

A Very Happy And Prosperous New Year To Everyone

Welcome to my first attempt at producing the Club Magazine. I intend to continue in the excellent style and format of my predecessor, Phil, by making you read the important but possibly less interesting stuff first.

So to the AGM which has given us a strong committee but no Chairman to lead it. You need the Club and the Club needs you - so please consider volunteering for this most important and rewarding role. This year we have a very experienced committee team so you will get all the support you need.

Your Club needs a Chairman - would you do it?

Minutes of the EGCC AGM 28th November 2006 - Adrian Botting

1. Attendees The following members attended, which constituted a quorum for electing a new committee and agreeing motions;- Dave Hodgson, Adrian Botting, Lars Singleton, Jo Campbell, Paul Padman, Bruce Gibbon, Andrew Brett, Roger Grieve, Jim Clarke, Reg Clarke, Trevor Clarke.

2. Chairman's Report The past year has been very quiet, for a number of reasons. A number of active members have departed overseas, either permanently or for the greater part of the year, which reduced the normal levels of attendance and enthusiasm for meets. Nevertheless, there has been regular attendance at the various indoor walls in the area, which conversely has also contributed to the decline in the cohesiveness of the club as allegiance has moved away from the club's former 'home turf' of High Sports (Redhill) and sandstone towards Craggy Island in Guildford. This led to members who cannot easily reach Guildford in the evening becoming isolated from club activity. However, a number of new members have joined, compensating for those who left. The membership is about 35.

3. Treasurers Report Lars Singleton presented the club's finances, which in summary are:

Balance at beginning of the year	£621
Balance at end of year	£591

The main expenditure was on the BMC subscription (£190 for the first 20 members and £8.75 per head thereafter), the magazine and administration.

Income was reduced this year as those members who paid by cheque last year were excused payment as recompense for those on direct debit who did not pay the previous year. This will not be necessary for the forthcoming year.



*EGCC Magazine And
Newsletter*

January 2007

Increased expenditure is anticipated in 2007 with an upturn in club activity.

Assets Some key club assets whereabouts were not known, but were identified at the meeting. In particular, Andrew Brett has the abseil rope. The whereabouts of the projector screen is uncertain. Lars Singleton has the remaining Thai club T-shirts.

5. Subscriptions The club subscriptions are proposed to be £13 for the forthcoming year, a sum that has remained unchanged for the past 4 years. This proposal was passed unanimously.

5. Election of The new Committee The exiting committee stood down.

5.1 Chairman There were no nominations for Chairman. This post is currently vacant and the duties will be managed by the balance of the committee members until a candidate steps forward and is accepted by the club.

5.2 Secretary Adrian Botting elected unopposed.

5.3 Treasurer Lars Singleton elected unopposed.

5.4 New Members No nominations.

5.5 Newsletter Editor Reg Clarke elected unopposed.

5.6 Social Secretary Sarah George elected unopposed.

5.7 Meets Secretary Jim Clarke elected unopposed.

5.8 Website Editor Trevor Clarke elected unopposed.

5.9 Librarian This post is to be amalgamated with that of Meets Secretary: and the library to be transferred to Jim Clarke

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Meets for the forthcoming year Jim Clarke proposed a meets list for the forthcoming year which was agreed in principle.

The attractiveness of day trips over weekends was discussed and it was recognised that whilst weekend meets were attractive, many members' commitments made weekends difficult. Day trips were easier and members

should endeavour to publicise their own day trips widely and be as inclusive as possible. Communication would be vital in the future success of the club.

5.2. Amalgamation The issue of the continued viability of the club was raised and whether or not the club should amalgamate with a suitable local club. On the basis that most committee posts had been filled it was felt that this was not necessary, but that this would be a make or break year for the club.

5.3 Climbing Walls The increase in the number of local walls has been divisive in the club, with some distinctly split allegiances. Efforts had been made recently to establish a varied programme, with varied success. Additionally, given the infrequency with which some members saw each other, recognition was not always easy. It was agreed that members going to a wall should publicise the fact by email.

5.4. Membership Badges In an attempt to address the issue of identification at climbing walls (and elsewhere) the club will obtain a supply of EGCC button badges for members to wear on their chalk bags. This was felt to be less regimented than a shirt; cheap, non-contentious and functional. Adrian Botting will secure a supply for distribution.

