







THE MOUNTAINEER JUNE 1986

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QUESTION: WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MR WALKERS BROAD GRIN ?

ANSWERS SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE EDITORS. THE BEST &/OR MOST  
ORIGINAL SUGGESTION WILL RECEIVE REWARDS BEYOND THEIR WILDEST DREAMS.

MANY THANKS TO JODIE PRICE FOR TYPING THE ARTICLES YOU ARE  
ABOUT TO READ.



### STANDARD DEVIATION

If the success of MUMC were gauged by the number of mega-trips which were being run, the indicators are that we are heading for an excellent year." With record numbers canoeing over Easter, a big "Easter Van Trip", large groups heading to Arapiles to rockclimb and perhaps the largest trip ever- the Halleys Comet trip in April, the year looks like being an astounding success. But believe it or not, the best way to appreciate Australia's bush and to obtain the most pleasure from one's surroundings is to be in a small group. This is more likely to facilitate feelings of empathy and harmony (crap crap crap.)

Unfortunately there has not been enough trips to satiate the demand of new people coming on trips. The ideal would be for more trips and with fewer on each trip. WE NEED MORE LEADERS!!

More leaders means more trips, perhaps of a higher quality ( in some quarters this is debated!) but certainly the leader of a smaller trip enjoys him/herself far more than the leader of a large trip. This also means that the current (small) band of faithful leaders does not become disillusioned. So, if you feel that you are at all able, please lead a trip and help to share the load.

Not much is required when leading a trip - a little experience, a good deal of commonsense and some preparation. You do not need a car! The people with whom a leader of an MUMC trip has to deal are ( mostly ) intelligent, sensible and reasonably responsible individuals - after all, they had the sense to join our prestigious club! The demands placed by them are not all that great- they can usually look after themselves fairly well.

It is probably best to choose an area with which you are familiar, somewhere that you have walked/paddled/climbed/skied before. Plan a straight-forward route, limit numbers to that which you feel you can manage and away you go. You must however, notify the appropriate convenor who will approve your trip, give advice or kick you up the bum ( unlikely ). Your enthusiasm will be appreciated that's for sure.

So, if you think you might like to lead a trip ( after all, you get to go wherever you like not somebody else ), get in there and give it a go!! (Please).



## INCORPORATION OF THE

### MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

In May, 1983, three school teachers led a group of kiddies on a bushwalk in the Cathedral Ranges.

This walk had seemingly been well planned, Education Department guidelines for this type of excursion had been religiously followed, and approval for the trip had been granted by the Department authorities. However, disaster struck. A number of the kiddies took a dangerous and incorrect fork in the well known Razorback track. One slipped and injured herself on some rocks below. Shortly after a second kiddie slipped and was killed as a result of his fall.

This case was taken to the Supreme Court of Victoria, with the first kiddie to fall alleging negligence on the part of the teachers taking the trip. The Judge found that the teachers had been negligent in their leadership and supervision and were liable to that girl for her injuries. This is despite the fact that they were well within departmental guidelines for staff/student ratios for such excursions. The Judge went further, and found that the officer in the department who had authorised the trip was negligent as well.

You will correctly observe that the situation with school kiddies is far different to that involving mature adults, capable of making their own decisions, who front up for MUMC trips. Nonetheless, this case illustrates the view of the Courts to "dangerous activities" such as bushwalking and the like. It is certainly not inconceivable that this type of action could be brought against the Club and members thereof in the case of MUMC.

As things stand, at law MUMC is regarded as an unincorporated association and does not have legal standing. In an action for negligence it is quite possible that the individual members of the committee ( who authorise club trips ) could be personally liable for the money awarded to a successful litigant.

It is proposed that MUMC incorporate under the Associations Incorporation Act. The major benefit to MUMC of incorporation is that a legal entity is placed between such a litigant and the members of MUMC, thus protecting personal assets.

It is the incorporated body which is seen to authorise trips, and the leader of trips acts as its agent. Thus this incorporated body is recognised as that which must be sued, and personal liability of individual members is avoided. In summary, an incorporated body had legal status and therefore the members are not liable for any liabilities of the incorporated association.



There are other benefits associated with incorporation. As pointed out above, individuals cannot be held responsible for wrongs of the club - this covers a wide range of interactions with other persons. As a legal entity MUMC could then enter contractual relationships, own property and even employ people.

