



MIDLANDS AREA NEWS

Issue 006 14th November 2008

Brought to you by the BMC's Midland Area

*** IMPORTANT NOTICE ***

BMC Midlands AGM: Thursday 27th November 19.30

The BMC will be holding their first meeting at Redpoint Climbing Centre in November, followed by an "interactive" show with Nick Bullock. This is your chance to get involved, meet some friendly people, rant about your favourite subject and scoff butties. If you want to find out more, email ian.a.mckenzie@btinternet.com, I will need to know rough numbers so I can arrange food.

At the AGM we are going to elect members to the Midlands Area Meeting for the next year, if you are interested in getting involved, get in touch. I would like to stand down as Area Chair and Wall Rep but remain on the National Council.

Photo: The paint job on the new extension opening at Creation Climbing Centre gets under way, details in the walls section.



Iain McKenzie out climbing after the National Council Meeting

Welcome to the Sixth issue of the BMC's Midlands Area News. It has been put together by the volunteers of your local Area Meeting to keep you up to date about Midlands walking and climbing. We are a happy bunch who are involved with crag clean ups, guidebook work, rebolting and access work. We would love to see you at our next meeting (see next page for details). We are a "doing, not talking" kind of meeting, and we are here to represent you.

If you would like to get involved or contribute to this Newsletter email: iain.a.mckenzie@btinternet.com or come along to the Open Area Meetings.

BMC Midlands AGM: Thursday 27th November 19.30

The BMC will be holding their first meeting at Redpoint Climbing Centre in November, followed by an "interactive" show with Nick Bullock. This is your chance to get involved, meet some friendly people, rant about your favourite subject and scoff butties. If you want to find out more, email iain.a.mckenzie@btinternet.com.

Area News by Fiona Devine

5th Newsletter

Previously circulated and contains a summary of the last area meeting and news from national council meeting, plus many other interesting articles. Help and contributions are needed on any subject you think of interest to the Midlands. Particularly welcome contributions from hill walkers.

Leicestershire guide book update

Draft copy is now available for comment. An example of one section of the guide was circulated at the meeting and attendees invited to make comments. If you would like to comment of the draft then contact Iain McKenzie.

Climbing Walls:

Creation Wall – 30 new routes have gone up.
Redpoint Climbing Centre – Phil Minel one of the directors reported that lots is going on. In particular on Sunday 26th October - "A Grand Day In" an all day event with climbing competitions, chance to a Master class with Neil Gresham and entry includes a lecture with Andy Kirkpatrick "Winding Stairs - Great climbing adventures around the world"
Alter Rock - New climbing wall in derby has opened Alter Rock Climbing Centre, St. James Church, Malcolm Street, Derby, Derbyshire, DE23 8LU for more details see their web-site <http://www.alter-rock.co.uk>.

Report on BMC Youth Climbing Series by Iain Blanch
 Noted that standard of climbing in Midlands continues to rise. Outstanding performance by Tara Hayes at the national final - 4 way tie for 1st place in 11-13 age category

Climbing as an Olympic Sport :

Lively discussion took place. Generally met with a positive response. Some concern that the BMC may not be the right organisation and what would be required; thought that it might alienate the hill walkers. Members felt that they would like more information to allow a more informed judgement.

Access Issues – local & national:

Local - The only real activity to report was from the West Midlands area where work (which is ongoing) to improve the access to a bouldering venue at Gnosall in Staffordshire. Chris Nunn (Access Rep for Manifold Valley) has been co-ordinating this through Martin Kocsis at the BMC. £200 has been requested from the Crag Care fund to help towards the works.

National Access – Cath Flitcroft reported on the progress on securing coastal access for walkers and climbers.

Use of the BMC Reserves: Suggestions included the offer of grants and keeping subscriptions down.

Individual Member issues:

Identify crags for clean ups – suggestions included Beeston Tor (a limestone cliff in Staffordshire) & Malvern Hills. Information was sought on the action the BMC is taking on the use of motorbikes on footpaths & bridleways in the Yorkshire dales

Next Meeting

The next Midlands Area Meeting will be on Thursday 27th November at 7.30pm, at the Redpoint Climbing Centre, 77 Cecil Street, Birmingham, B19 3SU

Prior to the meeting there will be a short annual general meeting to present a report of the work done in the last year and elect members to the Midlands area committee for the next year. We are particularly keen to appoint climbing wall reps.

If you have any issues you wish to raise at the meeting about climbing, access to crags in the Midlands, or matters about how the BMC is run, what you would like to see it get involved in and how you feel the office could support you better then please contact either Iain or myself through martin@thebmc.co.uk (0161 438 3336)



Iain McKenzie, Robert Adie and Tina Gardner

At the invite of the Prime Minister, around 120 climbers (Including Iain McKenzie, Midlands Area Chair) converged on 10 Downing Street, to attend a reception for the British Mountaineering Council (BMC); the national representative body of mountaineering, climbing and hill walking. This celebration of British mountaineering and climbing was a unique opportunity to raise the profile of the sport.

When Leo Houlding started making headlines in the climbing world, it never crossed his mind that one day it would lead him to be making a speech inside No.10 Downing Street. Yet, yesterday evening, there he was, amid the grandeur and chandeliers of upstairs at Gordon Brown's, addressing the reception being held for the BMC in celebration of British Mountaineering.

After giving a quick run-through of his climbing career, not failing to mention being arrested for climbing The Angel of the North, Leo explained how "climbing touches many of us at a level few sports reach" and that "it is a sport many will participate in for the rest of our lives, teaching great self-reliance and a respect for the Earth."

In the light of the emphasis on the 2012 Olympics, he finished-off by asking "Sport England not to overlook non-Olympic elite sport performers such as in climbing" when it comes to funding. Around 120 people from the world of mountaineering, covering all aspects from training to cutting edge youths such as James Pearson, joined ministers and senior civil servants at the reception that was originally to have been personally hosted by Gordon Brown. Understandably, given the economic melt-down, he was otherwise occupied and the Sports Minister Gerry Sutcliffe took his place.

Following on from Leo, the Sports Minister talked about the Government looking to sports, like climbing, that can create participation. He recognised that the BMC reaches young people, with the associated benefits of raising self-esteem and educational attainment. Finally, he paid tribute to the world-leading climbers and mountaineers from the U.K. and said: "This is a sport we want to work with."

Earlier in the day, John Mann MP, held an informal media briefing on the terrace at the House of Commons. He explained that very few sports get such an invite to Downing Street and usually it was following special sporting triumphs. "It demonstrates that the BMC has a growing respect in Government."

Commenting on the significance of the Downing Street reception, Mann spoke of climbing and hill-walking hitting the Government's agenda for social and health reasons. He believes that, "it is viewed as a good way of engaging with young people, being aspirational and promoting healthy living."

The BMC is currently awaiting the decision of a funding application with Sport England, who allocate government funds for sport at a community level, in order to support the BMC's general work. Hopefully, the evening will have helped raise the profile of climbing and mountaineering within the British Government.

For more go to thebmc.co.uk



A Mhaighdean

An 80% Chance – a trip to A'Mhaighdean

It was looking like we'd timed it right – MWIS said the forecast for our walk-in on Saturday afternoon was bright and showery, with a bright sunny day to follow for the summits on Sunday – just the chance of a very isolated shower and an 80% chance of cloud-free summits on the Munros. When MWIS go as far as 80%, they're usually very confident of a good day!

Our targets were A'Mhaighdean and Ruadh Stac Mor, two of the remotest hills in the Fisherfield/Letterewe area of the North West Highlands. A'Mhaighdean in particular occupies a spectacular position and is highly-rated.

The chosen route was the north-west approach from Poolewe, via Carnmore. It didn't start particularly well. We'd read something rather vague on the internet about an improved route around the top of the forest above Kernsary and so deliberately ignored the direct turnoff towards Carnmore when we passed it. Mistake! Before we realised that the new super-highway didn't exist (never believe anything you read on the internet!), we were nearly in the area marked on our 1976 OS Maps (which had cost each of us £1.15) as "Bad Bog". This left us with a long slog over this aptly named area with our full packs, trying to work out just where the forest boundary now ended (not where it was in 1976, obviously) and trying to find a way back to the main path we'd so happily left behind. I spent the time trying to remember the name of the bog from which the Hound of the Baskervilles had emerged – it seemed appropriate somehow.

