

MOUNTAINEER

The Magazine of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club
AGM Final Wombat Get Those Teles Happening We Want Kayaking In The 2000 Olympics Edition July 1996



Editorial.

Sob, sob, sob. My last Mountaineer. No more trying to tell you to look out for native animals on the roads. No more telling you to check the pouches of roadkills for babes that usually survive car accidents. No more telling you that wombats are not the ponderous animals that they are made out to be. And no more telling you that the furry hut animals are not horrible European rats. They are as native to Australia as the dingo and so please respect them.

As I type this, I'm stressing about the lack of photos that have been given to me. The AGM is right around the corner and I beg all of you to get behind the new publications officer. If you are thinking of running for the position, you must be prepared to put in a big effort. Too often have people been elected who then do nothing because they have no time or are too busy or their mum tells them off. Very lame. You need to make time and you need to be able to get close to a computer. On saying that, it is fun and it is rewarding. You get to make snide comments and write what you want about people (and hasn't that got me into trouble!). You also get to leave a permanent record in the clubrooms. Long after the president is forgotten, people are still reading the Mountaineer.

Thankyou time now. Thanks to everyone who submitted articles and photos, and also thanks to the Slush Elves who kept their ears to the ground and their fingers on the E-mail keys. Thankyou to everyone who has helped with the Mountaineer over the past two years. You are too numerous to name and if I forget one of you, they will get their nose out of joint (Thankyou to Bec Starling for getting me out of a bind with this edition though). Finally thankyou to Andy Gaff, who did a great job as sub-editor. He took on this position voluntarily and has sacrificed a great deal of his own time typing, bromiding (a great, great deal) and filling in all the gaps. I owe you.

Well, goodbye and good luck in the future. Hmm, maybe I will write a few more things about wombats and other native animals in future editions. Oi Oxo!

Amber Mullens.

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Front Page. Kate Bradshaw and Nigel Prior at Mt. Stirling.

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Prez's Report

And another year is over, seemingly just as it had begun. And a very active year too! Many many thanks to all those people who led the vast number of trips that make this club the success that it is - the most active club in campus.

This year's committee has been very hard working and successful. Thanks must go to: **Lisa Flew** for her organisation and support, particularly with the Mt Stirling T-shirt fundraising; **Nigel Prior** for battling with the club's complex financial arrangements, investment research and hassling people for money; **Alan Daley** for his rather entertaining minute taking, and interjections in his own inimitable style, not to mention his spearheading MUMC's campaign relating to the infamous 'Sports Ball'; **Sophie Brown** for her organising of many things social and administrative; **Amber Mullens** for yet another year of high quality Mountaineers and running that hugely successful weekend at Wilson's Prom in O'Week (a organisational nightmare); **Charlie Buttery** for generally doing things around the committee; **Joel Bartley** for wrestling with the gear store's contents, **Cuan Petheram** for organising many successful climbing trips, inducing the rebirth of the Easter spit roast at Araps; **Kim Ely** for getting caving back up in the popularity stakes again; **Stu Richardson** for another wet year on Vic, NSW, and Qld rivers, **Kim Hazeldine** for her entertaining tales of a hitched chopper ride out of the Tassie wilderness (hope that knee's better...), **Sam Maffett** for keeping the skis under control in a foreshortened season; **Andrew Selby-Smith** for keeping us well supplied with first aid materials, and finally in one of the more active years on the environmental front, **Kath Kent** and **Marcel Geelan** spearheading MUMC's aim to preserve the current diverse uses of Mt Stirling. Thanks again to all of these people for making this year a success on a committee level.

Beyond these people are many other faces helping in the running of the club. Far too many to mention individually, but collectively the committee extends its thanks.

Finally, of particular mention are three people: **Steve Bird** for putting in a big effort as the Search and Rescue delegate, **Richard Kjar** who shares the mammoth task of organising the 1996 I.V. Kayaking that MUMC is hosting on the King River near Wangaratta. Also club icon (fixture?) **Steve Curtain** has been invited back to the club as an honourary member given his expertise and enthusiasm for introducing people to bushwalking and ski-touring. Thank you to you both.

I hope that the next committee is blessed with the same enthusiastic people and helpers as has this one. If anybody is interested in any of the positions on the next committee, please feel free to approach anybody on this committee for advice, and then nominate! Then turn up to the AGM!

Finally to all those people who have been on and run trips locally, interstate and overseas, you all have yourselves to thank for another successful year in MUMC.

Dan Colborne

Scroggin.

The Annual General Meeting will be on Tuesday the 13th of August at 8pm in the Lazar Room. All committee positions are open. Nomination forms are available in the clubrooms. If you do not wish to be elected for anything, make sure you still come along and do the electing. The pub afterwards is always big.

MUMC has donated \$700 to the Douglas Mawson Trust. This money will be used to restore some of Mawson's papers that will be held in the new Douglas Mawson Museum. Australia was able to claim so much of the Antarctic land mass thanks to the efforts of Mawson and MUMC members have had a long history with Antarctica.

Kayaking IV is fast approaching. Anyone interested in competing or just coming to be part of it, should put their name on the list in the clubrooms.

The caterers for IV would like a few people to help out. For incentive, the helpers will get their food and petrol free for the week. Interested people will need to have their own car, not be doing much kayaking or other work and be available all week. See Kate Bradshaw and Amber Mullens, the personal managers of NQNQ Catering soon. That was the correct spelling by the way.

The Mt Stirling EES Statement is available for perusal in the clubrooms now. Please take the time to look at it. Also available is the report into a permit system for bushwalking in Tasmania. Comments on both are welcome.

Get better soon messages go to Cath Kent (broken collar bone) and Rohan Schaap (broken jaw). Both these people were not involved in "dangerous" MUMC activities at the time of their fractures.

Congratulations to Sam Maffett who came fourth in the individual bit of Wild Treck. A very fit young lad. Well done to all (most?) the other MUMC people who competed in the team events.



Dan on top of Mt Halcombe.



Andrew, Nico, Kate and Nigel practice their step-téles at Mt Stirling.

Annual General Meeting 1996

of

Melbourne University Mountaineering Club

is formally called for

Tuesday, 13th August at 8:00pm

in
the Lazer Room.

* * * * *
Proposed changes to
the Constitution:-

1. That the position of Assistant Secretary be abolished.
2. That the position of Assistant Treasurer be created

Special Agenda items must be given to the Secretary (Alan Daley) by Friday, 9th August. Nominations are called for all positions to be posted in the marked box in the Clubrooms by 5pm on Friday 9th August. Nomination forms are available from immediately underneath that box. The Returning Officer is Rebecca Starling. If you have any queries about positions, please ask the incumbent of the position, or anyone else who sounds as though they know what they're talking about. Get in there - make your administrative contribution to the club. Above all - turn up. The Lazer room is at the far western end of the Beaurepaire Centre at the top of the fire escape stairs. It is a night of much happiness, sobriety and cultivation. bye.



Steve Curtain wisely takes a cold shower, Mt. Cobbler.

The Mountaineering Club

- a beginner's guide.

by Rik Thornclift

Yes, it looks scary. That damn huge mountainside with a tiny goat's track, that gigantic phallic symbol of rock with only tiny pinpricks for holds, or that really turbid gushing water with self-guiding, kayak-seeking rocks. But it's O.K. You can be scared, because you're a beginner, and you've never been this psychopathic before.

Under the loving care of experienced leaders you will be propelled through this course of death-defying feats, until you too can scoff and say, 'Hah, it's only a 19'. But seriously, this is a little pep talk for those still a little uncertain as to whether they really want to test out some of those less used abilities. You do want to. 'It's fun'.

Activities such as rock-climbing, paddling, caving and bushwalking can be a bit intimidating at first, especially if you've never really been part of that 'outdoor experience.' For you, I write this report because I had never participated in such follies before. You know the type; skipped gym class at school, rarely ran for that bus, and would never, *never* be torn away from a flushing toilet and a soft bed. But I am a reformed woman. And I owe it all to the Melbourne Uni. Mountaineering club.

Originally I joined in first year. It seemed like fun, and I was told by a friend that the ratio of males to females was the highest of all clubs and societies (I later found out that this was a vicious myth-Damn it! (ed. - shhh, this is one of our big drawcards) There are just as many women as men doing that outdoorsy thing with us.) However, due to intense apathy, I never went on a trip. It appears that many people have also favoured this option, whether by apathy or lack of knowledge, or sheer terror, I'm not sure. One thing's for sure- it's not for the lack of really enjoyable and accessible trips that are offered.

Anyway, fate guided me back to the doors of MUMC in this, my third year. I paid my membership fee of \$15 and thought "Great, now what do I do?" Luckily there was someone around to help. Or actually some things. They're called 'trip folders' and

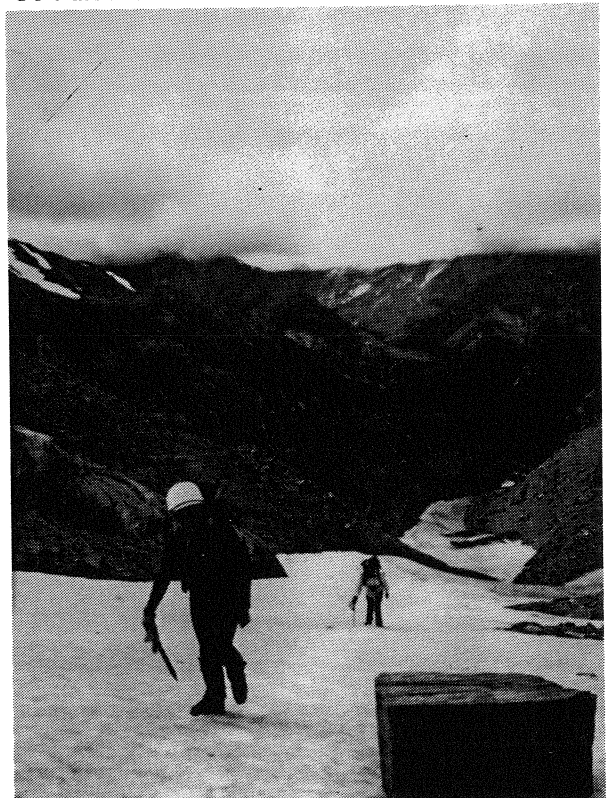
they're accessible from 1-2pm every weekday, and any other time the clubroom, where these folders reside, just happens to be open. In these magical folders lie a bounty of adventures to be explored.

Well O.K., they contain a listing of trips to be held in the near future; when they're on (usually at least one beginners' trip a weekend is held), what they involve, where they are, and who's taking them. Oh yeah, and a place for you to write your name so when you go to the meeting (time detailed also in this superlative folder), you get first preference to go on the trip. Easy.

And for a tiny fee (rarely more than \$10), you can rent from the club rooms all the gear that you need (except thermals, as they bond to body odours, and never, never let the smell dissipate. I was lucky enough to discover this when I borrowed someone else's thermals to go paddling. And he had been wearing them since grade 10...)

Anyway, once you've taken the plunge and signed up for a trip and actually gone to the trip meeting, you're set for an excellent time.

So I discovered.



I ventured forth, and found myself on a paddling trip down some river. Not knowing how to turn the boat over once capsized didn't even prove to be a problem (although frequent capsizing did!)- you just slide out of the thingie while you're underwater. FUN! A few little rapids (and I do mean little, in fact tiny might be a better description, practically ripples), a few kayaks stacked up on top of each other (quite safe, really) and I found myself out the other end of the trip unscathed. Morale boosted, I signed up for a fun weekend at Wilson's Prom - paddling, walking and climbing were all the go. I mainly played with going up vertical rocks. Defying gravity is possible! Before the end of the weekend I was racing up some of the less slippery suckers with no second thoughts. After all, you are attached to a rope for when you fall. Digging caves out of sand, and kind of impromptu sand caving were also going on. (Well, O.K., so we buried a few people- that's almost caving isn't it?) But I found it was not so, just a few weekends later, when I squashed my squishy bits through non-compactable openings down at Britannia creek. Yes, that's right I did say creek. Because water and caving are not necessarily independent. In fact as I found, water and caving can be a great mix (even when you add leeches). Anyway, a pull here, and a shove there, and I had a great day. I never

realised caving was so safe and easy to access. I also hadn't realised that I would frequently be swimming while caving.

