



Shauna Coxsey in the BBC's at Cliffhanger in Sheffield, 2009.

— Alex Messenger

Psyched!

The UK Competition Climbing Newsletter from the BMC Competition Committee



*Here it is... the first Competition Newsletter from
the BMC Competition Committee*

All About Competitions...

Here it is, the first BMC Competition Newsletter from the BMC Competition Committee, ably compiled by British Team Managers, Climbing Wall Managers, British Team Members and the UK's Competition Climbing Population.

The aim of the newsletter is to keep you upto date not only with all UK Climbing Competitions but also keep you upto date with what the British Climbing Team is doing, not only on home ground, but the world climbing circuit aswell.

I would like to thank all the contributors for their articles and photos and especially Natalie Berry for all her hard work as the Assistant Editor for the Newsletter, Alex Messenger (BMC) for the majority of the photo's and Dave Macfarlane (Planet Fear) for the articles and photo's he has supplied.

Well done to all who got the Newsletter this far and Good Luck to all the Competitors that represent Great Britain both at home and abroad.

Iain McKenzie

Chair, Competition Committee.



*Media, Judges, Crowd, Competitors... All enjoying the BBC's at Cliffhanger in Sheffield.
The event will be screened on Sky Sports at the following times: Sep 07 - 20.00 Sky Sports
Xtra, Sep 08 - 03.30 Sky Sports 2, , Sep 08 - 08.00 Sky Sports 3, Sep 08 - 12.00 Sky
Sports 2 and Sep 08 - 15.00 Sky Sports Xtra*

— Alex Messenger



>> *Natalie Berry in the European Youth Series in Imst, Austria in 2006.*

— Tony Powell

British Juniors off to Conquer the World!

It has been a very busy year thus far for the juniors fighting for their selection in the upcoming European (EYS) and World championship events. With only 6 and 4 places per category available for the EYS and Worlds respectively, the selectors have been hard pushed to reduce the field that have participated in the four events used for selection, to what we believe to be our strongest team ever.

With the World Championships, a four day event, coming up first, starting on the 27th of August, followed by four European competitions including one on home soil at the EICA (Ratho) on the weekend of 19th and 20th of September and another as far a field as Russia, we clearly have a packed agenda for the rest of the year.

Some names to look out for are, Natalie Berry (British Senior Champion) who already has a first place in an EYS to her name. Jonathan Stocking (British Junior Champion) has a third place under his belt in an EYS and a fabulous 4th place in the worlds in Sydney last year, can he go even further? Then we have Shauna Coxsey (British Junior Bouldering Champion) who has also taken a bronze medal at an EYS. Kitty Wallace (British Junior Champion) is making incredible progress in the sport and really could produce some surprises this year, her best previous result is 4th in an EYS. This is by no means the end of the list, keep your eyes peeled on the results there are another fist full that could easily get podium placings.

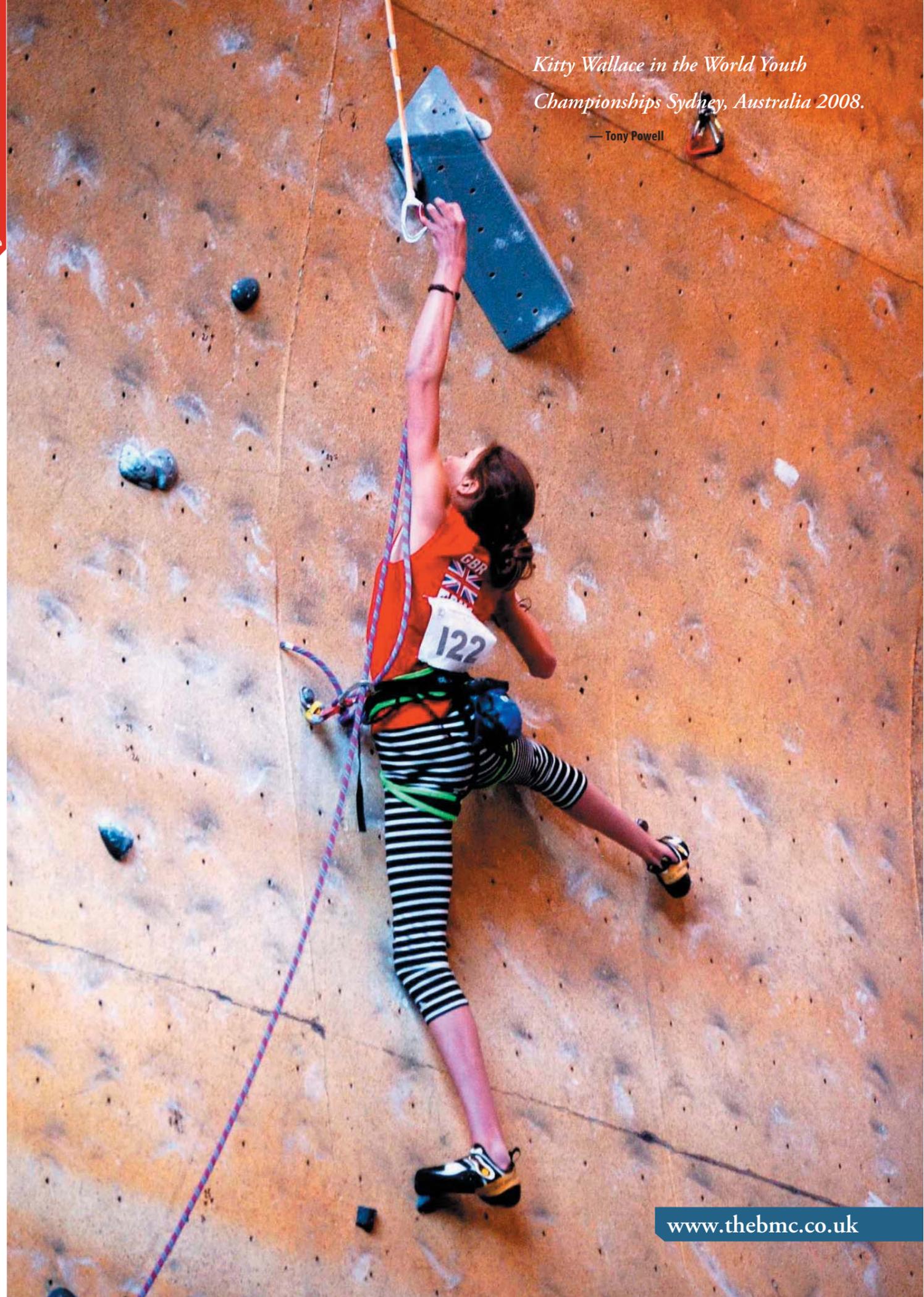
Don't let this list of placings fool you though, believe me, these guys are good and right up there amongst it in a tough sport where every place is hard fought for. They and their parents have to make many sacrifices and give total commitment to the sport to get the rewards they are achieving. We wish them good luck and all the success they deserve.

*By Tony Powell
British Junior Team Manager*



✓
✓ *The Junior Team are sponsored by Chunki Monki.*

— Tony Powell/BMC Collection



Kitty Wallace in the World Youth Championships Sydney, Australia 2008.

— Tony Powell

The BMC Youth Climbing Series

The BMC Youth Climbing Series 2009

The BMC Youth Climbing Series Final took place at the Westway, London on Saturday 20th June 2009.

With 186 competitors and the assembled throng of eager parents and spectators, the Westway was packed to the rafters on Saturday, for what was to be an action packed day of climbing competition.

The day was kicked off by a group warm up led by members of the British Junior Climbing Team. The kids then went at the problems and routes with boundless energy. Each competitor had 3 problems and 3 routes to complete, and competitors had come from all corners of the UK, including Northern Ireland for the first time.

The atmosphere was fantastic with regular cheers from the spectators from all areas of the Westway climbing centre as a competitor topped a problem or a route.

After a full day of competition, everyone including the judges, the belayers, and competitors were starting to wilt slightly, but Mark Alderson, chief scorer was feverishly tapping away at his laptop adding up the scores. So detailed below is the top three from each category, in what was a fantastic conclusion to a fantastic competition series.

Girls 8-10

- 1st Emily Allen
- 2nd Rachel Tennant
- 3rd Gabriella Stewart

Girls 11-13

- 1st Rachel Carr
- 2nd Eleanor Hopkins
- 3rd Nikki Addison

Girls 14-16

- 1st Suzie Zitter
- 2nd Charlotte Ellison
- 3rd Charlotte Garden

Boys 8-10

- 1st Jack Graham
- 2nd George Morris
- 3rd Dominic Vincent

Boys 11-13

- 1st Randy Roby
- =2nd Brendan Gallagher
- =2nd Dylan Mackenzie

Boys 14-16

- 1st Nathan Phillips
- 2nd Sean Hopkins
- 3rd Morgan Preece

The North West secured the Team prize, over the second placed London & SE, and Scotland North came third.

A full set of results can be seen at www.indoorsout.co.uk/brycs2009results.htm.

The BMC would like to thank all the volunteers that helped out with the final, and the rounds during the entire series, without you guys this competition would not be possible, you all do a fantastic job.

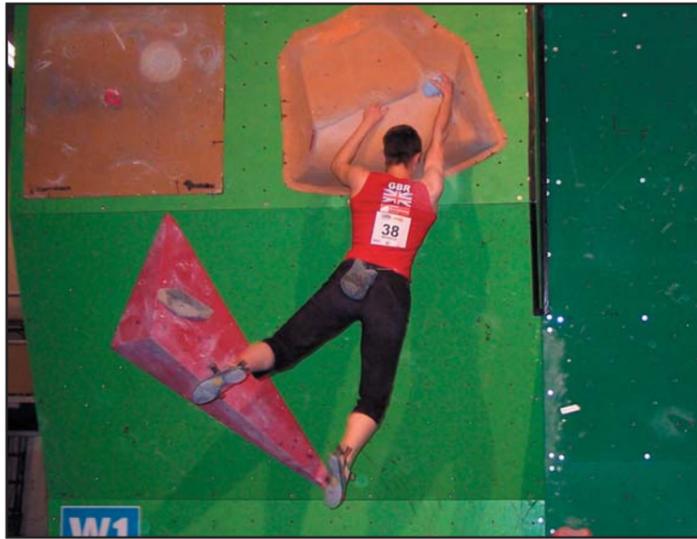
Lets hope next year's is even more successful than this year. Keep checking the BMC website for updates.

By Rob Adie
BMC Competition Officer



All photos in this section were taken during the National Final, at the The Westway, London.

— Supplied by Mark Alderson



>> *Diane Merrick in the Semi-Final in Eindhoven where she placed 15th*

— Diane Merrick Collection

British Bouldering Team 2008-2009 Report

The British Bouldering team pre-season training took place between September 2008 and April 2009 at a variety of different venues. The ability to train at world class facilities has continued to enhance the performance of the Team. I would like to thank all of the managers and the staff at the following Bouldering/Climbing walls for allowing the Team to use their facilities.

