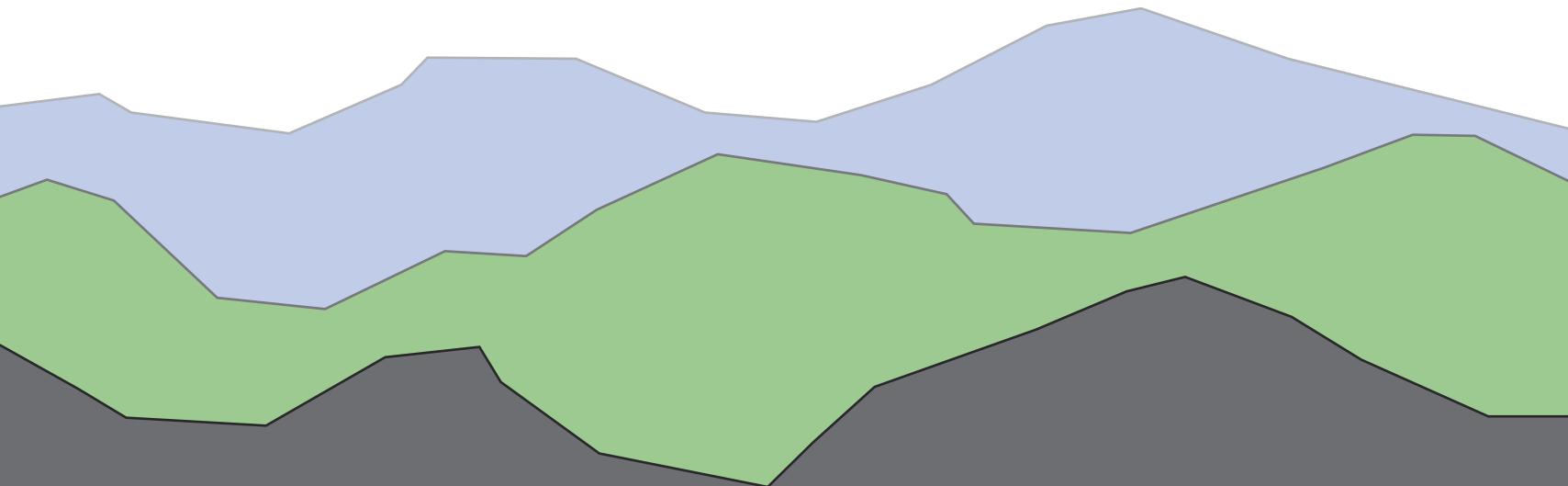
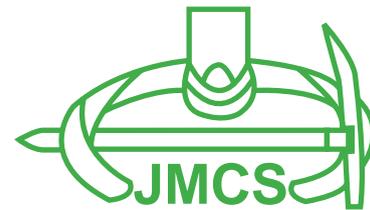


JMCS

Winter Newsletter 2013



2013

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Secretary's Introduction

Welcome to the 2013 Edinburgh JMCS Annual Newsletter.

The articles this year illustrate a fair range of the spectrum of mountain activities undertaken by Club Members and the places where they go. Thus we have two articles about the Alps, two about Scottish trad rock and three about "hot rocking" – both trad and sport – around the Mediterranean. We also have guidance on how (and how not) to go about things in the Himalaya, written from hard won experience.

There is nothing this year about Scottish Winter climbing, nor indeed about walking or cycling in the hills, or kayaking within sight of them. Of course, plenty of all that goes on in the Club. It would be impossible, in one issue of the Newsletter, to have articles which were a mirror image of all that we do. As regards

anything that we do without ropes and loads of metal, I am concerned that people may regard it as so routine that it isn't worth writing about. I've always felt that what you do matters less than how you describe it, but I've also found that one cannot tell authors what should inspire them – it's their creation to conceive, gestate and bring into the world, not the editor's.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy the Newsletter this year. It only remains for me to thank the authors and, especially, Sarah Wright, whose web designing skills make the finished product so much better looking than it would otherwise be.

David Small
Secretary, Edinburgh JMCS



Alpine Activities

Bruce Macrosson

There is a picture that hangs from a wall in my house, it's an old and photo taken from the Gornergrat railway station above Zermatt framing the Zermatt skyline and its array of 4000m peaks with the Matterhorn, Weisshorn, Dent Blanche looming large.

All very pretty but to me it's more than just an old photo. Whilst, like many, I relish fun on firm rock, bolts and sunshine, or a blast up plastic Nevis ice with a straightforward downhill walk back to

a warm hut, these peaks still cast an irresistible draw.

From bitter experience, I now well know that those beautiful facades, all perfect ridges and white icy faces, which tempt with their sensual promises of the pleasure of firm neves and warm rock, so often deceive.

Those haughty madams that picture portrays, I have learnt, are fickle and demanding, of innocent fun so often

bereft. Here in these 21st century days of internet reports, sticky rubber and chalk bags, the mountains still have the upper hand, Safety & success still hangs on precisely the same skills and moral qualities as were needed by the pioneers of old. For me that photo has always been a gauntlet in the dirt, it never fails to and I know will always test my mettle as both a mountaineer and myself and never fails to destroy quickly any ego I may wish to foster.



Bruce en route to L'Eveque

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With David there's no hanging about, so day one saw us bouncing, fresh & full of confidence up to the Vignettes hut, our target for next day being the traverse of L'Eveque.

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The Matterhorn from
Mont Blanc de Cheilon



But enough of such self indulgent rambling. This is supposed to be a trip report and here it is.

A partner was needed, so enter the embodiment of Edinburgh style Scottish pragmatism in the form of trusty JMCS stalwart and Secretary David Small. Having endured my foibles on past alpine escapades & mulled over our experiences Mr Small was in no doubt of the essential ingredients which were needed if alpine ambitions were to be turned into gold.

Most of such ingredients are obvious; decent weather, acclimatisation and mucho hill fitness. The essential element however is more subtle and elusive and sought for by so many British mountaineers only to end in frustration.

The dark art of alpine short rope technique. That Gastonesque ideal of moving together roped and unbelayed whilst flowing effortlessly yet safely for hours over loose rock and knife edged aretes with a couple of thousand metres of air screaming up from beneath one's feet. Not the usual British experience of snagging ropes, stuttering progress, a constant desire to pitch and watching the continental guided parties disappear into the distance.

So off we set complete with our alchemist's list of all we needed to turn our dreams into gold.

Dream peaks were the Dent Blanche & Weisshorn, the plan simple and we had 12 days. Off plane, pick up car, whip round to Arolla, bag a couple of classic AD's just below 4000m to acclimatise & then we'd be well primed to blast up first the alpine princess that is the Dent Blanche before our grand finale on what I will always see as the big daddy of all the 4000rs, the Weisshorn.