For those who like it marginally drier than being completely submersed in a raging river - there is bushwalking. If "strolling up a very steep hill is your style, or even just going for a long walk with magnificent views, (and then sleeping in a tent with somebody and their socks) then bushwalking holds the right stuff for you. From day walks, to weekend walks, we have it all. Check it out, and get those calf muscles developed!

However, enough about trips, lets talk about people. We're nice. Come meet us. Better still, come do a trip with us. We promise we won't bite (unless Dan is on the trip.)

O.K., I estimate that I've just about reached your attention span tolerance level, so to sum up: the Mountaineering Club holds many exciting things for you to participate in, and get that adrenalin spurting out into your bloodstream. I've learnt many interesting things, done some things that have been just amazing and seen some truly beautiful wilderness areas.

Come to the clubrooms opposite the cricket oval and see for yourself.



Nigel suffers from foot-in-mouth. He really should of ripped the elastoplast before he wrapped it around his foot.

Rockclimbing Convenor's Report

Cuan Petheram

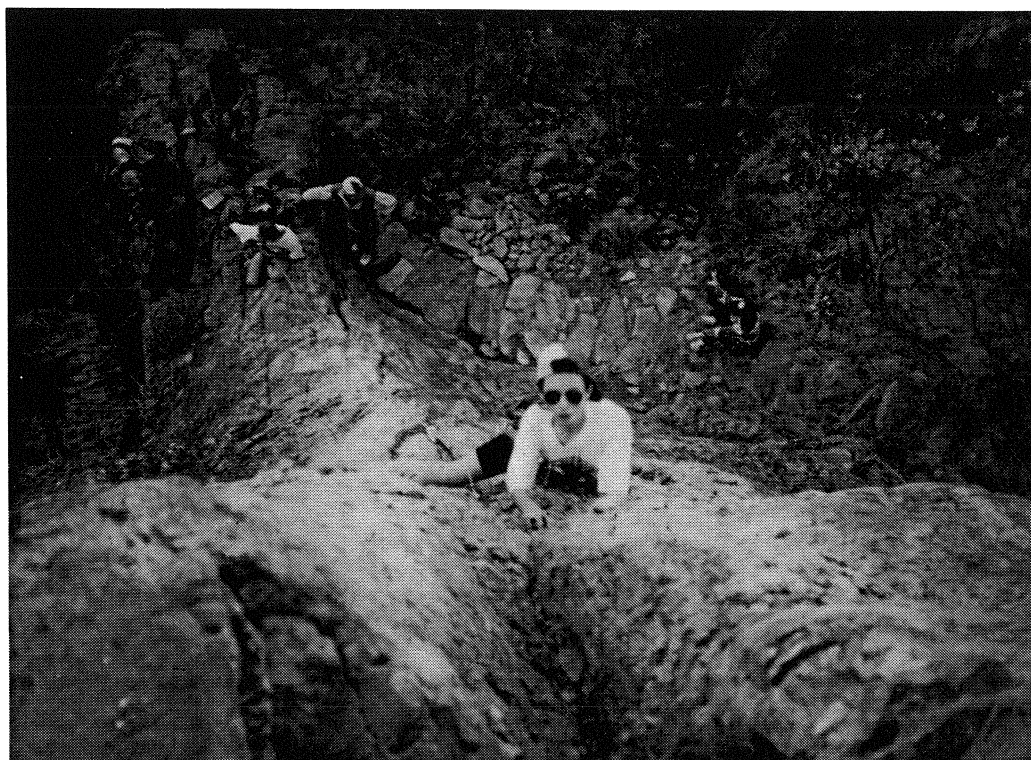
A combination of exams and winter weather has kept the local climbing scene fairly quiet of late. So, inspired by reports of blue skies, sunshine and good rock, about a dozen of us ventured into NSW, to check out Australia's premier sports climbing crag, Nowra. Sure enough, soon after crossing into NSW, the rain stopped and the sun appeared. It was a great way to end off a great semester in climbing.

During first semester, the club ran numerous trips to western Victoria (ie. Grampians and Mt Arapiles), an Easter trip to Monaro in South Australia, a number of day trips to chossy locations around Melbourne and of course Nowra during the mid-year break.

For those of you looking to start climbing in semester two, come into the club rooms and make yourself known. Beginner climbing trips should be slowly starting up again in a month or so, after the Midnight Ascent and the Alpine Instruction weekends.

As this is my last convenors report, I would like to thank everyone who ran and came on climbing trips last semester. It is great to see a number of people who started climbing at the start of the year now leading. I would also like to encourage many of you to run for the climbing convenors position. As well as being a lot of fun it is a fairly demanding and responsible position as the climbing convenor is in charge of the abseiling at discovery day and O-week, ensuring that numerous trips are run each semester, thinking up names for the holds on the clubs climbing wall and, most importantly, making sure that there aren't any colour clashes in the gear store.

Hope to see you on a climbing trip soon.



Life Above The Clouds

Rain awoke us early in the morning, followed by the hum of the sandflies. Up and ready in the blink of an eye, across the Dart River and a steep climb to the ridge lay before us. Thick moss was frustrating underfoot, often sinking in up to our calves. Hours later, the Dart was a glistening band framed by a rainbow as we stared down. To travel light, we took little water, drinking out of the tops of daffodils until the snow line. The weather was worsening, and a bivvy on rocks at the bottom of a snowfield ensued. After a wet night, Nicki, Cora and I awoke to a spectacular sunrise, and peering off the edge of the ledge, thick cloud had filled the void of the valley.

After scrambling up a steep icy slope that dropped off into sickening nothingness, we saw over the ridge and into the hidden Arawhata valley - separating us from the remote climbers' Mecca of the Olivine Ice Plateau. The easiest access to the bottom of this two thousand metre high plateau is an horrific thirty kilometre scrub bash, after making a steep alpine crossing of the Arawhata Saddle.

Our ridge seemed pleasant, and our aim was to traverse it as far as possible in two days, then return. Soft snow and wet slab avalanche danger thwarted our ambitions later that afternoon; the glaciers along which we had to traverse being cut up by crevasses and the snow bridges were shaky. We bivvied in a col on the ridge and relaxed, absorbing the views and our surroundings. We counted off the few peaks that joined us in the rich blue sky, above the white blanket. As we applied sunscreen, people in the valley below sheltered from the rain. The orange glow of the sunset was followed quickly by the cold.

After a chilly night, we emerged from our bivvy bags at 3.00am, trying to think of any excuse to avoid the -10 degree temperatures. My excuse was the wonderful meteor shower happening in the sky above. On rockhard snow, we criss crossed the glacier, and climbed up some steep ice to summit on Mt Bernard just after dawn, really just a high point on a high ridge. The cloud filled valleys glowed orange and the mountain tops pink. Scattered alpine peaks poked through the stratus to join us in heaven. Beyond, an abyss made the ridge impassable, and with the glacier softening by the minute, we hurried back to our bivvy site, and three hours later reluctantly ducked back under the cloud layer, into the rainy gloom. But not before we stood in silence again experiencing something so incredibly beautiful; so incredibly personal.

8.

- Dan Colborne

Steve Curtain at Mt. Stirling where he led 18 people.



SRT Caving

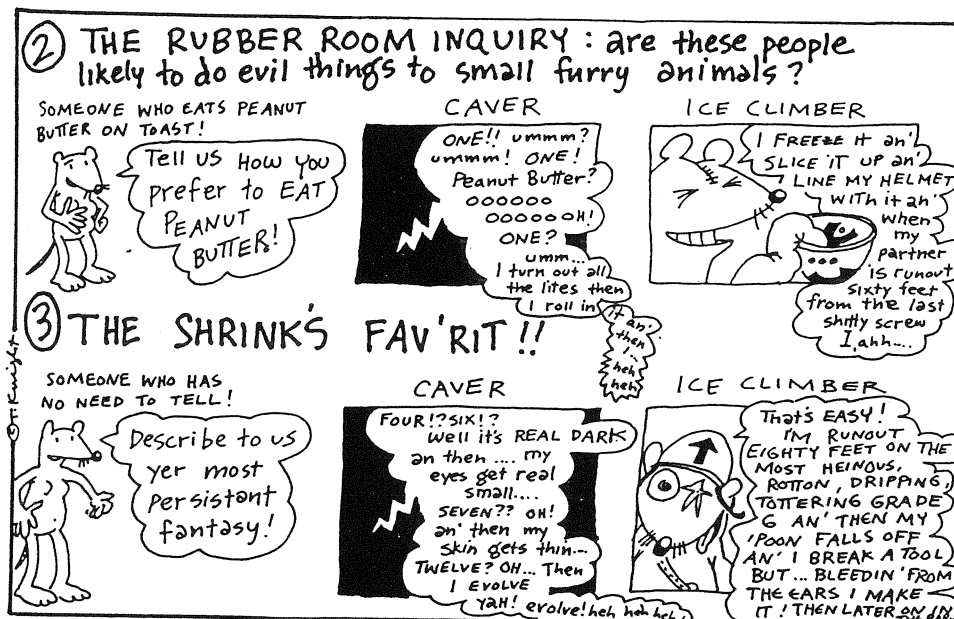
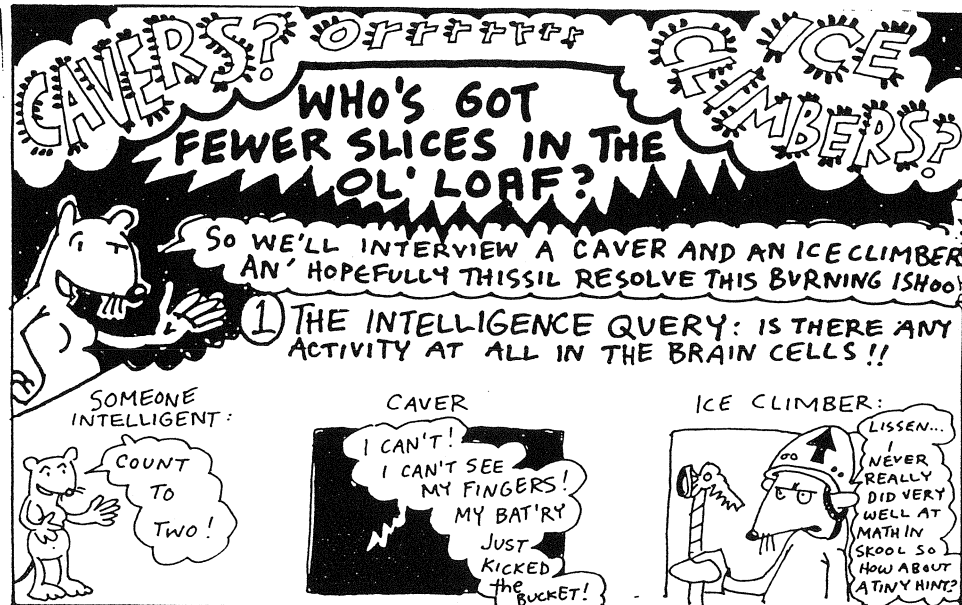
Alex Zdziarski

SRT caving (Single Rope Technique caving, or S&M caving as Carys and Katherine would prefer) has undergone a resurgence this year. Five weekend trips to Buchan have been run so far, with many MUMC folks active. Especially pleasing has been the number of new Oxo's keen to learn how to rig caves: expect more and bigger trips next semester. A very successful SRT instruction night was also held in combination with Latrobe University, with over 25 people in attendance. Notable caves have included the incredibly muddy Ragnarok, with its magnificent mud slides and desperate vertical exit squeeze; Stirling's Cave with its mud art gallery and high CO₂ levels; and the 45 metre pitch in the famous Jampot (which Kim almost led a group of non-SRT beginners down!), not to mention another vertical squeeze above a void.