- **Awesome Walls - Stockport**
- **Climbing Works - Sheffield**
- **Climb Newcastle - Newcastle**
- **City Bloc - Leeds**

The 2009 Bouldering World Cup consisted of 5 events at the following venues:

1. Apr-Kazo, Japan.
2. May-Hall, Austria.
3. May-Wien, Austria.
4. Jun-Vail, USA.
5. Jun-Eindhoven, Netherlands.

The 2009 competition season saw some impressive performances from members of the Bouldering Team and it was great to see younger members of the team starting to fulfil their potential. Highlights include the following:

In May the Team put in a credible performance in the Vienna World Cup which saw Dave Barrans place 6th in the final and Stewart Watson finishing 8th overall and just missing out on qualifying for the final.

The final round of the Bouldering World Cup took place in Eindhoven in June. Diane Merrick made it through to the semi-finals and finished a very respectable 15th in the Women's event and Ned Feehally made it through to the men's final and finished in 6th place. Other excellent performances came from Dave Barrans who finished 25th, Stew Watson 27th, Leah Crane 25th and Mina Leslie-Wujastyk 27th.

However the most impressive performance of the year came in July at the World Bouldering Championships in Xining, Quighai, China where Dave Barrans gained a Bronze Medal. In an exciting and closely contested final, Alexey Rubstov of Russia took the Gold and Rustam Gelmanov, also from Russia, took the Silver. All three men topped all of the final four problems and were only separated by the number of attempts. Dave's Bronze was even more impressive when you consider that he had to contend with a bout of food poisoning after the qualifiers and was still feeling the effects in the semi final.

This is the first time that a member of the British Bouldering Team has made it onto the podium in a World Championship. Dave finished the season ranked 11th in the World.

*By Nick Clement
British Bouldering Team Manager*



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Dave Barrans finishing 3rd at the World Championships in Xining, Quighai, China.

— Chinese Mountaineering Federation

The British Bouldering Championships

The BBC's 2009



The Cliffhanger festival saw around 20,000 people in Millhouses Park, Sheffield, over the weekend of the 11th-12th July, and the huge crowd saw some outstanding performances in the British Bouldering Championships. On Saturday the junior competition took place and featured some very impressive performances from the young climbers. The junior girls' event was finally taken by Shauna Coxsey for the third year running, who just beat Kitty Wallace in a nail biting finale with the final results eventually being determined by points scored earlier in the day. Suzie Zitter took third place after topping out on 3 of the 5 final problems. The junior boys' event was taken by Jonathan Stocking for the second year in a row, with Jonathan Field and Nathan Philips coming in second and third respectively.

The Senior event was held on Sunday 12th and began with the news that reigning female champion Audrey Seguy was out of the comp after a nasty landing in the qualification round. Audrey received immediate medical attention after she peeled off the competition wall and twisted her knee. Although out of the comp, Audrey was expected to make a swift recovery and joined Ian Smith in commentating on the senior finals. Audrey's departure from the comp meant she was unable to hold on to her title and left the female competition wide open for the taking.

Some fantastic route setting involved the use of many unusual features provided by Holdz, including tufas, bosses and volumes of varying styles. .

The womens' finals saw some incredible gymnastic moves being skilfully executed, on the severely overhanging routes created. Leah Crane managed to snatch 1st place in a dramatic finish which was on the wire all the way. Leah eventually finished only two points ahead of Katy Whittaker. The final positions for the women were divided by bonus points as they all managed 3 of the 5 final problems, with Diane Merrick placing third.

The men's finals saw more drama as Ned Feehally tried to hang on to the title of British Bouldering Champion. Both the climbers and the crowd knew how close it was, as Ned didn't manage to top out on problem four which Dave Barrans managed in solid form, however Ned flashed the final problem that Dave Barrans didn't complete. Ned only won with points gained on the final route. Gaz Parry placed 3rd after topping out on three of the final five problems.

By Dave MacFarlane
www.planetfear.com

>> *Top to Bottom; Shauna Coxsey, Leah Crane, Awe Struck Crowd and Jonathan Stocking.*

— Alex Messenger

Ned Feehally showing composure to win the title of British Bouldering Champion 2009.

— Alex Messenger



www.thebmc.co.uk

The British Lead Climbing Championships

The impressive internal space of the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena, saw the BMC's British Lead Climbing Championships take place over the past weekend. The juniors and veterans event was held on the Saturday and Sunday saw the seniors take to the grossly overhanging competition wall

This year's competition saw more female junior entries than male on the Saturday with 27 female entrants competing. In the qualification rounds, 14 females topped out on the first route, where none managed a top on the second route. In the male juniors 5 of the 23 entrants managed a top on the first route, with only Johnny Stocking and Alon Gurman managing a top out on the second qualifying route.

The female junior finals saw a fantastic finish, with Shauna Coxsey, Kitty Wallace and Suzie Zitter all vying for first position. Shauna tackled the final route with steady determination and to the crowd's elation, she managed a top out with what looked like relative ease. Kitty was last on the wall and having scored the most points in the second qualifying route, it was clear she had to top out to secure first place. The day's spectators watched Kitty move calculated and precisely, through the completely overhanging roof to top out and take first position.

The junior male's final was no less eventful, by the end of the second qualifying route, there were only two contenders for first place, having been the only two males to manage a top out on their second route, Johnny Stocking and Alon Gurman were neck and neck on points. Alon's final climb saw him scale the roof of the competition wall, to be met with a devastating fall from the penultimate hold. Johnny knew that he must finish the route to take first, so it was all down to whether he could go one hold further than Alon and manage a top. Johnny did exactly that and later when we spoke to him, agreed that it did feel like 'a bit of a cruise.'

The male veterans saw only 5 competitors take part, Nick Colton, Eddie Cooper and Mike Smith all managed a top out on their first route, but none did on the second. In the final Mike Smith and Eddie Cooper were the only two who managed the top, however Mike won on points gained from the height he managed on the second qualifying route.



*A Competitor getting to grips with the Competition Wall at
The Edinburgh International Climbing Arena (Ratho) in the Mens Final.*

— All photo's in this section are credited to Alex Messenger



Adrian Baxter and Drew Haigh in observation.

— Alex Messenger

www.thebmc.co.uk



Alex Messenger showing why he is one of the country's best climbing photographers.

Natalie Berry Climbing.

— Alex Messenger

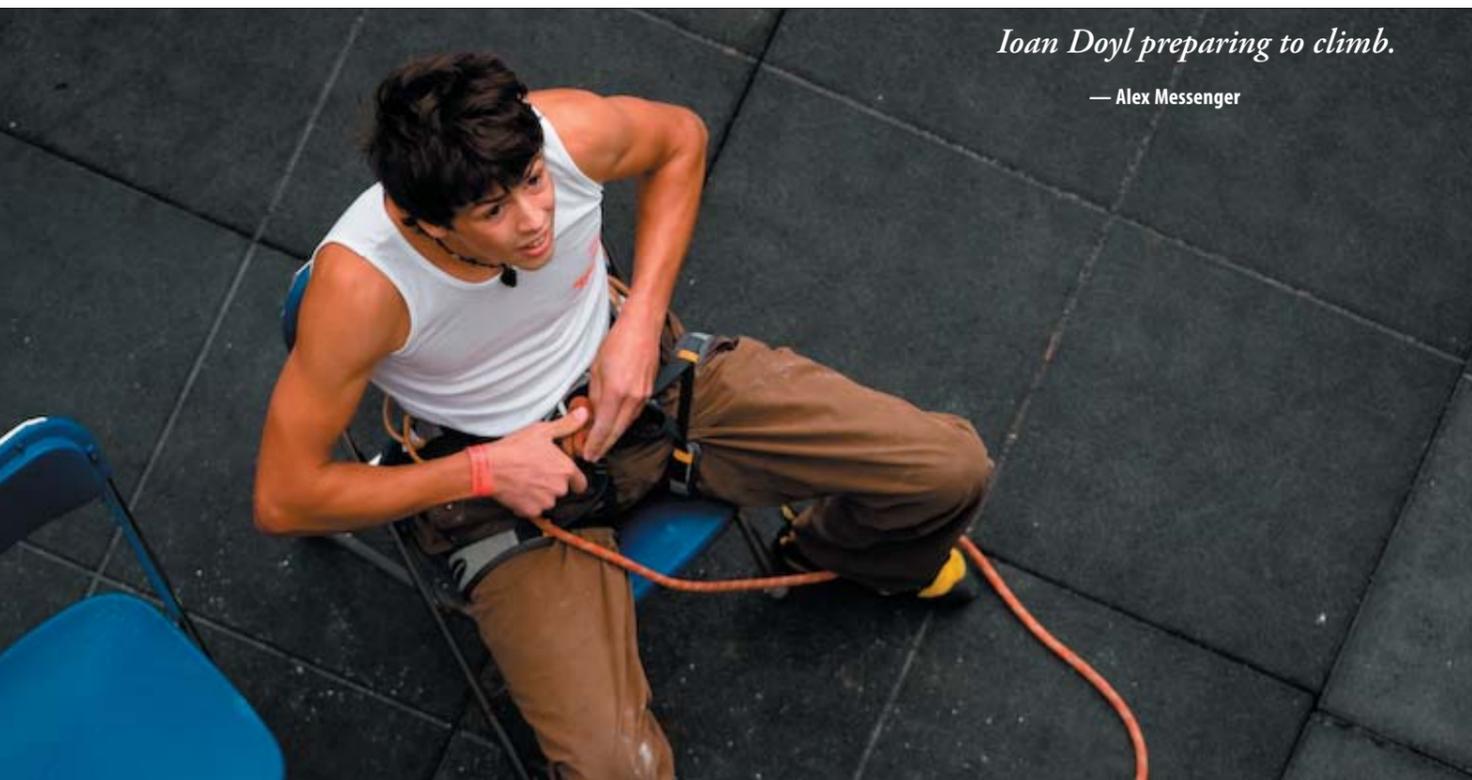
The EICA laid host to the senior round on the Sunday, with 20 male and 10 female climbers entering the competition. Only Natalie Berry managed to finish the first qualification route in the female senior's round, with Michaela Tracy and Rebecca Hall, both scoring the same on the first route, none managed to top out on the second route, but Natalie was still leading on points gained.

The final female route saw them take to the left edge of the competition wall, which allowed use of small holds on some of the outer edges of the arête and demanded that they climbed up through the roof and onto the vertical front side at the very top of the wall. Some outstanding attempts saw each of the successive finalists getting further and further up the wall, but once again Nat Berry was the only female to finish the final route, with a strong, convincing top out, meaning her first position was truly secured. Unfortunately Audrey Seguy was forced to allow her title as female lead climbing champ 2008, to slip away, being unable to compete after her fall in the bouldering competition at Cliffhanger, where she sustained a twisted knee.

