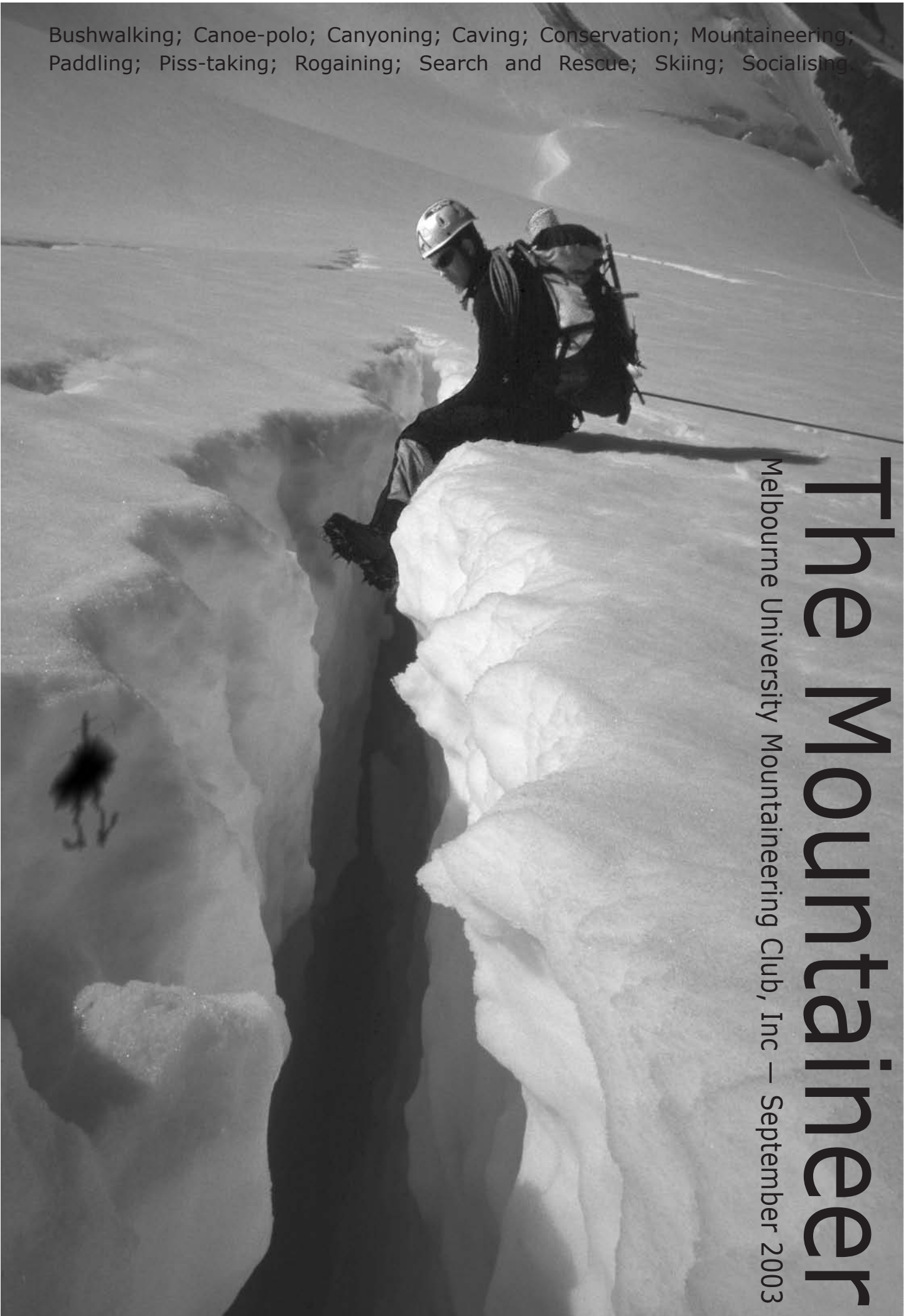


Bushwalking; Canoe-polo; Canyoning; Caving; Conservation; Mountaineering;  
Paddling; Piss-taking; Rogaining; Search and Rescue; Skiing; Socialising.

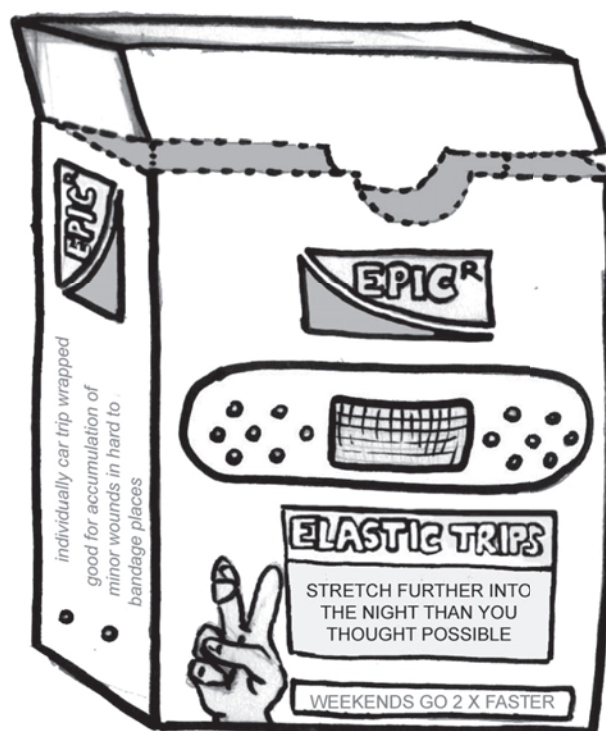
# The Mountaineer

Melbourne University Mountaineering Club, Inc — September 2003



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**Cover Photo** :- "So you were just walking along, and the Mountain just broke?" - Jasmine Rickards.

# Presidential Prose

Another AGM, another committee, another year....and so MUMC's 60th year begins!

So what's coming up? Well, after a great ski season things are beginning to warm up again and the snow's beginning to melt which means more water for the paddlers, less rain for the bushwalkers and nice weather for the climbers!! So, put those skis away and get out your harness, boat or boots, Spring has finally sprung! ... On a more social note, the RMIT Outdoors club are organising a pubgaine for October the 8th. For those who don't know this is similar to orienteering but, rather than markers, your aim is to navigate as many pubs as possible within a given time limit! Then there's the club christmas

party and of course the standard trip to the pub every Tuesday night!!

So, if you haven't been on a trip so far, where have you been??!!, get up to the clubrooms and sign up before the end of semester, before exam stress kicks in and before many of our leaders disappear off to more distant lands for the holidays!! All that's required is a little enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

See you there!!

Carys Evans  
MUMC President

## Editorial

Welcome to the September 2003 Mountaineer. Being on the committee has been a fair bit more work than I had imagined — a bit like my course, I guess. The new committee have their say on the next few pages; the interesting bit is after that, the stories of just about everything this club gets up to. Long may the stories be interesting and varied!!

I've not done much editing as such; most of the effort is in converting pictures to B&W; almost all the articles submitted have been included. I'd like to encourage anyone to write something for this mag: I'm hoping for a small issue in November and a traditionally large O-Week edition in February. If you've done anything interesting [that is, which you thought interesting or had fun doing], please write it up and share the adventure. This can be about anything, but should relate to the type of stuff MUMC does.

Surprisingly, the number of people contributing photos was about half that contributing writing. Photos and slides are welcome; we've got the technology to scan these and convert to B&W. If you'd like to submit digital images, the best guideline is toward BIG files [At some stages the cover pic was 150Mb]. Lots of pixels, in lots of detail; JPG and GIF are lossy formats, which means we're not getting all the detail you had when you were out there — TIFF is lossless.

Lots has changed since I first joined MUMC in 1992: the clubrooms moved from Cardigan St; email access for all students; the university extending South, making the lunchtime trip up to the new

rooms longer; and the advent of lunchtime lectures, making the clubrooms a lot quieter; lastly, but most strangely, the Clyde has morphed from a sticky-carpet, dingy pub into a seasonal night-club — necessitating the bar-hop that has settled at Pug Mohones', on Elgin St.

Co-inciding with this, and probably because it is now much more easy, trips are more frequently organised without open invitation to the wider club. I've noticed over the last snow season that many people are finding time (including myself) to go on Advanced trips without helping out on Beginner or Intermediate trips. Whilst this isn't the rule in every sport, I believe we, as a club, need to be aware of whether we, individually, are helping the club or are helping ourselves. This doesn't necessarily mean more trips or members; rather doing more with the talent we have; not burning out the people who find themselves (or believe that they are) running just about every instruction event within a sport. And yes, Mountaineering, for which I'm now acting convenor, did not get around to running their Alpine Instruction Course this year.

MUMC is a great club, and will help make your University years so much more than they otherwise could be. If you're interested, take a look at the names on the OXO mailing list (somewhere off [ariel.unimelb.edu.au/~mumc](mailto:ariel.unimelb.edu.au/~mumc)), to see how far we're flung. 60 years next year.

Dylan Shuttleworth  
[d.shuttleworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:d.shuttleworth@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)



## Bushwalking - c/o Andrew Oppenheim

Convenors past and present are away during the non-instruction period. Thus I cobble this together from vague (but good) memories. The Cathedrals was the focus for the March weekend. Convenor Matthew Jeppesen then looked further south and ran day walks to mystery locations near Marysville. Day-trips have also walked in the Dandenongs, near the Bunyip river, at Fraser National Park, to Mt Torbreck, and near Graytown and Toolangi, and, likely, other places as well. Farther afield, a long walk in southern Tasmania ran over the Easter break. The Hut and surrounds were approached in both superb and awful weather, but the fires earlier in the year meant that a Midnight Ascent was not arranged. In winter, several groups rambled around in the Lerderderg Gorge, and there have been three weekends in the Grampians. In August a group had fine weather on Mt Tamboritha, whilst the main September trip was to Croajingalong. I assume that excellent food was consumed on at least some of these trips. Most pleasing, though, was that (at least) six new leaders ran trips this year. It was good also to see members returning for more walks.

## Canoe-Polo

No Report Received.

## Canyoning - Kylie McInnes

The September mid-semester break is the most popular time for club members to venture north to the Blue Mountains and surrounds for some canyoning adventures, with one group up there at the moment and another group heading up in a few weeks. If you are interested in canyoning, build up your navigation skills, rope skills and

# Convenors'

Mac Brunckhorst — Action photo.



tolerance to cold water and keep your eyes peeled for trip information over the Spring, Summer and Easter breaks!

## Caving - Kat Martin

The idea of climbing and crawling around underground by torchlight doesn't appeal to a huge number of people in the Mountaineering club, but the few people that have been caving in the last 12 months or so have achieved quite a lot in our little sport.

Combined trips with Sydney Uni has seen our members visit several different interstate caving areas for the first time including Jenolan, Tuglow, Yarrangobilly and the Nullabor.

And in our own corner of the world we found a new cave at New Guinea Ridge (Buchan) and discovered the locations of and explored several other caves in the Buchan area. We also took advantage of the drought conditions and revisited Sub Aqua for the first time in several years.

This year we hope to get along and do some exploration in other caving areas in Victoria such as Bat Ridge and Naracoorte as well as expand our horizons with more interstate trips.

Thanks to all the cavers for safe, successful and enjoyable trips.

Mmm... paddler or closet caver? Timmy's 'Humour' winner at the Pie'n'Slide night. Others may just find this a little scary.



# Reports

## Climbing - Ian Gould

There's been stacks of climbing already this year. The first half of semester saw beginners throwing themselves at top roping and seconding with a huge number of trips to Arapiles, the Grampians, the Cathedrals, Werribee Gorge, and the You Yangs. All through the summer break and first semester, intermediate and advanced trips were also run on which leaders pushed their grades and up-and-coming leaders practiced their stuff. Of particular note was the success of the Introductory Cathedrals trip and the Easter Araps trip, where Sarah introduced us all to the drunken sport of nude bouldering!

Things died down a bit with the cold and wet of winter, though a few of us escaped to the sunnier crags in NSW. At the pumpily sport-climbing crags of Nowra we grunted our way up some ridiculously hard grades, taking the odd day off to visit the Point Perpendicular sea-cliffs where we whimpered in fear at the rocks and crashing waves below us whilst we climbed.

Now that summer's on its way again and the rocks are getting warm, its time to stop pretending to be paddlers or skiers and grab some ropes. Beginner/Intermediate trips are already being run, and more trips for all standards are being planned. Speaking of which, if I don't start packing now I'm going to miss my ride to Araps...

Hope to see you at the crags!

## Conservation - Cassandra Devine

My mission statement for the year, should you choose to accept it: as conservation convenor, I want every MUMC member to hug a tree a least once this year. Believe me, it's not that hard. We pass these things on the way to every rock climbing, paddling or bushwalking trip we do. If you're a tree virgin, your first tree hugging experience can be quite daunting, which is why I've put the following guide together for your entertainment...err...education.

Step 1. Stand at a distance of approximately 30 cm away from tree. Lean forward with legs slightly apart to conserve balance.

Step 2. Grab tree with arms and clasp to chest

Step 3. WARNING. If branches are in the way, DO NOT BREAK them. This will make the tree very unhappy and could potentially cause serious damage to person-tree relations. Instead, ask the tree politely to move. If it would rather stay where it is, hug around the branches- let them feel included.



Hut toilet with nice "Do not enter" tape across the door. Good to see officialdom at work. Replacement due mid-2004.

Step 4. If hugging a tree interferes with your macho Oxoman/woman image, pretend you're actually tying a rope around it. When people ask why you're so up close and personal with the Stringy Bark, tell them you are "perfecting your quick release" around the tree trunk.

Step 5. Maintain the hug for at least one minute's (60 sec) duration. When you wish to end the hug, slowly lean backwards and disengage arms. If you have been disguising your activity as knot-tying, untie the rope and saunter away as if nothing has happened.

You've done it—after all these years of paddling, climbing and walking past trees, you've finally managed to come into actual physical contact with one. If you've done the job right, your tree-hugging experience will change your life—so much so that you might even sign up for one of the tree planting/conservation trips you'll soon see in the Conservation Folder (hint hint).



Ben Arnott — People in the wilderness and all the fun that is glacier travel.





Grant, Rocky Valley branch. East Kiewa.

## Hut Warden

No Report Received. [The hut is in an area affected by fires earlier this year. Though the hut is fine, the toilet was destroyed; replacement of this is being planned with/by Parks Victoria].

## Mountaineering - Dylan Shuttleworth

We had a reasonably busy NZ season this year, with two groups heading over for a play in the snow. See Jasmine's article for their story. We've acquired several guide-books and maps, just to get you through the exams before summer.

JB is perched in a wee Scottish Northern Highland town, with awesome climbing all about, so hope to read something of this in the next issue. Though still on Summer Time, there is snow already on the nearby hilltops. As Scottish winter walking involves whiteout, axes, avalanches and whisky, despite the lower altitude, it is certainly mountaineering in the MUMC context.

## Paddling - Anna Hyland

Spring is Sprung,  
The Grass is Riz,  
Guess where all the paddlers ...is?!

This is only "half" a convenor's report because the other half, Gus, is already at Angler's Rest enjoying another big water day on the Mitta Mitta and surrounds. There's

plenty of snow and we can't wait 'til it melts! The season is already shaping up to be a ripper, with plenty of trips to the old favourites, but also to the Jamieson, the Maribyrnong, the Barwon, the Delatite and the Kiewa river system and more.

Even if the thought of "running the gnar" doesn't grab you, kayaking gives you a chance to explore some really special places that are often otherwise hard to access. Plus on trips in the last month we have seen a total of four platypuses (which I find exciting, even if more "hard-core" paddlers might scoff)!

Gus and I are really keen to run lots of exploratory trips to different destinations. If you feel like coming for a paddle, don't forget the Thursday Night Pool Session (meet 7:30pm every Thursday at the boatsheds). Everyone is welcome and its FREE for all club members.

## Rogaining

No Report Received

## Search and Rescue - Enmoore Lin

It was a quiet year for BSAR and despite the heavy snowfalls, there were no searches over the traditionally busy winter season. Perhaps signs erected at ski resorts are finally preventing resort-users from inadvertently wandering into and getting lost in the backcountry. Or maybe the decision by Parks Vic to close tracks in the burnt alpine regions successfully limited visitor numbers.

