

East Grinstead Climbing Club

www.eastgrinsteadclimbingclub.co.uk



SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER



In this issue...

Frolicking in the French Alps

Helmet or no helmet?

2010 gets off to a great start!

Editors bit:

Here it is again—the EGCC Magazine! Personally I love writing the magazine, it inspires me with that little flicker of enthusiasm and excitement for the year ahead, but does it do it for you?

We are welcoming a number of new members since the last magazine—so please if you see a sheepish face around please welcome them in (unless of course it is a sheep!)

It is always a struggle finding the articles for the magazine, it seems to be a tradition with EGCC. But I know you guys and girls have been out there climbing—I have seen the emails! Please remember though if you do go out (or in) just stick something in writing and send it to me with a picture or two, anytime of the year is good, and it will find its way into the magazine.

Thanks to Adrian this time who has kindly put together a great article on his recent expedition to the French Alps. It sounds like it was great fun.

So the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010 has been one of the very best winters for climbing in recent history—and I certainly don't intend to let it pass without some climbing in the white stuff, even if things have been a bit hectic recently (when aren't they?). So check out the list of events on the right and come along. Lets make this a great year for EGCC.

Andrew

What's on:

Note: our meets method has changed — please check emails for regular updates and please invite people along to events to keep the club thriving. The dates below are our main planned events.

March:

26th –30th - Possible Scottish or Welsh trip (check emails/contact Andrew)

April:

Saturday 24th - Peak District

May:

Sunday 30th - Wye Valley

June:

Saturday 19th - North Wales

July:

Saturday 10th - Avon Gorge

August:

Saturday 14th - North Devon

September:

Saturday 11th - Swanage/
Portland

Every Wednesday:

Indoor/outdoor local climbing

EGCC Committee contacts - click to email us!



Ann: Treasurer & Membership



Andrew: Newsletter & Magazines



Trevor: Website



Lars: Social Meets



Martin: Social & Meets



Adrian: Secretary



Of Note:

Google Groups is now hosting our new improved email system. Please make sure you have registered.

Mountain Biking trips planned - please look out for emails coming your way soon!

Andrew & William are competing in the London to Brighton Bike Ride please sponsor us!

Andrew: <http://original.justgiving.com/abrett>

William: <http://original.justgiving.com/whellyer>

13th March BMC Sandstone Celebration Dinner & Dance - see BMC website.

I NEED MORE PHOTOS AND ARTICLES PLEASE

PEGLER'S ICE FEST 2010

In recent years, my devotion to winter climbing has taken me to the wettest and warmest parts of Scotland in winter. Undismayed by weather fit for only otters, each year I have toiled north to scrape the last remaining slush off our noble mountains.

This year, I thought, my Scottish luck is bound to change. Thus, in the grip of the coldest and snowiest winter in Britain for decades, I inexplicably headed south to the French Alps for the Ice Fest. I gave up long drives for winter climbing years ago in favour of EasyJet and hire cars, but this year I occupied a seat in the back of Scott's freezing VW van for the interminable drive from Surrey to Le Bourg d'Oisans in the Ecrins.

and climbing it wasn't viable. The existence of a very thin Abalakov thread about 3 feet over the edge began to make sense. Jamie climbed up, placed a back-up screw and bounce tested the thread. I lowered him down. He put me on a belay and I reversed back down to the thread, clipped in, threaded the ropes through and abseiled back down. The first jolt on the abseil rope was not good - eyeballing a bit of 4mm tat wrapped around some ice that the sun had just reached, with 500 feet of air beneath your backside is enervating. There were other dramas. One of the other participants on the Ice Fest, Paul, fell and broke his ankle - easily done wearing crampons. As Jamie and I were at the far end of the crag, we were unaware of events unfolding at the other end, but walked back in time to see the helicopter taking Paul away.

classify my skiing as 'successfully incompetent' - something to be done when there is nothing better to do. That amounts to about one day skiing every 5 years. Inadequate, therefore, for off piste skiing. However, Darren, Steve, Doug and Scott are familiar with this sort of thing and prevailed upon me to step over rope that marked the edge of my nicely groomed little world and into a parallel universe of bottomless snow, trees and falling over. The first run was exhausting; the second was mostly enjoyable and the third a disaster as tiredness took hold. My last run of the day, though, was the best - a beautiful glide down a green run that had neither been pisted nor skied by anyone else. Gliding silently though knee deep powder amongst snow-laden trees was magical.