5.5. Communication The future of the club will depend upon communication and it is therefore in the members' interests to be active in communication.

Treasurer - Lars Singleton

Our affiliation fee to the BMC falls due on the 1st January each year and we must pay this within two months. This gives the Club and individual members (not overseas members) insurance cover for Civil Liability up to £5M and Personal Accident Disability Insurance (£10,00 for various disablements, up to £250 for hospitalisation, up to £500 for convalescence and emergency dental treatment) when involved in all forms of mountaineering (including ski mountaineering), climbing, walking and abseiling.

Affiliation also entitles members to discounts of around 10% in a large number of equipment shops (see back of this magazine) and to copies of the BMC Summit quarterly magazine. The EGCC has a special club discount of 20% at Peglers for climbing gear and clothing (not maps or books) on production of your membership card. This is only available at Arundel, not on-line.

All this (and more) comes for only about £9.00 per head and is included in your EGCC subscription of £13. If you have not yet paid for 2007, please get your subscription in to me ASAP. Membership cards will be issued this year.

If you are a member of more than one affiliated club you can get a rebate of the BMC affiliation fee - see EGCC Membership renewal form for details - which means to such people that their membership of the EGCC is a startlingly good value of about £4 per annum.

Meets Secretary - Jim Clarke

Climbing Walls This has been the subject of much discussion recently so I won't go over it again. I do however intend to keep the nominal alternating Wednesday night venues so that those who can't get to Craggy at least can get out to climb with other club members, and hopefully there will be some cross pollination between these people and those who prefer Craggy. I'm sure there will be members at both walls - this is fine and good. Remember the important thing is to get out, climb and get fit for the real stuff that the club is here for: Getting Outside To Climb.

The nominal Wednesday night schedule is: 10th Jan: Craggy, 17th Jan: K2, 24th Jan: Craggy, 31st Jan: High Sports, 7th Feb: Craggy, 14th Feb: K2 (or for some of us a posh expensive restaurant winning brownie points!)

Monthly Meets The important list - remember, the main raison d'être for the club is to help you get outside and climb. Those of you who were at the AGM know that I created a meets list, and I have fleshed it out a little here. Please let me have any comments/suggestions.

Jan 21st: Cycle ride over the downs. Yes I know it's not climbing, but then again January in South England isn't the most inspiring place for climbing, and a fair number of members are also cyclists. The idea is to find a circular route based around a pub (surprise surprise) just to get out in the fresh (wet and cold) air to blow the cowwebs off. The alternative would be to take a walk based on the same start/finish pub - So really there's no excuse...

Feb / March: No fixed dates or venue. The plan is to look at the weather, and act accordingly. If we get a nice cold snap then the idea is to head off perhaps to N. Wales to get in a spot of climbing on frozen turf. If the weather is fine then we will look at a day trip out to Swanage, Avon / Wye or the Peaks dependant on weather patterns or personal preferences.

Easter (April 6th to 9th): Either **Freyr** (Belgium - go through the tunnel and turn left) or **Font**. I'll look into it and put out more info about in the New Year. Freyr gets rave reviews from everyone who has been there so I'm interested, but I don't actually know a lot about it or of alternative activities. Font of course is bouldering, but offers much more for those of us with families - walking, cycling, chateaux, wine, food, wine.....

May 5-7: Pembroke Fabulous sea cliff climbing on limestone cliffs. For the dedicated climber as the area is not renowned for it's tourist traps!

May 26-28: Lakes. Personally my favorite venue for climbing in England bar none. In addition to some of the best climbing in England ranging from easy "mountain route" type Diffs to fiendishly hard test routes - far too many to list, there is there are the usual alternative of walking and cycling, or for less active families zoos, steam railways, boating on Windermere (or other lakes) and innumerable other touristy things to do.

23-34 June: North Devon. Baggly point is the main point of focus here but not the only venue. Again somewhere I've not climbed but I'm told it's cracking. Plenty enough climbing to occupy the weekend at all grades, but the area also offers alternatives should the fancy take you.

21-22 July: Peaks Really needs no introduction. Mostly Grit, some limestone. Possible to do in a day (I'd advise Saturday, not Sunday).