With David there's no hanging about, so day one saw us bouncing, fresh & full of confidence up to the Vignettes hut, our target for next day being the traverse of L'Eveque. We'd read the glossy guide book with its fine French phrases and pretty pictures and looked forward to a quick romp up a nicely well frozen glacier and then some sunkissed rock work & back to hut for tea. We should have been old enough to know better.

Yes, it was a quality day out and I could not recommend the area & route enough however it was two knackered & chastened wee laddies who staggered back to the hut that evening. That combination of 5 am start, altitude, glacier recession leaving a gaping bergschrund with 3 pitches of nigh on vertical tottering schist, route finding & mucho space below one's boot soles didn't really equate to my armchair vision of a slick team steaming to summit glory. Already the Weisshorn seemed to be slipping a little further away.



Weariness now called for a short , easy next day and a pleasant couple of hours were spent on the Pigne D'Arolla , where David greatly impressed me when he raced up it in half the guidebook time. A delightful afternoon followed as we walked down from the hut . Rocky gneiss ridges glowed red in the late afternoon sun which gave rich texture to the carpet of darkening pine forests and glacial torrents spread out below.

No rest for the obsessed however and the next day saw us lashing sweat on the slog up and over the Pas de Chevres en route to the Dix hut, again amidst alpine scenery so perfect it didn't seem real but I must confess that by this time weariness was starting to kick in and my right hip/ lower back starting, for some inexplicable reason, to niggle, which did somewhat dull the aesthetics of it all but still what a setting with the perfect pyramid that is Mt Blanc de Cheillon dominating all.

We traversed this the next day, a real Valais classic and an outing I'd strongly recommend. Unfortunately I'd managed to pick up some bug and to be honest that day was both physical and mental torture. Having staggered back to the hut, the final slog back across glacier, across the boulder field and up the ladder to the Pas de Chevre, then back down to Arolla all felt somewhat cruel . If the Weisshorn had felt a bit distant before, it now seemed in a different universe.

Arolla isn't Chamonix and finding beta on routes, weather and conditions was not easy but when some texts that came in from back home warned of a couple of days of unsettled weather my spirits rose. A chance to regroup & recover without letting David down, more fool me!

Cloud might have been clamped right down the next day, rain in the air & my aching ague ridden bones screaming out for rest but I had underestimated Monsieur Small - climb we must & if not a Valais mountain classic then valley rock it must be so a day spent clipping bolts in the valley was had. Which I must confess despite the fact that I almost tripped over my petted lip on getting out of our car I really did rather enjoy in the end.

Storm & tempest was still forecast for the morrow and the Dent Blanche at this point therefore seemed unwise, so instead we headed up to Moiry hut. I now felt better & relished a short, steep & again scenic blast up to the hut followed by a sublime afternoon on 2 classic 4 pitch alpine routes, situated perfectly above the glacier on impeccable gneiss all courtesy of Monsieur Piola & his topo book Suisse Plaisir (strongly recommended both the book & the Plaisir style alpine rock). Still the impending storms had not arrived but the hut guardian promised much meteorological nastiness by midday, so we shelved plans for the Grand Cornier & instead traversed the Pointe de Mouri

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and the Dent des Rosses. Turned into a very pleasant traverse with the team starting to move more smoothly now, however a smidgeon of frustration did linger as we walked down to car later that afternoon under a clear, warm blue sky.

Chatted to the only “anglais” we met in Arolla that evening. It was with interest that we noted their attempt on the Dent Blanche had finally stuttered and failed, the reasons; bad weather or snow ? no, exhaustion ? no, somehow time just seemed to mysteriously vanish as they negotiated gendarmes above the void whilst guided continental parties



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the inevitable front rolled in that night, temperatures plunged, heavy rain started and snow started to dump up high. This led to a morning of much panicked discussion, guessing, planning and a reappraisal of plans.

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disappeared into the distance; two more British victims of the dark art.

However I believed our alpine potion was by now fermenting nicely and an insight into the dark art being gained. Time now to approach a Valais giant, hopefully the Dent Blanche. Of course therefore the inevitable front rolled in that night, temperatures plunged, heavy rain started and snow started to dump up high. This led to a morning of much panicked discussion, guessing, planning and a reappraisal of plans. There was not much of our holiday left by now

and I was somewhat paranoid about returning home empty handed. A punt at this stage on the Dent Blanche to me seemed just too much of a gamble, with 3 precious days being spent on a six hour, 1700m hut walk, followed by a summit ridge buried in fresh snow and then a despondent, tired retreat. I therefore I tried hard to convince David, from what I had gleaned from guides, that the Zinalrothorn would clear of snow far faster than Dent Blanche and a day spent moving to Zermatt in the rain, followed by a hut walk the next day in sun as Zinalrothorn's ridge cleared of

snow should lead to success the next day. David most patiently agreed to my plan which was good of him because I know by now the Dent Blanche had cast its spell on him.

Great relief for me then when it did all work out. The summit day went smoothly as did the ropework, in fact I found it all turned out to be a pleasure, the rock, climbing and situations delightful, astride its gendarmed ridge and the amidst gleaming snows & angular rock peaks of the Swiss Valais giving a day to treasure.

To be honest I always felt our hoped for Obergabelhorn ascent the next day was somewhat optimistic. By now, back in an overcrowded hut, the physical effects of our day combined with having to fight for our dinner whilst squeezed into a corner with umpteen others and being regaled with that day's spectacle of a man with his wife fall from the ridge of the Obergabelhorn down its north face did scupper any such notion. Something technically interesting but shorter was called for the next day, before the 1700m trudge down from the hut that afternoon.

The Trifhorn just above the hut I believed offered the perfect solution. I'm sure it would have been too if the approach couloir had any snow in it. It did not however and we spent an anxious two hours teetering up said couloir consisting of a cakelike blend of mud, sand and television sized boulders carefully blended into a lethal creation where everything moved. I think we would have both retreated if that had not meant suffering the inevitable fusilades from above. The ridge was gained however and some airy delightful climbing followed but it just kept on coming & our descent down death couloir loomed, so we called it a day before the top and descended. I quite impressed myself when a football sized boulder blasted into my leg before another spun me round by the shoulder and still nothing broke, must be a tougher little lad than I thought! Well I

might have thought that back at hut, but felt decidedly soft after 4 hrs of hours of never ending zig zags later, when I hobbled back into Zermatt my wee tootsies burning and legs wobbling.