Eventually, we got back onto a decent path below the cliffs of Beinn Airigh Charr, only to make a further error in trying to short-cut the dog-leg up the Strathan Buidhe, by crossing the river (easy enough) and walking across the bog back to the path below Meall Mheinnidh (far from easy). Believe me, that path to Carnmore is the best and only way – don't even think about diversions or non-existent improvements!

Some pleasant evening sunshine greeted us as we crossed the causeway between Fionn Loch and Dubh Loch to arrive at Carnmore after 5 hours. A'Mhaighdean looked good for the following day. There were a couple of parties camped nearby, but we had the bothy to ourselves. The bothy has a good roof, walls which are nearly weatherproof and a dirt floor. It also has a few old bed frames and karrimats on which to sleep, though you need to be amongst the first 4 or 5 to arrive to get one of these.



Carnmore Bothy

In view of that optimistic forecast, the weather in the night was rather alarming. There were some long periods of very heavy rain on our plastic roof and the door was rattling rather a lot. Still, it always sounds worse in a tent (or bothy), doesn't it? And by the time we got up for a 7.00am start, the rain had stopped.

The SMC Guide suggests that you take the path from Carnmore for a while and then cross the Allt Bruthach an Easain and another "little stream" for a direct assault on A'Mhaighdean's north-west ridge. Quite how this was supposed to be done, was a mystery. The night's rain had left the "little stream" as an uncrossable raging torrent, while the Allt Bruthach an Easain is in a deep gorge and would prove a considerable obstacle even in dry conditions. On this day, the proposed route was out of the question, especially as the rain was now blattering in again on a strengthening wind. There was nothing for it, other than to carry on to Lochan Feith Mhic'-illean, cross there, and make straight for the col between Ruadh Stac Mor and A'Mhaighdean. The crossing looked like it might be difficult, but was made easier by the presence of some firmly-placed stepping stones just beneath the water's surface – remember, keep on the path and don't go for any diversions!!

We headed for the col as the rain and wind strengthened and the clag descended lower and lower. Some 80% chance! It wasn't even clear at 567 metres, let alone on A'Mhaighdean's 967 metre summit! We arrived at the col at the same time as a party of four, one of whom was doing his last two Munros – a right bloody day he'd picked for it! Choosing to do Ruadh Stac Mor first, we scrambled up a steep path to the trig point. For a moment, the rain stopped and the sun could be vaguely seen trying to poke through the clouds. Perhaps we'd get a decent day after all??

No bloody chance! Before we were half way back to the col, the storm had strengthened with renewed fury and the final ascent of A'Mhaighdean, so highly recommended, was just a wet slog. We even had a little difficulty finding the summit in these conditions, though this was achieved with the aid of GPS. No fine views down to Dubh Loch or across to Sgurr Ban and An Teallach, no relaxing in the sun to celebrate our achievement, just a quick bite to eat and a nip or two of Glenlivet to celebrate Terry's 100th Munro. Then back to the col and that river crossing (by now a little deeper), this time facing into the wind and rain.

Just before Carnmore, the conditions finally abated a little, though the trip to the summits, which we'd estimated would take 4-5 hours, had actually taken 7 by the time we got back to the bothy to load up our gear and start the walk-out. Even though we kept to the path this time, this proved a real slog, despite the lighter loads which resulted from having eaten all our food. The rain finally decided to pack it in, though the clouds remained firmly clamped onto the summits of A'Mhaighdean and other surrounding peaks. The few people we met on the way back were all very wet indeed! Only the midges seemed happy as they came out in the forest above Kernsary.

We eventually got back to Poolewe after 8.00pm, just in time to book a welcoming B&B and get a meal and a few pints in the pub. The total trip had been about 53km, rather longer than suggested by the SMC guide, but then the SMC didn't recommend a visit to "Bad Bog" did they? The following day was bright and clear and A'Mhaighdean could be seen down the valley laughing at us!



Approaching top of Ruadh Stac Mor

Club Focus - Bewdley & District MC

Bewdley and District Mountaineering Club is a small group of mountaineering enthusiasts based on the towns of Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport, about 20 miles from Birmingham. We are BMC affiliated, but have an informal and friendly atmosphere. The BMC affiliation means that members can obtain discount on climbing or hillwalking gear from many retailers, including the local ones in Kidderminster.

We cater for both climbers and mountain walkers and people of all levels and abilities are welcome to join.

The Club's main activities are centred around a programme of hut meets (with the occasional camping meet) most of which are in North Wales or the Lake District, but club members also make arrangements to go further afield, e.g. Scotland or the Alps. Recent trips have included Newlands Valley, Cwm Eigiau and Nant Peris.

We meet each week on Thursdays at around 8.45pm at The Great Western pub in Kidderminster Road, Bewdley.

The Club's website is www.bewdleymountaineeringclub.co.uk and this contains a page of FAQs which will be useful for anyone wanting more details.

Article and photos supplied by Vince Harrison of Bewdley and District Mountaineering Club

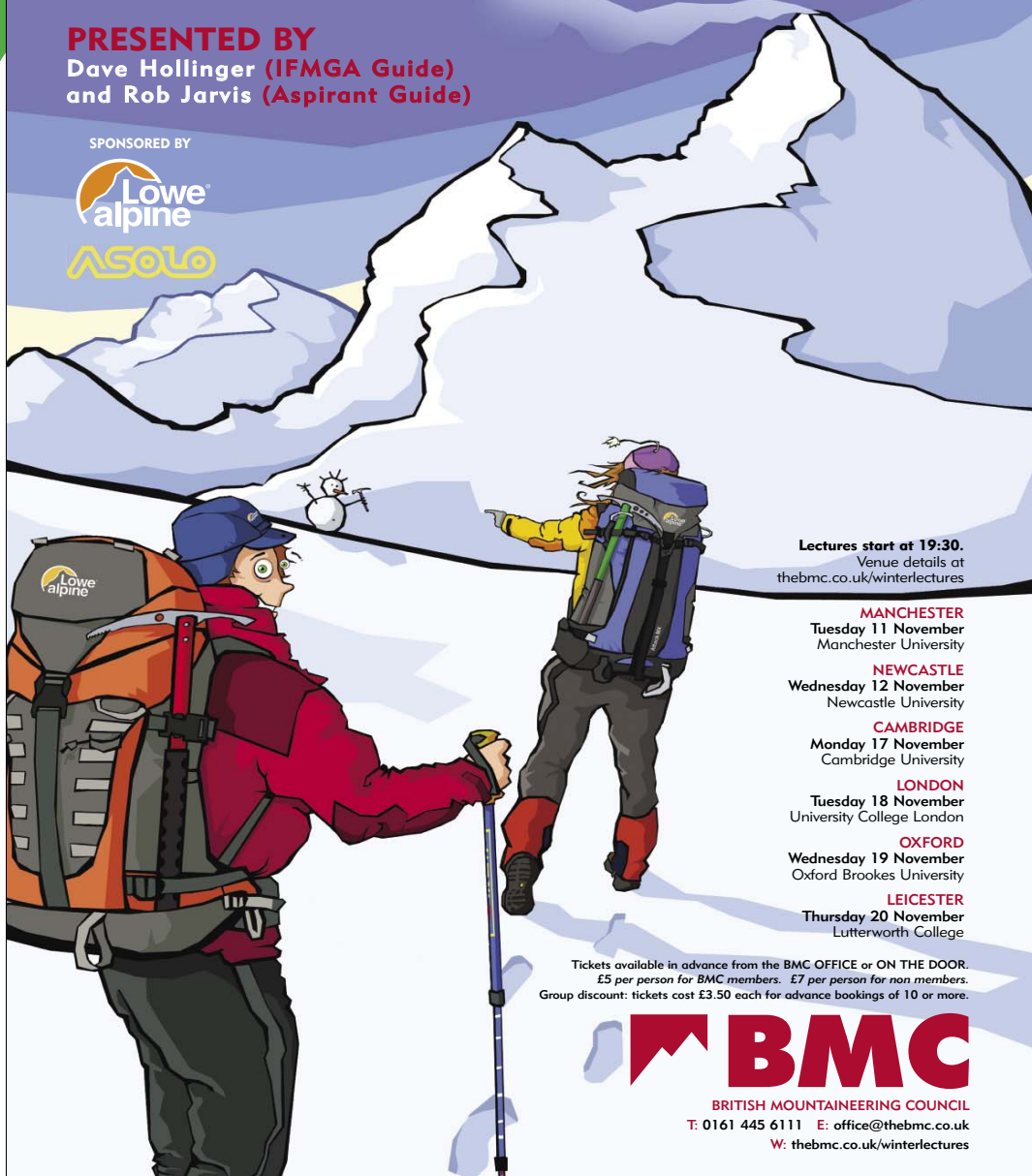
BMC WINTER LECTURES

SKILLS FOR THE WINTER MOUNTAINS

PRESENTED BY

Dave Hollinger (IFMGA Guide)
and Rob Jarvis (Aspirant Guide)