25-27 August (Bank Holiday): Cornwall. The traditional club pilgrimage to Lands End to worship on sun kissed, grippy like you wouldn't believe, granite. Most varied climbing at Bosi, Sennen, Chair Ladder, but these can be crowded - go to some of the smaller crags and you can have the place to yourself. For alternatives there's loads to do - I'd recommend going to the outdoor Minac Theatre - the atmosphere is great, but you do need to book early in the year.

September 22-23: Avon / Wye Limestone climbing two to three hours down the M4 so very possible as a day trip. I've climbed in the Wye valley at Wintours and Simmond Yat both of which offer great climbing. Avon seems to be Adrian's current favorite venue so comes highly recommended.

October: Roaches / Peaks. No fixed date on this as October's weather can be a little tricky. We'll take a view on the weather for this one and act accordingly. Peaks again as it's easy to get to and offers great climbing.

November: North Wales Banquet Date to be confirmed.

Social Secretary - Sarah George

So then, how are we going to be social in 2007? Well I suggest some food, various restaurants in various locations, say perhaps, every other month or so. In the summer we'll definitely have some barbeques - perhaps at Stone Farm, perhaps at Harrisons, perhaps at both!

Also, there's no reason why our social activities should stop at noshing. Cycling along/over/through the North Downs will be a real good laugh and personally I rather fancy a session of dumper truck racing at a site in Dartford. If you fancy a more cultural diversion then let's track down some of these displays of mountain paintings that lurk in and around London and if anyone's really feeling bold there's always the Kendal film festival later in the year....

Rest assured, if given no direction I will happily wander around organising things willynilly as the mood takes me. However, if given suggestions and nudged in good directions I may also organise events of taste and wisdom – the choice is yours!!!



Delicate Ice Tool Technique and Hey Presto - Stuart Summits

From your editor's archives, a photo of a youthful Stuart helping to build the Slinfold Scout Hut. Which leads to our first climbing tale by Jo Campbell.

A Welsh Summer Scorcher

When I wrote a Welsh Winter Wonderland I hadn't realised it was to be the first in a series! On that visit to Wales we found it blanketed under a thick layer of snow and ice, this time it was bathed in glorious sunshine.

Stuart and I had planned the trip as a bit of last minute training for the Alps - I

needed to remind my legs what it feels like to walk uphill with a heavy rucksack and more importantly get my hands on some rock as I hadn't climbed rock outdoors this year, only ice. Our first objective was Tryfan. I had never been up there and fancied doing one of the classic East Face routes. We selected our climb not by what we liked the sound of in the guidebook but rather by choosing the line with the fewest number of climbers already on it. Who said trad climbing was dead – Tryfan was crawling with climbers.

We ended up on First Pinnacle Rib, a 175m Vdiff, which unfortunately Stuart had done before. The start was a bit scrappy as I kept getting off route to avoid the scary looking bits but we soon found ourselves at the Pinnacle – the point where the first and second routes merge. The next pitch was the crux – delicate moves up the Yellow slab. We watched the couple ahead of us – the leader practically soloed it and the second made it look quite tricky but did identify the good handhold so I knew what I was aiming for. Unfortunately at this point the peace of the day was spoilt by the arrival of a rescue helicopter about 50m away from us, which appeared to be scanning one of the other classic lines. We hoped it was just an exercise but they then proceeded to remove a climber who we later found out had suffered a head injury – not surprising given the number of people on the crag. So I now faced delicate balancy climbing, with little protection, whilst carrying a rucksack, with a helicopter buzzing around – not the perfect combination. Thankfully the balancy moves were not too bad, I managed to get some gear in on the way and I had soon made it to the good handhold. The next pitch should have been lovely, up a beautiful scoop of striated rock, but was rather spoilt by an abundance of insecure flakes. And that was it, we were at the top. There is an additional optional pitch at the top – a chimney, but even on such a hot day it seemed dank and uninviting so we bypassed that and headed for the top for my first close up view of Adam and Eve. I passed on the traditional jump from one to the other - it looked far too scary.