The male final saw a strong group of competitors, all with seemingly equal chances of taking the top spot. 5 of the men managed to top out on their first route, but again none managed the second harder route. Adrian Baxter, James Garden and Drew Haigh were the three, all in the contending spot for first place by the final route. James Garden made a fantastic final push to gain the top of the route, but failed on the final hold.

Drew being the only climber left, knew that to take first he must top out, with the final rankings being contended right down to the last move. Drew powered through the roof of the route and to the crowds cheers managed to hold the final move and come away with first. No sooner than he had touched down though, news came that his first place was being contended. It was claimed -from the ground and at some considerable distance away - that there was a possibility, Drew may have used a bolt hanger with his foot, to gain some purchase whilst in the horizontal roof section of the route. After some time where the competition video was reviewed by officials, the appeal was over-ruled and Drew's first place stood.

By Dave MacFarlane
www.planetfear.com



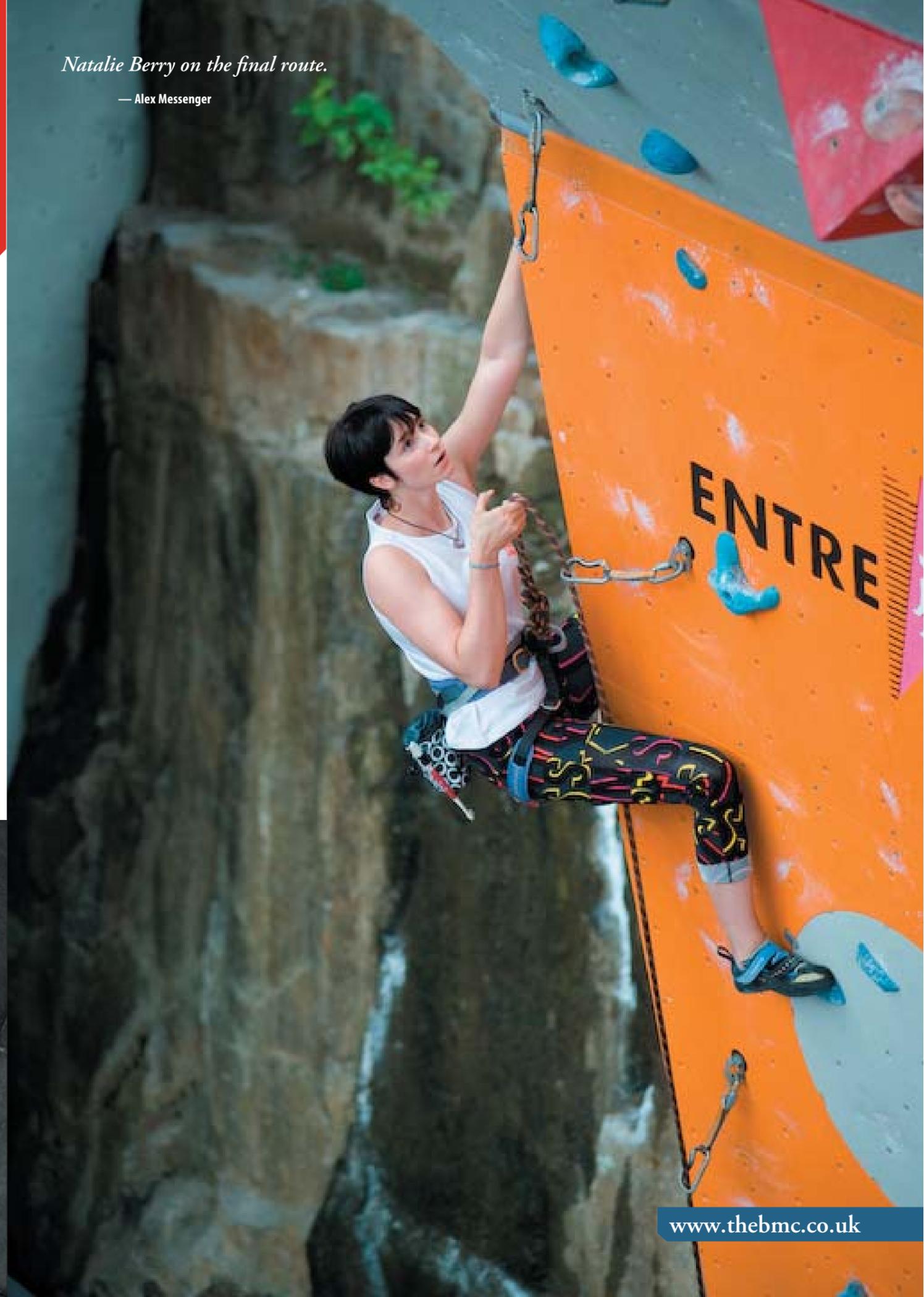
Ioan Doyle preparing to climb.

— Alex Messenger

The BLCC's 2009

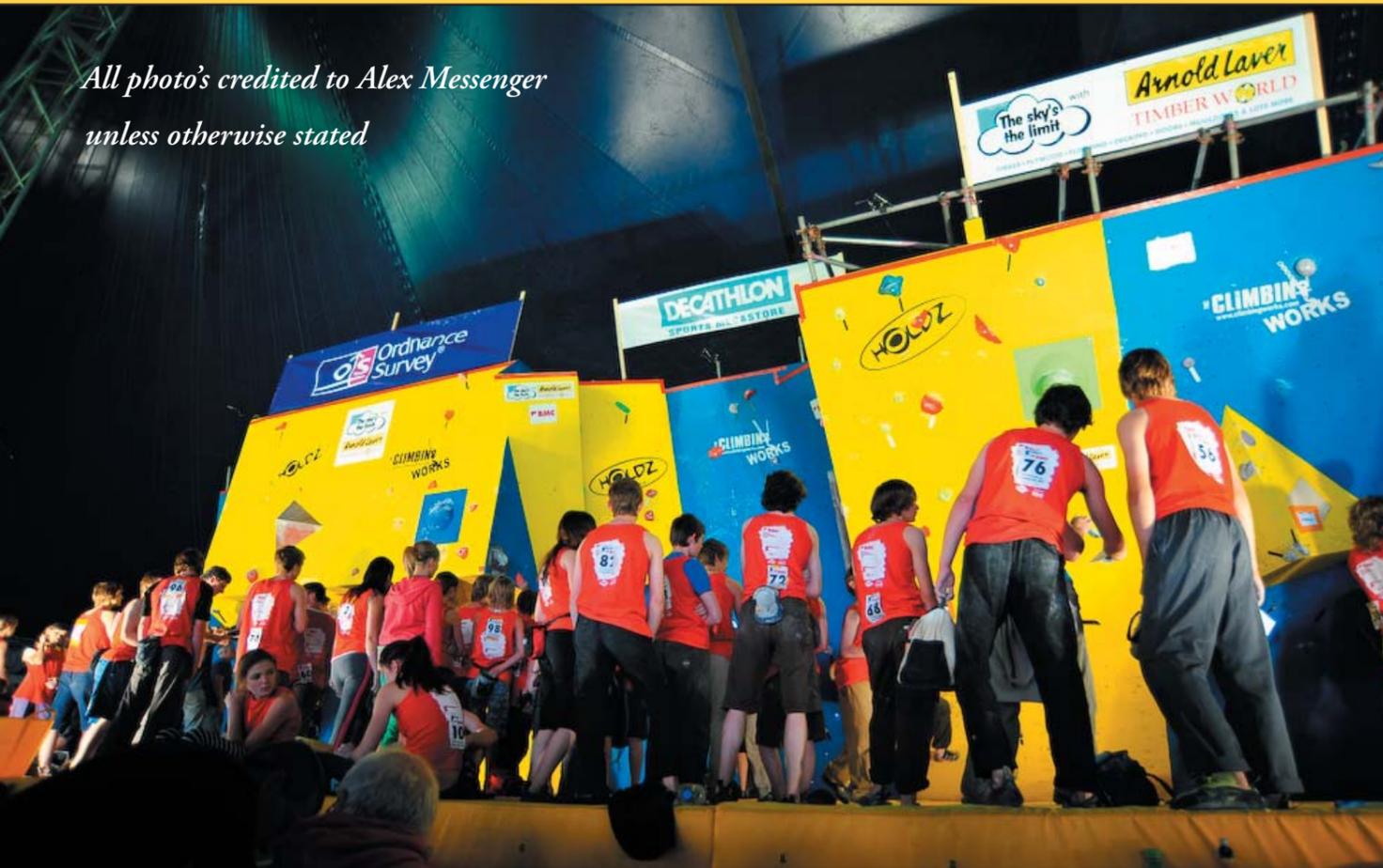
Natalie Berry on the final route.

— Alex Messenger

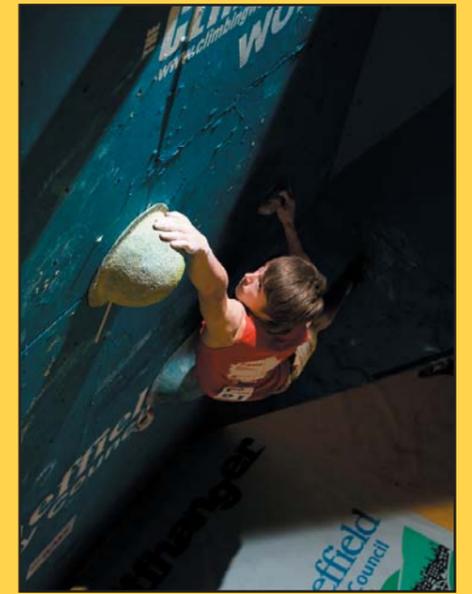


The best of British Climbers

All photo's credited to Alex Messenger
unless otherwise stated



In this section we meet some of the competitors who pushed the boat out and trained that little bit harder, pushed their mental and physical capabilities to the limit and pursued a dream, to be a British Champion..



JONATHAN STOCKING

The British Junior Bouldering Champion 2009

The British Bouldering Championships were the first of the two big British comps I was competing in this year. It was held in Sheffield at the Cliffhanger event on an amazing bouldering wall built by the guys at the works.

There were ten qualifiers which everyone had to attempt, then the top eight competitors went through to the final where five more problems were set for us to work out and send.

When I first got going on the qualifiers I was feeling a bit sketchy, as if I wasn't climbing to my full potential. I made a mess of a few of the problems but managed to dig deep and to them. I sat down and composed myself. After that I felt really strong and started climbing much better.

Keeping your composure in competitions is a vital strategy which could determine the difference between a win or 2nd.

Thankfully I climbed my way to the finals along with seven other very strong climbers, we had a few hours of rest to let the setters set the final five problems and then that was it, straight into the final of the 2009 BBC.

I was last out to climb, the pressure was building but I was calm and focused on my goal to win. As soon as I pulled on the first holds on the first boulder problem I got into a certain mode, you almost switch off and the only thing that matters is getting to the top.

Topping the first three problems first go I was feeling confident and ready for the two problems. They were much more difficult than the first three so I knew I had to give 110%. Then only problem left was the final, hardest problem.

