

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

BULLETIN No 79.

JANUARY 1981

Dear Members,

A Happy New Year to you all. Please read the small print in this bulletin, it is packed with information for you all, and 1981 Meet Cards are included too!

NEWS

1. The Glencoe Meet 7-14th February, 1981. All the beds are now booked on this meet, but anyone finding at the last minute that they want to go: please contact me on Tel: 0744 894512. I am sending details of directions to the flats, personal accommodation etc, to each person who has booked. (Late news, due to cancellation, 2 spare places)
2. The Long Walk 1981. Will be the Welsh 3,000' 14 Peaks. See meet card for the exact date early in May. So start your training now.... dont delay. Details and booking forms in the next bulletin, in April.
3. The Junior Meet once again in June (see Meets Card) will be a well organised meet this year. Obviously the casual kind of meet for our junior members isn't suiting. Now, is your Kids chance to get out without you, make new friends, etc. George Partridge Vice Chairman, is the organiser, booking forms in the next bulletin.
4. The Club Dinner was once again an excellent affair, thanks to the organiser Tom Walmsley and his wife Zita, whilst Rita Baron made the raffle prizes. It was especially nice to see John and Jane Bulman, plus so many friends under the same roof at one time. Roy Phillips was persuading people to enter

THE 1981 FELLSMAN HIKE

"and he cannot recall the names of all the people who expressed interest (probably a combination of advancing years and the hard stuff)". (Quoted from Roys letter)

Please send your name if you wish to take part, to Roy Phillips 119 Woodgrove Rd, Burnley, Lancs and include a SAE. Roy will send for the entry forms for the participants, these should be returned to Roy on completion, along with the required entry fee. He will send the forms to the organisers as a block entry, so that, if favoured with the luck of the draw 'you will amble round the course as a team'. The date is usually the weekend after the Club Long Walk.

So all you keen walkers, write to Roy NOWNOW....NOW....

NEWS cont....

5. Wanted..... a pair of size 39 or size 6 Scarpa Fitzroy Boots, or similar, in good condition. Please ring Joyce Foster.
6. Tony Brindle and Brendon Conlon are still in the States and Tony's letters get ever more philosophical and voluble.
When they arrived in Yosemite Valley they climbed 'the Nose Route' of El Capitan, amongst others, and then moved down to Sydney, Montana to work on an oil rig. Very Cold and very flat and boring, and on Dec 2nd they had gone 59 days without climbing! He then(Tony) climbed Devil's Tower in sub-zero temps in Wyoming. On Boxing Day they moved on to Boulder, Colorado for the high standard ice and rock climbing. They now have enough money for their trip to Alaska, and they are threatening to come home sometime in May.
7. New Gear Review Unfortunately I am unable to reproduce the photograph which accompanies this review. It appears to be a piece of old fence, two parallel pieces of rusty metal, 2'6" apart and joined by bent rungs. It is supporting one of our members, one of the Bolton Tech.Coll. fraternity up a gritstone outcrop.

THE TRAVIS TREADS

This exciting new piece of climbing equipment, designed specifically for the more elderly of the climbing fraternity, is an entirely new concept in climbing aids. Rather than concentrating on improving protection in the higher parts of a climb, this new aid aims to help those climbers who have difficulty getting off the ground.

Described here is the standard model, featuring six rungs, being tested by its designer Derek Travis, one of Rochdale's leading geriatric climbers.

At £17.95 it is not cheap, but the price does reflect the quality of the product. The other model in the current range is the Super Tread which features eight rungs, at a cost of £21.95.

Both models have undergone rigorous testing, and their performance is impressive. Initial testing revealed that the Travis Treads will bear the weight of a twelve-stone man without any damage, whilst subsequent tests have shown that even when the user carries a pack loaded with an empty flask and a plastic mac, performance is in no way affected.

Rumours that this product is nothing more than a piece of old junk found on a tip near the Rochdale-Edenfield road probably emanate from competitors who have no rival product to this new venture in climbing equipment.

Karrimor of Accrington are said to be 'concerned', whilst a spokesman for TrollProducts admitted that "We still have our feet on the ground where this new technique is concerned, and Travis would appear to be several rungs up the ladder ahead of us."

NEWS CONT.....NEW Gear Review...