SRT caving allows the exploration of vertical caves, ie those involving BIG drops, through the use of ropes, harnesses and rope ascending and descending gear. This makes SRT caving not only challenging, but also a great deal more exciting than horizontal caving - try doing a vertical squeeze above a deep void!!!

The club has all the gear necessary, however some technical instruction is necessary. Feel free to talk to Kim or myself at lunchtimes if you wish to learn the basic skills involved.

Hope to see you jumaring soon.



Conservation Report

Mt Stirling - The Time Has Come...

This is a do or die situation. Do something to help save Mt Stirling, or the mountain will surely suffer a slow and painful death. Although Grollo has decided against developing Mt Stirling, there is no time to celebrate yet! Despite Grollo restraining himself (surely Victoria should build the world's largest ski resort to accompany the world's tallest building and the world's largest casino...), the government has released the Environmental Effects Statement which details development as still an option for Mt Stirling. The EES sets out six options for the future of Mt Stirling; from Option A - virtually no change, to Option F - a comprehensive ski resort and village, with a gondola link to Mt Buller.

The EES is on public display for two months, during which time the public is invited to make a submission expressing their view. The government will then appoint an independent panel to review all written submissions and listen to presentations. After considering all submissions, the panel will make a recommendation to the Minister for Planning as to the most suitable option for the mountain. Therefore, the public submission time is critical. The more submissions presented to the panel from a cross country skier/bushwalker perspective, the more reasons they will hear against developing a full-scale down hill ski resort and village.

So now the time has come when Mt Stirling really needs your help. Things to do:

- Read the ESE summary. (There should be a copy in the clubrooms)
- Make a submission to the panel; detailing what you believe the future should hold and what you value the mountain for. (A few hints: cross-country skiing through the wilderness; snow camping under the lone tree on the summit, enjoying the natural beauty and spectacular views.) Submissions are due by Monday 26th August, 1996 to:

The Chief Assessment Officer
Policy Review Unit
Office of Planning and Heritage
477 Collins St
Melbourne 3000

- Request an opportunity to make a presentation at the panel inquiry. Anyone can make a presentation, they will be informal meetings to provide everyone with the opportunity to express their view.

*** * * MYSTERY ELEPHANT RIDE * * ***

**Rockclimbing at Moonarie, South Australia
by Stu Dobbie with a guest appearance from Mr. Maglite**

"150m..., finishing in a four metre long off-width roof crack..., bring tubes to 15cm..., grade 19..., first climbed by Henry Barber in 1974..."

Sounds just great! Having already learnt what a "Moonarie 19" translates to in the eastern states grading system, this guide-book description immediately registered as a climb not to do. Undoubtedly a sand-bag, and probably also very wide, ugly and full of horror. Peter Kreisner, on the other hand, suggested we climb it.

My initial declaration was that I'd have nothing to do with the cliff-splitting horrid Aliens-like-creature-withholding geological fault-line that astronauts could probably navigate off. As far as I was concerned cracks like these deserved to remain in the 1970's along with bell-bottom pants, long hair and my tortured childhood. However, this epic-thwarting pessimism was quickly swept aside as mere jittery-kneed bumbly talk - this was the mega-line of mega-lines with a roof to-boot!

"But tubes to fifteen centimetres! We don't have any gear that big!"

Pete, never afraid to launch into yet another debacle combining rock, darkness and foolish climbing partners, insisted it would go. "I've got a number three camming device, and we can borrow a number four from camp."

We asked about the route at the top camp where some Moonarie junkies from Adelaide were staying, and they seemed impressed with our choice. This, alas, combined with Pete's unhealthy enthusiasm for the route to manifest itself into a nagging desire deep within to give it a shot; that same sort of nagging desire that launches climbers onto all sorts of wildly ambitious projects, which invariably end with various amounts of infamy, loss of pride and plaster casts.

Pete lead the first pitch which was a good grade 18 with a lay-back crux, however several patches of lichen and dirt gave an ominous sign that this mega-line of mega-lines was also mega-forgotten.

We swapped leads and I worked up a grade 17 pitch with easy but awkward moves and lots of weet-bix rock and sand-pit bucket-holds, culminating in a slippery pink guano-lined cave. I set up a crappy belay with all the pieces pulling in the wrong directions, then resorted to wedging myself firmly in the crack before belaying Pete up. In front of me loomed the four metre roof, consisting of a slippery polished wall to the left, a yawning abyss to the right, and a fifteen-centimetre wide crack running out into the void! At least it was Pete's lead next.

Pete edged out along the roof, hands cupped on the crack's edge, feet smearing wildly on the face. He stopped to place the number four camming device, then swung around to the main face. The perspective from the belay was amazing: Pete in silhouette hanging from a hold above, feet barely sticking to the rock, and behind the bright blue sky and a wide brown expanse of rocky desert sprawling out to meet the sky in the distance, and lots and lots of empty air.

Pete looked at me for a moment, and grimaced that all-too-familiar oh-dear-I-think-I'm-going-to-fall-a-very-very-long-way-real-soon...

Pow!!! Pete's body shot out into space like a cannon-ball, the rope trailed after him, and time slowed down as he sailed farther and farther away, getting smaller and smaller, swallowed up by the big blue sky, then whumph! I'm ripped from the belay and dragged out into the sky after him, falling, falling down, tumbling down...

Silence. Open the eyes. Focus. I'm still in the guano cave. Pete is some metres below and out from the rock, swinging in the wind. The belay creaks slightly as I shuffle to free an elbow and lower Pete further to put him on rock again.

Pete climbs back up to the belay, we discuss tactics, improve the belay, and recompose.

Pete leads out again, checking the camming device as he passes it. This time he makes the move, and his silhouette disappears upwards out of sight. I let out some more rope, but I can't see Pete, and the rope works its way into the crack and dislodges the vital extra-wide camming

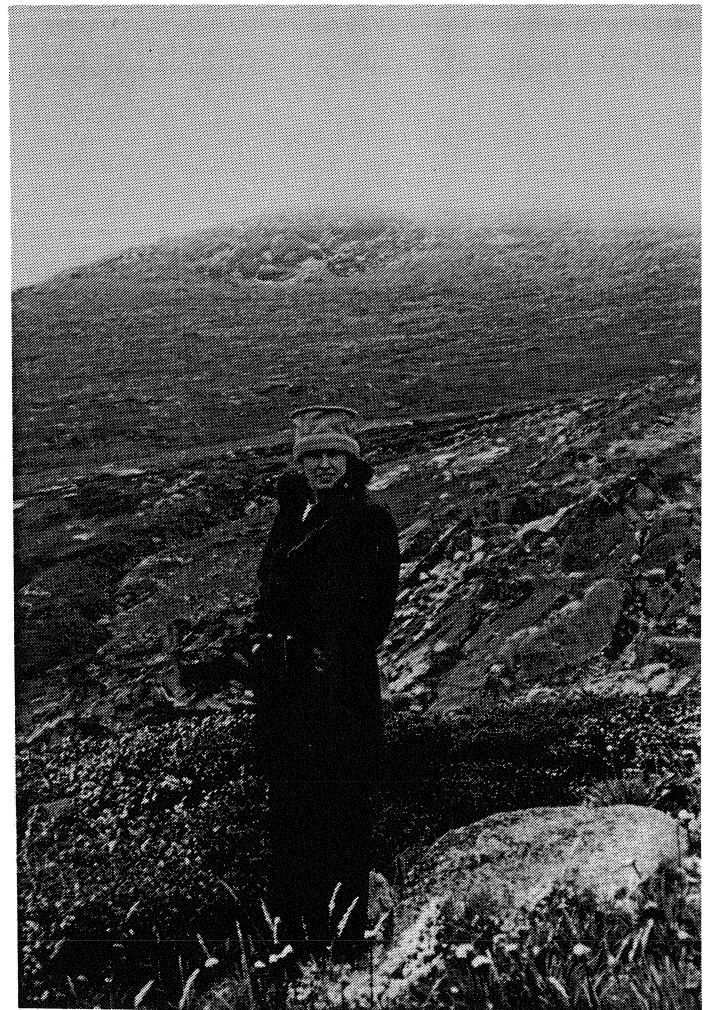
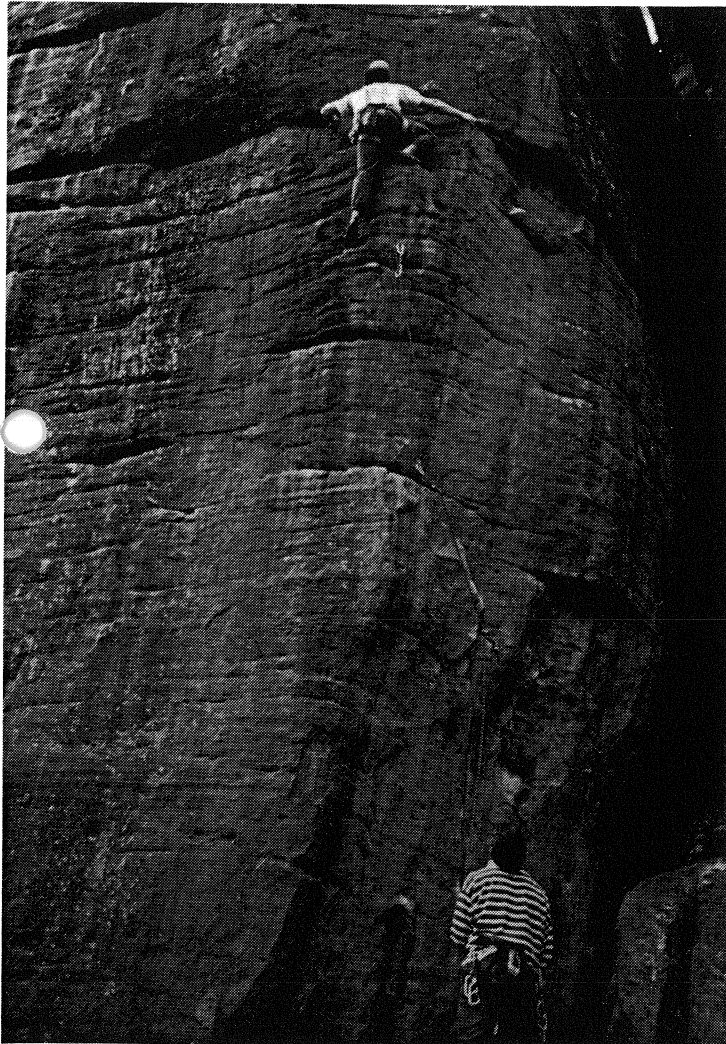
device which slides back down the rope towards me. Fine. Now there is no gear between the belay and Pete, ten metres up and out-of-sight. Is the climbing easier or harder? I can't tell. If he falls, he's going fall a hell of a long way. A quick adrenaline-driven calculation on the forces of such a fall - hell this belay won't survive this time! I grab the dangling extra-wide camming device and slam it into the crack above me and connect it to the belay.

A wind-churned cry of 'safe' finally drifts down and its all over. For Pete. Now it's my turn. Hey I'm a just a hex-dangling bumbly! I haven't climbed for months... I can't even climb grade 19 on slabs let alone a roof!

Belayed by Pete, I edge slowly out along the wall, then suddenly I'm at the lip, the world has turned up-side down with air beneath and above. My eyes focus to the new brightness, and I scan the crack for something positive. A speck of chalk hints at a hold, its marginal but I can make it solid by combining an arm-bar. Feet up... there is a tiny edge on the lip of the roof that I struggle but succeed on getting a toe to, then heave awkwardly, stand up, shake out, start breathing again, and its all over.