Only one call-out made it into the field this year. The search at Camberville, unfortunately, failed to find any traces of the missing man who had earlier disappeared from his car. It was the first search to operate under the new two-day search requirement, which was adopted to improve attendance rates at searches. Other efforts to increase response rates include the introduction of SMS call-out alerts and the forthcoming launch of email alerts.

In recognition of the immense contribution that ex-MUMC members have made to BSAR, the BSAR committee made a landmark decision in September to allow former members of MUMC to join BSAR without current club membership. Our "old-farts" not only attend searches on a regular basis, but many hold important roles in the





organization as Field Organisers, Police Liaison Officers and Group Leaders. We are all very pleased with this decision, which has finally ended decades of ambiguity and confusion.

The year has seen many of our more experienced MUMC searchers head overseas and leave the call-out list. In their place, we have recruited 8 new and enthusiastic members, who have greatly increased the numbers of current club members on the call-out list. At this year's search practice at Mt Baw Baw, we had a huge turn-out with 24 current and former MUMC members participating as searchers, trainee Field Organisers, mentors and practice organisers. BSAR is an aging organization and having so many young and enthusiastic people taking an interest in it augurs well for the future.

BSAR is always looking for new members, so if you are at all interested in bashing around the bush looking for lost people, contact Enmoore (MUMC's S&R Delegate). In the meantime, get active, hone those navigation skills and do some challenging, off-track walking.

New MUMC searchers:  
Katie Webby;  
Marty Hames;  
Dimitri P.;  
Hannah Lockie;  
Ben Cebon;  
Min Goh;  
Dylan Shuttleworth;  
Peter Hield.

## Skiing - Matt Jepperson

And it's over...not it isn't...there it goes... hey it's back again. Credit to Matt Thomas for organising a huge amount of snow this year. The ski season is now coming to its second or possibly third end, which means hopefully there'll be one more dump next week.

There have been plenty of great trips run: a few to Mount Feathertop (an almost but not quite Midnight Ascent), the Bogong High Plains, Stirling day trips aplenty.

There is still plenty of snow, so come skiing with us, especially if you never have before. It's the usual story: we can hire you all the gear at very reasonable rates, you can find information about upcoming trips in the club rooms...so come along on a Tuesday night, make some noise and get on a trip. 🏂



Robin S.S. in tele mode.



# Wanganui River, NZ — Tim Wallace.

Through the cooler morning air we discerned a noise, increasing exponentially in pitch and volume - our ride would be here very shortly. The evening before had been spent on the phone at the Mehinapua Pub – talking to helicopter pilots. We were looking to fly in to the Wanganui River and needed some transportation, for as with many of New Zealand's south island West Coast rivers, there are no roads, no tracks and only one way out. Our phone calls proved successful, we had a way in and, luckily we found our way out. It took the best part of the day, and sometimes it scared us, though most of the time it brought wide smiles to our faces.

With a few minutes to go before our designated pickup of 9am, the quiet was shattered by the shrill noise of a rapidly approaching helicopter. The pilot landed [in the middle of the rather small grassy, clearing that was hemmed in by trees and that we were parked in] and we started loading people and equipment in to and on to the small chopper. After reminding Mr. Pilot that we were quoted \$100NZ per person [not \$120], the first load of 2 people climbed in and the chopper took off, rising twenty meters vertically, before it tracked backwards, banked sharply and flew off up the Wanganui valley.

Being in the first load, with a pilot who had never been up this particular river before gave us a certain responsibility. When the pilot said, over the choppers intercom, [every person in the helicopter had their own headset] something about dropping us one kilometre above the Lambert/Wanganui junction, we convinced him [as was our belief], that we should fly higher up

Tentatively he replied "Okay...I'll fly close to the river, and you guys tell me when you don't think you can paddle it any more and I'll land"

So we kept flying. We flew perhaps five kilometres above the junction, to a point where the river seemed to suddenly get massively steeper. I looked at Pete and Pete looked at me, we both knew it was time to land. The pilot was happy enough to land, as he wasn't convinced he would be able to land any higher than this point.

With Pete, all our paddles and me deposited on a rocky escarpment, the chopper departed for the next load. The next load contained Greg, Dave and a pile of boats. Greg later related how dodgy it seemed as the pilot fought to balance the little chopper and prevent it from being thrown around as the boats swung from side to side, suspended underneath the chopper in a big net. With people and equipment deposited at the top of the river, it was time to actually do some paddling.

Whilst sitting at the drop off point, I had been contemplating the river. Pete had also been contemplating. Whereas Pete and I had been contemplating getting in about 50 meters below where the chopper dropped us off, below a two stage

drop that would be in the very-solid-class-four realm, Dave arrived and began contemplating the two stage drop it's self. Somehow, Greg came around to a frame of mind that said that this was a sane idea, so a very shaky Greg and Dave ran it, although Greg managed to further calm his nerves by getting stuck in a hole for 30 seconds or so within 5 meters of getting in the river! Pete didn't like the concept of jumping straight in to gnarly hairboating, so he and I filmed and ran safety then got in below these drops.

From the put in we encountered continuous, very steep, very involved, technical creaking. A fantastic mix of boat scouting and bank scouting, the first few hours definitely kept our interest and adrenaline levels up. Gradually the gradient eased, and for perhaps a couple of hours we negotiated fantastic class III – IV boulder gardens. Whilst more relaxing and less continuous than the mornings slightly gnarlier water, the fact that we were paddling such continuous, steep enjoyable water maintained the wide smiles on everyone's faces.

This would not last, as gradually the gradient picked up and the bottom fell out of our world, which as the guidebook notes somewhere, is better than the inverse of the statement. This next steep section promised much and delivered even more, though it must be noted that from the top the section we had no clue what to expect owing to the constant disappearing horizon line.

We ran the lead in rapid without much drama; one hundred meters of very steep bouncy rapid that was much steeper and much bouncier than it had looked from the bank, to an eddy then a final drop. We all pulled in to the bank upstream of the next horizon line. This drop scared us. Dave elected to probe and in doing so, demonstrated how not to run the thing, or at the very least, showed us a 'sub-optimal' line. Not wanting to take anything away from Dave's effort, perhaps I should

Tim relaxing with a quiet ale.





clarify. The drop consisted of a 5 meter wide, four meter high drop in to a big nasty hole. By keeping a generally river left line through the lead in and running the drop as hard left as possible one could avoid dropping over the slot on the right and in to the potentially inescapable boiling cauldron of water below. Casually Dave paddled the lead in. Momentarily he was surfed to the right by a diagonal stopper. This put him in a rather unattractive position, and it was with a bit of a fight that he struggled left and made the right to left boof in to the hole to avoid the cauldron. Going deep, he popped up downstream and executed a nice roll and later, a wide grin. We all ran the rapid, perhaps in a style a little less relaxed than Dave's, with various degrees of success. Just after completing the rapid, the group behind us caught up with us. One of the members of this group, Tom the Pom, later related that he was contemplating running the drop, at least for the first part of my description of it

"Yeah, it was all good, we all made it fine..."

...I continued and his mind changed...

"...I went deep, popped up in the towback, got flushed in to a small eddy on the left, got surfed a bit, in a small hole, then got recircled backwards in to the main hole. Spent a little time getting trundled but flushed in to the eddy on the left again, rolled up and struggled out"

For some reason, Tom's group and the group behind decided to portage.

A small but tricky drop followed. Pete barrelled down in typical Pete style. Next up was a small narrow drop that the entire river was funnelling in to. The fact that perhaps 30 or 40 cumecs was funnelling in to a drop a couple of meters wide and a meter or so high, combined with three or so meters of towback should have meant more to me than it did at the time, but I waved a then smiling Pete down. His smile probably disappeared shortly after when he was backlooped and thrown around like a coke bottle in a washing machine. Pete really had two choices at this point.

- a) pull his deck
- b) wait a bit longer and pull his deck

He opted for b), as he did I watched a little head emerge in the seam 3 or so meters in front of the hole before his little head, and presumably his body as well got sucked back in to do a violent dance with his boat which was still enjoying the hospitality of the hole. Balling up he popped up beyond the grasp of the hole and struggled to an eddy. Shortly after he made the bank, his boat came out too and was grabbed on its way past. Unfortunately Pete's paddled, a veteran of many an uncontrolled event, did not reappear.

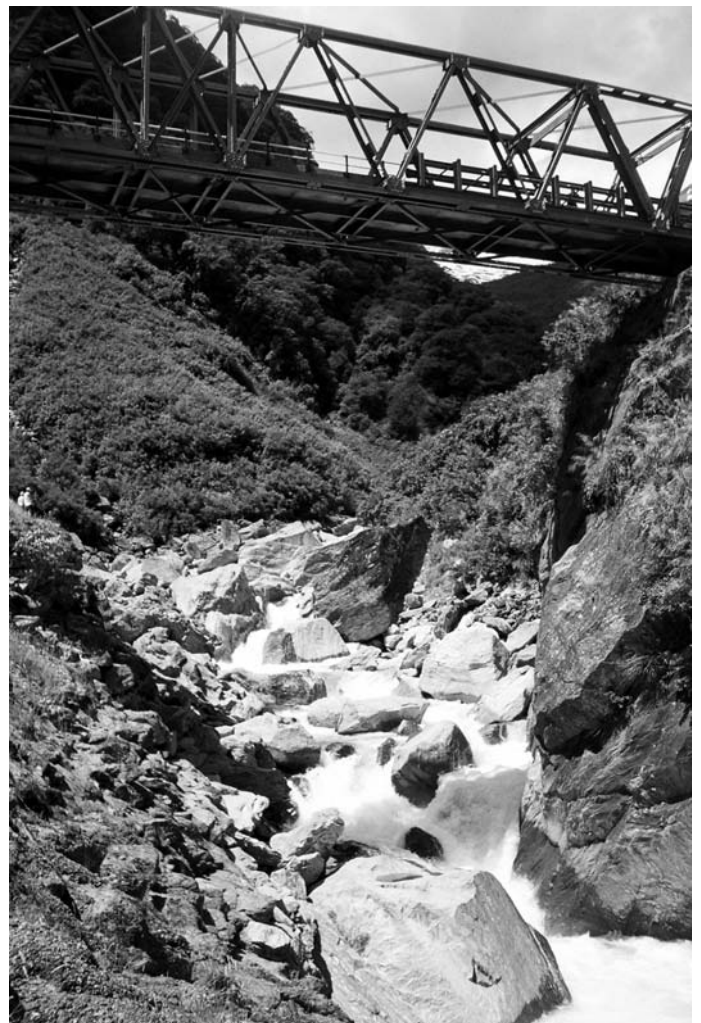
Some frantic scrambling along the steep banks yielded nothing, so we extracted the split paddle from the back of my boat.

With everyone back in their boats we resumed our journey. Fantastic, steep, class IV boulder gardens continued for the next hour or so until the gradient began to ease off. A sneaky hole snuck up on everyone, as most of us got stuck

in it. Everyone except Pete spent some time negotiating with this particular hole, though Dave had the least luck, as the conditions set during his negotiation with the said hole stipulated that he was not to be in his boat when he came out.

Steep and continuous class III boulder gardens continued for a long way until we reached Rick at the Lambert junction, only 3 hours late. Quickly we ate some food and continued down the last 13 km. The guidebook had promised a class IV/V rapid 'slip rapid', which we came upon shortly. Rick missed the line and dropped in to a massive hole. Shortly afterwards he flushed, still seemingly in his boat, however a head popped and we considered our next move – no one knew what lay downstream, except that it was supposedly hard and hazardous. Dave helped Rick to the Right bank and we paddled downstream in search of his boat. With a bit of mucking around we reunited boat and occupant and continued downstream.

A couple of nice class IV's and lots of big wave trains later we located the old quarry site that should indicate we were close to a thermal spring. Excitedly we jumped out and ran around for 15 minutes looking for it. The murky, algae infested, shallow, lukewarm swamp we eventually found was a bit of a disappointment, but we sat in it anyway. 20 minutes paddling saw us as the take out and hurriedly putting on warm clothes and another 30 minutes after that we were where we wanted to be all along – in the pub! 🍷



Gates of Haast — A lot of water when it's raining (~8,000mm/year?), but nowhere near the Wanganui.

# Climbing in the Warrumbungles — Stu Dobbie.

It was warm and cosy inside my sleeping bag, and the world outside didn't exist yet. After all, it was still dark out there, and if you can't see anything, who is to say it's really there? No, actually, I want to get up. The day is going to be good. I fumble for a head torch, paw after some tent zips, and inchworm inside my sleeping bag towards the tent entrance to find the stove. A few contorted rolls across the tent floor are required to squash Enmoore, who now can no longer pretend to be asleep and gradually starts her own waking up ritual. A beanie for the head, some hot chockie and warm muesli, followed by a change into the clothes for the day.

Soon we are skipping along the track, enjoying the early morning light. The birds are all awakening too; greeting each other with chirps and cries. Fresh air, warming sun, and the anticipation of a long, challenging day of climbing ahead. We've already sussed the access to the route the day before, so finding the junction where we leave the track and head into the bush is a cinch. We recall fallen logs and side gullies, and weave our way towards the main event, "Crater Bluff", a giant mountain of volcanic rock rising out of the hills and gullies speckled with gums and native pines that make up the Warrumbungles.

What a fantastic place to come and climb. The three main spires, Belouger, Crater Bluff and Tonduron, have elusive summits only obtainable by climbing graded routes; and the massive Bluff Mountain has probably the largest sheer rock face in Australia. The scenery is just magic, with views out in all directions across the park and the plains beyond. Grass trees, rocky outcrops, plenty of 'roos and cockies and big blue skies; it's the quintessential Australian landscape. Not surprisingly, some of the very first rockclimbs in Australia were done here; for these are mountains you can really come to climb. Forget the bolts and bullshit of the sport crags near home, grades aren't so important anymore. With notorious route-finding problems, varying rock quality, and big-time exposure, it won't be your ego climbing here, these mountains are much too big for that. (Well, too big for mine anyway.)

We arrive at the base of our chosen route, Cornerstone Rib, made famous by a photograph by Simon Carter. However, the photo was taken from a nearby ridge with the climb in profile, which misses the real point of the route: its bold ascent of a thin rib of rock that runs all the way up the side of the mountain. The exposure kicks in on around the



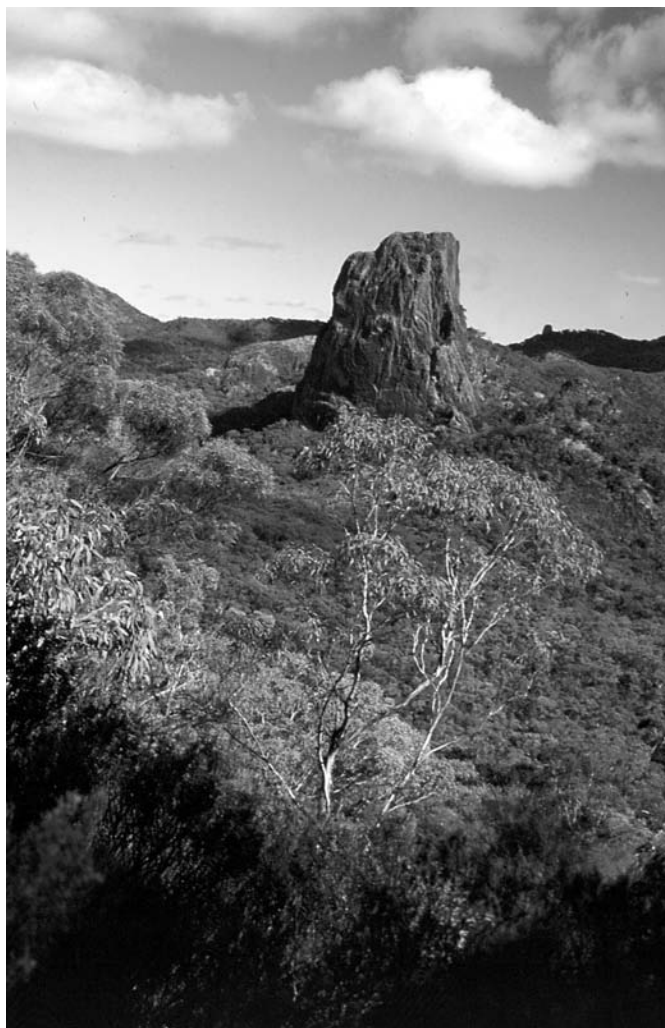


third pitch, when you're forced onto the rib proper with a yawning abyss on either side.

