



Peak Area Newsletter

Issue 8 August 2009

Welcome to the newest edition of the Peak Newsletter. An eclectic mix this time around; climbing rock, pictures of rock, getting to rock, counterfeit rock and, of course, Access. As always, we're immensely grateful for articles and feedback.

Remember... The next Peak Area meeting is on Wednesday, 2 September, starting at 19:30 at The Crown Inn, 142 Victoria Street, Glossop.

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The Peak Area Reps hold forth

By Chris Moor

Last week saw the news that Golf and Women's Boxing will be added to the list of Olympic sports in 2012. And no doubt they will also be close to top of the list of sports that armchair cynics will say shouldn't be in the Olympics. In 4 or 8 years time, we could well see Climbing or Bouldering added to those

If you're reading this from a printout, the hyperlinks won't show up (in some cases we do print them). To obtain an electronic version in which the hyperlinks will work, go to the BMC website (www.thebmc.co.uk). Members can have it emailed to them by contacting the BMC office: 0161445611, office@thebmc.co.uk

lists. The international body for competition climbing, the International Federation of Sports Climbing (IFSC), is very keen to get into the games, but the BMC has yet to decide it's position.

So why the caution? To some, competition in climbing is an anathema, tolerated but not to be encouraged. Inclusion in the Olympics would portray a very different view of the sport to that which they are comfortable with. Some might think it could possibly make the sport more popular than British crags could cope with. A more realistic concern is that chasing medals and concentrating on the elite end of the sport could distract the BMC from it's core responsibilities - that of ensuring access to the mountains and crags for the majority of its members.

On the other hand, the BMC's decision is unlikely to have an effect on the eventual decisions in the IOC,

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but could well have a detrimental effect on the young British climbers competing in competitions now and in the future. Whilst it is unlikely that they could find themselves excluded from IFSC competitions, the likelihood of such competitions coming to the UK is bound to be affected. Twenty years ago this issue threatened to split the BMC, but sensible compromises such as ensuring that competitions were only held on artificial walls ensured that it could flourish within the BMC's broad church. There are now more climbers participating in competitions than ever attend area meetings or AGMs, and if the BMC isn't going to represent their interests, who will ?

To find out more on the background to this issue, please read the [article](#) on the BMC website.

And to have your say, please come along to the next Peak Area meeting in Glossop.

Just don't try to argue that climbing competitions are boring - as everyone who was at Cliffhanger this year will verify, they can be pretty exciting affairs !

A Good Day Out

By Pete Whittaker

All the Brown and Whillans routes in Staffordshire in a day. It seemed like a great challenge and a good day out climbing.

Right from the start the weather wasn't looking brilliant and we had a huge downpour on the drive through Dove Holes. It was looking like a complete write-off there and then, but for some strange reason we carried on. Passing through the downpour and onto the moors over to Leek, we approached some mist on the right that supposedly had the delights of Ramshaw lurking underneath.

We looked at a few boulders and tried to lighten our spirits by judging the rock as moist, and taped up our hands optimistically.

All the routes at Ramshaw seemed to fall fairly reasonably till right at the end. Ramshaw Crack. It



Tom on 'Saul's Crack'

was soaking. Thankfully it was Tom's lead and after a few slips he managed to throw in the wet fist jams and crank off soaking arm bars, I followed and managed to tussle my way up on second. That was a good lead by Tom and we knew we could tick any of the routes now, whatever the conditions.

On to Hen Cloud, where the clouds had started to break, the rock was drying and we steadily moved along ticking some really nice long routes. It was interesting as I got to climb routes that I would have never have picked on a normal day of climbing, such as Second's Retreat. Thankfully there was no retreat!

Spirits were starting to rise as the weather continued to brighten, but these were soon chewed away by the horrendousness of the Roaches Lower Tier mides. We protected ourselves by pulling the draw strings on our hoodies tight so the whole hood engulfed our entire face.



We raced along the right-hand end of the Lower Tier, only having one slow route where the ropes got jammed behind the cams on the lip of The Mincer just as I was pulling onto the final bulge. I had to down climb back to the lip then re-climb the whole thing again.

However I felt my tick of the day was Teck Crack. A balancy, strenuous, tough HVS that's no pushover. It's a normal Brown and Whillans HVS, but to most a complete sandbag.

After a few more routes on the Lower Tier we sauntered up into the breeze of the Upper Tier, ticked what had to be ticked, and Tom finally enjoyed leading the massive juggy roof of The Sloth to finish.

