

EDITION #13 MAY-JUNE 2013

western

climber

CAWA TRIPS TO
KALBARRI & PEAK CHARLES

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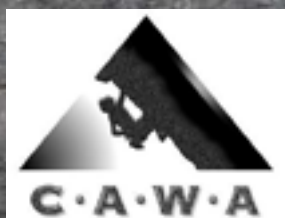
LIVIN'THE DREAM:
WA CLIMBER ON THE RUN

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Climbing is an inherently dangerous activity. Please give careful consideration and seek expert training before attempting any climbing activities. Undertaking them without proper training, experience, skill, regard to safety, and equipment could result in serious injury or death.

Material included here is intended as a source of information only and has not necessarily been tested. No endorsement is implied by provision of this information. It is your responsibility to ensure that this information is used only after appropriate professional instruction.



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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

EDITORS: Allison Low/Mandy Bowler EMAIL: editor@climberswa.asn.au

Welcome to the second edition for 2013!

It's cold and wet out there & school holidays are finally over... which is how your editors have finally come up with the time to get the next edition of Western Climber to you!

We bring you tales of our country men who have travelled afar, and others who have won glory in the

2013 Piolet D'Or (Golden Piton) Award. We may not have big mountains, but we have big dreamers that achieve many great things in the international climbing community.

We hope that you do enjoy reading this edition of the Western Climber and do write

in, with your stories and ideas for the next edition. We enjoy hearing from our members, with stories and photos from your climbing experiences (big or small).

If you are heading out climbing during this winter period, remember to take extra care

as the roads and rocks can get slippery. If you are one of the lucky few that gets to escape the winter blues, send in your stories to make the rest of us jealous :)

Your Editors,
Mandy & Ally



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western climber

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COVER PHOTO:

Neil Humphries on Juluka (18) at Peak Charles

PHOTO BY RICHARD WAINWRIGHT & CONRAD SLEE

CONNECT

Website: <http://www.climberswa.asn.au>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/climberswa?fref=ts>



GET INVOLVED WITH CAWA

We are always looking for volunteers and helping hands. Please contact cawa@climberswa.asn.au if you would like to get involved and contribute to the WA climbing community.

CAWA would appreciate being updated on crag access issues, as the Committee is unable to cover all the crags in Perth and WA. Please post any areas of concern on the CAWA website forum so that other climbers are aware of any changes to access or climbing conditions in WA.

You can also email the Western Climber as an alternative at editor@climberswa.asn.au

Western Climber

The Climbers Association of Western Australia was formed in 1968 and incorporated in August 1979. CAWA's purpose is to promote and develop climbing, especially in WA, and to promote and protect the interests of climbers in WA.

The management of CAWA is conducted by a committee. Any matters that should be brought to the attention of the committee should be addressed to the CAWA Secretary.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or of the committee. The contents of this magazine are subject to copyright and are not to be reproduced without permission of CAWA.

Western Climber is the magazine of CAWA and relies on contributions from its members. All submissions are welcome! If you have any photographs or articles you would like to submit to the Western Climber, please send them with full details to editor@climberswa.asn.au.

For the next issue of Western Climber, all submissions must be made by 18 October 2013. We welcome all climbing related material - trip reports, new routes, technical, safety, equipment, book/DVD reviews, crag information and climbing gossip. We love photos of locations around the world as well as WA..and most of all, people having fun climbing!



CAWA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to all members, new, old, past, present & future... While Tony has been away for the most of the last couple of months championing a worthy cause, I thought I'd put together the updates that are CAWA. But first, to those that supported Tony on his endeavour through the Camino de Santiago, and supported him raising funds for Prostate Cancer Awareness and research, I'm sure he feels lucky to have a such great association of friends back home to help him on the journey. The upside is that he made it back in one piece (his shoes didn't!), but he may be a few kilos lighter, and I'm sure he'll be regaling us with his stories soon enough.

Please remember if you have any issues, queries or questions that relate to your climbing or WA climbing in general, don't hesitate to contact your Committee, or use the CAWA forum to raise topics for discussion. The forum is always open, and there is always a committee member at a local gym crash near you - seek them out!

The Committee at present has been working on the usual gym crashes, climbing trips, and general access issues in Perth and WA. They have also seen a push to develop community involvement, an initiative to develop youth in the sport, as well as seeking additional benefits to members, like access to community programs, and discounts to outdoor suppliers. This has also brought about an assessment of the current position of CAWA and the strategy it would like to take to achieve the greatest benefits for its members and climbing community at large in WA. More updates will come through as they arise, and I would encourage members to offer feedback on where they would like to see CAWA go in 2013/2014 and beyond.

Special thanks to Neil Humphries for heading a fantastic trip to Peak Charles. For any climber with big wall aspirations, Peak Charles is the perfect place in WA to get you feet wet, so to speak, because there's not much water at Peak Charles. A new fav location for me.

End of May, start of June saw the arrival of the annual Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour here in Perth, at the luxurious Heath Ledger theatre. There were some fantastic entries this year for the short film festival, and I think the crowd favourite (and the Festival favourite) was the epic journey of Cas & Jonesy, 'Crossing the Ice', the two Aussie mates with an ambition to push the boundaries of exploration by retracing the steps of exploring forefathers to the South Pole (and back). Be sure to check them out.

We went to Kalbarri on the Foundation Day Long-weekend - this year I took the torch on this one and did see a great number of climbers making the trip north, the most I've seen in one crag at a time. More stories of our endeavours in this issue of the Western Climber.

A subsequent trip to Kalbarri the following weekend, saw a number of climbers posing for photos for a potential new photobook by Simon Carter. Simon and his wife, Monique Forestier, and daughter Coco, journeyed West to local crags, taking a fresh look at some of our old favourites. There was a 'Pop-up' trip to Wilyabrup and Bob's Hollow, where we rallied the available climbers not burnt out from two weekends of Kalbarri climbing or attending buck's nights, or other general ka-noodling. We will hear more from Monique in her blog of their trip West, as well as a sample of some proofs that Simon took of the classics.

Thanks to all that have renewed their 13/14 Memberships, I'm sure you all have seen the emails and posts to renew. Climbing trips coming up include the recently popular Eaglestone Trip, followed by the Mt Frankland trip - to ensure you are keep up-to-date on trips, gym crashes, and other climbing info, be sure to renew.

It's been a cold winter, but the good times keep on a-rolling. The days are only getting longer, from now and until the end of summer, which means... more time each day to go climbing each day! The weather will get better, so there will be not so many frosty climbing starts in the mornings too. Wherever you venture be sure to be safe, and take the right gear for the right job.

Enjoy Climbing!
Anthony Brandis
CAWA Vice President.

ACCESS IN WA

CAWA ACCESS/DEVELOPMENT OFFICER: Kate Swain EMAIL: kates@climberswa.asn.au

CHANGES TO DEC

THE SEPARATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION (DEC)

On 1 July 2013, the DEC will be replaced by two departments as part of Machinery of Government changes announced by the Premier Hon Colin Barnett MLA on 10 April.

The Department of Parks and Wildlife will focus on the community's enjoyment and appreciation of Western Australia's outstanding network of national and marine parks, nature conservation and forest management; while industry licensing, regulation and pollution prevention will be the responsibility of the Department of Environment Regulation.

From 1 July 2013, the departments will be:

Department of Parks and Wildlife
Head office: 17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington
Phone: (08) 9219 9000
Website: www.dpaw.wa.gov.au

Department of Environment Regulation
Head office: 168 St Georges Terrace, Perth
Phone: (08) 6467 5000
Website: www.der.wa.gov.au

For registering to rock climb at Sthambs or Mountain Quarry, there are currently no changes to the registration procedure. The phone number for registration and to obtain the gate code is still (08) 9290 6100.

NEW PATH

A new pathway was been installed at Sthambs Quarry. The works were completed by the DEC to upgrade the landing zone and access pathway for Dreamfit activities.

The work was completed a few weeks ago, following an engineers report on rock stability and scaling of loose rock. Terry Hewitt from Adventure Out assisted with the remedial works and provided some good advice on the activities requirements.



The DEC is welcoming any feedback on the changes made to Sthambs Quarry.

WELLINGTON DAM CLOSURE

The Quarry recreation site at Wellington Dam will be closed to the public for redevelopment works from Wednesday 23 July until completion of new facilities.

Access to the bottom car park will be blocked off to prevent unauthorized entry while works is undertaken to install a new access ramp, path and barbecues.

During the period of works there will not be any use of the facilities and **no abseiling or rock climbing will be permitted** until further notice. Please ensure you support Parks and Wildlife and comply with this regulation.



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Ross Weiter on another Rockin' Kalbarri Experience

KALBARRI TRIP NOODLES, RED WINE & CHOCOLATE...

REPORTER: Ross Weiter PHOTOS: Ross Weiter

IT WAS "LIFT OR BUST"

Having driven the seven hours to the "Special K" the last fifteen times, I was determined to get a lift or go elsewhere. Trip organiser extraordinaire Anthony tried to hook me up with punters like the professional event promoter he is, but things did not go so well.

Just as despair was starting to set in, Remi texted and said that there is a handkerchief-sized spot on the back bench of his Prado, next to Brian and Gesa, who thankfully are both skinnier than me. I gratefully held my breath for 7 hours, until at 11pm we arrived at the Z-bend car park and descended into the gorge for three nights of climbing, sleeping, and let's face it – mostly relaxing.

On Saturday we went to The Aviary and promptly got kicked out by the commercial abseiling group who had no intention of sharing the area with a bunch of climbers. "You shouldn't climb

where people can see you as they may imitate you" said the Abseiling Leader in a convincing tone, his argument unperturbed by his lack of concern that people may imitate abseiling also. I think the real concern was that his clients may chuck something on our heads, as demonstrated by the enormous broom he was yielding with professional care.

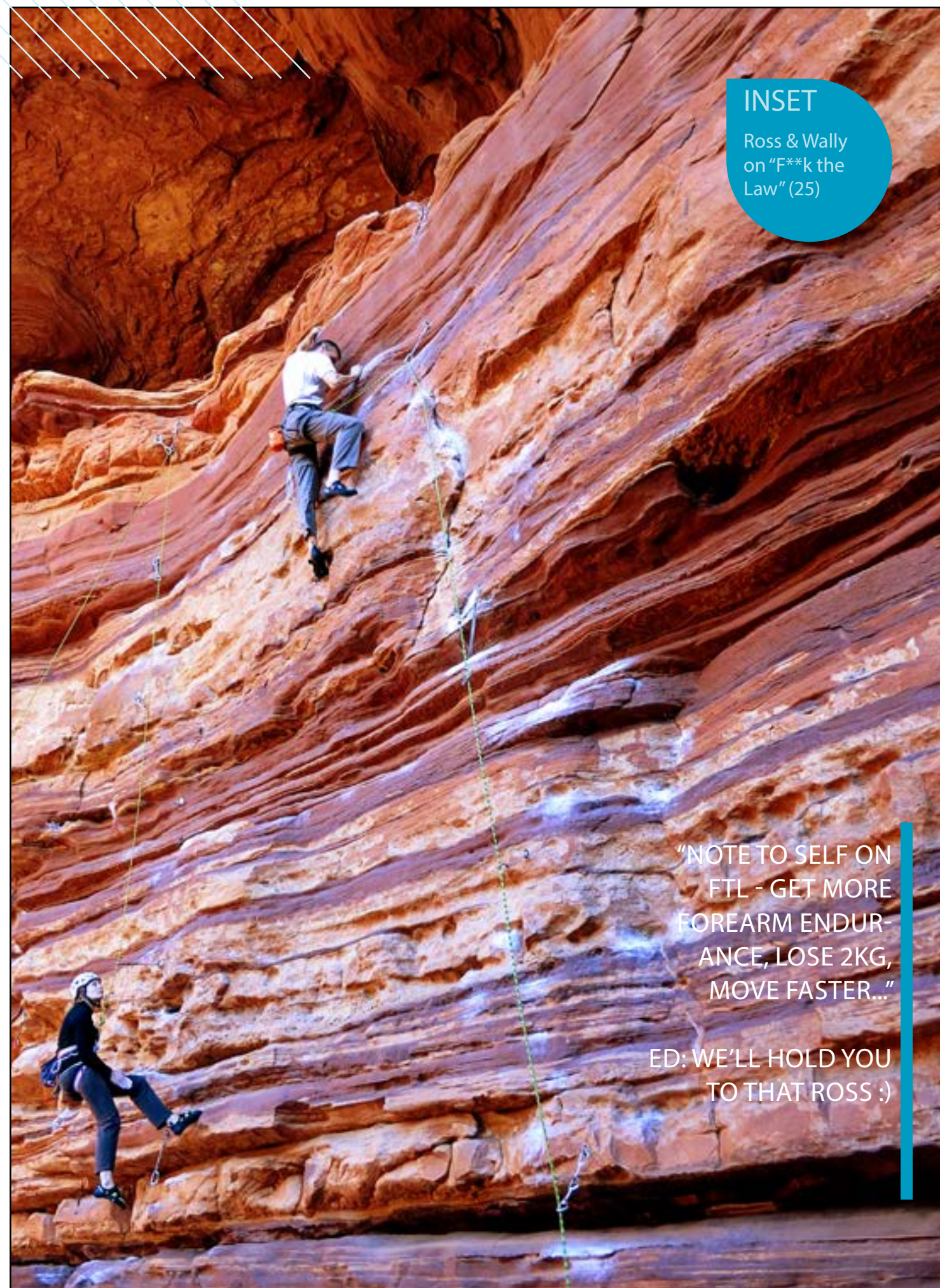
My mate Pistol Pete then arrived and led the classic warm-up "Keith Goes Blank" (15) left of the lookout, probably the best trad route there. There too we were the apple in the tourists' eye, but no intolerant abseilers this time. Just left of KGB is a series of R-facing corners called "Idle Goss" (17) which I led. It is very well protected - the guidebook is wrong. We then joined the rest of the day tripper crowd at The Pit, and continued warming up on another classic "9-6=3" (15). One should not let dumb names detract from great routes. Plenty of gear and good length. I repeated "Rattler" (22), a sweet and short little climb. I then joined the sport climbing Olympics at The Promenade and feeling warmed up, got onto my project "F**k the Law" (25), a route that I fruitlessly worked when I was five years younger. It was fruitless again. Undeterred, Pete and I both led "Thrutching the Bison" (23) a jug fest with a funky leg hook start. Brian got his RP of "Glass Slipper" (29), the other Tan - Rodney tested his steel on "Homophobia" (28) and Remi fired "Look at the Bears" (26) second go.