A few pitches later we top out to see the expanse of Wilpena Pound in the fading light. As Pete struggles to untie his figure-of-eight knot, he laments... "And another thing Stu..., the next time I have one of these hair-brained ideas..."

Andrew Selby-Smith bails on
Killer Boas (12) Nowra. (Ha ha sub.ed
strikes back).



Amber Mullens on Mt Jagungal.

BOOKS

While people mumble endlessly about what gear should be taken on trips, or even what film should be used in a camera, far too little thought is given to what reading material should be taken. A few helpful suggestions will be proffered here.

Firstly, German-English dictionaries are not acceptable. Everyone knows how they end, *Zwetschgen* (oops! Perhaps I should not have given that away). We need plot, we need setting and we need sentences. Enough said on this, the mere thought of it makes me yawn.

Consideration of destination is important, just as it is when choosing the gear you will take. Cyberpunk novels are probably not going to be appropriate for the fragile beauty of Tasmanian button-grass plains or the Grampians in September (*Neuromancer* may not be a bad choice in the high tech, lycra clad environment of rock-climbing). My belief is that it is difficult to go past a number of the short collections of poetry now published by Phoenix. These are just \$2, weigh about 20g and fit in any pocket - perfect for those short breaks for water. Wordsworth and Dylan Thomas (not to be confused with our own Dylan Shuttleworth, whose rambling prose is yet to be canonised) are simply perfect for anyone who wants their reading to complement their surrounds:

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green,
The night above the dingle starry,
Time let me hail and climb
Golden in the heydays of his eyes,
And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves
Trail with daisies and barley
Down the rivers of the windfall light.

-From *Fern Hill*, Dylan Thomas

Marty Meyer will attest to the beauty of Dylan Thomas readings while walking the valleys of the Main Range (ask him, go on).

Clearly, there is no need to dwell upon the experience of nature on club trips. The drug-crazed travel experiences of Hunter S. Thompson re-counted in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* complement the travel patterns of any Kayaking trip nicely. The account of how to behave when pulled over by the highway patrol is hilarious. "Never pull over with the first siren-howl. Mash it down and make the bastard chase you at speeds up to 120 [mph] all the way to the next exit."

Conversations with friends are also a very useful bibliographical reference. One suggestion made to me recently (though I confess, I have not read it) was *Seven Viking Romances* (part of the Penguin Classics range). While not to everyone's taste this collection of stories is great fun, containing some particularly amusing elements - not least is the role that women play in these "romances". Now we know what Dan studied in year 11. This book also has a number of handy hints - ice axes can be used for dispatching jealous partners of illicit lovers, as well as mountaineering. No woman could possibly refuse the charm of a man with a battle-axe in one hand and her (late) partner's heart, still warm, in the other. Essential reading for anyone not too sure what lines to use during O-week.

Beginners' trips would no doubt benefit greatly from liberal readings taken from *The Story of O*. If the Beginners are at all repelled by its content, chances are they never will understand how the club works. The problem with this approach is the way it narrows the scope of Advanced trips - further consideration may have to be given to this point.

Collections of short stories are usually underrated. These are great because they only take short periods of time to read. Where a novel may drag on with weeks of only intermittent reading (with the consequent loss of plot, characters, theme....the whole thing really), short stories are quickly read and quickly digested - they usually flow well and can even be great for readings at camp or lunch (try Henry Lawson, Roald Dahl, Guy de Maupassant).

Final tips: think carefully about the weight of a book and its value. Books are sensitive to water and *War and Peace* weighs about the same as a two-litre cask of port - you may wonder why you chose the former over the latter. Do not rely on off duty (or on duty) army personnel for good reading material, unless you are interested in the finer points (including the sort of bullets, shells, boots used - but not including the cries of the wounded) of the engagement between England and Argentina at Goose Green.

Now, find a nice mountain top, or a snug tree base, and read.

- Andy Gaff



Shirley, Nigel, Andrew, Rebecca, Kate and Russ pose for the camera while the sun is out.

The Return to the Nymboida

Fuck Yeah!

Stuart Richardson

Team Members: Stuart Richardson, Sam Maffett, Richard Kjar.

This trip can be classed as an all time favourite. Highlights include:

- A small group
- All with death wishes
- All prepared to paddle every rapid, even without looking (very stupid).
- People who love a big boost of adrenalin.
- Dirt Bike Man
- Showing off to people in high volume boats, who we've never met before, and think they're ace, just like we do.
- 3 boys who all talk dirty.

The trip started with an epic drive to the Nymboida River, leaving at 6:30 pm and arriving at the river by 2:30 pm the following day. This adds up to 2 hours sleep. Yes, this was not enjoyable and to top it off, we missed out on burgers as Rich needed to press on past Dubbo, dumb move, very dumb move. The next day started with a bet that there was burgers in Coonabarabran. Silly me, I should have trusted Rich's nose on this one. Any way I lost and now owe Rich an Egg'n Bacon McMuffin and a large orange juice (just what I wanted for breakfast that day.). Oh well, life goes on. Rich, with his pressing on attitude used up 3 times as much fuel as both Sam and I and we still didn't get there any earlier.

Characters who we were to meet on the trip added much enjoyment.

- **Dirt Bike Man** As he was affectionately called by Sam, who loved the way he strode around in his jocks. His name comes from his full face guard paddling helmet, motor bike gloves and padded elbows on his cag.
- **Mr Prijon** The man who imports a whole pile of Prijon goods into Australia. A dude.

Well, into the kayaking.

Day 1:

"Platypus flat down to Cod Hole Bend".

We ran every rapid, inspecting all of those that were questionable.

We all got creamed on the Cauldron.

- I went over it sideways,
- Rich backwards
- Sam upside down.

Sam proved his strength by bending his paddle to a right angle. Silly boy. He destroyed his favourite Canoe Polo paddle.

We then pressed onto the end.

Day 2:

Classic 3rd Section of the River

"Cod Hole Bend to the Little Nymboida confluence"

This was an eventful day with a group of about 20 (4 separate groups) paddling down the river. There were many laughs to be had.

Dirt Bike man decided to paddle the rafters section in half an hour and catch up with us. He did so of course.

Rich swam again, not surprising any of us. This still confirms his need for a telephone cable running from his paddle to his boat, (one which I have offered to buy for him, many a time. This is so that he can let go of his paddle, hand roll while still caught in an absolutely sick hole, and regain a hold on his paddle without swimming.)

Rich of course had to paddle the whole river, even the unpaddleable Mushroom Rapid (well at first glance anyway). He just followed the path of the creekers, down the rocks.

The day also included a major show-off session, doing gnarly tailturns on a splat rock. This left all the other kayakers absolutely stunned at our incredible kayaking ability.

The day ended fantastically. One of the other friendly kayakers, who was not kayaking that day, drove our car to the bottom (1 1/2 hour drive). This was awesome. The night then moved onto having a great meal at Ulong Pub. They only seemed to be able to cook one meal at a time, even though many of the orders were exactly the same. We concluded that they must only have one set of cutlery.

The night finished off with a hoon back to Platypus Flat, which I thoroughly enjoyed. (Daytona, yeah!). Sam, the owner of the four wheel drive, wasn't quite as thrilled as me.

Day 3:

"Some incredibly horrendous Bush Bash down a cliff to the river down to Platypus Flat"

This was a day to remember. Mr Prijon kindly drove us to the put in point of this section, as none of us knew where it was. He informed us that:

- All rapids have been paddled before (key point)
- It will probably take us 7 hours
- We will need to inspect a lot of rapids (key point)

With this invaluable information in mind we set forth.

Early in the paddle were some exciting rapids that all got us going. Some nice 3 metre drops into deep pools, some not so deep.

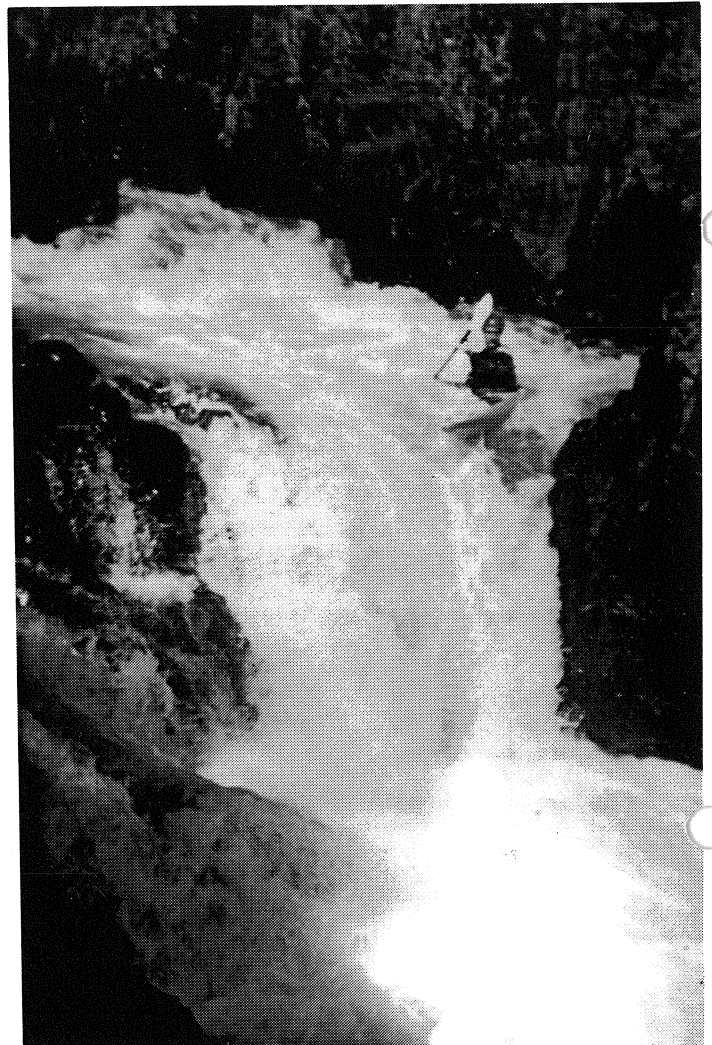
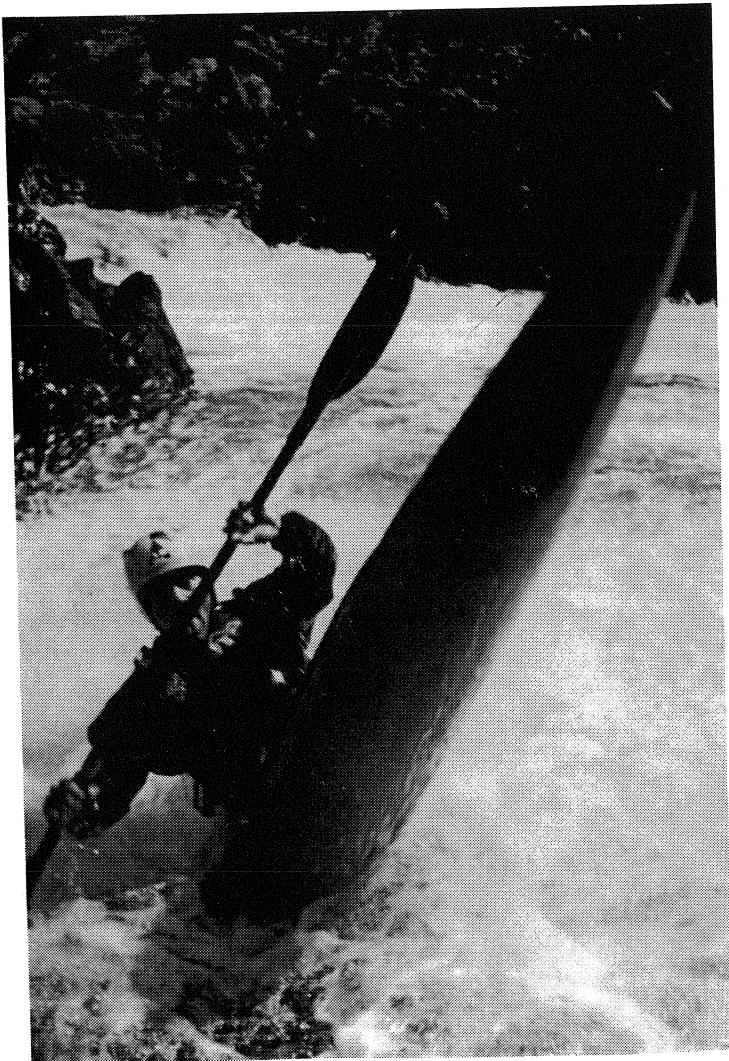
Highlights of the day were:

- We did paddle every rapid.
- Rich paddled 2 shoots blind. Both were not wide enough to use the paddle, and both ended up with all of us up side down. I remember Sam exclaiming while Rich and I laughed "Can we please look at some of these rapids before we paddle them." We thought that this was a good idea so Sam got out and inspected the next rapid. Sam then guided Rich onto a pile of rocks, which Rich was grateful for, so then we cockily decided that there was no point in scouting the rapids as we knew they had all been paddled before.
- Rich also chose to paddle an absolutely sick 4 metre waterfall. I looked at it and said "no, I'm walking", Sam was dubious, and Rich said "right, show me the line". Of course it was an absolute success leaving Sam and I stunned. So we then proceeded to ice off the waterfall.

