



THE
MOUNTAINEER
AUGUST 2011



THE MOUNTAINEER

AUGUST 2011



JOURNAL OF THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

CONTENTS

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----|--|----|---|
| 3 | Presidential Decree | 8 | No Pain, No Gain
EMILY FRENCH | 22 | Wombats and Weirs
SALLY HIGGINS |
| 4 | Editors' Bit | 9 | Malte Brun
STU HOLLAWAY | 27 | A Buller Epic
GAETAN RIOU |
| 4 | Announcements | 13 | Profile: Jim Newlands
CHELSEA EAW | 31 | The Mathematics of Cams
THARATORN SUPASITI |
| 5 | From Our Club Convenors | 17 | Folio: Tasmania
MARK PATTERSON & CARLOS CORREA GREZ | 34 | To MUMC, With Love
PAULA ROOSEDAHL |
| | | 21 | Kiewa Country: the Obsession
TIM CARTER | | |

COVER

Approaching Gillespie's Pass (Mt Awful in the background) on the second day of the Wilkin-Young Circuit, New Zealand. This photo was taken on the day Eng Wu 'Egg' Ong died. *Photo by Dale Thistlethwaite*

ABOVE

Daniel Berton creates the first snow angel of the season on Mt Feathertop's Northern Razorback, the route of choice on the MUMC Hut kegger trip in May this year. *Photo by Alex Thompson*



ANDY GREEN
President

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE

HAVING NOW SERVED THREE years as either President or Vice-President of this club, it is with some perspective that I write about its prospects for the future.

The world around the club is changing. We all know that one day we will revel in telling our kids that we did our homework in a library, not on the Internet. However, easy and almost instantaneous access to the world's knowledge is something humanity has little experience with. We have similarly little experience with the seeming absence of a need to plan, made possible by the mobile phone. Living in a highly successful era makes instant gratification readily available and risk seem remote and inconsequential.

Yet commitment to adventure is the hallmark of MUMC. Without that commitment, the club might not exist. Why, after all, should I join an outdoors club when I can simply look up online where to go climbing and how to do it? Why join a club when online social networking has made it easy to find a climbing partner without even leaving the couch? And, when I can simply call my partner when I want to go, why should I even bother to plan?

Despite my concerns, I am proud to say that interest in the club has grown, not diminished, in my tenure. Membership this year is almost double that when I joined. And, if the number of people in the clubrooms on a Tuesday night is any indication, there are more regular attendees than were present on some of the most popular nights four years ago.

But we should be wary. I see no one in the club with the level of commitment that saw our Memorial Hut built on Mt Feathertop. Is such commitment, like the days before the Internet, to become myth and legend?

Even in this new world of social networking and easy success, a club such as ours can have great value. But that value is limited by the dedication of the club's leaders and members.

Planning is a sign of commitment. Plan an adventure for yourself and the club!

CONTACTING THE EDITOR
For questions about this publication or the contents thereof:
Publications Officer
publications@mumc.org.au

MUMC ONLINE
Full colour PDF versions of current and past editions of *The Mountaineer*, as well as information about the club and how to join, can be found on the website:
www.mumc.org.au

MEETINGS & GENERAL ENQUIRIES
Regular meetings are held at the MUMC clubrooms each Tuesday at 7pm.
For specific questions about the club, contact the club secretary:
secretary@mumc.org.au

MAILING ADDRESS
MUMC
c/o MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY SPORT
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
PARKVILLE VIC 3010
AUSTRALIA

EDITORS' BIT

Publications Officer Richard Sota

publications@mumc.org.au



Welcome to the August edition of *The Mountaineer* for 2011, and my final as Publications Officer. In fact, I've had very little to do with this edition as Chelsea Eaw most graciously agreed to take control in June while I traipsed around Europe and stressed over the start of my final uni semester. Chelsea has subsequently been elected as the new Publications Officer, and she along with a hardworking team (Emily French and Krissie Piskorz) have produced a wonderful edition that maintains the high standard that *The Mountaineer* has come to achieve.

In spite of its relatively low circulation, our club's magazine has some very important roles. From a historical perspective, it serves to document the amazing trips and events that we enjoy in the present time for others to look back upon in the future. If you have a chance, take the time to check out some of the old editions of *The Mountaineer* in the club archives where there's a treasure-trove of incredible adventures and trip reports from past members.

And from an advertising perspective, the magazine promotes the club's activities to new and future members, and allows them to see, through its photos, some of the personalities that make the club the diverse melting pot that it is. My first impressions of the club came via *The Mountaineer* when I downloaded it from the club's website all those years ago, and was convinced to come along and check out a club meeting...

A big thanks goes out to everyone who has submitted great content over the years, making it easier to create great editions. I am honoured to have contributed to the long history of *The Mountaineer*, and wish Chelsea every success as the next Publications Officer.

Editor Chelsea Eaw

The Mountaineer August 2011



Flipping through a tatty old *Rock* magazine produces a flurry of emotions for me: the cloud of dust (and sometimes chalk) induces a fit of involuntary wheezing; the outdated '90s graphics that I'm never sure if I hate or love; but mostly it leads to an upward curl at the end of my lip—a knowing smile, which is the result of spying a photograph of some Aussie character, clad in the hideous fashion of the day, pulling some god-awful move in an outrageous position.

Today it is a photo of Malcolm 'HB' Matheson, 'resting' on the first ascent of Mussolini (28) on the North Wall of Buffalo Gorge—all you can see are his legs and his arse (of course, he's wearing short shorts...) for his head and shoulders are completely swallowed by the square-cut recess he's resting in.

The photo kindles a feeling of admiration and fondness—admiration for the feat and fondness for our local legends. Without magazines like *Rock*, Australia's adventurous past would largely be forgotten—celebrated only by those with a tendency to prattle on by a dying campfire.

Such is the legacy of our own rag, *The Mountaineer*. Australia's first organised rockclimbing was instigated by this very club, and along the course of its history, the club's publications have been there to record every step. It is a privilege to contribute to such a historic magazine, and I owe every thanks to the people who have allowed me to do it.

Editorial Team

The Mountaineer August 2011

Richard Sota, Chelsea Eaw, Emily French and Krissie Piskorz.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In August 2011's AGM, the proposed constitutional changes were passed and took effect immediately, meaning the structure of the committee has changed, going forward. The newly elected committee are as follows:

President: Tanya Craig
Vice-president: Simona John von Freyend
Secretary: Emma Harold
Treasurer: Shannon Crack

Walking Sports Officer: Luke Gogolkiewicz
Rope Sports Officer: Sean Ladiges
Paddling Sports Officer: Ben Webb
Snow Sports Officer: OPEN
Mountaineering Officer: Dale Thistlethwaite
Conservation Officer: Josh Howie
Publications Officer: Chelsea Eaw

General members: Aaron Lowndes
Mitchell Stephen

FROM OUR CLUB CONVENORS

Rockclimbing

Aaron Lowndes

rockclimb@mumc.org.au



Rockclimbing. Such a daunting concept. In fact I think most non-climbers only give it a passing consideration: 'People must be crazy to do that', 'It's dangerous' and 'Nah, I couldn't do that'. Of course we all know better, but this perspective has not changed much at all, despite the explosive growth in the sport's popularity over the last couple of decades.

This popular perspective is the reason I set a simple, straightforward aim for this year: to ensure that the sport is more accessible and less daunting than ever before. Have we achieved that goal? I think the answer is a resounding yes. And it would not have been possible were it not for the enthusiastic involvement from a lot of members, both new and old.

Here is a short summary of the year: the beginning of the year is always the busiest for rockclimbing—it's summer and outdoor climbing is much more accessible. Along with a slew of one-day beginner outdoor trips (the late Eng Wu 'Egg' Ong ran a lot of these last year, and it's great to see that many others have stepped up to do the same this year in his place). We had two beginner weekends to the Grampians and a large leaders-only trip to Nowra at Easter. I ran a successful three-part 'Learn to Lead' course with the aim of increasing the club's 'advanced leader' numbers, which we have done.

In winter, indoor climbing is much more active and the Melbourne Rockclimbing Facebook group (thanks, Julian Berton) was the simple solution that we all needed for finding partners. As a result, as someone has commented, you can walk into any of Melbourne's five climbing gyms on any given night of the week and you are highly likely to meet an MUMC member already there. I also note that many of the climbers who started only this year have now become 'known names' around the Melbourne rockclimbing scene this year—also great to see.

The Victorian Intersarsity Climbing Competition was held at Bayside Rock in May—in the MUMC clubrooms you can now view the trophy that we (of course!) won. I also want to point out Róisín Briscoe's outstanding performance at the event—she obliterated the competition to come away first in the women's category. Well done, Róisín!

It is great to see more beginners taking part—and sticking with—the sport this year. I also notice there is a much larger ratio of girls now, and I have definitely seen more female leaders (and lead climbers) helping to introduce others into the sport. That helps a lot and I look forward to the trend continuing into the new year.

Canoe Polo

Emma Bland

polo@mumc.org.au



It has been a steady year for canoe polo. MUMC has both novice and experienced players competing regularly in the Melbourne competition series organised by Victorian Canoe Polo. The team, 'OXO', is doing well as they begin their second season in the novice grade. In addition to this, several MUMC members are playing for a variety of teams in C grade. It's worth noting too that MUMC continues to be the only university club that enters teams in Victorian Canoe Polo competitions. During the year we have also organised friendly matches against La Trobe and Monash universities—these matches saw a number of past polo players get back in their boats.

It would be good to see more cross-over between canoe polo and white-water kayaking—in other words, more canoe polo players testing their skills on the river and more white-water paddlers trying out canoe polo: an exciting competitive sport. This would make better use of all our opportunities for skill development and paddling practice, especially when river levels are low, which is, after all, the reason why MUMC recognises canoe polo as one of its official activities.

Rogaining

Tanya Craig

rogaine@mumc.org.au



This year saw the introduction of the first GPS rogaine, which was avoided by MUMCers who felt that it missed the point of navigation (regardless, at least the volunteers at the Victorian Rogaining Association are keeping us on our toes).

Congratulations, to Alaster Meehan for his many top-three placings, including a first, in June's six-hour event, and to Aaron Lowndes for setting up a photogaine for a good cause.

A big thanks is owed to all those who volunteered at the 24-hour event in May and to all those who are volunteering in September for the second 24-hour event of the year. Thanks also to James Cristofaro for so willingly helping out with trip meetings and rogainer education.

FROM OUR CLUB CONVENORS

Bushwalking Mitchell Stephen

bushwalk@mumc.org.au



In the previous edition of The Mountaineer I expressed my view that Mt Feathertop was the core pillar of strength for bushwalking at MUMC. While I still hold that view, there is another aspect of the club that is equally important: its members. This year the club has seen a number of new members becoming very active bushwalkers in terms of both participation and leadership.

It is terrific to note that interest in trips did not peak immediately after O-Week and then nose dive to a level that would indicate that bushwalkers hibernate over winter. Instead there was sustained interest all throughout semester. Almost every weekend there was a trip—which was one of my goals as bushwalking convenor—and I can count at least four weekends when we had two bushwalking trips running simultaneously! The energy and excitement that has surrounded trips is fantastic and has led to many interesting and challenging trips.