P.S. some snap shots that Mum took at the end of the day



Pete seconding 'The Sloth'

A Transport Of Delight

by John Horscroft

I've noticed an interesting trend recently. When I go climbing, I'm as likely to end up talking to climbers about mountain biking as their latest mountaineering exploit. I guess it's not all that surprising that climbers should be seduced by a world of full suspension, full face helmets and drop – offs since the two disciplines share so many characteristics – the risk, the love of shiny kit and the great outdoors. Combine the two, and you have a marriage made in heaven.

I remember the first time I ever cycled to climb. It was during one of my fitness purges and cycling to Bowles Rocks seemed doubly virtuous as I'd burn fat rather than petrol. The fundamental flaw in my plan was the realisation on arriving that far from being fit for a couple of 5c's, I needed a lie-down before I set off home again. It was that or phone the missus for a lift back.

So bear that in mind before you decide to head for Derwent Edge or Kinder. Choose a venue that will leave you with enough energy to climb. For those who have only recently exhumed the Halfords special they got for Christmas back in the eighties, perhaps a trip to the Heeley boulder combined with a pint at the Sheaf View should be the limit of your ambition.

However, if your fitness is up to the rigours of, say, Abbeydale Road, the Peak is at your mercy. There are a number of obvious corridors into the Peak District. For those who live amongst the opulence and architectural splendour of the city centre, Endcliffe Park leads directly on wide tracks all the way to Porter Clough and Ringinglow with barely a car in sight. From there the Ox Stones are probably the nearest bouldering but it's only a short ride to Burbage North or Stanage Apparent North. Turn right at the top of Porter Clough and the more adventurous can loop round Redmires Reservoir and take the byway past Stanedge Pole directly to the Plantation. Check out the descent over the flagstones – it's a beauty.



Alternatively, head out towards Houndkirk Road via the aforementioned Porter Clough or along Ringinglow Road. There's a handy path running along the north side of Ringinglow Road for those reluctant to share a road with lunatic car drivers. Houndkirk is the obvious route to take if you're aiming for Burbage South but it will also lead those who have enough in their legs towards Froggatt and Curbar. Moss Road provides good access for the fit from Totley to the same area. From the North of the city, the obvious target for lovers of the esoteric would be Bell Hagg. Those looking for something less damp should use the network of quiet roads and bridlepaths to access Rivelin Edge.

Obviously, some crags and boulders are more bike-friendly than others. Burbage North and South, the Plantation and the Heeley boulder allow you to keep a close eye on your bike, but it's worth at the very least taking a lock. I see no reason why visitors to Curbar trackside boulders or Froggatt Hairpin boulder shouldn't push their bikes to the rocks. Obviously, this is aimed at those fortunate enough to live in Sheffield, but if you live in Manchester, break out the map and check out the options. Give it a try and remember, it's nearly always downhill all the way home.



An innovative use of aid?

Access Notes

By Henry Folkard

BMC volunteer Adam Long and myself had an opportunity to discuss new arrangements for the Eastern Moors with Secretary of State Hilary Benn when he visited the Peak on 24 July as part of the celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the Act which established National Parks. We were also able to stress the importance of proposals on coastal access in the Marine Bill to the Secretary of State and with local MP Tom Levitt. He is involved in the Report Stage as the Bill progresses through the House of Commons, and agreed to meet Cath Flitcroft, the BMC officer leading on this topic, along with Sheffield Hillsborough MP Angela Smith.



Photo from left to right: Carol Robinson (CEO for CPRE S Yorks), Graham Wynne (CE RSPB), Fiona Reynolds (DG, National Trust), our Henry & Adam Long (BMC). BMC official photo.

Others present at the 60th anniversary event were chief officers of the National Trust and RSPB – Fiona Reynolds and Graham Wynne – with whom we and Carol Robinson from the Friends of the Peak were able to share a common vision. Others present included representatives of Sheffield City Council, who have recently made new arrangements for all their properties with a company called Kier, including Houndkirk, Burbage and Millstone, though this is not in conflict with the longer term vision of getting a coherent land management policy across the whole of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) area.

Banff in Buxton

The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour will be making a rare UK-stop at the [Buxton Opera House](#) on September 13th with a 2.5 hour selection of the best films from last year's festival. [Programme](#) starts at 19.30. Tickets are £10 (concessions available). Supported by the [Canadian Tourism Commission](#).



A feature of the summer (or lack of it) in the moors around Sheffield, but also extending into the White Peak including Horseshoe, has been a proliferation of 'raves', fires and illegal camping by people who can not do their 'thing' without causing criminal damage to property and leaving a massive mess for someone else to clear up. It took four and a half hours of volunteer time to clear up after one such group at Horseshoe recently and the large open latrine they left behind was horrific. If rough camping is your thing don't forget the Eric Byrne campsite between Birchens and Gardoms which provides an excellent facility in stunning car free surroundings.