I could tell from the roars and noises of the crowd that Jonny Field was giving me a run for my money so I knew I had to perform on this final problem.

It spat me off several times but I noticed a vital thumb catch that helped me latch the sloper on a very dynamic move I powered on through to the top but to my disappointment fell off matching the jug at the top of the route.

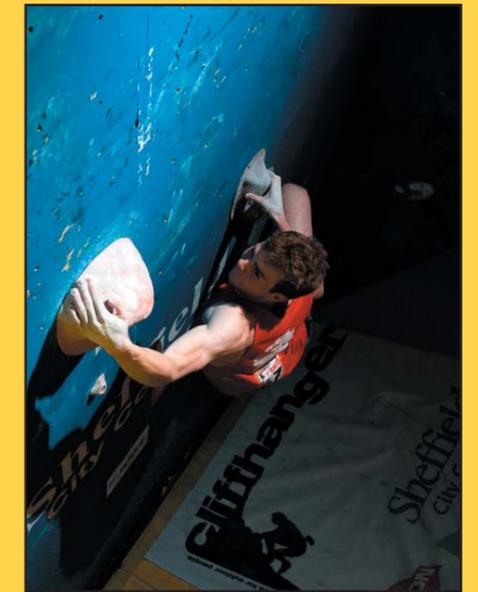
I had no energy left for another attempt so the only question left in my head was had I done enough to win, the answer was yes, but Jonny Field was climbing amazing and definitely gave me a run for my money but I managed to pull it out the bag.

By Jonathan Stocking
British Junior Bouldering Champion 2009

Jonathan is Sponsored by Prana, Metolius & Evolv

www.thebmc.co.uk

*All photo's credited to Alex Messenger
unless otherwise stated*



NED FEEHALLY

The British Bouldering Champion 2009

The qualifiers were nails! The route setters had a very steep wall, new volumes and brand new holds to play with and I think they got a bit over excited! There are usually a couple of easy problems to get you started, but this time the 'easy' problems were pretty hard and the hard problems were ridiculous!

Fortunately; I was feeling quite strong (and tall) and wobbled up enough problems to qualify in 1st place. Normally a score of 64/100 wouldn't get you close to the finals, but this year it was a comfortable 1st!

After watching the women's final (a real nail biter!) it was back into isolation for a second warm up. I felt strong and relaxed – a rare combination for me in comps. I wanted to get stuck in straight away but had to wait for the others to go out first. I finished my warm up and paced up and down – sitting still was impossible.

The first 3 problems went ok. I was climbing well and was recovering between attempts. The 5 weeks of crammed training to try to offset the fat weakness that exams had brought on seemed to have worked!

I really messed up the 4th problem, but this only made me want the 5th problem more. There was no way I wasn't going to do it. After a false start, (falling off the first move!), I pulled on went into cruise control and the next thing I knew I was hanging off the finishing jug! I am really happy to have won the BBC's again. I never thought I would find myself on the podium, let alone at the top.

This year was especially hard. Dave Barrans is **STRONG** and has been on fire all season leaving the rest of us playing catch up. I knew it was going to take a lot to beat him and to be honest I didn't think I had it. It was very, very close. I must have found a bit of luck somewhere – sorry Dave.

The event was brilliant – well organised, smooth running and a lot of fun (thanks to all those who organised it, built the wall and set the problems). It's good to see so many people getting into competition climbing. Hopefully next years World Cup will be even better and draw even bigger crowds.

*By Ned Feehally
British Bouldering Champion 2009*

Ned is Sponsored by www.beastmaker.co.uk, Five Ten shoes, Arcteryx clothing, Wild Country & Slap Holds



KITTY WALLACE

The British Junior Lead Climbing Champion 2009

The BLCC is a really fun competition with a great atmosphere, this year was my third BLCC so knew exactly what to expect and having come second last year I was hoping to get on the podium once again.

The first qualifier was fine- with only one tricky move right at the top. I was the last competitor to attempt the route and had already watched around ten girls top it I was confident that I could too, which I did. The second qualifier was a different story- while viewing and working out a sequence I could see that it was a very long, powerful route with incredibly large moves, very few footholds and even a tricky featured volume section.

However I was determined not to psyche myself out. When it came to my go I was excited- I began to climb and a few minutes later found I had set the high point on the route- only three quick draws from the top. After all the girls in my category had had their goes it was clear that I had qualified for the final in first position, I was extremely happy, it was my first time qualifying in first!

I was looking forward to the final! When all who had qualified were in isolation I wasn't feeling too nervous- we all sat around talking listening to music and warming up as we waited for the final to begin. All the girls and boys were then taken out for their six minutes to view the final route- I read through the route several times worked out exactly what I was going to do and thought to myself I know I can top this!

Soon we were all back in Isolation and one by one my competitors were lead out to attempt the route- until I was the only one left- while I sat in the waiting chair I was nervous almost wishing that I wasn't the last climber to go out- but I soon began climbing and all my nerves disappeared.

I felt strong - I tore up the first section of the route focussing on each individual move when I reached the bottom of the roof only a few meters away from the chain I took a few deep breaths then set off, I didn't find any moves too challenging and the chain was soon only a move away from me, I knew that I only had to clip it to become the 2009 British Champion. I could feel the tension from the crowd I pulled up the rope, terrified that my foot would pop or hand slip before I had successfully clipped, but nothing like that happened I clipped the chain and relaxed- at that very moment Jonathan Stocking topped his route and the crowd exploded .

I couldn't quite believe I had finally achieved my dream - I had wanted to become British Champion since I was ten years old and I finally had!

*By Kitty Wallace
British Junior Lead Climbing Champion 2009*

Kitty is Sponsored by La Sportiva, Petzl, Mountain Hardwear, Beal & Jazz Apples.

*All photo's credited to Dave MacFarlane
unless otherwise stated*



All photo's credited to Dave MacFarlane
unless otherwise stated



JONATHAN STOCKING

The British Junior Lead Climbing Champion 2009

The BLCC was held on home turf, EICA Ratho, the best wall in the country so I felt some added pressure at this comp. I had previously won the title two years in a row so a third would be an amazing achievement for me.

Ratho always has a great atmosphere when there is a comp on which gives you a confidence boost. I knew the route setters would use the new hanger comp wall for some of my routes but I didn't expect a technical slabby route on the old comp wall which spat lots of the competitors off.

Our second route was on good holds but it was very pumpy and featured roof climbing which I am used to now. I spend most of my time hanging upside down to train for the world cup and EYS.

Again this route spat of a lot of competitors as roof climbing isn't something that features in a lot of climbing walls but is an essential skill to learn for competing in Europe. The top six competitors went through to the final but this year was different because there were two competitors from Israel and Canada which added a whole new dimension to the comp. I was so used to competing against the same people so I knew their strengths and weakness' but these were total strangers to me, for all I know they could have been as good as Ondra. So, I had a lot more to think about, this added even more pressure and I had to step up my game.

The Israeli competitor Alon was an extremely strong competitor. I could tell it was going to be a close comp between him and I. When we went to view our route it was what I expected; a stamina rig on the new comp wall. Not too sequency but with some big moves. I ingrained the sequence into my head and went back of to isolation to warm up. There was a really cheery atmosphere in isolation which is normal in British comps but for some reason in Europe it all changes I am not to sure why. Again I was the last person to climb.

I was listening intently to the noise of the crowd to determine how well Alon had done on the route. I could tell he that he had done well but I knew he had fallen off. I knew I had to top the route to secure a victory in my own head. As soon as it was my turn to climb I had a sudden rush of adrenaline surge though my body, I was so psyched for the route I raced out went through the sequence in my head and pulled on climbing the route as fluidly and efficiently as possible saving as much energy as I could for the upper crux.

When I grabbed the finishing jug I knew I had won, it was such a buzz as the audience probably knew by the expression on my face. It was an amazing finish to the comp scene in Britain so all that's left is the World Cup and EYS.

*By Jonathan Stocking
British Junior Lead Climbing Champion 2009*

Jonathan is Sponsored by Prana, Metolius & Evolv

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NATALIE BERRY

The British Lead Climbing Champion 2009

The BLCC was an event that I had been looking forward to with intense anticipation, especially after hearing that it would be taking place in one of my home walls, the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena.

After being unable to compete in my first Senior year in 2008 due to exams, I was determined to make up for this gap by winning the 2009 title. However, after enduring a five week gap from training due to a hernia operation in April/May and working towards exams, I was aware of the effort that I would need to put in to regain my fitness for the event in July. After my exams and leaving school the hard work began - I made the 50 minute journey to and from Ratho three times per week in order to acclimatise to the steepness of the new Entre-Prises competition wall and return to form.

The BLCC is a lead climbing event which includes two qualifying routes and a final, with the qualifiers being climbed in a "flash" format - in which the routes are demonstrated - and the finals in an "onsight" format - involving isolation, where the competitors have no prior knowledge or experience of the route.

I arrived at Ratho early on the Sunday morning and noticed an eerie silence in the arena as competitors mingled anxiously whilst waiting for the competition briefing. After a brief warm-up I watched the demonstration of my first qualifier with some fellow competitors and was 6th out to climb. I felt quite nervous as I started on the first few moves, attempted to climb calmly to rid myself of the "first route anxiety".

After working my way up into a groove I found a rest and felt calm and composed before moving up to the harder top section. My pacing had worked out well, with the "one-minute remaining" call being issued just as I pulled through the last few powerful moves and topped out. I was the only female to top out in this round which gave me confidence when approaching the second qualifier.

One hour later I was first up to climb route 2, a steeper climb on the arete of the new competition wall. I was pleased to be climbing such a route, as the majority of my training had comprised many routes on this wall with its extreme overhang. The moves flowed easily until I reached the bottom of the roof section and rested on two larger holds.

I read the rest of the route from this pint and attempted to wire the sequence in my mind. I knew exactly how to pace myself and had climbed the bottom section relatively quickly. A deep breath and I continued through the roof, heel-hooking and toe-hooking along the lip of the overhang and using all of my newly-acquired core strength to keep tight into the wall. A few moves further and I attempted to put my foot too near to hands which took me further away from the wall and made the next move to a sloper much harder - I slapped for the next hold and fell, yet felt satisfied with my performance.

After watching my fellow competitors I was in 1st position once again on Qualifier 2 and 1st overall going through to the final. 4 Senior Females reached the final and after a short break isolation was opened and the senior finalists rushed in to find a space to relax before preparing to climb. My previous experience of isolation in national and international competitions was only at Junior level, and I immediately realised that Senior isolation is not quite as lively and bustling as Junior isolation!

No games of hacky sack, loud music or general laughter, but sheer focus and determined silence. I was, however, coerced into wearing my brightly coloured leggings ie "bad lycra" by the rest of the finalists! What seemed like hours passed and we were called out to view our routes. As I walked out I became aware of the atmosphere inside the arena - many more spectators than during the previous rounds and much more noise and activity.