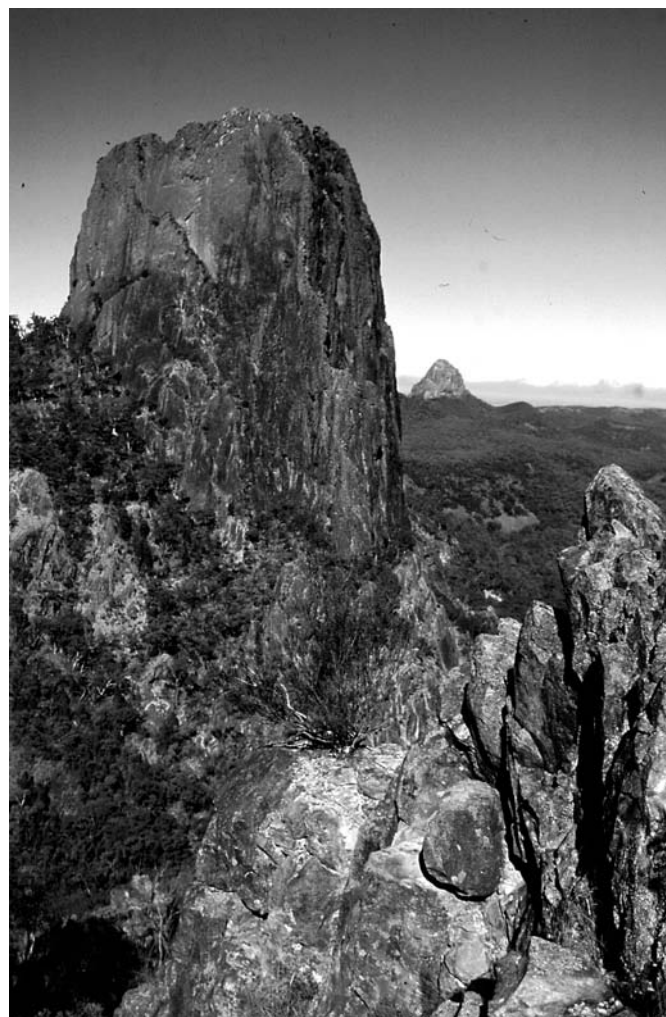
We share the morning with another party from Brisbane. They are carrying a lot of gear and moving slowly, and eventually we squeeze past them and motor on ahead, glad to finally travel at our own pace. It's lovely up there, quiet and so peaceful. Suddenly things get unhappy as the rock deteriorates and I'm pulling on bricks piled on top of one-another. For a moment I have visions of madly grasping for holds as the whole mountain slides underneath me, but thankfully it all seems to stick together just enough to see us through, and we move on.

Pitch after pitch of climbing goes by, then sometime in the afternoon the angle finally kicks back and we arrive at the crater rim. A quick entry in the summit book, a pause for scroggin, and we change to walking shoes for the descent into "Green Glacier", a lush, fern-choked gully that carves out the inside of the mountain. You can only see this feature once you're on top, so it's a pretty neat discovery to make. We descend precariously down into the damp slippery gully, lowering ourselves off ferns and clumps of grass, further and further into the heart of the mountain. Eventually the gully opens out into sunshine and abruptly ends in a high perch on the western face. A few abseils are required to finish the descent to the scree slopes and the forest path back to the campsite. 🧗

Crater Bluff.



Crater Bluff.



#### Fact File --

Where: Central NSW, near Coonabarabran on the Newell Highway, about 10 hours from Melbourne

When to go: Spring and Autumn

Guidebooks: There is a compact and brief "Rock" guide by Mark Colyvan, available in most gear stores.

Climbing: Very long "trad" routes, with varying rock quality and difficult route finding. Protection's not that brilliant.

Grades: The classics are between 10-20, but you will probably want to lead a few grades lower than you normally would in other climbing areas. Not suitable for beginners.

Access: Beloungery Spire, Crater Bluff and Bluff Mountain are all less than an hour's hike from Balor Hut, itself an hour or so of walking up the hill from the car park along a paved (!) footpath. You can stay in Balor Hut or camp outside. Tondurion Spire is normally approached from a vehicle track on the other side of the park, and is worth the extra hassle as it's rarely climbed and apart from the other popular peaks.

# Of sea caves and waterfalls... sea kayaking in New Zealand

## — Fiona Russell.

Sea caves, islands, seals and sleeping on beaches. I had the perfect introduction to sea kayaking in New Zealand's Abel Tasman national park. Min, Laura, Jasmine, Andrew, and I headed out from Marahau not so early on a Monday morning in January, after the kayak company checked that we knew which end of a paddle was which. With a few words of advice (don't paddle if it's too windy, don't go too far out from land, watch out for rocks and don't assume that speed boats have seen you), we set off to explore.

The Abel Tasman national park is a beautiful extension of coastline in the north of the South island. The rainforest curls down to the water from the hills, and there are dozens of coves, lagoons and islands to explore. Inland, swing bridges span steep drops down to rivers and weight warning signs make you question your choice of a large breakfast that morning. There are natural waterslides hidden under waterfalls where the layer of lichen and moss over smooth rock is perfect for a very quick slip and dip. The sea is very clear, but beware the Abel Tasman tide. It varies as much as 4m, which translates to a bloody long way horizontally, and can easily leave you stranded in the middle of a lagoon. Beautiful, crystal clear waters turn into large stretches of sand within hours, and landing at the wrong time of day means dragging kayaks several hundred metres above the tideline. We were warned with many a story of unwary paddlers who arose in the morning to no kayak.

The weather was fine for our trip north. We sauntered into island coves and had long lunches, then paddled lazily back out again. I decided that sea kayaking was like bushwalking, but without hills and without a pack. Perfect, really. Our only concerns early on were the speedboats. I was never quite convinced that they'd seen us, and each time I spotted one on the horizon, spent several frantic minutes negotiating with our rudder to get out of its way, only to find myself straight back in its path. This area is not isolated wilderness. Our first night's camp felt more like the flotilla of the Sydney to Melbourne yacht race, and finding a kayak park was almost as difficult as driving around a supermarket carpark. We were lucky with our independence, but there can be up to a hundred other kayaks out at any time, aside from the many yachts and speed boats. It's an area which, because of this, is accessible to people who would otherwise be unable to experience this area, however I was still slightly taken aback to find a small town, complete with a telephone box in the middle of a national park.

The weather changed for the trip back south to Marahau, and it was with a little more trepidation that I launched for my first paddle in the single kayak. If I was blown out to sea, it would be with my own company to deal with. Conversely, if I was smashed on to the rocks, there'd be more people to witness my demise. Either way, I was a lot more responsible for my own transport, and the wind was up. It was difficult paddling out of the bay, and each of us concentrated on hitting the waves head on. None of us wanted a capsized. I paddled next to the double kayak, but didn't talk much. The wind picked up further as we rounded the headland – the “Mad Mile,” and swung behind us. Echoes of the introductory talk reached me on the wind as I gripped the paddle for dear life. If it's too windy, stop; but halfway around the headland, I either had to keep going, or face rocks or open sea. I comforted myself with the thought that if I lost control, at least I'd run into the North Island eventually. Or Australia, if the wind changed direction again. It would be a cheap way of getting home, even considering the loss of deposit. And we'd gain a kayak... Worse things can happen at sea.

The waves were larger around the headland, bigger than they'd been on the way north. I could feel them lifting me upwards and forwards, and I tensed as I buffeted past the boulders. Square to the swell, square to the swell... I checked the island to my left, and found that the seals were lolling, unaware of the cyclonic swells that surrounded them. Or perhaps they weren't as laid back as they appeared. Maybe the wind wasn't that bad after all. Maybe, the tail wind was fun (although I still didn't want to have to roll the single), and perhaps it wasn't cyclonic. Merely galeforce. It eased me out of the Mad Mile and into the sheltered inlet for our last night in the park.

The sea caves had caught my imaginations much earlier in the trip. They were the stuff of the children's adventure stories that we were living, and I was almost disappointed to have avoided smugglers and ancient parchments. We had found glowworms in some, and mossy curtains in others big enough to beach 3 kayaks. Our final evening was spent sheltering in a sandy cave eating mussels collected from nearby rocks. We read, ate, and just watched as the storm blew across the horizon.

And so, we returned to Marahau as seasoned explorers, clothes stiff with salt and shoulders sore, and I'd developed a healthy respect for the sea and the weather. We'd experienced both fine and moderately windy weather, managed to avoid rocks and speedboats, and as for paddling too far from land – that's another story.



# Mountaineering with the mountaineering club: Slide show to summit — Jasmine Rickards.

The helicopter lifted off the ground like a giant insect and the grass was pushed flat by the wind. I was sitting in the front middle seat clutching the earmuffs on over my helmet and watching the scenery unfold before me. We were flying over the glacier; a broken chopped up river of ice. Stu (our mountaineering guide) was sitting next to me pointing out the route that we would have to use to walk out, but I was stunned by the sheer size of the cracks and crevasses, and the surreal feeling of sitting in a bubble hovering just below the cloud. I have seen photographs of the mountains, and I've heard people talking about them, but that was nothing compared to watching them loom out of the cloud, sharp and white, rocky and majestic. Excitement, awe and fear. At that moment I had never walked in snow with crampons on, up until that moment I had never been in a helicopter, one month ago I had learnt how to rope up for walking across a glacier, but I wasn't really sure if I could remember. Everything was huge and beautiful, I felt small and insignificant.

It had started at a slide show.

"Let's do that" Andrew said, "let's go mountaineering in New Zealand".



From the mountaineering stories that I'd heard it sounded like you had to be able to go for days without sleep, survive on cous cous and melt your water in your mouth while hanging on to an ice axe with one hand. Talking to people who'd been before I started to realize that they didn't all have muscles on their muscles, and they didn't all run the Rialto in their lunch breaks. They had even mentioned pancakes...

## Aurora

"Time to go climbing boys and girls"

For this motley lot bagging our first peak started out with finding your head torch. Stu lit the stove, Min poured parmesan cheese on his muesli (but then realized and tried the coconut milk instead. I think he was glad that we had labeled the baking soda). Chewing muesli is hard work. We didn't talk much. Maybe "you're standing on my overpants." Or "you've put on my boots by mistake you nong" Or if you were lucky an elbow in the face as you squeezed through the vestibule.

Then there was the queue for the toilet.

If you hadn't forgotten anything, taken the wrong pack, or wound your rope around your crampon points, you were up to the frosty walk across the flat glacier neve. This may sound simple. I had been walking in a straight line on a gentle slope but now I was flat on my face. My crampons just lunged for my gaiters or the rope for my crampons, either way I was a tangled heap. The next step is crossing the Bergshrund. This is where the glacier pulls away from the mountain. Basically it makes a ruddy big hole. You go looking for a snow bridge, and if it seems solid you prod it, and if it still seems solid you walk across. This one was soft and sloppy.

"I guess your snow anchor is Ok" Andrew said to Min

"Why's that?"

"Ben just fell in to the shrund"

"I thought my rope felt tight all of a sudden"

After that you huff and puff your way up the slope. I hacky sack, and then hacky volley ball, this continued until the hacky sack narrowly missed going out the windows, landed in our water bucket, and then in the bin. Outside the tap froze, the bucket and pipe that we tossed our slops into froze and had a scungy icy crust. We tried to push the blockage out but that didn't help. Dimi dropped his toothbrush in there and that didn't help either. I'd opened up the vent thinking we might suffocate but it ended up snowing all over Min's sleeping bag, so we shut it again.

Seeing as it was Christmas we decorated the hut and strung Andrea up from the ceiling as our Christmas angel. Kath and Andrew made a snowman with ice axe arms and legs. Luckily we made a last minute dash to rescue these before the windows got completely covered.

## Moonlight

At 5:00 am the wind died down. The ground was a lot icier than the soft friendly snow that we'd had during our course. And we were on our own. Andrew and I trailed Min and

Ben across the glacier. I caught sight of Ben on the other side of the snow bridge.

“Be careful, it’s slippery, Min just dropped his pack into the crevasse.” Actually Min had tried to drop himself in as well.

Ben had stepped onto the snow bridge which had creaked and cracked alarmingly. Once across Ben had started to take off his rope coils. Min took off his pack and knelt on it. Pack started moving, Min started moving, Min thought how do I stop with this pack? Then he thought f\*\*k the pack how do I stop with no ice axe, he looked at Ben, confused. Ben looked at Min moving with some amusement, he then saw the rope that connected them growing tighter, realized that Min was just about to pull him into the crevasse and panicked, they both dug their crampon points in and Min stopped just above the lip. The pack however continued its smooth descent to the bottom of the crevasse. At that moment the sun was starting to hit the icy rime that had built up on the rocks above us and tinkling chunks were rolling down the gully. We’d heard about this stuff, but we’d never been introduced. Looking back the chunks were only small, and we were all wearing helmets (except min who was retrieving his from the bottom of the crevasse). It was like seconding an ice climb without anyone leading. At the time it was pretty scary. Andrew was concentrating hard on placing his crampons so he didn’t really notice the rime. We started pitching but I got scared so I called him back. In the end we all retreated back to the hut. We were feeling a bit embarrassed about our progress so we were surprised to see the other group back already. Turned out they’d also been intimidated by the rime and some falling rocks so they’d decided to go ice climbing on the seraks. They’d all unroped and then Nat had started slipping. She’d dug in her ice axe but hadn’t been holding onto it very well, she’d dug in her snow stake but let that go too, and then managed to stop her slide with her crampons.

So we pulled out the cards and had a laugh about our disastrous first day without our guides. “I think I owe you one” said Min. “Only because I couldn’t get out my knife in time” Ben replied.

A few days later, after a successful summit of Aigrette, we waltzed up Moonlight Peak and made it back for morning tea.

### The Toilet

The toilet was a black barrel in the hot sun, and it was really starting to pong. It was almost alive, it roused you from sleep when you lazed on the balcony, and it was there to greet you when you returned from climbing. It hadn’t been so bad during the storm because by the time you had braved the icy walkway and survived the wind trying to rip you off the balcony you were incredibly glad to be there. Also you had probably been hanging on all day trying to convince yourself that you didn’t really need to go and the boys had resorted to pee bottles because the urinal was facing into the wind



and there was only a small delay before you had to duck out of the way to avoid being hit.

The first problem had been a lack of toilet paper.

“You can just use snow” Min suggested.

“The magazine worked ok, it’s in Italian or something...”

Andrew said

“Hey that was interesting it was about telemarking I was reading that!”

“There are rolls and rolls of toilet paper at Pioneer” Bec and Adam informed us.

They came over to visit on Christmas eve, and had been stuck here for three days because of the bad weather with only one sleeping bag, a down jacket, and some oats. Luckily they were happy to share the sleeping bag, as it had been so cold that Bec’s toothbrush had frozen into a cup of water.

“Right, then we need to send a toilet paper mission to Pioneer.” We’d even gone so far as to make a navigation plan in case it was a white out, but then we’d found toilet paper by raiding one of the food boxes under the bunks.

“We need it heaps more than they will” We reasoned. But now it was getting serious. The barrel was filling up. Fast. It was already at the neck and rising.

“We need a poo pusher,” said Ben. We all looked around for a likely suspect.

“Ok lets draw cards for it whoever gets the ace of spades pushes the poo.” We drew our cards with hearts pounding. And the winner is Ben!!! He approached the monster, rubber gloves, plastic bag coated stick, full of courage, fortunately Ben’s brave actions bought us a couple of days, but the next group wasn’t so lucky, and in two weeks time we heard over the radio that the barrel still hadn’t been collected and the residents were using a bucket...

### The Saloon Bar

“I’m looking forward to couple of beers in the pub for New Years.”

“New Years...Isn’t that tomorrow night?”

“Tomorrow night?” It suddenly seemed very important to be at the pub with a beer to celebrate New Years. The other group still had two whole boxes of food left including 12 dips.



“Even if we eat a dip each today and tomorrow we’ll still have some left” moaned Dimi. “Who wants the asparagus and blue vein?” We looked at the foil lid which was bulging ominously.

“It’s meant to be like that” Said Dimi, “it’s the altitude.”

