



ceunant
mountaineering
club

Affiliated to the BMC

NEWSHEET FEBRUARY 1986

CLUB NEWS

AGM

Will be held at the Old Crown, Broad Street on Wed 19th March, in the large committee room, 8.00pm.

Tranearth

Can members wishing to take children at weekends to this hut please check LCC Meets List for designated times. Apparently, only fully fledged humans and dogs welcome at all other times.

CLUB GEAR

An idea has been floated that the Club should keep a stock of basic gear, mainly camping, so that new, young or impecunious members short of the bare essentials can get away more easily. Other clubs do it, so if you can't sell it, give it away. Tents particularly welcome.

Old Tyn Lon

An old turn of the century photograph of Tyn Lon has been unearthed. It is very ethnic. Some blown up copies are going to be made for framing. If you want a copy (not free) please see Steve Harvatt.

For Sale

One pair of Koflach 'Viva' boots, size 7. £23.

One pair EB's size 6 (hardly used) £7.

Contact Graham Dyke 021 459 7255.

Camping Gaz stove. Used once. £7 including cylinder.

Contact Joe Brennan 021 354 3232

Climbing Guide Leicester and The Midlands

The BMC are in the process of compiling a guide for publication in March 87. If you have any information or wish to contribute in any way, contact Doug Kerr, The Mountain Shop, Snow Hill.

Areas to be covered include: Pontesford, Nesscliff, Wrekin, Stiper Stones, Llanymynech (its obviously going to be a big guide), Pandy, Bridgenorth, Wenlock, Rowley Regis, etc, etc..

BONFIRE MEET NOVEMBER 1985

A little late for this report but this is the first issue since then as the silent majority is now almost one hundred per cent.

The annual gathering of climber#arsonists saw the weather in its usual state for this occasion, ie prolonged subtropical storm without the temperature. A large barrel of beer was laid on from next door, shaken every half hour and poured through a sweaty sock to give that authentic Vaynol flavour.

Firework innovations included sub-nuclear(just) land mines deployed in the Tyn Lon kitchen and bedroom areas. The fabric of the building seemed to be shaken more than most of those present as they were already bombed out of their heads anyway.

The travelling scene produced its anticipated crop of encounters between unforgiving Welsh stone walls and flying machinery. The Ford Escort in particular seems to have become difficult to control:-

Guess Who ?

Incident One: As the driver leaps from the wreckage, in a voice soon to be outlawed by forthcoming EEC Noise Regulations;

"OH MY GOD ITS THE BLOODY LEAVES ON THE ROAD. BASTARDS. ROADSIDE TREES SHOULD BE CHOPPED AND STONE WALLS DEMOLISHED. HOW CAN YOU EXPECT TO DRIVE A HIGH PERFORMANCE MACHINE IN THESE CONDITIONS. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO GO TO THE WINE BAR LIKE THIS. WELSH GITS".

Incident Two: As the driver climbs from the wreckage with a skill that can only be learned from experience;

"Well Sarah, the coefficient of friction on a convex road camber varies over the angle of the curve according to velocity, trajectory, temperature, humidity, viscosity and rubber compound factors, especially in an opposite lock situation where reactive impedance from the track rod end sprockets in conjunction with constant velocity joint feedback lag can result in a termination of journey situation with a dry stone wall which has been constructed on the traditional principle of keystoneing, inward sloping medium sized stones of broadly equal mass with a counterbalanced vertical mode for the topping line, tapering from a wider base and"

Sunday saw Hurricane Gwynedd surprisingly past and a few faint hearts with the 'straight home' mentality disappeared forthwith, whilst others reverted to urban consumerism with a tour round the climbing shops, Keener types managed to make the most of the last flicker of heat from 1985 in pleasant conditions at Tremadoc.

Annual Dinner, 25th January 1986

Another excellent occasion with over 60 attending, from as far away as Stockholm.

The Annual Awards were keenly contested in the various sections, the results being:

Headbanger of the Year: Keith O Rielly for his unprovoked attack on Bosherton tarmac

Golden Chicken Award: Several senior skiers for failure to follow a female beginner down a slightly more than blue slope.

Convict of the Year: Joe Brennan for adding Aviemore Police Station to his forthcoming 'Good Nicks Guide'.