We finished the paddle in 2 1/2 hours.

The day ended with a good old chat with Mr Prijon. We then proceeded to drive the 1500 km back to Melbourne, via Sam's beloved big guitar in Tamworth. This was another epic drive. Okay, dinner time comes when we are approaching Dubbo. We want Fish and Chips, and we go past one, but no Rich needs to press on. By this stage Sam and I are yelling at Rich to turn around, but no we must press on. Eventually Rich finds another fish and chip shop on the other side of Dubbo to save face. It was the worst fish and chips I've ever had. We all agree. We then push on, grab 6 hours sleep under the stars, next to some huge buildings, and a bloody train line. Yes, the trains come past at 6 o'clock in the morning. We then pushed on home, Rich of course, having to get his burs, pushes on into Shepparton burs, with both Sam and I threatening to leave him there. We played on the idea for a while, and thought deeply about the pleasurable consequences, but decided to wait for the woose boy to come out of his temple. Well we then pressed to Melbourne, having driven 3500 km and done 3 days of extreme Grade 5 kayaking, all in the space of 5 days!!

Fuck Yeah!



↑ Sam checks to see if his tongue will stick to a wet paddle.
Nymboida.

↑ Stu Richardson about to ice the Nymboida.

NOWRA - JUNE 1996

(or MUMC in sportclimbing's Mecca)

It was a cold, damp Melbourne morning in July that saw us, the brave, intrepid members of MUMC depart our wonderful city for ten days of hard rock climbing adventure in the sleepy NSW town of Nowra. Despite the early hour we were keen, excited and all fired up, feelings that survived right up to Broadmeadows where most of us went to sleep.

The finish of the ensuing eleven hour car trip saw us camped in an animal park on the banks of the beautiful Shoalhaven river, not five minutes (by boat) from Nowra's main crag (it was twenty minutes by car). The remaining club members arrived over the next few days to take the total number to twelve, and, in a wonderful display of MUMC's camping efficiency, nine tents were erected (and two people slept in the open).

The rock climbing (the majority of which were sports routes) was excellent, with a variety of grades on good quality (albeit cold) rock. The weather stayed close to perfect for the ten days we were there, providing the group with ample opportunity to do some hard climbing. By the time we left, even Super Q was complaining of trashed fingers and sore forearms.

Enough of the climbing, lets reminisce about the social side of the trip. The first few nights were quiet with the entertainment being cards with, heaven forbid, no alcohol and early to bed. Then Mr Dale the Debonair arrived (with the renowned party animal Andy SS) and the party really kicked off. Drinking games ensued with the rest of the group finding out more than we needed to know about people's past lives; including Dale's experience in the female toilet of an Albury bound train, Cuan's wayward aim and all the sordid details of Ian's romantic life. Other nights' entertainment included drinking around the fire, Pizza Hut all you can eat (including the infamous chocolate mousse shaving cream incident), drinking around the fire, an abortive attempt at ten pin bowling (the natives had booked it out) and, just for variety, drinking around the fire. There was also the nightly visit to the local Safeway to get stuff we had forgotten the night before.

I feel I have to mention one incident that occurred the day before we left. One man, who we shall call Mr Naked, having taken up a dare the night before, ascended a rather exposed route in a rather exposed mode of dress. Whilst anybody who knows who I am referring to will not be surprised at this behaviour (unlike the locals at the time), the willingness of a certain young female to second Mr Naked in only a skimpy bra and shorts might. Anyway, considering the temperature of the rock or his natural dimensions Mr Naked apparently should be known as Mr Small.

To finish a sincere thanks to all the people who went; Cuan for his sterling leadership and organisation, Stu for his local knowledge, Anthony for his wonderful cooking, Andy for teaching us all the sign alphabet (and his spectacular lead fall), Dale for learning all the route names so well (Spinning Blades of what?), Scott for being Scott, Ian for losing the Hacky, David for redecorating the toilet, Nick for being the life of the party, Megan for catching Anthony, Richard for thrilling us all with his melodramatics (and his short visit) and Bec for listening to Richard.

Michael Cerda-Pavia

Bushwalking with a paddler in Tassie

The people of mainland Australia tend to rubbish our southern neighbours quite a lot.

Alternatives for crossing the Loddon Plains:

1. Mudshoes - think of snowshoes, then make a few modifications for the mud. Maybe attach floaties for extra buoyancy. I'll have to consult Anton on this one.
2. A boat - simple and somewhat stupid.
3. Wait until its frozen and then ski over the top. Even iceskates could be an option.
4. A helicopter - why walk to Frenchman's Cap when you can fly? A lot a time and effort could be saved by jumping in a chopper and cruising to the helipad at Lake Tahune, or even the top of Frenchman's (it might be a tad windy however).
5. Now being a little more realistic and practical, this problem has to be thought about in a logical matter. The problem is lots of mud. Therefore, the solution should involve something that *loves* mud. The answer - a pig. Make it bigger and you get a hog. Pile all of the gear onto a sled, harness the swine to the front and you have the perfect solution - the hog sled. Oink!

A rather pleasant, not so sunny rather breezy, O.K. rainy and blowing a freezing gale day in the Tasmanian wilderness can allow the mind to wander. While consuming a tasty lunch of satay sausages in pancakes, King Island double brie and chocolate mousse in a hut on the Cradle Plateau a thought sprang to mind. A bit of time on our hands, six large bags of instant mortar in the hut, heaps of rocks outside and , of course, and unlimited supply of water. Hmm, what could we build???

packcrusher, nood dumper, peanut butter, snorkel, Peter Kreisner look alike, hutarama

HEC everywhere, trackwork, travelators, Devil's Gullet.

Lisa Flew casts her eyes over the vistas from Mt Loch.



SRT Trip #2

The cavers were again faced with the great unanswered question: is the Kinder Surprise really better than the Milky Way Lucky-Dip? Alex, a life-long devotee of the latter, was forced to concede defeat when faced with a tacky-placky one piece Sumo wrestler. Kath, on the other hand, was delighted with her bendy hippopotamus, the ultimate symbol of caving glory.

But still questions remained... Would Stewart return from his midnight descent of Baby Pierre? Could Stewart, Nick, Rik and Jess live up to their optimistic return time of 5.30am? When we awoke the following morning, to the subtle, contemplative cries of the currawongs, however, all members of the expedition seemed to be present, if somewhat red-eyed.

That day, Baby Berger saw the development a new, highly refined rigging system. Tanja emerged out of the cave with her head-torch wrapped around her cows tail, wrapped around ten metres of rope, held onto her harness with her Jumar and all held together with a few carabiners and a rack.

At Sterlings, ever-cautious Stewart insisted on setting up the belay from the camping ground at Buchan and, having ensured that we were all securely attached, boldly led us through the perilous entrance of the mighty cave. An exhibition of the fine sculpting skills possessed by the MUMC cavers was held at the bottom of the cave, with notable works including a tent, a piano, and numerous Oxo men.

How to get a natural high at the bottom of Sterlings:

1. Listen to Alex and go down this really tight squeeze at the bottom of the cave
2. Keep on going down
3. Make sure 4 other people have already done this in the morning
4. Even when you start puffing, just go that bit further
5. You should now start to feel really buggered, cannot see straight, cannot think or hear properly (well that's what Tanja said anyway)
6. Maybe its time you came out.
7. Lie at the bottom of the pitch for a very long time and puff.
8. Take a panadol for the worst headache of your life.

◦ We also learnt that Alex CAN get pissed off at beginners.

Upon returning to the Buchan Five-Star Canvas Inn, we found that the camp had been raided, but by whom? The culprit was soon to be discovered - cute little possum paws up and down Richard and Alex's sleeping bags, and a huge pile of shit.

The usual Saturday night antics followed, with Madam Z receiving a handsome pair of pink knickers (see Popcorn night frolics for more...), but it was agreed that oxygen deprivation had affected the performance of all. Competition was stiff on the following morning for the biggest bum rip, and although Richard's effort was commendable, it was the huge dirty patch on Stew's thermals which took out final honours. A decision was also reached to direct caving funds towards the purchase of a group set of purple gortex overalls, just like those worn by the SES Volunteers we met on Sunday. It was certainly comforting to know that such a group of rugged adventurers were there to rescue us.

While Stewart and his tribe searched for new and exciting entrances, Madam Z decided to get him self wedged on a pitch in Oolite. His grunting and moaning echoed throughout the cave, and where was that cow?

On the return journey, our scratches, bruises, and aching joints made themselves felt, and in reply to Tanja's back-seat driving, Madam Z offered this pearl of driving wisdom: "Why lose speed when you can use both lanes."

By Richard La Nauze.



Climbing: The Art of Movement

Despite the incredible variety of the climbing spectrum, the aim of climbing is pretty simple - to get to the top. There. That's it. The whole history of climbing on this planet can be explained by those simple words. It doesn't matter whether one is talking about a 5 metre B3 boulder problem, or a 1000 metre high face on a mountain in New Zealand. The aim remains the same - to reach the top of the boulder, or the summit of something far bigger.

Climbing itself, however, is something far more complicated. Climbing, at a very fundamental level, is about the art of movement: the intricacies of fine footwork on a steep slab, the sequence of moves to climb through a set of holds, the precision of a deadpoint or dynamic slap. Climbing is a vertical ballet.

Efficiency is fundamental to movement. Again, this is pretty wide-ranging: it doesn't matter whether we are discussing an inefficient, thuggish pullup on a mantle and wild slap for a big bucket just above, compared with subtle footwork on tiny footholds and efficient mantling technique, all combined with rhythm and balance; or the efficiency of an ice axe swing on a big face in New Zealand - swinging the pick in with a flicking motion of the wrist, rather than lifting the entire arm up to blast in the tool.

There are many reasons for it being desirable to maximize the efficiency of climbing movement. The first, and most obvious, is that it conserves strength, so it enables you to keep climbing longer, before you drain your power reserves and fall off. Other reasons are that it reduces your chance of falling off before you reach your physical limit, through a poor choice of footholds, poor footwork, or poor sequentiality; it means you can climb harder with no increase in strength required; it feels much better and makes climbing more enjoyable; it does not place so much strain on the body; you climb faster; and climbing easily and efficiently through the moves of a hard climb is a good way to pick up girls (or guys, as the case may be)!