Day 5 was more skiing, spent mostly teaching Jamie to ski. Lots of other people beat themselves black and blue learning to snowboard. By Day 6, the snow had settled and climbing was on the agenda again, albeit with careful route choices. Jamie and I headed off for La Colère du Ciel. At 3+ it should have been about Scottish 4. It flipping well wasn't. The two big pitches were unrelentingly steep and mine was dripping wet. Jamie was struggling on his and climbing with borrowed Fusions: I shouted up 'Did you know that you can put the rope over the pommel and take a rest on those?' 5 seconds later, the rope was over the pommel and Jamie was asking for a tight rope. Ten out of ten for Top Tip timing!

On the last day Jamie and I did La Croupe de la Pouffiassse. The guide book said that the top pitches were rarely done, but they were so well formed that it seemed rude to ignore them. And that was that, bar a long drive home the following day.



The top pitch of Symphonie d'Autonne

Fortuitously, Jamie Evans, who was occupying the seat next to me, was also without a partner and negotiations were rapidly concluded. Many of you will recognise Jamie as the very tall belay policeman at Craggy in Guildford: he must have liked the Police tag, as he is now PC Evans of the Met.

There was a substantial turnout from the EGCC, Darren and Catherine, Steve and Bethan, Harvey and his son, Doug, and I all made it through the heavy snow to the gite. On day 1, Jamie and I headed for a benign day at Alpe d'Huez because all the new snow that had been falling made everywhere else too dangerous and because we were still stiff from the drive. We did a pleasant route, Canine Blues, as a settler, splitting one big pitch into two so that we both got a go.

On day 2, Jamie and I did Symphonie d'Autonne, a classic at Alpe d'Huez, and were followed by Harvey and Doug.

Being French, virtually all of the routes hereabouts have bolted belays, and so I was expecting a nice fat bolted belay at the top of the final pitch. I was consequently dismayed to top out from the final 30 feet of vertical ice to find nothing but lots of snow at a very uncomfortable angle. Of itself, it wouldn't have been a problem, but abseiling off it was,

After the trials of Day 2, Day 3 was decreed to be an easy day and so we went to do Le Pylon at La Grave. It didn't go well. Jamie did the first pitch of the Rive Gauche, up to the cave. I followed, feeling very out of sorts. I offered him the next pitch too, but he graciously declined. The second pitch stepped out onto the icicles hanging from the roof of the cave. I leaned out, placed a screw and scuttled back into the cave. I stepped back out and started to move up, feeling unconvinced and hanging on far too tight to my axes. Very anxious, I placed another screw and moved up more. By this time the fear was on me, my arms were tiring and everything was unravelling very fast. I placed an axe solidly, grabbed my fifi hook, slipped it through the hole in my axe and sat down. I placed another screw while hanging from the axe and clipped the rope into that. Getting into trouble is not important; it's how you get yourself out of it that matters. After a while, semi-normal service was restored and the pitch was completed. Meanwhile, Scott's partner, Nic, was hit by a large block of ice sent her way by a Spaniard and a retreat was in order.

That night it snowed. About a foot of powder fell in the village on top of the snow already there. Climbing was thereby cancelled and skiing was declared 'Sport du Jour'. I

Adrian

Can you tell me your name? Open your eyes... why you should always wear a helmet.

The time is Sunday 04 October 2009, 1130am. I am strangely aware of people talking to me in a dreamy sort of way but then abruptly the dream ends...