A small group of volunteers did a superb job at Stoney in letting light penetrate Dead Banana, Padme, Memnon and Garage Buttress. The landowner is trying to agree a proper management plan for the whole site with Natural England, the National Park and the BMC – something it has completely lacked for at least 40 years to my certain knowledge. Thanks to Rockfax for presenting him with a copy of the most recent guide to the area.

There is no end to the number of potential venues for work meets, but they all take time to organise, particularly in getting necessary manifold permissions, and commitment to deliver. At times there seem to be more people saying what should be done than there are willing to actually get stuck in and do the work. None of it happens by magic. Next in line, when all the negotiations are complete, are Horseshoe, more at Stoney, Cratcliffe and Froggatt.

Behind the scenes negotiations are always difficult to report because much is complex (not to say tedious) and involves delicacies which are not helped by the blaze of publicity. It is for that reason that access reps tend not to enter into discussion on live disputes on the interweb: climbers very definitely are not the only people who monitor key sites. But if you have particular interest in places like Willersley, Shooters Nab or Longstone Edge (where there is now a whole new set of problems) do ask at the Area Meeting.

The National Trust have indicated that they would like to meet with the BMC to talk through issues relating to climbing on their land particularly where

it involves placing of fixed gear in the White Peak. The BMC in turn has indicated that there is a raft of concerns about traditional routes which have seen little traffic in recent years and are becoming lost to vegetation, and that since most limestone venues are in SSSIs we have signalled to the Trust and Natural England that we would welcome a joint meeting. A reminder that in broad terms the arrangement with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (who acquired the lands in question after the initial stage of climbing development) is that whilst they allow access – most of their land is not CRoW land (under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000) – to established routes and to key areas like Two Tier they are not at all happy at the idea of new developments, increase in fixed gear or any removal of vegetation. We reciprocate by suggesting that key sites for them like Deep Dale where the climbing is of lesser quality should really be avoided.

Thanks for your help during the bird breeding season. All restrictions are now lifted. The Hen Cloud peregrines fledged young and across the Burbage to Bamford area ring ouzels did OK too, after a very shaky start, though on North Lees itself predation was a major and distressing problem.

The BMC's [Regional Access Database](#) (RAD) has up to date information on all crags in England and Wales. Otherwise access rep contact details are in the BMC Members Handbook and on the [BMC web site](#). Most access reps are at most Area Meetings if there are any points you want to raise with them, or you can always phone me on 01298 871 849 or the Regional Access Officer, Guy Keating, on 0161 438 3309 (guy@thebmc.co.uk).

See you in Glossop.

Use the bus!

The 284 bus ([timetable](#)) between Sheffield Interchange, Stanage and Hathersage Railway Station runs on summer Sundays and bank holiday Mondays until 18 October 2009 (Day Rider ticket £2). The BMC-run Access and Conservation Trust (ACT), Peak District National Park Authority and the Stanage Forum have again contributed funding to make this possible. Please use the bus to help protect the environment and enhance the Stanage experience.



BMC British Bouldering Championships 2009

By Tina Glover

The British Bouldering Championships (BBCs), organised by the BMC, proved to be a star attraction at Cliffhanger festival this weekend, with the bouldering marquee buzzing with crowds, cameras and action.

The Cliffhanger festival itself attracted a record number of visitors, with some 20,000 people enjoying the outdoor activities on offer in Millhouses Park, Sheffield.

Over 80 young boulderers battled it out on Saturday in the junior competition. Shauna Coxsey took the



Leah Crane on the up. Photo by Simon Jacques [Editor's note: which way is up?].

female title for the third year running. Jonathan Stocking also proved his continuing form by winning the boys championships for the second year running.

On Sunday, the spotlight was literally on the seniors. Reigning women's champion Audrey Seguy went out with an injury in the qualifiers leaving the title wide open. Leah Crane gave the crowds a fantastic performance of strong, agile climbing to take the women's title ahead of Katy Whittaker and Diane Merrick. Meanwhile Audrey joined Ian Smith in the commentary box.

It was all go in the men's qualifiers with 45 competitors taking part. The final promised to be exciting, with a line-up including Dave Barrans fresh from taking bronze in the World Bouldering Championships in China, reigning champion Ned Feehally, and multiple winner Gaz Parry. It all came down to the very last problem and in a nail-biting finish Ned Feehally successfully defended his title by confidently bagging the finishing hold.

All of the action of the championship was filmed and will be screened on Sky Sports on 7 & 8 September.

The championships formed part of the selection process for the British Bouldering Team 2010.