Gourmet of the Year: Sirk for whom a special menu had been prepared. This was:-

7.30pm Soup (plus 3 bread rolls)
 7.40 Smoked Mackereland side salad
 7.55 Main Course
 8.05 2nd Main Course
 8.15 - 8.30 Sweet times Three
 8.30 After Eight Mint
 1.00am Plate of Asparagus
 1.05 Plate of Scampi
 1.10 Two fistfulls of roast spuds
 1.15 One Smoked Mackerel
 1.16 One Grilled Trout
 2.30am Handfull of Roast Spuds
 2.31 Half Dozen Scampis
 2.33 Two grilled trout
 2.34 Six Tomatos

Boobs of the Year: Joint awards in a very competitive category; Martin Jolly and 'Tanker' ex-skiers extrodinaire, whose fractured legs have brought a new meaning to winter breaks.

Secret whiskey and lemonade drinker: A decanter for John Pettet who has been doing a lot of homework in this area.

THE CEUNANT SKI CLUB

The following is a transcript of a report on the January '86 Meet to St. Anton. The report was narrated at the 1986 Annual Dinner held recently and is reproduced here for the 'benefit' of a) those who didn't attend the dinner and b) those who did but who were 'deprived' of two key verses due to the narrator being struck down by an early and debilitating attack of inibriation.

The Ceunant meet to St Anton
Was well attended by everyone
The snow was fair and the weather fine
and the walk up the hill got better each time

Now several teams emerged each day
An 'A' team, a 'B' team and one quite fey
Those in the latter we won't mention
Though it has been said they all draw pension

So up the Valluga these stalwarts went
To ski all the way down was their intent
But one look from the top, "Are you sure that
we're able?
P'haps t'would be safer to go down on the cable"

Now a doctor in the town did a roaring trade
re-setting bones for all he was made
Two of his punters made us nervy
They were Tanker the Banker and Mr Jolworthy

As for the latter not much can be said
By the time we arrived he was tucked up in bed
He tried to tell us a German had hit him
But we think it more likely that Allison bit him!

And as for the former, that's Tanker the Banker
After breaking his leg he skied like a wanker
He tried to tell us that something was wrong
-We were that sympathetic we burst into song

It was an active scene day and night
The creakings on the landing gave you a fright
Was it the plumbing or was it romance
The Steves would have told you given the chance

No effort was spared in international relations
The Hon Sec displayed his usual patience
But he won the day and left his mark
Steve, how is the lady from Denmark

Next in line came Sweden's turn
A young blond maiden both tender and firm
Steve stayed behind, his plan was to trick us
It worked! The girl soon lost her knickers

Following this came a girl from the States
 - or so Jim said, and they seem good mates
 An accomplished skier and a handsome lady
 Her standard greeting was Yodel-ey-e-di!

Oh, I nearly forgot Sue from the Smoke
 Now she would'nt ski with any old bloke
 Try as you could she'd always dodge yer
 With one exception - you ask Roger

And as for the writer stuck up in the attic
 his fortunes have always been something erratic
 But for Sue's idea, I could have killed her
 - She only suggested the guest house 'Grunhilda'

Now in the 'Bar 37' the air was thick
 When she got up for her party trick
 Over her head went this bloody great condom
 And all the blokes there had a -----ing stand on

Bigger and bigger the air bubble grew
 'til folks started murmuring "What will the girl do?"
 The thing grew and grew, it was something uncanny
 She said "Hang on, I'll do the next with my fanny!"

It was not all play but occasionally work
 We arranged an interview for a lad called Sirch
 Said the rep "Young man for this job you'll need humour and wit"
 To which Sirchy replied "That's a pile of shit"

Now how to end, I can never remember
 How about toasting our Swedish member
 Please raise your glasses and kindly listen
 As I toast our visitor, the beautiful Lissan

Anon

Lists

Can you think of a sport which gives wider opportunity for doing your own thing than climbing? You can train and dedicate yourself to becoming a rock star, performing preferably in the epicentre of publicity. The only requirements being 6c ability and a natty line in stripped treads. At the other extreme you could become an Old Man of the Hills and squelch across miles of bleak moors and likely claim an early ascent of a 15ft gritstone diff. first climbed in 1908.

You can become a specialist in limestone, gritstone, sea cliff, mountain rock or just a boulderer risking no more than ego. You could make Stoney Middleton the centre of your universe, or develop into a rarefied artist of the conglomerate. On the other hand you could just be an ordinary member of that common species -- climbing wall devotees.

You could become a snowman, an iceman, a mixed terrain man, a Dover cliffs chalkman. You could be a Big Mountain Man with muscles on your cardio-vascular system.