A well deserved rest the next day? "Nein" said Herr Small, he fixed me with Messneresque stare and the next morning found us wandering about under the Rifflehorn, lured by the promise of more multi pitch "Swiss Plaisir". Eventually we found our route and much pleasure was being had until five pitches up, the glacier far below, along with rucksack, warm clothes etc our little dream bubble was burst. No idea where it came from but suddenly there was black cloud all around, then rain finally followed by sleet which started pouring down the rock. The pitch was 5c, my gear about 15 m below me and I confess I was terrified, with core temperature plunging and rock now slippery but that fright catapulted me up the last 10 meters to grab the chain.

A somewhat farcical 10 mins followed as David & I heatedly discussed the best way to escape. It all seemed a bit melodramatic an hour later when as we reached our sacks the clouds cleared and the sun warmed again.

Back to Edinburgh and the family the next day. Thanks David for a brilliant trip, much learnt and the whole

experience deeply satisfying because as mountaineers we know deep down it doesn't always have to be fun to be fun.

As for the Weisshorn and Dent Blanche, well we wouldn't want to achieve all our dreams too quickly! We'll see what next summer brings

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Climbing in Morocco

Bryan Rynne

For our usual early season climbing trip this year Patrick and I decided to go on a Climbers' Club 'meet' to the Anti-Atlas area of Morocco, in March. There is an immense amount of rock in this area, mostly unclimbed, with a corresponding large number of climbs in the guides. The rock is mainly pink granite and orange quartzite, in a sub-Saharan landscape, while the terrain is generally arid, with mostly scrubby vegetation, apart from near to the occasional stream where some trees and lush vegetation manages to grow. The climate is very good, at least in March (presumably it is way too hot in summer). In fact, in the week we were there we had only one day on which it rained slightly, but even then we managed to climb later on in the day, and mostly it was 20-25 degrees and sunny.

There is some bolted climbing, but the vast majority of the climbing relies on modern, high-technology protection, which is what Patrick and I went there for. The area is a climbing paradise for this sort of climbing. Most of the routes we did were good, although some people came back in the evening with accounts of loose, chossy death traps. It is worth bearing in mind that most climbs in the guides will not yet have had many

repeat ascents, and there is no rescue service! In view of this we stuck to VS and HVS routes, the hardest one we did being Crazy Mushroom Ridge, HVS 5b, 190 metres. All the routes we did were between about 150-200 metres, and relatively easily accessible from the road.

We flew to Agadir, which is well situated for the Anti-Atlas. Marrakesh would be possible, but it would be rather too long a drive to be sensible. We stayed in Kasbah Tizourgane, at the northern end of the Anti-Atlas climbing area, about 55 miles drive from Agadir. We hired a car from Agadir airport, and the drive was easy, along good roads. A car is essential to get to the climbs.

In Morocco a kasbah is: *a mud-brick castle that serves as a residence for the local Berber tribe is called a kasbah. Some are private mansions, others are even whole fortified villages* (Wikipedia).

Kasbah Tizourgane is an extensive warren of buildings on an elevated lump of rock, but you would not regard it as fortified. The kasbah is close to the village of Idaougnidif and is very well located for the northern climbing locations in the Anti-Atlas range, such

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The shed can easily be identified by the two obvious bald tyres leaning up against the front wall, and is worth locating since it is a long way from Idaougnidif to a petrol station.

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as the Afantizar and Samazar valleys. In fact, from the walk round the walls of the kasbah there are spectacular views across the valley to the hills containing these valleys.

Most of the climbs we did were less than an hour's drive from the kasbah along fairly well-paved roads (considerably better than Edinburgh roads, but of course that is not saying much). However, the back roads are very low quality dirt tracks, which I did not want to take our hire car up. On the other hand, the best day out we had was with Emma Alsford and Paul Donnithorne (the guide book writers and meet organisers) and Don Sargeant (guide book photographer), when we went a long way up the remote Samazar valley in a massive four-wheel drive vehicle. Some people took normal

hire cars up this road, but I felt that was madness - there seemed to be a good chance you would have to push your car 10 miles back to the road with a broken axle (do cars have axles nowadays - maybe I didn't need to worry ...). That day we did Sisters of Mercy VS 4c, 180 metres, on Dragon Buttress - an excellent route in a tremendous, remote location. We were also treated to a glorious, scenic drive round some very remote valleys while Don took photos for the guide book.

There is, however, very little in the way of facilities or accommodation in this area, apart from the kasbah. Idaougnidif has a few, very small, shops at which you can buy basic provisions, and has a shed from which the proprietor will sell you petrol, poured out of plastic bottles into your tank (you may wish to go for a short

walk while this operation is taking place). The shed can easily be identified by the two obvious bald tyres leaning up against the front wall, and is worth locating since it is a long way from Idaougnidif to a petrol station.

The kasbah owners are very friendly and helpful, but you do get the feeling that you are paying European hotel prices for a Moroccan 'club hut', with uncomfortable beds in dormitory accommodation, queues for the small number of showers, and not very good quality food with expensive water (by the bottle, charged extra). And no alcohol! It is possible to get alcohol in the mid-sized town of Taфраout, and the kasbah owners don't mind you drinking this with dinner. Some of the inmates went for this option, but Patrick and I opted for the healthy, no-alcohol





Don Sargeant

option (and it is a long drive to Tafraout from the kasbah). In fact, Tafraout seems to have a lot more facilities and is well placed for the southern climbing locations. When we went out there wasn't a guide for this area, but since then one has been published. If we were to go again I suspect we would stay in Tafraout next time.

The climbing guide we had was: Morocco Rock, by Emma Alsford & Paul Donnithorne (who also organised the trip). This is a good quality, Rockfax-type guide to, primarily, the northern climbing areas.

Since then, the guide: Tafraout - Morocco (2 Volumes), by Steve Broadbent, has been published, which appears to cover both northern and southern climbing areas (I haven't actually got hold of it, so I can't vouch for this).

Overall, if you want a so called 'trad' climbing holiday this is an excellent place to go, with good weather and good climbing. And you might return with your liver in better shape than it has been for years. Unfortunately, if you fall off you might not return at all....

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Too Old to Be Bold?

David Buchanan

It started with a trip to climb Ardverickie Wall. Alan and I sat in the car at the end of the track into Binnein Shuas. Mountain bikes ready to make the approach easier. It was miserable – dreich. “Shall we carry on? The weather should improve.” “Mm.. it might not, and anyway the crag will be wet and needs time to dry.” “Lets try the Cairngorms. The forecast is good for there.”

An hour or so later in the Cairngorm car park the weather is indeed much better. “Have we got a guidebook?” “No,” “A

map?” “No.” “I’ve got a compass.” “OK let’s stay in the Northern Corries and climb something easy to identify with no route finding difficulties and preferably something we have climbed before.” We trudge up to Coirie an Lochan. Traces of a path avoid the lingering snow and we arrive at the bottom of Savage Slit. It meets our criteria – easy to find and an obvious route – and we have both done it before. The climbing is very good – a little harder than I remember, although I find that a very frequent experience nowadays – and we ascend it without incident.