The next morning we set out early to do amphitheatre buttress, a 300m VD on the side of Carnedd Llywelyn. We had hoped that by choosing a climb with a fairly long walk in we might lose the crowds but it was not to be, there was one couple already on the route when we arrived and several more turned up after us. From the bottom the climb looked very green and I thought it was going to be scrappy, but right from the start the climbing was good. The lower pitches are quite slabby but as you gain height the buttress narrows and the exposure increases as the gullies either side of the route deepen. The crux comes about mid-height with a steep headwall that can only be passed by climbing out over the right hand arête above a massive drop into the gully. Stuart made light work of it and it actually wasn't that bad although I was glad I hadn't had to

lead it. Thankfully after this slightly nervy pitch the route eased as it followed 'the garden path', a grassy scramble along a wide flat ridge. We had taken up coils in the rope and were moving together over this stretch, then all of a sudden I went over a small hump in the ridge at the other side of which was a 6 foot drop onto a much narrower section of the ridge. Things just got more and more exciting as the ridge narrowed even more, eventually culminating in a 'shark's fin' of rock. The ridge was amazing – loads of exposure (although I tried as much as possible not to look down), and always entertaining but never too difficult, and it seemed to go on like this for ages until after a final short steep pitch we topped out.

After a stop for lunch and a laze in the sun, which was curtailed due to the number of midges, we walked to the top of Carnedd Llywelyn. Given the beautiful day we were expecting fantastic views of Anglesey to the north and Snowdonia to the south but the only cloud we saw all weekend chose that moment to sit on top of the hill. We headed down only to find that within 10 minutes of us leaving the summit the cloud had lifted! After 2 days of fairly long walks I couldn't face any more on the third day – so we drove round to the Llanberis Pass for some cragging. We headed up to Carreg Wastad for what Stuart promised me would be the best Severe I would ever do – Crackstone Rib. As it was Monday there was only one other pair on the crag so we didn't have to queue for this one. It lived up to all of Stuart's hype – a delicate traverse out onto a nose, followed by an arête with fantastic exposure but always with just enough gear placements and positive holds to keep me happy. The only bad thing about the climb was that my feet were burning all the time I was on the belay ledge as the rock was so hot – not something you often need to complain about in Wales. The route was well worth its three stars and was a fantastic end to a cracking weekend.

The Cornwall Meet is always one of the highlights of the club year. This year's trip was superb and is described by our ex-editor, Phil Perry.

In Search of a Different Cornwall

Why am I in this hot sticky loft with little light, some dubious floor boards, a bee's nest, a hornet's nest and the odd bat or two? Why did we decide to put our house on the market this weekend, and why did we choose to put so many of our books and stuff into this loft to hide our belongings and pretend that we live in a tidy house?

Well I was in the loft desperately hunting for the little black book and the little

red book (not the one by Chairman Mao). It was coming up for the end of August which meant it was time for the EGCC club trip to Cornwall, and I decided that before I got in the car and drove all that way I'd have a quick scan through the guide books to see what climbs I might like to (be able to) do over the long weekend, have a hit list perhaps, or more accurately know which areas were hard and which were easy. I knew that if I didn't do this I'd wake up on the Saturday morning and look at the weather and say, 'Err well...it looks a bit better over there. Err perhaps I'll go get some breakfast... And then I'll ummm...The Eden Project', But not this time...



Commando Ridge - Sea to Seat

So, having got the cobwebs out of my hair and having wiped the sweat from my now wet brow, I had the books. I didn't need to buy another copy, and that would have been a tragedy, it's my most ticked guide, ok, one of my few guide books. So began the lunchtimes of looking through the books, looking through the areas that I'd heard of and the ones that I hadn't. I looked at Land's End

and found that most of the climbs are way above my current leading grade, and besides I didn't much fancy the idea of dealing with the tourists. So by the time it was the weekend I had all those routes in my head, but not the foggiest idea of what I wanted to do. Still I had the trip to make up my mind.

Bridgnorth to the Cornish border 3hrs, Excellent! Amazing! I'll get to the campsite with loads of time, a short stroll perhaps, an afternoon beer or two. And then it happened, I saw the roadwork signs. After years of struggling across the moor and India Queens, a proper road is being built, now! But there you go, 3hours later I got to sunny St Just and pitched up at the site. Ok not as early as I'd planned, but enough time to pitch and make my way up tut' town to have a couple of pints of Tinnors and some pub grub, and of course, whilst I was waiting I read through the little red book to get some ideas. There were the usual amazing names, great approaches, and those with no drawings and vague descriptions, twenty metres left of the obvious groove, below the chock, start over polished holds to the airy ledge, finish up the thin polished overhanging unprotected groove.