I felt reassured by familiar faces wishing me well, and a good atmosphere always psyches me up to climb at my best. I was inspired by our route and consulted with the other finalists to work out the sequence and find rest points. I drew comfort from the fact that the steep route resembled what I had been training intensely on for the last few weeks.

Back in isolation I gathered my belongings and sat in quiet contemplation. I replayed the many moments in which I had been in a similar situation and how I had coped with the fears and expectations. I felt fully charged with adrenaline and knew that the home crowd would spur me on to complete the route. With the moves etched on my mind I walked through to the transition zone and focussed on the challenge ahead. I could hear the crowd cheering for my fellow competitors and had a rough idea how they had fared through the time taken and the crowd's reactions. Time slowed down and I kept moving to keep warm and supple.

Then came my introduction - I felt proud as the commentator read out my previous competition results, yet also slightly under pressure to live up to my best results. Walking out in front of a home crowd was an electrifying experience, yet I had to maintain composure as I started up my route. The first moves passed quickly and suddenly I was at a crucial move on the first steep section. I changed my initial sequence that I had worked out from the ground but quickly realised that I needed to re-work my hand movements.

I kept calm as I overcame my mistake and rested on a large hold below the roof. I listened to the crowd's support and recognised familiar voices. I smiled to reassure myself that all was well and kept confident as I moved through the final powerful moves on the prow. After I reached for the last hold and clipped I was lowered to the ground to rapturous applause and was greeted by my GB team mates and friends congratulating me.

Standing on the podium I felt immensely proud in the knowledge that my months of hard work had paid off, despite the setbacks earlier in the year. I took Digger the frog onto the podium with me - he is my lucky mascot and has travelled the world with me, so I was not going to leave him out of it! I would like to thank my parents and the EICA Ratho staff for their continued support and my sponsors: Scarpa, Entre-Prises and Cotswold Outdoors.

*By Natalie Berry
British Lead Climbing Champion 2009*

Natalie is Sponsored by Scarpa, Entre-Prises and Cotswold Outdoors.



*All photo's credited to Alex Messenger
unless otherwise stated*



*All photo's credited to Alex Messenger
unless otherwise stated*

DREW HAIGH

The British Lead Climbing Champion 2009

I started my competition climbing years ago when I was just a slip of a lad.

It was awful. I was weak, unfit and technically rubbish, I couldn't read a route for toffee and the atmosphere at the comps was terrible. The format was all on-sight and all isolation. Very unpleasant high-pressure experience.

So I stopped competing.

Then last year I was psyched by proxy. My brother was up for a comp and conveniently the BLCCs were upcoming in Blackpool. The fact that Rob was entering gave me a double benefit; I wouldn't have to sit in isolation alone and I wouldn't be coming last.

It turns out the format had changed since the dark ages of national comps with isolation only being for the finals. Great idea, very different vibe, but the promised Blackpool sunshine and open air venue let it down. The weather was very cold and windy and the climbers were suffering....a better venue was needed.

This year the BMC listened and Ratho new comp wall was commandeered for the weekend. An national comp on an international standard wall. Flash format for the first 2 qualifiers was great.

You get to sit with all the other competitors and scope out the hard moves ready for your attempt. The atmosphere was super relaxed, most people there knew each other and the ones that didn't were still pulled into the group and helped out by the more experienced competitors. I was very impressed by the younger guys who've just moved up from the juniors, they all competed well and kept up with us oldies.

The 1st qualifier was on the old comp wall and quite steady. No hard moves, a few long reaches, but all of the holds were positive. I topped out on the first route and was in joint first place.

The 2nd qualifier was on the new comp wall and a bit saucier. With harder moves, longer reaches and some less positive holds. The horizontal section at the top had two awful slopy crimps and an imaginary heel hook, from these I managed to slap the next hold which put me in top spot for the finals.

The crowd was very vocal.

It's strange when you're climbing and the commentator is talking about you and people are shouting, but you zone them right out.

It's like someone talking to you when you're half asleep, you hear it but you're not listening.

My four year old nephew was in the audience and his voice was about the only background noise I could pick out. 'GO ON UNCLE DREWWWWWWWWW!'

After the relaxed atmosphere of the qualifiers, it all got serious for isolation and the finals.

I was consciously making myself get psyched. By qualifying in first place I was due to come out last for the finals. By the time it was my turn to climb I knew I was going to win.

Normally as I'd walk towards the wall I'd smile and wave at the crowd, not today I was too focused. I climbed well. No mistakes, efficiently. The moves weren't actually as hard as I'd expected.

I topped out and won. A really great feeling.

Psychological preparation in competition climbing feels hard, especially when we consider our opponents as our friends.

This year I was able to turn that off and give it my all. I'd owed that to myself and to the people who were supporting me.

*By Drew Haigh
British Lead Climbing Champion 2009*

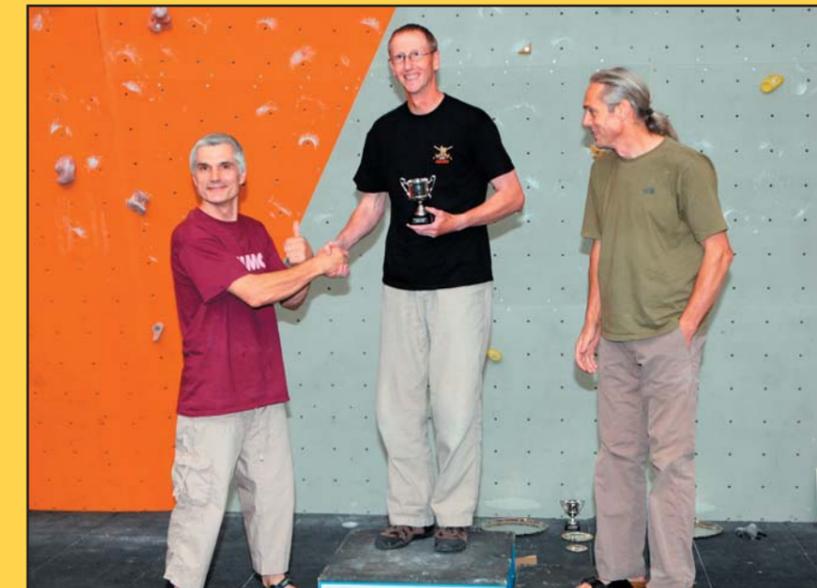
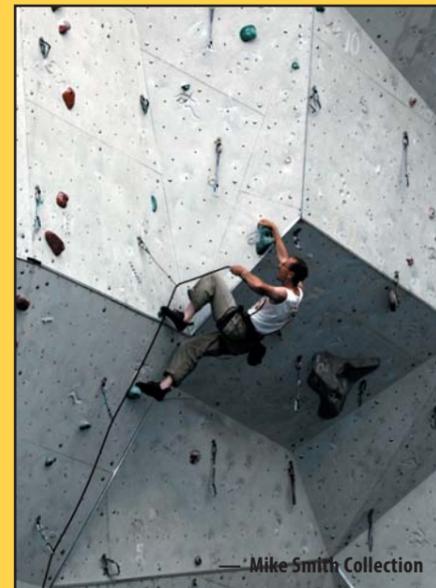
Drew Haigh is 32 years old and runs his own company that specialises in making custom chalk bags these are available from www.chalk-bags.com.

He works extensively with his local charity 'The Wilf Ward family Trust' and this year became a Guinness World Record holder for climbing.

Drew has recently recovered from kidney failure and before that cancer.



*All photo's credited to Dave MacFarlane
unless otherwise stated*



MIKE SMITH

The British Veteran Lead Climbing Champion 2009

Very surprised I suppose was my initial reaction at winning the Vets category at the recent BLCC's. A mixed team drawn from the Combined Services (Army, Navy and RAF) were bullied/encouraged to enter in order to get more competition experience in preparation for forthcoming European Military Competitions. I felt somewhat overawed by the other competitors in my category (7c's on site, 8a's redpointed, climbing wall owner) as I went into the qualifiers. The first route felt easy – Craggy 6a+ to be honest – but it was a good feeling to top out and allowed the nerves to settle. I trained at Craggy Island for three years so usually compare all other walls to their grades.

The second qualifier was a much longer and trickier proposition; many of the Junior boys timed out on the route and struggled with one particular move. I didn't top out but should have, effort was wasted on an easy 5+ move at half height (and I pulled a muscle). Fortunately no one else topped out although Nick Cotton did get closest. A surprise mistake from Eddie Cooper put him in third place after the qualifiers.

During the afternoon torrential rain outside caused a power cut and this caused a delay in the proceedings; a frustratingly long wait for the finals followed. Isolation as ever is a difficult thing to get right; read, listen to music, boulder, eat, chat, you cope as best you can. Whatever I did it seemed to work! We were led down the back of the wall to a tie in point. I knew before I climbed Eddie.... had topped out – the crowd gave it away. Therefore to be in with a chance I knew I had to top out also. The climb again felt easy Craggy 6b – although the sequence was crucial. After I had topped out I had to wait for Nick Cotton to climb, if he topped out he would win! Fortunately for me, despite looking strong initially he ran out of steam and just failed to finish the route. I didn't realise I had won and was fully expecting a super final with Eddie. Count back rules however meant I had in fact won!

Hopefully there will be a veteran's comp next year and I'll be able to defend my title, however, more climbers should be entering this event, if I can win on one days training a week there must be others out there who are up to the challenge.

*By Mike Smith
British Veteran Lead Climbing Champion 2009*

Mike trains as regularly as his full time job allows at the nearest available wall (currently the Climbing Works)! He is not currently sponsored although the Combined Service Sports board paid entry and travel to the event, many thanks to Major Pete Skinsley (assistant British Team Manager) for his dedication to Army and Service sports climbing.



>> *Lucy Creamer gives an insight into how she feels on the Olympic Discussion*

— All photos credited to the BMC & Mark Alderson

Climbing and the Olympics...

Although I love 'doing' sport, I'm not particularly interested in watching it. I would prefer to be out kicking a football, rather than sitting in a chair seeing other people do it.

But I have to admit, I am captivated by global sporting events; I will spend many a summers day watching Roger Federer's forehand at Wimbledon, I'll stop doing the weeding to savour another Usain Bolt world record and I will even watch the footie while the World Cup is on (although if all the British teams go out early, I admit to losing interest).

But the big one for me is; the Olympics!!

Suddenly, the intricacies of diving become fascinating. The whys and wherefores of triple jump are interesting- what is it about the Olympics?

From a competitor's perspective, the thought of having a realistic chance of competing in the Olympics must be such a big motivation. It is the biggest sporting event in the world and the atmosphere looks

incredible and I'm sure the experience would be something that you would look back on for years and years; and that's just the participating, imagine if you managed a personal best or even a podium placing, those feelings I'm sure are irreplaceable.

At the moment, for the world's top climbers the Olympic dream isn't a reality. These people are at the peak of physical fitness and are fully deserving of the chance to be Olympians.

It seems climbing has captured the attention of the IOC and with hard work from the IFSC (International Federation of Sport Climbing), the possibility for our top climbers to compete in the Olympics is seemingly within grasp.