It has been a chilly morning, with some fairly gentle riding across Leith Hill, well at least gentle compared to our normal riding, although strangely this ride I am not really focussed, I am riding stuff and my bike just does not feel a part of me today and my concentration is lacking. Jason (my brother-in-law) and myself have gone out for a bit of fun as we often do across the hills. It has been one of those mornings where the



ground is damp but crisp and the sun is shining, but with clear skies sending a sharp chill in the breeze.

We have been riding for about an hour now, taking it relatively easy and have just stopped for a chat near to an intersection of single-track close to Wolvens Lane in Coldharbour. There are a few other mountain bikers out today that we are sharing the tracks with. My rear shock on my Specialized FSR has been playing up a bit and feels a bit soft despite having the correct air pressure, so I ask Jason to give it a go whilst I take off on his formidable Kona Dawg Delux. I hop on and ride off down a footpath, BANG, as sudden as that, maybe 20 metres from where we had been chatting I have hit something on my head which is wrenched back and I feel what I think is a branch crack my skull in two, I maintain some sort of sitting position on the bike, and, I am told, lay it down gently to the left as I fall to the floor in a kind of neat, 'I am not too badly hurt' kind of manner which had it been 'Dancing on Bikes' probably would have got me a score of 5!

What I failed to see was the large branch that I have now rested by head on, which is when the pain starts to kick in following that short interlude where nerves and brain say "woo, hold on a minute here". Luckily I was wearing a brand new helmet, which I was wearing for just the second time, but even with this I know my neck is injured and thinking back to a previous neck injury, this may not be good at all.

Jason carefully removes the branch under my head and encourages me to get up, but the pain is intense and any neck movements are creating a nasty pain around my head and down between my shoulders, which in the given circumstances, being a good few miles from civilisation is not a particularly good thing. I remember asking Jason to check my head, I could not feel blood, but was sure that there must be some sort of gaping hole in my forehead from the impact I had just suffered. I recall Jason telling me that I had ridden into a branch of a tree but after that I don't really remember too much for a while and I'm not even sure for how long. All I know is that somewhere in the next few hours some very kind mountain bikers turn up, a Land Rover makes it's way over and Jason leaves for help. Oh, and my damn sunglasses which I have just put a new lens in have been trodden on! I know I am cold, in fact very cold, and uncontrollable shivering takes hold, followed, I am told by short interludes of mild unconsciousness. This is as a result of the incredible ability that the ground has to sap any heat from your body (and the fact that I had just hit my head). I remember someone saying to me "can you tell me your name" and "open your eyes". I also remember a Paramedic turning up and saying things about a helicopter. I was then strapped up in a straight jacket/padded cell contraption. Then came the Morphine, oh, what a great drug (am I allowed to say that?). The pain slowly drifted away and I remember conversations about the best way to get me out of the woods, for the ambulance was unable to get to me and the short wheel base Land Rover was not long enough to put me in.



Unfortunately it looked like cycling out of this predicament was no longer an option.

Soon, I heard the familiar noise of the helicopter, a noise that I am used to hearing, but normally when I am assisting someone else in such a situation. I recall that there was difficulty too in finding the helicopter somewhere to land so it dropped off a medic who made their way over before the pilot found a patch of grass which I am told was between a line of trees and a farmers crop of Christmas Trees on the smallest area of sloped terrain you could imagine, but these guys are good!

Whilst lying there I remember at some point two more cyclists riding in to the same branch that I had just collided with and I

would regularly hear "watch out" being shouted! I also remember that the helicopter medic walked into it creating a laugh or two from the crowd that had gathered around me! I then remember being walked headfirst looking up at the sky on a stretcher through what seemed like endless back country, shrubs, saplings and trenches before being passed over a fence and eventually slid into the helicopter where I lay staring at the ceiling until we landed at East Surrey Hospital.

From there it was a short trip in an ambulance to the hospital where I was met by my colleagues who had come basically to see if I was going to live or die! How embarrassing. Anyway, I soon got rid of them and spent the next three hours or so going through X-rays and then CT scans, but after a slightly worrying moment when they thought they had found a problem, I was free to go, and just like that I was unstrapped and walked out of the hospital with just severe whiplash.