INSET

Ross & Wally on "F**k the Law" (25)

"NOTE TO SELF ON
FTL - GET MORE
FOREARM ENDUR-
ANCE, LOSE 2KG,
MOVE FASTER..."

ED: WE'LL HOLD YOU
TO THAT ROSS :)





LEFT

Brian Tan with his 30 minutes of fame on "It's a Boy" (30).

Wally ran around like a man possessed, enthusiastically flailing and falling off everything. Delphine and Gesa enjoyed some relaxing top-ropes which were easy to come by.

On Sunday, Brian, Gesa and I headed uphill from The Prom to sample the trad climbs there for a warm-up. They are a sandy and awkward collection, that's for sure. "Pathetically Difficult" is neither, but rather a pleasant wide crack-cum-corner/overlap. OK a bit of a canine breakfast, but a #4 Camelot comes handy. We rapped off the large ledge and again I led; this time "Kalbarri Stampede" (17).

After the awkward start there was a hollow flake and an awkward finish with loose rocks. Mmmmm. We top roped the grade 18 thin crack in between, and just as well, as stopping to place gear would have been a problem. I could not do "Coriander" (21), the thin side pulls disagreed with my sense of balance. By then, Anthony rocked up after he got exhausted on "Rattler". I put him to good work by giving me a belay on "Crankshaft" (24), a fun juggy route I love and do every time.

Another favourite of mine is "Chimney Sweep" (20) - a trad roof that upsets strong people who don't commit to the leg hook. It is the one route I know that is best climbed feet first. Back onto "F**k the Law" and second go of the day saw me slapping the last hold but falling off again. That was my best effort so far.....maybe there was hope. Brian spied a new line at the left end of The Promenade and the result was a trad climb "Peek-a-Boo" (21, 15m).

In the evening we slurped the 2 minute noodles, drank red, ate the choklit, talked shit, and listened to Wally talk shit, and thus a great time was had by all. The sky was full of stars and it was oh so quiet.

On Monday, I onsighted "Peanut Butter and Jam" (19), a trad route left of The Pit that I had been walking past for years. The gear was not thrilling but the jugs kept things sane. I then had my fifth go at FTL, and failed again. My arms were feeling chewed out. Not so Wally, who put in a fine effort and statically reached for the top jug after placing his right foot high up. Brian completed the full suite of all published routes at The Promenade by onsighting "It's a Boy" (25).

This is the left-most route and the last bolt was missing. Now the last two bolts are missing as Brian pulled another one out with his hands. Luckily he had the cams to use instead. For me this was the best effort of the trip, few combine power with balls like that. The guidebook grade is 24 but I topoped the climb with much difficulty, and recon it is harder than Crankshaft.

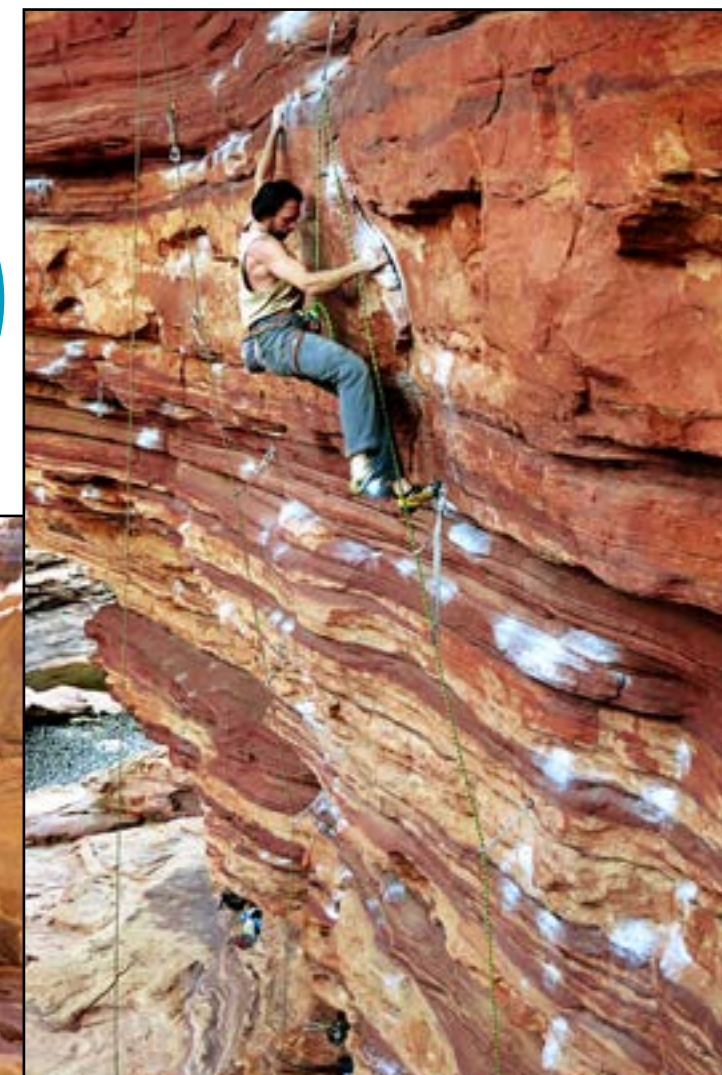
Topping out, I was not pleased to see the poxy anchors, with their crumbly glue surrounded by a hairline crack. I prayed the bolts don't both pull out at the same time. What was the author thinking when he left that job behind? All the bolts should be replaced.

RIGHT

Wally tackling "F**k the Law" (25)

BOTTOM

"Peak-a-Boo" (21, 15m)
Brian Tan's new line



Just before midday we humped all gear out and I enjoyed a great trip back with Cousin Dan, who despite his young age is very much a man of the world and good for a yarn.

Next time I will be coming back, the road will be sealed - this long-overdue project started just after the long weekend. Note to self on FTL - get more forearm endurance, lose 2kg, move faster!

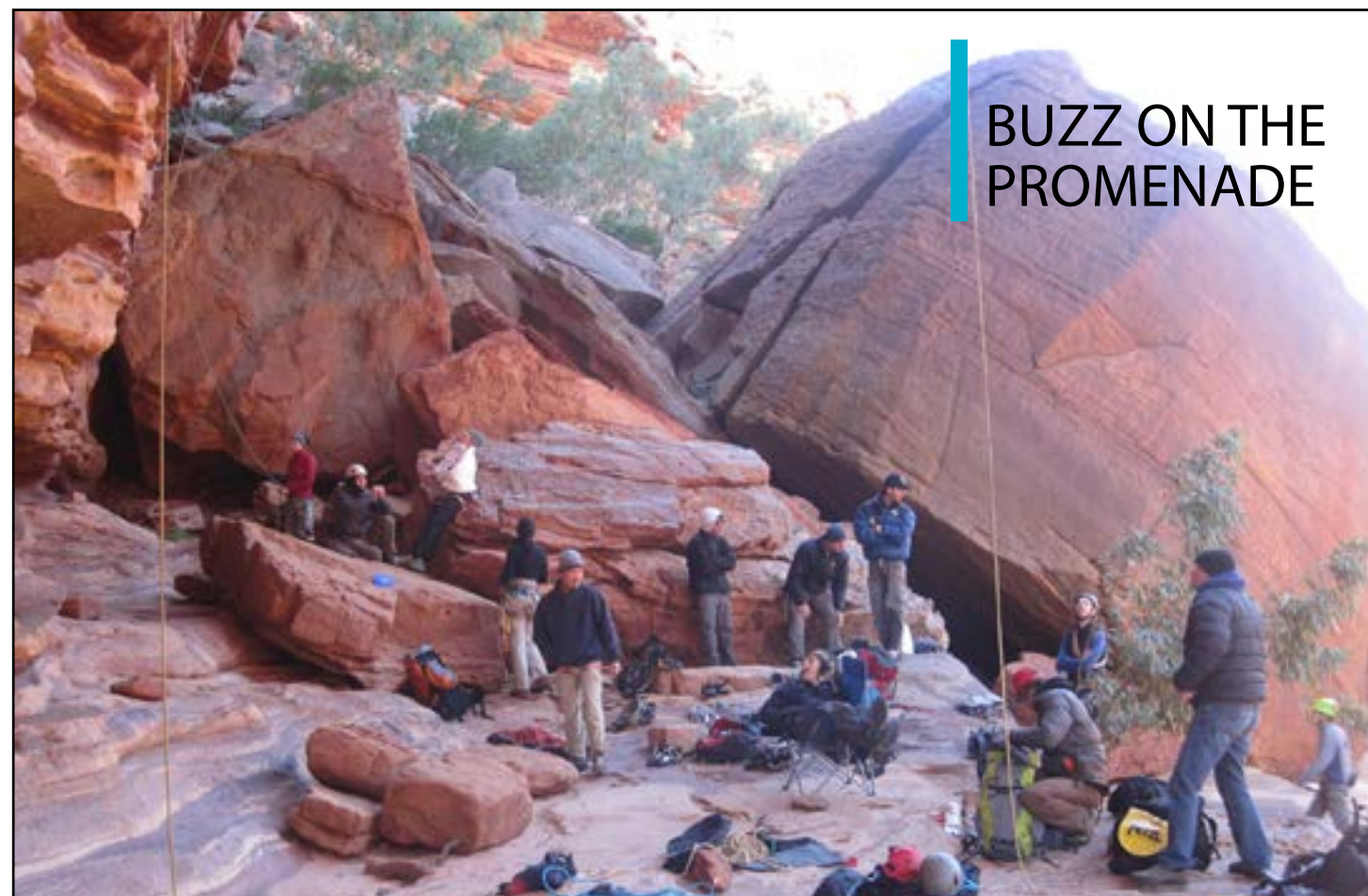
TAKE II: KALBARRI A DIFFERENT ANGLE

REPORTER: Anthony Brandis EMAIL: anthonyb@climberswa.asn.au PHOTOS: Anthony Brandis

Well, we had another fantastic trip, free of incidents to the north, and Kalbarri always proves to be a great destination for all. This is the place to work your favourites or broaden your climbing horizons. For the several first timers the spectacle of the red gorge walls, and the assorted challenging overhangs are a lot to take in all at once, I'm sure. You feel a part of the landscape, small, insignificant, but with a thirst to tear up the side walls.

If you've made the trip before, the anxiety of driving up to the National Park late at night and walking into the gorge, is the spurring energy you needed to crank those hard problems that have shut you down in subsequent trips.

Having been on trips north before, this was the most number of climbers I've seen in the gorge at one time. The Saturday of the Foundation Day long weekend saw several groups in attendance, peaking in the high 20's in the Promenade & the Pit areas. Even with the high attendance there was still plenty of time to get access to climbs, or team up on routes for good challenges.



BUZZ ON THE
PROMENADE



TOP

Action in the Pit!

LOWER

Craig Ward tackles
Rattler (21)

The popularity of Kalbarri will be ever-present after this October, as more people will be able to access the Z-bend via a newly-surfaced entrance road and car parks. No longer will it be necessary to take a 4WD or a capable two-wheel drive car, as all sedans and buses will be able to travel the entrance road at a normal speed rather than the crawling pace you've had to travel previously to avoid shaking your car to bits on the sand corrugations.

The influx of the able, and, possibly the less prepared, may be on the rise. I would urge you all to watch out for fellow climbers, or first timers venturing into the gorges in subsequent trips.

This year the Promenade received a lot of attention from those keen to hit their ticklist. There wasn't a lot left untouched. Brian Tan was in fine form, as were Remi, Rodney, and Wally. If overhang wasn't your style then we no doubt saw you in the Pit area or on the Adventure wall.