So began the eating fest. Pancakes, eggs, bacon, apple crumble, custard, lentil pasta, toasted raisin bread and chocolate. (We’d hidden the chocolate from our guides who had almost finished our hot chocolate on the first day so we had forgotten about it and had almost a block each left)

4:00am, brekky, and trying to stuff all my junk into my 50L pack. I remembered why I’d been wearing all my clothes in the helicopter. There wasn’t much room. We started leaving the hut in pairs walking across the glacier.

“Ready?” I said to Andrew.

“Yep” he replied and just at that moment poked out the lense of his sunglasses and watched it drop through the cracks in the balcony. Sunglasses are like your ice axe you are f\*\*\*d if you don’t have them.

After a few hours of walking we came to the first gaping crevasse. We debated about whether to pitch it or not. Ben and Min decided to be the guinea pigs.

Both my ice axes were buried securely in the icy edge, I reached out my leg, behind me, across a void that felt like an eternity. Just a little bit further said Min the edge is good and solid. I extended my arms to the point of no return, trusting, and then my crampon points touched into ice and I breathed a sigh of relief.

“I’m across” I said to Andrew on the other end of my rope, and I got a good stance and dug my ice axe in.

Further down past Chancellor dome the snow got softer and softer. We could hear fwumping sounds as we walked, and then we caught sight of the real glacier. The neve, the part the glacier that we had spent the last two weeks on was smooth compared to this. Walking along beside it, I kept losing my leg down the small crevasses that opened up in the soft snow. I’d be walking along fine, and then plop, one legged amputee. At one stage half of our party were trying to heave their legs out of holes. It was such a ridiculous sight I couldn’t help giggling to myself.

We came back down into the grass and shrubs for the first time in two weeks and I felt like I was on safari with my ice axe and helmet. I almost died of fright just looking at the Glacier we had to cross. In the thick fog we could hear the river rushing somewhere off to the right and booms and crashes as ice bridges collapsed. As the ice flattened I started to relax. Water had formed pools and was running down cracks in the ice, at some points you could hear it gurgling down a hole and joining the torrent underneath. I trusted my crampons, the ice was solid, the cracks were blue and smooth sided and not very wide. It was surreal and beautiful.

Bulls eye. We’d hit the creek on the other side. The brown ice at the edge was almost impossible to walk on as it was rock hard and covered with loose dirt and stones.

“Slippery” I muttered.

“Ahhh” agreed Ben rushing towards me head first.

But the moraine was much, much worse. I started off warning people behind me about the rocks that moved, then I realized that everything moved. There were house-sized boulders held up by something as small as your fist. I wouldn’t normally walk under it in a pink fit. It was such a relief to find the steps that the guides had cut in the ice, (for an extreme glacier adventure...) and walk back through the barrier saying “Caution: beware of loose rock.” Utterly exhausted we lay around in the carpark groaning. There was no way we’d make it to the pub. Min gnawed on some salami and Vitaweets and Kath contemplated taking off her boots but figured her feet were so pulverised that her boots might be all that was holding them together. It was fully dark when a tiny little rent-a-car pulled up. Legends Ben and Nat had hitched us a ride into town!

How exactly we squeezed 7 people, 8 packs, crampons, ice axes and ropes (and blue vein and asparagus dip) into the car I’m not sure, but I don’t think it could have ever smelt the same again. The driver, Alex, even had a pack between his knees. If he tried to move he bipped the horn. Then the car started fogging up and none of us could reach the demist. In spite of that we made it to the Saloon Bar before 12:00 and all had a beer in our hands to welcome in the New Year.

### If you want to go mountaineering

- Organise a group of 2 – 4 people who are equally fit, equally keen and who you will be able to put up with in a small hut in a storm.
- Get a guide for your group (if you hire a private guide you won’t waste your time dealing with a big group of people who don’t have a clue. You’ll at least have a little group of people who don’t have a clue...)
- Get fit (it makes everything heaps easier and more fun if you aren’t gasping every step; gasping every few steps might be OK)
- Talk to people who’ve been before
- See if you can learn and practice some of the basic skills before you go so that you can get the most out of your course and be on your way to doing things on your own.
- Drink some New Zealand beer 🍺

View across the Tasman Glacier from near Ball shelter.



# Caving in the Nullabor

## — Kat Martin.

After a 33 hour drive we finally arrived at our destination – a hole in the ground in the middle of the desert. I must admit it was a pretty impressive looking hole, but I still had to question my sanity at being there in the first place; in the middle of the Nullabor with a 50 year old guy I'd met on the internet and a fifteen other blokes who I'd also never met before. All in the name of caving! And caving there was, the Nullabor is literally riddled with holes in the ground and underground worlds to explore, despite its barren appearance.

With enough (noisy) generators to run a small town we set up a pretty comfortable camp just near the entrance of Cocklebiddy cave. I can't decide whether the bread-maker, roast lamb on the webber, or the power saw (for cutting up firewood) was more impressive, but that pretty much sets the scene of the camp.

The reason we were at this particular hole in the first place was because of an expedition to find the end of Cocklebiddy cave/ go further than anybody's gone before, explore the side passages and get some video footage of it (all underwater). So the first week was spent here while the divers (everyone except me) set to work lugging their gear down to the first lake for the big "push." This involved a 35m deep doline (hole in the ground) to get to the cave entrance, followed by a steep 300m rock pile once in the cave

Lesson #1, Cave divers are absolute gear freaks.

Lesson #2, Cave diving gear is HEAVY!

Hence the need for a hauling/lowering system into the doline and a cable flying fox through the cave right down to the first lake! There was also a 240V power supply and a compressed air line set up at the first lake. It was a pretty impressive setup and this was no minor expedition! It was really bizarre having electricity in a cave, especially when we took a kettle down for making cups of tea and hot soup.

I discovered pretty quickly that Cocklebiddy cave is pretty boring for the dry caver, so I kept myself amused by crawling into all of the other holes around the place. The first lake in Cocklebiddy was, however, the best place I'd ever seen for a game of Canoe Polo and looked quite spectacular when all lit up with diving lights. So I spent most of that first week wandering around the desert by myself poking around holes and generally soaking up the sun, and at night sitting around the camp fire, drinking beer with the boys.

I managed to convince a few of the cave divers to visit a couple of other caves in the area, Murra El Elevyn and Tommy Graham's caves. This wasn't quite as simple and straight forward as it first seemed when we attempted to

navigate windy 4wd tracks with a GPS coordinate alone, when none of the party had ever been to the caves before. Both caves turned out to be very nice caves for snorkeling in with the water temperature around 24 degrees, and offered some nice dry exploring through big orange tunnels when we eventually found them.

Murra El Elevyn, in true Nullabor style, had quite a spectacular abseil entrance, which required rigging the rope off the car as the only other anchor was a feeble looking shrub. The entrance to Tommy Grahams cave on the other hand, was a small hole hidden behind a bush at the opposite end of a big doline which took a little while to find. I had my fun guiding nervous cave divers through the dry passages, despite their extreme concern at getting lost (which I found rather amusing) without their trusty dive line marking the way back out.

The big "push" took the 5 divers 34 hours and was overall a successful expedition. The end was pushed (now a 6.35km dive one way!), the side tunnels were explored and the video turned out mostly well, including some pretty cool footage of a perfectly preserved bat skeleton sitting in the submerged passageway about 2km into the underwater section, making it around 10 000 + years old! And to celebrate we had a night out on the town, with 16 of us we managed to double the population of Cocklebiddy. There was much drinking and I even got offered a job on a Station – lucky me!

After Cocklebiddy we moved on to the Roe plain. We passed through Eucla where I spent half a day walking along the beautiful beach, befriending the emus, and exploring the ruins of the old telegraph station and township now buried by sand dunes. I also made the mistake of giving up a shower opportunity which was retrospectively a bad move.

Once on the Roe Plain we spent most of our time bushwalking (with packs laden with dive gear) through thick scrub in search of possible new caves from GPS coordinates that were taken by a guy called Max while he was flying over the area. Being a caver himself, most of Max's coordinates turned out to be caves, but they certainly weren't easy to find, which was fair enough considering that they were taken from an airplane, they quite often ended up being up to 300m away (through thick scrub) from the given coordinates. We even managed to find some new caves by ourselves which we named the KRAP holes as Kat, Rod and Paul found them.

I was quickly elected as probe as I was the smallest person on the trip, and ended up being the first person into completely untouched and unexplored caves, which I found very exciting. With the water table only being about 7m underground, we revealed an extensive underwater

cave system which the boys had heaps of fun diving while I explored all the dry leads which were mostly low flat passages. I also attempted to catch Amphipods at the request of the WA Museum, which are tiny (2mm) troglitic shrimp like creatures that swim around the water. I felt very much like Gollum from the Lord of the Rings trying to catch fish. I was not always successful and usually got very wet in my attempts which provided plenty of tales of “the one that got away”.

The cave life was amazing – One cave had thick hair like tree roots hanging from the roof with little droplets of water all over them that almost reached down to a big pool of water that had white and orange calcite rafting formation all over its surface. It looked really cool. I saw a pair of Skidgerimorph's, which are big (40mm) bright orange bugs that scuttle about with lots of legs; I also saw plenty of amphipods, troglitic spiders and various other cool cave bugs.



Walking 10km per day through beautiful bushland, as well as exploring and surveying new caves starts to take its toll after a while. And while I think I could never grow tired of sitting around a big camp fire at the end of the day admiring the beautiful sunsets in such a remote, picturesque setting it was once again time to move on.

So we left the Roe plain, and did Madura, Nurina (my new favourite cave), and Excavation caves on our way back to the Eucla Roadhouse where finally, I had a shower after nine days – and it was the best shower I've ever had!

Madura cave was bizarre, it was like a giant round featureless worm tunnel with a nice soft sandy floor that just barreled off underground. There were no side passages, just one fork where the two tunnels just continued in the same fashion. It didn't really seem like a cave, just an underground stroll. A few hundred metres away Excavation cave proved different when I got a bit enthusiastic and while I hate to use the word “stuck”, let's just say I had some difficulty in extricating myself from a small hole, much to the amusement of the other group members.

Nurina was cool, it involved lots of bridging over crystal clear pools that have that blue limestone tinge to the water. There were lots of clean orange and white twisty passages going off in all directions that led down to more pools and into rooms full of cool formation with calcite rafting all over the floors. There was one passage called the Acoustic flattener, I had to take my helmet off to fit through it and once on the other side I had to shout back to the others so they could hear me even though they were only five metres away. It just absorbed all the sound and made the others voices high and squeaky. It was really strange because I could see them but couldn't hear them.

I discovered what blowholes were on the way to Weebubbie cave (our final destination). We stopped at a few on the side of the road to find little holes in the ground with fast flowing air rushing out of them from some underground mystery location, some I could fit down, others I couldn't (but not without trying). I didn't get far into the ones I could fit down.

Once at Weebubbie it was my job to rig the ladder and hand-line for us to get into the cave (once again another spectacular entrance). I found an appropriate anchor to be a big sign that said, “Warning, this cave is closed” which provided a perfect free hang for the ladder! (We had permits so it was all legitimate)

Swimming through Weebubbie was an awesome experience with beautiful clear water, smooth white tunnels disappearing off into the darkness, and great white slabs of rock the size of houses submerged on the cave floor some 30metres below. Along the walls were slimy strands of bacteria colonies that looked to me like a cross between snot and coral. And with the water temperature being around 20

degrees it was quite a pleasant way to end the trip.

It was pretty cool sleeping under the stars for a whole month and watching a whole cycle of the moon pass. But it was also a sure sign that it was definitely time to go home (that and the fact that my caving socks were starting to smell like dead animals). I'd already spent a week caving at Jenolan before coming to the Nullabor which made it a whole month of caving, and I'd just missed week one of Uni. Although I wasn't looking forward to the 40 hour drive home to Melbourne via Sydney (where my car was parked).

I knew it was time to get back to civilisation and un-bloki myself when the most girly thing I could think of doing when I got back was trimming my fingernails with nail scissors rather than just chewing them off, hmmm...

Among some of the more memorable lessons learnt include the discovery that beer cans and campfires don't mix (I still have the burn marks as a reminder) and what goes down must come up... eventually!

Awesome trip, awesome people. Can't wait to get back. 🐼











# Winter Paddling — Sarah Neumann

Yes it's another paddling article but no, it's not written by Tim. There's been a lot of paddling this winter, and there's a lot more to come but a couple of trips are definitely worth recounting. One of them started on the Friday morning after Pie and Slide night but the real story is about the Sunday.

Kat and I had decided we were going to get on the Rocky Valley section of the East Kiewa, a grade 3 section of creek. For those of you who haven't done much paddling a creek is smaller than a river but it's also very continuous, there are no flat sections between rapids and stopping in small eddies is the only way to stay in control. The rest of the group started from further up the creek, but Kat and I walked in from the bottom hoping to meet them in the gorge which is just after the grade 4 rapids. We walked up the 4WD track parallel to the creek for quite a way while the weather couldn't decide whether it wanted to snow, sleet or rain on us. We decided to scramble down the meet the creek just downstream of the gorge, because the access looked relatively easy, it still involved bum-sliding down soft mud and lowering boats with slings. We bush bashed out way a little bit down stream to a reasonable eddy and, warm from all our activity, we sat down to wait for the others. At that point we were warm and confident, we'd been told to walk in straight away as they'd be cold and wet and wouldn't want to wait. But as we waited and waited we became cold and as continued to sleet on us we became wet. After an hour of waiting we started to discuss walking back out. Kat got out and walked up the hill a bit and around to get warm I checked the watch about every two minutes as the sleet turned to snow and back to sleet, we spent time staring mesmerised at the rushing water and looking hopefully upstream expecting to see the other come round the corner but they didn't. After an hour and a half I said to Kat that I was too cold and I thought I'd start walking out soon, she agreed. It was lucky I was looking up at her then because I saw a flash of movement and recognised Pete running past on the 4WD track above us - I blew my whistle and he stopped and peered down through the trees to see us. Then he made a paddling motion and ran back along the track, about ten minutes later the whole group rounded the corner finally!

I wasn't sure I wanted to get on the creek at all by this stage, I'd lost my confidence with my warmth and just below us a tree was blocking half the river - I'm particularly scared of trees. Finally I got on and Kat and I were in the eddy looking down at the others, the water took us round to the left but then a quick move right was required to get to an eddy and avoid the tree. PeBo and Kate were on the rock just next to tree, what Kat and I didn't know was that they were there because Kate had swum and had been pinned to the tree by her water filled boat. So off I went and just round to the left I hit a rock

which tipped me over, I rolled up again pretty quickly but not quickly enough to make the eddy. Paddling hard again the current I struggled to make a smaller eddy while being pushed slowly backwards towards the tree. Luckily PeBo came to my rescue, he held out his paddle and pulled me into the rock which he was standing on before pulling me across to the safe side of the river. My confidence was not improving, but I pushed on and slowly started to relax.

A bit further on I watch Kat go down a drop before me, she'd taken a cute on river left but was pushed up against a rock and ended up going down the chute sideways before going over and rolling up at the bottom. I decided to try a different line, all went well until just before the lip of a drop I hit a rock which swung me round. Facing back upstream paddled against the current and looked back over my shoulder to see and reasonable hole below the drop. I realised I had no choice and paddled backwards punch through the drop backwards, it was not to be. I surfed it for a few seconds before going over and rolling up in the eddy.

On we went and down we went until we came to an awkward drop that went round to left with a lot of the main current hitting a log on the right. Grant tried it first and hit the log, coming back into the eddy for a second go. I went next and made the line but hit something else further down the sent me over. It was shallow in the pool at the bottom and I was hitting rocks all over the place as I tried to roll, then I came to rest against a rock, or tree root which caught my body and stopped me. It was impossible to roll so I pulled my deck and swam... brrrr pure snow melt on a cold day. I came up behind my boat with my paddle next to me and pushed them into and eddy pretty quickly. I climbed out and Pete pulled my boat up and emptied it while Grant got stuck on a rock and had to roll trying to come over and help. After warming up I hopped back in and down to the rest of the group only to find that that was the last hard rapid I had swum on and we were just about at the take out.