I was lucky this time, and I seem to have made a very good recovery following a couple of trips to the Chiropractors but it could have been very different. My advice to you and the reason for writing this article is this: always wear a helmet, and this applies to climbing just as much as mountain biking. I could not have been doing more than 15mph when I hit that branch. My helmet took the impact and was dented and cracked, but my head had survived. Had I not been wearing it this could have been a very different story.

Andrew

If you would like to donate to the Surrey air ambulance please visit:

<http://www.surreyairambulance.co.uk>

You never know when you or your friends may need it, but lets hope you don't.

My advice to you is to always wear a helmet, and this applies to climbing just as much as mountain biking.

EGCC Library;

A list of current books available:

Scotland

Rock and Ice Climbs Skye ('90)
Ben Nevis and Glencoe ('84)
Cairngorms Winter Climbs ('94)
Northern Highlands Vol 1 & Vol 2 ('93 & '93)

Lake District

Winter Climbs Lake District x 2 ('86 & '87)
100 Classic Climbs in the Lake District ('92)
Scrambles in the Lake District ('85)
Borrowdale x 2 ('86 & '90)
Lancashire Rock ('99)
Greatest VS Climbs in the Lakes ('89)
Langdale ('99)
Buttermere and Eastern Crags ('92)
Dow Dudden and slate ('93)
Gable and Pillar ('91)
Skafell Wasdale and Eskdale ('96)

Northern England

Yorkshire Gritstone x 2 ('89 & '89)
Yorkshire Limestone ('92)
Yorkshire and Peak Gritstone x 2 ('90 & '90)
Yorkshire and Peak Limestone ('91)
Yorkshire Limestone Rockfax ('90)

Peak District

Stanage and Millstone x 2 ('83 & '83)
Stanage ('96)
Derwent Gritstone ('95)
Staffordshire Area x 2 ('81 & '81)
Peak Limestone South ('87)
Peak Limestone (Rockfax) ('92)
High Peak Walks ('87)
Northern Limestone (2004)
Peak Gritstone East (2001)

Wales

Winter Climbs in North Wales (missing)
Welsh Winter Climbs x 2 ('90 & '90)
100 Classic Climbs N. Wales x 2 ('89 & '95)
Gogarth x 2 ('77 & missing)
Ogwen ('82)
Ogwen and Carneuddau ('93)
Llanberis ('87)
Llanberis Pass ('81)
North Wales Slate ('92)
Tremadog and Cwn Silya ('89)
Tremadog (2000)
Lliwedd ('72)
Ridges of Snowdonia ('85)
Scrambles in Snowdonia ('88)
Mid Wales x 2 ('88 & '88)
Gower & S.E. Wales x 3 ('83, '83 & '91)
Pembroke ('95)
Pembroke Rockfax ('95)

South

Southern Sandstone (na)

West

Wye Valley ('91)
Avon and Cheddar ('92)
Swanage ('86)

Swange & Portland ('95)
Dorset Rockfax (na)
Into the Blue, deep water soloing (na)
Lundy ('94)
South Devon and Dartmoor ('85)
North Devon and Cornwall x 2 ('88 & '88)
Cornwall and West Penwith ('84)
Bosigran x 3 ('91, '91 & '91)
Chair Ladder x 2 ('92 & '92)
Cheesewring ('98)
Symonds Yat ('99)

European Guide Books

Jersey and Guernsey ('87, '87)
Fontainbleau
Southern Alps (Plaisir Sud) (na)
Mont Blanc Range vol2 ('88)
Chamonix Cragging ('95)
Le Topo Du Mont Blanc ('88)
Les Aiguille Rouge (na)
Alpine 4000m Peaks (na)
Central Switzerland (walking guide) ('93)
The Valais, Switzerland (walking guide) ('94)
Tour of Monte Rosa (walking guide) ('95)
Hut to Hut in the Stubai Alps (na)
Escalades dans le Dolomites (na)
Walks in the Central Italian Alps ('95)
Walks, Climbs in the Pyrenees ('88)
Long Distance Walks Pyrenees ('91)
Costa Blanca Rock ('97)
Costa Blanca/Mallorca/El Chorro ('98)
Walking in Mallorca ('01)