Even though I feel my competing days are behind me now- partly because of the long hours of training indoors and partly motivation differences- if I was offered the chance to compete as a climber in the Olympics, would I take it?



Damn right I would, suddenly the indoor wall would be my best friend and the gym a close second! Although realistically, age is not on my side in terms of when climbing might appear in the Olympics (do they have 50 year old competitors?) so unfortunately my chance has come and gone and I can openly admit to a sadness about that. Having committed a lot of time and energy to comps and thoroughly enjoyed them, competing in the Olympics would have been a big motivating factor and a huge inspiration.

Climbing has had a successful national and international competition circuit for 20+ years, this has not interfered with what the recreational climber does or wants to do, in fact the sky hasn't caved in as predicted and harmony seems relatively sweet.

So in the present climate within the climbing world, where we have route climbers, boulderers, trad-only climbers, indoor only-ers (!) and comp climbers; it seems that the time could be right for climbing to enter the Olympics.

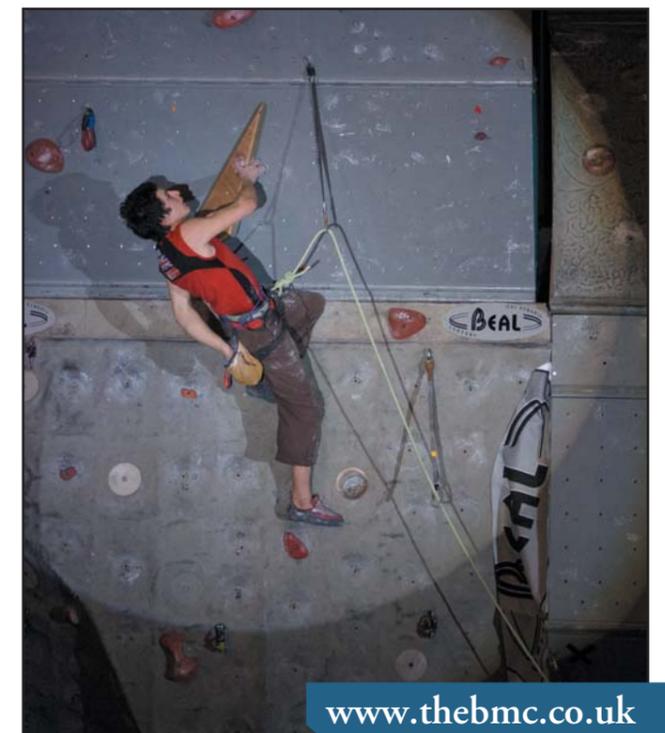
Ed Douglas wrote a balanced and well-researched piece for Summit (it's on the BMC website too) on the 'should climbing be an Olympic sport' issue, which is worth having a look at to find out a wider perspective on the subject and how it might or might not affect climbers and the BMC.

But what I know, is that the passion of people involved in the British competition climbing scene is unsurpassed. These people (a lot of them climb outdoors too, unbelievable, I know)) have a love for competitions that runs parallel to their other climb-

ing goals and they give 100% to make things successful.

Having climbing in the Olympics would for them be almost a reward for the years of effort they've put in (voluntarily) and for the talented young climbers we have at the moment who are dedicated to comps, lets give them a chance to bring us back some medals- go GB!!

So to finish; in my humble opinion, as a non-political being, having climbing as an Olympic sport would be fantastic. In the main, it would be great for climbing and for those who aren't interested, would it really affect them?



World Youth Championships



WYC - Valence, France

>> *Natalie Berry gives us the low down on the World Youth Championships in Valence, France.*

— All photos and text credited to Natalie Berry

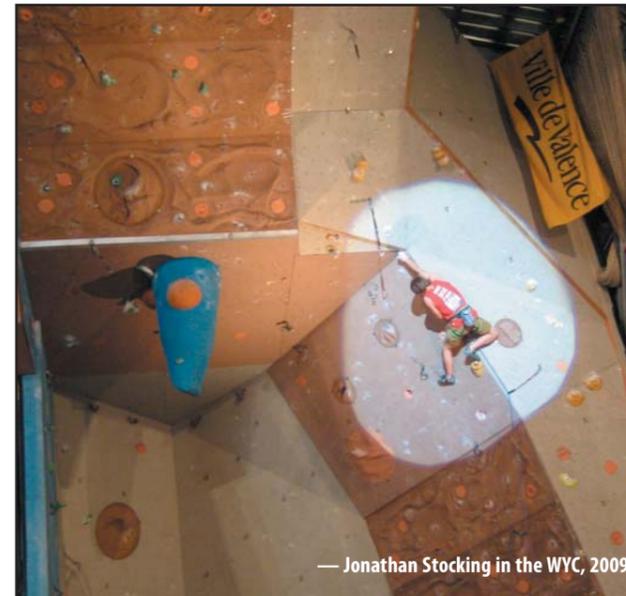
This year the World Youth Championships took place in Valence, France from the 27th-30th August.

This 4 day event draws the world's very best young athletes together to compete for the title of World Champion in their respective age categories and this year, with almost 500 registered competitors across Lead and Speed categories, it was clear from the start that it would be a hard-fought battle for even the most experienced and talented young climbers.

After the success of the WYC in Sydney last year, everyone had high expectations of both competitors and the event itself. Selected to compete for Great Britain was a 10-strong team psyched and ready to show how much effort and hard work had been put into training for this prestigious competition.

Representing the boys were Jonathan Stocking, Luke Tilley, Ed Hamer, Paul Williamson and Robbie Phillips, and for the girls Kitty Wallace, Shauna Coxsey, Becki Hall, Suzie Zitter and myself, Natalie Berry. Unfortunately Michaela Tracy was unable to compete due to a heel injury incurred from a fall, yet she still came along (armed with crutches and wasabi peas!) to support Team GB and witness some awe-inspiring performances from around the World.

Our first day in Valence was a rest day, and we decided to go for a wander around the town where we jumped in fountains, bought souvenirs from local market stalls and played "spot the foreign teams" under the scorching southern French sun. Everyone felt relaxed and ready for the first qualifiers the next day...



Arriving at the Halle du Polygon reminded us all of the sheer scale of this event - 494 competitors from 39 countries, 150 organisers and assistants, numerous coaches, chaperones, routesetters, spectators, cameras, photographers, officials, judges, belayers, lights, sound systems, massive screens, television cameras, computers and 24 world-standard routes over 6 categories and 4 rounds to determine the fate of 10 British athletes.

After a long day of waiting, watching, warming up and some gutsy performances we had a promising start for Team GB - Kitty, Jonny and Shauna topped their routes and many others had results within or near the top 26 - the semi-final quota. The second routes determined the overall positions for many of our athletes, along with 3 of us making the semi-finals - Shauna, Jonny and myself. Kitty was incredibly close to making the cut-off, just one move away from making it through and finishing 29th. The intense heat of the climbing arena certainly tested our competitors, who are more used to training in cooler climes!

The semi finals took place on the Saturday and our trip coach Ian Dunn accompanied us three semi-finalists for a long wait in isolation.

The atmosphere in the warm up zone was fairly relaxed and social with the routine following a pattern of eat, drink, stretch, climb, chat, listen to music and rest before being escorted to the transition zone. The crowd was cheering loudly for competitors climbing outside as we were shuttled to and from the tie-in zones getting psyched by the lively ambiance.

The Brits commandeered the extremely overhanging wall at one point as myself and Shauna happened to be climbing at the same time. We made good progress on our routes and were spurred on by the support of the rest of Team GB as our images were projected onto two massive screens.

After a nerve-wracking wait whilst watching the rest of our categories climb Jonny was out next. He climbed smoothly up a tough vertical section before moving on to a section with a tricky, balancy movement into a roof where he held a different section of the hold and unfortunately came off.

After the semi-finals I was placed 12th in the Junior Female category, Shauna 19th in the Youth A Female and Jonny 24th in Youth A Male.

Although there were no British finalists (top 8 go through) we enjoyed watching some inspiring performances in the finals and the presentations of competitors and Cirque du Soleil-style entertainment (plus a crazy guitarist!) made the finals incredibly exciting to watch, and we are now as a team looking forward to competing in European events over the next few months.

It may not have been our most successful competition as a group, but the World Youth Championships in Valence was certainly an event we will all remember for it's fantastic organisation and atmosphere as we prepare to host two international youth competitions in Britain over the coming year, and also to recognise the fact that competition climbing is growing and reaching further than ever before and that the standard of youth climbing is increasing at a phenomenal rate.

The cruel nature of competitions dictates that the smallest mistake or inexperience can win or lose it for a competitor, and the only way to overcome this obstacle to prepare as best as possible and gain experience.

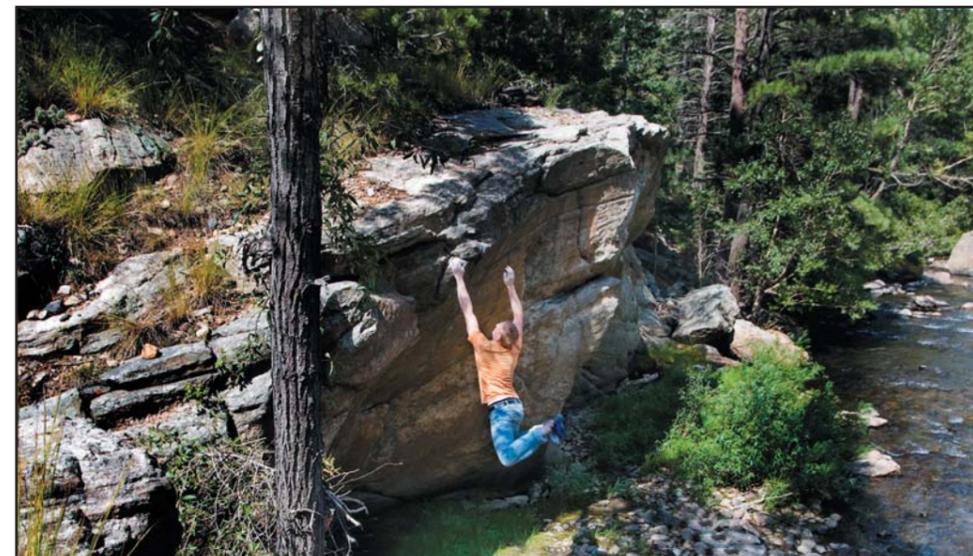
Considering the lack of competition experience, funding and coaching availability that we have here in the UK I believe our team did exceptionally well in a tough field of athletes.

Bring on the World Youth Championships 2010, see you all at EICA Ratho with your Union Jacks!



Skyler Weekes going for the World Record at the Cliffhanger event in Sheffield 2009.

— Alex Messenger



Skyler on his new Dyno, Zion.

— Skyler Weekes Collection

World Record Smashed ...

Skyler Weekes has once again managed to break not only the current world record, but his own previous record set at Cliffhanger in 2008.