With a few new scratches on my helmet, I thankfully carried my boat up to the car and changed into warm clothes. Then it was off to dinner in Wangaratta then home to bed. 🐼



# The Jamieson — Sarah Neumann

“But it’s a 28km paddle” I said, “that’s way to far for a day trip”. But Timmy had an idea and was convinced it would work, “there’s this track half way down, we could get out there and it’s only about a 15km paddle, the track’s not marked 4WD so it should be fine.” A 15km day trip wasn’t that bad at all, we were planning a trip to the Jamieson, a beautiful, pristine river that flows through bushland before entering Lake Eildon. It’s a river none of us had done, and we didn’t know anyone who’d done it. The guide said there was a grade 3 -3+ sections close to the start then it was pretty easy all the way to the take out, so that was it - it was planned. One car leaving Friday night and two coming up on the Saturday morning, Latrobe Alex was bringing his raft for the beginners.

My trip started at 5.30am when Grant and Kellie came to pick me up, Kel slept in the back as we drove up to Mansfield where we met Gus’ carload. The bakery was full of ski bunnies much to Gus’ disgust but we ate some breaky and met two other paddlers who were surprisingly heading the same way as us. They were apparently sick of the King and the Delatite and were heading up to the Jamieson with two boats, a slab of beer and a bike so that they could “either ride the (41km) shuttle or bribe someone to drive it for them”. Well we didn’t need bribing (but really, they could have left some beer at the take out for us!) so they tagged along behind us in their commodore and we headed up towards Jamieson. It was a gorgeous day, clear skies, warm sun and beautiful views of snow capped Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. Our road turned to dirt after Jamieson and it took us winding and up through the hills above the Jamieson. We came to Axe track, the planned take out and Timmy was no where to be seen. His car load was to have camped at the put in, and he was supposed to meet us at the take out so we decided that Grant’s car and the commodore should go down to the take out and leave the commodore down there, with Grants car bringing the two guys and their boats to the put in, while Gus’ car went and found Tim then did the same leaving one of their cars at the take out.

All went well, we got past the first fallen tree and continued down the track, soon it became very steep and I realise from the map that the track had to drop almost 500 m down to the river. The commodore was scraping on some of the large drainage mounds across the track and finally they decided they couldn’t do it and tried to turn around... opppps... they were stuck in the softer earth on the side of the road. We sent Kellie back up the track to stop Gus’ car coming down, as it wasn’t a 4WD either. Luckily Grant’s car’s a beast and he pulled them out and back up the hill to a spot they could turn around. They opted to leave their car there and walk up as long as we could drive down and mark the take out. As we were coming back we met Timmy coming in so in the end we were all at the put

in with Tim’s car at the take out. The Commodore guys got on the river and we started organising everyone, meanwhile Timmy and Gus sat in chairs and read the pornos all left by the 4Wdrivers who were camping there and had already headed out for the day.

Finally on the swiftly moving river, Anna and I took the lead with Nick and Wade in the middle of the group as they were the most inexperienced paddlers. Not far into it I drifted into the trees over hanging the rivers edge, I went over and when I attempted to roll back up I found there wasn’t enough clearance under the tree and I was knocked back in again, my second roll attempt was much the same as the first and I started to panic about getting stuck under the trees. On the third attempt the trees had cleared enough to allow me to roll up and I pushed my way through a few more out into the river. I expected to see Anna right next to me, but she was no where to be seen instead Wade’s mostly submerged boat was floating down. What I hadn’t realised was that both Wade and Nick had swum which Anna had seen. I saw something floating in the water just upstream of my boat and started at it trying to work out if it was a shoe or foam out of a boat - then it dived - a platypus! The first time I’d ever seen one in the wild, but no time to be excited Wade’s boat was full of water and almost level with me. I finally managed to push it into a small eddy as Anna and Gus paddled past trying to rescue Nick’s boat. I joined them leaving Markus to look after Wade’s boat, it was a little while before we gathered everyone and found boats and paddles again. The raft was having issues too, it had a hole in the bottom which required frequent bailing and at higher air pressure air was leaking out of one the pontoons. So at the next point where the track met the river we reassessed the situation.

Nick and Wade decided that they’d get out this time as the gorge section was still to come, the raft decided to push on. Off we went again, and soon some bigger rapids started. The river narrowed and went down a drop then a bit further on there was another major rapid. After watching a few people bounce down it on river right, I paddled off only to be to the left of the river, that was fine until the final drop which created a large hole on the left - which I went straight into. Timmy reckons I rolled three times, all I remember is side surfing, flipping, front surfing and finally waiting upside for the feeling that I’d flushed out the hole, it came and I rolled up. Just after me down came the raft and the same hole tipped everyone out, we gathered up the swimmers and fed them chocolate before putting them back in the raft. However that wasn’t the gorge, just a little later we found ourselves between narrow rock walls, paddling through closely spaced waves and holes. I joined Grant in an eddy, he’d apparently gone through most of the holes upside down, just behind Gus who was also upside down. The raft was ahead of me in an



eddy so I joined it then passed it and went down the drop. We waited for the raft, Grant had the video camera out and it was good that he did. Down came the raft and at the bottom it tipped to the right, those on the right fell out as did the rear person on the left leaving Kellie on front left, she obviously decided against paddling the raft alone and took a gigantic leap to leave the raft on the right side with the others! So we gathered the raft and swimmers again and set off.

That was the end of the major white water but the river continued to be very beautiful, bends filled with tree ferns and quiet pools, waterfalls coming in from the sides and the sun shining on the steep valley walls above us. A bit further down another platypus surfaced just near my boat,

then went under and came up on my other side. Just after that shouts from the raft told us they had seen a platypus too! We pushed on and finally got to the take out at 5pm, just as we got out Wade and Nick pulled up in Grants car having driven the shuttle for us. Timmy's car has low clearance so Grants car took six boats and six people back up the track while Timmy drove up with Alex and Anna having to get out of his car and run up all the steep bits so that his car would make it without bottoming out. We got everyone up to the top just as darkness fell and then it was off to Mansfield for a much appreciated counter meal and beer at the Delatite Hotel before the drive home. 🍷

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## Cambarville Search — Enmoore Lin

“We’ve been given the toughest search task.” Ahh...the joys of being in the youngest (Andrea, Laurence, Nic and I were all in our mid-20s) and therefore, supposedly one of the fittest search parties. Laurence seemed thrilled by the challenge, but my immediate thought was “Crap!” Having participated in last winter’s search at Lake Mountain, which was only a few watersheds away, all I could envisage were incredibly steep slopes, thick scrub, giant rotting logs and countless twisted ankles.

This time we were looking for Mark Hulme, whose car was found in the Cambarville area with windows down, keys in the ignition and bushwalking equipment inside. He suffered from paranoid schizophrenia and it was assumed that he had suffered a delusional episode and believing he was being pursued, had fled into the bush. Mark was a fit and experienced bushwalker, which meant he could have covered a lot of ground.

The Bushwalkers Search and Rescue (BSAR) call-out began at 5:30pm the previous night. This gave much more notice than usual and this showed in the excellent response, with thirty-three BSAR members (nine from MUMC) assembled in the pre-dawn darkness at either Dawson St or the Police Academy for the bus trip to Cambarville. Tired and sleep deprived, I tried to doze on the bus, but in between catching up with friends, toilet stops and search briefings, there was precious little time for sleep. On arrival at search headquarters, we engaged in a spot of “hurry-up and wait”, a common activity on any search. This generally involves a lot of frantic eating, packing and struggling with the bright yellow pack-covers on the off-chance that the group would have to leave immediately, only to then sit around and wait for briefings or for a lift to the drop-off point. While the police and BSAR Field Officers were busy printing maps and devising search strategies, we enjoyed the police hospitality. The new and improved catering van served delicious meals

during the entire search (including the option of coco-pops for breakfast!) and for the first time, had even provided sandwich ingredients for lunch.

After a formal police briefing in front of the attendant media cameras and individual group briefings, search headquarters erupted into a flurry of activity as the search groups headed out. Since we would only be day searching, our packs were reasonably light, with a tent, sleeping bag, mat, first aid kit, stove and a small supply of emergency food between the four of us. We piled into a SES 4WD for some wild off-road action en route to our drop-off point. We were to walk up Armstrong Creek and meet a group that was coming down in the opposite direction. Other groups were searching the side-gullies and spurs that led into the creek.

In the bright sunshine, the forest with its giant ferns and towering mountain ash looked benign. With Laurence in the creek and the rest of us fanned out on either bank, we began pushing our way upstream through the tangled vegetation, constantly looking around us, under logs and behind us for footprints or any other foreign objects. Our calls of “Mark” would hopefully alert the lost man but were also a useful marker of the whereabouts of the rest of the group. We tried to keep the neighboring person in visual contact to ensure that the intervening ground was adequately searched, but in the dense scrub, this was not always possible. Detours became unavoidable as we encountered enormous fallen trees that could not be scrambled over or slopes that were too steep to traverse. Even in the creek, there were endless logs that had to be climbed over or ducked under. Our GPS, which had trouble detecting satellites on the flat, open ground at headquarters, was completely useless. The radio only functioned intermittently.

By lunch, we had only covered a couple of kilometres and our pull-out point seemed impossibly distant. We had found no signs of the missing man and instead had found leeches. Being so close to water, we had amassed an amazing collection of leeches and bites that would itch uncontrollably for many days to come. As the day drew on, the constant fight to move through the scrub and the unexpectedly plunges through the undergrowth as rotten logs gave way beneath our feet became increasingly tiresome. We had been going for ages, so where the hell was the spur and track that was to be our pull-out point? With the dense foliage, it was difficult to determine the topography of the land. Was that a spur hiding beneath the trees or just another non-distinct slope? Andrea's yell that she had located the track was greeted with relief and we were even happier when we saw the 4WD and waiting Melbourne Water driver. Phew, we wouldn't have to roadbash up the track after all.

The presence of Melbourne Water personnel was unexpected as they do not usually participate in searches. It was not until we drove past a gate with a "Water Catchment. Do not trespass" sign that it all became clear. We had just spent the afternoon tramping through and urinating right next to Melbourne's water supply!

That night, instead of driving down to Marysville and sleeping in the local scout hall, we were allowed to camp at a Parks Vic picnic ground a couple of hundred metres from search headquarters. Cutting out the bus travel meant more sleep and more importantly, a later wake-up call of 6am. It was a lovely site with picnic tables, toilets and soft, mattress-like grass to sleep on. Then again, given how tired everyone was, hard concrete would probably have felt like a soft bed. To make sure that the public would not get any ideas of camping there (like they would be around to see us in the middle of the night!), Parks Vic demanded that the picnic ground be surrounded with police tape.

With the recent change to a two-day search commitment, the second day would be the last day for BSAR members. The search was expanded to take in the neighboring watershed. My group was given the task of walking down and searching a gully, which from the map looked to be quite steep. This was an accurate impression. Entry into the lush, rainforested gully for Laurence and Andrea involved launching themselves over an overhang and landing in a patch of blackberry bushes. Nic and I had cleverly spied an easier route and simply walked down the opposite side of the gully. Again we left a little space between each person, with Nic struggling with the mud and thick scrub in the middle of the gully and the rest of us perched precariously on the precipitous sides. As we clambered over the fallen vegetation, Andrea estimated that she only spent 30% of her time on solid ground. The terrain was so steep that not only our GPS, but our radio failed to work too. The Field Officer thought that we would finish our search task in half a day, but this proved to be a

little optimistic. On the other hand, we weren't keen to be sent out again, which happens when groups return early, so we weren't altogether displeased.

At lunch, we met Rod Costigan's group and hurriedly gobbled our sandwiches beneath a creaking mountain ash that looked as if it would topple at any moment. We had no hope of finishing our task by the 3pm turn-around and since part of our route was shared by Rod's group, we decided that Rod's group would continue their route while we would return to headquarters by travelling up the obvious spur next to our gully. The drier conditions on the spur meant that the vegetation was more open and even in the regrowth forests, it was reasonably easy to move through the scrub. Our return trip was quick and we were back at the road in less than an hour.

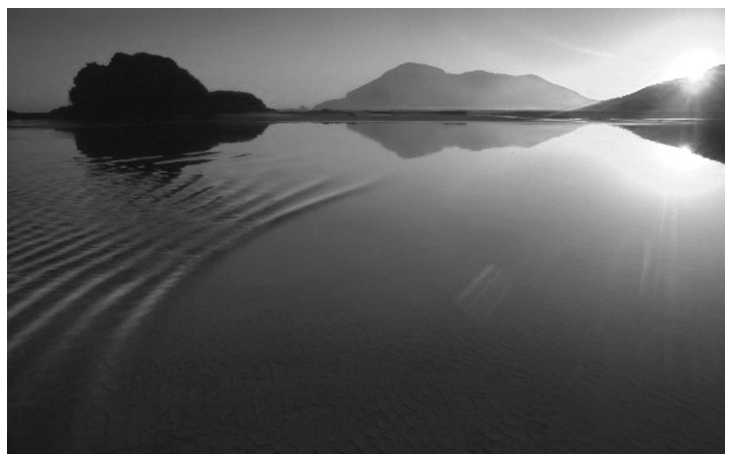
Back at headquarters, it was time to relax over an early dinner and to examine our battered bodies. Blood from leech bites trailed down people's legs while angry red welts from swordgrass cuts and scratches covered arms and in some cases legs. It was always easy to tell who was on their first search - they tended to wear shorts while more experienced searchers were invariably dressed in long pants and often, also in long-sleeved shirts.

### Postscript

Despite general searching by BSAR, line searching by SES, extensive road patrols by the Police, Melbourne Water and Parks Vic and helicopter searches by the Police and media, no trace was found of the missing man. 🐼

MUMC searchers

Joel Bartley  
Rod Costigan  
Jim Grellis  
Nicolas Hohn  
Andrea Kneen  
Enmoore Lin  
Laurence O'Neill  
Andrew Rothfield  
Lizzy Skinner



Selb's winning photo in the "Australian Landscape" section of the Pie'n'Slide comp.



# Tour de Tas — Pete Lockett

Being a native Taswegian I seem to have done things decidedly backwards. For starters I left Tassie to go to uni in Melbourne, while most others leave uni in Melbourne to go to Tassie. Following that, I got into paddling when I got to Melbourne, where hours of driving are required for a bit of paddling, rather than in Tassie where a bit of driving can get you hours of paddling! Anyway, having realised my flawed thinking and hearing our esteemed paddling convenor, Tim, muttering things about organising a paddling trip in Tassie I jumped at the opportunity; keen to find out just what the southern rivers had to offer.

The plan was for a whirlwind five day "creeking" tour of the island, with myself and Tim catching the ferry over on Thursday night and meeting up with Jeff and some friendly Tassie paddlers that Tim had met over the internet (hmmm, this was sounding suspicious already). After meeting Tim at the ferry terminal and explaining at length to the local attendant why I did not deserve a parking ticket we boarded the ferry and found our cabins, where I became aware I was sharing with two members of the "Outlaws" bikie gang. The evening then consisted of dining in the "A La Carte" restaurant (no joke), perusing maps and river descriptions and a quiet ale at the ship's bar. Finally I was



Andy on the Deep Creek.

required to return to my cabin where I found the bikies nicely tucked away in bed making heaving guttral noises which were kind of like snoring but certainly much more threatening.

The next morning we met Jeff at the bakery in Devonport and proceeded to head down the west coast to meet our internet dates in Queenstown. A couple of phone calls (and hours) later we met with Ian, Carl and Andy who were to be our guides for the next few days. The Youlandie was the river of choice for Friday, a scenic grade 3 creek, not much volume but very pleasant...except for one thing...temperature. I could now start ranting about how cold it was, however, Saturday was colder so I'll leave it till then. I will instead talk about wood. Yes, one of our paddling buddies from down south seemed to

have formed quite an affinity with any sort of trees that were in the river. Rather than just ducking down and squeezing under (as was standard practice) the resulting performance involved a neat tail-stand into back-flip negotiation of one particularly low lying log, and climaxed with a strange backward overhanded kind of paddleless rock drag underneath another. However, all ended well and we headed out to the coast to a lovely campground at Trial Harbour where the evening was passed by eating and chatting around the campfire. The evening's activities also included trying to sleep in a tent that was flexing so much in the wind that suffocation appeared such an imminent danger as to warrant a midnight boxer clad scavenger hunt for makeshift tent pegs.