Sunday saw a new climb formed, as Brian & Gesa plucked out a line from the gorge walls. Be sure to read Ross Weiter's trip article for the name & grade, but this climb takes a right tending line on the very left periphery of the Promenade, to the right of Chimney Sweep for those that know the spot. This is sure to be in a mini-guide or revised edition shortly.

Other hotspots in the gorge were the Pit and the Adventure Wall, with several smaller groups tackling the Aviary and the Tourist Walls. Some more highlights of the climbing can be seen in the time lapse photography of the weekend on CAWA's very own GoPro camera.

Check the links:

"CAWA Kalbarri 2013" @ <http://goo.gl/xAbE3L>

"Back in the Pit" @ <http://goo.gl/p4ofQl>

If you have ideas for interesting footage, pass them along and we'll see if we can do them on one of the next trips. CAWA has a GoPro ready for use, let's use it!

If you have highlights you would like to share please do so on the CAWA Facebook page, and remember the regular climbing trips are great opportunities to take photos and enter them in the Annual Photo Competition to be in the running for awesome prizes.

While at camp, of course, we enjoyed the luxury of being close to shops, food, and a stocked bar, taking time out to barbecue and get the fire blazin' (eventually), while numerous others were bracing the chilly nights in the gorge. Anchorage Caravan Park has modest services, with swept sites, and the facilities are well maintained at a fair price. Perhaps one of the best features is the close proximity to a cafe for the early morning coffees! We took full advantage of the gas BBQ-ing, and served up a mean feast, but I'm not sure if we could top Nadia & Stew's chargrilled spread of veges and roasted meats. Wow guys, I was jealous! You definitely know how to barbecue. Be sure to bring enough for me next time!



LEFT
Francis on Obscene
Gesture (18)
TOP
Delphine & Kylie
Chilling Out

On Sunday, a few of us took off to the Tavern for a counter meal. Not bad, but we were left pretty hungry. While others were preparing for a Monday return trip home, Karen and I squeezed in another climb at the Tourist Wall, before taking time on the beach (albeit cold) and do some beach fishing.

Hopefully, trips in & out of the gorge will be shorter with the advent of the surfaced roads, giving more time on the rock and less time in the car seat. If you are planning a trip north, be aware that works are ongoing until about October, with only some access allowed during school holiday periods. If you are unsure, please check with the National Park office for current activities.

Please respect the national park on any trip and we will continue to enjoy the gorge for what it is, an excellent scenic place to climb!

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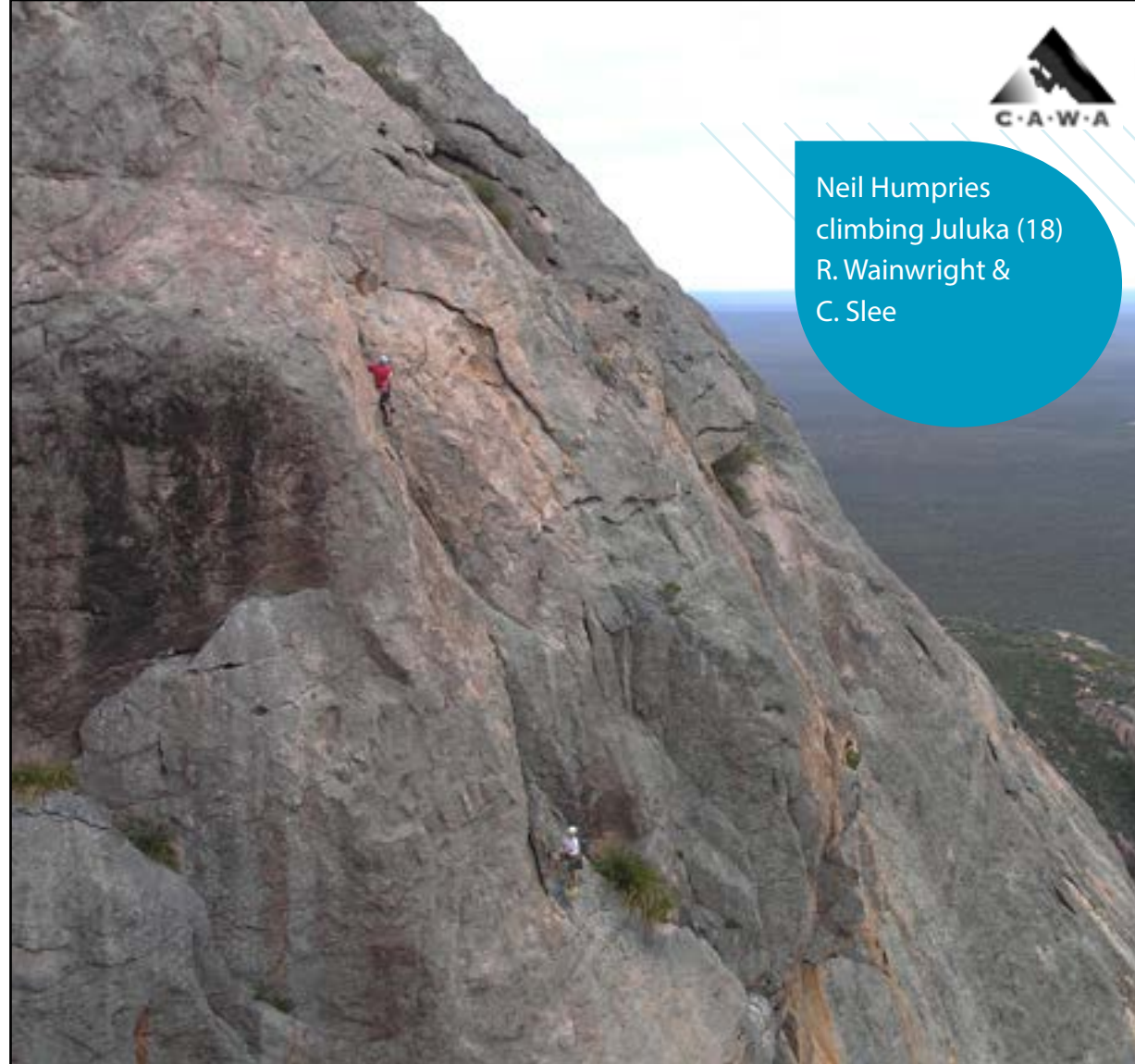
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CONQUERING PEAK CHARLES



Neil Humphries
climbing Juluka (18)
R. Wainwright &
C. Slee

REPORTER: Neil Humphries PHOTOS: Anthony B, Richard W, Conrad S, Neil H

We had driven through the evening and it was 2:00 a.m. on Friday morning when we rolled into the camp ground. We had used our backup jerry can of diesel and had been crashing through some washed-out dirt tracks but we had arrived. At an imperceptible distance the Peak Charles granite dome shape was visible in the night sky, and for the three newbies they had to be thinking 'was that 10 hour drive worth it'? Well, it was, for starters the weather was kind to us with lovely mild to warm days and no rain, which translated into jam packed days of conquering fears and racking up meters upon meters of great climbing.

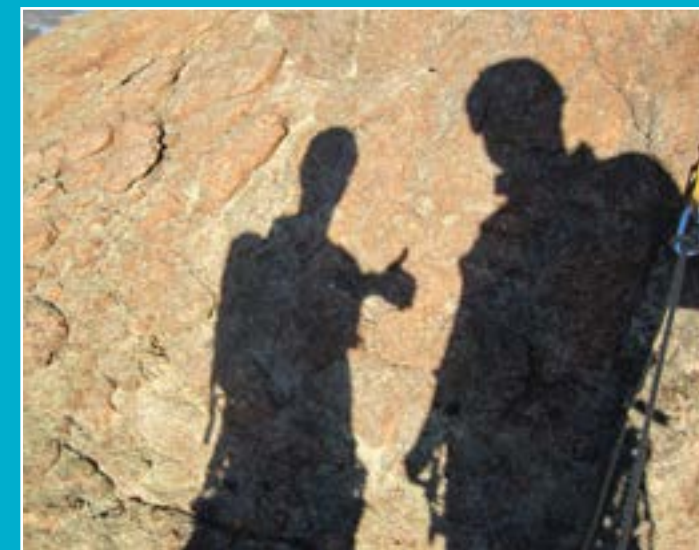
Also down for the trip from CAWA were Peter Thomas, Richard Wainwright and Conrad Slee. For the purpose of this article we shall call them 'Team SuperQuick' as well as David Moyses who had come with Julia, a German-friend in tow, but none of the usual 'Oldies' were in attendance. It was really fortunate to have some experienced folk to call upon for local knowledge advice and to have a yarn about their experiences, as well as to take comfort in the back of one's mind that when things go wrong these fellas will be around. Peak Charles trips tend to have more than their fair share of 'benightings' and mini epics so group safety is the real deal out there.

We had a sleep-in on the Friday morning and then it was game-on for an exhausting bush bash up to the North East Buttress to ease ourselves in the area with some low grade multi-pitches for the day. Blair Crafar and I headed up the classic Beckoning Horizon (grade 19, although that is only the 1st pitch, the rest of it being grade 11), with Anthony Brandis and Leslie Rayment heading up the other classic Office Workers Rule the World(14) nearby and right of the prominent Central Gully. It was great day with the chalking up of some firsts by our crew.

Team SuperQuick, barely hampered by having a 3rd man and experiencing next to no sleep at their camp spot at King Lake. Their beauty sleep being destroyed by blaring boganism involving some 'built' Kiwi chicks and lesser built Kiwi fellas blaring music to get the owner of the petrol station to wake up early so they could get refuelled and on their way to Esperance, luckily not via Peak Charles. None the less, the lack of sleep was no impediment to Team SuperQuick who bagged the three classics Left Edge (12), Spartacus (19) and Garp (14) in good order.

Day 2, our first full day of climbing with an early morning start and a satisfying feed from the night

before. Armed with fixed plans of attack and all racked-up we paired off to Central Gully. Anthony and Leslie danced the Last Tango in Widgiemooltha (13) just right of the main roofs, behind the odd couple of Team SuperQuick who were going to run circles around us that day. They then left us for dust in up Mediterranean Cruise (17 and straight-up the right side of the main roof), they then proceeded onward to Ryobi One (16) on the Summit Terrace (and summit proper), walked down to upper part of Central Gully then rapped down the main face to do the Birthday Party (18), and to top it off then completed first two pitches of Beckoning Horizon (19), and got themselves off the cliff just after dusk.



Blair and I headed up Juluka (18), a classic route that traverses right over the main roof of Central Gully. I had forgotten how gaining the ledge before the traverse is technically more difficult than the traverse itself, especially if there is seepage on the on the ledge. We loved it, and the traverse is legendary, I could go back to do just that pitch again. After topping out it took very little to twist Blair's rubber arm and we rappelled down the Central Gully to do Mediterranean Cruise (17). The rappel was a bit of a mission it took us about 40 minutes to locate the rappel chains and upon finding them could not believe we had not been able to see these hunky pieces of safety.



Unfortunately for Blair I did give him a bum steer and directed him off route for the 1st pitch of the Mediterranean Cruise but he still got to the correct belay stance for the second pitch. The second pitch is a pearler for exposure and by the time Blair had joined me on the top this, Blair was experiencing another first of night climbing, radio communications down to camp informed Anthony and Leslie that we were feeling good, we were warm and we had plenty of energy. Best of all there was supper when we got back thanks to the guys. What a great day we had.

Day 3, Karakoram Wall, on the northern side of Peak Charles. One hell of a day in the sun, a pity about the dehydration. We mixed it up and I climbed with Leslie, Blair climbed with Anthony, Team SuperQuick were still the same, and they were even faster walking through the bush than climbing. They approached across the whaleback ridge, then followed the creek to the base of climb. Team SuperQuick were roping up for the multi-pitch face and features of Stormbringer (17) when we arrived, battered and bruised. Leslie and I followed-up behind them. Anthony and Blair proceeded up Riders on the Storm (15) which looks like a sweet climb worth another trip back.

PHOTOS

Previous Page (Clockwise):

"The Super Quick Team" Richard Wainwright, Peter Thomas & Conrad Slee

"Thumbs-Up" from Anthony Brandis & Blair Crafar on a great day climbing

Leslie Raymant letting it all hang out in "Comfy Belay".

This Page (Clockwise)

Conrad Slee & Peter Thomas tackle Beckoning Horizon (19)

Blair Crafar in some Lead Action on Riders on the Storm (15)



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Alan Ezy on Lardale 27, Fort Knox, Glenburgh NSW

Unfortunately I had a bad day of it, my choice of climbing shoes for the day predicated blisters I had incurred from my other shoes in the preceding days, were just not suited for a long day and I slowed right down. My nerves were also getting shattered with each hold that broke-off. This happened about twice, as well as hearing the debris of Team SuperQuick come down from above.

Karakoram wall is a full sun climb and on the warmest day of the trip my 2 litres of water disappeared with every painful foot placement. Fortunately we had provisioned on only doing one climb on that day as I was a heap of shattered nerves by the end of the climb. On the walk down the tourist track Blair and I were a shadow of the energetic duo we were the night before. Team SuperQuick climbed a few more pitches on the Bath Bluffs and took the alternative track home through the Rabbit Hole (a cavern and cave system on the bluffs – a recommended adventure and a different descent route).