The disadvantages on the other hand are fairly minimal. Registration under the Associations Incorporation Act requires certain obligations to be fulfilled. Application fees need to be paid, accurate minutes of any general meeting and detailed accounts of the club need to be submitted and a reliable "Public Officer" ( probably an existing Committee member ) needs to be found.

The whole exercise amounts to "getting our house in order" as well as covering our backsides. It is to be hoped that the school kiddie type of incident never arises in a club such as ours. The possibility that it could, given our litigation conscious community, must be guarded against.

There is a very strong ground swell within in MUMC in favour of incorporation. A sub-committee has been formed to make a final assessment of, and to make the necessary preparations for incorporation. This sub-committee will be preparing draft Objects and Rules for MUMC to be effective post-incorporation. The exact requirements of incorporation under the Act will be thoroughly checked and suitable candidates for the position of inaugural Public Officer will be approached.

The Rules and Objects as prepared will be available for inspection and comment. These will be finalised and then voted on, together with a Public Officer being appointed at a special general meeting of the club for this purpose. A majority of members at this meeting will authorise incorporation to take place. It is hoped that this meeting will be held sometime near the end of July.

It is urged that you put your minds to the question and consider it carefully. Discuss it with other members and become familiar with what is involved. It is a matter of importance for the club, and so a conscious, informed decision by members needs to be made when coming to vote.

Further enquiries should be directed to sub-committee members:

Tim Greenhall ( Chairman ) 3877007

Jamie Orr "

Rob Taylor 8577764

Jodie Price 256566

David Walker 3481070



## SKIING WITH M.U.M.C. 1986

A programme is currently being prepared for the 1986 season, but is tentative on a couple of factors:

- i) if there is any snow at all;
- ii) if there is snow at the specified location.

If there is no snow at all, the trip will have to be cancelled. Unfortunately this is one aspect we can't control.

If there is no snow at the location planned, but there is somewhere else, then the trip may be changed to the area which does have snow.

Thus pretend you are a pair of skis ie. be flexible and tolerant of those trying to guide you.

Another problem which may lead to a change of plans is the weather. As you will probably be aware, there were a number of tragedies in the Alps last year, and a number of near misses. Some of these could have been avoided through proper planning and common sense, in a changed set of conditions.

Experience in the Alps in winter is essential for safe enjoyment of skiing and snow camping. Your leader will have this requisite experience, so they should be listened to and their decision is final - all the better to err on the side of caution and be ready for next week, than spend a night out in the open.

Remember they probably want to go skiing more than you do, so if a trip is cancelled or a route is changed it is done reluctantly, so don't make it more difficult for them than it already is.

Weekend trips to the distant high plains will probably leave on Friday night, whilst day trips normally leave bright and early from the clubrooms - about 6.00 - 7.00am. If you live in the suburbs, you may wish to arrange accommodation close to the university the night before. Try this with friends or people going on the trip, or ask your leader.

Trip size will normally be limited so that the leader can keep in touch with everyone. Another factor which limits the size of trips is transport. The best way to ensure a place on a trip is to be prepared to bring a car. Rough as it is, if no one is prepared to bring a car, no one is able to go. Most of the roads to the skifields are very good, and we won't jeopardize the cars unduly.

Probably in no other activity is your clothing and equipment more important.

YOU MUST HAVE THE CORRECT EQUIPMENT. All the requisite outer layers and skis, boots etc. can be hired from the club.

If you don't have the correct gear you won't be able to go, so please don't say you're fine and then pull out a quilted parka or plastic raincoat in the middle of the blizzard. If you are at all unsure about gear, show your



leader and if it is not adequate you can hire the appropriate gear. Dont let anything I have said put you off. Some caution is required, but if you are properly prepared you will have a great trip and enjoy the thrills, beauty and peace which makes skiing the envy of all the other club activities, which are merely offered to take people's minds off skiing during the non-winter months.

Keep you eye on the trips book and get in early, and be persistant, especially if the snow is late in arriving, and remember out motto.

"Have Snow, Will Ski"

See you on the slopes.