Over the last five months we have had trips covering many areas of Victoria and a number of forays interstate. A few adventurous highlights include: a mid-winter traverse from Mt Feathertop to Mt Bogong, alternative off-track routes out of Lake Tali Karng, an ambitious attempt to complete the entire Australian Alps Walking Track in stages, an off-track slog out of the Wonnangatta Valley that incorporated walking six kilometres up a stream, a warm-up on a 1:4 gradient spur for 800 metres and then an even steeper climb up to the plateau: a 1:2 gradient slope for 600 metres that involved some serious scrambling. My convenor photo features apples from a tree we found in the valley—probably the best apples I have ever tasted!

I must thank all of our members who have participated on, helped run and lead these bushwalking trips. It would be impossible for me as convenor to have run all of these trips by myself—I would have burnt out halfway through the first semester. But more so, it would have meant the sport suffered, since fewer people would have gained experience in leading trips. People learn and improve by being challenged. I believe it is advisable for experienced walkers to take a step back on trips and let those newer to the sport take the lead—that way they learn from their mistakes and then get a broader perspective of running a trip.

Overall it has been a terrific semester and I look forward to the adventurous trips that you have in mind for the near future. But I couldn't conclude without a mention to the team who brewed another keg for this year's Midnight Ascent—thank you very much!

Mountaineering Dale Thistlethwaite

alpinism@mumc.org.au



For the second year in a row the usually quiet winter mountaineering season has seen plenty of activity. This year MUMC facilitated the offering of two guided instruction trips for members at discounted rates. The two trips, run back-to-back in the first two weeks of July and based out of Wanaka (in NZ's South Island), had complementary goals, with the first focusing on ski skills and avalanche awareness, and the second a guided ski-tour designed to provide some more extended adventures. MUMC members Helen Dulfer and Dan Marshman both attended the first week, gaining their Mountain Safety Council Backcountry Avalanche Awareness Course certificate of completion, with Helen staying on for the ski-tour that culminated in a three-day trip to the Two Thumb Range.

In addition to these trips, there will be another eight-day course providing an introduction to summer mountaineering running from 21–29 January. Member interest in this course has been strong—if you are keen, make sure you get in contact with me before 31 August.

For those interested in mountaineering there are several events coming up later in the year. On a date yet to be confirmed (watch the website) will be the mountaineering info evening. This evening will provide a discussion of what to expect in your first season, what gear you'll need, how to organise a trip and what preparation you should undertake beforehand. There will also be a slide show to help inspire everyone for the coming season. In addition, on the 22–23 October weekend, there will be a pre-alpine instruction weekend. The weekend will be run by myself and Stu Hollaway for MUMC and NZAC members and will cover a range of alpine climbing techniques and considerations for those heading over in the summer to ensure you make the most of your time in the mountains. It's also a great opportunity to meet other keen mountaineers. If you have any questions please email me at alpinism@mumc.org.au

FROM OUR CLUB CONVENORS

Skiing Jeremy Walthert

ski@mumc.org.au



Are you sick of spending another boring weekend in the city? Do you often wonder if there is something more to your life in Melbourne? And have you ever thought: 'I'm sick of all my usual procrastination methods'? If you answered 'Yes' to any of these questions, then you need the experts from the MUMC ski department to help immediately!

We offer a unique, personalised and often totally awesome escape from the everyday mundane by strapping skis onto our feet and going cross-country. The ski store has everything you need to try out this ancient sport. But there are a few items you need to own yourself: modern wools, polypropylenes, wind-breakers, and Gore-tex will be your closest companions on the trails, and are thankfully far more user friendly than the reindeer clothing used by Sami folk who used their skiing skills for hunting. These light-weight and essential clothes can be layered, letting you strip off when things heat up...

Trips happen whenever there is good snow combined with fair weather. Trips get planned the Tuesday before the weekend—if you have never skied before, start with a beginner day trip, which are usually run around June and July. If you're really unsure about what to expect, talk to the skiing convenor or another member of the club and let the life-changing adventures begin.

Conservation Josh Howie

conservation@mumc.org.au



Club members attended both weekends of checking nest-boxes near Benalla during March and April, and all saw Squirrel Gliders in nest-boxes on at least one of the days. One group even managed to find a few Sugar Gliders. This nest-box checking is part of the Regent Honeyeater Project, for which we have supplied volunteers over a number of years now. We will be running multiple trips up to Benalla for tree-planting during August and September. These tree-planting trips are great fun, with free food, great community atmosphere and a party on the Saturday night.

It is a very busy planting season this year. We recently participated in the Grow West Community Planting Day near Bacchus Marsh, and there is an upcoming tree-planting trip to Little Desert, once again offering free food and good times.

We have also been working with VNPA on their grasslands conservation projects. We spent one day in April setting up a new site for monitoring Murnong (or Plains Yam Daisy) at Kalkallo—there will be trips throughout the rest of the year to continue this work and to monitor the Golden Sun Moth, Striped Legless Lizard and Growling Grass Frog.

Kayaking Ben Webb

paddle@mumc.org.au



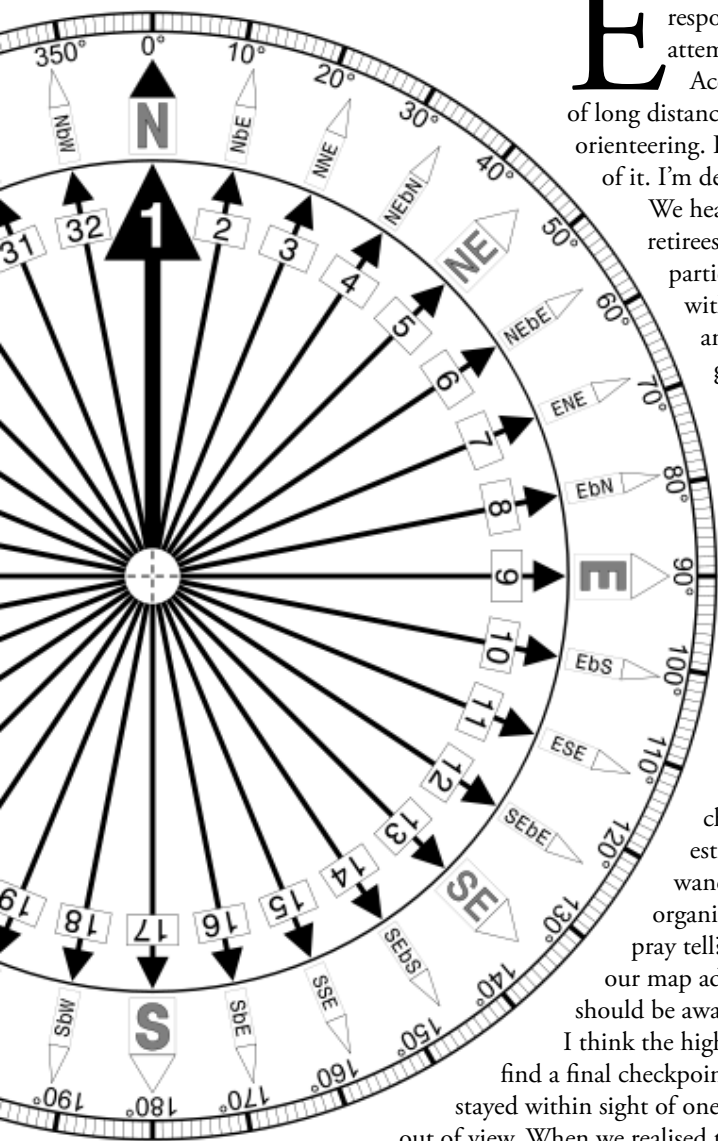
What a year for MUMC kayaking! We have seen a great deal more rain than any years in recent memory, and as such a whole new kayaking crew has come out of the woodwork. We have consistently been (and still are) working on skills, skills and more skills; building up experience wherever we can. Now that the main paddling season is upon us, it is time to put them to good use! With many successful (albeit out-of-season assaults) on the Mitchell, Avon, Thomson and King rivers, we are looking forward to running these rivers again at higher, more adrenaline-pumping levels. We also have ambitions of running the Mitta Mitta and the Snowy. Our core group of paddlers have skill sets that are maturing, and these paddlers are getting to a stage where they will be confident in leading trips, which will open up a whole new bunch of opportunities for beginners wishing to get involved.

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

ROGAINING

Rogaining rookie Emily French tells us about her first-ever rogaining experience in the spider-infested forests of Castlemaine

BY EMILY FRENCH



EVERY TIME I INFORMED people of my upcoming rogaine trip, the consistent response was: 'What the hell is rogaining?' Even as I typed that word, Microsoft attempted to change it to 'regaining'. That's how little known this activity is.

According to the Australian Rogaining Association, 'Rogaining is the sport of long distance cross-country navigation'. Or, as I told everyone who asked, it's basically orienteering. In fact, I'm pretty sure it is orienteering. If there is a difference, I am ignorant of it. I'm definitely going to get abused when someone in the club actually reads this.

We headed out to a place called Castlemaine, where a strange mix of scarily fit retirees and students with nothing better to do on a Saturday had congregated to participate in the rogaine. My team consisted of myself, Shane Dawson and Lu Li with only Shane having rogained before. I had embraced my competitive side and attempted to convince my team members before we set off that we were going to run and make a serious effort to win the novice section.

As 10am loomed, participants congregated in a small cordoned-off area to be read the rules and regulations of rogaining. When the klaxon sounded, the competitive people ducked under the tape and streaked off. Our team attempted to follow suit and for a short time we kept up an admirable jog. However, as our path took us off the track and into the bush, I ran straight into a spider's web and completely freaked out.

The spiders were huge, and I am not being British about this. Big, scary-ass Orb-Weaver spiders hung between every tree in the vicinity. My plans of running almost immediately fell by the wayside as we surveyed our surroundings with wussy expressions, picked up large sticks and walked tentatively forward waving them in front of our faces. Bush-bashing was not going to be speedy.

As it turned out, neither was finding our checkpoints. While rogaining is challenging and definitely good fun, apparently I suck at it. I definitely underestimated my ability to be walking within 20 metres of a checkpoint and still wander blindly past it. Our group even struggled to find the water station, which organisers insisted was located right in the middle of the bloody path. Which path, pray tell? About halfway through our rogaine Lu noticed that (in rather small print) our map admitted that there were a number of unmarked tracks on the route and we should be aware that it couldn't always be considered accurate. Great.

I think the high point for all of us, though, was when we made one last-ditch attempt to find a final checkpoint and decided (sensibly) to split up for the briefest of moments. Shane and I stayed within sight of one another. Lu, on the other hand, went wandering over a hill and completely out of view. When we realised this, a lot of panicked shouting commenced and for a short while I seriously

thought we were going to have to return to the starting point and confess we had lost one of our teammates. Fortunately, Lu heard our bellows and turned back.

Unfortunately, this delay to our return meant that, although we ran, we were just under two minutes late getting back to the starting point. Twenty points were deducted from what was no doubt an already very modest score.

We were comforted, however, by the sight of some well-deserved post-rogaine nosh. On offer was a fantastic supply of barbeque fare, stew, pasta and soup for us to enjoy. I insisted that we couldn't grab our food until we had found out our results and was proud to discover that we were even more awful at rogaining than I would have guessed. Our result was 81st place out of 89 teams!