Due to the lack of rain recently (yes, yes, we know, if we had been there two weeks earlier...) we decided to head up the central highlands to paddle the interestingly named "Deep Creek". Whoever named it that sure had a sick sense of humour and apres paddling it was promptly, and not quite so lovingly, renamed the "rocky trickle". It was quite unlike anything I had paddled ever before, and if the local's weren't also paddling it I would be quite convinced that it was some sort of a twisted attempt at humour. Let me outline why:

1 – water: Generally speaking creeks have water and rocks in them, however the ratios are such that a kayaker is allowed to "float" on the water and "avoid" the larger percentage of the rocks. This seemed to be a concept lost on deep creek, as I am not sure that at any particular stage I was actually supported by water alone.

2 – Temperature: We should have clued in, after the amount of frosty ice on the road (even Tim's trusty go anywhere 4wd steed was finding footing an issue), the local's quizzing us about whether or not we had "Pogies", oh yeah and the ice on the lake that the creek was flowing out of, as well as ice lining the banks of the creek itself. That's right, we were in the central highlands too, and even the trees had decided it was too cold to hang around and migrated down to lower altitudes years ago.

However, after establishing that we were going to paddle the creek and despite my last ditch attempt at getting out of it by leaving my spray deck at the takeout we headed off.

It is now I need to explain some more concepts to those that may not be familiar with them.

Kayaking gear is really quite good in situations like this and I think about 95% of our bodies were really quite warm, however the other 5% is the hands and the hands were about as far from warm as you can get! The

“screaming barfies” were in full force: your hands are hurting so much you want to scream, but, due to the insane pain, your guts are nauseous and that pre-spew dry-mouthed salivating sensation is going. You’re afraid that if you do scream you’ll barf – hence the “screaming barfies”. Added to this if you get the ‘barfies real good (as I seem to manage to) you start to feel faint.

Fortunately this run was only a few hundred metres (about 20 minutes) long and involved only one tricky drop just before the takeout which was negotiated with varying levels of success. The takeout, however, would have been quite an amusing scene had a stranger stumbled on us. I was there lying down feeling faint, Tim was inspecting the damage to his helmet and his knuckles as the result of some unplanned upside-down probing and Ian was wandering around cursing with his hand totally covered with blood from a rock that “must have been sharp”, yep, I reckon he got that one right!

However, several steri strips and layers of warm clothing later we were happy to be leaving the central highlands and



headed to camp at the takeout of the Lea river which we were to paddle tomorrow.

In the morning we were joined by the local guru and explorer “Harry” and the crew from Launceston (“Dicko”, Jack? and ?) and so ten of us headed up to the put in. The rewards were spectacular. An amazing lush forest setting with consistent grade 3-4 rapids (with warm water!) and a couple of grade 4 drops (3metres or so high) thrown in. Certainly plenty to keep you on the ball, very exciting and technically challenging, but without any major consequences if you didn’t get it totally right. This last point was tested by a few of us, myself included, as I caught an edge on a tricky lead into one particular drop, resulting in my negotiating the drop while being decidedly tilted to the right.

That day certainly made the trip worthwhile in itself and everyone was totally stoked at the end of it. Unfortunately the next day was Monday and all our local friends had

things to do (like go to work, heh, heh!), so we got as much info out of them as we could about potential runs for the next couple of days, thanked them for their generous guiding and said our farewells.

The plan for the next day was to paddle the well renowned “Leven Canyon” and that we knew had many gnarly rapids as well as a couple of waterfalls on it. However, this could not possibly be done with wet thermals, so the drive to the campsite near the canyon was made via the Ulverstone laundrymat. I pity the next person that goes to use that dryer as I am sure the smell of baked sweaty thermals and rubber will never quite come out of their clothes.

After several navigational challenges (go easy on me; many animals fly in circles to gain their bearings before moving off) and with Jeff pushing his “Super Wheels” van to the extreme of it’s cornering limits we found the campground on the Leven river. This was quite a bit downstream from the section we were to run tomorrow, but was handy where the gauge for the river level was situated. We had been advised by Harry that the min /max levels were about 0.40-0.65m. Below 0.4 and the section below the falls would be a rocky tiresome scrape and above 0.65 the section above the falls would be particularly exciting. We were also informed that Justin Bookcock, aka “Booger” probably the best paddler in Tassie (and in the top ten C1 slalom paddlers in the world) had walked out of the top section at 0.7m!

It was with these thoughts that I drifted off to sleep that night. I use that expression loosely because I’m not really sure as to how much sleep I got. Each night of this trip I convinced myself I was exhausted from the days activities and the lack of sleep on previous nights and would drop off like a baby, but there always seemed to be something stopping me dropping off into the land of blissful rest. It started with the bikies, then the previously mentioned tent flapping /suffocation, then Tim’s bean intake and resultant output, and tonight it was waterfalls.

Waterfalls are interesting things in the paddlers psyche. To me, anyway, it’s not really something that comes naturally. The funny thing is that as nerve racking as it is, it doesn’t really require any skill, as long as you can paddle up to the edge gravity and the water will take care of the rest! In the words of Jeff “You could send your mum off these ones!”.

We checked the gauge that morning, it was at 0.64m after a bit of overnight rain, and so the run was certainly promising to be sporty. After a few more navigational challenges we parked one car at the hop farm at the takeout and drove to the top and found the track for the “25 minute” walk down to the canyon floor. After five minutes of walking we got to the footbridge, and after a small hiccup involving bush bashing, boat dragging and a bit of warm up paddling we found the described seal launch entry ledge.



This was a great way to get things underway, a four or so metre plunge into the start of the canyon to wash the sleep out of the eyes and switch the brain on.

Once it got going the action was intense and very exciting. The river provided an endless supply of tight, technical boulder hopping moves in pushy water, interspersed by stacks of drops where the river would funnel over horizon lines. When you looked down the gorge it appeared to drop away at a rate that seemed impossible to descend in a kayak, however bit, by bit we picked our way down.

Jeff was revelling in the role as the fearless probe; craning his neck to try and just make out a possible line over the next horizon line, then giving Tim and I the "I'm not entirely sure what happens down there but I'm quite sure it'll be exciting" look and barrelling off over the lip, to re-appear in the next eddy downstream and several metres below us! He did a superb job paddling blind down hard grade 4 (probably delving into grade 5 at times) rapids and then letting us know the best route to take.

It's funny how you can't remember much about what you paddle when you're paddling at your limit like this. Well I can't anyway, It all seems to blur into a big exciting chocolate milkshake! I do, however, remember Jeff with that crazy excited look in his eye screaming "Now were creek'n boys" and then disappearing over another sceptical looking horizon line! I think that was the 173rd rapid of the day and involved making a really tight ferry out of the micro eddy on river right surfing the cushion of water in front of the rock, but behind the hole (8ft gap), then you had time for one stroke, a boof left off a 6ft drop, hard left again, and finishing with another 6ft boof...sweeeeeeeet!

We were now deep in the canyon and realised that below us it fell a way at an incredible rate, we must have reached the falls. The following scouting confirmed that indeed we had and yep, there was a 10 and 12m waterfall there! But they looked good and the advice we had been given on running them made sense so it looked like they were a go. Before that. However, we still had a couple of drops to run, one of which was a bit nasty, having water gushing around into several undercut rocks required setting up people in safety positions to grab and drag out of the way anyone that looked like floating upside down into an undesirable spot! Tim and Jeff both styled it, but with my thoughts being preoccupied by what was downstream I decided to gracefully decline and hike my boat around.

Well, there we were, the falls were good, all we had to do was paddle over them! The idea with the first one being to attack it from right to left so you would go over it in the middle (thus avoiding the ledge on the left side) with your momentum carrying you left (thus avoiding the overhanging cliff wall on the right). Well, it worked, despite my slight panic as I went over the lip and thought I was too far left and may land on the ledge, and my hideous lack of aerial technique, I did reach the bottom of the fall

(ah gravity) and rolled up, all be it with may paddle the wrong way round and upside down! Jeff was already at the bottom grinning at me and Tim soon followed looking very stylish (that is until the bit of his brain that reminds him how to roll got washed out his ear...mmm beeeer).

Then for the "no brainer" fall, despite being a bit bigger than the last there wasn't anything to avoid on this one and was simply a matter of paddling straight off. Jeff went first; barrelling off with a "yee-har". He then got the camera out and off went Tim...all good! So I guess that makes it my turn, I thought, and off I went. This one was negotiated with slightly more style and I can very vividly remember watching the bottom of the falls come racing up toward me!

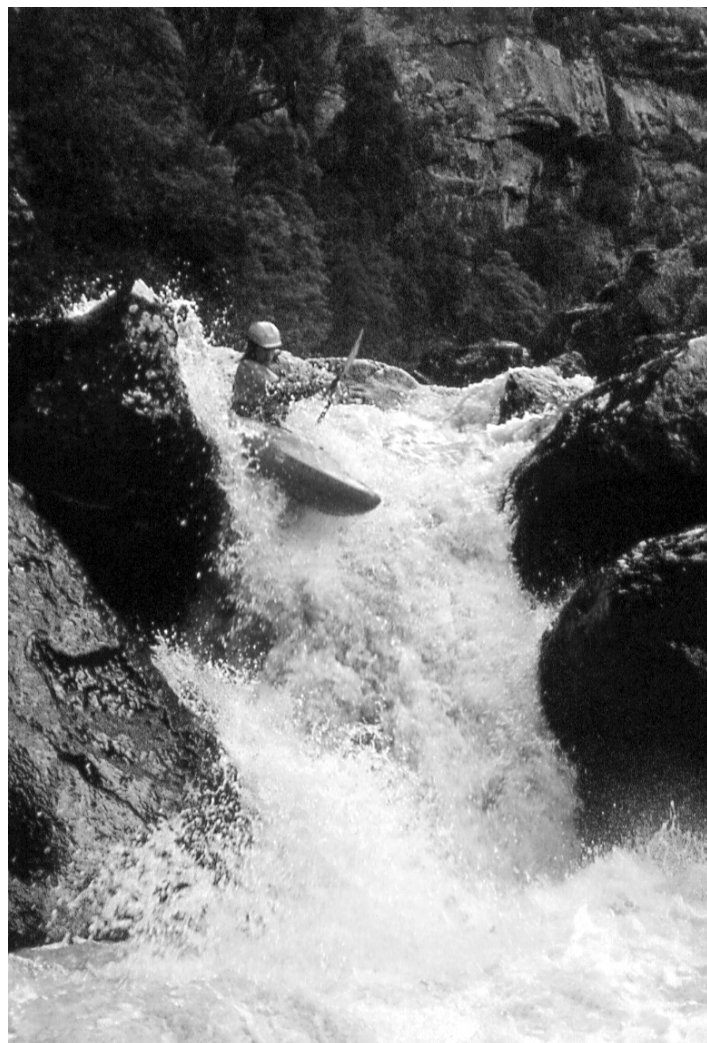
Unreal! We were all super stoked, we'd successfully run all the hard stuff, bombed the falls and could now relax and enjoy the slightly more sedate paddle out!

An hour later..."you know, there aren't any mountains like this where we parked the car"

An hour and a half later..."I wonder if we parked it on the right river"

Two hours later..."phew, the hop farm, we must almost be there"

Two and a half hours later... "how big is the b!#\*+ hop farm"



Jeff in the Leven Canyon.

Anyway, after a long flat water paddle we made it out and headed (via that laundrymat again!) to a friends place just out of Devonport for the night.

Well, it would seem that would be a fitting place for it to end, and for me it basically did, seeing as I didn't paddle the next day. Tim especially, was keen to squeeze a last bit of paddling in, and so on Tuesday we headed over to the Arm river, of which we new very little about. Upon inspection it appeared to have an unscoutable sheer walled canyon in it, so the boys decided to get in just after this, they were, however, presented with the spectacular "Arm Falls" which they proceeded to blast off and then get swallowed and spat out by.

Unfortunately we were all about to head our own ways, Tim back Melb, Jeff for a couple of days exploring the east coast and myself to see the parents in Hobart. However, such a successful trip could not go by without a celebratory beverage and a quiet one was enjoyed on the roof of the "Delorane" hotel reclining in the comfort of the genuine 80's plastic "Coca-Cola" outdoor setting.

And that is about that. I think the only other noteworthy thing that happened is that Tim drank a pint of...wait for it...Raspberry Lemonade at the pub in Devonport while waiting for the ferry. We handed Jeff a map as he headed off (has anyone seen him since?) and I sang to the radio at the top of my lungs the whole drive home.

Perfect! 🍷

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## Nymbo — Tim Wallace

Almost all club trips require driving to some extent. Distances driven vary from 5 minutes to the Pool on Thursdays for a paddle, to 4 hours for the trip to Arapiles for a weekends climbing. Occasionally, club members drive even further than this; 7 hours driving for a week in skiing in the Snowy Mountains, even more rarely they might drive further, perhaps 16 hours for some kayaking on the Nymboida. Almost unheard of would be to do this for a weekend. 3152km for one weekend. Two days paddling the Nymboida, 32 hours driving - surely no one would be so stupid as to drive that far for one weekend. Apparently these people do exist [actually, their names are Anna, Angus, Kate and Tim].

A team was assembled and a timeframe developed. Some calculations were done.

(Midday Friday to Midday Monday = 72 hours) (Nymboida River ~1450km = 16 hours) = Plenty of Time to paddle!

Excited about the 16 hours of continuous driving that lay ahead of us, we left the boatsheds at 1pm. We crept north, along the Hume Highway, through Shepparton, Tocumwal, West Wyalong, Forbes, Parkes, Dubbo, Gunnedah, Tamworth, Armidale, before eventually arriving at Dorrig, in the heart of the New England Tablelands at 6:30am Saturday. A quick enquiry at the butcher [who was up preparing the shop for the days trade] confirmed that the bridge upstream of the Platypus Flat Campsite had been reconstructed, and we arrived at the campsite, erected our tents and were in bed at 7am for the 2 hours we had designated for sleep. At 9:30 [half an hour late!] I dragged myself out of the tent as I could hear voices, and to my pleasant surprise, found that the rafters had arrived. We sorted out a shuttle with them [this later proved to be invaluable], had some breakfast and got on the water. The rapids started within the first couple of hundred meters, a grade two lead in to a nice grade 3 chute that Anna probed without any problems. Angus located the most sticky part of the hole that I had been compelling him to avoid and

shot rapidly skywards as he was backlooped, but rolled back up in time. Next up were a couple more grade three chutes and drops before the real action started. Lucifers leap is a fun grade four rapid, consisting of a three meter waterfall style drop in to a confused chute of about 30 meters length. Cameras were produced and Anna styled it [even managing to eddy out just below the falls] and waited for the rest of us to run it. Everyone ran it successfully, with Angus getting probably the nicest line and letting out a massive 'fuck yeah' style exclamation after realising that he had run it successfully and was not going to die.

Time was creeping up on us as we had to get to the take out by 2:00pm to get the shuttle with the rafter, so we portaged 'Rock Bar', a fairly straightfoward drop of about 2-3m between confined rock walls. Below this the river flattened out a bit and we were presented with a number of fun grade 2 3 rapids which everyone ran successfully.

An hour or two later, we carefully began approaching 'the devils cauldron', the hardest and probably the most dangerous rapid of the day. I waded out an island in the middle of the channel to take photos and operate the throw bag. The Devils Cauldron is a steep, demanding rapid that requires precise boat control in very fast, steep and confused water to avoid the cauldron of water on river right [which you would not necessarily come out of should you swim in it] and big retentive hole and adjacent undercut wall of the middle channel. Time was still a concern, but I told the others that as I had run it before at a similar water level, I was happy to run safety and take photos while they ran it. I would then portage to save time. Kate elected to probe, and after some initial confusion about which part of the centre channel to come down, she blasted down the middle, missed the crucial boof off the rock on the right and went fast and deep in to the big hole at the bottom, before re-surfacing a few seconds later, upsidedown, 5 or so meters downstream. She quickly rolled up and made the eddy before the next chute.





Kate Running Lucifer's Leap on the Nymbodia River.

Angus liked what he saw and was quickly in his boat and ready to shoot the rapid. Setting my camera so that it would take continuous photos until I released my finger, I watched, slightly concerned, through the viewfinder as he made his way down the rapid at various alarming angles and orientations, before dropping in to the bottom hole upsidedown & sideways then disappearing. Vaguely concerned about his fate, I frantically looked around for him and was relieved when he resurfaced a few meters downstream. Shortly afterwards a head appeared besides his boat, but luckily he was flushed in to a nearby eddy. Unbeknown to me, he had actually hit his head during his chaotic whitewater dance down the rapid, so oblivious to this, I walked up and portaged around the rapid whilst Kate looked after Gus. Anna also decided to portage after seeing a couple of only moderately successful attempts. Paddling down to Gus, I noticed that there was blood coming out of his head, however Kate had already checked him out and he was OK, just a scratch.