JAMIE ORR

SKI TOURING CONVENOR

#### THE EASTER BUNNIES AT ARAPILES

Anxiously awaiting the beginners arrival, the leader's tent was rocking to the thud of Tony's Midnight Oil, causing a few problems with the neighbours. The objectionable group could rest easy when the Arapiles camping ground was plunged into silence at the modest hour of 4am.

Ross, roving around "The Pines" with his museli, discovered that every body had arrived safely during the small hours of Good Friday. All had slept, oblivious to the rendition of Garret and his band. After breakfast, everbody moved over to "the campsite". Selected for its large spacious fire place, on the main dust road and an energetic walk to the tap. Its desert like environment with the large rocky outlook - in full splendour of the afternoon sunlight appealed to the R. M. I. T. trio.

Friday was highlighted by the first performance of German excellence, which had strange effects upon most; notably Simon, supposedly a member of the elite, gung-ho 'Mellow Gromlets', who was left drooling on the spot. (Stefan had just climbed Serious Young



Lizards - a climb Kim Carrigan had been attempting for some time). Carrigan's brilliance seemed to fade somewhat, however, in the eyes of a beginner anybody who can climb over grade 15 is worthy of recognition.

Dinners were a constant battle with two ravenous dogs, belonging to Ruth and Mark. The couple became part of the camp, Mark forever with a joint and Ruth being teased due to her acute lack of height.

Saturday was rather hot, the Natimuk milkbar had brisk business churning out those famous milkshakes. We all had a shower at the local caravan park, (- a 10km. drive.) before attending the 'Easter

Pig - on - the - spit' at the Pines. Vicki and Sally, managed to befriend the German Camp. With a bit of beer, they'd got their 'fearless leader' and companions agreeing to stay with them in Melbourne. Simon was amazed with their progress - Stefan answered one of Simon's "Wow you're the greatest" questions with "you must be a fantastic climber".

A lethargic lot of people surfaced on Easter Sunday. The nights dancing at the lookout and the culmination of U.D. L.'s and Midnight Oil took their toll. The climbs on Monday were tackled with a lot more enthusiasm and energy. April Fool's Day was probably the climax. Ross put up a new climb at 'Declaration Crag' called "...And the Bunnies are disgusted." There were no plans of action for the morning, hence we didn't discover any 'fools'.

Easter festivities caused practical problems when it comes to 'heating' hot cross buns or preventing Easter eggs from going white in the heat.

The whole trip was fantastic. There was never a shortage of climbs (some 1800) or sun! WE left Araps. mid Tuesday afternoon, stopping first at Natimuk for a departing milkshake, before the 320 kilometre slog back to Melbourne.

Lizzie Dawson



### HALLEY'S COMET

It's very hard to sum up the feelings I have of this weekend. Although there were a few headaches prior to going, they all sorted themselves out in good time, and it turned out to be one of the most successful and enjoyable trips I've been on for quite a while.

Having 47 people in a 45 seater bus gave it a very communal feeling from the word go, and there seemed to be no shortage of talking and laughing which all goes well for people feeling good about what's ahead.

After turning the "trout farm" into tent city and a lovely night under a cloudless sky, the weekend really began, (earlier for some than others.) The trip up the N.W. Spur proved to be quite a challenge for most of the contingent, with people strolling into the hut at various stages of the afternoon, in various stages of despair and physical exhaustion.

Saturday night was again cloudless and still and was perfect for lying around outside the hut eating and polishing off that last bottle of red and of course port is essential after any meal of trout isn't it?! Then of course there was the whole purpose of the weekend, that being Halley's Comet. This turned out to be a bit of a dud, but we did see it and well, who really cared that much, no one seemed too fussed by it.

On the Sunday morning those hardy souls who decided to visit the summit were rewarded with what I was assured was an absolutely amazing sunrise over the Bogong Highplains. I can say that after many visits to Feathertop the scene from the steps as the sun came up was one of the most peaceful and beautiful I can remember, and had me transfixed for quite a while.

After breakfast a brief visit to the summit was made by those who hadn't been able to make the earlier session. Then down to Federation Hut for lunch. Here in the glorious sunshine with everyone weary and content we headed off down the Bungalow Spur to where our coach awaited. However, not before being given a wonderful demonstration by Monash of how not to run a bushwalk. I was only glad for their newcomers that the weather remained fine and that they had someone to take them back down the mountain.