Despite what we may have failed to rack up in checkpoints, it was unanimously concurred amongst our group that if we were being judged purely on distance travelled, our team definitely would have kicked butt. At one point, we realised we had walked in completely the wrong direction and almost wandered straight off the map. Now that's covering ground for you. ☘

MALTE BRUN

BY STU HOLLAWAY

Stu Hollaway reflects on recent and past adventures on one of the classic peaks of New Zealand's Southern Alps >



I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN KEEN on climbing Malte Brun. The red giant that towers between the Tasman and Murchison glaciers is a storied peak in New Zealand's climbing history.

It was the first three-thousander (or ten-thousander as they were in the imperial units) to be climbed when Tom Fyfe—one of the world's first great rockclimbers—made his paradigm-shifting solo up and down the northwest face.

On the descent, he traversed into a couloir low on the face, hoping for fast travel back to the glacier. Downclimbing steep snow, he heard rockfall high above and, seeing the rocks sweep into the couloir above him, he realised that the narrow funnel offered him neither shelter nor chance of escape. Fyfe threw himself headfirst down the slope in a deadly race for the glacier; he recalled seeing the dark gulf of the bergschrund flash below him as he was launched out of the bottom of the couloir and hearing the whining stones hammer into the snow around him as he slid out across the neve. Returning to the De La Beche bivvy rock that afternoon, he left his entry in the logbook: *played lone hand and won.*

The classic route on Malte—the West Ridge—was opened by Freda Du Faur. It was the climb that convinced Peter Graham that she was ready to attempt Aoraki/Mt Cook and together they climbed it via Earl's Route in record time shortly afterwards. The good rock, the big peak atmosphere and the outrageous positions on the immediately famous 'cheval' pitch made it the great prize of Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park alongside any ascent—always a coveted prize—of Aoraki.

The excellent access up the road to the Ball Hut and then a few hours across the glacier to Malte Brun Hut reinforced its position as the classic high-guiding route of the park. (Fyfe led the first ascent of Aoraki 1894; its 100th ascent came 60 years later. In contrast, Harry Ayres guided 40 ascents of Malte Brun's West Ridge. Despite being the pre-eminent climber of his era, chief guide and founding chief ranger of the Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park, Ayres made about a dozen ascents of Aoraki during the same period.)

The access has deteriorated as the glaciers have retreated, but the peak has continued to attract climbers and ongoing route development, offering adventure but extracting a toll in sweat and blood.

'... the peak has continued to attract climbers and ongoing route development, offering adventure but extracting a toll in sweat and blood.'

I CAMPED AT MALTE BRUN Pass on my first trip into the hills. We climbed the North Ridge of the Aiguilles Rouge; our first alpine summit. It was a magnificent day

with the South Face of Malte Brun imposingly close and we were surrounded by great peaks to dream of climbing. We considered trying for Malte's South Ridge but the weather was starting to change, so we headed down to Beetham Hut. The most recent entry in the hut book was from the Mt Cook SAR team collecting the personal equipment of Jim Le Grice, who had been killed in a fall from the South Ridge the previous day.

The next summer I attempted Malte from the north, struggling up an unclimbed buttress out on the North East Ridge. We were too



Anthea Fisher downclimbing past the schrund and back to the glacier (previous page).

Anthea unroped on steep, sound rock. We put the rope on for several short pitches just above this point and abseiled this on the descent (opposite).

Anthea found getting onto the cheval so awkward that she wound up riding it backwards (above).

Stu Hollaway under his bivvy rock in the morning (right).



late and too slow, enduring a gearless bivvy high on the mountain before retreating down our route, with a couple of scary abseils, and slogging through the night back to Kelman Hut.

A couple of years later I spent a beautiful night bivvied in the Beetham Valley (the hut had been destroyed by an avalanche the previous winter) to solo the mountain, but turned back from the base of the ridge as everything above 2500 metres was still pasted with snow. On the walk out I met up with an all-women's instruction course and got a lift out the road with them—disappointingly I can't say that this is a story in itself.



THIS JANUARY ANTHEA

Fisher and I had a few days off and the promise of a small spell of good weather. A cheap chopper flight filling up the seats in a scenic took most of the work out of our first day, which was a few hours of mostly straightforward travel with just a bit of weaving through a couple of icefalls in the Bonney Glacier to reach the Malte-Bonney Col, where we set up our tent and lounged on the rocks and enjoyed the view: Malte overhead, its West Ridge a beautiful red arc of rock, and the ice peaks of the Main Divide etched against the sunset.

At 2am I thought we had been skunked. Gale and storm-force winds battered the tent and we pretty much gave up on the idea of the climb as the winds had been forecast to arrive in the early afternoon and rise to 140 kilometres per hour. The winds dropped about 7am and, after they stayed down for a while, we decided we would stick our necks out and give it a go.

We start up at 9am and it is outrageous fun. Gaining the rib from the glacier is casual, we run out a few short pitches up the steepest section before putting the rope away and romping up fantastic steep scrambling to gain the ridge proper, where we turn left and head across and up in rising winds.

The ridge keeps narrowing and we swing back and forwards, following the easiest travel as it becomes ever more exposed. We balance

along a thin, steep slab, which we think might be the cheval. We complete a wild hand traverse section, which we are sure is the cheval.

When we reach the cheval, there is no confusion: it is a ludicrous proposition. With considerable hesitation, I assume the position.

Across the cheval the ridge broadens and we rush upwards in the chilling wind. After a brief snack and photos of the growing clouds, we head back down. In the buffeting wind we are now both fans of the 'au cheval' technique—it is quick and super secure (if a bit hard on the pants) to straddle the ridge and shuffle along.

The views on the descent are even better because the Tasman Glacier and the great peaks are in front of us as we charge down. The climb is unbroken fun. A few abseils down the steepest section and we are back on the glacier and trotting back to our kit at the bivvy site for a big 3pm lunch.

Three abseils from the col get us to the Malte Glacier: a few crevasse jumps and a couple of hours tramping get us into the Beetham Valley where we spend a great night under a giant boulder. It rains lightly through much of the night and into the morning.

It has been an outstanding climb and neither of us feel like suffering, so we make our way out onto the white ice of the Tasman, where we hack out a flattening for the chopper and mark the ice with rocks and raspberry tea. Mark nudges his chopper up the valley through the drizzle under thick grey cloud and we are suddenly hurtling back to the airport.

Working on the SAR team, Anthea is living in the house originally built for Harry Ayres as the first Chief Ranger. We have been away only 48 hours—mountaineering at its most fun. It is the end of a mixed summer for me: there has been wonder and there has been death. On the comfy chairs at The Hermitage we drink Pelorus and revel in the beauty of it all. ☘



Anthea Fisher coming down the upper ridge with the summit beyond (above).

PROFILE: JIM NEWLANDS

There was a time when first ascents were
done in sneakers, nuts were homemade and
bold lines hadn't fallen—Jim Newlands
enlightens us

BY CHELSEA EAW
PHOTOGRAPHY FROM
THE NEWLANDS COLLECTION

FOR SOME MUMCERS, Jim Newlands' name may ring a bell. You may have seen it in an email, overheard it in the clubrooms—but most likely you will have spied it engraved on our Honorary Life Member board.

Despite being a ripe 69 years old, Jim has not let life get the better of him. Age has a habit of robbing people of youth, vigour and even personality—but it has not withered away Jim's humour and tendency to talk (a lot). Jim has been known to chew the ear off many an MUMCER, but when I visited Jim at his home in Vermont he was bashful and bewildered at why on earth anyone would want to interview him.

The answer is obvious. If you're certain you've seen Jim Newlands' name elsewhere, you are correct. Pick up an Arapiles guide and leaf through the pages around the Bard Buttress, the Organ Pipes and the Flight Deck and you will find his name in fine print under a number of popular climbs.

Without a doubt, Jim Newlands is best known for his first ascent of the Bard (12), an Arapiles route that climbs the imposing buttress easily seen from the campground. Few

people who climb regularly at Araps wouldn't know the Bard; it is undoubtedly a classic.

What is impressive about this feat is not necessarily its difficulty—it is the circumstances under which it was undertaken. Jim

'There was no gear to have. You're tied on with a waist-loop. The rope tied around your middle. You didn't have the harnesses—they came much later.'

and his partner, Bruce Hocking, protected the entire climb with little more than three pitons and some slings. And Bruce was wearing Dunlop Volleys. They weren't being reckless; it was simply 1965.

'We just didn't have gear,' Jim recalls. 'There was no gear to have. You're tied on

with a waist-loop. The rope tied around your middle. You didn't have the harnesses—they came much later.

'Gear was scarce,' Jim continues. 'There was only one shop bringing karabiners in, and that was Auski. Tony—he used to be called the rook man. He used to charge everybody double price. You know, according to him, if you were a university student you would get discounts. But, oh no, not on this line, he'd say. Bloody farce!' Jim chuckles at the memory.

'I think we started making our own jam-nuts by taking different sized, you know, nuts, and filling them out,' Jim recalls. 'I was lucky because as a science teacher at McKinnon I had access to all sorts of aluminium shapes, which we purloined [he chuckles again].'

It wasn't to be the only time Jim employed both theft and creativity to protect a climb. One of the greatest—but little-known—MUMC (and general Victorian climbing) stories must be the one about Jim Newlands stealing wooden off-cuts from the Natimuk pub to protect the first (aid) ascent of Orestes (23 or M4, 19).

When asked to verify the story, Jim answers resolutely: 'Yeah, we did! I had a Swiss army knife, and we shaped the off-cuts that night after we'd been to the pub. I said, John [Bennett]! Look at this! They're the *ideal* width! And we took them away, shaped them and then bored a hole so that we could put a rope through and bash them in. That's true. They were lying on the ground—why ask permission when you can slip them into your pocket?'

In typical Jim Newlands humour, when asked why they named the climb Orestes, Jim responds: 'For for two reasons: one, Orestes was part of the Atridae [the name of the area in which the climb is located], and we also had lots of "resties" on the way up!'



IN ALL SERIOUSNESS, Jim had an eye for searing lines: Orestes, the Bard... Jim was also the first to lead the overhangs direct on the notorious D Minor (14) in the Organ Pipes at Arapiles. Despite being an 'easy' climb at grade 14, D Minor has a sad history of injuries and death—leading the overhangs on minimal gear back then would have been a bold endeavour, as most things in the '60s would have been.

Even today, anyone who has been foolish enough to take on the Bard's dicky traverse has probably found themselves midway across—with their elbows below their knees, their head swallowed in the horizontal break, unable to see what they are doing or where they are going—wondering whose stupid idea it was to take up rockclimbing. Now imagine doing it 50 years ago without the assurance of modern gear.

First ascents can be loaded with uncertain-

ty: you wouldn't know (for sure) how difficult the climb would be, if the holds would suddenly peter out, if you would abruptly come across a stopper move or run out of gear. Scaling anything previously unclimbed would take guts. Or stupidity.