Nicky de Leeuw raised the current men's record from 2.65 to 2.8 metres in Eindhoven on the 14th June. However that record lasted only one month; on Sunday July 12th, Skyler broke the record with an astonishing dyno of 2.825 metre, once again at the Cliffhanger festival in Sheffield.

Skyler had been attempting the record on Saturday, and managed to match the 2.8 set by de Leeuw, however he didn't manage to beat the record within the three attempts allowed.

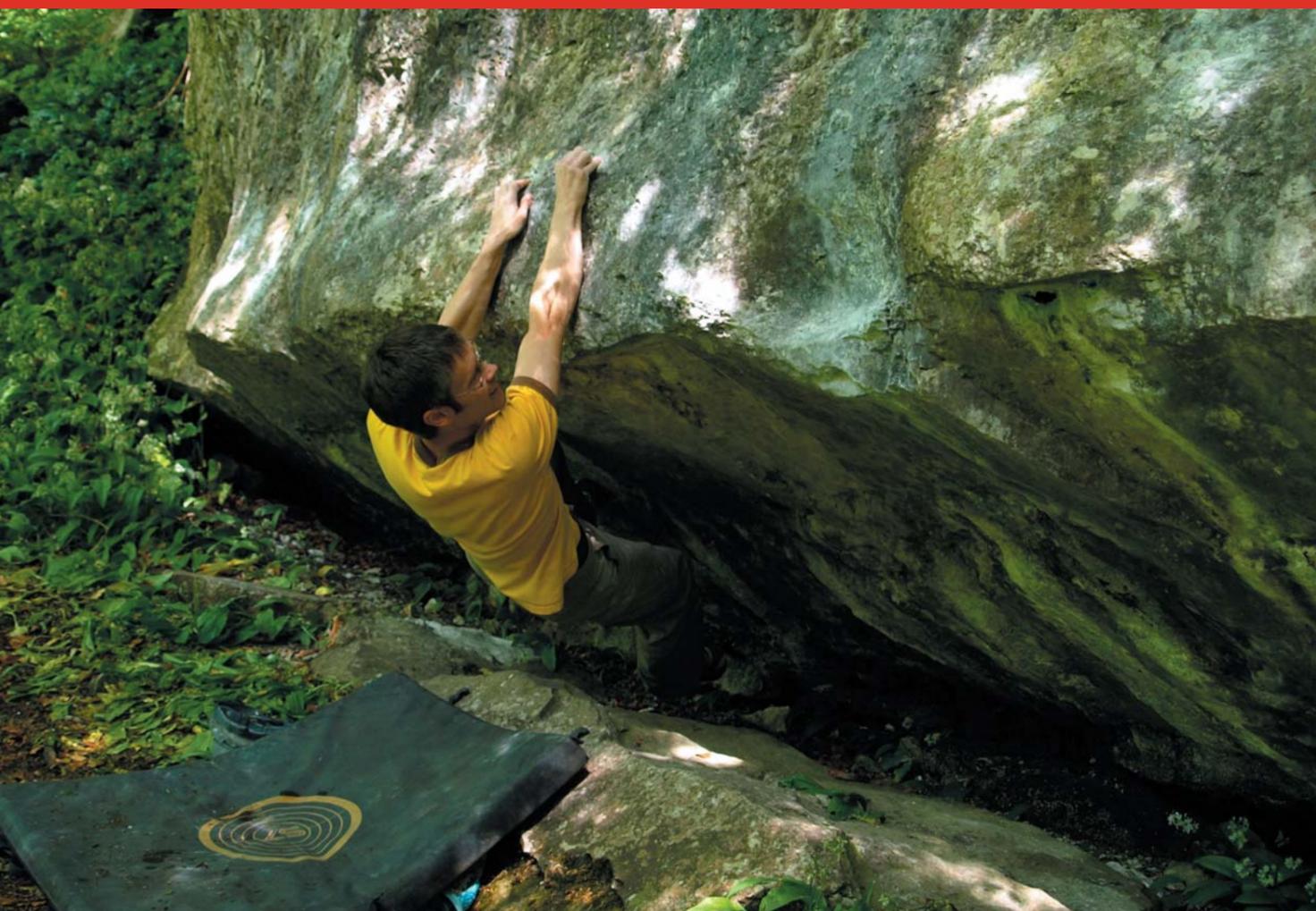
Not one to be beaten, Skyler returned on the Sunday and put rights to it, in front of a packed marquee at Cliffhanger.

The attempt was not without its drama. Back in 2005 Skyler suffered a serious injury whilst attempting a dyno at the Teva Mountain Games.

After a huge move Skyler landed on his head and neck, which left him with a fractured spine and needing reconstructive surgery after his knee came crashing into his face. In a near perfect reconstruction of the horrific event that left Skyler unable to walk and in a brace for six months, he almost managed the same thing again. Except it was Graham Alderson's knee that made contact with Skyler's face, as Graham was spotting and the momentum Skyler produced in the dyno caused him to come in to contact unexpectedly. After shaking this off Skyler returned to the wall and set the new world record.

In the women's event Lily Fitzgibbon walked away with 1st place after attempting to beat her own world record set last year, although she came in 1st place she fell just short of beating her personal best.

By Dave MacFarlane
www.planetfear.com



Introducing a Team Manager

First up for the Management Team is Nick Clement, Manager of the British Bouldering Team.

I have been the Manager of the British Bouldering Team since March 2009, previous to that I was the Assistant Manager for three years and I was also a member of the Bouldering Team for four and half years.

The opportunity to manage a team in a sport that you are passionate about is a great privilege. As manager my aim is to carry on and improve the excellent work done by the previous managers, Mike Lee and Sue Pinner. I want to facilitate and maximise the development and potential of all members of the Team and Squad in order to win International Bouldering Competitions.

The management of the Bouldering Team requires and deserves a high level of commitment, time and effort and it's not until you take on the manager's role that you appreciate how much work is involved. In some ways there is probably enough work for it to be a part time position. So juggling this around your own hectic work schedule, home life and personal climbing, at times can be difficult.

For me personally this years competition season has been exceptional and extremely rewarding, it was great to see younger members of the team starting to fulfil their potential and get into semi-finals (Dianne Merrick and Stew Watson) and finals (Ned Feehally and Dave Barrans). The highlight of the year was definitely Dave Barrans getting the Bronze medal in the World Championships in China; Britain's first ever medal in a Bouldering World Championship.

The level of commitment that the Team have shown this year has been exceptional with the majority having to self fund in order to compete. I have utmost respect for them and have thoroughly enjoyed working with them. I am extremely proud of them and their achievements and am looking forward to starting the pre-season training with the new Team and Squad in September. The future definitely bodes well for the Bouldering Team.

*By Nick Clement
British Bouldering Team Manager*



Nick Clement repeating Anesthesia 8b at Woodwell.

— Nick Clement

Introducing a Volunteer

First up is the man that makes it all happen, Mark Alderson.

When I remember the circumstances of my introduction to the world of competition climbing back in the year 2000, I begin to wonder how I have become so deeply involved. For more than 20 years I have been a teacher at a large secondary school in Kent. With my responsibility for outdoor education, and a background in instructing all sorts of mountain activities, climbing has been a significant part of the school curriculum. Our keen band of climbing pupils needed something to challenge them locally and Southern Sandstone was not always attractive through the winter months.

We had a recently completed bouldering wall at the school and the idea of climbing indoors to train for routes outdoors was starting to make sense. I think it was an early incarnation of the BMC website where I learned of the British Regional Youth Climbing Series or BRYCS (now known as the BMC Youth Climbing Series) and this seemed to be the next logical step for us; three regional competitions with the top three climbers in each category invited to a nationwide final. A handful of our pupils took part and did surprisingly well. But that is another story.

I was impressed by the level of organisation and commitment demonstrated by the coordinators and volunteers at each round of the BRYCS. The generous cooperation of each host climbing wall was surprising and at the same time heart-warming to witness. The competition also had a set of very reasonable and, on the whole, fair rules. Despite a lengthy wait for results to be published, and no idea about what was happening in the other ten regions around the country, it all came together at a joyous British final which took place at the nearly-new WICC in South Wales.

Our next climbing competition adventure was the Southern Indoor Bouldering League (SIBL); a very different experience. Organised by one of the founders, it was (and still is) the longest running competition series in the country. The scoring system was new to us and I was a little disturbed to find that the organiser frequently seemed just as unfamiliar with the rules; not that there were many to remember. On our first few visits I often felt that the competition was just an excuse to get a lot of climbers together to have a good time. I soon learned that the SIBL is very good at providing a friendly, all-inclusive atmosphere where regular climbers mix happily with complete novices and international athletes. The competition is secondary, some would say unnecessary, but I can see how it forms a routine for each get-together and, for many, provides an extra level of excitement beyond the socialising.

It was only when our pupils became involved in national competitions that I met Graeme Alderson and realised how very different competition climbing could be. As Competitions Officer for the BMC Graeme was dealing with the increasing popularity of the sport. He certainly knew how to run effective climbing competitions. Even with my very

limited experience, I could see it was Graeme's knowledge and enthusiasm that drove the success of each event. He was doing a brilliant job planning and organising volunteers, route setters, venues, equipment and, of course, competitors. I knew he could do with some help calculating and publishing results (some of the calculations are not straight forward, competitor numbers were increasing and the BRYCS was still handicapped by a lack of results information between rounds) so I offered to design some spreadsheets to speed up the process and cut down on the tedious manual preparation of various running orders, rankings etc. A little later I started managing the score data at national events and developed a nationwide system for regional volunteers of the BRYCS to help them record, calculate and communicate their results. By 2003 I could publish reliable results of all BMC regional and national events on the internet within hours of them finishing. Frustratingly, these results could not be hosted on the BMC's own website (which was in some sort of mysterious limbo at the time) so our school's own Outdoor Education website became home of the national results service until I started the short-lived britishclimbingteam.com in 2006. Two years later the BMC website finally took over in its current versatile form: thebmc.co.uk.

Meanwhile, after seven years of hard work developing the competition scene in the UK, Graeme stepped down from the Competition Officer's duties. Since then, there has been further rapid development of the sport by a small band of dedicated volunteers and with the help of some important BMC staff.

A new competition series, the BMC Leading Ladder, is about to enter its third season.

High-profile international competitions have been secured. For example; a round of the European Youth Series (EYS) will be accommodated at the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena (EICA) in September 2009 and a year later, at the same venue, the prestigious World Youth Championships.

Sheffield City Council have committed to hosting a round of the Bouldering World Cup in 2010.

Looking even further ahead, the Cities of Sheffield and Edinburgh are bidding for the honour of running the prestigious biennial World Championship in 2011.

It's an exciting and challenging time for British competition climbing and, like many other volunteers, team members and aspirants, I am looking forward to being part of it.