This is surely so. While competitors are now working furiously to bring out similar products, Travis is already field-testing The Extension Treads, which are designed to take the more mature climber right to the top. And although neither party will comment, we are reliably informed that negotiations are taking place between Travis and Dixcel, with a view to joint work on developing climbing chalk in an exciting range of delicate pastel shades.....

8. Bon Voyage to Fr David Brigstocke who left Lancashire early in January to take up a new post in Northern Pakistan.
9. Stu Evans is hopefully now making a full recovery from his unfortunate accident whilst potholing during the Autumn. He is George's co-partner for the junior meet, and all the eager cavers are waiting eagerly for the next meet in the cold and nast and wet. In fact Dot Wood is positively suffering from withdrawl symptoms, so hurry up Stu, we are missing you.

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MASS ON SCAWFELL PIKE

THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL report from J.B.Ayre.

About 75 people (including 6 ARCC members) attended the commemorative Mass on the summit of Scawfell Pike on Wednesday 16th July, 1980 at 8am

The Club was represented by Fr. David Elder, Fr. David Lannon, Terry Hickey, Dave Ogden, Simon Price and Barry Ayre.

I am sure that many more members would have attended if they had known in good time, or if the schools had broken up.

Those from the club, stayed at Buckbarrow Hut and were roused at 3.30am by Fr David Elder's Alarm Clock. He was evidently giving him self plenty of time to walk from Brackenclough to the summit.

By 5.15am, we had parked the cars at the campsite at the head of the lake and were joined by many others from the Cumbria coast. Brown Tongue can rarely have seen so many people so early.

I left Terry at the large boulder at Hollow Stones to go via Lord's Rake to the summit, then by Foxes Tarn and Mickledore to the Pike. Terry continued via Lingmell Col. It was a fine clear day, and the perfect reflections of Yewbarrow and accompanying crags in Wastwater was a feature of the view. Most of those on the summit had arrived about 7am. and by 8am. were feeling pretty chilly.

Mass was celebrated by Fr. Piers Grant-Ferris O.S.B. assisted by 6 other priests including one from West Cumberland who had been at the previous Mass forty years before.

Bishop Pearson sent a message which read, "Forty years ago today,

Scafell Mass Cont...

I said Mass on this summit at 8am in the morning. A coach load of boys travelled from Blackpool, leaving there at midnight. We were under the old fasting rules and could neither eat nor drink, not even water, so it was a penitential act as well as that of having to carry up a large altar stone! Britain stood alone against Nazi Germany after the defeat of France, and that Mass - the first to be offered on a mountain peak in Britain was to pray for victory and peace.

We have had nearly forty years of peace and I join you in returning thanks on this feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and to pray that that peace will last. I wish I were with you. Perhaps Westminster has been as hard a climb!"

(Footnote: It was reported on BBC News 13th of January 81, that Fr. Piers Grant-Ferris had celebrated Mass on a Peruvian summit and had failed to return to camp. His companion, a climber from Stockport has been found in a dazed condition suffering from exposure. Nothing further has been reported since).

Has now been found safe and well.

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REPORT ON THE ANNUAL ORIENTEERING EVENT 1980

FROM George Partridge.

Happily, the weather was kind for this years event at Great Tower Plantation.

Good weather for the Bishop's Walk, the Orienteering and of course the Long Walk last May; maybe it wasn't such bad weather last year after all!

Twenty-two members competed at Gt. Tower and almost all went around inside the expected time of 60mins, with the first four well inside the expected optimum time of 35mins.

Congratulations to the new Trophy Holders, Sandra Corbett and M Michael Pooler. Micky just edged out Derek Price by a mere 1min40s. Full Results:

1. M. Pooler	26.04	9. Brian Fanning	40.04
2. Derek Price	27.44	10. Frank Whittle	40.08
3. Wilf Charnley	32.00	11. Ernie Horrocks	55.00
4. Alan Kenny.	33.01	12. Dot Wood & Peter Walsh	55.02
5. Jim & Clare Harding	35.58.	13. Clive Millard	60.00
6. Andrew & Jill Morrison	37.00	14. Sue Wood & Ann Walsh	64.00
7. Sandra Corbett	40.00	(Junior Members)	
8. Roy Phillips	40.02	15. Duncan Drake & Jo Wood	

Mike Lomas and Cath Millard and Jim & Alwyn Cooper also took a gentle stroll around the course.