You could be a generalist in Abroad, with sub-specialisms in French Rock, Spanish Rock, Irish Rock, Greek, Yugoslavian, Italian, Arabian, Yewish, or Albanian Rock: an expeditionist to the exotic or the obscure, from the Arctic to the Equator and beyond.

You may be a gentleman climber, cosseted at night in a real bed, a poseur smartly dressed in the latest hi-tech fashion, a dosser, a hanger-on, a bullshitter, a tramp climber festooned in twenty year old breeches. You may be an anarchist, a psycho, a socialist, a caring middle-class trendy, an odd ball.

You could develop sub interests in things geological, botanical, fungal, ornithological or faunal. You can live on orange juice and lettuce with every carbohydrate calculated to the last microdot or use climbing as an excuse for living on beer and grease.

You may be a strong, silent hardman a la the Scottish model or a Californian wimp given to total self analysis using the cliffs as a vertical psychoanalyst's couch.

So, with such an almost infinite freedom and diversity, what do many people do? They tick off routes on a list.

"Don't confuse me with choice, man, just feed me the instructions."

'Hard Rock' probably started it in earnest and with each new lush publication, a new faithful working through it from cover to cover, riding pillion on someone else's imagination.

When they have worked their way through Ron James's book they can proceed to Paul Williams's offering. Then there is 'Selected Climbs in the Lakes'. There are those who want to do all the routes on Stanage. Not to be frustrated by lack of ability, there are those who want to do all the routes on Stanage below a certain grade. There is 'Classic Rock' and with Mt Blanc's '100 Best', a different element: "How far up the list have you got."

And it is not just in climbing: below the waist there is 'Classic Walks', The Munros, the multiple Wainwrights, the Coast to Coasts, the Pennine, Highland, the Cheviot Ways. When you have done all the Welsh Three Thousanders there are the Two Thousanders (The Corbetts?). There is

probably someone right now completing all the points in East Anglia 100ft above sea level.

The result of all this is we have bigger and bigger armies working their way round increasingly battered and threadbare old classics. Look at the state of the Welsh routes in 'Cold Climbs' within a couple of days of coming into condition.

Well, given that people like to be programmed, perhaps what we as a club should do is produce our own non-cliched and less crowded compendium. Never mind the despoilation, think of the profits.

For starters, how about all the routes in Wales over the 2,500ft contour, or all the routes in the Pass beginning with the letter 'C', all the mountains in Scotland with 'Ben' in the name, or for those who like their lists relatively short, all the old 'Rock and Ice' routes first done without aid.

The possibilities are endless. Suggestions please for the next issue. The best could become the 'Official Club List' with royalties to the author.

Mike King

It was with great regret that we heard of the death of Mike King. Mike will have been well known to older members of the Club. He was an active, able and prolific editor in the early years of the Club. A short extract from one of his many articles is reproduced below. It shows that the use of aid was just as important a factor in climbing as it is now. Mike, to his credit, took a very pure line on the topic. Climbing standards may have improved out of all recognition but have the ethics?

Climbing Notes by M N King

December 1962

Despite indifferent conditions, the summer of 1962 has seen a total of twelve new 'climbs' (one hesitates to use the word "routes") on Clogwyn d'ur Arddu. This is, to say the least, extraordinary. Most of them are reported as being on the Far East section. Furthermore, the Great Wall in the Vember area has yielded to the doubtful tactics of being abseiled down from above and then climbed with direct aid from slings left on the way down. This is no doubt exciting indeed for the performer, but if a piece of rock can only be climbed by these sort of tactics, it would be more respectful to leave it alone. One feels a little sorry for people whose standard of climbing is so inordinately high that they have to seek entertainment in this way.

If these reports are correct in the detail so far submitted to this writer, one fervently hopes they will remain unrecognised.

There is without doubt tremendous pleasure and thrill to be had from opening up a new area of cliff or mountainside and to find an 'impossible' looking section of rock going at mild severe standard or less, should be an experience without parallel. For Roberts and Cooke, the finding of such a relatively straightforward climb as Main Wall, Cynr Las, must have been the experience of a lifetime. We are not digressing, merely excusing the desire to climb new rocks - there ain't much left!

The report by our friend CTJ on Castell Cidwm in the last CC Journal

does'nt seem to have awakened much desire to visit the spot. The routes don't appear to have been tried more than once, and the name doesn't mean anything when raised over a pint pot; except to the Cromlech Club. We may be misinformed but "the find of the year 1961" hasn't been found in 1962. How about leaving the Pass and its Corner to the masses - no disrespect to our members who have climbed this long and hard pitch - and climbing in an atmosphere remote from the road and other parties ?.....