Its July and not yet three o’clock so there is plenty of time for another route. We wander over Cairn Lochan and down the Goat Track. “How about Fingers Ridge Direct?” This doesn’t really meet our criteria – we are not sure where it starts, we don’t know where it goes exactly, but we’ve both climbed Finger’s Ridge before - what can go wrong? It will be an adventure. “Anyway we can always escape on to the ordinary route.” We find what looks like the start and Alan leads off. He climbs quickly to a small overlap, and then slows. A tricky move is required



Alan on Fingers Ridge Direct

to gain the slab above. When I follow I find it quite hard and I'm not confident about leading the next pitch. It's a small moment of truth. I set off. It's slabby, not too technical, but bold. An occasional old peg seems to show the way and provides assurance. Protection is minimal and I run out almost all the rope before I reach a stance. A wonderful pitch. Alan joins me and leads another fine pitch to join the normal route and the finish over the "fingers".

Less than a week later I returned to the Cairngorms with Stuart. This time we walked over to Stac an Faraidh. Our first route was Whispers. It has three pitches, and we agreed that I would lead the easier initial ones, leaving the crux pitch to Stuart. The route follows a discontinuous crack over slabs and I was a little worried about how much protection I was going to get. I set off with some trepidation, but found the climbing enjoyable and fairly straightforward and the protection (mainly cams) good. The initial traverse on the final pitch was very fine leading to some slightly more difficult climbing and then easy ground. Altogether, three excellent pitches. Our second route was Pippet Slab. Although easier than Whispers, sparse protection gave it a very serious feel. Another great route.

My final trip to the Cairngorms this summer was again with Alan. We headed over to Hell's Lum with the intention of climbing Clean Sweep which we had climbed together many years before when



Unknown Climbers on Magic Crack



it was graded severe. Unfortunately, recent rain had soaked the east side of the crag – Auld Nick had a small stream running down it, but the western side was dry so we elected to have a go at Hell's Lump instead.

I led the first pitch up a quartz band. Although relatively easy climbing, the quartz extrusions felt a little insecure and there was no protection until near the end of the pitch. The second pitch was the crux. Finding the correct way was a little tricky, but Alan worked it out and climbed it with panache. I followed with some difficulty. The next pitch was fairly straightforward leading towards Deep Cut Chimney. According to the guidebook the route now follows the left edge of the chimney, but this is very steep and looks much harder than anything below. Alan found a way through by an airy crossing of the chimney and so on to easy ground and the top.

We were keen to do another route and decided to visit the Mess of Potage on our way back to the car park. So down the Goat Track and across Coire an t-Sneachda and what seemed an unreasonably long and tiring walk to the base of the crag. As we approached we were attracted by a clean looking corner. We identified it as the winter line Yukon Jack with no summer ascent recorded in the guide book. It was my turn to lead, and Alan suggested that I might like to stop part way up the corner to give him some of

what was likely to be the best climbing on the route. However, once I got started I ran out nearly 50 metres over excellent VDiff/ Severe ground to the top of the corner. A roped scramble over loose ground led us to the crack line which is last pitch of the winter version of Pot Doodles. This gave Alan a fine pitch at around Severe. So three great days and six small adventures with a little boldness. As Stuart said "This is real climbing. Anything else: climbing on indoor walls; sports climbing – is just practice"

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Arriving at Carnmore

Fifty Percent Isn't Bad David Small

Andrew and I usually arrange a couple of weekends of rock climbing each summer and usually we strike it lucky with one of them, while the other is a washout. A 50% success rate strikes me as acceptable, when you take into account the Scottish weather, and all the other variables that have to go in your favour to produce a good weekend's climbing. This year was no exception. Climbing indoors was all we could manage during our second weekend – and that was cut short by the effects of a virus which was doing the rounds at the time - but we bore no grudges because we'd had a sun soaked couple of days in the North West during our first expedition.

The forecast for that first weekend had been less than perfect and I thought the Lakes would be a safer destination, but Andrew had his eye on Fionn Buttress, on Carnmore Crag, and persuaded me to take a gamble. The plan was that on Saturday we would climb on the crags overlooking the Bealach nam Ba on the way to Applecross, then we'd stay Saturday night at the Ling Hut in Torridon, and on Sunday we would drive to Poolewe, cycle and walk in to Carnmore, climb Fionn Buttress, walk and cycle out again and drive all the way home. Who cares about work on Monday?



Looking back on the weekend now, from amidst the indifferent, good for nothing weather of October, I am very glad that he persuaded me to take the risk.

On the Friday night we stayed near Aviemore and got up early next morning, under low cloud and mist, to drive to Inverness and beyond. As our prospects looked poor I had the urge to vindicate myself with the fatal utterance “I told you so” but, at least in my memory of the journey, I didn’t actually say it. At any rate, I hope I didn’t, because by the time we were at Achnashellach the sun was breaking through, and when we stopped for coffee and breakfast at Lochcarron the last remnants of the cloud were burning off and it was clear we were in for exceptionally good weather.

We went on to park just below the summit of the Bealach nam Ba and strolled down to the foot of Sword of Gideon, a VS first climbed by Tom Patey in 1961. The guidebook says it is low in the grade, but I’m not sure I would agree. Getting off the ground requires some commitment and if, further up, you were to come off the crux, you would be held by your gear only after a fair bit of downwards and sideways travel. Anyway, it certainly isn’t harder than VS, and is well worth doing. I remember watching from one of the belays as a seaplane came up from the Applecross side of the pass and swooped around the corrie before disappearing down towards Kishorn. I assumed the people on the

plane were having an airborne mountain tour before a good lunch somewhere on Skye, or maybe even just afloat on the Minch, but basking as I was in the sun, on the clean dry sandstone, I wouldn’t have swapped places with them.

Next, after some faffing, we (thought we had) found the start of Bumbley Two, supposedly a Hard Severe but with a name like that bound to give you a false sense of security, and so it proved. I led out a rope length, which included a fair bit of vegetation, but it then became impossible to match the rock ahead of us with any of the description in the guidebook. Andrew tackled a steep layback crack, which was at least 4c and would be famous if it was located in the Lake District, to the base of a buttress which looked climbable, but with no gear.

I evaded the main difficulties and let him confirm our diagnosis on a top rope. This made us very much aware that even though the North West is no longer the deserted stronghold that it once was, it is not exactly Traprain Law or Aberdour either – there is a lot of rock and grass that is not climbed often enough to show you the way. Having absorbed that lesson, we went back to the car, round to Sheildaig and relaxed over a beer in a pleasant pub with a sun terrace on its roof. If only Scotland could be like that more often, nobody would bother with Kalymnos. Emerging from the Ling Hut early next morning, we drove up Glen Torridon and

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The guidebook says it is low in the grade, but I’m not sure I would agree.