SPONSORED BY



Lectures start at 19:30.
Venue details at
thebmc.co.uk/winterlectures

MANCHESTER
Tuesday 11 November
Manchester University

NEWCASTLE
Wednesday 12 November
Newcastle University

CAMBRIDGE
Monday 17 November
Cambridge University

LONDON
Tuesday 18 November
University College London

OXFORD
Wednesday 19 November
Oxford Brookes University

LEICESTER
Thursday 20 November
Lutterworth College

Tickets available in advance from the BMC OFFICE or ON THE DOOR.
£5 per person for BMC members. £7 per person for non members.
Group discount: tickets cost £3.50 each for advance bookings of 10 or more.

BMC

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL
T: 0161 445 6111 E: office@thebmc.co.uk
W: thebmc.co.uk/winterlectures

This excellent series of BMC lectures on winter skills will navigate its way around the UK this November and visit Leicestershire.

SPEAKERS & CONTENT

Sponsored by Lowe Alpine and Asolo these inspirational and educational talks will be presented by Dave Hollinger (IFMGA Guide) and Rob Jarvis (Aspirant Guide). Whatever aspect of winter mountaineering you aspire to, Dave and Rob will make you aware of the skills required to explore the winter mountains. Topics covered include:

- Equipment and clothing
- Navigation
- Footwork
- Route planning
- Avalanche awareness
- Climbing and much more.

Dave and Rob deliver the talks in a highly informative way with some great practical elements that draw on a wealth of first hand experience. There will be a host of humorous tales from which to glean invaluable advice and photos to inspire you on your winter adventures. There will also be a Lowe Alpine free prize draw for audience members.

VENUES & DATES

All talks start at 19:30 and finish at approximately 21:30.

Monday 17 November - Cambridge

Cambridge University, Department of Plant Sciences, Large Lecture Theatre, Downing Site, Downing Street, Cambridge, CB2 3EA.

Tuesday 18 November - London

University College London, Edward Lewis Theatre, Windeyer Building, 46 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 4JF.

Wednesday 19 November - Oxford

Oxford Brookes University, Centre for Sport, Cheney Lane, Headington Campus, Oxford, OX3 0BD.

Thursday 20 November - Leicester

Lutterworth Grammar School & College, Bitteswell Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 4EW.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Tickets cost £5 per person for BMC members and £7 for non members. Group discount: advance bookings of 10 or more, tickets will cost £3.50 each.

To purchase tickets please complete and return the ticket booking form or telephone 0161 445 6111.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact Becky McGovern at the BMC by tel: 0161 438 3302 or email becky@thebmc.co.uk



Iain McKenzie, enjoying some steep ice in Chrevoux 2007

BEWDLEY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

Bewdley and District Mountaineering Club is a small group of mountaineering enthusiasts based on the towns of Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport, about 20 miles from Birmingham. We are BMC affiliated, but have an informal and friendly atmosphere.

We cater for both climbers and mountain walkers and people of all levels and abilities are welcome to join.

The Club's main activities are centred around a programme of hut meets (with the occasional camping meet) most of which are in North Wales or the Lake District, but club members also make arrangements to go further afield, e.g. Scotland or the Alps. Recent trips have included Skye and Kintail (May 2007) and Glen Strathfarrar (October 2007).

The Club's website at www.bewdleymountaineeringclub.co.uk has recently been expanded.

We meet each week on Thursdays at around 9.45pm at the pub, The Great Western, Kidderminster Road, Bewdley and new members are always welcome.

Club Meet: Thursday's

Time: 21:45

Venue: The Great Western, Kidderminster Road, Bewdley.

Contact Name: Vince Harrison

Telephone: 01299 871724

Web Address: www.bewdleymountaineeringclub.co.uk

Email: vince.harrison@btinternet.com

BOWLINE CLIMBING CLUB

The Leicester based and BMC affiliated Bowline Climbing Club has been established for more than fifty years and is an active and friendly club with over 100 members, holding regular meets throughout the UK and further afield. We also own a hut just outside Llanberis.

Characterised by a healthy spirit of competition and no small amount of p*s taking, the Bowline exists to foster a love of the outdoors, not just in climbing but in hill walking, ice climbing, mountaineering, cycling, running and skiing and the many other activities which our members participate in. These activities are enjoyed at many different levels within the club, so there really is 'something for everyone'!

Although there are many meets based further afield, most weekends there are people going up to the Peak District for a day of fun on the grit, or limestone. In the winter we generally try to get away for at least one week sport climbing on hot rock and/or a week skiing. We also have an active program of evening events in the week, including running, cycling and climbing.

Club Meet: Wednesday Night

Time: From 21:00 onwards

Venue: Cow & Plough, Stoughton, Leicester.

Contact Name: Zoe Pickering

Telephone: 07709 337976

Web Address: www.bowline.f9.co.uk

Email: meetsec@gmail.com

CEUNANT MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

We are a long established climbing club based in the Midlands (centred on Birmingham). We number about 150 members. A mixture of all sorts, from big range mountaineers to rock climbers, sports climbers, skiers, ski tourers, walkers and scramblers.

We organise a varied program of meets and longer trips around the UK, Europe & occasionally international. In previous years, these have included Chamonix, Alps, Lundy, Italian Dolomites, Corsica and the Canadian Rockies to name just a few. We also have an active programme of social events like canoe trips on the river Severn, curry evenings and slide shows. For more details See the "Meets and Events" page on our website.

The Ceunant welcomes new members at all levels of ability and in all fields related to climbing and mountaineering. You don't have to be a great alpinist to join! We have members who climb at various grades, and in various styles from bouldering to mountaineering, so you'll certainly find someone to climb with. If you're completely new to mountain sports, you will be very welcome: you couldn't find a better place to start!

Essential Information:

Club Meet: Every Wednesday

Time: 21:30 - 23:00

Venue: Spotted Dog, Corner of Alcester St & Warwick St, Digberth, Birmingham, B12 0NH

Contact Name: Fiona Devine

Telephone: 0121 704 2177

Web Address: www.ceunant.org

Email: secretary@ceunant.org

Membership: Open to anyone over 18. Young people are welcome if they come with their parent or guardian. Membership rates this year are £20.

Club Hut Information: Are you after a hut to stay in Snowdonia? Why not book the Ceunant MC hut "Ty'n Lon" in Nant Paris, next to the Vaynol Arms, and close to the main climbing and walking areas. This five star accommodation has three bedrooms, (a main bedroom that sleeps 12 and a further 2 bedrooms reserved for members), a drying room, cutlery, crockery, hot water, w.c., showers, electricity and central heating. Access is by car. Our rates for outside booking are very reasonable at £8.00 per person per night. For mid week bookings we can accommodate 25 people.

For more information and bookings, please contact the Hut Secretary, Val Beddard, 49 Vicarage Road, Wollaston, STOURBRIDGE, West Midlands, DY8 4NR Tel:01384 373105 or email hut@ceunant.org



Ceunant Mountaineering Club Hut

COVENTRY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The purpose of the club is to encourage every branch of mountaineering.

The main activities of the club are a varied series of weekend meets held every two to three weeks in the popular and also the less well known climbing and walking areas of the UK and beyond. In winter we generally base our meets in mountain huts and cottages and in summer we normally camp.

