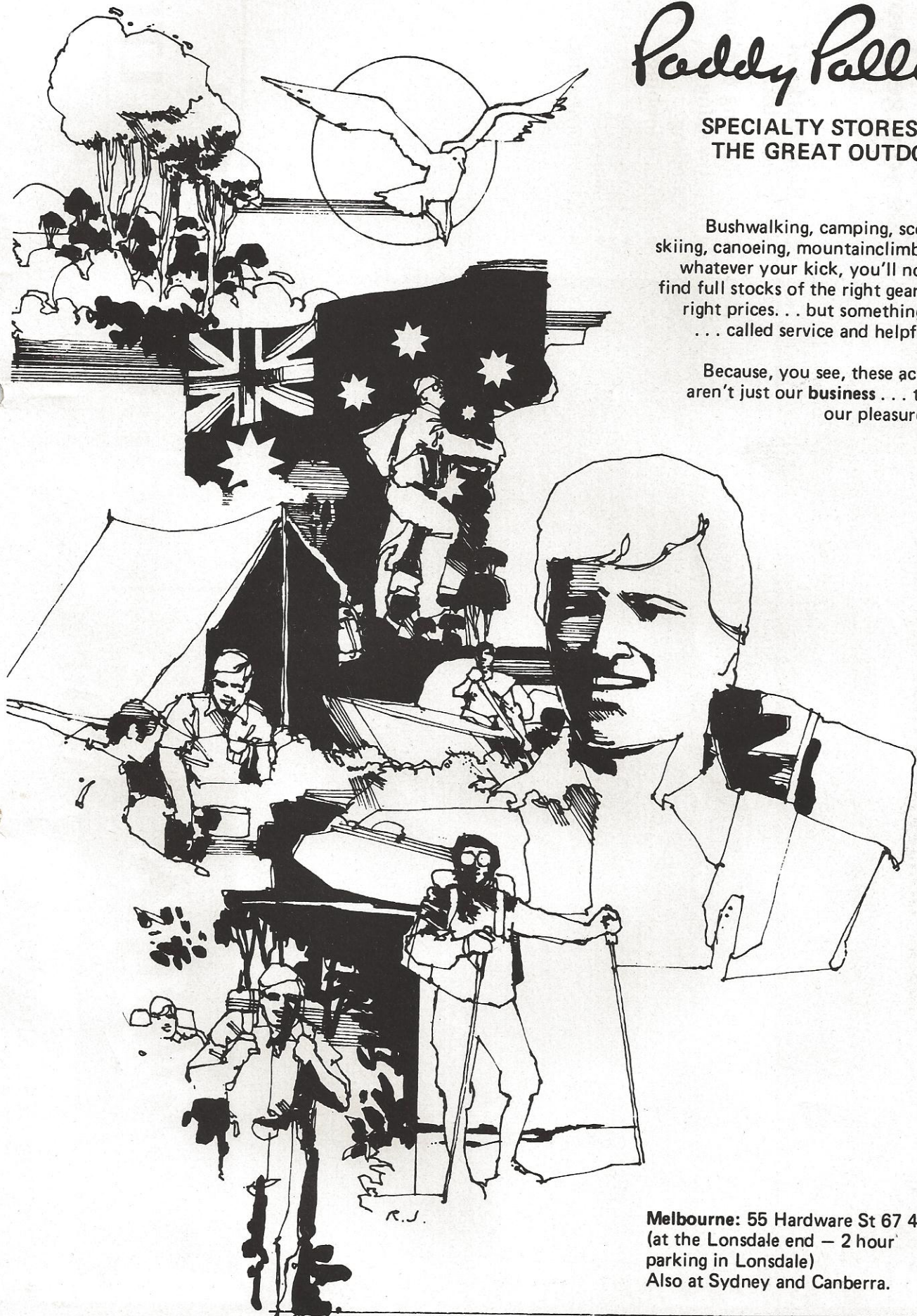
ORIENTEERING
Bob Dawson - 341 6355 (W)

Paddy Pallin

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