Day 4, home time. Team SuperQuick minus Richard were up and at'em and climbed seven pitches of Kwelaman (16) over three hours or so. Though Richard Wainwright tried his best charm to entice me into the opportunity of one last climb, it fell on my shell-shocked deaf ears. Our focus was now on the quickest route to get fuel and head home to Perth.

Climbing is always a learning experience. Ten hours of the drive back helps one reflect on your experiences of the trip and over time, as the nerves settle down and the scars and bruises heal, the yearning returns to conquer your fear and do it all with a bit more style speed and gusto like Team SuperQuick.

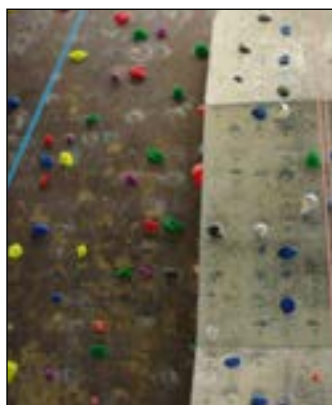
GYM LOCATIONS IN WA



ROCKFACE

63B John St
Northbridge
9328 5998

MORE INFORMATION:
www.rockface.com.au



THE HANGOUT

12 White St
Bayswater
9371 9939

MORE INFORMATION:
www.thehangout.com.au



CITY SUMMIT

2/26 Harris Rd
Malaga
9248 7035

MORE INFORMATION:
www.citysummit.com.au



URBAN ASCENT

24 Jackson St
Bassendean
0419 304 925

MORE INFORMATION:
www.urbanascent.com.au



JOONDALUP

2/25 Winton Rd
Joondalup
9301 0097

MORE INFORMATION:
joondalupclimbingcentre.webs.com



NATURALISTE

1/32 Faure Lane
Dunsborough
9750 5252

MORE INFORMATION:
climbingnaturaliste.com.au



OFF BELAY

BOOKING THE QUARRIES

Just a reminder that the phone number to book to climb at Mountain Quarry and Stathams is 9260 6100, which is DEC's Perth Hills District Office. 7 days a week 8am till 4pm.

CAWA TRIP - EAGLESTONE ROCK @ AUGUST

Shovel no longer required! Bonus! The CAWA trip to Eaglestone Rock is coming up from 30 August. Get back to nature, experience some fantastic climbing & enjoy amazing sunsets. Contact trip organiser Tony Brebner for more details.

CAWA TRIP - MOUNT FRANKLAND @ SEPTEMBER

Brave the cold? Have great footwork? Love slabs? Then the CAWA Mount Frankland trip is for you! Multipitch slab climbs, a pretty nice camp site & lots of great people to meet. Drop a line to Mark Kleinman to join this amazing long weekend trip!!!

NEW MINI-GUIDE: LOST BUTTRESS by Krish Seewray

Check-out this new mini-guide for an area near Wilyabrup!!! There is evidence of previous climbing activity here - please contact Krish if you know some history.

<http://www.climberswa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Lost-Buttress-June-2013.pdf>



CHRIS SHARMA COMING TO PERTH!!!

Got your tickets yet? We have!!! For one night only, Chris Sharma will be in Perth as part of his 2013 Australian Tour!

Wednesday 11 September @ 7:30pm in the Octagon Theatre at the University of Western Australia.

Tickets are \$55 and available through CAWA. Please e-mail Anthony Brandis for a ticket (Note: Limited tickets still available).



NEW ROUTES

Please send in details of new routes that have been established in Perth and WA climbing areas. Photos and topos would be wonderful if these are available! New routes can also be submitted to the CAWA forum:

<http://climberswa.asn.au/forum/first-ascents/>

Spangelic Upstarts 20 *** 30m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball)

6 bolts (boltplates), plus wires and small-med cams. Classic smear stemming up the scalloped runnel ~100m left of Dinosaur. Hike up past Dinosaur and the splitter crack in low-angled apron (first pitch of Delusions of Grandeur?). Keep going left along the base until under the large horizontal cave/gash. Access the nice big lower ledge under R of edge of cave. At R end of ledge where it slopes away is a 2BB (needs plates). Step right into groove, climb past 4 bolts (veer a bit R after 1st one), then small-med gear in flake to the fixed hanger DBB above the tuft of vegetation. An excellent sustained climb, much better than it looks from the ground. FA Tim Ball, Angela Separovic June 2013.

Bogan Villager 19 ** 30m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball)

The sharp arete left of SU. Boltplates needed, small wires and cams/microcams. Starts as per SU, ie same DBB and first bolt. Boldly run it out directly up the slabby face after 2nd bolt (crux), hit the arete past two more bolts then place small gear to top out to the fixed hanger DBB on the large ledge with spear grass, about 5m left of SU's anchor. FA Tim Ball, Angela Separovic June 2013. ing the mud out of the corner and bolting a direct finish may improve the climb.

Painters and dockers 15 ** 55m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball / Lars Klessa)

A two pitch 15 that climbs from the toe of the buttress 10m left of dockyard wall. Pitch one follows the left trending ramp through an overlap to a dbb. Five fh and small cam in overlap if needed. The second, easier pitch goes up and left to a small runnel past three fh to a dbb just below the first cave of dockyard wall. A single 60m rope is sufficient to get down. Linking the two together for a 55m pitch is possible.

Go the dockers 15 ** 30m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball / Lars Klessa)

An alternative start to the first pitch of p and d. Start at a left facing flake 5m left of previous route. A couple of medium cams to link to second bolt and finish as per p and d.

Lars attacks 21 ** 20m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball / Lars Klessa)

Left again ~10m is a thin face with five FH to the DBB of the first pitch of painters and dockers. Thin sustained and a little painful on the tips!

NEW ROUTES

Lars needs guitars 19 *** 20m, Gibraltar Rock (Tim Ball)

5m to the left of Lars attacks is an obvious right facing flake that does not reach the ground. Great varied climbing with mixed protection. Three FH and three or four medium to large cams for the flake and horizontal. Make sure you place your top piece in flake well back due to possible expansion.

Pudding, V3, Kalamunda Boulders No.2 (Jean-March Gething)

At the Kalamunda jorgensen boulders number 2 on the list of "short hard slab". Stand start, without the aretes high right footer then slab straight up to top out. Its a really cool climb.

Neil Gledhill & Kate Swan @ Marmabup Rock, Porongurup

Loofah Groove, 100m, 22***

Starts 10m right of Riddy Wuzere below a bolt and shallow grooves. Brilliant, varied slab climbing with lots of memorable cruxes and well protected by bolts (no hangers required). It provides a fine juxtaposition to it's neighbour, Riddy Wuzere, which is a climb from another era and worthy of repeating in its own right. Albeit, it can be rather frightening depending on how much moss is about ! No such moss issues on Loofah Groove however, and adequate bolts means a fun day out for all. Finishes just below the summit on the same ledge as Riddy Wuzere (far south end of ledge) and Gemini (~4m to the south of DBB). Gemini looks rather runout and probably has not seen a 2nd ascent. Aspiring punters should beware!

Pitch 1, 30m, 18

10bolts. Very enjoyable, well featured slab climbing. Up easy slab to first bolt. Pleasantly up past bolts, flakes, grooves and jugs before a delicate sequence (crux) takes you to the base of a right leading ramp. Step right a little before climbing up onto ramp and following it right. Cross the deep groove (easier higher up) and find DBB on slab right of groove.

Pitch 2, 20m, 22

7 bolts. Classic delicate slab climbing with a trio of subtle cruxes. High step and smear your way nervously past the 2nd bolt and grab the crimper rail gleefully at the 3rd. Wobbly you your way over the awkward step before overcoming the final steepening with some very classy climbing. Pad up the easy slab to DBB on the headwall. The belay at the top of Gemini pitch 2 is down and slightly left in the nasty gulch.

Pitch 3, 28m, 22

10bolts. Traverse right 3m from belay into grooves. First bolt is mildly awkward to get to. Stem, pinch and layback your way up the groove past bolts (crux). Swing onto the nose and launch yourself up on to the detached perch in a fantastic position. Gloriously stem up the big groove to the right and then romp up the plaisir slab to DBB on ledge. Superb, varied climbing.

NEW ROUTES

Pitch 4, 25m, 10

Scramble out right up blocks to top. No bolts on this pitch but you can place some med to large wires if you have them or thread blocks with long slings. If you got this far, running it out is not a problem. Friction belay on the summit or use one or two med to large wires. Descend north eastish towards tourist summit of Marmabup Rock. Picking up your packs where you left them; summit, saddle or base of route. You could easily rap down the route if required using the DBBs and a 60 m rope but you will need leaver biners, shackles or prus-sic as the anchors are hangers.

Commit, ??m, 26, Amphitheatre, The Gap (Gideon)

The climb is in the Amphitheatre area at the Gap. Start as for "Just an Aleutian" at two thirds height of "Just an Aleutian" go right about 2m and up the 2m tall splitter crack (crux) then go right one more move and then straight up. All gear was placed on lead on redpoint, 2 small cams but good cams under the lip before the crux. Took some big whips on them first attempt. FA Gideon, November 2011. (Recently posted).



BOULDERING COMP AUTUMN 2013

REPORTER: Tracy Wall PHOTOS: The Hang Out Crew

The Hangout's 2013 Autumn Bouldering Competition came to a conclusion on 28th June. Consistent with our previous in-house competitions, it was run over a few months and competitors had an opportunity to work on problems whenever and as often as it suited them. With just shy of 130 competitors our bouldering area was busy day and night which created a great vibe, and meant that there was usually always someone to share beta with.

As well as our "normal" problems (graded 1 to 6), the competition featured some seriously marathon style "bonus" problems consisting of up to 15 moves of increasing difficulty moves. We watched with joy as these painfully tortured our climbers, and despite the groans and vocalisations we remain convinced that many of them secretly enjoyed (or at least benefited from) these brutal endurance training sessions!

Once again we have seen a significant improvement in the skill levels of our climbers. Improvements were evident throughout the progression of the competition, as well as compared to our previous competitions. This almost across the board improvement in bouldering skills is likely attributed to the sheer number of hours boulderers have spent working problems each week during the comp, as well as the wonderful encouragement and knowledge that fellow climbers share. Over the last few months we have also seen a significant increase in the number of climbers heading outside to crank on problems in bouldering areas around Perth and at Margaret River.

Of course no bouldering competition would be complete without a finale, so embracing all things retro we celebrated with a disco party! As expected there were mirror balls, disco tunes & slick dance moves, lycra, legwarmers and men in lurid suits with white shoes. As the evening progressed we turned out all the building lights at The Hangout so that climbers (most of who were adorned with glow sticks) could either boulder under the shimmer of disco lights, or lead/top-rope with head torches.



The Hangout Crew get into the Groove of the Disco themed event.

Belaying with glow sticks and looking good is a skill to acquire.



The party wasn't just about disco; we also watched some of our best boulderers battle it out on different finals problems (3 each for men and 3 each for women), and then acknowledged our victorious competitors with prizes. The large array of prizes given out on the night included a dozen front row or VIP tickets to Chris Sharma's Australian Tour 2013 Perth show. Black Diamond and Evolv also generously donated a plethora of fabulous prizes including a number of the awesome new Evolv Cruz approach shoes, some Shaman climbing shoes, a Black Diamond boulder pad (as a door prize), and much more.

So who won the 2013 Autumn Bouldering Competition at The Hangout?

The male open winner was Karl Laczko, 2nd was Marko Vukic and 3rd was Jason Liew. The women's open winner was Barbara (Bambi), 2nd was Jolyn Lai and 3rd was Ning Tan. Ross Weiter and Ruth Murdie were both veterans that excelled and put in notable performances. Young Mitch Bulluss must also be commended for such an exceptional performance from a junior climber.



WONDER WHAT THE PLAN IS FOR
THE 2013 SUMMER BOULDERING
COMPETITION???

2013 CHAMPIONSHIP BOULDERING

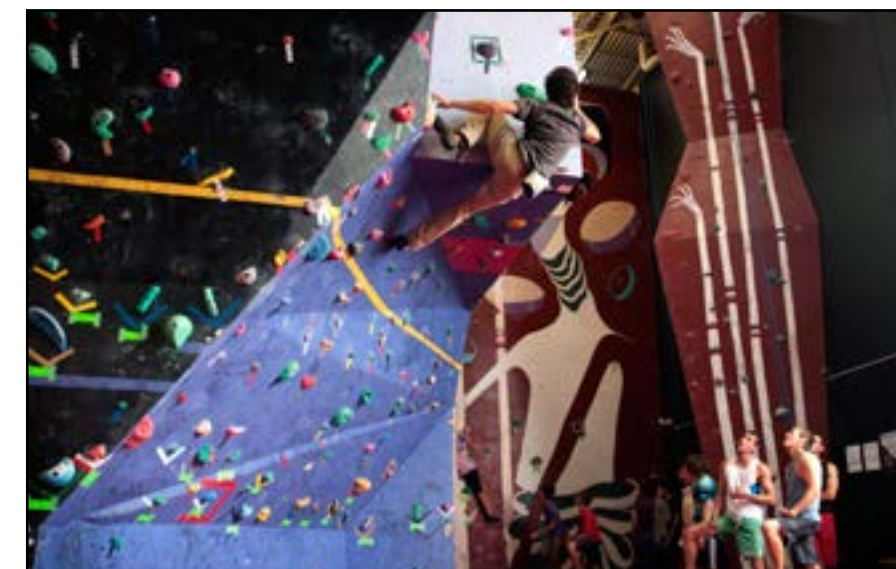


REPORTER: Damien Hall

PHOTOS: The City Summit Crew

With high expectations and a steep learning curve ahead, the newly opened City Summit Indoor Rock Climbing Centre embarked on hosting their first bouldering championship. Already with a couple of false starts for the date of the event due to delays in construction, the pressure was on to deliver a professionally run and exciting event.

