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THE MOUNTAINEER

NOVEMBER 1979

THE MOUNTAINEER

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The Journal of M.U.M.C.

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NEWS

1. 1980 Tasmanian Wilderness Calendars are available at the clubrooms at a price of \$4.00. Well worth purchasing for presents to friends etc.
2. Tobin Sorenson has not only blitzed Australia with his climbing but also with his lectures. His illustrated talk was well attended at Melbourne University and well worth attending. With his extreme climbing ability Sorenson is one of a new breed of super rockclimbing alpinists and there is a revealing interview with him to be published in the next issue of Thrutch.
3. Well-known NSW climber Joe Friend is currently attempting to promote the formation of an Australian Climbing Union. Club and individual membership is envisaged and VIAA membership is hoped for. A meeting of any interested climbers is to be held over the Christmas-New Year vacation at Mt. Buffalo. A formation of a National Climbing body in Australia is long overdue and Joe's efforts deserve much support.
4. The MUMC IV 24 Hour Walk team is to be congratulated upon their first place in the Men's Event. The Golden Boot has returned to where it belongs.
5. The finances of the club suffered yet another blow when the distributor of the Journal went into receivership. It is hoped that we will be eventually paid our debt of some hundred dollars but the present position is unclear. The true position will not emerge until the company is wound up.
6. Meanwhile work on the next edition of "Mountaineering" proceeds at a slow pace. Advertising support is growing and articles are gradually being accumulated. The magazine may not be published until early 1980.
7. Problems occurred when Prue Dobbin performed well enough in IV Canoeing events to entitle her to an award of a University Sporting Blue as it has always been club policy not to recommend anyone for Blues. The feeling has always been that such awards are irrelevant to mountaineering. A decision on Prue Dobbin's award has been delayed to next September and in the meantime the whole question should be discussed at the A.G.M. While the editor agrees with traditional club policy, if a person really wants a Blues award perhaps it is their business. (Perhaps competitive canoeing has little to do with mountaineering - thought for the future!).
8. This year's Alpine Instruction course never eventuated as the teachers were ill at the crucial time. For a club that has such a record of interest in alpine climbers and a host of experienced alpine climbers it is a pity that only two people ever volunteer to lead courses and that if they are ill or unavailable, the course does not go on.
9. The MUMC Orienteers are organising the V.O.A. relay championships on Sunday, 9th December, 1979 near Daylesford. Entrants and helpers are most welcome. Contact Ron Frederick, telephone 870 4033 (H) and 874 8111 (W) for further details.

Armed with stories of raging rapids and ice-cold waters, nine intrepid MUMC canoeists arrived at the I.V. canoeing championships this year to compete against contingents from six other universities on the Goobarra-gandro River.

The first of the three events, canoe polo, was played for the first time at intervarsity this year. Canoe polo is a relatively new sport, sort of a cross between basketball and water polo except that its played in kayaks. Quite an unusual game involving lots of ramming and capsizing. Despite a complete lack of experience in this field Melbourne paddlers did well to win two of the five games.

The Wine and Cheese Night, an integral part of every intervarsity canoeing competition, once again proved very successful enabling canoeists from different universities to meet each other (and also to get highly inebriated). A great night!

The slalom course this year consisted of 23 gates, suspended over 200 metres of fast grade 2 water (fresh from the snowfields). Although the course was not as difficult as rumours had suggested it still demanded considerable skill to do really well. One particularly hard gate, gate 17, required a tricky "cut in" and to overshoot it meant smashing into nearby rocks followed by a highly probable capsize. The Melbourne University team, who happened to be judging gates 17 to 19, accordingly spent a lot of time extracting canoeists from the freezing river.

The water was quite shallow in some spots making it very difficult to roll, as Ian discovered after wiping out on gate 17, however he later recovered sufficiently to make a good run in the K1 and C2 events.

As usual Prue came first in the Ladies K1 and Janet and Gaye, who had never seen a slalom course before made very commendable attempts, even beating some Monash lady paddlers.

It was in the Canadian events, however, that Melbourne really excelled with brilliant C2 runs by Leo and David, and Roger and Pete. A surprise win in the C2 teams event against some world class paddlers placed Melbourne Uni. in 2nd place overall in the slalom.

The four days of competition finished with the downriver race, over 8 km. of white-water. Once again it was the C2 events in which Melbourne did really well with a second by Pete and Ian in the Open C2 and an outstanding first by Andrew and Prue in the mixed C2.

As usual, the standard of paddling at Intervarsity this year was very diverse giving novices confidence to compete against those with similar abilities but also providing very keen competition for those with a lot more experience. All in all, a very successful competition.