With Jim, I would like to think it is the former. Jim strikes me as a man interested in many things. Throughout his interview he cited Shakespeare and Greek tragedy numerous times; he talked about his love for photographing plants and his time as a schoolteacher. In fact he admitted that climbing wasn't—as it can be for many climbers—an

‘
...leading the overhangs
on minimal gear back then
would have been a bold
endeavour, as most things
in the '60s would have
,
been.

all-consuming obsession. It was just one of the things he did. It was probably Jim's broad talents; his interest in life and his surroundings that saw him take to climbing. And that he happened to be around in the '60s also likely played a role in allowing him to accomplish what he did in so short a time.



JIM'S ANTICS WEREN'T limited to our beloved Victorian crags. One of Jim's other

grand adventures was his ascent of Tasmania's Federation Peak—a serious undertaking even today. Jim and his team's ascent would have been about the third. What's more, in addition to 55 kilograms of gear, Jim lugged up a 16-millimetre camera and 300 metres of film. 'They were for the department of film production,' Jim explains. 'They wanted a film of the ascent. And unfortunately we couldn't help them. I mean, we were too busy climbing.'

The adventure led to what must be one of Jim's most memorable abseils. Descending from Federation Peak's Blade Ridge, the person who was supposed to rap off last decided he wanted to be lowered down. So he was, and Jim was left standing on the cliff thinking, 'He's taken all the bloody gear with him!' Jim ended up taking a loop out of his boot—which, he says, was always laced with Venetian blind cord—and wrapped it around a small tree or shrub about six times. And then he abseiled off his shoelace.

It was on Federation Peak that Jim reckons he first met Olegas Truchanas, a well-known photographer whose images played a huge role in raising awareness for the campaign against damming Tasmania's Lake Pedder. Olegas and his protégé Peter Dombrovskis heavily influenced Jim's plant photography.



PLANTS, NATURE AND conservation seem to be Jim's other interests. He speaks strongly about his feelings toward cattle in the High Country, and in recent years he has grown native pine seedlings on his own property for planting at Mt Arapiles—Tooan State Park one day. 'That's where they grew,' he says, pointing out the window. 'Up there

in that plastic. As soon as the ranger gets his act together, he'll send me down some more. We took 450 plants up and potted them all into bigger pots and had them looked after up there. Noddy Lockwood and Doc Sutherland were the ones who looked after them. Then they planted them out.'

Clearly Jim does have a serious side, despite being known for his humour. 'If there's an issue that he gets involved with, then he puts his heart and soul into it,' says John Bennett, an ex-MUMC member and climbing partner of Jim's. 'He does seem to be full of social conscience in that regard.'

It is incredible that Jim is still—speaking relatively—heavily involved in conservation at Arapiles and in our club's anniversary dinners. Jim joined MUMC in the early 1960s—that's nearly 50 years ago. During that time, despite life's tendency to present paths leading away from the outdoors, Jim has managed to hold on to MUMC; a club that must mean something to him.

For some people, MUMC is simply a club you join in first year and forget about in years to come. For others, MUMC is more than that. Jim's best man at his wedding was a fellow MUMC member. What's more, Jim talks about his MUMC experiences as if they happened yesterday—for him to be able to recall memories from all those years ago with such clarity; they must have been some of the most memorable years of his life.

It could be that Jim's involvement with the club and planting trees at Arapiles are his way of giving back, although it seems like Jim has always been a do-gooder. As John Bennett recalls, 'He's a sort of behind-the-scenes operator in a lot of ways. He's quite a determined character, but doesn't make a big fuss about getting jobs done.'



Jim radios a fellow MUMC member on an early Federation Peak trip (above).

PHOTO FROM THE NEWLANDS COLLECTION

As such, propagating seedlings for Arapiles is probably something Jim does for no other reason than to do something useful. But I have always thought that planting trees is a beautiful thing. Some seedlings are doomed to fail against our harsh summers in the Wimmera, but others struggle on, flourishing into the friendly shape of a native pine. These survivors are a poignant reminder of somebody's devotion to the bush; a legacy that will, with any luck, last for generations. Jim's native pines are one part of the relatively small, but notable contribution he's made to MUMC, Arapiles, climbing and Victoria. And I am sure that when he reads this, he will insist that others should be credited too. That may be true, but it doesn't make Jim's efforts any less significant. ☘

An excerpt from the 1978 Arapiles guidebook by Keith Lockwood...

Orestes 40m M4,19

'When Jim Newlands did a new route, there was no half measure. This lead vies with Bard for sheer boldness: loose rock, decaying pegs and exposure combine to make it rudely thrilling. (1) 20m Insecure aids up the giant yellow corner, to a belay ledge off right. Escape is possible from here. (2) 20m Reverse back into the corner-crack which leads to the top. Jim Newlands, John Bennett Oct. 1966. Glenn Tempest freed pitch two in August 1976.'

—Page 31

Other Tales...

Port in the Grampians

Probably the most amusing Newlands story ever. Somewhere in the heart of the Grampians' Victoria Valley—en route to the Fortress, an unmistakable block that makes up part of the Victoria Range—three flagons of port lie hidden awaiting discovery. They were planted there by a youthful Jim Newlands, in case of a war. We asked Jim for the whereabouts of the flagons, but Jim's response was vague. Alas, the port remains at large.

Going to the toilet on Federation

Jim: 'When we were doing Federation [Peak], the weather was so bad that, to go to the toilet, you had to tie on to a climbing rope to go out, and somebody had to hold you. And then you'd expose your derriere over the 2000-foot face; 1000-foot drop. You're hanging on for grim death. It was pretty bad.'

First night ascent at Arapiles

If Jim's memory serves, the first night ascent at Arapiles was done by MUMC members. They were the first by a hair's breadth. You see, MUMC were at Arapiles with Monash University on a joint trip for the first time, ever. On the night they arrived at the Pines, a rumour was leaked:

'Jenny McMahon said to me, "You gonna let those bastards steal a march on us?" And I says, "What do you mean?" "Oh, they're gonna put up the first night ascent while the OXOs are asleep." So I said, "All right, here's the headtorch." They ended up climbing Diapason (8).

MUMC's first experience at Arapiles

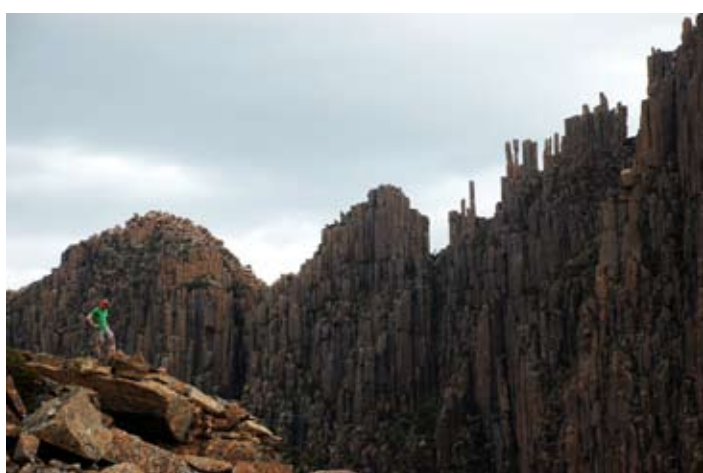
MUMC's first trip to Arapiles almost ended in a catastrophe. Rumour has it that a group of MUMCers mistakenly camped at Arapiles' summit. Blinded by the night they had little idea of where they were. In the morning they discovered they'd erected their tent a few metres from a 100-metre drop.

'Yeah, that was us. We arrived in the dark. We cursed the people who gave us directions. Oh yeah, they said, just go out on the Gorokey Road and you can't miss it. Well, we did. We went 15 kilometres past it. So we decided to go back and take the other turn off to Edenhope. I don't know if you've come to that little turn off with the dead trees in the middle? We camped there. And the next morning we realised that we were almost on the edge of the bloody cliff. Just as well we didn't go for a walk that night!'

TASMANIA 2011 MUMC GRANT

In February 2011 Mark Patterson, Carlos Correa Grez, Ivan Gonzalez and Marcela Gonzalez embarked on the second expedition funded by the MUMC Grant. Their objective: Tasmania's Mt Geryon. While MUMC awaits Mark's much anticipated write-up, here is a taste of Tasmania's awe-inspiring crags.

Photos by Mark Patterson and Carlos Correa Grez



Crumbling towers of columnar dolorite at the Acropolis: a major feature in Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park.

PHOTOS BY CARLOS CORREA GREZ

TASMANIA 2011 MUMC GRANT



Tasmania's wild landscape stretches as far as the eye can see from an Acropolis summit (above top).

Ivan Gonzalez thrutches his way to glory (above left).

Mark Patterson unimpressed with the condition of his rope—more on this in Mark's full-write up (with any luck, in the next *Mountaineer*) (opposite left middle).

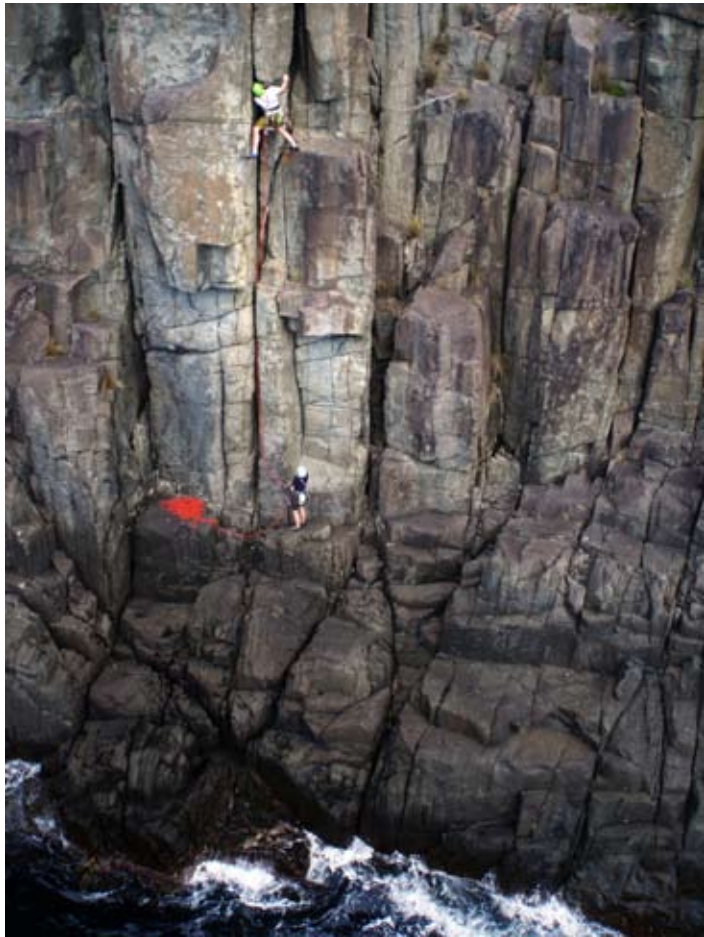
The mighty Mt Geryon, seen from the Acropolis (opposite middle).

The four travellers (left to right): Carlos Correa Grez, Mark Patterson, Ivan Gonzalez and Marcela Gonzalez (opposite bottom).

PHOTOS: CARLOS CORREA GREZ (THIS PAGE, OPPOSITE TOP, OPPOSITE MIDDLE, OPPOSITE BOTTOM LEFT) AND MARK PATTERSON (OPPOSITE LEFT MIDDLE, OPPOSITE BOTTOM RIGHT).