Having got back to the campsite I had a wander across the try line and found that Reg and Jim had arrived. This was good news, as they shared their wine, crisps and conversation into the night, as it got colder and colder. Then it rained. Ah Cornwall!!!

Saturday morning. We suspected that Maisy and Colin had turned up late but there was no sign. It rained for a few seconds, but it blew over, ah that'll be fine. Perhaps we'll take water proofs just in case. Then the decision... Reg was easy, he would go wherever we wanted. I asked Jim what he wanted to do. He said that he didn't mind, but he'd looked at a few areas, and produced a hit list of starred climbs. Great, we looked organised. We chose Aire Point, a little west facing crag just off the coast path at the northern tip of Whitsands Bay. So it made sense to park in the car park at the bottom of Sennen, and walk bare foot all the way along the beach with full pack at low tide, difficult after five minutes but good exercise. Just before the crag we saw a basking shark. Nature was out in force.

John Wayne Memorial Crag sits just below the path, it stretches to a dizzying height of 10metres, but that means that you can shoot up and down these routes until the tide comes in. A warm up on some VDiff's, moving on to a couple of Severes that made us think a bit. I had to apologise to Jim after my first lead, having protected the crux move at the top I went for it, and in that determined way got over the bulge at the top, even scratched my elbow, well ok a bit more than a scratch – I hope the blood has come out of your rope, sorry Jim. It was Cornish Granite. Anyway, that was Cow Girl – a warm up.

That evening, after getting back from the essential pub grub and beer and meeting some of the regulars that we are used to seeing each year, I cursed my tent position. As I sat in Reg's tent (ten times as far from the club house as mine) whiling away the rest of the evening all I could hear was the pub singer. He was appalling; he'd go from Celine Dion to Dire Straights to the Birdie Song and back again. Anyway we had a good evening, and again it rained.

Sunday morning. We decided to do something completely different to Aire Point, we chose Commando Ridge, an eight pitch 198m ***VDiff classic route. We got to Bosigran and I for one took great joy in peeling off the main path to walk over to the ridge, and for once I felt quite excited. We knew what we were going to do and it was a great long route. As we walked to the ridge we read the description and it sounded a little dangerous which helped the excitement. Oh and it rained again. Now here's a tip, crossing over the ridge to down climb is a touch steep. We reached the wet rocks at the water's edge and looked across at the corner which we had to go around to reach the first pitch. We looked...We looked...and then I thought I'd investigate whilst on belay, so I tiptoed across the rock and tried to ascertain the safest, driest route to the start. But after a few slips and the like we accepted our situation and realised that it was too dangerous, there was a good swell on and I didn't have clean pants on. So we skimmed up a grassy way to the start of pitch 3, and from there we were on route.

We had the route to ourselves for quite a while, Jim and I taking it in turns to lead. It was interesting to look across at the hordes on the main Bosigran Crag. After a couple of pitches a group caught up with us romping over the ridge Alpine style. We gave way and followed on. Here's a second tip, never assume that the people in front of you know where they are going and never assume that they have stopped at the belay ledge in the book. Always read the guide book, and when it doesn't feel far enough, keep going. Anyway Jim led off for the last pitch and eventually we got to the top, and stripped our gear, couldn't wait to get feeling in my toes. I looked up and saw that there was an interesting feature just above our heads, it looked like an armchair, quite a lot like I'd have expected the armchair feature (4b) on pitch eight. Doh! Never assume that the group in front of you know where the climb finishes. We walked to the top and took a moment to enjoy the view. We decamped to the pubs of St Just and again had huge plates of food and the odd beer (not too much as we'd all got a little too much sun).

At least I now have an excuse for going back to the ridge to climb pitch 1, pitch 2 and pitch 8. I might even get that piece of Ab-tat back whilst I'm there. Let me know if you want to do it, experienced guide available.

On the Sunday Reg and Jim made moves to get back to the south east. And I

thought for a while and charged off north, as much as one can charge in Cornwall, on August Bank Holiday, with road works on the only main road out. Still I had a couple of CDs, and perhaps next year the road will be finished.

North Wales in December; a Saturday with reasonable weather, the Snowdon Horseshoe completed, a fine banquet consumed with much delectable wine. A Sunday pouring with rain and what did our Treasurer, Social Secretary and Webmaster decide to do? Trevor tells all.....