The club owns a hut, or cottage, at Corris in southern Snowdonia, which is available to members. Corris is close to Cader Idris, the Arans and Plynlimon. The Corris area is much quieter than the Snowdon area. It offers good hill walking, forest trails, mountain biking trails and rock climbing.

It is quite common to go out for a day and see no more than a hand-full of people.

Club Meet: Socially every Wed evening

Time: 21:30 - 23:00

Venue: London Road Social Club, Paradise St., Coventry.

Contact Name: Mike

Telephone: 024 76597125

Web Address: www.coventry-mc.fsnet.co.uk (new site shortly)

Email: mike_o_bike@yahoo.co.uk

COVENTRY & WARWICKSHIRE RED ROPE

The club is based in Coventry and Warwickshire, with members in Coventry, Kenilworth, Leamington, Warwick, Stratford and around.

Our members go hill-walking and scrambling, country-walking, mountaineering, and mountain-biking – all year round. We have regular weekend trips to the hills, such as North Wales, or the Lakes, day trips, local walks, a regular pub meeting once a month and evening walks in the summer.

We are a regional group of National Red Rope Socialist Walking and Climbing Club, bringing together walkers and climbers who have socialist and like-minded ethics. The club is organised in regional groups around the UK, and if you join you can take part in walks and trips organised by other regions, giving you a wide choice of locations and activities.

Have a look at our website to see our planned activities for 2008.

Club Meet: Socially, the first Tuesday in the month.

Time: 20:30 – 22:30

Venue: Virgins & Castle pub, Kenilworth.

Contact Name: Bronwen Reid

Telephone: 01926 314634

Web Address: www.redrope-warks.org.uk

Email: info@redrope-warks.org.uk

This is a list of clubs locally in the Midlands. All the clubs on the BMC database were emailed and asked if they wished to be included in this list, if a club is not here, they did not get back to us. If a club wishes to be included, please check your details are correct on the BMC database and email us direct.



Showing them how it is done... the the Redpoint Grand Day.

HEREFORD CLIMBING CLUB

We are a small but active club with members from Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

Through the summer we climb weekly at Symonds Yat and during the winter months we climb weekly indoors. We also have regular weekends in the Wye Valley, Pembrokeshire, North Wales and the Peak District.

New members are always welcome regardless of experience. Please contact us to find out more.

Email: matttyler1500@aol.com

HINCKLEY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

We are an active club that exist for the benefit of the members. With a full programme of activities there's ample opportunity for walking, scrambling, rock climbing, mountaineering, mountain biking, skiing and socialising.

Check out this website to find out more, or come and have a drink with us on Thursday evening.

New members whether beginners or experienced are always welcome.

Club Meet: Every Thursday Night

Time: From 21:00

Venue: The Holywell Inn. London Road, Hinckley.

Web Address: www.hinckleymc.org

LEICESTER RED ROPE

The club is based in Leicester and our members go climbing, hill-walking and scrambling, mountaineering and country-walking. We have regular weekend trips to the hills, such as North Wales, or the Lakes, day trips, local walks, a regular pub meeting once a month and evening walks in the summer.

We are a regional group of National Red Rope Socialist Walking and Climbing Club, bringing together walkers and climbers who have socialist and like-minded ethics. The club is organised in regional groups around the UK, and if you join you can take part in walks and trips organised by other regions, giving you a wide choice of locations and activities.

Have a look at our national website to find out more about the club.

Club Meet: Climbing, every Wednesday

Time: 18:00 - 19:30

Venue: Moat Community College, we meet socially the first Tuesday of every month 9 pm at the Swan and Rushes (near Leicester Royal Infirmary)

Contact Name: Pravin

Telephone: Mob. 07796988488 Tel. 01162366852

Web Address: www.redrope.org.uk

Email: pravski@yahoo.com

MERCIAN MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The Mercian is an active and friendly club catering for mountaineers, climbers and walkers of all abilities. Social activities are based in Birmingham, but we have members based all over the Midlands and further afield. We have members from all walks of life, and ranging in age from their early 20s to 70+ and still going strong!

We have mountain meets roughly once a fortnight. These normally attract a good mix of people: there will be people wanting to do things ranging from a walk to a scramble to easy climbing to hard stuff up to the lower E grades, and novices at any activity are always welcome. Mountain biking has also taken off recently, especially on wet days. Club members usually arrange trips abroad too – last summer saw trips to the Alps and to the Dolomites, and there have been several skiing and snowboarding trips in the last few years too.

Our weekly pub socials take place in the Old Crown in Digbeth on Thursday evenings from 9:30pm, usually following a visit to the climbing wall. One social a month is a special event, such as a slideshow, a quiz or a photo competition. We also arrange other socials once a month – outings such as bowling and meals out. Full details are available on our website. If you think we sound like your sort of club, get in touch and pop along to meet us. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Club Meet: Thursday Evenings

Time: From 19:30 (Creation) & From 21:30 (The Old Crown)

Venue: Creation Climbing Wall, Moseley & The Old Crown, Digbeth

Contact Name: Rebecca Blyth

Telephone: 07799 207990

Web Address: www.mercianmc.org.uk

Email: newcomer@mercianmc.org.uk

NORTH LEICESTERSHIRE MOUNTAIN CLUB

We are a mountain club rather than a mountaineering club and so enjoy all activities associated with the outdoors environment. These include: Climbing, Walking, Mountaineering, Caving and Mountain Biking.

We are child and dog friendly, as long as they are well behaved and you look after them!

In the dark winter evenings we have a weekly indoor climbing meeting at the Tower Climbing Centre (Tuesday's), on summer evenings might go to a local crag or quarry or maybe up to Wildcat Tor at Matlock.

Club Meet: Tuesday and Thursday Evenings

Time: From 19:00 (Tuesday) & From 21:00 (Thursday)

Venue: The Tower on Tuesday & White Hart public house in Quorn.

Contact Name: Adrian Thorpe

Telephone: 0116 2892421

NUNEATON MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

We are a friendly club involved with all kinds of mountaineering activity including Climbing, Scrambling, Hill walking and back packing.

Club Meet: Thursday Evenings

Time: From 20:30

Venue: The Attleborough Liberal club, Nuneaton.

Contact Name: Andrew Holder

Telephone: 01827 717648

Web Address: www.nunmc.org



Steve Mayers, on Virago, E1 5a**, Craig Buddon.

SOLIHULL MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The Club is based in the Solihull area of the West Midlands with members from all round the area. We are actively involved in many mountain sports including mountaineering, scrambling, hill walking, rock climbing and mountain biking to name but a few. We welcome anyone with an interest in mountains.

Although we have a number of very experienced rock climbers in the club we also cater for novices with regular ad hoc meets targeted at their needs.

The club has both a structured programme of events and an informal set of events that are arranged at short notice. Check out the Activities section of the website, message board or turn up on a club evening for up-to-date details.

Club Meet: Every Tuesday many members go to the Creation Wall climbing centre at 582 Moseley Rd, Birmingham. Check the website for location details. If you want to make contact with us there its probably best to get in touch beforehand to make sure we meet up on the night.

Thursday night is club night. Although there may not always be a committee member there every Thursday, we guarantee to have someone there on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month.

Time: 21:30 - 22:00

Venue: The Old Edwardians Sports Club is at the junction of Streetsbrook Road and Olton Lane, in Solihull. A map showing the location of the Old Ed's can be found on the website.

Contact Name: Rob Trezise

Telephone: Rob on 07976 840679

Web Address: www.solihullmc.org.uk

Email: See Web Site

WARWICK CLIMBING CLUB

Warwick Climbing Club is based in the west midlands, so if you want to go rock climbing, mountaineering, scrambling or hill walking, you have come to the right place!

The club have approximately 80 members drawn from Warwick, Leamington Spa, Stratford-upon-Avon, Coventry and the surrounding areas.

We aim to offer a friendly atmosphere where local climbers can meet so come along one evening and say hello.

The club organises outdoor trips about three times a month during the summer months and less frequently during winter. Have a look at our website to find out our planned activities for 2007.

Club Meet: Every Monday & Wednesday

Time: 19:00 - 21:30

Venue: St Nicholas Park Leisure Centre in Warwick.