We paddled on down the chute below the Devils Cauldron and a couple of grade three rapids below it. About this time a couple of rather disturbing things happened. Having sent Kate downstream to chase another group of kayakers so that she could paddle down with them and hopefully not miss the shuttle, I was eddy hopping my way down with Gus and noticed that he was slightly off-line on the rapid I had just come down. Much to my horror, he hit a tent-sized rock and was quickly sucked underneath it! Swearing a lot and trying to make the difficult upstream ferry glide to get to him, I observed his paddle emerge, around 5 seconds later, from a small [think about the size of a small TV] gap that the boulder was forming between it and another boulder. I swore some more, however after another 5 seconds, much to my relief, a yellow helmet, Angus attached, also emerged from this gap, followed by his boat.

Quickly he got himself and his boat to the bank and was soon back in, all too aware of the precarious situation he had been in. Around this time, Anna yelled out, and I turned around to find Kate downstream, in her boat, holding her face and apparently in some distress. I quickly paddled down to her and found that she had hit her face on a rock and had blood streaming down her face from two cuts on her [broken] nose, as well as out of her nose. Anna and Gus quickly rejoined us as I applied some basic first aid, took the necessary photographs and then headed down the river [of blood]. Luckily we got to the takeout just as the shuttle bus was about to leave, so I jumped on. Lucky also was the fact that Kate only went in to shock AFTER she had paddled out to the take out - good on ya Kate! An hour or so later I re-emerged and we repacked the car and drove up to the hospital at Dorrigo. The doctor had a look, before deciding that X-Rays were in order, which we would have to go to Coffs Harbour to get. Arriving at Coffs Harbour around 8pm, Kate sat around before having her x-rays as we cooked our dinner in the ambulance car park outside emergency. It was discovered that Kate had indeed broken her nose [the actual bone!] and there were various fragments of nose bone floating around in the increasingly large mass that her nose was swelling up to. With all the hospital stuff completed, we moved to a caravan park where we set up our tents and headed off to the pub [Kate decided bed might be nice, so she opted out]. Anna, Gus and Myself had a few beers at the nearby plantation Hotel [which had a 9:1 security staff to barman ratio] before heading off to bed as well. Waking at 9 the next morning we repacked the car, driving down to Sydney, where we had dinner in Parramatta before keeping on going, through Goulburn, Wadonga and back home, where we arrived at 3:45AM Monday. I think the next trip I run will be within Victoria. Perhaps even Arapiles. 🇦🇺

# Snowboating — Tim Wallace

With a title like snowboating, many readers might be somewhat confused about to what exactly the author refers; To the kayaking down the summit of mount Feathertop in a kayak that had been carried up? Or that this article is about a kayaking trip where there was no water [\_no\_ boating]? Rest assured, this is not the ramblings of some lunatic [Monash Bushwalking Club] kayaker who carried his kayak up Mount Feathertop, nor is it about a kayaking trip where there was no water. In fact there was quite a bit of water. Perhaps not as much water as has appeared in some articles published recently in the Mountaineer [see the epic Kiewa incidents volume I & II for example]. In this article I will show that despite what you might have read in mountaineer, heard mumbled from the lips of some partially inebriated paddler at the pub or been told by some Bushwalker or Climber who is jealous that paddlers have more fun and engage in more scandalous romping than they do, paddling is awesome fun, very exciting and places you in unique settings that 99% of the population will probably have never have heard of, let alone seen.

Dave, Ruth and Myself had been in the Snowy Mountains near Jindabyne for around four days, when in the face of a malfunctioning car [Ruth's], and in a possible act of desperation Dave and I decided to hitch-hike our way up to Charlotte's Pass, having already arranged for our boats to be dropped up there. Ruth didn't really like the concept of paddling 8km of continuous grade 3 and 4 rapids with the odd 4+ just make things interesting.

Having been challenged on an easier section of the Thredbo a couple of days earlier, she preferred to sit this one out and drink cups of tea with our new friend and saviour, Rodney [Rodney dropped our boats up near



Pete and Jeff walking in to the West Kiewa.

Charlotte's pass for us]. Thus Dave and I set off. In a happy and miraculous coincidence [on the scale of miracles we're talking divine intervention here] we were not 10 minutes walk up the road from our campsite when Pete, Alex and Matt appeared from round a bend. Knowing that we were up here, they had completed the 9hour drive from Melbourne overnight in order to paddle with us, on the off chance that there was enough water. This improved the stakes somewhat. Gleefully, we jumped in Pete's car, told him that we were going to run the Snowy from Charlotte's pass to Guthega Pondage, and drove up towards the put in. My information suggested that whilst the Perisher - Charlottes pass was closed for the last 5km, it would be possible to book the oversnow for the final 5km. This was a slightly ludicrous concept because there was not actually any snow on the road, however it meant we could avoid a 5km walk, so we shelled out our \$10 each to the nice people [racketeers] at the Perisher oversnow. They picked us up at the end of the open road and dropped us off 5km later just before Charlotte's Pass village. Although we still had a 1km walk over a ridge to get to the river, I relished the walk, as I had never walked through the snow to get to a river. American Alex was having other thoughts [something like "man we're dumb"], however we cajoled him along with the promise of excellent whitewater. We reached the river without much fuss, and Pete and I walked downstream about 300m, as the guidebooks said that it was recommended that paddlers portage [walked around] the fist 300m because there was an unpaddable dangerous blockup where the water went under, over and in between narrow gaps in rocks over a 3m vertical drop.

Post-inspections, we decided that it would be reasonably straightforward to paddle the gorge down to the blockup and get out directly above it, walk around and keep paddling. Everyone successfully paddled the 300m of continuous grade 3 water and tricky last drop and made the eddy. Whilst not particularly difficult to do, it was absolutely necessary that none of us went over this drop, so Matt generated a fair amount of interest when he came within 20cm of going over it before recovering and getting to the eddy. After the blockup we paddled on down, through fantastic bouldery rapids. A unique and interesting fact about the snowy river this high up in the catchment is that, in mid October, there is still plenty of snow around and for large sections of the run. This snow formed 1 - 2m high vertical snow walls that were perfectly aligned to the river, snow gorges if you like. The kilometre or so of river directly after the blockup was mostly grade 3, however the gradient [steepness] soon picked up and for a couple of kilometres after we were paddling some fairly continuous, highly technical, steep grade 3 and 4 water that required absolute concentration to make the correct lines and avoid the many sieves, strainers and other rocky hazards that abounded. The river momentarily eased up as tributary



joined and the banks became a little less steep, AND the sun came out momentarily allowing us to fully appreciate the starkly beautiful surrounds, but not making any impact on our hands which were numb within 15 minutes of getting on the water that morning. Gradually the gradient picked up again, and the gorge walls began to once again encroach. This heralded the beginning of a section that contained some bigger volume, larger drops and rapids. Whilst they maintained the continuousness and technical nature of the upper river, they were much more powerful, a tad more pushy and presented less problems in terms of rocks being in crucial places, as had been common upstream. Whilst the NSW guidebook had indicated that there were some potential grade 5 rapids in this section of river, we found a couple of grade 4+ rapids, a number of 4's and a generally excellent, exciting stretch of whitewater. A couple more kilometres of excellent grade 3 and 4 rapids brought us to a location that I recognised. The day before, bored as batshit, I had ridden my bike through the rain, hail and sleet up the steep, winding road from Island bend on the Snowy River to Guthega Village. I had also scrambled upstream from the pondage for about 500m to locate the

gauge that would reveal crucial information - if the river was high enough to paddle. Around 100m before reaching the gauge I noticed that there were some paddlers coming down the river, so I waited for them, took some pictures from them and extracted a gauge reading so that I would not have to scramble the extra 100m. The last kilometre of river presented a couple of solid grade 4 rapids and arriving at the gauge we found it was on 1.2m - it had been on 1.1 the day before, however we found 1.2 to be excellent. We paddled down the remaining rapids and out on to the Guthega pondage. Guthega pondage is a man-made lake used to store water for the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme, and the 500m flatwater paddle across the Pondage provided us with a good opportunity to warm up, before we carried our boats up to the cars and set about putting something warm on. That night, camped near Island Bend on the snowy, we cooked up a storm and excitedly related our tales of the Upper Snowy to Ruth and Rodney. This section of the snowy isn't the hardest river around; but it is one of the best, most beautiful, interesting, exciting days of continuous excellent whitewater. 🏆

## Paddling Notes - East Kiewa, Rocky Valley Branch

Section: Spion Kopje Track to Little Arthur Fire Track

Class: IV – V (p)

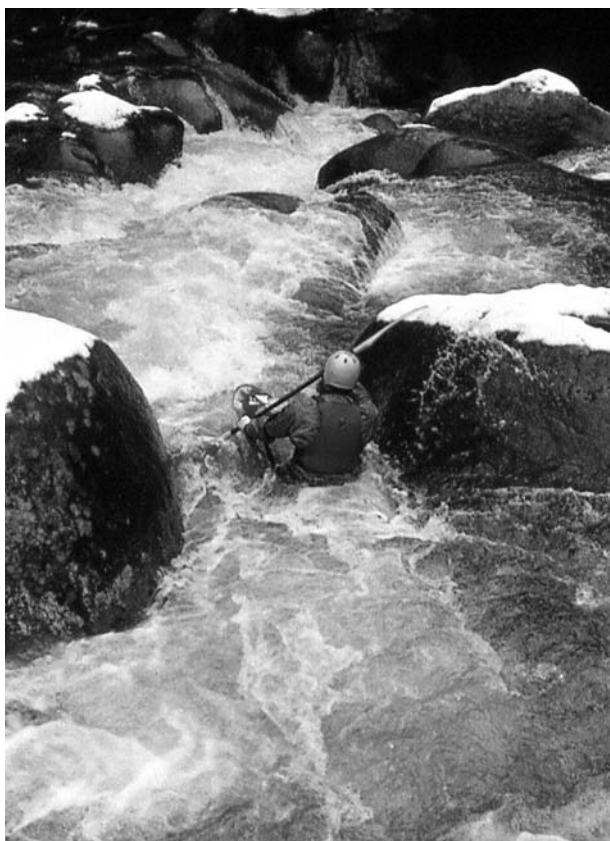
Time: 4 – 5 hours

Length: 1.3km

Gradient: 115m/km

Level: low to medium

Suits: small groups with creek boats



Grant in the snowy Rocky Valley branch of the East Kiewa. Photo - Timmy.

Description: Don't be deceived by the gradient – this run outsteeps the steepest of the steep and often requires continuous bank scouting. There is something for everyone; very steep and technical bouldery rapids, slides, portages and one amazing showstopper of a rapid, about two thirds of the way down. This rapid comprises a 3 meter drop in to a small pool that leads to the lip of a huge [at least 7m high] waterfall, which will be paddleable at the right level, make sure you're on line though... From this rapid it's a few hundred meters to the final fun drops that are visible from the put in for the regular section.

Put in: From Mt. Beauty, drive towards Falls Creek Ski Resort on the Kiewa Valley Highway. When you get to Bogong Village, continue driving for approximately 4km, until you reach a spot on the left where two gated tracks [Little Arthur Fire Track and Spion Kopje Track] leave the road. Walk along the top track [Spion Kopje track] for 2km until you reach a ford that crosses the river. This is the put in.

Take out: Either get out on river left at the first ford you come to [Little Arthur fire track] and walk back up to you car at the Kiewa Valley highway or keep paddling down the river to Lake Guy at Bogong Village. This section is mostly class III with two easy IV's and takes an hour or so to paddle. 🏆

# Core Stability — Louisa Walsh

## What does “core stability” mean to MUMC members?

Core Stability - a term that has recently become fashionable amongst lycra-clad gym instructors and infotainment presenters alike. You would think that any self-respecting MUMC member would paddle a mile from it, or yell out “What are you talking about?” before concentrating once more on the overhang they are trying to negotiate. However, core stability is not just for gym-junkies or dancers. It can be used to improve performance in many sports – especially those requiring high-level balance - such as kayaking, climbing and skiing.

Core stability refers to increasing strength in the small muscles of the lower back, abdomen, and pelvic floor. The diaphragm, deep abdominal muscles, deep lumbar spine stabilizers, and pelvic floor muscles create a “core”, which the rest of the body uses as a base for movement. Increasing strength in these deep muscles can lead to an increase in balance, and increased limb control. Decreased strength or integrity of the “core” can cause destabilization, and can lead to injury and pain – especially of the lower back.

Core stability exercises generally target the transversus abdominus (TA) muscle. The TA is located beneath the superficial abdominal muscles – those that create the “six-pack” and are contracted in sit-ups or abdominal crunches. Doing TA exercises has been shown to promote contraction in the small muscles of the lumbar spine, therefore strengthening them at the same time. This may occur due to the connective tissue links that the TA has with these small spinal muscles.



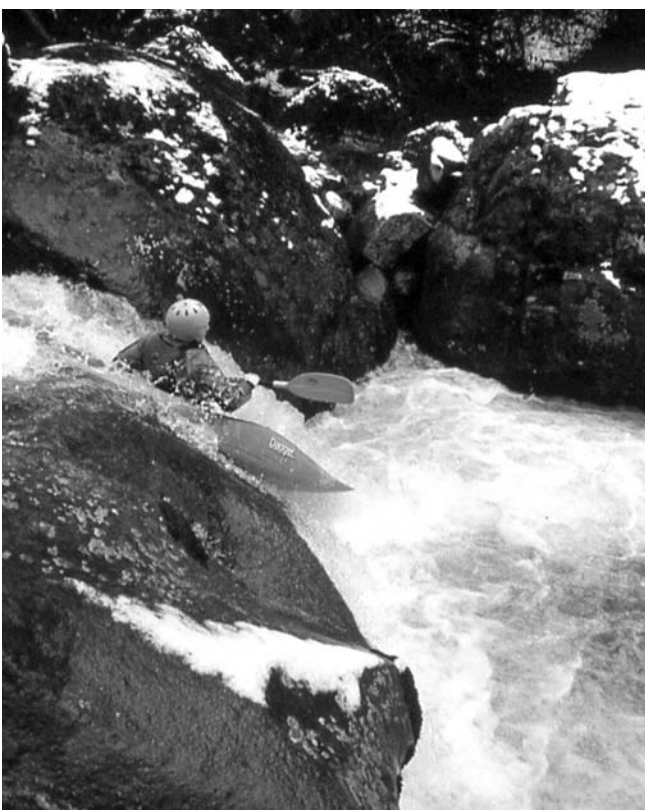
Not sure if this exercises the TA? Not actually sure whether and where the toilet is going, either... Photo Matt T.

Doing sit-ups will not improve your core stability. To do a TA contraction, place your hands on your hips, and then move your fingers 2cm from the pelvic bone. Draw your belly button toward your spine, and you should feel the muscles under your fingers tighten. This is the TA working. Sometimes it helps if you clear your throat while trying to tighten the TA, as the expulsion of air helps to activate the muscle. While tightening the TA, you should also be working your pelvic floor. These are the muscles used to maintain continence and contain the pelvic organs. To tighten your pelvic floor, imagine you are trying to stop urinating mid-flow. Throughout all of these contractions you should be able to breathe normally, while holding the muscles tight. It can take a bit of practice!!!

TA contractions can then be worked into an exercise routine, normal daily activities (especially lifting), or your paddling, climbing and skiing. Fitball and pilates classes promote TA exercise, in a variety of increasingly challenging positions. Purchasing a fitball, or going to classes, can be an excellent adjunct for those wanting to take their club sport further, or simply those who want to get the most out of their trips.

Many sports that MUMC members participate in are high risk – not only for major accidents, but also for the muscle, tendon, ligament, bone and joint injuries that are a problem in many team and individual sports. TA exercise is just one of many possible stretching and strengthening regimes that members could be doing during the week to both improve their performance, and avoid musculoskeletal injury, on their weekend trips. 🐼

Grant again; this time about to be recircled, rocky valley branch, East Kiewa. Photo - Timmy.