It Really Is Great Fun - Honest

The Morning After

With the very enjoyable Saturday evening feast and drinkies over with, Sunday morning dawned a trifle damp to say the least. Most elected for an early return to the motorway, whilst the slightly more cunning of us had chucked a mountain bike or three in the boot on Friday night.

“Whimps!” I thought as I doggedly got gears lubed and derailleurs and brakes tuned up for thrashing through Snowdonia. I had brought a route map from MBR magazine, a ‘Hard Route’ no less. A mere drizzle and gust of wind wasn’t going to put me off.

And so with the rest off and gone, we mounted our Aluminium Horses and pedalled up the road to Capel to join the 17 mile circuit across the fells towards Llanwrst. It was by this time raining a little.... And a bit windy... but I was up for it and the others weren’t objecting loud enough that it couldn’t be ignored.

Cycling the rocky path was a little interesting as the wind added a random element to the steering and when the path reduced to a single-track (MTB heaven in normal circumstances) it became laughable with rocks boulders, trees and evil looking wild horses all out to get in the way.... And laugh is exactly what Sarah and myself did when Lars, attempting to open a gate and push his bike through, was pinned down by the aforementioned gate for about 20 seconds by a tremendous 60mph gust that came, rain laden, down the valley complete with his name on it.

We’d managed about half a mile, if that, and agreed to turn tail and cycle up the Ogwen valley instead – a nice wide track to allow for the wind effect. I guess we managed about a mile before the rain and flood water running along the track made the whole thing slightly ridiculous.

On the news the next day were reports of Capel Curig having 4 inches of rain between 12noon and 7pm. Yepp – we were in the middle of it!!!

It was a rather soggy car that followed the rest some 3 hours later!

As watched the trio assemble their bikes without mudguards to face the pouring rain it seemed to me they were about to participate in the biking equivalent of pissing into the wind. I didn’t think there was any significant risk until.....Adrian Botting, nursing a broken shoulder sent me this X-ray of his pinned bones with the wry title.....



'Dangerous Things These Mountain Bikes'!

And this description of a day not mountain biking.

Yellow Edge - Avon Gorge

A three star route comprises many things and sound rock, good moves and a fine line are reasonable expectations. I cowered against the wall as 38 tonnes of juggernaut thundered past two feet away; blinking the dust and grit out of my eyes, I caught my breath on diesel fumes and braced myself for the next one. Clearly, proximity to a major road is not a factor that guide book writers consider.

A few minutes later I climbed over the wall and dropped into a patch of damp brambles, mud and nettles. Uncomfortable perhaps, but safer than the other side of the wall. A straight-armed shove from behind reminded me that as a wearer of the full-length trousers, I was responsible for treading the path through the nettles to the foot of Yellow Wall, the three star route that was the objective for the evening.

Now, as any fule no, yellow limestone means bad rock: always has, always will. Shale has never had a good reputation as a climber's rock. So, a yellow limestone route, called Yellow Edge, that started on a shale band was bound to be a bad day out, wasn't it? This type reasoning is called 'the benefit of hindsight'. A careful perusal of the history section of the Avon guidebook later revealed the views of a visiting climber from Yosemite, "Back home we call that mud".

Nevertheless, I climbed up, clipping odd iron-age pieces of fixed gear and a few

wires here and there, until a traverse and mantel onto a shelf presented themselves. I placed my flat palm over a rounded nubbin of rock, pulled down, threw my weight over my hand and began to push when, with a tired little crunch, the nubbin sheared off. Panic instantly flared, as a gruesome fall looked imminent, but I repositioned the nubbin and patted it back into place like a snow ball, allowing a hurried retreat.

This was yet another one of those 'mouth like a pharaoh's sock' moments. No matter how I looked at it, it wasn't going to go away and there was no more gear to be had. I stepped back up, threw the nubbin away and tried again, reaching through to grab first one handful and then another handful of strong grass on a ledge. A few easy moves led to another ledge and a stout bolt belay.

As I brought Paddy up, I set to wondering about the 3 stars: loose holds and big handfuls of grass? Perhaps it will pick up. The second pitch goes up a bit, left a long way across a vertical, yellow wall and then up a steeper yellow bit to a belay next to a big diagonal roof. It looked airy, as the wall cut away underneath the traverse. At the end of the traverse, a big iron bar stuck out from the rock. The guide book suggested that most people liked to stand on this.