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along the side of Loch Maree in exactly the kind of settled weather you want for a long approach to a crag; sunny and warm, but not too hot and with a gentle breeze to suppress the midges but not strong enough to hinder you while cycling. Taking the bikes off the roof of the car, we left Poolewe and set off towards our distant objective. After a while the road turned to a track, the track got narrower and more uneven, with drainage ditches galore across it, and the inevitable discomfort of cycling with climbing gear began to make itself felt. Andrew had panniers on his bike so the load on his back was much reduced, but the panniers tended to get snagged on heather or boulders and impede his progress. I had all my kit in a rucksack on my back, with the result that my personal interaction with the saddle soon became rather painful. There is no easy way out (although padded cycling shorts probably help), but if the only alternative is walking then, overall, there

is no doubt that having a bike is better. You may not appreciate it on the uphill bits of the approach journey, but the downhill return trip will be so much easier.

I know that some people take their bikes all the way in to Carnmore, but my advice would be to leave the bikes just west of Strathan Buidhe (ie the little steep sided valley cutting through towards Loch Maree below Beinn Airigh Charr). If you take them any further, as we did, you will have to manhandle them a fair bit and then probably, like us, abandon them anyway after a lot of fruitless effort. But whatever you do, if the weather is as good as we had it, nothing can detract from the pleasure of approaching Carnmore beneath the immense shadowed hillsides, along the shore of the blue lapping loch and with Carnmore Crag itself getting bigger and bigger the nearer you get to it.

From Carnmore House the way up to Fionn Buttress starts easily but gradually steepens and, near the bottom of the route, mainly consist of a rather unnerving thin layer of vegetation over slabby rock. I would not like to have to down climb it.

Once the climbing begins, the true line of the first pitch is hard to find. Andrew started off up a steep slab (which did not have the generous gear placements one prefers to find on a first pitch after a nervy approach) then continued up some loose heathery grooves. He was looking

Andrew starting Sword of Gideon with the necessary commitment



for a chockstone in a chimney which the guidedbook said was the first belay. At length he found one, with an in situ sling on it to suggest that he was in the right place, but when we looked around for the second pitch we realised we had gone wrong. I explored up and right from the belay and, gaining perspective the further I went, realised that we were much too high and some way left of where we should have been. Fortunately, from the end of my tentative, we could abseil down more or less to where we should have been at the end of the true second pitch. I hope the sight of the nut and quickdraw which we left behind has not lured others the same way.

After we had sorted ourselves out I was concerned about the time we had lost and,

I am afraid to confess, I suggested bailing out. If we'd gone off route on the first pitch, how would we manage on all the rest? It seemed to me that we'd already had a fair amount of excitement for one day and, even allowing for hassle descending the gnarly approach, we could probably still make it back to Edinburgh before midnight if we headed down now. Andrew did not positively disagree, but clearly preferred to go on, and since he had been right about the basic choice of destination, I came round to trusting his luck a bit more.

From this point onwards the rather vegetated start of the climb was left behind and the climbing was all on clean rock. The next (third) pitch went quite boldly up a slab and seemed to me to be the

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the way is obvious, the holds are comfortably big and the gear is good. However, if you think the exposure on the fifth pitch is significant, you ain't seen nothing yet;

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technical crux of the route. The holds are all there but you cannot see them from below and have to work out where to go by instinct, trial and error, without a lot of protection to assist your deliberations. The fourth pitch is a corner, not as well protected as the guidebook suggests but fortunately dry for us when it is often wet. The fifth pitch is the technical crux according to the book, but although steep, strenuous and very exposed, the way is obvious, the holds are comfortably big and the gear is good. However, if you think the exposure on the fifth pitch is significant, you ain't seen nothing yet;

the sixth pitch is a traverse where from start to finish your heels are, without any exaggeration, above hundreds of feet of space. No matter what time it would be when we got home, I would not have missed it for the world.

The final tricky pitch is the seventh. The guidebook description suggests there is an obvious flake to aim for, but in reality it seems so insignificant from below, and the line towards it seems so steep, that it would be easy to ignore it and go, in error, left or right. After that, two long easier pitches on perfect rock, high up in the glorious isolation of the wilderness, led to the top. We got there at 6pm, relishing a few carefree minutes before thoughts of the length of the homeward journey began to intrude. Reluctantly we packed the gear, coiled the ropes and began the descent, literal and metaphorical, from our natural high.

Never has the A9 seemed so long and tedious, but eventually, hours later, in the very early morning half-light of Edinburgh, I quietly closed the door of my house behind me and crept upstairs to bed. My kit was in a pile in the living room, my shirt for work was un-ironed, my books and papers in disarray. I left it all as it was, being content to let “tomorrow” take care of itself; I would cope with it when it arrived. For the moment, my mind was still on top of Carnmore Crag, all uncertainties resolved, in the early evening of a perfect summer day.

Near the top of Fionn Buttress





The Chamonix Valley for Beginners

Ewan Paterson

When Graham asked if I would like to go to Chamonix on a climbing holiday I at once agreed, buying the plane tickets that week. The deal was free accommodation in his mummy's chalet in Les Houches for the 2 weeks and lots of climbing (with me being his guide?). So I'd never been to Chamonix before, and Gray had always had a guide when he'd been climbing, so we decided to focus on the Aiguilles Rouges: not risking glacier access. The Aiguilles Rouges are on the Northwest

side of the Chamonix valley, while most of the really interesting stuff (Mont Blanc, Aiguille du Midi etc) is on the opposing side.

So Michel Piola's guidebook became bedtime reading for me for the couple of months preceding the trip. This would have been time well spent however I couldn't make sense of the names and places, even with the help of Google maps, and how they fitted together, or

even how the grades would relate to mine and our capability. So constructively I got in some practice with the knots for abseil and played out the various scenarios of us dropping to our deaths in my head, so was pretty well prepared in that regard.

Anyway, I should say that I got injured a month before shipping out – getting the excuses in – when doing gymnastics, which I have now given up (too dangerous). I was in a handstand and

had somehow balanced weirdly – then tried to drop and roll but instead dropped my full weight onto the back of my neck, in so doing levering my chin into my sternum (massive crunching sound) whereupon my ribs separated a bit. So my ribs were really painful for the next 6 weeks or so, but I was lucky not to hurt my neck/spine – so could be worse.

Luckily by the time of the trip I was able to half the daily dose of painkillers I'd been on for that month.