CAWA Committee members Anthony Brandis, Kate Swain, Brian Tan and Remi Vagnals brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table that was generously offered to City Summit to ensure the Perth climbing community and all the spectators were the beneficiaries of a well run event. Owners Damien Hall and Nigel Ray were the first to admit they had many ideas but no experience between them and with CAWA being involved early in the planning stage of the competition, a strong relationship was formed. Although this competition was not an official event, the aim was to run in accordance with the SCA rule book so that the correct framework was in place for future events.



With a tight timeline and the looming impact on the regular day to day operation of the gym, the setting began, with some 50 problems planned for the boulder wall, Tyrone Clements, Walter Jones, Lochlan Gibbons, Damien and Nigel set forth with fresh fingers and a head full of ideas. Wall by wall, a total of 90 problems were set throughout the gym.

12 finals problems were needed to decide the final places of the best qualifiers, 3 set on the boulder and Spider Walls and 6 on Dream Catcher.



WINNERS PODIUM

Junior Category:
Martin Kuhnel, Elliot Vercoe &
Jacob French

Womens Category:
Christina Bedard, Inalee Jahn &
Victoria Alexander

Mens Category:
Jason Girdlestone, Alan Pryce &
Jarrod May

Frayed fingers and tired minds from the repeated attempts of moves and sequences beyond the ability of most of the setters and the awareness to not allow fatigue to influence the problems, Brian, Remi and Tyrone, saved the best and hardest for last, the men's final. Several of the most difficult and technical climbs of the category were still being tweaked in very early hours of comp day; completion was welcomed with a cold beer and bed.

On comp day, registrations were easy with all competitors issued with their score cards and welcome bag of goodies, after a brief welcome and outline of the basic rules, the pump fest was in full swing. A battle of skill, strength and strategy were at the forefront of the minds of the top competitors, a balancing act of keeping enough in reserve for the finals but gaining enough points to qualify.

As spectators munched on breakfast wraps and hotdogs throughout the day, the buzzing atmosphere was enhanced by resident DJ Courtney in the Redbull promo truck blasting tunes through the gym. Beats and forearms pumped as the final minutes of the qualifying stage approached, a last intense effort saw some of the harder problems ticked to the delight of the crowd and fellow competitors.

During a short break, the points were tallied and the top qualifiers hustled off into isolation. The team of setters quickly stripped a few walls where the remaining final problems were set, huge tarps were pulled down to reveal the problems set on the Spider Wall and Dream Catcher complete with previously unseen volumes. Spectators found a patch of floor and reminiscent of school yard assemblies, a sea of heads eagerly awaited the finals round.

There was a mix of climbing styles and techniques required in the last round and because of the experience of the setters, the strengths of any one climber did not give anyone an advantage throughout the series of problems. From dyno's to sketchy foot switches, awkward mantle's to pumpy overhang sequences and horrid finishing holds, the crowd of onlookers were witness to some spectacular climbing, from the junior boys and girls to the open men's and women's.

At last the top place getters were announced and only a few points separated the men's final order.

The Winner's Podium:

Juniors

1st place Martin Kuhnel
2nd place Elliot Vercoe
3rd place Jacob French

Women's

1st Place Christina Bedard
2nd place Inalee Jahn
3rd place Victoria Alexander

Men's

1st place Jason Girdlestone
2nd place Alan Pryce
3rd place Jarrod May

After trophies and prizes were presented and a few thankyou's from City Summit to all the volunteers for their help, the generous suppliers for all their donations and door prizes as well as a thank you to the spectators for making the event fun and interactive, in a thoughtful gesture, Alan Pryce grabbed the mic and gave thanks for all the hard work and organisation that the City Summit team and volunteers put in to pull off a successful event. City Summit would again like to thank the people that helped to make the competition a success;

Brian Tan, Remi Vignals, Walter Jones and Lochlan Gibbons for setting some exciting problems, particularly the finals.

Anthony Brandis at CAWA for assisting organising of the event and prizes.

DJ Courtney Bridge for the wicked beats and Red-Bull for the use of their truck.

Seth Fortune at Sea to Summit Who donated the bulk of the prizes from Black Diamond and Evolv.

Ty Murphy at Outdoor Agencies for donations from Scapa Edelridge.

Gabby Mayo at Expedition Equipment for of Red Chilli and Wild Country gear.

Steve Hawkshaw at Climbing Anchors for donations of Metolius.

Oliver Rahn of Ferno for donations of Skylotec gear.

And Special thanks needs to go to Tyrone Clements and Jenelle Ryan who dedicated so much time and effort in organising and marketing a successful competition.

In the de-briefing of the comp in the following week, there were several areas identified where improvements could be made, from the scoring and count-back. All in all, a great experience for City Summit, spectators and the Perth climbing community. Keep your eyes and ears out for more news of upcoming events at City Summit.



Sunrise over
the climbing
mecca of Mt
Arapiles, Victoria

LIVIN' THE DREAM

REPORTER: Jonas Hollingworth EMAIL: jonash@climberswa.asn.au PHOTOS: Jonas Hollingworth and Mandy Bowler

OUR IN-HOUSE REPORTER JONAS GETS THE LOW DOWN FROM SHAUN CURREY, FROM WA TO THE ARAPS....

Mid last year a climbing buddy revealed his plans to quit his well paid job, sell his house and take a 4 week drive over to Melbourne for a 3 year 'Outdoor Recreation' course climbing along the way. Only fairly new to climbing, he gave his boss 6 months notice (who does that?) and spent that time setting himself up for the big plan. Just before Christmas I went to his farewell party in Perth and then waved goodbye in Albany in the new year as he and girlfriend Jo headed east.

His plan quickly dissolved once he arrived at Mt Arapiles as he cancelled the course and decided to 'live the dream' by becoming a full time climbing bum instead. Recently I caught up with Shaun Cur-

rey, ex-WA climber, at 'The Pines' camp ground in Arapiles after nearly 4 months to see how the dream was going.

Reporter (J). So what happened to your original plan, why did you quit the course to become a climbing bum?

Shaun (S). "Well the plan was to stay in Arapiles for about a week after the road trip. After staying here for just a few days I was quite sure that I didn't want to leave. Also I spoke to a few people who gave me the run down on qualifications and I found out that TAFE courses aren't really respected as far as climbing goes and I wanted to guide so I settled on the ACIA course here".



J. From the start, give us a run down on what you've done so far and where you've been?

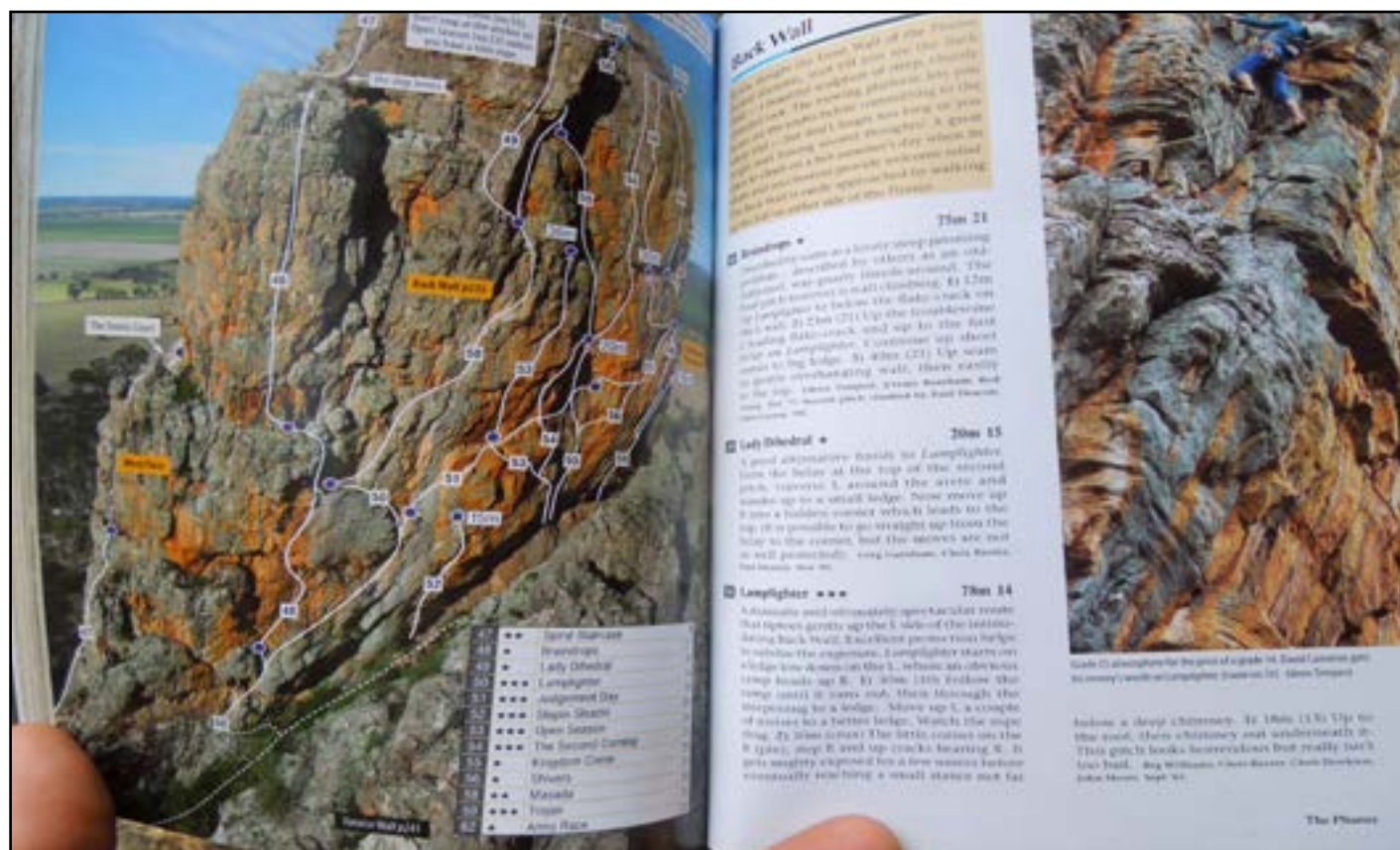
S. "So I left Perth just before Christmas and went down to West Cape Howe (WCH) and spent xmas and New Years there climbing WCH, the Gap and Peak Head. From there we headed across the Nullabor, well, before we stopped at Peak Charles. Then Jo and I headed up to Moonarie for a few days. After that we headed down to do some climbing in the Adelaide hills, then we went to the Grampians and finally ended up here and haven't left since".

J. Of all the crags you've been, which has been your best climbing experience and why?

S. "The best climbing experience would definitely be at Moonarie. It's very remote, all the main cliffs are about 100m high with a lot of exposure. The environment looks amazing with desert, rolling hills, cliffs everywhere, giant eagles, emus, kangaroos, and it was very Australian. I just liked the exposure and the remoteness and the climbing was fantastic. Everything was a sand-bag so it was always exciting".



"THE PLAN WAS TO STAY IN ARAPILIES FOR ABOUT A WEEK. AFTER STAYING A FEW DAYS, I WAS QUITE SURE I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE...."



J. And what about your favourite all-rounder crag and why?

S. "Favourite all-rounder crag is Arapiles for sure, its very convenient and the climbs are all quality at every grade so its a good place to learn to climb as well as climb as hard as you want".

J. So what does your weekly schedule look like? How much climbing are you actually doing and how much time are you taking off?

S. "I climb most days, almost every day I guess. Sometimes I am forced to have a rest day but generally I do at least one climb a day".

J. You're doing a lot of climbing, do you ever get sick of it and how do you 'keep it real'?

S. Laughs, "No I don't get sick of it. There is such a variety of climbs and I started going to the Gramians to do some sport climbing".

J. You took a pretty big fall at Mountain Quarry last year when two pieces of pro pulled. Please talk us through the details?

S. "Well, I just started learning trad climbing. I was at Mountain Quarry and I think it was on a grade 14 on the beginner wall which was bolted but there was trad as well. I decided to clip the first two bolts

then put in a small nut and small cam just above in a nice parallel crack which I thought was bomber. The block didn't look detached at all and was huge so I didn't even question it and I decided that I need to build my confidence by taking a fall onto this bomber gear" (laughs from the reporter).