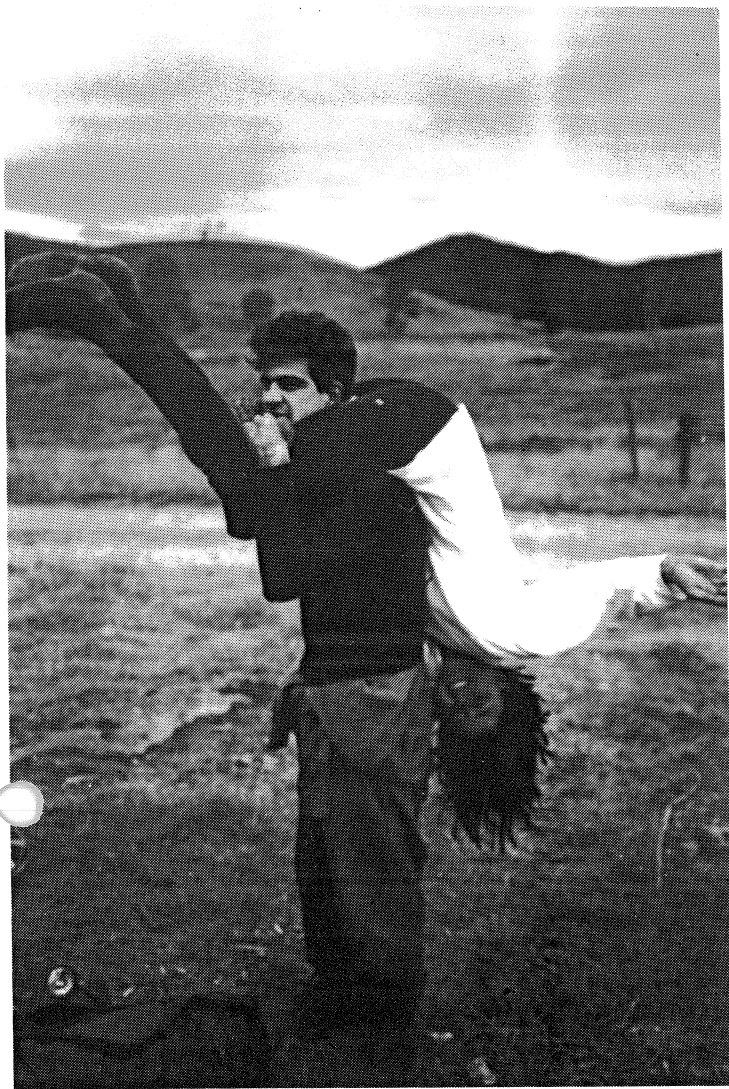
There are countless books in existence which discuss climbing technique. However, I will summarize by mentioning a few pointers. First, the first step on the road to better climbing technique is looking at your feet. The importance of good footwork cannot be overemphasised. When you climb, make sure you watch your feet EVERY time you move them, until AFTER they are on the hold. Don't take your eyes off them a fraction of a second before they touch the hold, as everyone seems to do - keep looking at them until after they are on the hold. The point of this exercise is to make you more confident and proficient in the use of your feet, because if you can SEE that your feet are on a good hold, then you will trust your feet more, and thus put more weight on your feet, taking load off the comparatively weaker arm muscles.

Because the leg muscles are so much bigger and stronger than the ones in the arms, use them whenever you can to save your arms. Another positive benefit of watching your feet is that it makes you far more footwork conscious, and thus you will develop new climbing techniques that use the feet rather than the arms, which enables you to climb harder!

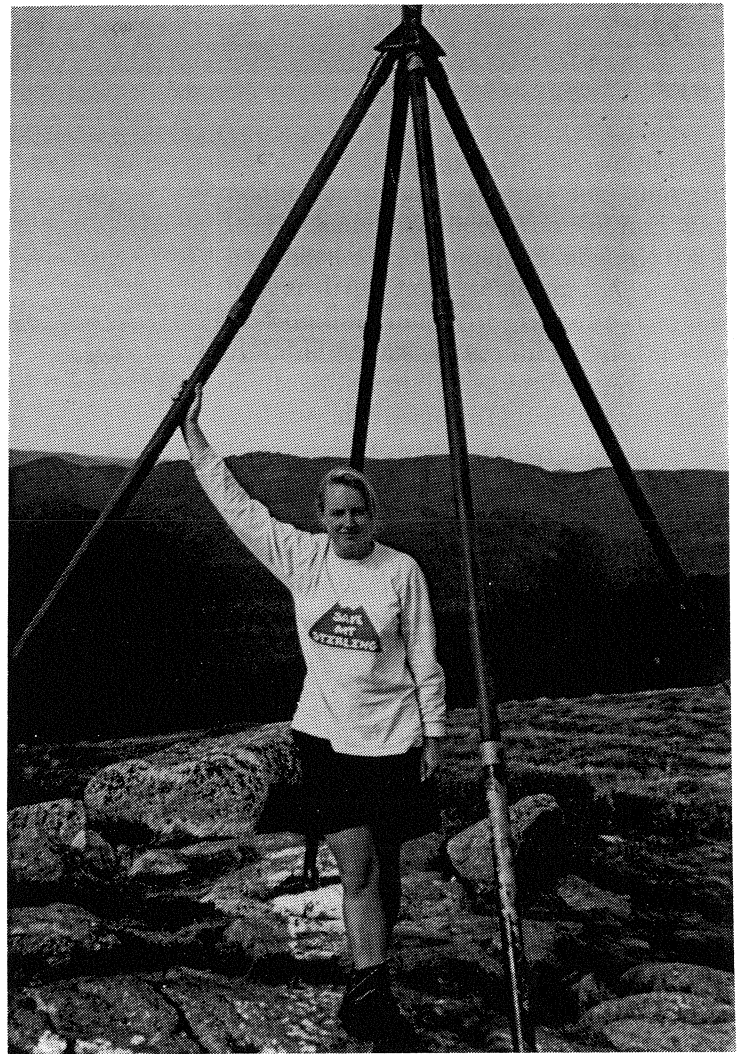
Another important thing to bear in mind is to avoid reaching really high whenever possible. There will be exceptions to this, but it is still very important. The reason for this is that when you reach high, the elbow and shoulder are fully extended, and you cannot apply so much grip strength, or so much force with the large shoulder and arm muscles. Reaching high makes you lean closer to the rock, often putting you off balance, and it also often means that the only thing you can see is the few crystals of rock directly in front of your eyes! The effect of this is that you cannot see your feet, and this encourages poor, or no (!) footwork, as you tend to slap around with the feet when you cannot see them.

A good exercise to practice to avoid reaching is to climb such that your hands never go above the top of your head on near vertical or slab climbs. This encourages you to drive yourself up with your feet, using your hands only for balance, which is highly efficient.

Another extremely useful technique that I use, especially on vertical or overhanging climbs, is the twist lock. I am aware that here I am in danger of descending into techno-jargon to piss off Andy Gaff & Amber (Just be grateful you don't have to type it up, Gaffy!) but I will try and avoid it as much as possible. Right, let's say you have your left hand on a good hold, about chest level, and your feet on good footholds, and you want to reach for a higher hold with the right hand. The obvious (and wrong!) way to do it is to pull in hard with your left hand on the good hold, so that your elbow points towards the ground, before reaching for the next hold.



Pedro and Kim demonstrate their version of the 69. Buchan SRT



Amber trying to save Mt. Stirling

The less obvious way to do it is to maintain an angle of 90 degrees (or more!) in your left elbow, and this time get your body closer into the cliff by rotating your body to the left, instead of bending your arm. Use your feet to turn your body towards your left arm (move them if necessary) so that the forearm passes across your chest, and you are facing AWAY from the cliff. The result is that you have not had to pull hard on your arm, yet you have put yourself into a good position to perform the reach, as your right shoulder will be higher and closer to the cliff. I know this is complicated, so if you want a clearer explanation, feel free to ask me or any of the senior climbers for a demonstration.

I know it all sounds like a lot to absorb. However, it is worth it, as when you have good technique, you will have all the advantages mentioned above. When you climb efficiently & with good technique, you feel as though you are climbing with little effort - it really is a fantastic feeling.

There is a lot more to climbing than the basic aim and the art of movement - judgement, the ability to place gear, the ability to perform under pressure, the ability to communicate, the ability to improvise, the ability to back down from things you are not capable of leading, and so on. However, I guess I will leave these for other articles, as each of them is enough to generate an article on its own.

Toodle oo. Have fun climbing (bushwalking/caving/paddling/rogaining/skiing/etc).

Andy S-S.

mmmmmm SPICY.

mmmm Spicy is a term used for describing many things, although some uses are more common than others. It may be used for describing some food, particularly those meals your elder brother cooks up for you to test the strength of your taste buds; it may be used for describing a gorgeous male or female as they strut their stuff down the street or on the beach; it may even be used for describing a tiny two finger jam crack, reached only after a two metre dyno on a long over-hung rock climb. But in this instance it is used to describe something far greater, something far superior, something that can honestly be described as totally awesome...

SNOW

It may be just be some funny kind of frozen water to some; it may be the white stuff that it always bloody cold and always falls down your back when you walk under a covered tree; and it may even be the stuff snow white plays in on the blank page of your lecture pad as you fall asleep once again... But when you are screaming down an extreme slope, playing come-and-get-me with the devil while dancing on the very edge of life, with tears running, legs burning, crowd cheering and the overwhelming fear that you are about to slam into the fast approaching wall of rock;

mmmmmm it's spicy!

Hooray, the snow has fallen at last! After what has been a somewhat slow start to the season of the gods, the snow has arrived and continues to fall while I type, due to the fact my toes are numb and the drip through the roof of my room is starting up again with the rain falling outside. It means many hours of fun and frolicking are just around the corner, or not long after the last lecture on a Friday, as we head up the land of the white spice most Friday Nights!

So you have never been skiing before and you can't see that having two metre pieces of timber and fiber glass attached to the bottom of your feet could be at all fun! Well it is, and we can teach you how. The mountaineering club has all the equipment you need to go skiing, be it for a simple day trip to lake mountain or a ten day extreme tour of the Kosciusko Main Range. We have the expertise within the club to teach you how to get up and running and maybe a little more, and with the production of a great little booklet this year teaching you how to do it all, it has become that much easier to learn. We run trips of all standards for all people, basically starting with the snow skills trip where we head out for the weekend and camp in our tents in a beautiful little bowl somewhere, teaching snow camping skills, navigation, hypothermia first aid, and how to do your first telemark turns - the essence of Back Country skiing. We also have a great deal of fun by putting a few tents through their paces by testing the strength of their seams...! and by testing the strength of someone's personality as they have a hand full of snow shoved down their back.

As part of the gender balance program, this year we applied for and received a \$1600 grant from the Sports union to promote women's skiing within the club; due to the poor ratio of 4:1 males to female skiers in recent years. After several lead up weekends of female only ski trips, the program will conclude with an almost all expenses paid, two day instructional ski trip (holiday!) on Mt Buller for eight lucky girls. To be included on the final trip you have to have been on all the lead up trips and be committed to helping other girls within the club develop their own snow knowledge and skiing ability.

So good luck to you all this ski season, don't break any bones or equipment! Hook in, Ski hard, and when you get to the bottom of a ski run; pause, look up, check out your tracks and say; mmmmm spicy!