TASMANIA 2011 MUMC GRANT



Climbers negotiate sea-swept rocks on Tasmania's temperamental coastline.

PHOTOS BY MARK PATTERSON



KIEWA COUNTRY: THE OBSESSION

BY TIM CARTER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX THOMPSON



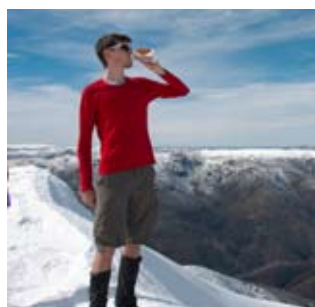
MUMC members are at high risk from the outbreak of an infectious condition characterised by a hankering for something that only the Kiewa Valley offers...

A NEW CRAZE HAS HIT MUMC: the culprit is Kiewa Valley flavoured milks. The possessed have an abnormal desire for the beverage. Chocolate and Strawberry will get you hooked, but try Iced Coffee and you won't escape.

This obsession has taken hold amongst the hikers and now threatens the climbers. Whole trips are now dedicated to obtaining the addictive drink. For the fanatics, trips to the Grampians, Wilsons Prom and Gippsland have ceased to exist. Only on trips to the Kiewa or Ovens valleys will you see these possessed MUMCers. You will hear them say that all the best trips are to the High Plains, Mt Bogong and Mt Feathertop, but their real motivation is not the landscape or the walks, but Kiewa Valley flavoured milk.

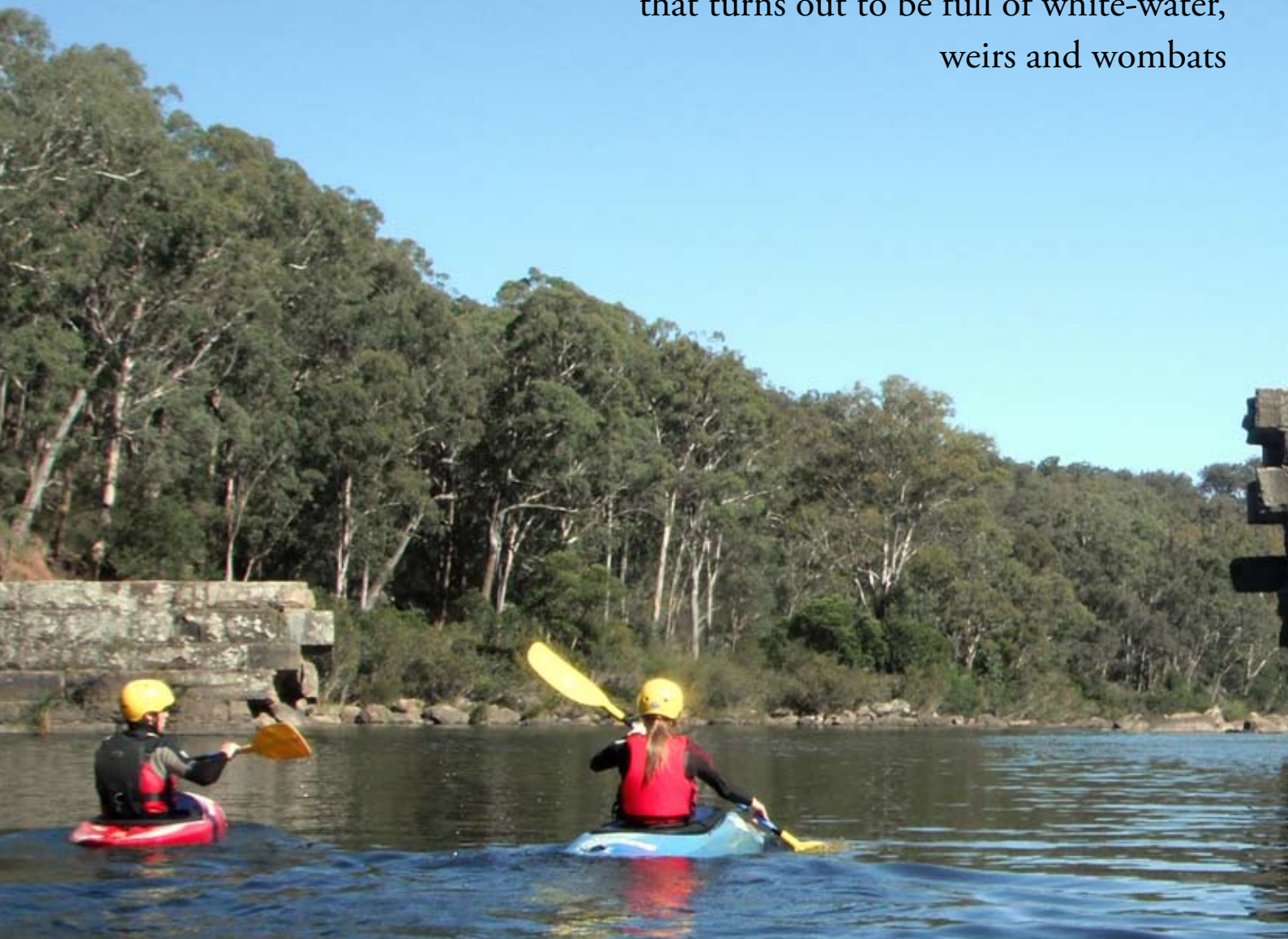
The symptoms of a true diehard fan are varied. Some have been known to carry the drinks to the summit of Mt Feathertop for others to make ice cream on Midnight Ascent. At least one club member still hasn't recovered from the shock when he realised they no longer make malt flavoured milk.

You have been warned. Next time you see a club member downing an ice coffee before an ascent and claiming it as fuel, think twice before joining them.



WOMBATS AND WEIRS

MUMC kayaks the Mitchell; an adventure that turns out to be full of white-water, weirs and wombats



BY SALLY HIGGINS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROSE BEAGLEY

NO ORDINARY WHITE-WATER kayaking trip begins with a wombat in the moonlight. But, then again, this is MUMC, which from what I can tell is no ordinary club...

After strapping kayaks to the roof and packing the car to the gunnels with gear, paddles, eskies and Nutella, we finally left the beloved boatshed late Thursday afternoon. Although we met a heavy traffic slog out of the city, we knew it would be worth it. Our destination was Gippsland, for an epic three-day paddle on the Mitchell River.

A few hours later, dusk fell as we rolled along the Princess Highway. Our first stop was Moe, for groceries and pizza. In case you,

like me, are not Australian, or haven't visited this famous hot spot, it's pronounced 'moe'. Moe probably has the largest pizzas in the southern hemisphere (maybe the world). Among the four of us, we bought two one-by-two-foot pizzas, ate one, and—with the groceries—squeezed the leftovers in the car for morning breakfast.

A gibbous moon shone as we rolled along towards Mitchell State Park, admiring the ghostly gums on the roadside. Suddenly, out of the moonlight, we spotted a wombat trotting across the road in the distance. James, our driver, slowed to avoid it. Thankful for our still-intact suspension, we continued on our way.

But not for long.

A second, larger wombat ran out of the bush. James slammed on the brakes, the

pizza and groceries flew overhead, and we heard a thud.

'Get out, and let's take a photo!'

'Damn. The suspension...'

'My first wombat, and it's dead?'

'...breakfast.'

Needless to say, we got out to take a look at the wombat and the car. Sadly, the wombat—a hardy, seven-inch-backboned marsupial—did not survive the collision. After checking the suspension and deciding that we had enough supplies for breakfast as it was, we continued on our way.

Meanwhile, the second carload had made good progress, leaving Melbourne with only a few detours and a lengthy debate on the pros and cons of eating apple cores. Encountering little traffic, they were only slowed by regular stops at the 'Revive, Survive' Stations to get



Approaching the Mitchell River Weir.

PHOTO BY ROSE BEAGLEY

tea, coffee, colouring books, crayons and to stock up their horde of Arnott's biscuits. Passing through Moe they too couldn't resist the challenge of the two-foot pizza, much of which may still be found on Ben's car floor (sorry, Ben).

By late evening tiredness had set in, but with Ben and Nigel singing *The Clash* and the thought of needing to get to the campground to set up tents and light a fire, the second car managed to keep going. However, 20 minutes from the campsite, everyone in Ben's car was shaken awake by the sight of another car topped with kayaks! Our own car had been elapsd. The wombat must have really slowed us down (let it be known, this is no comment on Ben's speedy driving). Both cars made it into the campground at witching-hour midnight.

Our late arrival meant setting up tents with only the light of our head-torches. Fortunately Christian's tent, christened 'MegaTent', went up like a peach and we all crawled in ready for sleep and a sharp start tomorrow.



Friday

BRIGHT AND EARLY the next day, we donned wetsuits, spray decks, helmets, life jackets and heaps of fluorescent yellow zinc. Armed with dry bags and throw bags, we went to meet the rapids. Today, we planned to paddle the 18 kilometres from Angusvale down to the camp at the Den of Nargun.

Our highlight: the Amphitheatre rapid, the main feature of the Mitchell.

First, though, we had a nice warm-up on the Slalom rapid, which at low volume was neatly divided into three 2+ sections. This rapid gave us a good, controlled start and ample opportunities for eddy hopping and playing in waves. New kayakers were also able to practice rolling in flat water between rapids, while more advanced group members practiced rolling in the current. This occasionally involved a few romantic underwater encounters with rocks (by some more than others) but all in all we avoided most cuts and bruises.

You might think that huge sections of flat water are boring, but we had our own personal entertainer. When spirits were low, James would instinctively break into Tina



Turner's *Private Dancer*. We made it through the whole day (and so did James).

Lunch on our first day was grand. The cheese wasn't too wet and the wraps were intact, so we opened a can of beans and set up a royal smorgasbord on our table of an up-turned kayak. Between the good jokes, not-so-good jokes and food, all had a great time! Unfortunately during our lunch we roused a couple in the bushes who were also having a great time.

Soon after lunch and a pretty hefty stretch of smaller rapids and flats, we reached the Amphitheatre. We portaged the boats upstream, scouted the rapid to pick out danger points and sighted the best lines. The more experienced kayakers went down first, staged themselves in eddies to give the OK signals, and prepared throw-bags just in case.

Here I must break the narrative to be 100 per cent honest and caution you against the perils of celebrating too early...

The Amphitheatre rapid is divided into two sections, separated by large eddies mid-way down, with each section preceded by a decent-sized drop. The most dangerous part of the rapid is in the second section: a giant boulder stands to the right with a carved out overhang perfect for pinning kayakers. The plan was to take the line left-of-centre, hop into the left eddy, and then keep a close left-line down the second section to avoid getting pinned under the overhang.

I found myself at the top of the rapid—the most difficult I had done yet—patiently waiting for the OK signal from one of the more experienced kayakers staged down the rapid. I glimpsed the vertical paddle and started

off. The rule is to keep paddling, maintain momentum and be aggressive in taking the best line.

I felt my stomach leap after the first drop, and my head rung with my 'Just keep paddling!' mantra as my boat and I coursed over and between rocks, trying to keep in the higher volume stream. Finally, I spotted an eddy to the left. Wow, relief. I made it down stage one of the Amphitheatre and was still in my boat, with paddle in hand! I felt great.