Contact Name: Dave Button

Telephone: 07775 582958

Web Address: www.warwickclimbingclub.co.uk

Email: info@warwickclimbingclub.co.uk

WARWICK MOUNTAINS

The University of Warwick Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club is an active and open club for students and staff at the University of Warwick.

Catering for people of all abilities with a wide range of interests, we go on weekend trips every three weeks to Britain's mountainous regions.

Whether you want to take an easier walk through beautiful mountain scenery, or have a technical day on the mountain we can accommodate your interests.

We also run two annual trips: one winter trip to Scotland for winter walking and climbing, and a summer alpine tour.

From walkers to alpinists, this is the club if you love being in the mountains.

Club Meet: As above, three weekend trips per term, plus an annual Scottish winter trip and summer Alpine trip. We also have social events which tend to be fortnightly.

Web Address: www.warwickmountains.co.uk

Email: info@warwickmountains.co.uk

WEST MIDLANDS RED ROPE

The club is based in the West Midlands, with members in and around Birmingham, Solihull and Wolverhampton.

Our members go hill-walking, mountain walking and country-walking. There are day walks, summer evening walks, weekend trips to the hills and twice a year there is a social meeting. A recent addition has been an annual four day backpacking trip.

We are a regional group of Red Rope, a national socialist walking and climbing club. This brings together walkers and climbers who have socialist and like-minded views. If you join Red Rope you can take part in walks and trips organised by other regions, giving you a wide choice of locations and activities.

Have a look at our national website to find out more about the club..

Club Meet: contact below for further info, details of programme.

Time: as arranged

Venue: n/a

Contact Name: Gill Cox

Telephone: 01902 331233

Web Address: www.redrope.org.uk

Email: barrier@waitrose.com (local contact)

“ from upper class beginnings over a century ago to a modern thriving network, the club scene is part of the fabric of climbing in Britain...”

WEST BROMWICH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

WBMC is a friendly mountaineering club based in the heart of the West Midlands. We welcome all kinds of mountaineering activity, including climbing, hill walking and fell running.

We welcome experienced mountaineers and complete beginners alike.

Club Meet: Every Thursday evening & Coach Meet 2nd Sunday (rarely Saturday) of the month

Time: From around 9pm or 8pm if there is a talk/slide show (7am for coach)

Venue: "The Globe", Reform Street, West Bromwich (opposite the Police Station)

Contact Name: Alison Whitehead (Membership Sec)
Nigel Tarr (Coach Secretary)

Telephone: 01384 254110 (Alison) 07703 345729 (Nigel)

Web Address: www.wbmc.org

Email: jaejed@hotmail.com

THE WORCESTER MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The WMC is a small but lively club based in Worcester. Our members are keen on many forms of mountain sports ranging from hill-walking and scrambling to climbing and mountaineering.

There are regular club trips planned to a variety of venues from Cornwall to North Wales, the Lake District and Scotland, and also European ventures to the Alps and the Dolomites. The greater ranges of the Himalaya and the Andes have also been visited when individual finances allow!

Some club members also enjoy the outdoors on their mountain bikes and in canoes – always a good option if it is raining!

The club meets regularly at a pub in Worcester and will always give a warm welcome to anyone who might be interested in joining whether experienced or not.

Club Meet: Thursday Evenings

Time: From 9pm

Venue: The Albion Pub, Bath Road, Worcester

Contact Name: Matt Smallman

Telephone: 07752 638924

Web Address: http://worcestermountaineer.tripod.com

Email: mjsmallman@googlemail.com

Child Protection Awareness Training Course

The BMC is holding a Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness Training course, sometimes called Good Practice in Child Protection, on Monday 2nd February 2009 at 6.30pm pm at the Westway Centre in London.

The training is free to BMC volunteers who support activities involving under 18s or those in BMC affiliated clubs that admit under 18s when not accompanied by their own parents.

WREKIN MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The Wrekin Mountaineering Club is a very active Club and friendly Club based in Shropshire, but includes members from all over the Midlands and other parts of the Country.

Meets are held every 2nd Sunday, and weekend and longer meets are held throughout the year in all major climbing areas in the UK and Europe. Members are active in all areas of mountain hill walking, rock climbing, bouldering and winter mountaineering.

Membership is for persons over 18, and our rock climbers and mountain walkers are of all levels of ability, all willing to pass on their skills and experience to new members.

We are a BMC affiliated Club, and have excellent discounts with National and local retailers.

Club Meet: Socially 1st Tuesday of each month but indoor wall and outdoor meets every Tuesday

Time: 1st Tuesday of the Month 20:30-22:00

Venue: George and Dragon, High Street, Much Wenlock.

Contact Name: Bob Mitchell

Telephone: 01746 761696

Web Address: www.wrekinmc.co.uk

Email: mitch@wrekinmc.co.uk

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER M.C.

Membership to the club is restricted to students, staff and graduates from the University of Leicester.

Whether you are climbing in the High E grades, or don't know a karabiner from a friend, then the Mountaineering Club is for you.

We provide the means, equipment and safe instruction from experienced club members. The club runs regular trips to the Peak District, Lake District, Snowdonia Yorkshire, Portland and Pembrokeshire.

New members are readily welcomed and you can get involved as much as you like. All you need to join is enthusiasm. In return we promise to offer you a year packed with fun and adventure.

Club Meet: Tuesday Night and Wednesday Afternoon

Time: 19:30 - 21:00 (Tuesday) & 13:30 - 15:00 (Wednesday)

Venue: Moat Climbing Wall

Contact Name: Steve Elliff

Email: su-climbing@le.ac.uk

Training will be delivered by Alan Weightman who is an experienced climber and accredited by Sports Coach UK to deliver this course.

Those attending will receive a certificate of attendance that can be used as proof of attendance in other sporting contexts across the country.

To reserve a place please contact Nick Colton on 0161 438 3305 or email nick@thebmc.co.uk



The Third Annual
REEL ROCK TOUR
FALL 2008

reelrocktour.com
Trailers, Schedule,
Tickets and More Info.

New release from
Sender Films

the SHARP END

Big UP's **USAGE** series goes to South Africa
with Paul Robinson and Daniel Woods

Caldwell & Rodden explore Grand Canyon
Europe's wildest on sights
Corey Rich Photography

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The Phoenix - Leicester
23rd November 2008
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Over 80 shows across
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URBANCLIMBER





Francis Bensley, BMC Youth Climbing Series 2008, Warwick Wall.

The BMC Leading Ladder is back, with a new and improved format. Taking part in this fun competition series is an excellent way to improve your climbing standards and a great way to get fit - and stay fit - over the winter months.

What is it?

The BMC Leading Ladder is a series of competitions that start in October and runs at 36 walls right through until the end of March. Each round of the BMC Leading Ladder runs for a 16 day period - that's 2 weeks including 3 weekends. That means that you can travel around the country and take part in leading competitions right throughout the winter - and all at your own pace. Full details: www.thebmc.co.uk/ladder

What's different to last year?

This year we are running multiple rounds at the same time, up to 6 rounds at any one point, meaning that you will have even more opportunities to compete at a leading ladder round every week right throughout the winter. The time table of rounds can be viewed here. This year we have also extended the grade ranges so that each round will have 10 routes ranging from F5+ to F8a. The competition is also split into three ability categories - Improver, Recreational, and Elite.

- The Improver category is aimed at climbers whose on-sight limit is F6B/6B+.
- The Recreational category is aimed at climbers whose on-sight limit is F7A/7B.
- The Elite category is aimed at climbers whose on-sight limit is F7C/8A.

You choose which category you want to compete in and then your points will be entered into that category in the scoring system. This gives climbers that are operating at a more intermediate level a chance to compete in a national competition and possibly compete in the National Final.

N.B. British Climbing Team members must enter the Elite category.

How hard are the routes?

Each competition shall consist of 10 routes graded F5+, F6A, F6A+, F6b, F6b+, F6c, F7a, F7b, F7c and F8a.

Categories

As detailed above there are three categories this year, which will then be split into male and female categories and into under 16's and 16's and over. Ages will be those on 31st August in the year the series starts. If you would like to find out about other climbing competitions for young people, please click here.