Next summer, Britain will play host to a prestigious IFSC Bouldering World Cup event which is due to take place at the Cliffhanger festival, on 3 -4 July 2010.



Ned Feehally, [possibly in some pain?]. Photo by Simon Jacques.



Podium results for 2009 were:

Female Senior

Leah Crane 1st
Katy Whittaker 2nd
Diane Merrick 3rd

Female Junior

Shauna Coxsey 1st
Caitlin Wallace 2nd
Suzie Zitter 3rd

Male Senior

Ned Feehally 1st
Dave Barrans 2nd
Gaz Parry 3rd

Male Junior

Jonathan Stocking 1st
Jonathan Field 2nd
Nathan Phillips 3rd

An afternoon on Derwent Edge...

By Fran Halsall

Landscape photography is all about getting the best out of natural light and the photographer's skill lies in understanding how the quality of illumination changes in response to not only the time of day but also the type of weather. Using the 'right' lighting for the subject is essential as it creates the image's character. At the two extremes of weather, both seriously overcast conditions and bright midday sun are far from ideal when attempting to make making great landscape images.

Derwent Edge is one of my favourite locations in the Peak District as it features heather moorland alongside a host of distinctive sandstone formations. For this particular walk I set off in the late morning, planning to take in all the outcrops between Back Tor and Whinstone Lee Tor. My favourite time of year to do this trip is in late summer when the heather is in full bloom, however this means that the light is much too strong throughout most of the day to create the kind of photographs that I prefer.

Mid-afternoon (photo: Derwent Edge, Back Tor, incoming storm) - the light is still quite harsh, bringing stark clarity to the rough edges of the Back Tor outcrop. Often this time of day can be problematic as the sun is still high in the sky, creating extreme contrast between highlight and shadow areas. Bright light also strips some of the colour out of the landscape, making things appear washed-out. However, this problem is somewhat offset by the moody sky darkened by impending rain. Without the presence of clouds, the blue sky would

be too intense and the photograph would suffer for it.

Early evening (photo: Derwent Edge, Salt Cellar, heather and grasses) - by now the light is softer because the sun is much closer to the horizon and has to travel through more atmosphere before reaching the ground. It is also more colourful, taking on a golden hue that complements the sandstone's mineral pigments. Because of the sun's position shadows are significantly longer, which is ideal as it creates a more textured and three-dimensional impression of the Salt Cellar. This is helped by using side-lighting and when planning to visit a location I will work out at what time of day the subject is likely to be side-lit.



Derwent Edge, Salt Cellar, heather and grasses (all photos © Fran Halsall)



Derwent Edge, Back Tor, incoming storm

Sunset (photo: Derwent Valley, Hagg Side and Kinder Scout) – as the sun dips below mid-level cloud golden beams spill across a small part of the landscape while much of the Derwent Valley remains in shadow. These conditions create a broad tonal range that is difficult to capture in camera. However, it is worth the effort as the heightened contrast creates a dramatic image. Kinder Scout's northern slopes appear back-lit against luminous sky and the silhouetted escarpment provides an instantly recognisable feature within the landscape.



Derwent Valley, Hagg Side and Kinder Scout

Fran Halsall © 2009
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Fran is the author of "[The Peak District](#)", published by Frances Lincoln, and also a new title: "[Light and Shadow – the Art of Landscape Photography](#)", due to be published by Frances Lincoln in February 2010.

She exhibited at Cliffhanger last month and has very kindly written this article for us.

Calendar

There is a comprehensive calendar on the BMC website; this one covers stuff of mainly Peak Area interest. If you have an item for inclusion contact us at peakarea@gmail.com.

Throughout the year:

Consider a [Peak District Ranger guided walk](#). Interesting insights into geology, wildlife and archaeology.

September

2 Peak Area meeting, 19:30 - The Crown Inn, 142 Victoria Street, Glossop.

13 Best of Banff TBC, Buxton Opera House

October

9-23 Great World-Wide Star Count (take a look).

9 FRCC prospective members' meet, Langdale.

29 Meet the BMC; open invitation to BMC Office, from 3pm onwards.

November

1-30 Application open for High Peak Marathon 2010

11 Peak Area Newsletter published.

19 BMC Winter Lecture, venue Sheffield Hallam University, starts 19:30, tickets £5 for BMC members.

25 Peak Area meeting AGM, 19:30 - The Grouse Inn, A625, Froggatt Edge Road.

28 BMC Club Seminar, for all BMC affiliated clubs, at BMC Office.

30 Best of Kendal film night, Showroom Cinema, Sheffield

2010

April

23-25 BMC AGM weekend, venue TBC.