And finally the actual trip! Arrived by transfer from the airport with cloud covering the whole valley so couldn't see any of the landmarks yet. Hadn't considered the adjustment to the place/altitude and had a couple of weird days where I felt like I was losing my mind – no sleep and a sort of out of body feeling. It drizzled those couple of days and the cloud kept creeping steadily up, slowly revealing Mont Blanc behind the chalet. When I eventually saw the full thing I was astounded. I have never seen such a towering behemoth of a hill, it has a sort of anti-climatic domed peak but the sheer size of the beast is breathtaking. It is really a sort of spiritual experience seeing something like that for the first time.

Les Houches is just slightly down-valley from the main hub Chamonix. Across the valley from the chalet in the midst of pine

trees was a massive concrete statue of some king (maybe dwarven – not sure), this added to the atmosphere of the place in a Tolkien-*esk* way. There are a couple of sports crags in Les Houches, or close by, but nothing much worth a particular visit. We started out on these crags and I made sure we were practised in the rope techniques, as much as he could be.

The Chezerys slabs are multi-pitch fully bolted slabs near the top of the valley. We focussed here for a few days. It's all pretty easy climbing (mostly <6a) in a really nice relaxing place. If you want to see Ibex then go there as a tribe of them live there and we saw them every time we went. A fantastic easy route there is Voie bleue (no. 10 in the book) with pitches 2&4 being the most interesting.

On the slabs I could see it would be problematic climbing on the more mountainous routes as Gray was being extremely slow in tying to the anchors. Sometimes it felt like he took longer to make the clove hitches than to climb the pitch. It was fine to be waiting there in the wonderful sun and in the relaxed atmosphere but it was definitely going to be a problem on the proper routes, especially if we had to build the anchors.

I'd seen enough of the slabs after a few days but Gray seemed to want to spend the whole holiday there. I couldn't do that

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It drizzled those couple of days and the cloud kept creeping steadily up, slowly revealing Mont Blanc behind the chalet. When I eventually saw the full thing I was astounded. I have never seen such a towering behemoth of a hill, it has a sort of anti-climatic domed peak but the sheer size of the beast is breathtaking.

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and so we went on the €25 gondola to la Flégère to maybe go onto the Index which is a big rock spike with some great classic routes on it. Index was covered in cloud when we got there so we consulted the book and gambled on the Tour des Crouchues which is a big tower at the other end of the sort of massive amphitheatre of rock. Gray was being really slow on the approach which meant when we reached the route we were at the end of the queue with 3 teams ahead of us.

Gray is a really good runner, but unfortunately got completely destroyed by any decent gradient. I was in trainers and had to cross a step snow field by kicking steps. This was fun and easy to do but would have been really problematic if the snow fields had been any larger. It was also quite funny turning up in shorts and trainers when every climber around you had on B3 boots!

So really annoyingly we had to wait for the other climbers to go up before

we could start but at least no-one was overtaking us, which was a distinct possibility with our slow climbing pace. We were doing the Voie Escande – de Glabert (no. 6) which is a very easy route and quite nice. There was a scary moment when starting off the second pitch as suddenly there were loud shouts from above, I glanced up (not advisable) and saw a huge boulder flying in the air, shouted down to Gray “HIDE, QUICK HIDE” and hugged the rock. Well we escaped it but it was a pretty frightening experience.

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Because I was rushing, at one point I untied myself without anything holding me to the rock and so really scared myself – luckily there were no consequences but this will serve as a big lesson to not rush at the cost of safety.

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When we were on the 3rd pitch, or so, the weather quickly started to turn with dark cloud swirling overhead. Gray kept asking what we should do, I was determined to do the route and so pressed on and hoped it would pass over. The other climbing teams above and around us seemed to think the same. Then there was a huge deluge of hail and there was an immediate change in the thinking with all the climbing teams rushing to get the hell out of there.

So everyone was rushing to abseil down and we quickly traversed over to an equipped anchor and prepared for the first abseil of the trip. Because I was rushing, at one point I untied myself without anything holding me to the rock and so really scared myself – luckily there were no consequences but this will serve as a big lesson to not rush at the cost of safety. When we were pulling down the ropes we managed to dislodge a rock (another lesson – don't look up when pulling down the ropes!) which managed to bang off our helmets and cut my leg a little. Blood always helps make you look like you've been climbing hard.

We came back later in the trip and completed the route. The Tour des Crouchues towers majestically like a titan's gravestone above your head on the approach and it would be great to go back and try the more interesting routes that I

managed to scope on the abseils.

The other mentionable route that we managed was on the Index (Aiguille de l'Index) which is conveniently positioned a couple of hundred meters from the chairlift station. The SE Arête is the big classic there but I was really itching to do a route with a little challenge in it so we opted for the Voie Brunat-Perroux (no. 4). This is a really decent route but got a bit confusing at the top and so we didn't get to do the last hard pitch which I had been looking forward to.

Anyway it is wonderful to get up on top of the Index with the amazing views and huge exposure on the arête. The abseil is really nice as well, really airy. The team ahead of us managed to get their rope stuck in a crack because they were not careful with where the rope was above them on the abseil. I helped them out by releasing the knot: yet another lesson to take from the trip.

It was really an amazing place to climb in and it's thanks to Gray that I have been exposed to it. The learning experience has been invaluable and the epic mountains there have instilled in me a great motivation to improve my climbing and come back better prepared. I'm already planning a trip there next summer.



A New Year Trip to Turkey

James Dalgarno

It is three days to New Year and the beginning of 2013. Sunshine and warmth is a distant memory and the Scottish summits are storm bound but we are packing shorts and t-shirts for a trip to Antalya in Turkey.

Antalya is already a popular destination for the beach tourist. Only a few miles inland where the mountains rise up there lie tier after tier of perfect limestone. A short distance away nestles the village of Gayikbayiri where we stayed at Nancy's

apartments. Callan's trip logistics were hugely complex. We were Bryan, James, Alan, Eric, Callan Scott and Maddy, in order of appearance arriving from Newcastle, Manchester, Glasgow and Bergen. And all too soon departing in a different order and not necessarily back to the same airport.

Bryan and I were out on the first week. After we had explored the lie of the land we set about a few introductory routes on sunny sector Gismo. This is the most

accessible sector with reasonable grading. Unfortunately the weather turned for a few days, with heavy rain and mist. Glad we weren't camping, many do, it looked miserable. December and January are the wettest months, although generally quite warm. This is in contrast to May through September when it can be unbearably hot, climbing can only be done in the shade and it almost never rains.

During the damp days we found many caves in which we could climb. Sectors

Magra, Left Cave and Trabenna were particularly good. The huge caves at Trabenna were spectacular but intimidating. At least in the wet, quality climbing could be enjoyed on the moderately graded first pitch of two pitch routes. Commonly the second pitch would soar across the cave roof ending just outside the lip and would grade at the wrong side of 7.