Caving cont....

there taking photographs, but they had failed to get any further as the water in the canal was 5ft deep and racing like a mill-stream. A decision was reached, but my relief was short lived as we turned off at the Milky Way Inlet, through Cascade and into Toyland. This involved crawling painfully on hands and knees and sometimes on stomach in two inches of muddy water along a bedding plane. A rather constricted passage with a sinuous bend in the middle and a sort of chimney with a fixed rope up it came next. The cave of Toyland must have been pretty at one time with stalagmites all over the floor, but now they are covered with mud. We did go further, into the Victoria Extension, but when it came to shinning up a manky-looking rope under a waterfall that disappeared up through a hole in the roof, I had had enough.....

Mike was already half-way up to the roof when we arrived, but when none of us followed him he soon came back down; and then back along the contorted passageways and painful crawls towards Valley Entrance.

I was beginning to think that it was all over, when some idiot suggested a quick look at the Master Cave to see if the water level had dropped. Mike and John raced off like a couple of Black Rabbits with Jim and Myself following, but more like tortoises. The water level had dropped by at least two millimetres, and the others were already in the water forcing their way upstream. Jim and I found the way into the canal, where unfortunately I was soon in some difficulty. Mike must be made of stronger stuff than me, I couldn't make any headway at all, but with Jim acting as a breakwater I did manage to cross and get out onto the other side. We didn't go much further as it was obvious that the next section was flooded. Going back was easier, but I was scared stiff in case I got swept away. Visions of Jules Verne's 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth', haunted me and when Mike just floated past me it was the last straw. I grabbed hold of him and shook him. The water actually disappears into Keld Head, a mile long permanently submerged passage, and that's a long way to hold your breath !!!

I did manage the way out through the duck without totally succumbing to hysteria, though when John threatened to send a wave after me I came very close to it. Emerging into what passed as daylight at that time of year, I didn't realize that the biggest struggle was yet to come. Divesting oneself of the wetsuit requires the expertise of Houdini, even without the frozen useless fingers. Emerging finally from our black cocoons, purple with cold, stark naked on the highway, and wanting only the comfort of ten down sleeping bags, a roaring log fire and gallons of hot tea. We dressed and roared off in the car, heater full on and then bliss as we became warm and human (almost) again.

(Watch Hut notice boards for details of the next exciting caving meet. Led by our genial wizard Stu Evans and his erstwhile partner George Partridge (Vice Chairman). Hut accommodation.

PARADOX by Tony Brindle.

"Diff; this is never Diff!"

The words hung in the air, and then floated by, to be lost in the dense, grey cloak that had enveloped us several hours earlier.

I dreamt of the warm 'van and the food down in Glen Brittle and wondered what the time was

Several hours earlier, four of us had stood in trepidation at the foot of Western Buttrass, Coire Lagan; watching the water cascading down the slabs and grooves to form hundreds of rivulets sewing an intricate pattern to the central force far below.

It had been Mick who broke our silence;

"I'm not climbing in this!"

"It's not going to get any better," supported the Old Man, alias Norman.

Eric hadn't spoken since the rain had extinguished another cigarette, commented "It's only diff."

After a cup of coffee in the shelter of a boulder and a meeting of the committee, it was decided that Eric and I should climb, whilst Mick and Norman descended to prepare the evening meal.

Several pitches later, Eric and myself were thoroughly enjoying ourselves, splashing through vertical waterfalls to hide in secret caves, where Eric's cigs could be lit without disintegrating. The water was surprisingly warm, the climbing very pleasant and the pitches just rolled on and on and on. . . .

"This is never Diff".

Eric's voice could be heard again, as he came into view fifty feet below me.

The last pitch had convinced me that there could be a grain of truth in Eric's words. 120ft of vertical, smooth rock split by a perfect fist width crack, with just one runner half way up.

I grinned as he pulled into the top part of the crack. A hard layback and he was standing on the same ledge as me. "Is this not the top?" he asked, in between catching his breath.

We consulted the oracle and then counted the rope lengths we had done. We calculated we had climbed 1,500ft. What a pity that the route described was only 1,000ft long!

Two easy traverses led us, both now strangely quiet, to a large amphitheatre made up of several basalt dykes. There was only one way up, so I set off. After 140ft of straightforward, but very necky climbing, I had a belay. Eric was finding the going just as nervy as I was. Wearing large boots more suited to crampons; and no crack lines, the climbing wasn't very easy. I had never met rock as greasy as this before.

Knowing how poor my belay was, I set off again searching for any kind of protection, but the basalt dyke just got steeper and more loose. 90ft and still nothing.

Paradox Cont....

When I heard Eric shout "Ten feet of rope left", I couldn't have been in a worse position. Bridged across a very steep groove with no protection and no sign of a belay. I decided to climb the last ten feet and pray, for anything.

Anything was what I got; up on the left was a bent and twisted piece of iron, hammered into the dyke wall. I prayed again, and clipped in. "Climb when you're ready."

Eric couldn't believe his eyes when he saw the belay anchor that we were dependent on, but he laughed it off and sent me on up.

I was lost in my own thoughts by now, as I launched into the penultimate pitch. One mistake and we would both be gonners. Suddenly there it was; in front of me was a crack, the runner was good and the next twenty feet was sheer enjoyment.

"This is no place for a Hobbit," I said as we set off down the descent gully. The next minute we were diving for cover as Something Very Big was descending above us. It stopped and I looked round for Eric, he appeared out of a cave and we rushed on down. In fact we rushed on down so fast that we went way past our sacks and so I gave Eric the rope and set off back up to look for them.

On his descent Eric spotted water and so, because he's a clever lad, he headed straight for it thinking it must be the coast. It was a lochan so he had miles to trogg to get back!

It was eight o'clock and we should have been down for three.

The next day racing Eric across to the toilet block, I tripped over a stone and could hardly walk for the next several days.

A strange Paradox!

(The route for the first 1,000ft was Median,diff. The second section we now believe to be a variant on Trap Dyke Route V.S.

The climbers in the tale in ascending order of height were, Tony Brindle, Mick Donnelly, Eric Dearden and Norman Ogden.)

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VISITING CLUBS AT BUCKBARROW Nov 14/15 Guildford M.C.

Jan 9/10 Cambridge CC. Feb 28/29 Rev AM Leslie and party.
Mar 6/8 Capar Montis Clyb.

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USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Tyn Twr Hut Warden John Foster Billinge 0744 894512.
Langdale Hut Warden Alan Kenny Morecambe 0524 418345.
Buckbarrow Hut Warden Frank Whittle Seascale 333 Ext. 6774 (work hrs)
Club Secretary Tom Walmsley Longton 0772 615421.

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Following the controversy raging at the huts for the last several weeks, the following is a direct copy of Pete Livesey's Rockscene in September 1980 'Climber & Rambler' magazine.

LEAVE IT AS YOU FOUND IT.

Much magazine space recently has been concerned with ecological bickering. Conservational issues concerning climbing have been hotly debated by the extremists of both sides, and make no mistake it is the extreme view we have been hearing. Without becoming involved in the complex and badly understood area of conservational philosophy points are always apparent to me: In a small country of over fifty million people it is impractical to expect any part of the ecology of that country to be unaffected by man and secondly, the recreational needs of a large portion of that population are probably more important than the preservation of a particular ecosystem in many situations where the two clash. The conservation extremists (and they nearly always are) do not always know better than a crowd of unruly 'tigers' (to borrow their own emotive language).

It has been refreshing recently therefore to receive correspondence from the less extreme and more sensible on climbing issues, particularly on what constitutes the ethos of conservation within the sport itself.

Lyn Noble, warden of the Whitehall Centre at Buxton writes that a recent ascent of Vector was spoilt for him by the line of chalked holds up this route, reducing the beautiful intricacies of Vector to a mindless gymnastic feat. Having waited fifteen years to make an ascent (has it been raining for that long) the traditional aura and mystery of this established route was destroyed. Roger Payne complains of the marking of routes on certain Scottish crags by scratching and chipping arrows and grades at the foot of routes or by the addition of extra piton protection where nuts had been used before. Both correspondents make the point that they are reasonable people and don't really object to the techniques that the first ascentionists find necessary. They do object however, to the defacement of existing routes in such a way that subsequent climbers are affected in that they cannot enjoy the essential qualities and experiences in repeating a route.

The message is therefore quite clear, and I cannot help but agree. DON'T DO ANYTHING THAT SPOILS THE ASCENT FOR A FUTURE CLIMBER, AND THAT INCLUDES USING CHALK ON ROUTES THAT WERE ORIGINALLY CLIMBED WITHOUT.

Poxy white hands.....

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BULLETIN EDITOR: Joyce Foster 29, Braeside Cres, Billinge, Nr. Wigan.
Please send your articles and news.