How will it work?

The BMC Leading Ladder competition routes are clearly marked and anyone using the wall may climb them. But if you want to take part in the BMC Leading Ladder competition, and have your score recorded, then you need to buy a scorecard for £1 from the host venue. Don't try any of the routes before buying a scorecard - that's cheating!

Scoring

The BMC Leading Ladder is a fun competition relying on the honesty and integrity of those taking part and those belaying to ensure fair play. Climbers start at the bottom of a route and see if they can climb to the top. Clipping the lower-off from a hold on the route signifies a successful ascent. If a climber is successful, their belayer marks their score their card. If not an X is marked on the card. Higher scores are awarded for fewer goes and, of course, a flash ascent receives the highest score.

Succeeding on a route on the first attempt (a flashed ascent, or flash for short) gains 20 points. Getting it second go gains 15 points, third go 11 points, 4th go 8 points, 5th go 6 points, 6th go 5 points, and any subsequent attempts, however many, gain one point. Competitors may attempt the routes as often as they like during the period when the competition is running at a particular venue. The maximum score possible, and therefore the perfect score, at any venue is going to be 200 points - that's 10 climbs multiplied by 20 points.

Can I practise the moves before trying the routes?

Nope. With the maximum score for the on-sight climbers can't practice or inspect the routes first. Nor are they allowed to weight the rope, use out of bounds holds or features, use the top edge or side edges of the wall, or grab the lower-off. All quick-draws are to be clipped while climbing - the first one may be pre-clipped for safety purposes.

Belayers

Competitors choose their own belayer(s) as usual at a climbing wall. Climbers and belayers need to be aware that they will be required to meet a wall's usual entry conditions. To find out

what these are, especially if you are under 18, please contact the wall direct prior to your visit.

Results

At the end of each round walls collect the cards for the competition held at their venue and return them to the BMC. They will be published here on the website. All scorecards returned to the BMC will go into the hat for a spot prize draw, so make sure you hand that card in, no matter what score you got!

National final

When all the rounds in the series have been completed, each competitor's highest 3 scores will be added together to give their overall score for the series. The highest possible overall score is 600. Those with the highest overall scores in each category qualify for a national final. The national final will run similar to a leading ladder round this year - details will be announced nearer the time of the final.

Here are the dates and venues for this years BMC Leading Ladder - we have signed up a lot more walls this year, making it even more accessible for you to get down your local wall and have a go at a Leading Ladder round this winter! For information and directions to each venue, click on each of the walls and it will take you to their website.

Dates and Venues

Please note that a couple of the walls have slightly different dates to the standard round dates - these dates are detailed next to each of the walls in the list below. (Round 1 & 2 have already run, but that does not mean you can't enter!)

Round 4

15/11/08 - 30/11/08

Climb Rochdale
The Foundry, Sheffield
Dynamic Rock, Swansea
Mile End Wall (NLRC), London

Round 5

29/11/08 - 14/12/08

The Tower Climbing Centre, Leicester

Awesome Walls, Liverpool
Boulders Climbing Wall, Cardiff
Westway Sports Centre, London - actual dates 6/12/08 - 21/12/08
Rockcity, Hull

Round 6

13/12/08 - 4/1/09

Redpoint Climbing Centre, Birmingham

The Barn Climbing Centre, Tavistock

Round 7

3/1/09 - 18/1/09

K2 Climbing Centre, Crawley
Manchester Climbing Centre - actual dates 7/1/09 - 25/1/09
Glasgow Climbing Centre - actual dates 5/1/09 - 25/1/09
The Ridge, Swindon
Beacon Climbing Centre, Caernarfon
Rock Antics, Newton Aycliffe
Bear Rock Climbing Centre, Warwick - actual dates 9/1/09 - 25/1/09

Round 8

17/1/09 - 1/02/09

Calshot Activity Centre, Southampton
Rope Race, Marple
Dynamic Rock, Swansea
Alter Rock, Derby
Transition Extreme, Aberdeen
Rock Solid, Oxford
The Leeds Wall

Round 9

31/1/09 - 15/2/09

Awesome Walls, Stockport
Undercover Rock, Bristol
Edinburgh International Climbing Arena
Craggy Island, Guildford
Redpoint Climbing Centre, Birmingham
Rockcity, Hull

Round 10

14/2/09 - 1/03/09

Awesome Walls, Liverpool
Glasgow Climbing Centre
The Peak at Sportspark, University of East Anglia, Norwich
Lakeland Climbing Centre, Kendal - actual dates 16/2/09 - 1/3/09

Round 11

28/2/09 - 15/03/09

The Tower Climbing Centre, Leicester

West View Leisure Centre, Preston
The Barn Climbing Centre, Tavistock
Avertical World, Dundee
Westway Sports Centre, London - actual dates 7/3/09 - 22/3/09
Rock Antics, Newton Aycliffe

Round 12

14/03/09-29/03/09

Calshot Activity Centre, Southampton
Manchester Climbing Centre
Boulders Climbing Wall, Cardiff
The Leeds Wall

British Team Trials will take place on the 6th and 7th December 2008 at EICA - Ratho on their brand new articulated competition wall, visit: www.thebmc.co.uk/teamtrials

The new articulated competition wall at Ratho, which overhangs by a massive 14.2m in it's 19m height when fully articulated, will be used to whittle some of the best climbers in the UK down to a select few who will be asked to join the British Junior Team or British Senior Lead Team for the 2009 competition season. The country's best route setters will set some challenging routes up the uber steep overhangs of the Ratho competition wall to test climber's technique and strength to the max! So download an entry form and get signed up to give yourself a chance of competing next year alongside some of the best climbers in the world!!

If you fancy competing in the British Team Trials for a place on the Junior Team or Senior Lead Team download an entry form from the BMC Website, in the competition section.

THE TOWER CLIMBING CENTRE - LEICESTER

There are three climbing areas, "The Tower" 15m lead wall, "The Bouldering Wall" with an Arch & Cave and "The Bloc" 8 m training room with 12 bottom ropes in-situ. The centre boasts over 200 established routes from F4 to F8b+, a total surface area of 600m2 and provides a unique and friendly base for the teaching of rock climbing in all its forms.

Opening Times: Weekdays 12:00 - 22:00
Saturday 10:00 - 17:30
Sundays 10:00 - 16:00*
(*closed May - September on Sundays)

Cost: Casual Peak - £5.50 Concession - £3.90
Casual Off Peak - £3.85 Concession - £2.60
Casual Lunchtime - £2.55 Concession - £2.05
Casual BMC Member - £3.70
Equipment Hire Available

Web Address: www.thetowerclimbingcentre.co.uk
Email: enquiries@thetowerclimbingcentre.co.uk

THE BEAR ROCK - WARWICK

The Bendcrete-built facility - open to both members of the University and the general public offers indoor climbing of a regional status. Indeed the Bear Rock has hosted a round of the British Indoor Climbing Championships on several occasions, and regularly hosts rounds of the British Youth Championships. Routes are changed on a regular basis and top class route setters are used on the main competition/lead wall.

Opening Times: Weekdays 07:30 hrs - 21:30 hrs
Saturdays 09:00 hrs - 17:30 hrs
Sundays 10:00 hrs - 19:30 hrs

Cost: Weekdays £6.10
Weekends £4.95
Children Under £4.00
18 anytime
NUS/UB40 Card Holders
- before 17:00hrs £4.00
- after 17:00hrs £6.10
Equipment Hire Available

Web Address: www.warwick.ac.uk/services/sportscentre/bear_rock

WOLF MOUNTAIN CLIMBING CENTRE - WOLVERHAMPTON

Good selection of featured walls and some mildly overhanging technical walls with good route setting. All the routes are topoped; though if you want to lead you can but bring your own quickdraws. New boulder room open, also a stamina tunnel, 12 meters of continual roof climbing at 35 degrees plus 13 rung campus board) Also planning permission being sought to build through the roof for a large lead wall.