ICEMAN

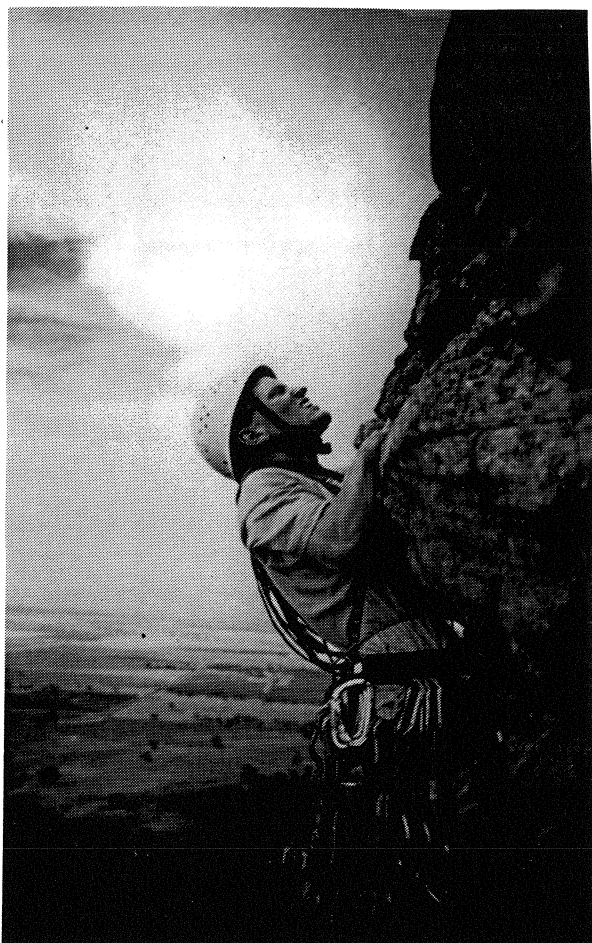
Sam Maffett, 1995-95 skiing convenor

Raiders of the Lost Art.

By Alan Daley

Navigation is, unfortunately, somewhat neglected in our club sometimes. It is a skill that is dying with the advent of GPS, 1:25000 maps, the Internet, and the general moral decay of our contemporary society. Confronting these obstacles, one brave car-load headed for the Victorian Rogaining Association's permanent course in the Mount Disappointment State Forest. Rik without a c Thornecliff without an e was the most keen. For months she had been trying to lure a truly intrepid bushwalker into reviving the lost art. Alan with one l Daley with an e obliged. Eventually, Steven with a v Curtain as in drape was his faithful sidekick and the adventure was almost complete and ready to begin. However, with such intrinsic risk in the task at hand, it was felt that two more bodies were required for a semblance of safety. Enmoore two os and an e Lin as in lint with no t, and Ruth rhymes with truth Patterson dissimilar to Banjo was there to provide the balance. So it was that a small, fuel-efficient blue Ford Falcon zoomed off to the clubrooms at the crack of dawn. 9:00 was the meeting time, and within half an hour, all five participants in this dangerous event had congregated in the charming, quaint shed on the cement slab known as MUMC clubrooms. Rik wanted to test the navigational ability of her mentors before she could trust giving her whole self to them completely. The party found their way to Rik's place in Cardigan Street. After the grand tour, Alan felt it was time to offer the first challenge of the morning: coffee. So it was that the Ford guzzled its way to Brunswick for a fresh grind and plunge of coffee. Their caffeine addiction sated, the famous five headed for the hills. On the way, they stopped briefly in Wallan to refresh their quickly depleting supplies of bread, apple scrolls and chocolate. "Did they find Mt. Disappointment State Forest?" I hear you cry. Indeed they did. After a lunch to revive themselves following such a tiring morning, this daring and audacious bunch spent at least three and a half hours on the track, using compasses, features, handrails, roads and big stumps with white and red stuff smeared over them - an ancient tribal symbol of the rogainers, we were told by Stevie.

The emotionally charged group headed for home, astounded by their own feats of endurance and skill, and fulfilled in their quest to recover what was once common sense to our ancestors. Rik taught this close-knit community a new song to celebrate their achievements, and slowly the Ford crept into the sunset, followed by the trail of flashing blue and red lights, the wail of a siren and the lingering echoes of *The Rainbow Connection*.



Simon at Arapiles.

Grim Outlook



The wombat goes to check the mail
and finds the Mountaineer.
Will the forces of good prevail,
will the wombat live another year?
No! It finds it's naked to any predator
because Amber is no longer editor.

Those of forthcoming years
will not care as much
as Amber does for wombats' tears
Making them worthless as such.
Full knowing the wombat scurries to its lair,
hides, and says its prayers.



The abductor made a strong demand
that was not met
Wombat's now six feet in sand
and the tombstone inscription set.
"Bad poets crave any format,
No publication - dead wombat."



Mount Anne Magic

With the Arthurs behind us the last few days of my Tassie trip were set for a visit to Mt. Anne. There had been a high rate of attrition in the group and Marty and I were the only starters. Several hours of walking on the road were avoided by a free lift from the bus. The ascent began and we sweated, panted and puffed up to High Camp Memorial Hut in the hot conditions. (Yes it *can* be hot/not raining in Tassie). The tiny stone hut is perched below Mt. Eliza and has magnificent views.

My Favourite Toilet

The High Camp Memorial Hut has a loo that is a pleasure use. If the smell from the loo isn't breathtaking enough the view certainly is. It's functionality as a toilet is not the greatest but its construction takes full advantage of the spectacular surroundings. To the west is the unnatural Lake Pedder with Scotts Peak and Mt. Solitary sitting in it. The Franklin Range makes the horizon. To the east is the very undulating Western Arthurs. Deception Ridge is to the north. This setting becomes even more stunning at sunset as the mountains silhouette and the sky continuously changes colour. The light show in the morning is equally as good. Unfortunately the loo is only a long drop complete with smell and flies but the perspex window distracts you from these short comings. So from using this toilet some things can be concluded: 1) Any loo is better than digging a hole, 2) Flooded button grass (Lake Pedder) looks out of place, 3) Western Arthurs from a distance look just as inhospitable as at ground level, 4) More toilets (eg. Lake Tahune) should have windows.

After a meal and pleasantly relieving myself it was time to watch a great sunset and to argue with some travellers who slept in the stuffy loft. We successfully got the bottom bunks.

During the night the hut rodent was very busy running about. (Rat, marsupial, rodent, clean/dirty or otherwise they are annoying). An early start was made to avoid the heat. First peak bagged was Mt Eliza, then the plateau was crossed to Shelf Camp. The terrain was made up of boulder fields and a carpet of tough alpine vegetation with the occasional small tarn. The final climb to the summit of Mt. Anne is 'airy' as you skirt rock edges on top of massive cliffs and drop offs. From the summit the entire South West could be seen. Most notable was the Arthurs, east and west, and PB.

Back at Shelf camp we meet with other hikers and exchanged the use of our stove that night (their MSR had died) for some sun screen (we had run out and were starting glow red). The terrain turned harsh as we sidled the ridge to Mt. Lot. At The Notch (a very steep saddle) I finally got to use my rope for pack hauling instead of tying food up in trees to avoid furry things. Lunch on top of Lot was made unpleasant by hoards of flies. Lunch was surprise - surprise, Ryvita, cheese and spreads for the twelfth day. Variety is the spice of life and extended walks, note has been taken for next walk. A steep decent was made down the boulders of Lightning Ridge then the track disappeared into the forest. It wasn't that hard to follow as there was a trail of blue sleeping mat parts to follow. Please - always protect your sleeping mat in a thick plastic cover if it is on the outside of your pack.

Camp was made at Lonely Tarns and a swim in the fresh (bloody freezing) waters of Judds Tarn was invigorating. We meet up again with the odd couple of hikers. Laurie was a rock climber/outdoors kind of person while Steve was a builder, getting over some difficulties, having his first overnight trip. What a place to begin. Well, they were enjoying themselves - apart from not having a stove.

Night came in and Lot's Wife provided that evenings light show. The next day started with a superb still dawn. It was soured for me as something had helped it's self to my scroggin during the night. On the track again we passed several tarns, went through many bogs and crossed fields of harsh low alpine vegetation all under brilliant blue skies. This was an astounding place. Every moment we were grateful that we did not have the weather that made the terrain so stunning and rugged. Packs were dropped and the huge boulder felid of the side of Mt. Sarah Jane was tackled. The summit gave us a view of the ground covered so far and inspired the next days side trip (Schnells Ridge).

Lunch back at the base was again spoiled by the relentless Tassie flies. They never land and aren't dissuaded by swatting, they just buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, head butt, buzz, buzz, buzz, etc. The decent back to the button grass was a tortuously steep bash through dense medium scrub. The button grass was a welcome relief. Not for long though. The mud had dried to sticky in most places but not all. I was about ready to give up minimal impact walking as I saw Marty disappear up to his thighs in mud and desperately cling onto the button grass to avoid sinking further. Camp was made at Lake Judd by the Anne River outlet. This was an ideal spot. The mud was washed off in the small fast flowing Anne river then a swim in the warm waters of the lake. As we ate there was russelling in the under growth and we saw the natives darting around preparing to attempt to sample our food. That night the food was hoisted particularly high in a tree.

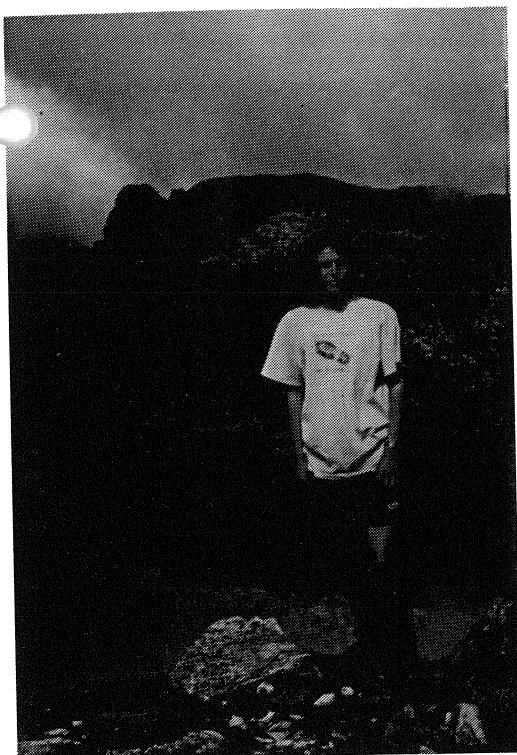
Next day and yet again another magical morning. Lake Judd was mirror still in the first glimpse of the rising sun coming over Mt. Sarah Jane. Back to the mud but relief came soon as we hit the first few sections of well maintained track. Striding easily along the board walk I suddenly stopped. SSSHHHHIIITTT!!! Marty sees a pail figure shot pass him. I'm sure the huge snake which had raised it's head in a annoyed manner was just as surprised and left just as hastily.

The afternoon was taken up with a side trip to Schnells Ridge. The ridge is untracked with low vegetation. Climbing up to the bluff above Smiths Tarn gave a brilliant view back to the peaks we had just visited. The heat was to much to continue on. With limited water we had to returned to the Anne River cable crossing to collect packs and go on to Red Tape Creek camp.