'Here I must break the narrative to be 100 per cent honest and caution you against the perils of celebrating too early...'

I turned to paddle into the eddy with a big grin on my face, meeting the other two kayakers bobbing there.

My grin was wiped off pretty fast. In actual fact, it turned upside-down when I flipped over. I had barely reached the edge of the eddy when I lost track of my momentum and the current caught the topside of my boat. Over I went; underwater and a bit disoriented.

I decided to wet-exit. I reached for the tab at the front of my spray deck, and pushed out of my kayak. Normally, a roll is the best bet when you go over, but at my level and on

this rapid I did what came most naturally. I bailed.

James saw my stunned look and shouted: 'Swim, swim!' What I was supposed to hear, of course, was, 'Swim and grab your gear! Swim, grab your gear!' I made it into the eddy before heading over the next drop (and towards the pinning rock on the right). In my state, however, I failed to grab my boat and paddle in time. My kayak finished the rapid without me, held in the current by a fortuitously placed rock. The paddle was recovered by James, who in the process lost his GoPro camera—and after that he probably wished I too had gone the way of the wombat.

Although I failed my attempt down Amphitheatre, I learned two critical lessons: only stop when you reach the river bank, and try to hold on to gear if safe to do so (especially if it is MUMC gear and you want to avoid explaining your folly to the kayaking convenor the next day).

Next to come down was Rose, who exemplified the truth that there are often many lines down a rapid. In the case of the Amphitheatre, going down the right side, heading towards the massive overhung boulder certainly worked for her—although us onlookers would have popped nitroglycerine pills if we had them. Rose did manage to get down safely, even smiling, and we all managed to avoid getting heart attacks.

We spent the rest of the afternoon paddling flat water. New Zealander Nigel, our recruited river sensei, provided plenty of instruction for us new kayakers on how to roll, making the lengthy paddle a good deal more interesting. He also had good tips on spotting

Throw-rope practice—learning rescue skills is an important part of paddling education (above left).

The team: poised and kitted out for some river action (above middle).

Seal launching off the lower half of the weir (above right).

PHOTOS BY ROSE BEAGLEY

The Mitchell River Weir's higher half has long been a staging ground for many a grand luncheon, seal launch and exhilarating jump.

PHOTOS BY ROSE BEAGLEY





river features, and would wax eloquently on the ‘shuttie iddies’ (translation: ‘shitty eddies’ for those who don’t speak New Zealand) he had encountered on other trips.

Finally, we reached the Den of Nargun at dusk and hiked back up to our camp for dinner; dripping, exhausted, but smiling. Round two tomorrow would see another bright and early wake-up, and another beautiful section of the Mitchell River.



Saturday

WE MET SATURDAY morning with a hearty breakfast. Today’s paddle would take us from the Den of Nargun to our final rapid, aptly named Final Fling. After the excitement of yesterday, we were a bit slow-going that the morning. Luckily, this changed when we got to our lunch spot: the Weir.

The Mitchell River Weir is an epic wall of stone blocks built in the late 1800s and

damaged by floods around 1893. It is now split in two; the more intact half is around seven metres high (depending on river levels, obviously), the other is partially sunken and stands at about four metres high. The higher side makes a mighty fine lunch spot, and is good for a after-lunch adrenaline rush when you launch yourself from the top into the river below. It was Mitchell (who, incidentally, is named after the river we were paddling) who took the first leap, with all of us soon to follow.

The other half provided prime territory for seal-entries, a dry self-launch in your kayak from a rock above the river. While most of us were occupied with jumping off the high side, Richard—one of those individuals not satisfied with doing just one sport at a time—decided to climb up the weir face.

Mid-afternoon was throw-rope practice, enthusiastically initiated by Richard. We paused at an eddy at the bottom of a rapid. Rightfully so, Richard was the first to go down, making it to the bottom totally bump-free. With only a few misses, everyone

had a go at throwing the rope. Our aim vastly improved when Rose went down the rapids—she was wearing bright yellow hockey socks and all we had to aim for were her feet sticking out above the turbulent water.

We finished our day at Final Fling (which, for me, went heaps better than the Amphitheatre rapid). Sadly our group of eight pared down to four, when half of us had to head home and onto other adventures. We said goodbye to our fellow kayakers, and helped load the boats.

I feel confident to write that everyone had a blast, improved their kayaking skills and ate plenty of good food. I can’t wait to return to the Mitchell for another paddling adventure... although, I might suggest taking a different road there next time. ☘

Despite higher rainfall this year, the Mitchell was still low when MUMC ran it on this trip.

PHOTO BY ROSE BEAGLEY

A BULLER EPIC

BY GAETAN RIOU

Rising rivers and brutal conditions brewed the perfect storm for an epic in Alpine National Park

>



‘We found ourselves at a narrow and rocky section—perfectly doable on a nice day with a daypack, but dangerous with wet rock, and 10+ kilogram packs.’

I WAS LUCKY TO BE accepted by trip leader Jess Trevitt on this Mt Buller trip, since this was my first bushwalking trip with the club. The plan was to go up Mt Buller via Four Mile Spur, enjoy a good dinner in the resort, camp somewhere for the night, and go down Six Mile Spur the next day. The plan involved some nice rock scrambling and fair bit of bush bashing—that’s what got me excited about the trip!



ON A GREY SATURDAY morning Jess, Taner Kucukyuruk, Krissie Piskorz and I drove toward the Victorian Alps. We reached our starting point without any trouble, parked the car and started walking late in the morning. After a few minutes of hiking, I found out that we had to cross a river. I had not signed up for that but, well, it’s all part of the fun. Going up Four Mile Spur was pret-

ty straightforward—the only problem was bashing through the young alpine snow gum growth covering the tracks in some places. We managed to avoid the rain but those saplings got us all wet. After that there was some nice scrambling and we were rewarded by nice views when the cloud cover lifted a bit.

Our way up took a bit longer than expected. When we arrived at the resort, almost every place to eat was closed. Actually there was one posh hotel open, but we didn’t really fit in with the clientele and it was not in any of our budgets anyway. We ended up in the information centre, where at least it was warm. We decided to have some dinner, which meant digging into our food supply—food only planned for two lunches and one breakfast. The weather outside was misty and cold, so spending the night in the information centre seemed very appealing. We were just a bit worried about getting kicked out in the middle of the night,

but tried our luck and managed to get a nice and warm night without being disturbed.



THE SECOND DAY started well though it was cold, rainy and windy—not great for walking along a totally exposed ridge. Only a short section of Six Mile Spur has an actual track, so we were soon walking on the ridge not knowing what to expect. We found ourselves at a very narrow and rocky section—perfectly doable on a nice day with a daypack, but dangerous with wet rock and 10+ kilogram packs. At this point, it was drizzling and quite windy. We weighed our choices and decided that the safest option was to go around the dangerous section. That meant climbing down a rocky slope, and trying to find a way ahead lower along the spur, hoping to be able to reach the ridge again. It took us three hours to find our way back



Mt Buller lost in the clouds (previous page).

Jess wades through a sea of young trees (left).

A wet but sheltered camp (below).

PHOTOS: KRISSIE PISKORZ (LEFT) AND GAETAN RIOU (PREVIOUS PAGE AND BELOW).





Taner, Gaetan and Jess crossing the river at the foot of Four Mile Spur (above).
The brooding weather showing hints of the tough conditions to come (below left).
Jess, Krissie and Taner a little damp, but still all smiles (below right).

PHOTOS: KRISSIE PISKORZ (ABOVE AND BELOW LEFT) AND GAETAN RIOU (BELOW RIGHT).





to the ridge. Talk about a detour! It was really tricky at times, we almost lost a pack and got scared a couple of times, but we made it.

Once back on the ridge, our spirits were high and the sun was out, which was more than enough to motivate us to carry on (not that we had a choice...). From there the descent was relatively easy, until we reached the tree line. You have to remember that we were bush bashing and it's not always easy to find your way when tall trees are blocking the view. Unfortunately the rain set in again, maybe to tell us to hurry up. Eventually we reached the river crossing, but an unexpected problem emerged! It had been raining most of the day and the previous night, so the river level had risen, preventing us from crossing. We did our best to try to find another spot to cross, but the river was definitely looking too dangerous. Since we weren't too far from the ford where we had crossed the day before, we decided to

follow the river to the ford, hoping we could cross there. That was not an easy task. We had to bush bash up and down a steep spur before finding the river bank again... and we ended up not where we had expected to be: one river bend away from our destination.



AT THAT POINT, we realised it was already late and starting to get dark. Quickly we decided to set up camp where we were. Everyone was wet and tired, there was no point pushing forward and risking getting lost or injured. All four of us crammed into Jess' two-person tent to keep warm. Food was in short supply, gear was wet, spirits were a bit low but at least we weren't lost. We tried to get some rest, lulled to sleep by Taner's snoring. I'd never met someone who could sleep so well just about anywhere.

The next morning we could hear cars on

road on across the river while packing up camp. Could it be rangers searching for us? We tried to attract their attention but without much success. Eventually we eventually set off and finally found the ford over the next spur. Luckily the river level had dropped a bit during the night, allowing us to cross safely. Jess was on the ready to help us with crossing using a somewhat questionable clothesline. Back at the car we were welcomed by a ranger who was happy to see us safe and well. That was the end of our epic journey. This trip has not deterred me from going bushwalking again—far from it. I must say that it was one of my best trips! ☘

Postscript: the club has since purchased a SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger that allows walkers to send 'We are OK' messages or request help. At least our adventure was useful for the club.

Taner negotiates a slippery scramble (above).

PHOTO BY KRISSIE PISKORZ

MATHEMATICS OF CAMS

A maths wiz explains the mathematics behind spring-loaded camming device design

BY THARATORN SUPASITI

1. SPRING-LOADED CAMMING DEVICES

A **SPRING-LOADED CAMMING** device is a piece of gear used in climbing. It falls under the category of 'active protection': that is, in a nutshell, any piece of protection that uses movement to exert outward force when a climber falls. Unlike 'passive protection', like traditional pitons or nuts, spring-loaded camming devices can be placed in parallel cracks easily. Introduced in the 1970s, they opened many traditionally unprotected routes to new generation of climbers and are now a must-have on any climber's rack.

Most designs have four blades/lobes called cams that are mounted on one or two axles so that a pull on the axle spreads the cams apart. Each cam can be retracted by pulling on a trigger on a single stem that is attached to the axle. (See Figure 1.)

By pulling the trigger, the profile of the device becomes narrower, which allows you to place it in a crack. Once released, each cam expands to fill the gap. When a climber falls on the device, the force pulls on the central stem, and therefore spreads the four cams apart. This increases the friction force on the rock, and arrests the fall.

2. THE CAM SHAPE

AS MENTIONED BEFORE, when a climber falls on the device, the force is transferred to the axle of each cam. By ensuring that the position of the axle is above the cam's contact point with the wall (see Figure 3A), there is enough frictional force to hold the fall. This depends only on the shape of each cam.