# Search and Rescue training weekend — Ben Cebon

On a very snowy weekend in late July, Search and Rescue volunteers from all over Victoria teamed up with the Police Search and Rescue squad, and converged on Mt Baw Baw for two days of training. On a weekend when almost two feet of snow fell, and - quite frankly - I'd rather have been snowboarding, we instead found ourselves hiking UP the ski runs, and onto the Baw Baw plateau, where we camped in the fresh snow and based our training exercises. These included wading through deep snow in frustratingly thick bush on navigation exercises, honing our first aid skills in rescue scenarios, and hauling each other up and down hills in "skeds", lightweight ski sleds designed for evacuating injured skiers from remote areas. Enmoore, Dave (both MUMC), Gerard and Graham did a fantastic job training as Field Organisers, whose job it is to co-ordinate the various teams of volunteers during a search. Topped off with some evening gourmet camp cooking, (augmented with some over-chilled Coonawarra Shiraz), the weekend turned out to be awesome fun, and a



Ben in camp at the BSAR snow practice weekend. This and other BSAR photos by Tristan

great learning experience for us all. The fact that almost half the participants were from MUMC exemplifies the tremendous contribution that our club makes to S&R, though we hope that our services are needed as rarely as possible. If you're interested in joining BSAR, contact Enmoore Lin for more information. 🐉

## Walking the Crinoline in Winter — Ned Rogers.

On the weekend of the 16 and 17 August, MUMC members Ben, Melanie, Jasmine, Andrew and I set out for a weekend walk to the Crinoline near Licola. The route involved a circuit over Little Tamboritha, Mt Tamboritha, Long Hill and the Crinoline.

Uncertainty as to the amount of snow in the area lent the undertaking an extra air of adventure. Fortunately, the prediction of an eminent Victorian bushwalker that we would be 'bollock deep in snow' walking over Mt Tamboritha proved to be mistaken. There was just enough snow to make for some excellent sightseeing and to make me regret not carrying raspberry cordial with which to make slurpies.

The first day involved a rather arduous slog to the top of Mt Tamboritha (gaining around 1100 metres) before camping on the ridge between Tamboritha and Long Hill. Having done all this hard work, the second day involved only some gentle and scenic ridge walking before reaching the Crinoline and a very spectacular lunch spot near the summit. The views from the unusual, terraced summit of the Crinoline were magnificent. From the Crinoline we descended to Breakfast Creek, starting point of the walk.

It was an extremely memorable walk, especially enjoyable due to the cool, fine weather. There is little water along the route and it would be a very hot, dry undertaking in summer or autumn. 🐉



More Feathertop sanitation workers — Matt T.

# The Dodgy Daywalk – Felix Dance

Originally this trip was supposed to be a two day walk down the Lerderderg river, 60k west of Melbourne. When we arrived at the clubrooms at 7am on the Saturday it became apparent that it'd have to be a day trip due to people feeling discouraged by the weather and other people assuming I'd be able to magically fling open the clubroom door to let them hire gear early on a weekend. This was annoying because the whole purpose of the trip was to make up for my failed attempt to lead a weekend trip to the same place a couple of months before and having to turn it into a day trip for a different set of reasons. To add to the irony the weather for the weekend turned out almost perfect the whole time.

To throw in more irony, one walker, Jason, had misinterpreted my casual inquiry about whether he had a car as a plea for him to hire one, which I discovered he had at a cost of \$150. Having hired it in Geelong he was caught by traffic on the way to Melbourne the previous night and had to sleep in it – thus causing him to arrive at the clubrooms with absolutely no gear (it was all at his parent's house). We didn't even need the car.

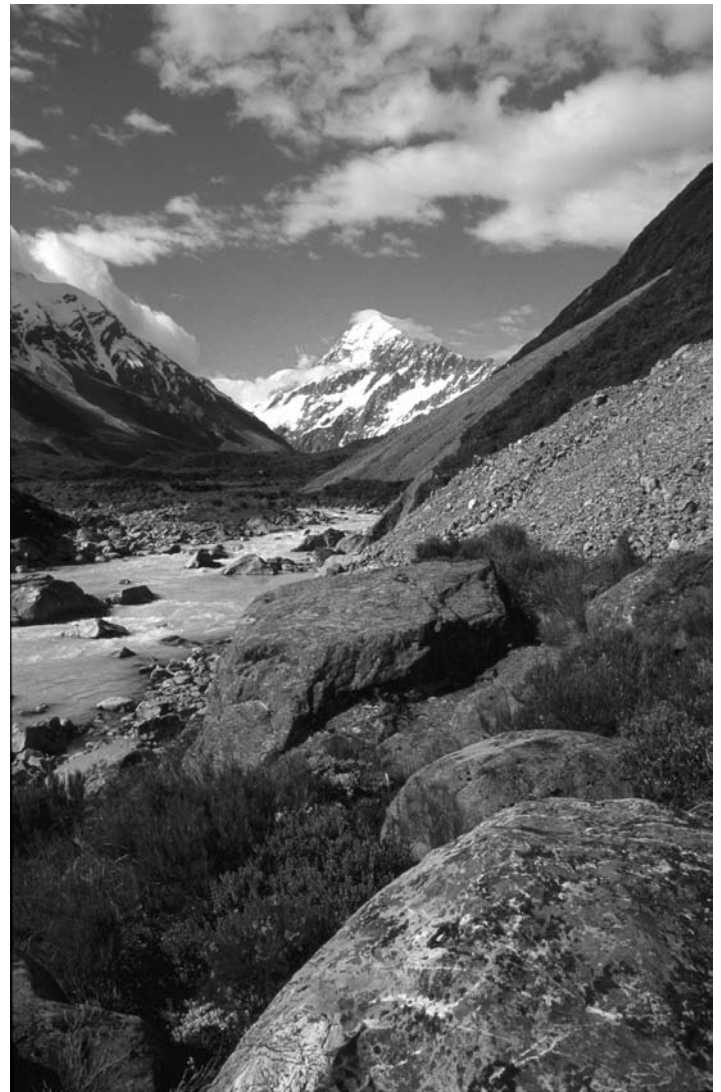
When we got to Mackenzie's Flat (discovering that one of us was still assuming we were doing an overnight trip)

**Bureaucracy survives the bushfires**  
— Matt T.



we found the river to be pleasantly non-dry and the path at places scenically submerged. Indirectly this caused another of us, Miriam's, hair colour to turn from blond to a sort of dark red at places after a rock fell on her off-track. Fortunately like all good club trips our one had a medical student included to clean up the blood.

The next few hours were spent pleasantly meandering from one side of the river to the other as we negotiated our way along a circuit in the gorge. At about 3 o'clock and many hours expecting the return road to appear in front of us it was discovered that we weren't going to make it back by nightfall. So, after a few of us fell in the river so that we'd be heavy enough to not enjoy a 200 metres vertical in 300 metres horizontal climb, we slowly crawled our way up



Gratuitous foreign daywalking territory  
— Dylan Shuttleowrth

the spur to the road, where much admiring of views and drinking of alcohol was had.

Dietmar and I then ran down the ridge further on into the gorge so we could pick up the others in the cars and go and have pizza. So, all in all, a 100% successful trip. 🍕

## Slush — anon.

"Well, we're both in bed, so you can come and play with us if you want."

"Grant is a hole magnet!"

"That's it Al finish it off, use your fingers, use your tongue, whatever it takes!"



# Cryptic Crossword

by Cameron Quinn and Alison Thompson.

This torturous creation is the result of several days stuck in Pioneer Hut (NZ). We've included at least one entry from each club activity, to encourage you all to socialize.

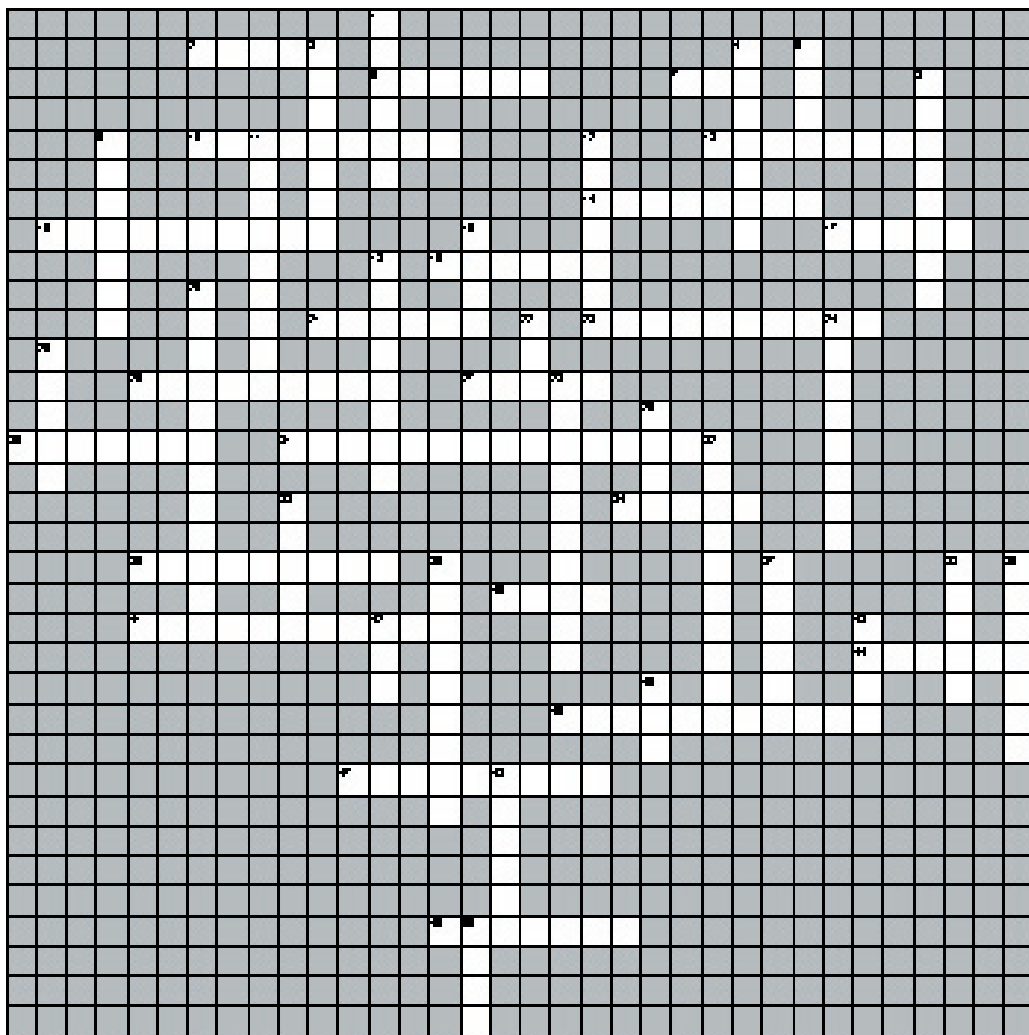
Through the warped logic of cryptic crosswords, each clue has two hints, one "ordinary" and one based on wordplay (eg anagrams). Have fun!

## Across

2. Who cares about an icy barrier? (5)
6. Scene of a Blue Mountains epic - anyone can tell you that! (6)
7. Mascot made of hugs and kisses (3)
10. Ian's after a sloping ramp to climb on (9)
13. Fast-flowing water destroyed main body (8)
14. A smaller boat in the spectrum (5-3)
15. A simple rat is puzzled, but popular with climbers (2,8)
17. See bread used for ascension (5)
19. Equestrian equipment lying between two hills (6)
21. To push yourself up on the Earth's interior (6)
23. Protruding from the roof, it lactates, maybe (10)
26. Bizarre sport played with a ring lost in sugar and a twisted loop (5,4)
27. A hesitant utterance inside a container will help you go up (5)
30. Chaos in Base Camp almost aided navigation in the rain (3,4)
31. Although garbled, his reply matters in fashion (7,8)
34. Injured pores can haul packs (5)
35. Messy snake tows anchor (4,5)
40. Top half of radio handy in a crack (4)
41. Make me a ball gown at the canyon exit (11)
44. Broken tool submerged in frozen water (3,3)
46. A pen Biggles lost keeps me warm at night (8,3)
47. A wart and a leech spin in the current (9)
49. Waterlogged tuxedo worn in Kelvinator (7)

## Down

1. In the Khumbu, changes created a caving site (6)
3. Police officer who disturbed communion aided navigation (7)
4. Professional parrot provides warmth (7)
5. Part of a quickdraw is an arthropod (4)
8. Honest, torn lingerie was in the river! (8)
9. Outdoor competition in the Iron Age (7)
11. Like lava, he can flow down a slope (9)
12. Early iterations shrouded by vapour keep out the snow (7)
16. A dark region made part of the evacuation team turn around (4)



Created with EclipseCrossword — [www.eclipsecrossword.com](http://www.eclipsecrossword.com)

18. In disguise, a big noun goes underground (8)
20. Ski run containing a dish and sharp knives (8,4)
22. Throwing up half a Big Mac is useful protection! (3)
24. Effortless turn makes a stain on the TV (8)
25. A vest is shredded to make footwear (5)
28. Nearly had to reach for it in the dark (1,4,5)
29. An uncertain roar makes you bounce off the walls (4)
32. Mites skirt around on skis (4,6)
33. Large hole atop fixed pro (5)
36. Dog noises followed completed item of clothing (9)
37. A mountain of moths (6)
38. Back to back Nepalese fauna often found in the water (5)
39. Fabric woven by a presidential candidate above Northern Texas (4-3)
42. The first of many scary rivers likely to explode (3)
43. Regal river (4)
45. Witch's curse also offers protection (3)
48. The patrons of the brothel met to provide protection (6)
50. A prince relaxed in still water (4)

## Win Prizes.

There is a prize to be won (tba, a voucher I think), to the first drawn correct entry. Crosswords in by 28th Oct for the draw.

Beyond that, there will be a prize for best article or photo in each subsequent edition. Get writing!

# Just ... resting — Laura Kneen

Once upon a time, a tired little bushwalker could honourably couple rest with the need to hydrate. However, now that Camelbacks (waterbottles with tubes to your mouth) have made drink stops redundant, countless OXOs are faced with the horrendous prospect of actually admitting that they are tired to get a rest. This plainly unacceptable situation cried out for a remedy, and now I present it to you:

## Ten Ways to Lose Your Pack, Without Losing Face:

**1. Pack badly.** Ensure that something vital is stashed right at the bottom of your pack. Stop, down packs and spend at least fifteen minutes fishing around for said item. Apply same excuse on regular intervals in relation to sunscreen, chocolate, raincoat etc...

**2. Bring along an unfit friend.** Make condescending remarks as he struggles up the slope. Roll your eyes at other groups members to ensure they know that you *could* sprint up this hill, but you're such a great friend that you'll stick with your mate. Or even ten metres behind, just to make him feel better.

**3. Feign injury.** Roll gasping on the ground, clutching nominated body part (ankles are particularly suitable). If you play your part well, this should result in widespread sympathy, people offering to carry various contents of your pack and, with any luck, an attractive group member comforting you. Milk situation to the full.

**4. Develop diarrhea.** Similar theory as above, except that diarrhea enables you to drop your pack and run off into the bush at any time you choose. Everyone will be too polite to comment.

**5. Use views wisely.** Everyone knows that you couldn't give a damn about any view except the campsite looming, but a pretended appreciation of nature can greatly extend rest stops. Vague remarks such as 'I could look at this lovely scenery all day,' should cover the fact that you are truly fantasising about ensuite hotel rooms with room service.

**6. Get tips from a climber.** These guys stop every time they reach a ledge *and* manage to look important by playing with lots of ropes and bits of metal. Or better yet, a mountaineer. The original gurus of resting, mountaineers

have been known to stay in the same spot for weeks simply because it was snowing outside.

**7. Be creative.** University should have taught you countless methods of procrastination by now. Apply them where they really count.



A pack not to lose? Selbs' anamalistic winner at the Pie'n Slide night.

**8. Get a manual camera.** Spend at least half an hour lying down fiddling with light readings, focal points and whatever else you can think of before taking each picture. Explain that your heavy breathing is a consequence of the intense cranial activity involved.

**9. Walk alone.** Rest whenever the hell you want.

*and last but not least...*

**10. Do not, for any reason, be fooled into buying a fricking Camelback!** Put your pack down, get out your water bottle and rest in the good old-fashioned way. 🏔️

I hope you've enjoyed my first Mountaineer. If you didn't like anything (not enough articles/photos about sport X, please feel free to contribute to the next edition. Back page photo is of Dimi carrying his skis, by Matt Jepperson.