Opening Times: Mon to Thurs 10:00 hrs - 22:00 hrs
Friday 10:00 hrs - 20:00 hrs
Saturday 10:00 hrs - 18:00 hrs
Sunday 10:00 hrs - 20:00 hrs
Bank Hol's 10:00 hrs - 18:00 hrs

Cost: Adults Peak - £6.00 Jnr (u16) & Nus - £5.00
Adult Off Peak - £5.00 Jnr(u16) & NUS - £4.00
(off peak times 10am - 4pm - Monday-Friday)
Registration - £6.00
Climbers wishing to use the wall must have registered before climbing.

Web Address: www.wolfmountain.co.uk
Email: info@wolfmountain.co.uk

CREATION CLIMBING CENTRE - BIRMINGHAM

Looking for something to do during those long winter nights?? Well look no further.....

Creation Climbing Centre Birmingham is pleased to announce the long awaited expansion will be open for use on Thursday November 20th 2008!

This massive extension to Creation's already vast array of routes will provide climbers with an additional 100 routes spread across more than 30 new lines. A balanced mix of top rope and leading will be available in the new area as well as the existing space, which will bring the total number of independent lines to more than 80, thus allowing for a staggering 230+ individual colour coded routes!

Grades will be spread between F4 right through to F8a covering all angles from Slabs through Vertical to steeper Overhangs giving up to 14 metres in vertical height.

Opening Times: Weekdays 10:00 - 22:00
Weekends 10:00 - 19:00

Registration: Day - £1.00
Adult Off Peak - £3.75

Cost: Adult Peak - £6.75
Adult Off Peak - £5.75
Concession Peak - £5:30
Concession Off Peak - £4:30

Web Address: www.creationwall.co.uk
Email: creationwall@gmail.com

RED POINT CLIMBING CENTRE - BIRMINGHAM

Redpoint Climbing Centre has a huge variety of routes at every grade from 2+ to 8b. The many different angles offer some of the most interesting climbing that you'll ever find indoors: arêtes, grooves, arches and those famous stalactites. With a reputation for great routes, helpful staff and a friendly atmosphere, Redpoint caters for climbers of all ages and abilities.

Two dedicated bouldering areas have over a hundred easily identifiable problems and bouldering circuits for every level.

The much renowned Rock On climbing shop is on-site, offering great service and vast array of all manner of climbing gear.

All types of instruction are available; beginner and refresher courses, kids and family groups, NICAS, schools and youth groups and even advanced climbing coaching and qualifications provided by expert instructors.

Opening Times: Weekdays 12:00 - 22:00
Weekends 10:00 - 18:00
Bank Hol's 10:00 - 22:00

Cost: Annual Registration £2.00
Adult Peak - £6.50
Adult Off Peak - £5.50
Concession Peak - £5:00
Concession Off Peak - £4:00

Instruction Prices: Adult (per hour) £15.00
Concession (per hour) £7.50

Web Address: www.redpointclimbingcentre.co.uk

Email: info@redpointclimbingcentre.co.uk

A TRULY GRAND DAY IN

Redpoint's very first competition day was held on Sunday 26th October. Organised in collaboration with Rock On, La Sportiva and Climb Magazine, A Grand Day In was a roaring success, brimming over with enthusiastic climbers and supporters, expert and novice, with some travelling from as far afield as Bournemouth, Sunderland and even Australia to be here. Everyone had a great time and agreed that it was one of the friendliest comp days ever.

To document the event our resident photographer, Luke Spiers, was joined by Simon Hipperson and Climb Magazine's own Dave Simmonite. We'll be posting pictures on our website as soon as we get them; watch out for Dave's pics in Climb Magazine and on their website.

Over 100 people got involved in the bouldering, leading and speed climbing events, and over 300 people topped out on the sponsored routes and were entered into the prize draws. The competitions saw some fantastic efforts by many people and the standard of climbing was phenomenal, even though it was the first ever competitive event for some of the participants. In keeping with Redpoint's tradition all the routes and boulder problems required a degree of imagination rather than just brute force to solve them!

First place in each category of the Bouldering and Leading Comps won a Masterclass with Neil Gresham to be held at Redpoint. Neil was on hand all day and wasted no time in finding the sneakiest way through the crux sequence of Mirf's fiendish competition route. Dom Sellers came closest to topping out but was foiled by the final slopers.

As well as contributing prizes, Climb Magazine gave out goodie bags and free posters, and La Sportiva brought an extensive range of boots to try out.

Andy Kirkpatrick finished the evening off with his brilliant, hilarious and inspiring lecture, Winding Stairs, a hair-raising account of his ascent of El Cap with his girlfriend, who has been paraplegic since a climbing accident 15 years ago. Andy is currently on tour with another lecture, When Hell Freezes Over, which is much recommended. Tickets are still available - check out his blog for your closest venue: <http://www.andy-kirkpatrick.com/site/ontour>

The Competition Winners were:

Male Bouldering

Joint 1st Dan Bradley
Alex Fry
2nd Chris Whiteman
3rd Sam Cox



Female Bouldering

1st Sarah Daniels
2nd Charlie Kelly
3rd Vun Lim

Under 16 Bouldering

1st Orrin Coley
2nd Tara Hayes
3rd Jez Etherton

Male Speed Climbing

1st Dan Bradley
2nd Chris Whiteman
3rd Dom Sellers

Female Speed Climbing

1st Maya Holding
2nd Charlie Kelly
3rd Adele Greenway

Under 16 Speed Climbing

1st Orrin Coley
2nd Will Smith
3rd Tara Hayes

Male Leading

1st Dom Sellers
2nd Alex Fry
3rd Lance Finlay

Female Leading

1st Charlie Kelly
2nd Emma Hanna
3rd Maya Holding

Under 16 Leading

1st Will Smith
2nd Orrin Coley
3rd Tara Hayes

Spot Prizes were also awarded for Aerial Nudity - Dave Rose
Best Lob - Dan Bradley
Bravest Under 16 Lob - Liam Henderson
Antipodean Persistence - Jess Van Lunenburg
Gurning - Brian Rogers
Hands off rest - Louis Boscence

Winners of the Sponsored route prize draws were

Sportiva - Dany Jones
Redpoint - Charlie Wells
Climb Magazine - Maya Holding
Rock On - Adrian Samarra

All the routes and problems will remain up for anyone who wants to have another go or see what they missed. Meanwhile Redpoint are having another routesetting blitz, including contributions from our special guest routesetter Steve McClure, so there'll be lots of new reasons to come down again soon.

Finally, the competition took a huge amount of effort to organise, and it's only fair to thank everyone who took part in the organising, stripping, setting and running the event on the day... Climb Mag, Lyon Equipment and La Sportiva, Rock On and its staff, all the Redpoint staff, Chris Rose, Dave Field, Geoff Dell, Rory Buckland, Rich Cole, Sarah Daniels, Mal Nicholson, Luke Spiers, Simon Hipperson, Dave Simmonite, Neil Gresham, Andy Kirkpatrick & Karen Darke and Sue's Café next door.

Apologies if we forgot anyone!

Ski Traverse of the Albula Alps 80 km in April

In April 2008 six members of Solihull Mountaineering Club completed a 80 km ski tour of the Albula Alps. in Switzerland This is the range that runs between St Moritz and Davos

We started from the Julierpass (2200 m) early sunday morning. We trekked uphill in decreasing visibility through fresh snow towards the pass of the Fuorcla Agnelle. On the way we met a group of telemark skiers who'd made a navigational mistake. They followed us to towards the pass from which we skied down to the Jenatsch hut where we spent the night. Here we became concerned about the falling snow and the possibility of avalanche on the next stage of our trek.



Photo: Mike turns uphill - Piz Jenatsch

The next morning we left the hut and set off past the risky slopes of Piz Jenatsch towards Piz Laviner (meaning: Peak of avalanches). Part of the ascent involved passing in single file across a particular black spot for avalanches. It gave us no problem.

Photo: Crossing avalanche alley



We reached the col of Piz Laviner at the same time as a guided party. Their guide wasn't familiar with the land – it can't have been great for him to follow us down as we navigated into val Mulix. Here we found perfect knee high powder snow that floated us several km down to the bluffs where Brian took a variation route and caused a mini avalanche. Luckily it was only a minor slough, and he was unscathed.