Bryan and I saw in the new year with Nancy at an organised dinner at a local campsite. The highlight being a visit from Santa Clause (the proprietor) putting on a show of zeybek dancing.

When the weather improved the limestone dried quickly. We left the caves and explored other sectors, of which there are many, Ottoman was a favourite. Alan, Eric and Callan joined us and Bryan left. We maintained the easy daily rhythm, a chilly walk from the village down to the orange cliffs (where it always felt much warmer) working the routes in strong sunshine, retiring to a campsite bar and dining at the fish restaurant on the walk home after dark. An inexpensive hire car saved our feet the walk to further sectors, took us to the local town for provisions and further afield for dinner. In contrast to the cool chic (with drum & base soundtrack) campsite bars, local cafes in nearby villages appear somewhat spartan although their food was good and owners very friendly.

During the second week Callan climbed his first 7a, and added two more. Maddy made a brave twilight ascent to retrieve





gear, in the rain, of 'Lycian Highway'. This climb, when it starts to overhang at 20 meters, features a bridging move across a kind of tube to a hanging pinnacle. Good value for a 5+. Maddy doesn't enjoy exposed climbs. All in all we climbed on at least nine sectors. The bits we missed were more distant and harder.

The area has been developed in recent times and although perhaps not as closely bolted as Kylmnos most routes are well

equipped. A few lower-offs need chain rather than tat to connect the bolts. Grades feel fairly stiff but it is clearly a Mecca for those leading 6b-7a.

On the last day after a few routes we took in the open air market and enjoyed the local specialty, a stuffed pancake called 'golzeme' which like the climbing was not to be missed.

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On the last day after a few routes we took in the open air market and enjoyed the local specialty

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Sport Climbing in Ariège

Nils Krichel

Extrapolating from the few trips abroad during my comparatively short climbing career, a climbing holiday features most or all of the following:

- lots of sun
- lots of exciting (but bolted) routes
- swooping vistas
- luxurious accomodation
- too much good food and good wine

Clearly this is an impression that I would

like to avoid to have spoiled. And so, after one sortie to the Italian Riviera and another two around Costa Blanca, this time Sue, James, Bryan and I set off to Ariège, escaping the driech, dark, Scottish October that we have been blessed with. Let's go through that ticklist:

Lots of sun: The guidebook suggests late September – early October to be warm enough, with good chances of prolonged dry spills and bright enough evenings

to try out some of the more extensive multi-pitch outings at Le Dent D'Orlu - we had our eyes on two eleven-pitch/300 m routes, but more adventurous souls will find anything up to 35 pitches and 1000 m ascent! Before we set off, the area's weather forecast seemed to fluctuate heavily, but then settle on dry and predictable conditions throughout. In actual fact, we were lucky for the first few days, and we decided to gently warm up and get used to entrusting our feet to

Tarascon's valley with some worrying but photogenic cloud cover



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Even during busier times, Ariege is an area so spoiled for choice that even a short scramble or half an hour's walk in turn a potential crowd magnet into an exotic destination for a day's climbing.

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invisible undulations in grippy outdoor rock around the area's very pleasant single-pitch crags. Being thus honed for our epic adventures, the second half of the week turned out to be sufficiently overcast and grey to not commit to anything too long, and the four half-ropes that ate up a good amount of our sparse baggage allowance stayed in their bags for the whole holiday. That said, we only caught occasional rain showers and scary grey clouds that often dried off quickly on the warm rock, only cutting some days short.

Lots of exciting (but bolted) routes: Rockfax has released a new guidebook for the area last year, covering most (but by far not all) of the crags which

are scattered all around. From our base close to Tarascon-sur-Ariege (not to be confused with Tarascon-sur-Rhone, about 250km further east!), Calamès with its close to 200 climbs was an easy walk and an even easier drive away. Most crags – even the ones marked as busy – were mostly empty during the week, with the occasional British climbing group encountered. Even during busier times, Ariege is an area so spoiled for choice that even a short scramble or half an hour's walk in turn a potential crowd magnet into an exotic destination for a day's climbing. It is also worth noting the various bird bans throughout the year – these would be more hindering around April/May than in September/October. The quality of the

bolting is generally very good, with no rusty pegs encountered and solid anchors at the top. This even applies for old routes and sectors which are comprehensively re-fitted with reassuringly shiny bolts. A 70 (or even 80)m single rope would definitely be a good investment for a trip to Ariege, as many worthwhile single- or short multi-pitch routes require one. James upheld the true values of British mountaineering by trad-leading the only non-bolted worthwhile line that we could find – on the next day, we discovered that my set of nuts has just been recalled by the manufacturer, which I am sure retroactively added two grades to the climb...

Swooping vistas – most definitely. With





the snow-capped mountains of the Pyrenees around, this is clearly prime photographer's country. The keen climber might often find himself rewarded with ruins of towers and castles at the peak. I had to skip some climbing towards the end of the week due to an aggravated finger injury, but having to have a walk in those surroundings instead certainly did not feel like hardship (watch for stray dogs though!).

Luxurious accomodation – based on previous holidays, all that we expected was a humble villa with only a modestly sized swimming pool, and our expectations certainly were met and exceeded – comfortable, conveniently

close to many crags and run by two British expats with a keenness for climbing, our Gite was a fantastic base. Tarrascon and Calames are a brisk walk or a short drive away. In general, any accomodation style from campsite through to B&B and self-catered are readily available in the area; again, the recent Rockfax guide is worth consulting. Due to our villa of choice being booked for the first few days of our stay, we spent two nights at the local hotel in Tarrascon, which is perfectly serviceable.

Too much good food and good wine: It is France. The local supermarket had many shelf metres of cheese, the village down the road boasted a Michelin Guide-listed restaurant, and even the 'house wine'

in most places would fetch a good price back in the UK. While the general effect on climbing ability might be disputed, this certainly raises troop morale...

So once again there are lots of ticks against my list, and the non-winter-climbers of us are now slowly settling into their cold season indoor routine – or they are in training for the next climbing trip abroad. It's a hard life...



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The time out there varied from very exciting and adventurous to desperately lonely, from annoyingly confused to complete acceptance of any situation.

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How Not to Have Too Hard a Time in the Indian Himalaya

Susan Jensen

As part of a late-gap-year/mid-life-crisis career break from the far-too-flexible NHS Scotland, I spent 5 months in India. The whole period was spent in the Himalaya: Darjeeling, Sikkim, Uttarakhand's Garhwal, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand's Kumaon, Zaskar and the Eastern Karakorum.