The angle α shown in Figure 3A is called

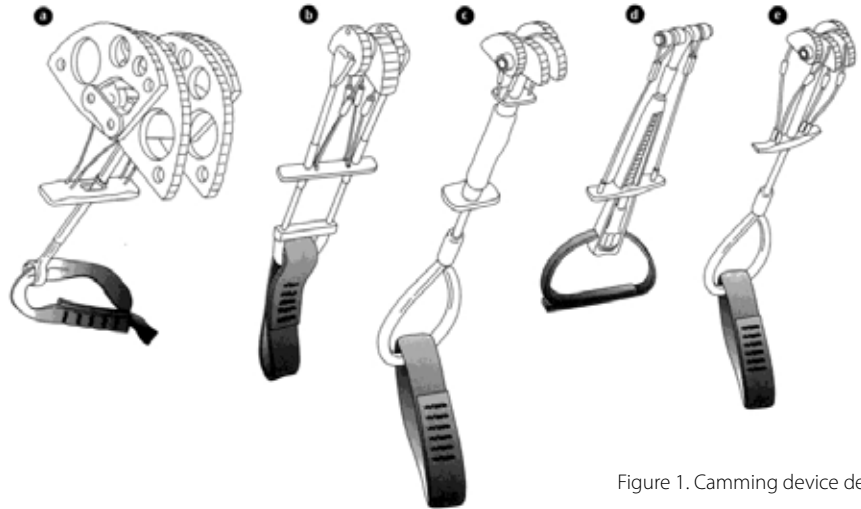


Figure 1. Camming device designs.

SOURCE: MOUNTAINEERING: FREEDOM OF THE HILLS.

the *cam angle*. It turns out that the angle α remains constant regardless of the angle θ between the cam's actual contact point and the minimal contact point.

For the maths-minded, here is a mathematical explanation: by using the polar coordinates, we may parametrise the distance between the contact point and the centre of the axle as a function of θ by $r(\theta)$. We will show that $r(\theta) = C \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta)$.

Consider increasing θ by very small $d\theta$. Approximately, the triangle ABA' is a right-angled triangle, where $|OB| = |OA|$. We have $|A'B| = dr = dr/d\theta d\theta$ and $|AB| = r(\theta) d\theta$

So, by looking at the triangle, we see that

$$\tan(\alpha) = \frac{1}{r} \frac{dr}{d\theta}.$$

Since α is fixed, solving the DE gives a general solution of $C \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta)$. This shape is now used by most major manufacturers. It is referred to as a logarithmic spiral.

3. RESTRICTION ON CAM ANGLE

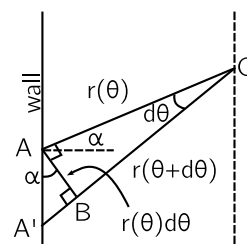


Figure 2. Parametrising the distance between the contact point and the centre of the axle (above).

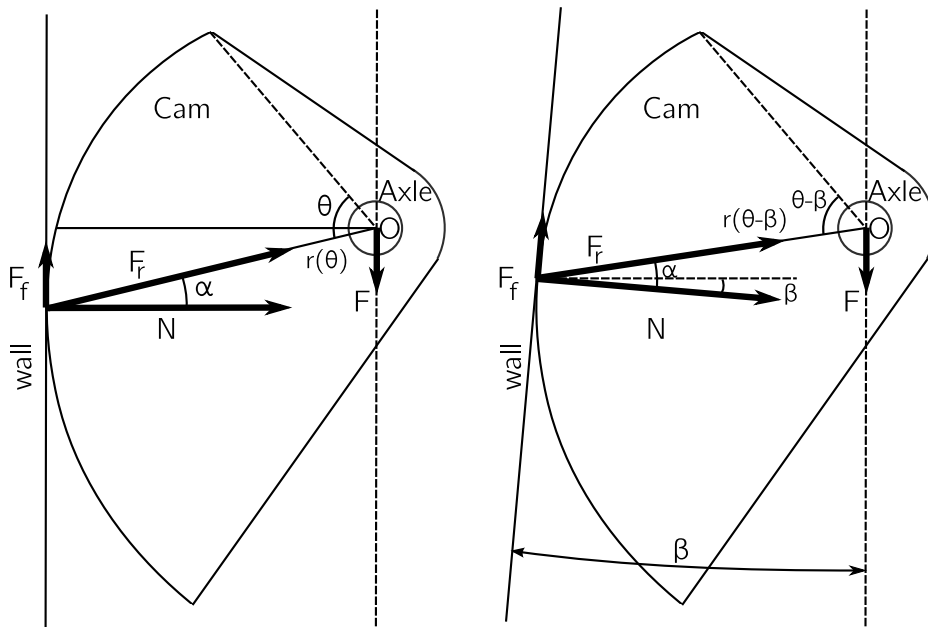


Figure 3. Schematic diagram of a cam.

(A) Parallel crack (left)

(B) Flaring crack (right)

FROM THE PREVIOUS section, we see that the cam angle is constant regardless of θ . So, we may choose α so that the frictional force F_f can hold the climber during the fall.

Let F be the force loading on the axle of each cam. We will assume that the load spreads even across four cams. We assume further that F is parallel to the gravitational force. Let F_f be the frictional force exerted by the wall and N be the normal force. By the torque balance with the centre on O , we have

$$F_f r(\theta) \cos(\alpha) = N r(\theta) \sin(\alpha)$$

And thus, $F_f = N \tan(\alpha)$. If μ is the friction coefficient between the rock and the cam, then to avoid sliding, $F_f \leq \mu N$.

This implies that the cam angle must be chosen so that $\tan(\alpha) \leq \mu$. Generally, the cam angle is chosen to be around 13.75° . Now, the reaction force F_r from the wall is the sum of F_f and N . Further, by balance of vertical forces, $F = F_r \sin(\alpha)$, so $F_r = F / \sin(\alpha)$. Notice that cam angle is small. This means N/F_f is quite large, so a little force on the camming device can generate a strong reaction force from the wall.

4. FLARING CRACKS

SUPPOSE THAT A CRACK is not quite parallel, but flaring out a little at the bottom as shown in Figure 3B. Let β be the angle between the wall and the vertical direction. By torque balance, $F_f = N \tan(\alpha)$. The difference between the two scenarios is the reactive forces. First, a force balance on the whole cam gives

$$(1) \quad F + N \sin(\beta) = F_f \cos(\beta).$$

Substitute $F_f = F_r \sin(\alpha)$ and $N = F_r \cos(\alpha)$ in (1), we get

$$F = F_r \cos(\beta) \sin(\alpha) - F_r \cos(\alpha) \sin(\beta) = F_r \sin(\alpha - \beta).$$

So, as the angle β tends to α , the reaction force F_r tends to infinity. In practice, this means either the camming device or the rock will break. In either case, it is not great news for the falling climber. So,

is there an alternative design that allows one to place cam in a highly flared crack?

5. TOTEM CAMS

RECENTLY, A NEW manufacturer produced a new design, which they claim to be more effective in highly flared crack. This is their design: instead of having a central stem taking the force of each fall, they have a wire connected to each cam to take the load (see Figure 4A). A wire follows the contour of a cam before exiting downward. By designing the shape of the back, they can change the reaction force from the wall.

There are two active areas in each cam. Their shape is now a logarithmic spiral, where one can be obtained from the other by a 180° rotation around the centre of the axle and then applying an appropriate scaling. Let each active region be parametrised by

$$(2) \quad B(\theta_B) = b \cdot \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_B)$$

$$\text{and} \quad C(\theta_C) = c \cdot \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_C).$$

We will assume the following:

- (1) The load is perfectly aligned and distributed evenly to all four cams.
- (2) The force loaded on each cam is in a downward direction.
- (3) The angle θ_B is equal to the angle θ_C .

First by the force balance on the whole cam, $F_f = F$. Using the torque balance centred on the axle, we get

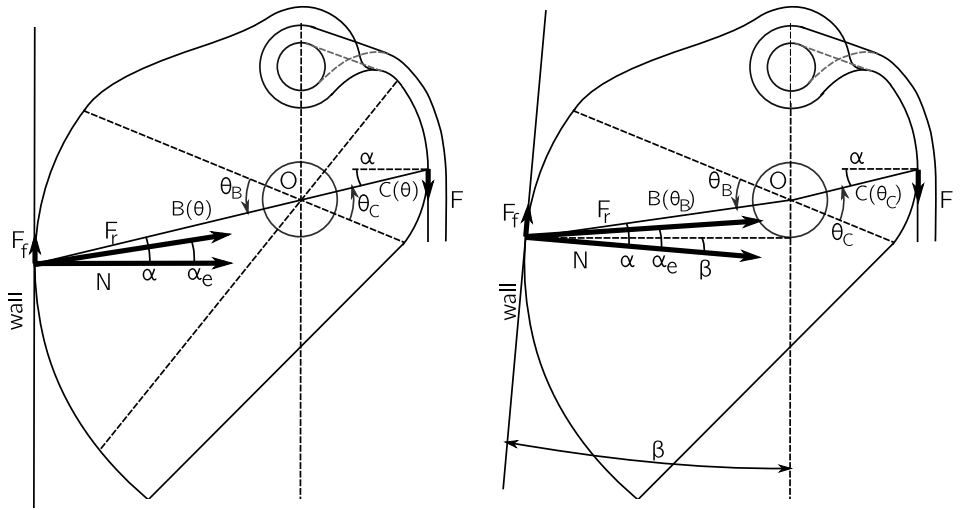
$$F_f \cos(\alpha) B(\theta_B) + F \cos(\alpha) C(\theta_C) = N \sin(\alpha) B(\theta_B)$$

$$F_f \cos(\alpha) (B(\theta_B) + C(\theta_B)) = N \sin(\alpha) B(\theta_B)$$

$$F_f \cos(\alpha) \cdot (b + c) \cdot \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_B) = N \sin(\alpha) \cdot b \cdot \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_B)$$

Figure 4. Schematic diagram of a Totem cam.

- (A) Parallel crack (left)
(B) Flaring crack (right)



$$F_f \cos(\alpha) \cdot (b + c) \cdot \frac{\exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_B)}{b \cdot \exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_C)} = N \sin(\alpha) \cdot b \cdot \frac{\exp(\tan(\alpha)\theta_B)}{1 + c/b}$$

$$F_f = N \frac{b \tan(\alpha)}{b + c} = N \frac{\tan(\alpha)}{1 + c/b}$$

The second step is just a substitution with equation (2). Again, to avoid sliding, $F_f \leq \mu N$, where μ is the friction coefficient. This requires that $\tan(\alpha)/(1 + c/b) \leq \mu$. For simplicity, we may interpret this as a new cam angle. Define an equivalent cam angle by

$$\tan(\alpha_e) = \frac{\tan(\alpha)}{1 + c/b}$$

Note that since \tan is an increasing function between 0 and $\pi/2$, $\alpha_e < \alpha$. Now, the reaction force is just $F_r = F/\sin(\alpha_e)$.