"So I lobbed off, it wasn't a big fall but they both popped and I fell about 8m. The rope caught the bolt and sort of started catching me but I hit ground harder than ever before. I was dazed and confused for a while and quite numb but I didn't hit my head and was fine after that. I decided it was important for me to 'get back on the horse' and wanted to know why the gear pulled so I went and finished the climb. I found that the huge block had moved a couple of millimetres which is all it took for the pieces to come out".

J. How did this affect your confidence and grades on trad?

S. "Well very soon after that, maybe a week, I went to Kalbarri for trad climbing on the CAWA trip so when I got there I was shit-scared and spent most of my time seconding but I knew I just had to keep at it and lead a few things. It didn't take long before that particular fall wasn't an issue for me".

Life is sweet hanging out at the Pines...





J. So how have your climbing grades progressed on trad in the last four months?

S. "When I started the road trip I was just leading 13s and then at WCH I started doing 15s and I did a 17. Physically I could climb about grade 18 but trad just freaked me out. At Moonarie I did a few 13s, 14s, 15s which were pretty sand-bagged and I got to Arapiles at about grade 15. Within a week I was leading grade 17 and after a month I was leading grade 18/19s so I progressed quite fast".

J. Most climbers, in the real world that is, train several times a week by climbing in gyms, bouldering, using finger boards etc, before they take it out on the rock on weekends and getaways. You're pretty much playing a 'live match' every time you climb. How has this affected your grades?

S. "I never think about training, except maybe for running, I like to run. I think I'm still happy to climb all the time so its more a matter of getting enough rest days so I don't burn out"

J. In what areas has your climbing improved the most?

S. "Definitely my confidence in my own ability. I am much more sure of what I can do and so I can push harder and keep safe on routes that are at my limit. Also I have more confidence in my gear. I still haven't really taken many falls but there's been plenty of times where I've been well above my gear and very close to peeling off (laughs) where I felt quite confident the gear would hold".

J. Do you have any target climbs or goals insight or are you just climbing for the enjoyment?

S. "I'm trying to red-point a grade 25 before I'm 26 in May. Everything else is just the most burly f#%ked up climbs I can find, a bit of that and all the classics. Just get better and have fun"

J. I'm guessing you don't spring out of bed at 6am in the morning, what's your daily routine look like?

S. "Daily routine is fantastic. Every day I get the time to say 'Ah life's great'. I get up maybe about 9am, usually start climbing by about 10am, I usually don't have lunch maybe just a snack, and then finish climbing around dark which is now about 6pm. Then I have dinner, socialise a bit, go to bed and then wake up and do it again".

J. You had it pretty easy back in Perth - you had your own apartment then once you sold that you where living with your parents in their nice pad. Are you sick of living out of your car, in a tent and eating BBQ food yet?

S. "I really thought I would be. Soon after we came here we got a house-sitting gig in Natimuk only 10 minutes away and I found it was quite negative on me because I wasn't as psyched to come out climbing. I wasn't... really... doing much. I have the option to rent in Natimuk now but I'm not going to take that".

J. You're travelling with your girlfriend, Jo, who is also a climber. Has she been your main climbing partner or are you teaming up with other friends and randoms along the way?

S. "At the start she was but it didn't take long after we got here that we had different schedules and we met lots of cool people from all over the world so we've been climbing with them and met some really good friends already. I've probably done the most climbing with her but we both get to climb with lots of other people as well"



J. You still have some financial commitments - you have a car to run, a mobile phone, you need food etc. How are you funding the dream?

S. "I try not to think about money, that helps. I did set myself up to travel for a while. I've still got all the money from selling my house sitting there not to be touched until I want to settle down again. I'm eating though my savings a little bit but I started an online drafting business out here which gets me a bit of work and is usually enough to keep the bills paid, not that there's many" (chuckles).

J. What do you reckon your weekly expenses total?

S. "The last budget that we worked out was \$125 p/w each and about half that was fuel so we could cut that back by hitchhiking into town or cut the food budget back by raiding the Aldi bin" (chuckles).

J. Raiding the Aldi bin! So would you say you're living like a bum or pretty comfortably?

S. "I feel like I'm living like a king. I sleep well, I eat well, I exercise every day, I socialise every day. I really feel like I'm living like a king"

J. Do you have any regrets or is there anything you would do different if could you start the journey over again?

S. "No at all, I've learnt different things from different parts of my journey. I learnt a lot from pursuing a career and getting a house and trying to settle down as I felt like it was expected of me. But now I realise that money is not everything and certainly didn't make me happier. I was just always pushing to get out on the weekends".

J. So where to from here, what are your plans for the future?

S. "This will be home base for probably a year or two. I am going to Frog Buttress in QLD for two months during winter and then hoping to go to NZ at xmas. Then next year hopefully the Northern hemisphere for winter and then Tasmania for the next summer and thats about all I've loosely planned. So I might have to work one day a week for while to fund this but thats ok"

J. Would you say you're 'Living the Dream'?

S. "Yep... yes, yeh. I've never felt more like I was doing exactly what I wanted every day as I do now. I'm not on the dole and I'm not burdening society. I am still paying my way as well. I'm pretty happy with it".

J. Any last tips or words of wisdom for wannabe climbing bums?

S. "I guess it feels really hard before you get away. It feels like you're never going to be able to do it but once you get the ball rolling everything falls into place. Everything seems to fall into place here"

J. Thanks for your time, its been a pleasure

S. "Thanks Jonas"

Shaun did not get the grade 25 he was hoping before his 26th birthday.



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Over 150 wall images

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EVENTS & TRIPS 2013 & 2014

AUGUST 22 ROCKFACE GYM CRASH

MORE INFORMATION:
www.climberswa.asn.au

AUGUST 31 - SEPT 1 EAGLESTONE ROCK

MORE INFORMATION:
www.climberswa.asn.au
TRIP COORDINATOR:
tonyb@climberswa.asn.au



SEPTEMBER 17 HANGOUT GYM CRASH

MORE INFORMATION:
www.climberswa.asn.au

SEPTEMBER 28 - 30 MOUNT FRANKLAND

MORE INFORMATION:
www.climberswa.asn.au
TRIP COORDINATOR:
markk@climberswa.asn.au

OCTOBER 11 URBAN ASCENT GYM CRASH

MORE INFORMATION:
www.climberswa.asn.au

OCTOBER 29 JOONDALUP GYM CRASH

MORE INFORMATION:
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NOVEMBER (TBC) WILYABRUP

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NOVEMBER 21 ROCKFACE GYM CRASH

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CAWA will always try to keep to the planned dates here. Members should check the website for the most up-to-date calendar as dates may change after publication of this magazine.

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DECEMBER 27 - JANUARY 1

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MORE INFORMATION: www.climberswa.asn.au

an opinion piece

CLEANING A FIXED ANCHOR

REPORTER: Jonas Hollingworth EMAIL: jonash@climberswa.asn.au

When at the top of a climb with a fixed rappel anchor, how do you descend safely and recover all your gear? In this article I'm going to talk through the procedure that I use to do this. Now there are a thousand ways to 'skin a cat' and it's the same with cleaning a fixed anchor. In my opinion there are safe, safer and unsafe techniques of cleaning a fixed anchor. I have seen many other climbers use different techniques, some that I wouldn't use and others I have tried, however no right or wrong way. I use the techniques that work best for me which I have varied over the years to suit myself. Just like some climbers prefer to tie-in with a bowline, I prefer the figure 8 etc.

Disclaimer: This article is not an instruction guide and if you decide to follow the techniques described here, you are entirely responsible for your own safety and do so at your own risk. Always think for yourself and never blindly follow instructions. Safety first. Check, double check and triple check

I use two methods, which each have their own variation, whose use is determined by the size of the anchor bolts and the diameter of the my rope. The first - a bight of rope will fit through both anchor bolts, or the second - a bight of rope won't fit through either of the anchor bolts. Both methods are applicable to either sport or trad routes with a fixed rappel anchor which usually consist of either two rappel bolts, two rappel chains or a rappel ring tied to a threaded anchor. It is also important that the belayer understands the process before the climber leaves the ground. The extra gear I use other than my harness, rope and helmet is the Metolius PAS 22 Personal Anchor System (looped daisy chain) girth hitched onto my belay loop with a screw-gate on the end and one extra screw-gate.

I might also add that when I'm climbing on a route with a fixed anchor I always follow ethics by never top rope belaying directly through the bolts (without using quick draws) as a standard practice. Over time this causes excessive wear on the bolts which are difficult and expensive to replace unlike my quick draws which can be swapped out with others. If everybody belayed directly from the bolts every time, which could be hundreds of climbers every year, they're not going to last too long. Ideally, cleaning an anchor should be done by abseiling/rappelling off the fixed anchor rather than lowering as this will reduce the wear even further.

METHOD 1: When a bight of rope will fit through the rappel bolts.

Step 1. The first thing I do is secure myself to the anchor. If there are two draws already clipped into the bolts, I clip my PAS 22 into both of these and adjust the length so I can reach the anchor. If I've just lead up and are starting at two clean bolts and no one else will be climbing the route, I either place two quick draws or configure my PAS 22 so I can clip and equalise it to both bolts.

Step 2. Once I'm safely attached to the anchor I ask for slack. At this stage some climbers will call "safe", however I don't, as some belayers tend to switch off after hearing this and I want my belayer to keep me on belay and be ready at all stages of the procedure. As the belayer gives me slack I then pull up a bight of rope and thread it through both bolts feeding through plenty of rope.



METHOD 1/STEP 2
Threading a bight.

Step 3. In the bight I have just threaded through, I tie a figure 8 knot and clip it into my belay loop with a screw gate.

Step 4. I untie the end of the rope from my harness and pull it through the anchor. Some people now tie the end of the rope back into their harness before unclipping and dismantling the figure 8 on the bight however if I'm just lowering off and the extra rope is not needed to reach the ground then I stick with the figure 8 attached with a screw gate.

Step 5. I now DOUBLE CHECK EVERYTHING. I check the rope is fed through both anchor bolts. I check that the figure 8 knot is tied correctly in the rope. I check the figure 8 knot is correctly attached to my belay loop and the screw gate is done up.



METHOD 1/STEP 3
Threaded with a Figure 8



METHOD 1/STEP 3
Complete.



METHOD 1/STEP 4
Pulling end through.



METHOD 1/STEP 4
Complete.

Step 6. Once I'm fully satisfied, I unweight my PAS 22 and have the belayer take the rope in and hold my weight.

Step 7. I can now unclip my PAS 22, retrieve the two draws and have the belayer lower me down removing any gear on the way.

METHOD 2: When a bight of rope will not fit through the anchor bolts.

Step 1. As for Method 1.

Step 2. Once I'm safely attached to the anchor I ask for slack (again I don't call safe) and pull up a few metres of rope and tie a figure 8 knot about 2-3m from the end. I now clip it securely to my belay loop and double check it. I do this to ensure I'm secured to the rope at all stages and I don't drop the rope when untying it from my harness which would leave me 'high and dry'.



METHOD 2/STEP 2
Complete.



METHOD 2/STEP 3
Threading the rope.



METHOD 2/STEP 3
Complete.

Step 3. I then untie the end of the rope from my harness and thread it through both anchor bolts and retie it into my harness with a figure 8 knot.

Step 4. I now unclip and untie the knot holding the backup slack and have the belayer take in the slack.



METHOD 2/STEP 4
Complete.

Step 5. I now DOUBLE CHECK EVERYTHING. I check that the rope is threaded through both anchor bolts. I check the rope is correctly tied into my harness with a figure 8 knot.

As per the Method 1, I finish off with steps 6 and 7 and I'm done.



METHOD 2/STEP 7

Ready to lower.

Recovering the draws or protection on the way down sounds easy but this is not always the case. If I'm at the top of an overhang or have traversed in the climb I'm not going to be lowered directly over the top of my gear and consequently it may be well out of reach. To combat this I take a spare quick-draw and before I start my descent I clip it from my belay loop to the rope feeding up through the quick-draws. For this method to work, the rope must be clipped through the draws. With careful belaying, I now use the rope to guide me down, retrieving gear in the process. At times I may need to take the pressure off the rope in order to remove pieces of gear.

Once I'm safe on the ground, the belay is dismantled, I untie the rope from my harness, ensure all knots are removed, retrieve the rope and I'm done! End of story.

If you would like to continue this discussion with me or if you have anything to add then feel free to email me at jonash@climberswa.asn.au or come along to a CAWA committee meeting.



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Italy and the Gianetti Hut below the south side of Piz Badile. The central ridge, dividing sun and shadow, is the normal descent. We came down the middle of the sunlit wall in similar weather.



CLIMBING IN THE BREGAGLIA

By Ishmael, August 2012

"The childhood of a French nobleman in the eighteenth century was not usually the period of his life upon which he looked back with either affection or regret. The doctrine that parents exist for the sake of their children was not then accepted, and the loving care and hourly attention bestowed upon the children of to-day would have appeared ridiculous to sensible people. The modern method reflects greater credit on the parents; but evidence is not yet sufficient to prove that it produces a superior type of individual."

~ *The biography of Talleyrand; Duff Cooper 1932.*

Buying an ice-axe from Moosejaw costs almost as much in shipping as for the axe. And you get bizarre customer service. "Mooooosse-jaaahhh", a weak soprano answers the phone. Yes, at the complaints department they sing. And the staff are all softly spoken retiring young women. The theory being that your typical angry middle-aged man would hesitate before attacking such a milquetoast girl. Anyway I got the axe in time. A super light Grivel AirTech Evo. More than a trekking axe, though not as comforting as the solid old Stubai.