The moves up were OK, until a stiff pull was needed to get onto the traverse line, which consisted of pockets of all shapes and sizes – the holds appeared one by one, as did the gear. Each hold faced a different way – side pulls, undercuts, incuts and the puzzle steady unlocked until I could make a long step down to stand on the iron spike. Brilliant climbing, that left a huge grin on my face, which slowly faded as I looked up.

The pockets had all had lips, where a softer inside had eroded behind a harder skin. Unfortunately, the harder skin had now disappeared, leaving slightly impending, crumbly yellow crud and equally crumbly gear placements. Still, time was pressing; one more pitch to go and it seemed to be getting quite gloomy.

I stepped off the comforting spike, and started to pick my way up. I reached up, held a hold, began to pull, and off it came in my hand. The pharaoh scurried back with his socks: I 'took a moment for myself' and carried on. At one point, Paddy considered telling me that I was standing on a really bad hold, but then he saw I was holding an even worse one, and decided that I probably knew.

I also knew that I was heading for a spike belay. I had something the size of a traffic cone in mind and so the croissant-sized object I found was a distinct disappointment. Still, there was a decent looking peg and a friend placement.

A ledge to sit on would have been good, but perhaps that had fallen off. Swinging from my hanging belay I began to take in the ropes and looked around a bit. It was definitely very gloomy now: it was evening, true, but a big black cloud wasn't helping. At which point, the big black cloud did its thing and rained.

This outing instantly turned from being a pleasant evening into a full scale rout. On the down side, my ropes wouldn't reach the ground and Paddy was on a belay some 50 feet down and 50 feet to one side and the belay was badly set out for rigging an abseil. On the plus side, most of the gear was clipped on one rope, and the other rope would reach the belay doubled, which meant that I could have a belay as I abbed, and get the gear back, and get pulled back onto the stance.

Explaining the plan to Paddy over the noise of the rain on the trees and the roar of the A4 was not easy, but eventually two damp climbers were reunited on a small ledge. The ropes were sorted, and thrown off into the near darkness, and two very wet people landed in the brambles and nettles.

I'm told that Yellow Edge is E3 5b 5c 5c and that the top pitch is amazing – it takes a rising rightwards line above the diagonal overhang. It probably is, and curiously, I still want to go and do it, because the middle pitch is brilliant too, in its own little way. The first pitch, you can keep.

Editor's Thanks

A special thank you to all those who have contributed articles for this magazine. I found them most entertaining (and I am sure you have too) and so well written that the only editing required was to change the fonts.

Stop Press:-

Seasons Best Wishes to all at EGCC from Tony & Ag currently (30th Dec) in Melbourne at 15°C and raining. At the same time it was 13° and raining in Horsham. It is supposed to be summer there and winter here - crazy!

East Grinstead's Own Miniature Great St Bernard

Boo somewhere on the Snowdon Horseshoe - but doing and saying what?

Yup its competition time folks. email Reg with your caption and bubble filler. Who knows, we might find a prize for the most amusing suggestions.

In the case of a tie, Boo will have the casting bark - or bite, depending on whether or not he feels insulted.



Special EGCC Discount



Peglers, tel 01903 883 375, website www.peglers.co.uk, give EGCC members a special discount of 20% on climbing gear and clothing on production of a current EGCC membership card. This discount does not apply to maps or books. As proof of membership is required this special discount cannot be given for on-line purchases.

BMC Discounts

As a BMC member you are entitled to a discount, usually 10%, on production of your membership card. A full list is given in the Member Handbook you will receive direct from the BMC. Some retail outlets of likely interest to EGCC members is given below.

<u>Store</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Website</u>
High Sports	Salfords	www.high-sports.co.uk
Costwold Outdoor Ltd	Nationwide	www.cotswoldoutdoor.com
Field & Trek	Nationwide	www.fieldandtrek.com
Joe Brown Climbing Shop	Capel Curig	www.joebrownsnowdonia.co.uk
Needle Sports	Keswick	www.needlesports.com
Outside (5%)	Hathersage	ww.outside.co.uk
Snow & Rock	Nationwide	www.snowandrock.co.uk
The Climbers Shop	Ambleside	www.theclimbersshop.co.uk
Ultimate Outdoors	Betwys y Coed) Keswick) www.ultimateoutdoors.com