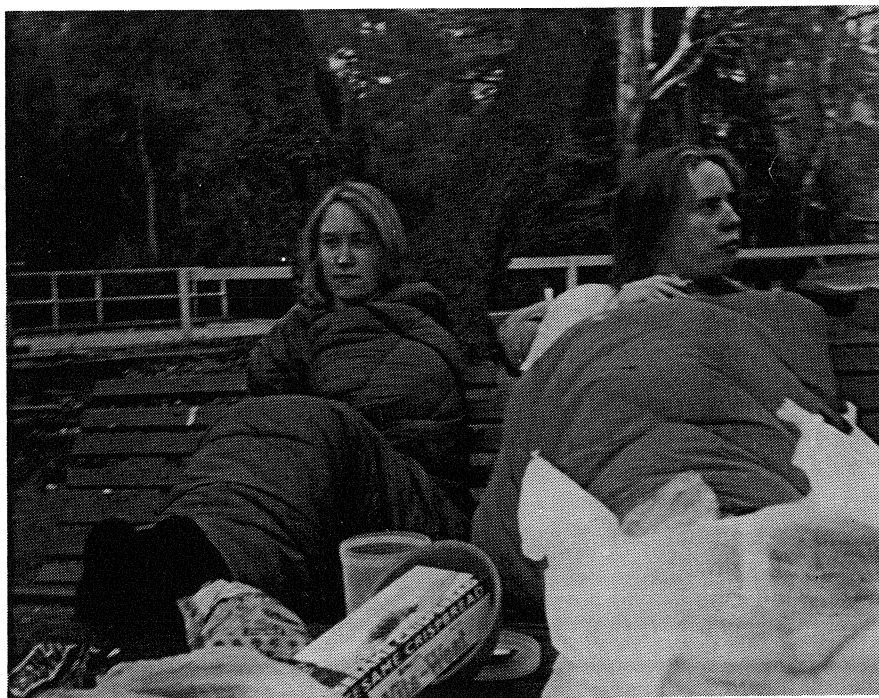
Marty and I indulged in a cheese cake to mark our final night in the splendid south west wilderness. The incredible experience of fourteen days out had certainly made an appetite for this treat. A walk to Eager Dam allowed us to look back at Mt. Anne, fellow peaks, and the Arthurs as the setting sun drew a curtain on the trip. The sense of relief and achievement that we had completed the trip was great with the many events that had happen at the start (ref previous Mountaineer).

The Mt. Anne circuit is a challenging and beautiful walk. It was "the icing on the cake" for a epic trip (Or maybe the lemon topping on a powdered cheese cake). Mountains, lakes and button grass, its all there with fantastic side trips as well. It has left me hungry for more Tasmanian wilderness. See you there in summer.

Joel Bartley



Joel in Tasmania.



Carys Evans and Jill Fagan. Happy little soles.

GEAR FREAKS CORNER

XCD Ski Fashion 1996

TGF - True Gear Freak

WGF - "Wannabe" Gear Freak

XCD (cross country downhill) or telemarking is in vogue amongst serious skiers in MUMC (no matter what Steve Curtain tries to tell you !). Ski-touring is to XCD as approach walks are to climbing, yuk. Touring is only a method of travel to get out backcountry to telemark untracked bowls and steep gullies.

As all gear freaks know, it is vitally important to look the part, even if you haven't got past the snowplough stage.

Jacket (waterproof and breathable)

The ideal jacket has to be of short length for freedom of movement(s) and the TGF will look for pit zips to air those sweaty underarms. While your knee-length goretex may be the envy of your bushwalking mates, you will look like an absolute tossle on the slopes. TGF's with the fattest credit cards will go for the Patagonia "Super Alpine" with kevlar ripstop (ed. - Oh spare me!). The fashion conscious TGF will prefer the dynamic colour mix and features of the Mont "Very Extreme". More conservative TGF's will head towards jackets like the Mountain Designs "Nimbus", WE "Traverse" and Paddy Pallin "Vortex".

Fleece Tops (windproof or wind resistant)

Standard Polartec type fleeces are old hat and only for WGF's, throw them out now. TGF's will go for windblocking fleece, microfibres or stretch fleeces (made by numerous manufacturers) as they can be used as outerwear on windy days. Windblocking fleece vests and jackets are particularly trendy and outrageously expensive this season.

Bottoms

Kinetix pants are excellent value for money and are reasonably fast drying but incredibly boring. TGF's will prefer stretch fleeces like Wilderness "Lava Legs" or Patagonia "Activist Tights" for colder weather. For extreme weather, serious wallet emptying is required to purchase TGF items such as waterproof salopettes or dropseat pants (i.e Mountain Designs "Alpettes", Mont "Extreme" salopettes, Patagonia "Nitro Bibs" or Paddy Pallin "Vortex pants").

Thermal underwear

TGF's will thermally cover themselves from head to toe with liner gloves, liner socks, tops, bottoms and balaclavas. TGF's will want fast wicking and drying fabrics such as Capilene polyester, Thermax polyester or Malden Bipolar. WGF's will find stripey or plain polypropylene cheap, scratchy and impossible to colour co-ordinate with their gear but adequate in a smelly sort of way.

Hats

Stupid looking jester style fleece hats with bells on them are definitely out (sorry Rik, sorry Rak !) (ed.- WHAT! Noone mentioned this to me! I'm doomed never to tele).. The rage this year are "baseball" style caps made from fleece, goretex shelled fleece or windstopper.

Gloves

Windstopper style fleece gloves are a must have for TGF's. Serious TFG's should empty their wallets and purchase mountaineering shell gloves with goretex covered fleece liners made by Black Diamond, Patagonia and Outdoor Research. Those with less cash or "wusses" with cold hands will be happy enough with shell mitts although they are difficult to scratch yourself with. If you are into mitts, get the seam sealed ones and match them with fleece gloves.

Gaiters

For pure snow use, wanky goretex gaiters such as Wilderness Equipment "Snowploughs" or Outdoor Research "Crocodiles" are a TGF staple. For durability and all round use, canvas gaiters (i.e Aiking, WE, Macpac...) are a more cost effective but exceedingly dull purchase. Make sure they have velcro and snap closures and open up at the front. Don't forget to match the colour to your jacket.

Boots

A simple choice, get anything with buckles, the more the better. Anything without buckles has to be a poxy touring boot. Serious TGF's will prefer plastic boots such as Asolo "Telebreeze" or the inimitable Scarpa "Terminator 2".

Skis

Forget about double or single cambers, the most important thing is whether your skis have "extreme" or "telemark" written on them. True gear freaks are getting into cable release bindings and waxing bases (no hot wax jokes please). High performance skis to look for are the Tua "Montet MX", Morotto "Ultimate Cap", Atomic "80/60/70", and the Black Diamond "Eclipse".

In the MUMC gear store, Morotto "Telemark" or Swallow "Telemark" skis with their minimal pattern bases and excellent turning characteristics are the best for XCD. For a compromise, Morotto "Light-Tele's" are fine as they are excellent touring skis but still perform in the turns.

Stocks (poles to you downhill losers)

They have to be adjustable even though you usually set them to one height and forget about them. Dont ask why, TGF's have adjustable stocks and that's that. BD "Flicklocks" and Salewa "Extreme Tours" look particularly cool for jabbing skaters or ski-tourers.

In conclusion

1. Save up lots of cash
2. Bargain, bargain, bargain and never pay full price.
3. Get a job in a gear store like most of MUMC.
4. Don't believe anything a gearstore person tells you

DEBACLE ON FILM

A review of *Aguirre: Wrath of God*

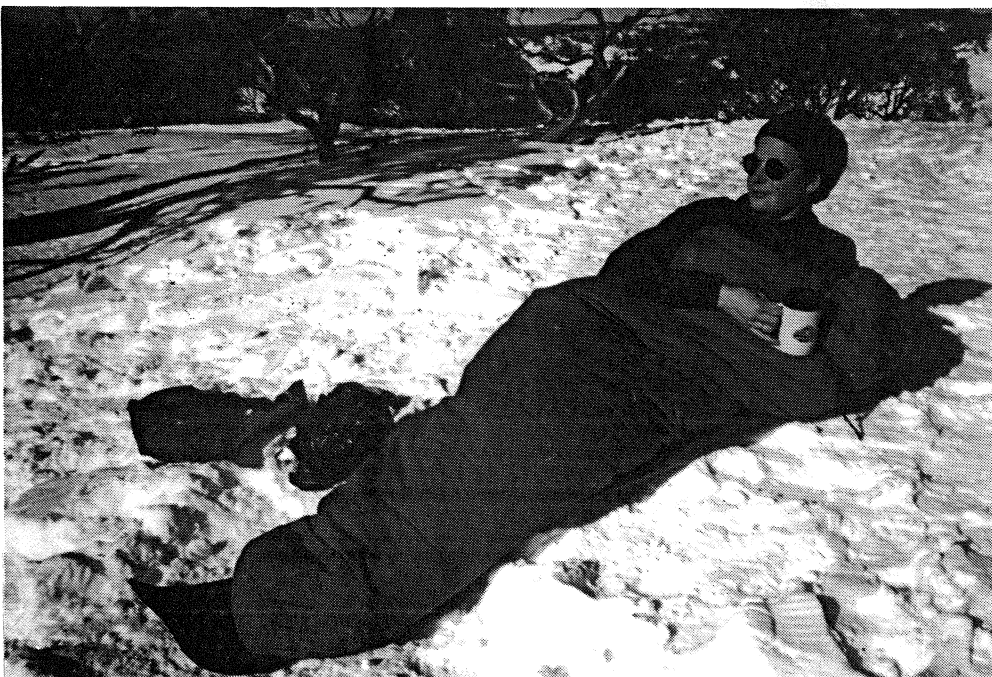
Overall, there are not many quality films featuring "outdoor adventure" (only *Cliffhanger* had a budget). However, there are some awesome ones - *Aguirre: Wrath of God* is one of these. A genuinely epic tale, starting in the mist-clad jungles of the Peruvian Andes and descending to the Amazon Basin on the sort of river only the Andes could produce (oh, to paddle them now!).

The lush jungle and beautiful mountainous terrain featured in the beginning are not dwelt on overly long, though we might wish to know more detail of exactly where they are. Even at these early stages we are made aware that a debacle is in the making - these people do not travel light! While I have never solved the problem of carrying fresh meat on trips this group of pioneers have found an extraordinary solution, obvious once it's suggested. No longer do these people have to worry about their meat going off, no longer do they have to worry about carrying it. All this without even having to forage for it (no macho hunting rites here). These problems are solved by having it walk along beside them, fresh pork to their left and their right. True, they do carry chickens, but I will sacrifice free-range on any trip if it means fresh meat.

But this movie is not a culinary tour (this interest is, perhaps, peculiar to me). There is no escaping the truly awesome descent of this great river, for us as viewer and for the poor bastards gulping the water. Deciding the trek is getting them no closer to their destination and being practical people, our intrepid adventurers make their own rafts and begin the descent. River features include eddy-lines to make your eyes water (the sort that smile at you, while licking their lips) and locals that even Dave Kjar would hesitate to engage in some polite banter. This incredible descent must be seen in its entirety to be believed.

Aguirre: Wrath of God even answers the question "What do you do when you wake up on day two and find the river has risen overnight, sweeping your boats away?" - build new ones! Truly, an awesome debacle - the sort that anyone would be proud of, requiring a trip leader such as Aguirre. This movie is a must for all debacle/kayaking/epic-trip aficionados and is available for hire on video at a good rate.

- Andy Gaff



Slush.

Dear Burgs-Loving-Kayakers. This is to officially let you know that the skiers not only beat you to the new Hume Burgs, but were there for the Opening Night and have photos to prove it. And it still didn't taste any good.

Mother Kjar - "Don't dance with that Andy Gaff boy, he'll kiss you".

Russ - "No, not a first year, I've had too many of them".

Slush hears that a former kayaking convenor and a person known to a few as "Piker" have formed a very close friendship.

Andy Gaff - "He's carrying on like a head without its chicken".

A former female president - "I get one whenever I take my pants down".

And the final word goes to a well developed, previously hisute person. Not since Dave Wilson hulled every boat he tried to paddle at Wild Treck, has another MUMC entity done as well as in this year's race. On the cycling leg, this person used Pedro's bike, Pedro's super duper cycling shoes and Dave Week's wheels. That was before the accident on the bridge. He managed to bend the front wheel, hurt the frame, and tear the soles of the cycling shoes (they remained attached to the pedals). Good Effort, but then came the kayaking leg. When it was over, the kayak was spotted way past the finishing line. Well, bits of it were anyway. Ahhhhh, Marcel Geelan, come forward. You are a legend.



Nasty Kate and Nigel attack poor blameless Amber at Mt Stirling.