Information Books

How to Shit in the Woods ('94)
Rock Climbing ('87)
Modern Snow and Ice ('88)
Modern Rope Techniques ('88)
Mountain Craft and Leadership (na)
Altitude Illness Prevention & Treatment ('94)
Mountaineering First Aid ('99)
Knots for Climbing ('95)
Beginners Guide to Rock Climbing (2000)
Climbing Terms and Techniques ('90)
Modern Alpine Climbing (na)
The Trekkers Handbook ('96)
The Hillwalkers Handbook ('96)
The High Peaks of England & Wales ('99)
100 Best Limestone Climbs (missing)
Ice World (missing)
Rock Climbing in Britain ('84)
Hard Rock ('92)
Great Climbs, Bonnington ('95)

Club Booklets

BMC Safety on Mountains x 2 ('74 & '88)
BMC Safety for Beginners (missing)
Mountain and Cave Rescue ('89)
Mountain Navigation (na)

It's getting to be a fairly impressive (not to say flippin' heavy) collection of UK & European literature with over 120 books and members really are to be encouraged to use it. They are an ideal resource for checking out new areas and getting bags of enthusiasm together for your next foray into the unknown club trip or own trip.

Discounts:



Tel: 01903 883 375

www.peglers.co.uk

Peglers Offer:

Special discount to EGCC members of 20% on climbing gear and clothing on production of your EGCC membership card. This discount does not apply to maps or to books and cannot be used online.

BMC Discounts (usually 10%) on production of your EGCC membership card.

Please refer to the member handbook received from the BMC, however, here is a taster:

High Sports	Salfords	www.high-sports.co.uk
Cotswold 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	Hathersage	www.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

EGCC members and contact information:

Please use this to stay in contact and arrange new meets – then let us know so we can share it!

(If you are missing from this list or your details are incorrect please let us know!)

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS COMING SOON

Forenames	Surname	Home	Mobile	Town	Email Address
Richard	Barlow		07791 690 165	Haywards Heath	rj_barlow@hotmail.com
Charlie	Batho	01273 696876	07817 801 086	Brighton	charlie@kiwanda.co.uk
Adrian	Botting	01737 812 069	07740 798 134	Tadworth	adrian.botting@btinternet.com
Andrew	Brett	01342 843 446	07739 041 954	Smallfield	andrew-brett@tiscali.co.uk
Joanna	Campbell	01403 262 188	07941 373 755	Horsham	j_k_campbell@hotmail.com
Jim	Clarke	01403 272 954	07785 244 173	Horsham	jim.clarke@systemsensor.com
Trevor	Clarke		07949 764 248	East Grinstead	trevor@aha-ltd.co.uk
James	Ducatel	01342 718 901	07818 847 502	Copthorne	james@horis.demon.co.uk
Sarah	George		07711 689 092	East Grinstead	sarah@aha-ltd.co.uk
Bruce	Gibbon	01444 236 215	07860 868 703	Burgess Hill	bgibbon@jrp.co.uk
Lianne	Harburn		07976 848 026		lianne.monsoon@googlemail.com
Danielle	Hatch	01403 734005	07949 633360		danielle.hatch@btinternet.com
Ann	Hellyer	01737 211434	07985 588 437	Merstham	ann_michael@hotmail.com
Will	Hellyer	01737 211434	07990 574697	Merstham	will.hellyer@gmail.com
Mark	Holmes	01403 263864	07788 442 525	Horsham	mark.holmes@markitnet.com
Harvey	Jones	01403 271 297	07887 748 382	Horsham	jones_harvey@hotmail.com
Steve	Logan		07970 427 003	Dorking	zakalwe@ukonline.co.uk
Jeremy	Messervy	01737 215215	07790 098444		jeremy.messervy@googlemail.com
Tom	Moore		07968 768490	Henfield	owenthomasmoore@hotmail.com
Paul	Padman	01883 380 229	07785 290 513	Caterham	paul.padman@ntlworld.com
Sam	Pearce	01293 611538	07977 111710	Crawley	sampearce20@hotmail.com
Kevin	Savill	01732 353 006	07876 234 257	Tonbridge	kevin.savill1@btinternet.com
Graham	Siggers	01256 359 421	07763 424 201	Basingstoke	gbs@hrwallingford.co.uk
Lars	Singleton	01959 561 560	07753 963 199	Westerham	lars.singleton@hfm-bs.co.uk
David	Tilley	01256 819 180	07860 738 835	Basingstoke	david.p.tilley@motorola.com
Sam	Turnbull	01403 210071	07702 307996	Horsham	samturnbull@gmail.com
Martin	Walker	01342 325 401	07766 463 445	East Grinstead	donkeyhoatey@nessec.co.uk
Simon	Wilson	01293 536854	07784 528 685	Crawley	blitz1320@yahoo.co.uk