Other notable events include:

- * Prue hitting the team manager over the head with a paddle in the Mixed C2 down-river event.
- * Leo not coming last in the C1 event.
- * Team movie-star Prue Dobbin being interviewed and filmed by a local TV film crew.
- * The MUMC team being stranded at the end of the down-river race with a car, a boat trailer and no car keys.
- * Rally drivers, Ian and Leo, having everybody holding on tightly as they raced the hired car along the steep, muddy slalom site access road.

INTERVARSITY CANOEING RESULTS.

Slalom

Open K1 (29 Competitors)

David Danks	3rd
Pete Freeman	6th
Andrew Wilson	12th
Roger Hatten	23rd
Ian Egerton	24th

Melbourne Uni. 2nd

Open C1 (15 competitors)

David Danks	2nd
Pete Freeman	3rd
Leo Cussen	9th

Melbourne Uni. 2nd

Ladies K1 (17 competitors)

Prue Dobbin	1st
Gaye Carter	13th
Janet Rice	17th

Melbourne Uni. 3rd

Open C2 (15 teams)

Danks/Cussen	2nd
Freeman/Hatten	3rd
Egerton/Wilson	9th

Melbourne Uni. 1st

Mixed C2 (11 teams)

Cussen/Dobbin	3rd
Freeman/Rice	7th

Melbourne Uni. 3rd

Open K1 teams (5 teams)

Pete Freeman)	
Andrew Wilson)	3rd
Roger Hatten)	

Melbourne Uni. 3rd

Ladies K1 teams (4 teams)

Janet Rice)	
Prue Dobbin)	Last
Gaye Carter)	

Melbourne Uni. 4th

Open C2 teams (4 teams)

Egerton/Wilson)	
Dobbin/Cussen)	1st
Freeman/Hatten)	

Melbourne Uni. 1st

FINAL PLACING 2ND

Down River

Open K1 (14 competitors)

Roger Hatten	9th
--------------	-----

Melbourne Uni. 4th

Open C2 (4 competitors)

Freeman/Egerton	2nd
-----------------	-----

Melbourne Uni. 2nd

Ladies K1 (9 competitors)

Gaye Carter	8th
-------------	-----

Melbourne Uni. 4th

Mixed C2 (10 competitors)

Dobbin/Wilson	1st
Cussen/Rice	9th

Melbourne Uni. 2nd

FINAL PLACING - 2ND

Canoe Polo 5 teams

Team: Wilson, Freeman, Dobbin, Cussen, Hatten, Egerton.

Melbourne Uni. 4th

The Team:

Prue Dobbin, Ian Egerton, Gaye Carter, Roger Hatten, David Danks, Leo Cussen, Janet Rice, Pete Freeman and Andrew Wilson.

I.V. 24 H.R. WALK REPORT

Iain East

The Intervarsity 24 Hr. Walk was held in the Bilahdelah Forest near Newcastle. Melbourne University was represented by two mens teams. Martin Hall and David Rowlands as one team and Rod Costigan and myself as the other.

Rod and I left the start almost last having drawn position 16 out of a total of 17 teams. Martin and Dave had already quietly disappeared. We went well early making good progress through some easy, close spaced checkpoints, until, an out of bounds area, we slipped into a jungle gully where the going got the vier. Back on the road and some more quick checkpoints. The weather was sunny and the ground was carpeted in flowers, including Greenhood and Caladenia orchids. This, with our seemingly good progress made the walk delightful.

A long steep climb up to the fire-tower where Rod viewed the country as the sun set and I lay exhausted on the ground. We changed into our woollies and kept going along a delightful moonlit, ridge-top. No hard checkpoints and no mistakes. Yet! A long roadbash to checkpoint Z then down through thick bush to a scrubby creek junction, upstream of which we noticed a number of glow-worms.

Two checkpoints and then lost! The road additions supplied at the start were incomplete and we had to search for the right road. A swap of information with Uni. of NSW men and we were on our way. One checkpoint and back to the hash-house at 1.30 am. after 13 hrs.

We were shocked to find that although we thought we had done reasonably well, Martin and Dave had done exactly the same route and left the hash-house on the second half 4 hours earlier.

Fifty minutes rest, and Rod taped his blisters without complaining. A bad choice of route on the second leg meant a long walk between checkpoints on the start of the second leg all because we wanted to avoid scrub-bashing along a switchback ridge. After all the moon had gone down and you couldn't even see the road in front of you.

Three-thirty a.m., I fell over on the road and the ground was comfortable, I didn't want to get up. Rod pushed me on and things improved as the sun came up. Shorts on and up a very steep hill. We dumped our packs and moved on to the next checkpoint. On the way, the organiser drove past and told us that Dave and Martin were about ten minutes from the finish. Great! Time getting short we pushed on, more trouble in jungle gullies looking for checkpoints. Then a long hard roadbash with a long uphill section, a final checkpoint and bash down to the hash-house. Relief, rest, food and fifth place in the results. A great weekend for us, and a good result for M.U.M.C. First and Fifth (best number two team). So if you want a cheap trip to Armidale next year, and like walking (70 km. in 22 hrs., 2500 metres vertical climb) then come to the next I.V. 24 hr. Walk.

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY GROW CREVASSES IN AUSTRALIA, AFTER ALL!

Craig Nottle

"Going to Blue Lake?"

"Yes, I hope the weather gets better!"

At the time of this conversation it was raining at Perisher Valley. It should have been snowing. The three of us, Rod, Tim and myself spent the time being amused at the strange costumes downhill skiers were wearing. In turn they were amused at our dress and by the monstrous bundles, partly camouflaged by ice axes, hammers and snow stakes, on our backs. No one was amused by the weather and the fact that one-way tickets could not be purchased to the top of the mountain. A warning to those who follow.

By the time we had walked to the top of the chairlift the weather was most shithouse. Our thoughts also rested on our stomachs after we had devoured some medieval milk chocolate that I found underneath the top station. Shivering, we played around with compasses and one inch thick klister we skied down into Guthega in the Snowy River Valley by way of a pole line.

We spent a soggy night at Guthega. We skied up the Snowy River Valley. The wet snow and overcast weather added to the atmosphere of immense strength which the Snowy River has. There were large chunks of ice crashing down and frothing chutes of icy water. All this was left as we skied up the Blue Creek Valley. Half-way up this valley is Blue Lake. It is surrounded by a spectacular amphitheatre of rock, steep snow and vertical ice. The whole scenery was really inspiring - especially the broken 30 foot cornice on the far side and the 300 ft. of avalanche debris running down to the frozen lake.

Next morning we awoke to real life spindrift, two feet deep and it had collapsed our tents. Eventually we walked around the lake, trying not to trip up over our crampons. Roddy, who had been to New Zealand impressively climbed a thinly iced boulder. When I tried to follow I soon realised how gripped you can get on iced-up rock. We "bouldered" all morning with an axe and ice hammer. During the afternoon we tackled one of the longer ice gullies on the northern side of the lake - as shown on the August "Mountaineer" cover.

On the third day we rose again and ascended a frozen wall. It was about 30 feet high, reasonably solid and really good fun. The difficulties we encountered made Sorenson's efforts of 3000 ft. of steep ice a little hard to perceive, especially when he didn't have the comfort of a top rope. In the afternoon we climbed another gully that divided near the top. The right-hand side was a steep ice ramp. Tim led the first pitch and he set up a belay on about 50° of slope. From here I set off hoping to reach the top via the ramp before the rope ran out. But after 30' I found an 18" deep fissure running across the slope. Then, another three steps, my left foot sunk in about a foot and beneath it was a chasm, fifteen feet deep.

"Hmm, looks like they grow crevasses in Australia after all!"

From there I reached the top as quickly as possible on all fours with ice-axe and hammer in my hands. At the top I set up a belay and Tim and Rod were soon with me. Unfortunately, the slope and pseudo crevasse didn't avalanche during the rest of our stay but that would have been too close for comfort.

Roddy had visited Watson's Craggs on the first day and he had come back to Tim and I raving about a route he had picked out - 70° slopes followed by a rock pitch. We all visited Watson's Craggs. As we descended to the base of our climb it became evident that the slopes were much gentler than we had been told and that the snow was soft. The top three pitches of the five pitch route were very worthwhile. The last moves of the climb, on icy rock were quite hard.

Finally, Saturday, we arrived at Thredbo. It was a cosmic transition to jump suits, day tickets, and plastic. A quick change of thinking and we began the long hitch home.

AN ALPINE CLIMB IN THE HIMALAYA

Recently, local NZAC member Gary Wills went on a trip to India to climb in the Himachal Pradesh region. He went with Andy Rothfield, Ed Neve, Peter Allan, Mike Rhineberger and Max Berry. The trip was successful as most members climbed White Sail, a 6455 m. peak. Gary talks about the trip.

"How did you become involved?"

"Peter and Mike organised the trip. However I became involved at short notice. Ed rang me up and said do you want to go climbing in India next month? I said yes."

"What were the peaks like?"

"The peaks are about 600 m. high and reasonably accessible. You do not need porters but we did use donkeys. Generally the peaks are snow but there are some beautiful rock peaks of excellent granite. The average climb is 1500 - 2000 m. The peak we did was enjoyable but it tended to be a snow slog."

"Any bureaucratic hassles?"

"I was not involved in negotiations. We were stuck in Delhi for a week until a liaison officer was assigned to us. People wanting to go there should put in their applications at least 6 months prior to departure. You also have to pay for the peaks. It cost us \$100.00 each in peak fees."

"What about your climb?"

"It took about 4 days to climb White Sail. We established a camp on a on the main divide and it was a good day to the top and back to our tents. There were four steep pitches, two through ice cliffs, and two near the top. The rest was easy."

"What effect did the altitude have?"

"We first noticed the effect of altitude at 12,000 to 14,000 feet. We had headaches at 17,000 feet. Above 18,000 we found climbing hard work. We spent a week between 12,000 - 14,000 feet establishing a base camp and this seemed to help. It took a couple of weeks to fully acclimatise."

"Did you need any special equipment?"

"We took normal alpine gear plus double boots, super gaiters, cluвет, thermal underwear, mountain tents and a comprehensive first-aid kit. You only need for these peaks normal gear plus some extras. We really treated them as a big alpine route."

"What was the liaison officer like?"

"He was worth his weight in gold. He could speak Hindi, and he generally liaised between us and the locals. He made hiring donkeys easier. We had a really great bloke, Raman Gupta, and he did a good job."

"Any funny incidents?"

"Yes, but only libellous."

AN EARLY SEASON SKI TRIP

James Pitt

Queen's Birthday came and I was told by everybody that there was no snow in Victoria. It was a pity as my skis were all waxed up waiting to be tested with the first snow fall. However, all was not lost as rumour had snow on the ground in NSW. With a few friends from Monash I decided to endure the 12 hour drive in order to find the elusive white stuff.

On Friday night the Hume Highway passed in the hazy way it does with vague memories of greasy cafes, midnight changes of drivers and the odd turnoff. We spent the night at Geehi and continued on to Charlotte's Pass the next morning. Surprisingly enough there was plenty of snow for ski touring in certain areas. It was satisfying to see all the downhillers shaving their skis to pieces on the rocky ground at Perisher Valley.

After much messing about we left Charlotte's Pass at one o'clock in the afternoon and dropped into the Snowy Valley. There was not much snow by the river. However once across the valley on southern facing slopes the snow became good. It was hard and frosty and it was on with the purple Klister. The grip was fantastic at first and those with wax could laugh at the antics of the unfortunates with stepped ski. Higher up the snow turned to solid ice and we all walked. Camp was made towards dusk near Hedley Tarn.

A cold, windy night gave way to a sunny day. We headed off to have a look at Blue Lake. As the ice covered the ground with a one inch thick layer nobody took skis. Blue Lake was most impressive with ice gleaming from the cliffs and the lake half frozen over. After some skating practice we returned to our camp and spent our time attempting to find some snow to ski on.

Towards evening I set up to the top of Mt. Twynam to watch the sunset. Although icy I used skis at first but towards the summit I had to walk. Amongst the weird ice formations at the summit I stood watching the sun setting behind hazy clouds and casting a pink glow upon Watson's Crags and the Sentinel. The huge drop into the Geehi and Victoria was filled with cloud, slowly boiling up the gullies to the main range crest.

It was a hairy descent to camp. If a fall had occurred at some spots a couple of hundred yard slides would have resulted. Most of the descent was by sidestepping with knees vibrating at high frequency on the corrugations. In good snow the descent from Twynam would be fabulous. So back to camp and dinner in sleeping bags listening to the choofah purring and the wind howling.

An uneventful retreat to Melbourne the next day. We had done little skiing but it was an interesting start to the season.

SURVEY OF BUSHWALKERS AT WILSONS PROMONTORY

SOME CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTITUDES OF BUSHWALKERS AT WILSONS PROMONTORY

A questionnaire survey of bushwalkers at Wilsons Promontory National Park was conducted by F.V.W.C. member Gerry Grandage and others over three weekends (Labour Day long weekend in March, beginning of school holidays weekend in May, and another weekend between these 2) in late summer and autumn, 1977. This survey was part of a Masters thesis Gerry was doing at Monash University.