The trip back was relatively subdued, however the morals officer made sure we were all well behaved and that our minds didn't wander onto evil thoughts or deeds.

I'd like to thank everyone who came, and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did, and maybe we can arrange to meet, when the comet next comes around!

JAMIE ORR



### MUMC HALLEY'S COMET TRIP

The mood was expectant and electric! Scrambling into the bus, some clever people managed to even smuggle more spiritfuf drinks one stroke before the bus was to leave.

Landing at midnight onto a paddock some tried to put their tents up for the first time after consumption of a considerable amount of the Carrington variety. Some had more trouble than others, whilst others ( guess who ! ) didn't bother with the pettiness of a tent and became intimate with the glorious carpet of brilliant stars above!

Saturday morning was glorious as everyone started the attack of the North-West Spur of Mount Feathertop. It was a good climb and when the MUMC bubble ( ie hut ) became visible, the speed somewhat increased!

Then came THE night of all nights! The sunset was a moving and glorious experience and proved a delightful entree for what was to come. He-lllo Comet! After distinguishing the Comet from shooting stars, flying saucepans, the Milky Way and the dog star, it was great to see what we actually came up to see!!! After everyone had paid respect to Mr Halley and his little friend, people managed to get their way to a tent ( if any!). Tent "6" was a two-man tent in which six bodies slept ( or did they? ) and created a massful of mass massaging masseurs ( ~~mmm~~...my back feels better already..)who rotated throughout the duration of the night... (?!\*!Δ!)

We blamed it all on the high altitude and the Comet as well as the people (thanks Devo ) who didn't drag us out for the sunrise climb to Feathertop Peak ( apparently it was fantastic ).

Next morning, those who didn't make it at dawn took on the Feathertop peak after which we started the descent via Bungalow Spur. It was a lovely trip down after which more bodies were rubbed, squeezed, hugged and photographed. Thankyou ( sincerely ) to Devo, Jamie and all who came - I think the general view was really and truly: great time!

Most of all, though, thankyou to Mr Halley for having discovered a piece of cosmic dust ( which we call the Comet ), without whom this weekend would have been non-existent. Believe me, it was a truly cosmic experience!

#### QUOTES FOR COMET

Peter: "I think I fancy you."

Lisa: "You'd better for what you're doing to me!"

"Where there's a crowd, there's Jamie" (Or was it some-one else?)

Lana Bantas



## INTERVARSITY CANOEING 1986

GOD DAMN!! While my back was turned I was nominated to write this report on I.V. Canoeing Competition in Tasmania, held in the first week of May Holidays (10th to 17th May for those who don't remember)

Saturday we left, there was the rigmarole of airports, of course someone has to be late (he's the one with all the tickets) if he had it his way would have kept on sleeping (to rid a hangover??).

Arriving at the thriving metropolis of Launceston Airport where the airport people had nothing better to do but harass foreigners in their city, trying to book us for obstructing the flow of traffic (which was NIL). I'll skip all the swearing, yelling, also complaining cause there is only Boag's beer, no Victorian beer and go straight to the Mersey River which was site of the Downriver and Slalom courses. First experience of the river BRR!! cold and wet, that's is about all oh yeah also a rapid here and there, but no big problem for the experienced canoeist of Melbourne Uni. WELL I tell a lie, but just seeing if the water was safe for swimming, also preparing for the competition, things like closer inspection of the course and viewing the situation from all angles, above and below the water. Monday, Slalom Competition began, that's after the hydro-electricity people turn on the taps so there is water to paddle. There was 16 gates in the slalom course I think, I know there was a few rocks and stoppers (which we won't talk about) Sometimes I wondered if carrying the canoe back to the top of the course (which had its only obstacle course) was harder than paddling down the course, the slalom course was quite challenging and also heaps of fun. Well I guess you want to know the results; Overall Results; 1st Tassie Uni, 2nd Sydney, 3rd Melbourne. During the slalom event there were some crowd pleasers; a number of capsizes and stopper "munched" victims. Some people who hadn't swum for a long time experienced the pleasure while attempting the course in a C1. One crowd-pleaser from Melbourne decided to start the course with NO paddle and upside-down! but after going over the drop, into the stopper (what are helmets for?) he decided to do the course like everyone else, handrolled up, fetched his paddle and proceeded down the course to record Melbourne's fastest Men's K1 time. In the LK1 event also Melbourne decided to get into the action with eskimo rolls during the course just to add a bit of variety. Another Melbourne K1 paddler lost his paddle and his front tooth attempting to handroll. The tooth was more neatly removed at Mole Creek, or was it Slut River (Chaplin Creek was a common nomenclature!) but noone ever really saw the place it could have been Devonport and noone would have known wiser.