The very useful links page:

(Please let me know what links you would like to see here!)

For shops/discounts please see page 5.

<http://www.eastgrinsteadclimbingclub.co.uk/>

<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/>

<http://www.mountain-works.co.uk/>

<http://www.ukclimbing.com/>

<http://www.metcheck.com/V40/UK/HOBBIES/climbing.asp>

<http://www.mwis.org.uk/>

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/outdoor/mountainsafety/>

East Grinstead Climbing Club

New Members Application/Members Renewal Form for 2010

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTCODE _____
HOME TELEPHONE No. _____
MOBILE TELEPHONE No. _____
E-MAIL _____

Please indicate above if you have a preferred method of contact (*). Also, if you wish to give an emergency contact, please give name, relationship, address & phone numbers overleaf.

All club members will be affiliated to the BMC (if you are already an individual member of the BMC, you can renew at a discount).

Tick this box if you would prefer your contact details not to be available to other club members.

Tick this box if you would like to receive the EGCC Newsletter by post, however we would prefer to email it as it saves postage!

LEGAL BIT

"I ACCEPT THAT CLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING ARE ACTIVITIES WITH A DANGER OF PERSONAL INJURY OR DEATH. I AM AWARE OF AND ACCEPT THESE RISKS AND WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES VOLUNTARILY AND SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY OWN ACTIONS AND INVOLVEMENT."

SIGNED _____

I enclose a cheque for **£15.00/£17.00/£10.00 made payable to the "East Grinstead Climbing Club"**, which I have remembered to sign and date. (Sliding Scale for joining: Early payment 2009: £15 / Jan-Aug 2010: £17 & Sept-Dec: £10)

Please send to: Ann Hellyer, 125, Albury Road, Merstham, Surrey.
RH1 3LW

A novice - climbing mainly on indoor walls only but can safely use a belay device.

Able to tie a figure of eight knot.

Reasonably capable - been on the real stuff but only as a second.

Have some leading experience.

Can set up a belay.

Not yet a major rock climbing deity, but pretty competent - I know where to go, how to get there and what to do when I'm there.

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What can East Grinstead Climbing Club do for you?
(or what made you join East Grinstead Climbing Club?)

And what can you do for EGCC?

(what skills, contacts, ideas or anything else that might be of benefit to EGCC could you suggest/offer?)

.....

East Grinstead Climbing Club - Membership 2010

Name: _____

Date: _____

Received with thanks: £ _____

Valid until end 2010

Please retain this receipt - it is your proof of East Grinstead Climbing Club membership and British Mountaineering Council Affiliated Club Civil Liability Insurance Cover (please see the BMC website for further details).

To help us help you ... I would consider myself: