



Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland
Edinburgh Section

25 Plewlands Gardens
Edinburgh
EH10 5JS
2 November 2005

Edinburgh JMCS members,

NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2005

Welcome to the autumn newsletter. Please find attached:

- An agenda for the AGM
- The minutes of last year's AGM
- An annual subscription form for 2005-2006
- The current membership list

As you will know SMC member and well known mountaineer Malcolm Slesser has kindly agreed to be guest speaker at this year's Annual Dinner. 2005 marks eighty years of the JMCS so it promises to be an interesting evening. If you wish to attend the event and have not already booked please do so now.

The winter meets start in Glen Etive in December, and the Met Office is predicting a colder than of recent winter. Meets are also planned for the Cairngorms, Glen Coe, North West Highlands and Ben Nevis. Wednesday night climbing-wall evenings at Heriot-Watt University and SMC/JMCS lecture nights have already begun.

Regards,

Neil Cuthbert
Secretary Edinburgh JMCS

Winter Meets Programme 2005-2006

| Date | Venue | Notes |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 9/10 December 2005 | Inbhirfhaolin, Glen Etive | 6 Places £4 ppn |
| 13/14 January 2006 | Muir of Inverey, Braemar | 6 Places £6ppn |
| 17/18 February 2006 | Blackrock Cottage, Glencoe | 10 Places £4ppn |
| 10/11 March 2006 | Invercroft Hut Achnasheen | 8 Places £5 ppn |
| 31 Mar/1 Apr 2006 | CIC Hut, Ben Nevis | 6 Places £7 ppn |

Further details of the huts are available on the club web site (www.edinburghjmcs.org.uk)

If you wish to attend a weekend meet please telephone Meets Secretary Patrick Winter no earlier than the Monday preceding the weekend. Bookings are taken on a first come, first served basis. Further places at Muir of Inverey and Invercroft are likely if required

Website

Winter Conditions Reports

Last year, the club hosted a Winter Conditions “Blog” on our website. A “Blog” or “Weblog” is basically an online diary that anyone can read and subscribe to. Our Winter Conditions Blog allowed members to post pictures and short descriptions about the climbing conditions. It proved very successful and popular with thousands of visitors over the winter season 2004/5.

The Blog is active again this season, and can be found at www.edinburghjmcs.org.uk/conditions If you wish to contribute, please email any reports and pictures to webman@edinburghjmcs.org.uk The web manager asks that you try and re-size any digital photographs such that they are not huge in terms of geometrical size or file size (around hundred kilobytes or so maximum), especially if you are submitting many photographs.

Reports, Articles and Topos

The website has plenty of space for member’s photographs, trip reports and travel articles – please feel free to contribute. Again, email to webman@edinburghjmcs.org.uk.

In addition, we have started to create photograph “topo” cards of local (and not so local!) crags, which have proved popular to active and armchair (computer chair?) climbers alike. Please feel free to contribute your own.

SMC Eastern District/ JMCS Slide Nights

8 November – Geoff Monks of the Mountain Weather Information service (www.mwis.org.uk) discusses mountain weather forecasting

13 December – Ross Jones Rock climbing trip to the Torssukataq Spires area of Cape Farewell in South Greenland in 2002. Ross' party were the third party into the area and the second climbing party and climbed 9 new routes from VS to E2 and 120m to 560m in length as well as making second ascents of routes climbed by the previous party of Powell, Cool and the Benton brothers.

10 January –Cliff Smith Edinburgh based SMC member gives a talk on paragliding in the Scottish Highlands, the local Edinburgh hills and abroad in France and Slovenia.

14 February – SMC/JMCS slide night

Venue for all talks is the South Side Community Centre, 117 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh.

A useful reference point is the busy Tesco Metro which is about 50 metres north on the other side of Nicolson Street. There are no parking restrictions at this time of the evening.

All talks start 7.30pm sharp.

JMCS Members slide night

Pat & Dave Buchanan have kindly agreed to host this year's slide night on Thursday 1st December from 19:30 to 20:00 onwards. Please bring a selection of slides (no more than ten) plus food & drink. The address is:

5 Mortonhall Road
EDINBURGH
EH9 2HS

t. 0131 667 7497

Digital projection should also be available. Members should send their images by e-mail or on CD to Dave (davidbphoto@yahoo.co.uk), preferably about a week beforehand.

2005 Summer Meets Reports

All reports by Meets Secretary Patrick Winter.

The Salving House – Borrowdale –Lake District 15 –17 April

Members Present: Sue Marvell, Ruth Love, Brian Finlayson, Eddie Gillespie, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter

The first meet of the year and somewhat inclement conditions.

On the Saturday only hill walking was really feasible and an ascent of Skiddaw in wild snowy conditions was made by Brian, Sue, Patrick and Francis.

Eddie and Ruth climbed meanwhile ascended Grey Knotts in the Gable area.

Sunday was slightly warmer and the rain held off until late afternoon. An inevitable visit to Shepherd's Crag was made in the morning and JMCS parties made ascents of Arduis (MVS), Brown Slabs Crack (VS), and Brown Slabs Direct (V. Diff) amongst others.

Arran: Glen Rosa 13 – 15 May

Members Present: Helen Forde, John Fowler, Eddie Gillespie, Ruth Love, Dave Buchanan, Stuart Buchanan, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter, Susan Jensen, Bryan Rynne, Terry Lansdown

A good forecast for the weekend provided the stimulus for a well-attended meet. Some camped at the Glen Rosa campsite which was unusually quiet, others plodded further up the valley to wild camp. Despite the time of year a few midges were evident.

A number of classic climbs were made including South Ridge Direct (VS), Souwester Slabs (V. Diff), Arctic Way (VS), Pagoda Ridge (Severe), Mosque (VS) and Blank (VS).

Terry who lacked a climbing partner went hill walking and did the round of Glen Rosa with some scrambling on A'Chir.

Glencoe: Lagangarbh Hut 3 – 5 June

Members Present: Francis Winter, Patrick Winter, Eddie Gillespie, Thomas Beutenmuller, David Small, Linda Corlett

Rather disappointing weather but some climbing done on both days. The Buachaille was a popular climbing arena on Saturday. Francis and Patrick went for Crowberry Ridge via The Direct Route (Severe). The other two parties made an ascent of North Buttress (Diff) and a descent of Curved Ridge.

On Sunday it was difficult to predict where the weather would be best for climbing.

David and Linda tramped all the way up the Coir'an Iubhair hoping to do the Great Ridge of Garbh Bheinn but were thwarted by heavy showers.

Eddie and Thomas managed some climbing at Polldubh and at Pine Wall Crag did Pine Wall (Hard Severe) and The Gutter (Diff). Meanwhile Patrick and Francis went back up the Buachaille for Bottleneck Chimney (Hard

Severe) and Crow's Nest Crack (VS) completed just before the heavens opened.

Skye: Glenbrittle Memorial Hut 1 – 4 July

Members Present: Eddie Gillespie, Ruth Love, David Small, Terry Lansdown, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter

This meet was essentially a wash out. The only climb recorded was the classic Window Buttress (Diff) by Eddie and Ruth, undeterred by the rain.

All parties departed a day earlier for either the Ice Factor or home.

Better luck next year perhaps (a return meet is being arranged).

Cairngorms: Camping at the Shelterstone (actually climbing on Skye and Binnein Shuas) 22 – 24 July

Members Present: Robert Fox, Gillian Dean, Francis Winter, Patrick Winter

This meet as such did not really happen. Robert and Gill fully intent on the walk in to the Shelterstone on the Friday evening decided that discretion was the better part of valour when they realised that they had only one pair of walking boots between them! The pair eventually bedded down in a campsite in Newtonmore for the weekend.

Patrick and Francis meanwhile headed up to Skye to catch up with all the unfinished business left by the rained out previous meet. This time the weather was perfect and ascents of some of the great classics in Sron na Ciche were made, namely Cioch Direct (Severe), Arrow Route (V.Diff), Integrity (VS) and Trophy Crack E1.

Next day we headed back south for more climbing at Binnein Shuas. In perfect conditions an ascent of the Fortress Direct (HVS) was made with good views of Robert and Gill who were coincidentally on Ardverike Wall (Hard Severe). Maybe a JMCS meet was salvaged after all!

Ben Nevis: CIC Hut 12 – 14 August

No members present.

Torrifon: Ling Hut 2 – 4 September

Members Present: Francis Winter, Patrick Winter

Only slightly more interest in the Ling Hut meet, despite a lovely weekend with very warm settled weather. Francis and Patrick decided to try and fulfil a long and cherished ambition to climb at Carnmore and enjoyed a lovely four-hour walk in to this remote and highly prized crag. Our choice of climb, the classic Fionn Buttress (VS) [ten pitches] was unwise. After the fourth pitch of some

great climbing on superb rock we abseiled off rather than contemplate an almost certain benightment.

We got back to Poolewe at around 10pm. Next summer we hope to return with a better game plan i.e. try camping overnight at least!

Next day we headed south, breaking the journey at Cave Crag, Dunkeld for the well named Coffin Corner (HVS) and Squirm (E1).

NB Ling Hut now has a generator that works and pumps all the water so you don't have to!

North Wales – Llanberis: Cae'r Fran Hut 16 – 19 September

Members Present: Helen Forde, John Fowler, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter

The weather was not quite on a par with the last club meet to Llanberis but was not too bad either.

On Saturday Francis and Patrick went to the atmospheric Gogarth (Main Cliff – North Stack) and climbed Gauntlet (HVS) and the eponymous Gogarth itself (E1). John and Helen went over to Tremadog for Scratch (VS). On Sunday F&P checked out Cloggy, but finding it too damp repaired to Tremadog for Grim Wall (VS) and Vector (E2). Great climbing. Helen and John meanwhile did a couple of climbs on Holyhead Mountain (the names of which elude me at the time of writing).

Mention should also be made of Helen's ascent of the Cae'r Fran Hut (Upper Dormitory Route – North Side - E1 at least) to enter the men's' sleeping quarters on the second floor via a very narrow window and a long reach to gain the top of a bunk bed and all because the hapless pair were locked out!

On Monday, a 'mass' ascent of the very enjoyable Nea (VS) at Clogwyn y Grochan was made before the long haul back up top Scotland.

Lake District – Langdale: Raw Head Hut 30 September – 1 October

Members Present: Robert Fox, Bryan Rynne, Francis Winter, Patrick Winter, Brian Finlayson, David Buchanan, Eddie Gillespie, Ruth Love

Saturday was far too wet and windy to consider any serious climbing so all parties went hill walking and in some cases scrambling on the local Langdale Fells. Rounds included the Fairfield Horseshoe, the Langdale Pikes via Jack's Rake and the Greenburn Horseshoe.

Next day the weather was better and parties were out on Raven's Crag and White Ghyll Crag.

At Raven's Crag Brian and David climbed Revelation (Hard Severe) and Original Route (Severe) while Patrick and Francis went for Mendes (VS) and Bilberry Buttress (VS).

Our colleagues meanwhile on White Ghyll did White Ghyll Wall (VS) – Eddie and Ruth, whilst Robert and Bryan tackled The Slabs, Route1 (Severe) and (Slip Knot)

Article

Thomas Beutenmuller: A trip to the Ling Hut June 2005

After Eddie Gillespie and I had attended the Ling hut meet in March this year, I was keen to return for a visit in summer, to sample some of the delights of rock climbing in the Northwest Highlands. We arranged a date for the last week in June, but as the weather was not very good in the weeks before I did not want to get my hopes up. Climbing the odd outcrop route between showers, or even ticking off some remote Munros was all that I hoped for. But then for once things worked out:

We started our 'road trip' in Glencoe where we had been only a few weeks earlier staying at Lagangarbh. We returned to the hut to search & rescue David Small's espresso maker. This operation failed right away, we could not find the pot. We plodded on, to see whether we would be more successful on the mountain behind the hut.

We chose the route *Raven's Edge* on Buachaille Etive Mor. I have climbed many routes of the grade Very Severe, but this was surely the scariest of them. Especially the second pitch was psychologically demanding, as falling off the wet rock on the traverse would have resulted in hanging over the abyss of Raven's Gully. At least I had a tight rope from above, and was very relieved when I was on top of the famous open book corner and reached the tiny belay stance with the approximate foot space of a Colin Baxter calendar. My pitch above was technically easy, but there was not much protection on it. The last pitch however was a delight: Very steep, but the deep crack had good holds throughout to the top of the buttress. The weather was fantastic, and we had good sport scrambling back down to the rucksacks.

Back at Lagangarbh we met John and Helen who informed us that they had retrieved the coffee maker already. We then drove past Fort William and along Loch Ness to Inverness, where we had a quick petrol stop, before heading over the Kessock bridge. It was half past nine when we arrived at the Ling hut.

To follow the tradition from March, we slept in the next morning. The weather looked doubtful anyway, and over a leisurely breakfast we decided to borrow one of the laminated mini climbing guides that belonged to the hut and check out the Aztec Tower near Gairloch. By the time we got there the sun was out, and after ten minutes stroll we stood under a twenty meters high buttress that really had a slight resemblance to an ancient Middle American centre of worship. The rock was immaculate Torridonian sandstone. We had a good afternoon's climbing there and did five routes between Very Difficult and Very Severe.

On the way back we tried to catch a weather forecast, but were not successful. We decided to climb *Cioch Nose* on Sgurr a'Chaorachain in Applecross the next day whatever the weather. The next morning the cloud base was well below Liathach and we could see for only a few hundred feet

as we eventually drove up the hairpins to Bealach nam Ba. We then walked over to the radio mast and descended a wet gully down into the corrie. We had to probe a bit before we found the right terrace that lead to the beginning of the “Diff to end all Diffs”, to quote the first ascensionist Tom Patey. The sun came out, and by the time we had geared up it was getting warm and the rock dried off nicely. The sun stayed with us and we were roasted for the rest of the afternoon.

The first three pitches were three star climbing throughout. Afterwards the rock got more broken, and we moved together for a while. We took the ropes off on top of the Cioch and walked along the top. As we had to get back to the radio mast we ignored all the gullies that we could have descended back into the corrie. The mountain kept its momentum: There were about three steep and exposed gaps to cross, and some acrobatics were called for. I thought that especially the first gap after the summit of the Cioch could be a nasty sting in the tail for a party that was not aware of the obstruction in fading daylight. I have to admit that I thought this route might be a bit of a push-over at the lowly grade of Vdiff, but I have learned that it is a mountain route that should be treated with respect. Even finding it in the mist is a challenge in its own right!

Back on the plateau we were rewarded with fantastic views of the Cuillin hills of both Skye and Rum, and could see many more of the Hebridean Islands.

After enjoying three days of more or less a heat wave we started to feel a bit edgy: It's bound to rain soon! What would the morrow bring? Back at the car park I heard Teutonic voices outside three very large camper vans. I asked them for a forecast. Those people from my fatherland were very anxious that their bratwursts did not burn in their massive saucepan, they were not worried about the weather tomorrow though... We headed back to the hut and some people were there. One more day, they told us, before the weather would change. So we felt brave and went to climb *Piggot's Route* on the Triple Buttress of Beinn Eighe. This was another place I never had been to.

The car park was fairly busy the next morning. The spokesperson of the German delegation asked me about suitable walking routes. I suggested that they could follow us to Coire Mhic Fhearchair, which they did. They were a nice bunch, and as so many of my compatriots, real Scotland fans (the country, not the football team...)

The Triple Buttress looked very impressive, especially as it was bathed in glorious sunshine. Eddie went in front and negotiated a way up the lower sandstone tier. There was one very good pitch out of a cave up a chimney, which was marked with loads of crampon scratches. We then got to the great terrace, and all by a sudden we had to climb quartzite instead of sandstone! After another few pitches the ground got a bit more broken and we moved together to below the final tower. When I uncoiled the ropes, I ended up with the mother of all fankles! Some drops of rain were falling and I knew I had to hurry, but the rope was in a mess! I got it sorted eventually, the rain stopped

again and we were able to carry on. After three more pitches we were on top of the Triple Buttress.

As a keen Munro bagger I was determined to bag some tops before descending back down to the glen. Eddie however decided to go straight down. He descended the screes into Coire Dubh Mhor. I had a nice evening stroll along the ridge. I could see the clouds move up from the south. It was apparent that this was the end of the spell of good weather. Eddie and I were reunited again in the hut just after nine and celebrated the day with a bottle of Claret.

The next day I had to go back home. Eddie agreed to take me to the bus station in Inverness, before he would go on to the Skye meet. I suggested that we would go to the Black Isle for some Dolphin spotting instead of going climbing again. We drove down to Fortrose and went to Chanory Point. This is a very good place to see the Moray dolphins, and so I was not surprised that even a Shearings bus was parked there. Within ten minutes a school of bottlenose dolphins arrived and swam up and down the point.

This was surely the cherry on the icing of the cake of this great trip!

Winter Skills for Climbers

Davy Virdee is offering winter skills training for members, with accommodation available at Jock Spot's on 21/22 or 27/28 January 2006 – exact date to be confirmed.

The idea behind the training is to provide member's with some basic skills to help ensure their safety before and after completing a winter climb. It will not provide tuition in climbing, but hopefully concentrate on the skills that are often overlooked, and sometimes hard to learn. It is aimed at both experienced and inexperienced climbers; however those that would gain the most from it are climbers maybe embarking on their first few seasons of winter climbing, or those with an open mind who want to refresh their ideas.

Venues for training will be the Northern Cairngorms or other locations, depending on conditions and weather. The course will be ran by Davy Virdee. Davy holds the Winter Mountain Leader Award, and works (part-time) as a freelance instructor. He is also employed at the Adventure Centre Ratho. The exact cost has not been decided yet, but it will be a nominal fee for each person, plus hut fees, food and travel. There are eight places available. If demand is such, another course can be run later in the year.

If you are interested in attending, or would like more information, please contact/e-mail Davy directly (davy.virdee@gmail.com, 0131 337 0186).