Apart from the leeches leaping out in front of you as you were unarmed and carrying a canoe, making you light-headed with the loss of blood, there were no major accidents (apart from the case of the missing tooth). Only slight damage to canoes, not like Monash who limped home with 7 of their 10 boats damaged or actually more like "insurance claim damage". It's a pity Tassies' drivers are not as good as their paddlers with the wrecking of at least 3 cars over the week!

The downriver course was approximately 3km of fairly continuous rapids (rocks) and by the time you had finished your arms had fallen off (only one arm in the case of C2 paddlers- I pity those poor K1 people who loose both arms!), lungs have packed in, not to mention you are cold and wet. Slamming into rock walls was a problem if you weren't watching where you were going, one in particular, The Berlin Wall (no comment needed). Overall results in the Downriver; 1st Tassie, 2nd Sydney, 3rd Melbourne. It's hard to say what goes on in the race but a lot of energy is used and everyone made it down in some form or other.

I have to tell you about the waterfall, It was so high (high enough to kill you if you fell down it, well cause a lot of damage anyway). A pair of Tasmaniacs decided to paddle it- and they were sober! A Melbourne person nearly paddled it but that was when he wasn't so sober! Close but no banana! The highlight of the day and even the week for some.

Back to the competition, and we are now in Hobart for Canoe Polo, a silly game played with a double ended weapon! What I saw of it was good competition but that's about it as I was sent over Hobart to find the College where we were all to be staying that night. Returning later it was necessary to ask two policemen the way there from the City Mall. Results of the polo were as for all the other events. Melbourne was the only team to score a goal against Tassie for the whole competition.



The discovery of crackers was an added bonus to the deprived visitors from the mainland. Numerous members of our university provided unending entertainment for unsuspecting opponents passing under our window. Thursday morning began with a savage counter-attack as a "dud" came through our open window landing on the sleeping bag of our fearless leader who, showing the most speed that we had seen all week (including the boat races) flicked it away to save consequences graver than the Hiroshima explosion!

That sums up the I.V. Canoeing for 1986 as did the presentation night at a Tassie pub which was reminded that the Mainlanders hadn't in fact seen crackers for a long time.

Thanks must go to Andrew the only man amongst us with the delegation ability to make such an event like this leave our Australian shores. I think he was our leader because I didn't hear anyone else saying that they were as busy. The whole event went off with a bang and noisy repercussions (or "reports" as those more technically aware refer to it!) can be heard regularly throughout Carlton since.

### "KANOO KULCHA"

- Andrew Maffett ( Kanooing Konveenor )

Over the many years since its inception, the great art of kanooing has evolved an ethos embroiled with a unique kulcha many would say is more important than the sport itself. From when Moses was first floated down the river on his papyrus raft amid the screams of his parents, "Get in there!", to when the first negro in his bark kanoo found himself at the top of the Victoria Falls and thought "Oh shit!", or the Aborigines disturbed by the hoarse voice of Mick Jagger emanating from a ghetto blaster on the shoulder of Batman whilst playing on Byter Falls, kanoo kulcha has unfolded. The development of this kulcha has been nurtured through generations of kanooists and it is the job of today's kanooists to ensure it is understood, appreciated and most of all passed on to the next generation. The best way to start an appreciation of this phenomenon is by the definition of some terms, and following the economical lead of Telecom, this will come in two instalments:

A - K and L - Z.

A : ALCOHOL, most often in the form of beer, stored in tinnoids, is an integral part of kanooing as it facilitates many acts not otherwise found possible, ie. jug skulling on the head, and gave rise to the now famous cry of " I don't feel very well " ( See I ).

B : BULLBAR'S are also essential for all trips ( See E ) to protect Victoria's and N.S.W.'s wildlife from vicious drivers who savagely chase them across the roads, and are preferably BIG, as is everything associated with the sport.