The axe and light crampons were for glacier crossing only. The rule for the Alpine summer of 2012 was rock – no mountaineering. A rope, cams, sunscreen, long rock routes, warm huts, hot food, cold beer etc. I had 10 days, no time for the snow and ice. Five other Perth climbers would be there, most would mountaineer. Choices were Chamonix, Grand Paradiso, Zermat, and the Bregaglia.

Kate, Neil and Nostromo would start in the Bregaglia region of the Swiss-Italian Alps. In the Bondasca valley, Piz Badile and the Sciora range were free of snow with only the occasional glacier. Climbs up to 900 metres vertical ascent were within reach of comfortable mountain huts. I'd meet Nostromo at the Sasc Fura hut (1904m) to climb the Piz Badile North Ridge (3305m).

Nostromo's was keen. We would think about training. In the mean time he occupied himself with putting all the furniture in his house into his dining room, spending nights installing wooden flooring, painting walls, and attending "birthing" classes with his pregnant partner (not inspiring classes, they referred to the incipient

mum as the foetus pool-filter). Apart from Moosejaw my training was lying in bed for two weeks with bad flu. I hoped to get fit on the walk-in.

Big trips are always popular. Everyone wants to go, next year. It's strange when next year comes. Trying to sweep up climbers, and enthuse them with climbing foreign mountains I visited the little people in Harvey where the elves live. But there progeny had priority, no one could go. The town's premier climber was busy with the task of insinuating her youngest into the human population,- using an ingenious disguise comprising a tee-shirt bearing the words "This is not an elf". But the ears would give him away. Arapiles and the beautiful south had absorbed everyone's energy that year. I went alone, hoping to meet the other mountaineers.

The quickest way to Europe is Perth-Dubai-Munich. There, in the botanical gardens, close to the Nymphenberg Schloss, I stayed with my sister, a long time resident. After many years in Germany she's absorbed a bit of Hessian humour. She had a gift for me. A large german bird-house, made of wood painted bright red. It had a little door for the birds and a place to put the seed. Perhaps a challenge. . It was too large to go on the rack. I should have taken it, but being weak decided to leave it in one of the greenhouses or the basement, and collect it on the way back.

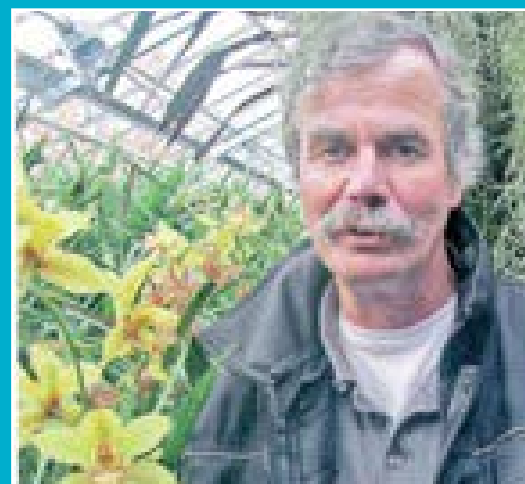
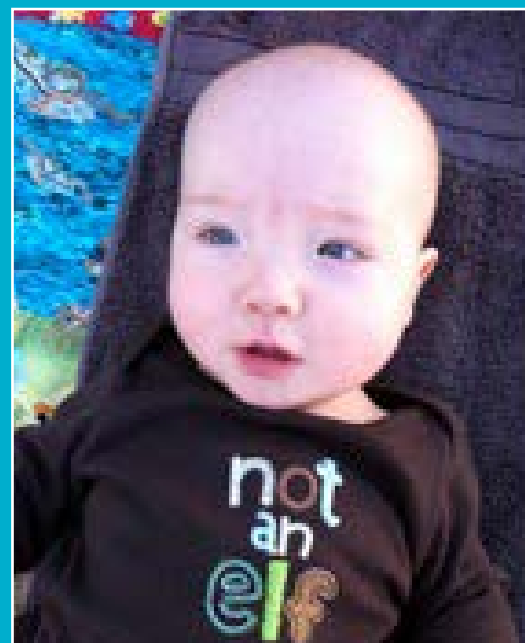
The Munich orchid houses are quite remarkable ; kept by a world renown orchid expert (my brother-in-law). He was away collecting something from the local hospital, where he was quite well know following his admission for an iguana bite. There are few cases of iguana-bite in Munich. Going in the back door, peering through the tropical foliage, I looked up to see, draped over the rafters, Iggy, and Pop, the giant green iguanas. Orchid experts roam the jungles collecting plants and occasionally specimens of fauna that take their fancy. The iguanas, snapping turtles and piranha add to the character of the Botanical Gardens. I stashed the birdhouse in the basement.

FROM TOP

An Incognito Elf

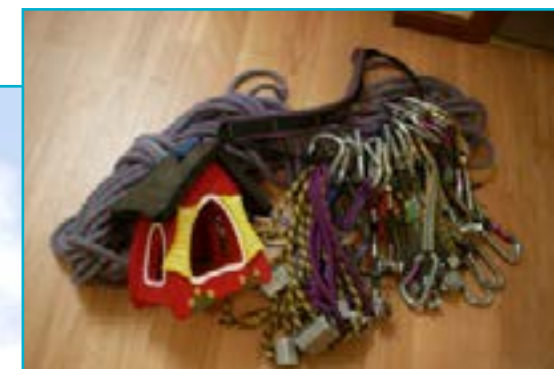
Climber at Bob's Hollow scoping out Toy Shopping" (26)

Internationally known Orchid specialist and Iguana attack victim



Getting to the Swiss-Italian Alps was easy. It was a hot day and the Swiss trains had their windows down letting in a warm breeze. Mountain scenery rolled by in the bright sunlight. Getting off at San Moritz I caught a bus to the Bregaglia. I planned to be at the Sasc Fura hut at the base of Piz Badile later that same evening. This made for a heavy carry since I took all my baggage up, not leaving anything at the Bondo hotel. Fortunately summer clothing was light, the 60m was only 9mm, the climbing rack a sparse selection, and the unnecessary camping gear - ice axe - crampons - and sleeping bag (none to be used) were relatively lightweight.

The description said an hour-and-a-half walk for a thousand metre rise, these were fit description writers. After crawling uphill for two hours I reached a road and a parking lot. It became clear that the one-and-a-half hours was from the parking lot. Late in the afternoon I sagged down at the door of the Sasc Fura hut. "Ah, you are going on an expedition." Said Grizelda the friendly hut-keeper. "I am from Australia." I said. "We can see that, dinner one hour, hot shower five Swiss franks." The luxury of a hot shower at a mountain hut can't be overstated.



PHOTOS: Rack and Birdhouse (Inset) & Piz Badile (3305m) flanked on the right by Piz Badilet, Punta Trubinasca, and Piz Trubinasca. Photo from the Bondasca Valley (+/-1000m) (Top)

Clean if wilted I made it to dinner. This hut didn't have solar batteries. Lighting was candles. In this archaic atmosphere I found Nostromo talking to Catalan and French climbers just down from Another Day in Paradise (6a North East face right of Cassin, a much admired bolted route, though some describe it as a climb without a line). He seemed surprised. We'd been out of touch for the last few days. Kateandneil had hiked out that morning after doing the North Ridge the day before. "We do the North Ridge tomorrow," speculated Nostromo. After a heavy carry in the thin mountain air I nodded weakly.

Breakfast was at four thirty. It had been laid out the night before. We ate by candlelight. Then 500m up to the start of the ridge. Nostromo had walked the path twice and led the way without hesitation. There were two other parties, their lights ascending in the dark. A pair headed for the North East face, and a pair of Italians we would meet later on the North Ridge.

The sun rose as we climbed a rocky gully up the side of a hundred metre step at the base of the ridge. There were bolts but this was still scrambling. We moved into the sun at the base of the climb, below a giant gendarme the other side of which was "the Notch" and the start of ridge climb. To get to the ridge the route went left onto the north east face, around the gendarme, and up to the notch. Nostromo led off climbing directly up the gendarme. I objected to this, urging him out onto the face. He found and followed some abandoned abseil ropes. The day before someone had fallen low on the ridge. Nostromo had watched the helicopter taking the party off. The helicopters do good business, hardly a day goes by but someone bumps their head. The length of the routes requires speed which means sparse gear placement, poorly thought out moves and long falls. Beyond the abandoned rope I led onto the ridge. A bit off route, vertical slab on thin gear. Then the ridge and back down to the first of a series of belay rings. After that we wandered up the ridge at a good pace.

Ascending the Nordkant (Swiss-german for North Ridge) was kind of blurry. After the carry from the bus stop the previous afternoon and not sleeping well, I padded up the rock somewhat dreamily. It was a spacey place to be. The Bodasca valley laid out beneath us. Vast walls of rock above and glaciers far below. To the west the square peak of Trubinesca slowly coming level with us and finally falling below. In the east the massive eastern buttress of Piz Badile itself, softly lit in oblique sunlight. Further away the Siora range. The climbing was steady and undemanding. Nostromo leading most of the time. With rings on all the belay stations there was no advantage in swinging leads. We semi-simul-climbed, a great convenience since it did away with all the shouting – belay-on belay-off – instead when the rope ran out, belay was off and the belayer climbed. I would try to follow at the lead pace, but often accumulated slack, clipped into the next piece, and resuming belaying, until the rope ran out again. True simul-climbing would have about 20m of rope between us, but we used the full 60m. In effect we were doing 90 or 100m pitches, which went quite quickly.



PHOTOS (Clockwise):

A Bavarian Iguana

It's important not to take more gear than you can carry. An elf with his ill considered selection, #4 BD cam.

The Author halfway up the North Ridge. The clearing with the hut is a white spot in the green patch, lower right.



Good climbing, some of it was a bit hard, but mostly it was overshadowed by the need for speed. Converting grading systems runs into philosophical problems. What people think is hard varies with local rock. We found there as on later climbs, slabs tended to be a little overgraded and some other things undergraded. The hardest was probably around 16/17, with most being 8 to 14. It would have been much harder in rain or snow. In the conditions we had it was a nice intro to Alpine rock.

22 pitches for a 900m rise. Orientation was difficult. Features visible from a distance were too large to be seen when on the climb. And the big steps, overhangs and ledges encountered on the climb are too tiny to see on topo photo's. With beautifully clear weather, puffy white clouds far above the summit to soften the blazing sun, it was a perfect climbing day. Nostromo ploughed up the ridge, I followed sleepily behind.

Above the "Difficult Slab" which wasn't I sat on a comfortable belay ledge. I waved cheerily to Francesco and Bruno, the two Italian climbers behind us. They were initially hesitant, but after smiling and offering them room on the stances and asking if they wanted to go ahead, which they refused, they were friendly if incoherent, we had no common language. They were in their sixties and seemed to be doing the climb as a pastime on a par with lawn bowls. Although fully pitching the route they easily kept pace with us. On the warm rock, in the cool windless air, it was in the moment a benign place.

Above the slabs, just before the horizontal knife-edge of the summit ridge, there was a spectacular vertical pitch. Really easy climbing with amazing exposure right over the Trubinasca glacier, twelve hundred metres below. Above the ridge narrowed. One could put a leg over the North East face and the other leg over the North West. I was on lead, the climbing was up and down, into and out of gaps with enormous views on either side. Finally down-climbing into a notch below the beacon. Easy with the rope drag, but necessary to place gear or the second solos.

The descent on the Italian side is shorter. Maybe half the rise of the Nordkant. The route description puts the descent down the south ridge. Abseils and easy down-climbing. For some reason, after descending 100m, we decided, to turn west and go down the shear south west face. I think we were attracted by a box-gully full of teetering blocks. It had a rope down it. The gully discharged onto the face, where we found the first of a series of shiny new abseil stations. Abseiling down into the unknown, at one stage climbing back up when we missed a station. And a far more serious lead by N, up ten metres of vertical face to recover the end of the rope which we'd pulled up without undoing the knot in the tail. Eventually the face became overhanging and the last abseil went nearly the length of our 60m ropes. Out of reach on the wall were hideously balanced flakes with old chopped loops of rope from parties whose ropes had been too short.

A half-hour walk down the slope brought us to the Gianetti hut; a little after eight and still daylight. Very full, but they had room and hot food. A packed bunk-room and the problem with the Euro aversion to oxygen. At midnight I opened the window, but the fresh air was detected in minutes and the window slammed shut. For much of the night there was an amazing electrical storm on the peak of Badile. Fanchesco and Bruno were up there, having decided to spend the night in the small iron refuge. I envied them the adventure and the fresh air.

The next day, sunny and warm, we hiked the path back to the Sasc Fura hut. The track went through two small passes, Porcellizzo and Trubenasca. Exposed scrambling protected by chains and cables. A third day of steep hills.



The Sciora hut. The smooth face of the Flat Iron - Bugeleisen - is seen on the lower right.