If (and it is a big "if") the results of the survey can be extrapolated to all bushwalkers who visit Wilsons Promontory, then it appears as if:

Most bushwalkers there are male and less than 35 years old. They are mostly students or professional/technical workers who come from metropolitan Melbourne, primarily from the eastern suburbs. Most have been bushwalking for 1 - 15 years and go bushwalking less than 5 times per year. Most go bushwalking at Wilsons Promontory with groups of friends, although over 20% go on club trips. Most are in moderate sized parties of 3 - 10 people and most have been to Wilsons Promontory previously.

Most bushwalkers are reasonably happy with the management of Wilsons Promontory and think that the park should be managed with an emphasis on conservation. Most are happy with the size of their party and consider that party size influences their enjoyment. They agree with limits being placed on both party size and number of parties, although they are divided over limits being placed over maximum length of stay in the park. They have mixed feelings over encounters with other parties or evidence of them.

Detailed results of the survey (somewhat abbreviated) are as follows:

Characteristics

1) Sex of bushwalkers	72% male, 28% female
2) Age of bushwalkers	17% aged 14-16 20% aged 17-20 29% aged 21-25 21% aged 26-35 9% aged 36-45 4% aged over 45
3) Occupation or profession	38% professional/technical 22% secondary students 14% tertiary students 9% tradesmen/laborers 6% clerical 4% administration/executive/ managerial 2% housewife 5% others
4) Origin of bushwalkers -	
(Melbourne & suburbs	68%
(eastern suburbs	47%
(southern & bayside suburbs	16%
(western suburbs	5%
Gippsland	11%
Interstate & overseas	8%
Mornington Peninsula	6%
Rest of Victoria	7%

- 5) Number of years of bushwalking experience:
- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| less than 1 year | 25% |
| 1 - 5 years | 37% |
| 6 - 15 " | 27% |
| more than 15 years | 11% |
- 6) Frequency of bushwalking trips:
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| once per year or less | 31% |
| 2 - 5 times per year | 47% |
| 6 - 15 times per year | 17% |
| more than 15 times per year | 5% |
- 7) Type of party in which the bushwalkers visited Wilsons Promontory:
- | | |
|------------------|-----|
| Family group | 8% |
| group of friends | 43% |
| club trip | 21% |
| school group | 10% |
| scouts/guides | 14% |
| alone | 1% |
| other | 3% |
- 8) Party size:
- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| 1 - 2 | 15% |
| 3 - 5 | 27% |
| 6 - 10 | 26% |
| 11 - 20 | 23% |
| greater than 20 | 9% |
- 9) Number of nights spent out:
- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| one | 36% |
| two | 45% |
| three | 17% |
| more than three | 2% |
- 10) Number of previous visits to Wilsons Promontory:
- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| none | 23% |
| one - two | 32% |
| three - ten | 35% |
| more than ten | 10% |

Attitudes

Here the question on the questionnaire is given with the percentage response given in brackets (slightly abbreviated).

- 1) Do you think a National Park should be mainly for?
- (6%) conservation purposes
 - (2%) recreation purposes
 - (89%) a combination of both
 - (3%) don't know
- If a combination, on which of the two should there be an emphasis?
- (56%) conservation
 - (6%) recreation
 - (38%) equal emphasis on both
- 2) Do you think that the size of your party influences the enjoyment of your walking?
- (83%) yes (14%) no (3%) no opinion
- 3) During your present walking trip at Wilsons Promontory, was your party?
- (3%) too small
 - (79%) about right
 - (12%) too large
 - (6%) no opinion

- 4) How do you react to the Parks Service placing an upper limit on party size to reduce any possible environmental impacts in the popular walking areas (such as Sealers Cove, Waterloo Bay etc.)?
- (23%) agree (11%) disagree (6%) no opinion
- 5) How would you react to the Parks Service placing an upper limit on the number of walking parties in an area at a particular time?
- (77%) agree (13%) disagree (10%) no opinion
- 6) What do you think of the system of compulsory walking permits for overnight bushwalkers at Wilsons Promontory?
- (85%) agree (10%) disagree (5%) no opinion
- 7) Do you agree with the idea of maximum length of your stay in the park being limited by the Parks Service?
- (45%) agree (44%) disagree (11%) no opinion
- 8) How do you react to:
- | | <u>Pleased</u> | <u>Upset</u> | <u>No opinion</u> |
|---|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| (a) evidence of past groups in a camping area (e.g. campfires, tent-clearings etc.) | (45%) | (33%) | (22%) |
| (b) having a large group move alongside your campsite uninvited | (10%) | (56%) | (34%) |
| (c) being within sight and hearing distance of other groups in a camping area | (31%) | (26%) | (43%) |



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