C : CALCULATOR, important for mentally atrophied or deranged trip leaders ( See G ) to calculate the usually BIG petrol/damage/food/beer... costs and ensure that they don't have to pay.



D : DOORS, not the type that get bent on Easter Mitta Mitta trips, but the band, which must be played at a level not less than 8 on every car stereo for a period, before the trip scores any more than 5 out of 10.

E : EPIC, the result of something or everything major going wrong on a trip. for no apparent reason. It was thought to be necessary to have a Chaplin on a trip to make it an epic, supported by the latest ever exit from a river when 3 Chaplins were present, but has been disproved by a recent trip to NSW when everything possible went wrong ( forgotten gear, illness, damage, injury, mega-pullout ) and there were no Chaplins within 700kms.

F : FACE MASSAGE, applied by the rocks on the bottom of a rapid as retribution for extreme FOOLISHNESS.

G : GRADE 6, sometimes the schooling level of GODS who attempt "unpaddleable" rapids to the gleeful cries of the crowd, "GET YOUR NOSE IN!". Often resulting in death or the utter humiliation of having to 'walk out'.

H : HELP, what gods never ask for, except when stuck in the middle of grade 4 rapids, which they disclaim accepting when removed anyway.

I : "I DON'T FEEL VERY WELL", an excuse often used by less talented paddlers often putting on appalling displays of paddling, or when wimping out. Said to have originated from the wimping out of the bottom of a human pyramid by a most average paddler, before vomiting.

J : JAGGER, MICK, a person having a physique, lips and singing voice to not only qualify him for the theme 'tune' to "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" but also to act the 'Same gunslinger' who gets shot. A person whose hideous voice and attempt at music making for some strange reason must be heard on all trips.

K : KEEPER, a form of water turbulence that has a tendency to eat people for breakfast, chew them up for lunch and not spit them out until dinner time, as retribution for displaying the "arrogance of youth, and intelligence of a housebrick".

Now that you think you know half of what there is to know about kanooing, get going on some trips. If you have been on some beginner trips in term I lookout for the intermediate trips on rivers like the Mitchell, Mitta Mitta (Upper) or the Thompson, and if you haven't given it a go yet, there'll be some more beginner trips too.

SO, GET IN THERE!!!



GEAR :                    HOW GOOD IS GORETEX ?

Goretex, that miracle fabric which first appeared on the market only a couple of years ago is actually a very thin layer of polytetrafluoroethylene, or teflon. The product which is generally sold to the public and known as 'goretex' is this layer sandwiched between two layers of other material, providing strength and shape. The lightest, and least durable of these compound fabrics is Tricot. Taffeta and Taslan goretex are much more tenacious with arch-gear freaks even going to the extent of having articles made from strata-cloth: goretex bonded to cordura. This fabric will resist all but the most furious abrasion.

The property of goretex which means that it is such a marvellous material is that it is micro-porous. The fine holes allow water vapour to pass through but do not allow droplets to pass. Thus, sweat can pass out, but rainwater cannot come in; a breathable yet waterproof fabric.

Does it work? On a recent climbing trip my partner and I were snowed on whilst approaching the base of the climb. We didn't stop to put on our parkas, basically because we couldn't be bothered. When I finally did put my parka on I was covered in a fine layer of snow. However, the exertion of climbing the first couple of pitches was sufficient to cause the snow to evaporate away and not only did I not get any wetter, I actually dried out.

For its effective operation, goretex relies on a temperature gradient - it needs to be hotter on the side from which the water vapour is to come and cooler on the opposite or 'wet' side. In my view, for this reason goretex is wasted when used in tents. The comparatively large air mass around the occupants means that the temperature difference between the inside and the outside of the tent is not great enough to 'force' the moisture out.

Conversely, goretex is well suited to bivvy-bags where the shell is much closer to the hot, pulsating body.

When wearing goretex clothing, it is worthwhile noting that the outside layer will not allow moisture to escape when it is being trapped by the layers which precede it. Your perspiration may be being trapped by the undergarments being worn, thus not allowing the jacket or whatever to do its job. Super-absorbive cotton would appear to be a chief offender, whereas some of the new synthetic fabrics which hold very little of their own weight in moisture are quite good. Polypropylene or Chlorofibre which wicks moisture away from the skin to begin with is excellent.