6. TOTEM CAMS IN A FLARING CRACK

LET B BE DEFINED like previously. First note that angle θ_B is not the same as θ_C anymore. In fact $\theta_B = \theta_C - \beta$ (exercise). The force balance on the cam gives $F_f \cos(\beta) = F + N \sin(\beta)$. By the torque balance,

$$F_f \cos(\alpha) B(\theta_B) + F \cos(\alpha) C(\theta_C) = N \sin(\alpha) B(\theta_B)$$

$$F_f B(\theta_B) + (F_f \cos(\beta) - N \sin(\beta)) C(\theta_C) = N \tan(\alpha) B(\theta_B)$$

$$F_f (B(\theta_B) + \cos(\beta) C(\theta_C)) = N (\tan(\alpha) B(\theta_B) + \sin(\beta) C(\theta_C))$$

Again, to avoid sliding,

$$\frac{\tan(\alpha) B(\theta_B) + \sin(\beta) C(\theta_C)}{B(\theta_B) + \cos(\beta) C(\theta_C)} \leq \mu.$$

Substituting equation (2) in to get

$$(3) \quad \frac{\tan(\alpha) b e^{\tan(\alpha)\theta_C - \beta} + \sin(\beta) c e^{\tan(\alpha)\theta_C}}{b e^{\tan(\alpha)(\theta_C - \beta)} + \cos(\beta) c e^{\tan(\alpha)\theta_C}} = \frac{\tan(\alpha) b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\beta} + \sin(\beta) c}{b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\beta} + \cos(\beta) c}$$

At $\beta = 0$ (parallel wall), equation (3) gives $\tan(\alpha)/(1 + c/b) \leq \mu$. At $\beta = \alpha$, equation (3) gives

$$\frac{\tan(\alpha) b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\alpha} + \sin(\alpha) c}{b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\alpha} + \cos(\alpha) c} = \tan(\alpha) \frac{b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\alpha} + \cos(\alpha) c}{b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\alpha} + \cos(\alpha) c} = \tan(\alpha) \leq \mu$$

A careful differentiation will yield the fact that the expression (3) is an increasing function between $\beta = 0$ and $\beta = \alpha$. So, the minimum required friction coefficient to avoid sliding increases from $\tan(\alpha)/(1 + c/b)$ to $\tan(\alpha)$ as β increases. The reaction force is

$$F_r = \frac{F}{\sin(\alpha_e - \beta)} \quad \text{where} \quad \alpha_e = \arctan \left(\frac{\tan(\alpha) b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\beta} + \sin(\beta) c}{b e^{-\tan(\alpha)\beta} + \cos(\beta) c} \right).$$

5. REMARKS

WHILE THE TOTEM DESIGN is great for lowering the cam angle at low β , as the flaring angle increases, its cam angle increases to that of traditional design. The manufacturer chose $\alpha = 20.35^\circ$, and the ratio c/b so that in a parallel crack, $12.52^\circ < \alpha_e < 13.13^\circ$. This design allows for a theoretical placement in a 40.7° flared crack. Note that in this crack, the cam angle is 20.35° which is considered to be at the maximal end (Black Diamond Camalot's cam angle is about 14.7°).

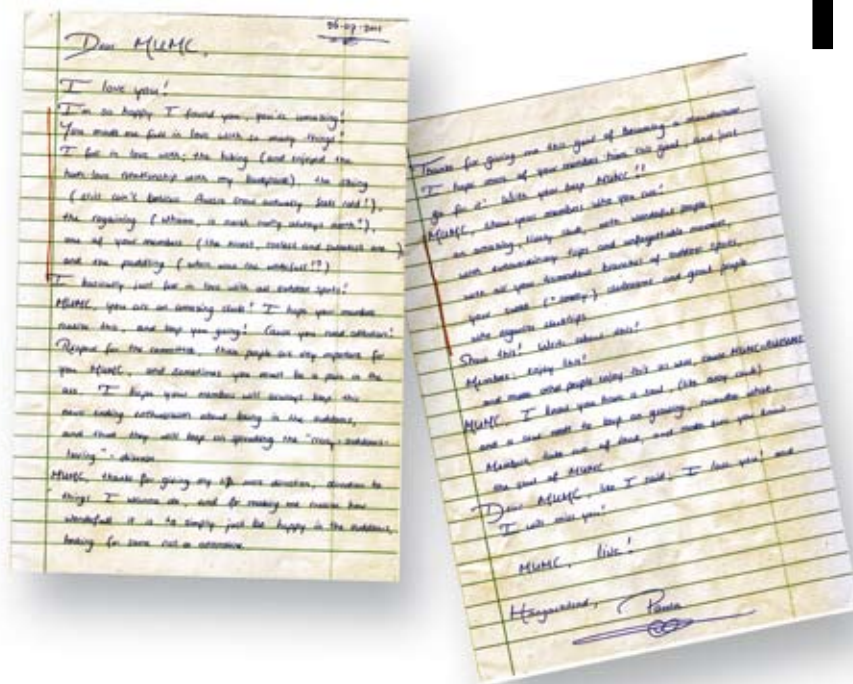
The benefit of this design is clear when we compare it against a traditional camming device with a cam angle of 20.35° . At lower flared angle, Totem cams require a lesser friction coefficient than other competitors. However, if one compares it with say Black Diamond's Camalot C4, which has a cam angle of 14.7° , we see immediately that Totem cams sacrifice their required minimum friction coefficient at higher flaring angles for a larger maximum flaring angle. In practice, one should avoid placing cams in a flaring angle for obvious reasons anyway. So, it depends on what one values more in a camming device: higher maximum flaring angle or minimum friction coefficient requirement. ☼

A NOTE ON THE CALCULATION:

- (1) We assume that the force loaded on each cam is downward. This angle depends on θ_B .
- (2) The angle θ_B is unlikely to equal to θ_C . The means the ratio $C(\theta_C)/B(\theta_B)$ will vary. The manufacturer suggests that it can vary between 0.67 (fully closed) and 0.59 (fully open).
- (3) The load never spreads evenly to each cam. The force F is the force on that cam. It is not the same as T in their calculation.

TO MUMC, WITH LOVE

FROM PAULA ROOSEDAHL



DEAR MUMC

I love you!

I'm so happy I found you—you're amazing! You made me fall in love with so many things! I fell in love with the hiking (and enjoyed the hate-love relationship with my backpack), the skiing (still can't believe Aussie snow actually feels cold!), the rogaining (whaaa, is north really always north?), one of your members (the nicest, coolest and sweetest one...) and the paddling (where was the waterfall!?).

I basically just fell in love with all outdoor sports! MUMC, you are an amazing club! I hope your members realise this, and keep you going! Beause you need attention! Respect for the committee—those people are very important for you MUMC, and sometimes you must be a pain in the ass. I hope your members will always keep this never ending enthusiasm about being in the outdoors, and that they will keep on spreading the 'crazy-outdoors-loving' disease.

MUMC, thanks for giving my life more direction, direction to things I wanna do, and for making me realise how wonderful it is to simply just be happy in the outdoors, looking for some rest or adrenaline.

Thanks for giving me this goal of becoming a mountaineer. I hope more of your members have this goal, and just go for it! With your help, MUMC!

MUMC, show your members who you are!

An amazing, lively club, with wonderful people, with extraordinary trips and unforgettable moments, with all your tremendous branches of outdoor sports, your sweet (*smelly) clubrooms and great people who organise club trips.

Show this! Write about this!

Members: enjoy this!

And make other people enjoy this as well, because MUMC = AWESOME.

MUMC, I know you have a soul (like every club) and a soul needs to keep on growing, no matter what. Members, take care of that, and make sure you know the soul of MUMC.

Dear MUMC, like I said: I love you! And I will miss you!

MUMC, live!

Hoogachtend (yours faithfully)

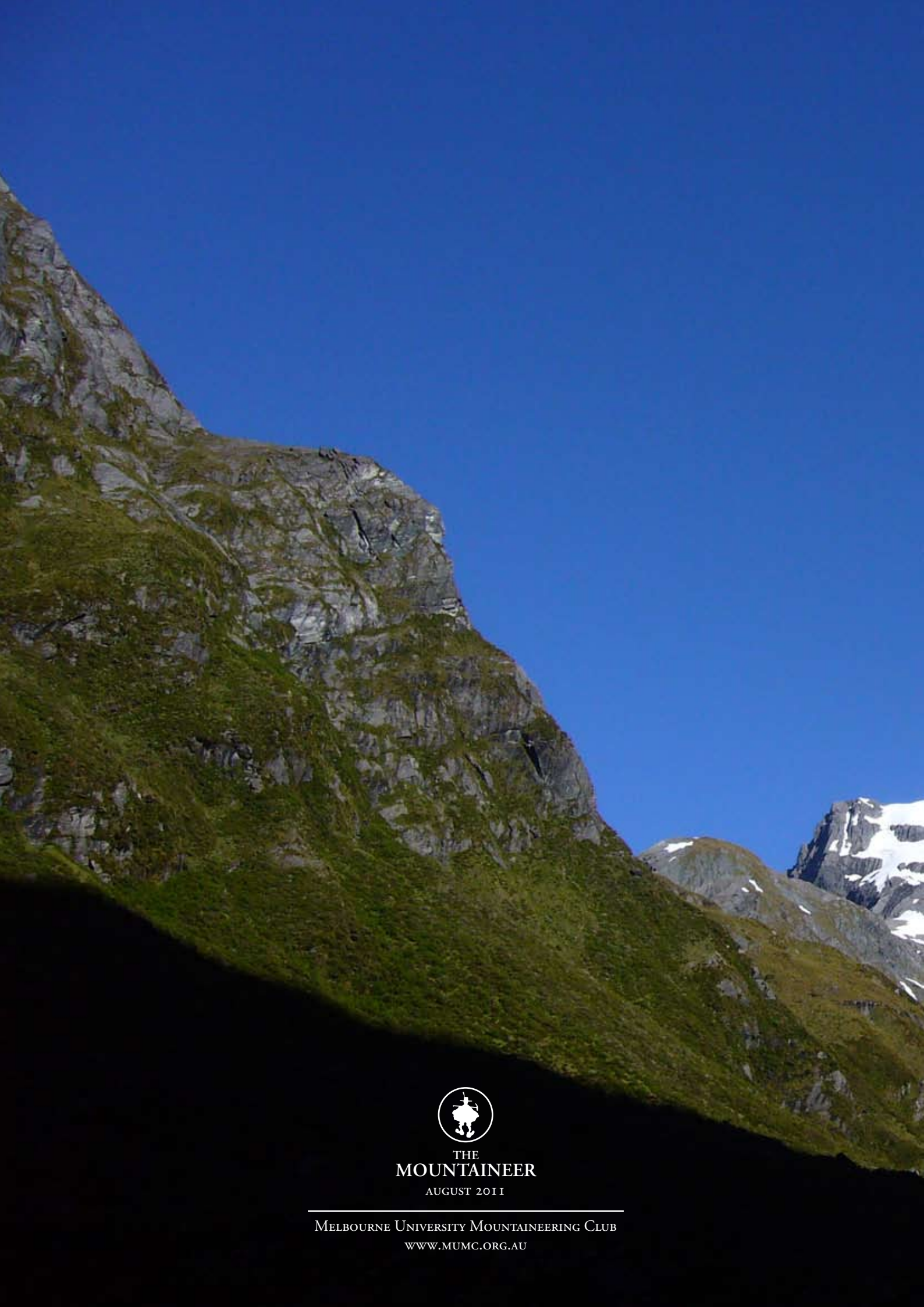
Paula ☺

MUMC

Wild places.
Wild times.



**MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB**



THE
MOUNTAINEER

AUGUST 2011

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
WWW.MUMC.ORG.AU