So, in the same year, the Eigerwand has killed two britons and two others have climbed it, in apparently extraordinarily good conditions. A noble achievement but - why encourage all the Press hullabaloo ? In a 'thank you' letter for our hospitality, Don Willans wrote - "So Chris and Ian have climbed the Norwand. I sincerely hope the craze to throw away lives will stop now the 'first Briton' has climbed the face". We need say no more. Sympathy and congratulations in the same breath. Not good.

"Talking of getting a move on" in the hills, the Cuillin Main Ridge is down to 4 hours 33 minutes. Not that this sort of competition has anything to do with future mountaineering or any other mountaineering for that matter, though if it catches on, it will no doubt have a great deal to do with future accidents.....

"..... how impossible it is to escape the march of progress. Mountaineer scientists, tiny embryonic Slessers, lurk behind every chockstone" - so wrote Tom Patey after coming across bathygraphic surveyors in Torridon. But despite the crowds, there are some big cliffs hereabouts which were explored by Bonnington and Patey - visual XS climbs turning into tactile Difficults - good stuff, lets go.

Well - here we are says SMART MART as we arrive at our doss spot beneath Mt Aiguille. A pleasant spot. Kate immediately puts the wine in a stream to cool, Allison tidies the van, Martin starts making a table and I doss in the sun.

TOMORROW - WE HIT THE ROCK.

Breakfast over, its 12 noon, time to pack our sacks and head for the mountain. At 12.30 (only half-hour to pack and make our fond farewells), we and Martin leave camp, in dispute.

Martin wants to walk directly up the hill and I want to follow a wandering path (easy angled). We agree to meet at a little boulder 1000ft above us. One hour later, Kate back at camp can hear two people shouting obscene comments at each other. We finally meet, calm down and decide to climb the South Pillar, an 800ft route.

According to the guide it starts just around a pillar, left of a bivouac cave.

Guess what? No pillar

No Cave

and the first few pitches look 6a not 5a. We meet two frenchmen who have been looking for the same route for two hours. They don't even know which face#corner or whatever is South. We sit down near a pile of boulders and realise we are sitting on the first few pitches. They are now horizontal.

So what now - we consult the guide again, and go for an easier route.

Pilier Sud#Ovest near a prominent pillar at the far end of the face. We go there and find three prominent pillars. Which way shall we go - "I see no pegs".

We decide to put on our gear and go for it. I tip out my sac, put on my harness and 'clip up' the gear.

"Pass the ropes Mart".

"What".

"Pass the ropes Mart".

"you've got them".

"No, you have".

"Well they were in your sac yesterday".

"That was before I packed for the climb".

"Shit".

"Oh well, its too late to start now".

"And the weather looks ominous".

We repack and retreat under blue skies and burning sun. Back at camp Allison is boiling the dish cloths and face flannels.

Next day - perfect weather again. Back under the Pilier Sud#Ovest we immediately find the correct route, gear up and set off. What a start,

10.00 o'clock and we are already progressing upwards.

After several pitches at the (Pete Livesey) crux. 4c with a couple of pegs for aid. Mmmmmh - smooth wall bristling with pegs 4c. I set off armed with a couple of slings ready for those 'aid' pegs. Five minutes later I'm back at the belay panting.

"Give us some more slings Mart".

This time I successfully cross the wall with the aid of every peg I can clip. (that is, all of them). Martin follows. A couple more pitches and its Mart's lead.

Quote guide "the difficulties are now over"

Quote Spenceley "its easy, bomb it Mart".

The diedre looks easy, I can see a couple of pegs.

Ping - zip - whiz - Mart motors off.

20ft later - "It looks steep".

Another 5ft - "Can I pull on a peg?".

Another 5ft - "I wish I could reach the next peg".

On the remaining 30ft Mart clips and pulls every peg - the corner is overhanging.

"Come on Mart, you hopeless git, can't you climb anything".

"You free it then".

I intended to, at least at first but I soon employ Mart's technique. I arrive on the belay which looks like a spiders web. Mart has used 10 wires and fixed the rope separately to every one!

The climb is easier now but more serious - vertical scree. We take turns being bombarded by rocks as we second. We untie and continue to the top solo.

The top is brilliant - like that Mordillo cartoon, a green field of grass on top of a rock pillar.

Back at camp Allison is boiling socks.