I am firmly of the opinion that goretex clothing is worth the extra money which is spent. A goretex raincoat is by far the best parka currently available on the market. The trouble is - that it is necessary to have the required capital outlay to start with.....

DAVID WALKER.



## "YOU CAN'T LEAD YOUR PLASTIC LIFE IN A BUBBLE"

By DEVO

"You want to paddle from Oallen down? Are you blokes tired of living?"

- Ranger, Morton National Park NSW.

\*\* \*\* \*

Rumours were running rife in the weeks preceding our trip on the Shoalhaven River in south-east New South Wales - Was it really harder than the Indi? Why was this section classed uncanoeable? or Had Roy Farrance taken his wife down there? Could you take beginners if the level was low? The four of us: Timmy Beriman, Ian McKenzie, Andrew Maffett and myself were on an adventure to find out.

Pulling Andrew out of an exam, Tim and Ian away from the local ( on a Monday morning ) we set off a mere  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours later than expected. A further 12 hours down the track saw us camped at Tallowa Dam - the end point of our trip.

The next morning, the car shuffle was completed and we found ourselves beside the Shoalhaven, faced with the daunting task of cramming 6-7 days of gear into our boats. Almost ready to leave with wetsuits donned and seats put back in, we decide that the time had come to pick up that fourth spray deck - dickhead McKenzie (who's organising this trip anyway?). A three hour return trip into Canberra to buy a new one, and some complimentary beers for putting up with him.

So, the first day's paddle amounted to about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours worth. The first portage was reached at dusk - a straightforward enough drop of 2 metres or so, but into some undercut rocks. A real killer at higher levels.

A cold campsite was made opposite this rapid. A tranquil setting, on a sandy beach with abundant firewood, this site rated highly. However, the cold that night meant we were fairly much awake by the time Tim's 6.00am wake up call came. An inspection of our wetsuits that morning confirmed our worst fears- they had frozen. Tim, with dry bathers, denied himself of inestimable pleasure.

We paddled off into the mire- a very thick fog - fortunately a prelude to a perfect paddling day. After watching Maffo make a meal of the first major rapid I decided that it was too soon to get the spots scratched, and so portaged. The rapids had started to come thick and fast as we paddled deeper into the gorge. The highlight before lunch being a double waterfall.

A quick lunch and we were away before Macca had the chance to throw up; the super helmet exerting too much pressure for even his brain.

Another big portage signalled the end of that day's paddling. We camped beneath towering cliffs, by this stage right in the heart of the gorge.

Tim, intent on earning himself a reputation in mountaineering circles had



us up at 6.00am - another alpine start. The map taped to the front of Tim's boat (who's organising this trip anyway?) indicated that the riverbed fell 60 metres in the space of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kms. - fairly intent on getting down to sea-level. A roll in the first rapid to warm me up and we were away.

A second roll, after pausing briefly for a facial massage and a broken paddle to Maffo and we soon realised that it was all happening here.

Our slow progress was not helped when Macca decided to have a rest in a waterfall. No amount of cajoling seemed to convince him that we should make a move - anyway, we couldn't hear his answer with the full flow of the river coming down on top of him. Out came the ropes, a very hectic couple of minutes ensued as our small drama was played out. Eventually, we were able to haul Ian who had become wedged in the front of his boat, together with his boat out of the nasty situation.

A couple of rapids later and the first of two large waterfalls. The crossed arms came up conveying the classic "don't do it" message from opposite sides of the river. A short distance on and the second waterfall; unlike the first which careered into rocks, this one looked good - we could paddle it. A single drop of 4 metres into a large pool below - a moment of pure transcendence.

Macca had just about sunk by this stage - it was clear that substantial fibreglass repairs would be needed before we continued. By the time the resin had gone off and lunch was finished, we decided there was no point going on - total distance for the day -  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kms. Things weren't looking good for Maffo's exam the following week. Still, the flat rock campsite was a sensation.