The first two were sightseeing and a bit of walking, the third was being joined by a friend from Scotland for some popular treks, then me going on a hard-core trek with a guide. The fourth was the Scottish

Himachal Pradesh 2013 expedition to explore unclimbed 6000m peaks, then in Kumaon I spent a couple of weeks with my niece from the US, working with an NGO. The final two were associated with the Indo-British Exploration Expedition 2013 to explore a glacier and climb a virgin 7000m peak. I came back a stone lighter (all re-gained now), mainly due to the last in the list.

The time out there varied from very exciting and adventurous to desperately lonely, from annoyingly confused to

complete acceptance of any situation. If you are thinking of going out to the Himalaya, be it for an expedition or just wandering, here are some things I learned that might be of help. It is an eclectic selection, and I am more than happy to talk about any of them – or any other queries - in more detail should anyone want information.

1. When planning a trek, use a map with contour lines. Distance alone can result in a pretty stiff itinerary.



One of my intended activities was to do some trekking around areas that I had read about, and use that to get fit and acclimatised for the expeditions later in the summer. I emailed some general questions on access to Mr Pandey, who runs the logistics agency Himalayan Run & Trek, which we used for the June expedition. He returned the email with an outpouring of welcome and suggestions, to the point that I ended up hiring one of his staff (known from the previous year's expedition to Zaskar) as a guide/cook for my treks.

I had spent a fair bit of time reading the trekking books and had the maps I could get ahold of, which had the paths, villages and ridge lines but no contours. So armed with that knowledge, I decided to combine a few treks, compress the time and do

some longer-than-normal days. It resulted in doing 20km with 20kg rucksack in 32 degree heat, with some 800-1000m of ascent and descent each day. I did get very fit, and lost a fair bit of weight. Even Heera, the guide and the strongest man in India, was tired. I considered that to be a bit of an accomplishment. The trekking was brilliant, mostly on popular footpaths, only accidental bushwhacking through the jungle.

2. When on a bus on a narrow road going through the mountains, don't look for bus carcasses down the steep edge with the 1000 foot drop below you. You will find them and it won't make you happy. Nor is it advisable to stare fixedly out the front window to watch how closely the sides of the bus seem to attract oncoming vehicles.

Best thing is to look at the distant landscape and hum nonchalantly to yourself. Or emulate the locals and fall asleep, or keep your sheep or chickens in check on the sharp corners.

3. Enjoy the adventure when the weather completely changes your plan, even if it is retrospective weather.

On the trekking in May, both with my friend Judith and when I was on my monster-trek, we felt the impact of the huge floods of the previous summer in Uttarakhand. The floods had done a number on the hillside down which there "was an easy path". It had also taken out houses and bridges, but that's another story. Heera, who lives just the other side of that hill, hadn't been on that path and nor had any other trekking groups. Much

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What should have taken 5 hours to descend took us two 12 hour days. It was knackered, but proper adventure.

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of the hillside had been re-arranged by landslides – the path was largely missing, replaced by boulders and trees. Lovely little trickling streams had been turned into raging torrents that gouged out 10m deep scree-banked nightmares that had to be crossed. What should have taken 5 hours to descend took us two 12 hour days. It was knackered, but proper adventure. We didn't see any jaguars, unfortunately, and we had what must have been the best cup of tea ever given to us by the locals in the first village that we came through once out of the jungle.

On the June expedition, we had good weather until we arrived at Base Camp, then it snowed and snowed and snowed. There was some uncertainty about whether we would get up anything (we did, it was fine if hard work), and

what impact it would have on our river crossings on the way back out (it was fine as well, levels had dropped by then). When the porters arrived to pick us up, we heard about the fact that as we were getting snow, about 50 miles away Uttarakhand was getting pounded by rain again, with 20,000 people in the major Hindu pilgrimage villages affected, dead or missing. Meanwhile, we were making the most of our time at base camp.

4. In India, the primary property of time is its elasticity. Indian time can either mean extremely promptly (sometimes even ahead of the scheduled time, inconvenient when you have called for a 4.30am taxi and they arrive at 4am), or whenever it actually happens. Such as the bus scheduled to arrive at 9 that does get there at 11, meaning that you

will be spending an impromptu evening in a village that you hadn't intended because you missed a connection that wasn't running to a similar timeschedule. Take advantage of the unexpected and explore. Everything you want to have happen will probably happen, but possibly not when you expected it to.

This is closely related to :

5. There is no point whatsoever in getting distressed or angry with anyone. If someone promises a service but haven't delivered, it is very likely to be because of things outwith even their control. This has led to the locals being remarkably creative and pragmatic, and having a very astute sense of humour. Even if you are fuming about something, understand that there is nothing you can do about it by shouting or scolding, but you might be

Snowman at Basecamp



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What should have taken 5 hours to descend took us two 12 hour days. It was knackerin', but proper adventure.

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Haute cuisine

Tea with villagers



able to with a smile and a joke. So chillax. And if you want to do/see/have something and someone says no, ask someone else. Repeat until you either get what you want or tire of asking.

A few expedition-specific things:

6. Don't assume that Smash exists in other countries. If you know that you like a particular thing in the hills (from backpacking experience, for example) then it is probably best to have enough weight allowance to bring it with you. For many things you can get a reasonable facsimile – chocolate, cereal bars, biscuits, cheese – but for Smash and Peperami, your best bet is hand-importing. This becomes important if you are the type that loses your appetite at altitude (I'm not one of them).

7. You will feel like death warmed over at some point(s). This may be because of food/water poisoning, altitude or extreme homesickness. It will pass. Drugs often help, and they can be purchased over the counter from any chemist – do some internet research and speak to the chemist about antibiotics. As an aside, the only drug I've ever been told a prescription is necessary is Valium. Don't ask. Definitely make sure you bring Imodium because you may not have time to get to a chemist before you need it.

8. No matter how much you trust your logistics company, go over all paperwork with a fine-tooth comb.

Staff meals on the road – are they not included in the package price or is one of the staff a bit of a chancer?

9. Tips – Even though you are going to the back of beyond, make sure you have extra cash for tipping of unexpected help. It may be that more porters or porter-days are required than originally anticipated, and if that isn't covered in the package (see previous), then you will have to do some lubrication of the wheels/legs before your loads will be carried up/down.

10. Female stuff – first, www.mooncup.co.uk. If you as a climber don't already have one, check it out.



Cooking in Snowy Tent

Secondly – the ability to work with a Shewee is very useful for pee-bottle use in tents at 2am in bad weather on steep slopes. I forgot mine, but was incredibly pleased with my improvised Shewee using a Sprite bottle while kneeling in the tent. The only issue was that the Sprite bottle has depth to the body of the bottle and so holds onto liquid, whereas

the Shewee has the liquid running out immediately into the pee-bottle, on the ground, or on your shoes. So with the Sprite bottle version, you have to lean forward further to get it all emptied out into the pee bottle before being fairly assured that your sleeping bag isn't going to be soaked.