The two weeks I'd spent laid up with flu took their toll. Nostromo sensed this and carried the heavy gear. It was a nice walk, and good to see the comfortable and again almost empty, Sasc Fura Hut. After climbing the mountain It's good to sit quietly outside the hut on a warm sunny day. Nothing too hard for the next few days. In the evening two German climbers came down from Badile. Peter and Franz. Quiet men. They smiled a lot and looked very young. They'd climbed the Cassin route, up the South east face of Badile. – How was it?

"Oh, it was wet", they said. Too wet. I thought of the previous night's storm. The chimneys higher on the North East face would have run like streams. "Well no, we are here, so not too wet," they smiled.

The Cassin, first climbed by Riccardo Cassin in 1937. [Cassin was the first to ascend the Walker Spur, and the Cima Grande. Later climbing in the Himalaya with Bonatti and on the Cassin Ridge Mt McKinley.] He climbed Badile with his friend Vittorio Ratti, with Geraldo Esposito, Mario Molteni, and Giuseppe Valsecchi. They climbed in July, the middle of summer. Before Global Warming. Ice in the cracks, snow on the ledges. Climbing in hob-nail boots with static hemp ropes. Lock off on a hemp rope and it snaps. The belayer absorbs the energy by allowing the rope to slide across his back. They pushed through unknown ground. It was hard. On the summit Mario died of exhaustion and cold. Giuseppe died on the descent down the South Ridge. The others survived, until 1945, when fighting with the Italian resistance in the streets of Lucca, Vittorio was killed at Cassin's side. Cassin climbed almost all his life. At 87 he was recorded climbing 5.10b. He lived to be a hundred, he made it into the twenty-first century. And now two quiet young men say, - yes, it was wet, but we are here. -

Next day we walked to the Sciora hut in cloudy weather. Across the top of the Bondasca valley is a wall of attractive mountains. The Sciora range with a choice of medium length climbs (500m or less) moderate to hard. The hut has nice bunks, hot food, beer and wine. Our first night was crowded, the weekend, the second night almost empty. Our objective here was the Flat Iron.

Or the Bugeleisen. A moderate 400m climb up a broad slabby ridge. The climb was interesting for the approach and the conditions. It was the one climbing day that the weather was grey and misty. We crossed a small glacier, a raft of ice the size of an olympic pool, with very little tilt. It was embedded with grit so we crossed a narrow section without crampons. Then up a 20m step which was a steep and difficult solo on wet rock. The climb itself was dry, pleasant climbing, maybe easier than the grade 5b. And an amazing position looking down the valley, at one moment clear, then vast masses of cloud rushing up to cover us in mist, then clear. On our right was a glacier under the Piz Cengalo ridge. Through the day there were sounds like cannon fire and plumes of dust and ice like a B-grade war movie, as boulders fell from Piz Cengalo. It was good to have been able to choose climbs up ridges free of rock-fall. Abseiling the route the clouds rose out of the valley and covered us. At times Nostromo would vanish 20m down the abseil. Once I missed the next ring. Abseiling further and further down into the cloud very conscious that there was no knot. On short climbs we always knot the rope, on more serious ones we're terrified of the knot jamming somewhere off the descent line.

Coming back I miss-stepped on the glacier and not having my poles in arrest position, slid a short way. Nostromo leapt forward to ascertain I could still walk and hadn't torn his jacket. Fortunately the sleeve had rolled up so the rock that lacerated my arm didn't touch it. I hardly even got any blood on it. As we walked back the only rain of the trip fell.

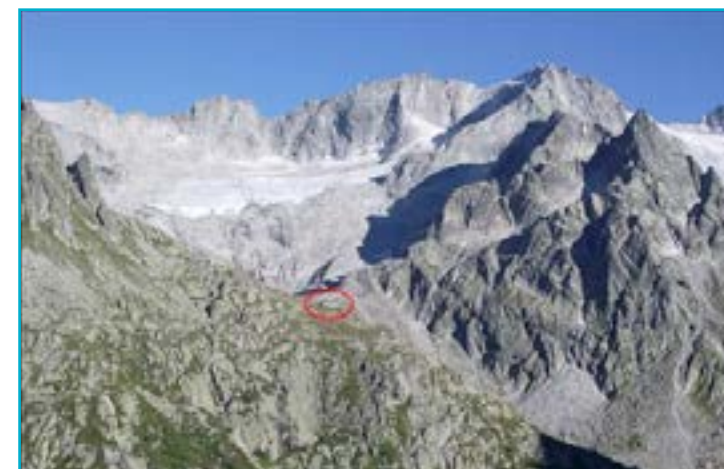
In the morning the sun shone and the possibilities were endless. However we went down. Nostromo had responsibilities, there could be a little Nostromo demanding his return. We spent a relaxed night at the hotel in Bondo where we read Kateandneil's notes. They had proceeded us to Sciora then gone to Albigna, come down and left for the western Alps.

The Albigna Valley is different. There is a cable car. It goes up to a hydro dam seen in the picture. The hut was really good. There were a lot of hikers but with such a big hut there was plenty of room. Arriving in the cable car we stopped off at the peak whose pinnacle is the "Flamme", the flame. A 15m wafer thin vertical sail of rock visible from the valley. This was the crag we climbed for the next few days. It was the shortest most convenient one we could find. Shortest being some climbs not much over 200m. That first afternoon we got a little lost and Nostromo made



a brave attempt at a pitch of 7a (24). After a long fall we retreated to hot dinner at the hut. Over the next two days we did easy climbs, or tried to. Nostromo tended to get bored and wander onto wildly strenuous diversions. It was a nice spot to wind down. Sunny, with the grasses flowering the seeds whirling in the breeze and a wide blue sky.

With family responsibilities looming, Nostromo was becoming stern and prescriptive. For fathers, a necessary adaption. Otherwise your children won't rebel and may never leave home. We left early, down to the Pranzaira hotel. Comfortably upmarket among the pines. The valley from Bondo to Pranzairia is deep and narrow. I walked down a way on an old Roman road by the river. This was once the northern edge of the Roman province of Cisalpine Gaul. The southern border being the Rubicon river. Transalpine Gaul is currently called France.



The next day Nostromo was off to Milan and I was off to Zurich. As the bus pulled away the light dimmed, wind-screen wipers came on, through the pouring rain the peaks were faint outlines. My planned side-trip to Chamonix was shelved in favour of warm coffee shops in Zurich and Munich. Zurich is low-rise; pretty in the wet. Old gabled buildings and cobblestones. I stayed with friends south of the lake. Mostly time spent drinking hot chocolate watching the pouring rain; while somewhere far across the Mer de Glace, Kateandneil wandered through the snow looking for mountain huts in the mist. With the season turning, a day visit to Chamonix seemed less urgent. I was reacquainted with my friends. And one short euro climber, now a vigorous 7-year-old. Children are a mystery. How much stress is it necessary to apply to build character, self-reliance, discipline? In Switzerland kids seem to have healthy boundaries. Though house rules can be surprising. Table manners and school work being strictly enforced, but war dances on the kitchen cupboard and somersaults over the furniture being permitted. With the rotten weather it seems euro kids get more latitude indoors. So remember, if a midget European runs amok in your house, he may be following the rules he knows.



Back in Perth Nostromo now has very nicely finished wooden floors and a small son. I look at the Piz Badile webcam and am amazed at the amount of snow down to the hut even in July. We had a narrower window than I realised. Next time best to take the mountaineering gear.





Rick Allen & Sandy Allan on the Podium



THE PILOET D'OR

by Rick Allen

In July 2012, Rick Allen and Sandy Allan made the first successful ascent of the 10km long Mazeno (West) Ridge of Nanga Parbat (8126m) in Pakistan over an epic 18 days. This long standing objective, high on the list of 'last great problems of the Himalaya' had previously repelled some of the finest alpinists of their generation, including Doug Scott, Voytek Kurtyka, Segei Efimov and Erhard Loretan.

As a result, they were nominated for a Piolets D'Or (Golden Ice Axe), an annual award instigated 20 years ago by Montagnes Magazine and the Groupe de Haute Montagne (GHM) of the French Alpine Club and supported by the alpine centres of Chamonix and Courmayeur. The award is for outstanding, imaginative first ascents accomplished by the highest ethical and environmental standards.

Also nominated were an American team for Baintha Brakk (the Ogre, 7285m) in Pakistan, a Russian team for Muztagh Tower (7284m), also in Pakistan, a French team for Kamet (7756m) in India, a Japanese team for Kyashar (6770m) in Nepal and another British team led by Mick Fowler for Shiva (6142m) in India.

The panel of judges was chaired by Stephen Venables, a British alpinist renowned for the first ascent of the Kangshung face of Everest without oxygen in 1988.

The awards form the centrepiece of a short climbing festival in the French and Italian alps, giving the short-listed candidates a chance to ski and climb together before facing the judges. This year they skied down the Vallee Blanche, the famous glacier descent from the Aiguille du Midi in the shadow of Mt Blanc. Not all of the world's supposedly elite climbers are elite skiers, or even barely competent ones and the icy conditions and liberal scattering of blocks of avalanche debris reminded many of their frail mortality. Your correspondent tactically avoided this experience by arriving a day late, preserving both his ego and his knees and illustrating in the process something of what it takes to survive 30 years of new routing in the Himalaya.



Each team gave the judges a short presentation on their climb and then assembled in a large theatre in Courmayeur with the world's mountaineering press to hear the outcome.

The American, Russian, French and Japanese teams were predictably young and extremely fit looking whereas the two British teams were distinguished by their obvious extensive experience.



Kurt Diemberger, the renowned Austrian mountaineer and mountain film-maker who made the first ascents of Dhaulagiri and Broad Peak received the Walter Bonatti lifetime achievement award and each team made a cameo platform appearance with Kay Rush, tri-lingual compare for the evening.

Journalists quizzed Rick most often on how long he thought it was possible for someone to continue making first ascents of routes on 8000m peaks in alpine style, to which he suggested that they ask him again in 20 years time. Rick and Sandy's climb was notable for the extreme privations towards the end as they descended without food or water and they were presented on stage with a packet of Italian 'artisan' mountain biscuits in recognition.

When the finale arrived, Stephen Venables announced to a stunned auditorium that the panel of judges could not distinguish an outright winner and had decided to award each of the final six teams. The climbers were delighted but the journalists somewhat less so, where was the story? Everyone received a Piolet D'Or, but Rick and Sandy took the biscuit.



"EVERYONE RECEIVED A PILOET D'OR BUT RICK AND SANDY TOOK THE BISCUIT"

"RICK AND SANDY'S CLIMB WAS NOTABLE FOR THE EXTREME PRIVATIONS TOWARDS THE END AS THEY DESCENDED WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER"





MY CAMINO

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

REPORTER: Tony Brebner EMAIL: tonyb@climberswa.asn.au

It's not every day that you're told, your life, as you know it, is under threat. My cancer diagnosis, surgery and recovery left me in the early part of this year thinking – WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON!!! Once I settled down I knew I couldn't just go back to work as if I'd had a bad hair day.....

It was a spur of the moment thing. I'd been looking for something and somewhere to make sense of everything I had been through. The Camino de Santiago ticked all the boxes.... Solitude, time for reflection, a pilgrimage, historical and religious context, a challenging journey and La Rioja wines!!!

The Camino de Santiago has been travelled by pilgrims from the 10th Century from all over Europe and beyond. They celebrated "The Way" of Saint James. The modern pilgrim has a number of Caminos to choose from, but the most popular is the Camino Frances which starts in St Jean Pied de Port in France and traverses the Pyrenees into Spain ending 800kms later in square in front of the breathtaking Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

I knew it was something I had to do. I knew it was something I could do. It felt right.



"EVERY JOURNEY
BEGINS WITH A
STEP IN THE RIGHT
DIRECTION..."

Within days I was booked to fly, my family and friends all understood and our esteemed VP of CAWA Anthony Brandis, gave me the "no problems" thumbs up.

On the 27th of May I flew from Perth to Paris and then took a train from Paris Montparnasse to Bayonne and then an alpine train from Bayonne to St Jean Pied de Port arriving the same night. The next morning it was pouring with rain and cold. The owner of the Albergue (a traditional pilgrim refuge that was to become my style of accommodation for the next 5 weeks), told us by way of sign language, that the mountain was closed, it was snowing too heavily and it was very dangerous....

That was just what I wanted to hear!! I eagerly packed up my sleeping bag, got into my rain gear, hauled on my backpack and headed out of the door. It was 5 Deg at 70mts altitude, by the end of the day I would be in driving snow at 1,500mts, alone and cold. But I would also be ecstatic and living my new life to the full.

More to follow in the
next Western Climber....

TONY KEEPS ON WALK-
ING TOWARDS HIS END
GOAL.... DESPITE POOR
WEATHER ALONG THE
WAY. THE 800KM WALK IS
COMPLETED WITH ONLY
10KG ALLOWED IN YOUR
PACK.



We hope you've enjoyed our new-look Western Climber! Look out for the spring issue at the end of October 2013 and don't forget to send in your photos and articles and of course, any feedback or ideas on how we can make this an even more awesome publication.

Happy Climbing!

"SHADOW OF PEAK CHARLES"

by Anthony Brandis