Another early start, we knew we were behind the eightball by this stage. On the most optimistic view, we were a day late - that exam wasn't looking good, nor was a certain legal career. Tim's Queensland holiday was even in jeopardy. Progress was again slow as the size of most rapids demanded serious thought, if not portage. One very long grade 4 looked promising - Tim volunteered to paddle first. He shot it cleanly, pleased with his line. The three of us set off to our boats to follow him. Tim yelled out "I think my boat is stuffed" - inspection revealed an eight inch triangular tear through the kevlar hull. The rest of us portaged.

The position was contemplated over lunch and a major taping job done on the wounded boat. We were in a spot. Tim looked concerned, Maffo adopted the gumby position - who organised this trip anyway?

A couple more waterfalls, an all-over body massage to Ian in his attempt to gain empathy with the rocks on the riverbed, a second paddle on its way out, and we found ourselves at Sewells Point. We had 2 days left and this was where most people begin their 4-5 day trip on the Shoalhaven.

The question of trip leader was resolved at this point: no one wanted to take responsibility for our situation at that time.

We decided to send the junior member of our group with the maps back 37



kms to collect Tim's car from the start whilst the rest of us set about getting all the boats and gear up the 300metre high valley wall. After a relaxing breakfast, Maffo returned to find the rest of us halfway through hauling up the second set of equipment - not very impressed.

With much more heaving and straining the final loads were complete. A drink from Timmy's bladder was a well earned reward.

The trip back to Maffo's not-needed car, which was to turn out to be quite expensive, involved obligatory stops at two choice watering holes. Just as we were getting back down to Tallowa Dam, Tim decides to write himself a chapter in the annals of Canoeing Driving Incidents. His performance to that time had been a disgrace - actually breaking and swerving to avoid rabbits! He did us all proud this time by actually chasing a wombat across the road at 80km/h to take out his driving lights (all four of them) and buckle his bull-bar. A worthy feat.

The drive back to Melbourne the following day was uneventful to call it a sensational trip. Unanimous rating - 9.5 - one of the very best.

#### Footnote

This section of the Shoalhaven River is very serious indeed. It was considered to be much harder than anything the members of our trip had seen before; this includes the Franklin, Indi and Nymboida rivers. It is not just a single section but the entire trip is of uniform difficulty. Bearing this in mind, anyone contemplating a trip to this spectacular region should contact Tim Beriman who has the full set of necessary maps. One piece of advice given to us - if the level is 1.5 metres, don't trouble yourself with the car shuffle.



Wyperfeld Hike

Ken Wedel and I set off to visit Wyperfeld National Park on Friday 16th May 1986, as an official MUMC hike. I was the official leader, so I suppose that made Ken the official follower. Subsequent events were to throw no light on this relationship.

After an overnight stop at the St Arnaud caravan park, we reached Wyperfeld at midday Saturday. Realising that we had no binoculars, we borrowed a pair from the Ranger. Realising that it was Saturday afternoon, we started walking, to the Northern Camping Ground. This was a place for men to be men, and to eat their meal off the picnic table.

The next morning, we awoke to grey skies, conducting sheets of cloud on their way to Melbourne. However, the temperature was bearable, so we set off on an exploration of the Park's northern reaches, hoping to identify birds and trees. We saw a Red-Capped Robin, and many kangaroos.

We spent much of our walk, moving up slowly on trees to locate the source of a particular call, and looking up our notes and book, to determine the species of bird.

Sunday night. I lay awake listening to the wind trying to rip another hole in the fly.

Monday. Navigation practice. We followed a compass course, aiming at Mt Mattingley, the park's highest point ( 100 m ). On the way, we crossed Lake Branbruk. Ken stopped me at the bank. On the other side, lay resting kangaroos. As we walked toward them, they stood up, and elegantly hopped away.

We saw Mallee Ring-Necked Parrots, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos, Galahs, honeyeaters, Butcher Birds, Wattle Birds, and two species of parrot we were unable to identify, one yellow and black, and the other green and blue.

Wyperfeld is in the Wimmera, dry country, covered with Mallee, sand dunes, and patches of River Red Gum and Black Box. There are many lakes, all dry, since 1976. Weather was cool, with the occasional light shower. It is about 7 hours drive from Melbourne.

This was the first official MUMC hike I have been on, and the first MUMC hike I have led. I thank David Walker for extending the invitation to get involved - I enjoyed myself enormously.

Jim Royston.