A few km further we entered the woods and followed a dynamic complicated trail of turns and switch-backs that took us eventually to the road and a short walk to the station at Preda. This gave us a magnificent train ride on the famous Rhaetian mountain railway through an amazing set of loop tunnels and viaducts down to the town of Bergun. The next day, by a cleverly made arrangement, we caught the final chair lift of the season and ascended to Piz Darlux. This would have been the longest distance of any day's travel, with the greatest amount of ascent. However the dark clouds were gathering over the far summit. We considered the options and the time. In the end it was decided to turn back rather than press on with a long and difficult trail.

Even so, the descent through and beyond the ski pistes was fantastic and at one point our path was crossed by a trio of black deer. We descended to the town, in between the coils of the mountain railway.

Photo: the Rhaetian railway



The next day we had a long ascent towards the Kesch hut. We met a lot of people following this path, some of whom we'd run into at the Jenatsch hut earlier. It started out fine and sunny but gradually turned dull and cloudy.

The final approach to the hut was a real slog – the snow was heavy and wet and balled up under our skis – it was like wearing clogs.



Photo: Approaching Piz Kesch

Next morning we set off towards Piz Kesch (3417 m) – the highest peak in the region. In fine weather it gives magnificent views of the surrounding mountain ranges. Not on this day. Once again the weather turned in late morning.

We were in the cloud as we cramponed up loose snow to the summit We descended in poor visibility past the glacial crevasses and back to the hut.

The next day started with a 5 km ski descent before we had to put the skins on and ascend 800m to a col where we entered a total white out. from here there was a ski descent of 3 km in zero visibility, navigating by compass and GPS, until we reached a stream – a reference point from which we could skin uphill to the Grialetsch hut.

More bad weather forced us to ski out towards Davos, instead of Zernez on the final day. Even so we had another great powder descent, followed by a long glide through a tree lined



road to a hotel where we enjoyed hot chocolate before getting the bus to davos and then the train to our last night hotel.

Photo: skiing towards Davos



< Photo: leaving the Grialetsch hut



Working towards his Level 1, at The Redpoint Climbing Wall.

NICAS Overview

Here in the Midlands NICAS is off to a flying start and has been a huge motivator for young people following the launch of the scheme in May 2008 and is now a firm favourite with young people, schools, youth clubs and families.

The Tower & Redpoint Climbing Centres now offer a full range of junior NICAS Climbing courses. Both centres report the courses are now bursting at seams as young people desire to be recognised for their climbing achievements. The two Midlands Primary Centres are proud to announce that they now have their first Candidate to achieve Technical Climber Level 3, Kirsty Highton, richly deserved for her commitment & dedication to her climbing (see Kirsty's Personal Profile, below).

The Tower Climbing Centre

During the transition phase of introducing NICAS into its course structure, the Tower's team took great care in ensuring that all its young climbers and their parents on the old style climbing course's where well informed of the intended changes, why the change and of the value NICAS would offer. This clearly paid dividends as the response from both climber and parent was incredibly positive and supportive. In fact parents were bold over with the prospect of their child having the opportunity not only improving their skill by following a logical progressive syllabus but also increasing their knowledge of the equipment they are using and the wider sport of climbing. Then being nationally recognised for their achievement by being awarded certificates, Wow was a response used a lot.

The Tower is also working closely with Local Education Authorities through School Sports coordinator Partnerships

and the Youth Service alike with the intention of increase not only the profile of NICAS but of the sport in general. The Towers team have been amazed at the enthusiastic response from young people to the sport of climbing, which can only bode well for the sport that we all love.

Redpoint Climbing Centre

Building upon the success of the 'Rock Monkeys' climbing club Redpoint became the only centre in Birmingham to deliver the NICAS, giving young people and adults alike the opportunity to gain nationally recognised awards in indoor climbing.

Since the launch of the award the centre have witnessed many successes and a real commitment from young people who attend our centre. A 2 hour session with a Redpoint instructor on a Saturday or Sunday has now become the highlight of the week for young people across the midlands. With families travelling from as far as Derby, Tamworth, Solihull and Worcester to take part in the NICAS award it is clear that the award holds a lot of value for climbers and is making a positive impact on young people.

Redpoint are looking forward to seeing the NICAS award gaining recognition and strength as the winter months unfolds and is clearly an exciting time for climbers in the Birmingham area.

National Picture

From a national perspective NICAS is working to harness the strengths of all its members to develop links with Central Government agencies as well as Private Sector organisations to enable the scheme to be even more accessible to young people right across the UK. With well over 200 people in Midlands now participating in the award, both centres are confident that young climbers across the UK now have an even bright future.

If you would like to get involved with NICAS by either becoming an Awarding Centre or taking part in the scheme itself, please contact The Tower Climbing Centre, 0116 233 3073 or Redpoint Climbing Centre 0121 359 17777 or visit the NICAS web site www.nicas.co.uk.



Chris Clarke with a group of NICAS Level 1 that have all passed! The Tower CC.



Kirsty Highton, Training at The Tower Climbing Centre, Leicester.

Kirsty Highton - PE Teacher and NICAS Participant

I began climbing around ten years ago. It all started after a day out walking in the Peak District with my parents. We had just descended Grindsbrook when my Dad suggested trying rock climbing.

A few weeks later I was booked on to a beginners course at The Tower Climbing Centre in Leicester. I thoroughly enjoyed it, right from the first session. I made some great friends on the course; little did I know that they would become climbing partners in the future.

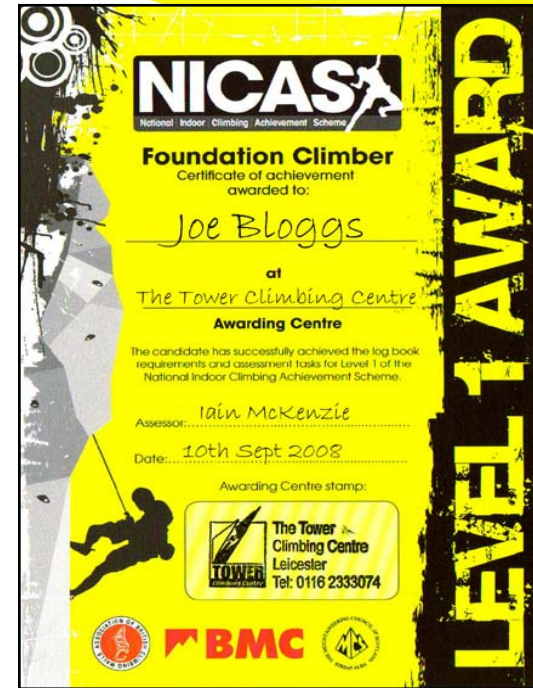
I progressed through the courses, learning all the skills to proficiently climb in the Centre. My Dad then got into climbing himself and we were then able to climb together, not just inside, but as our skills improved we ventured outside. Since beginning ten years ago I have climbed in lots of places including, The Peak, Snowdonia, the sea cliffs of Cornwall, Pembroke and Swanage and also in the French Alps.

For me it is not just about climbing, it is far more. The sport has enabled me to develop not just physically but also mentally. I have become mentally stronger, with increased confidence, motivation and commitment. I love climbing for all these reasons and would highly recommend the sport to anyone.

I am currently training to be a PE teacher and initially decided to do the NICAS scheme to be able to put some meaning behind what I do in my spare time as well as enhancing my CV.

However since beginning the scheme I have learnt far more than I did when I first began climbing. Going back to basics within this scheme has really enabled me to consolidate my current skills and also learn some new ones and put me in an excellent position to continue my development.

The NICAS scheme has been an excellent guide throughout my training and really aided in my progression towards the higher grades.



As mentioned I am training to be a PE teacher and I highly recommend that children take this opportunity to get involved in a different sport. It will give them opportunities that traditional games will not. Climbing offers independence and skills to be a successful individual which is a necessity in life today. Even for me NICAS has had a huge effect and therefore I would highly recommend it as a route into climbing for any younger person.

I am now looking to the future and to continuing my climbing through NICAS Level 4 and eventually Level 5.



Kirsty Highton, working with a NICAS Group at The Tower Climbing Centre.

Nick Bullock
the **Fifth** year on the road



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27th November 2008 @ 19:30

Redpoint Climbing Centre, entry free to BMC Members attending the AGM



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