By Mark Alderson

British Team Support and the Junior Team Co-ordinator for the South

Introducing



The Insider; Part 1

Part 1
Pre - comp
Part 2
Isolation
Part 3
Mental Edge
Part 4
Comp Tactics
Part 5
Comp Fallout

In my first year of competing internationally, in 2006, I had the classic case of 'beginner's luck'. With no expectations weighing me down I was just happy to be doing the Bouldering World Cup and was as surprised as anyone else when I made it into two finals. At the time it felt like it would be the start of the grand career as an international competition climber. If I could do that in my first year- maybe I could be a world champion! I went into my second year of competition with much more determination and organisation. I had a coach prepare a training plan for me and I tried a lot of different techniques. However, I was my own worst enemy and practically sabotaged myself in a number of ways which I hope you'll be able to learn from by reading below.

Do you really want to do this?

The first thing to accept with climbing is that maybe one or two people can be good at everything but chances are that you're not one of them! This means that you're going to have to decide what it is that you want to do. If you want to win a national championship then it's unlikely that you'll also be able to train to climb trad to your full potential. Pick something and focus on it. Obviously as you become fitter and stronger other climbing disciplines will benefit as well. But remember, it's not healthy to totally abandon all other aspects of climbing to just pull on plastic if you also enjoy climbing outdoors.

Find the balance between training and doing what it takes to remember that it's still fun.

Audrey at the Bouldering World Cup in Montauban, France.

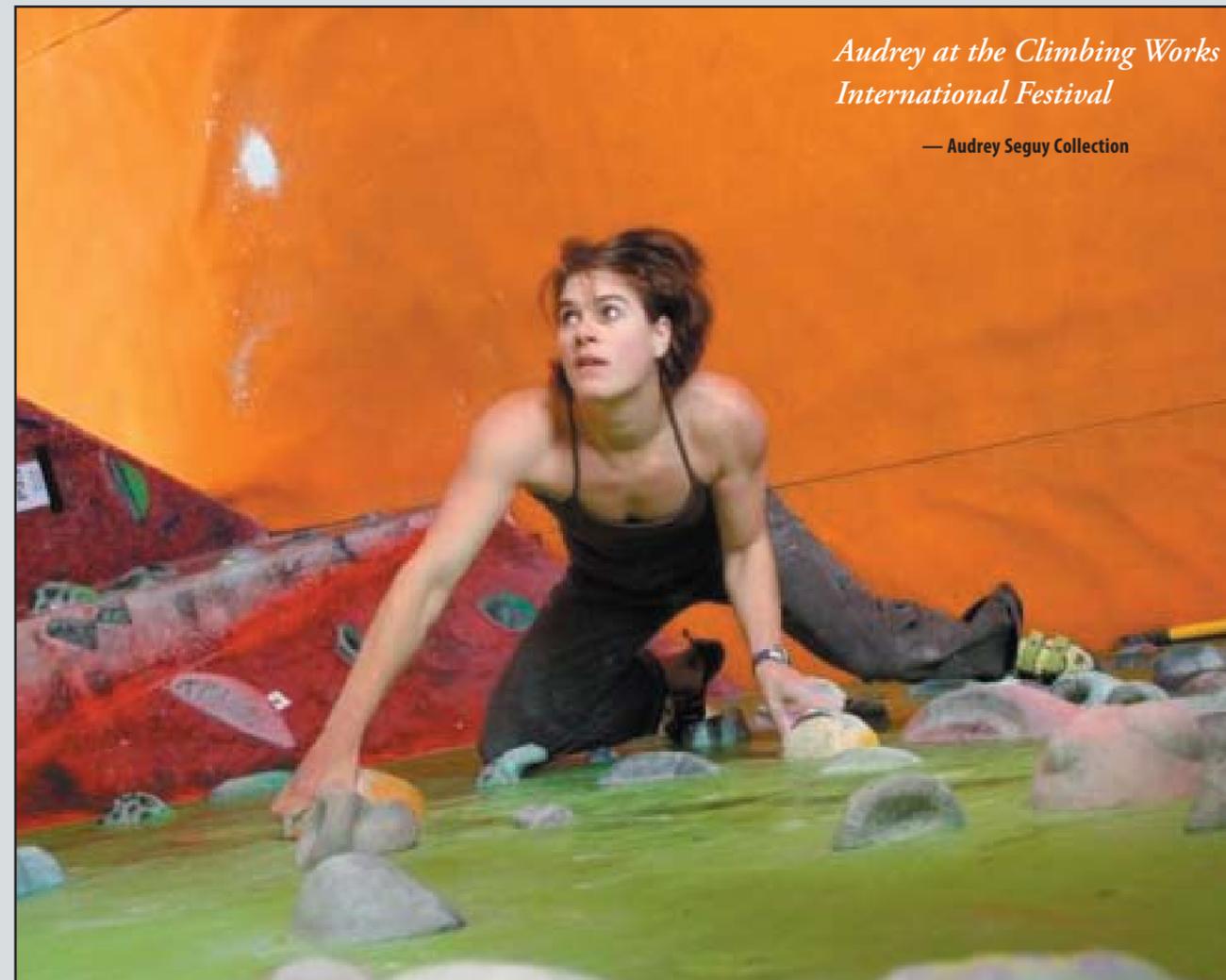
— Michele Caminati. July 2008

By the time you arrive at a competition, your chances of success are largely set by the preparation you have done, even the most talented climber may not do well if they have not prepared properly. This part of the series will take you, the competitor, through your preparation up to the point of going into isolation. I'll be drawing on my experience as an international competitor, but I'm sure you'll be able to draw out any lessons you want for any other competition.

Training and periodisation

Once you've decided that you want to focus on your competition season have a look at when it is. If you're doing BRYCS you want to be climbing well enough from March to May to qualify for the finals but you want

to be climbing your best in June during the finals. Your trainer or coach can help you plan for this with a periodisation programme designed to have you reach your peak at the right time.



What not to do!

I had to climb the first comp of the World Cup in 2007 with a finger injury because instead of listening to my body and doing something about that 'niggly' finger I kept training. Like many climbers, I was enjoying feeling strong and pulled harder instead of letting it properly heal.

At another competition that year, instead of having a sensible meal the night before consisting of something easy to digest that would give me energy for the following morning I decided to have a meat-eating competition with one of my teammates. Then that night I didn't tell my roommates to watch a movie somewhere else, instead just sticking on some headphones which didn't help me get to sleep. Finally, the next morning, at the competition, we had an early start. Instead of my usual coffee and good breakfast it was just a few cakes and some water. Without my caffeine fix I felt like I never woke

up. Needless to say I never really got in gear that day.

Lastly, I was working full-time while I was competing and to make up for time lost for travel and comps I would work extra-hard in the week before the comp, doing twelve-hour days in the run up to the big day. Exhausted by the time the I arrived at the venue, I was never giving myself the best chance.

What to do!

Now when I'm travelling to a competition I make sure that my needs are met. We usually travel as a group and it's hard to please everyone, but everyone should feel confident enough to ask for what they want or need. I try to book gites with kitchens because cooking relaxes me and the food I make is food that I'm used to eating and healthy. Because I'm used to a bit of caffeine in the morning I make sure that I can get a coffee somewhere or I pack some Red Bull. I also make sure

Audrey at the Climbing Works International Festival

— Audrey Seguy Collection

that my roommates respect when I want to sleep- we'll often change the rooms around depending on who's made it into the semis and finals so that they get the most sleep.

A final top tip if you're traveling abroad is to make sure that you pack your shoes and comp vest in your hand luggage. You can always borrow chalk, shorts, harness, etc but you need to have your own shoes and vest so don't let them out of your sight!

By Audrey Seguy

British Bouldering Champion 2006, 2008

British Lead Climbing Champion 2008

BMC Vice-President

Audrey is sponsored by Prana, Metolius, Evolv and The Castle

www.thebmc.co.uk

Technique Time

By Dave MacLeod

When is a good time to consciously focus on learning better technique? 'All the time' might be an obvious answer? But it's not really that simple. The problem is that good technique, by its very nature is automatic and most of our technical decisions while climbing have to happen outside of conscious thought.

There are just too many things to think about - many different points of contact to use and move between with pinpoint accuracy. Accelerations of limbs and body in different directions at once, and many individual muscles firing with just the correct force at the right moment.

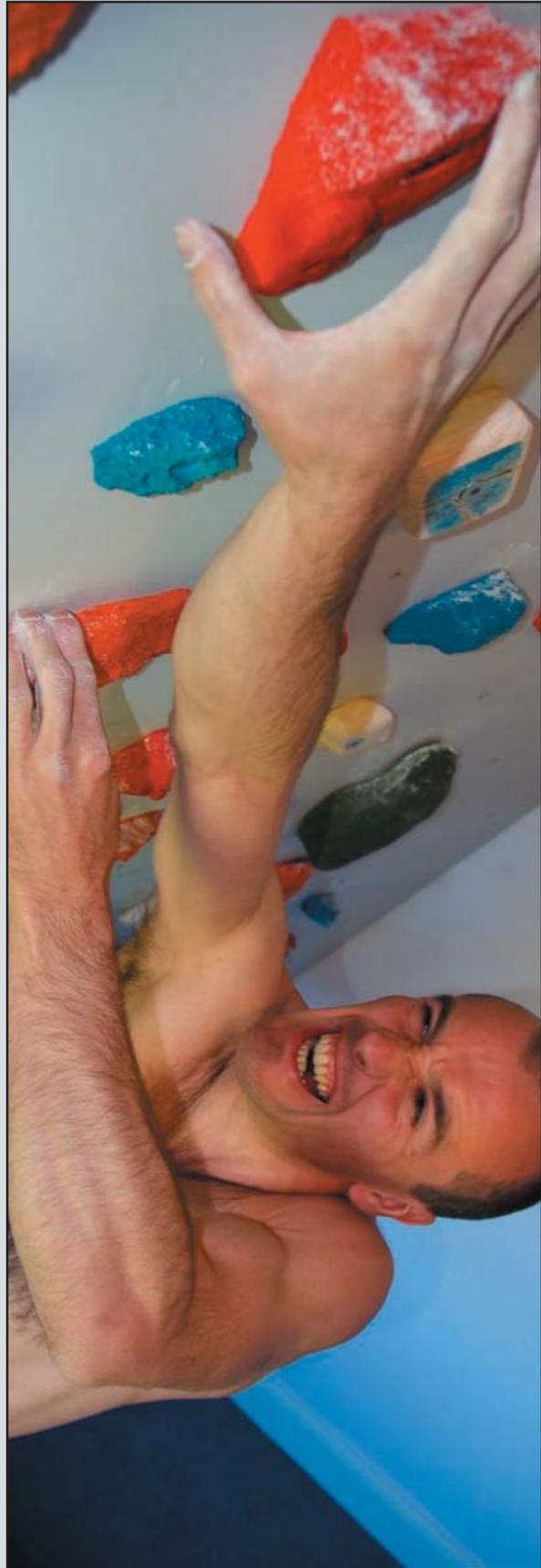
We often take the bulk of these instantaneous movement decisions for granted too. But as soon as we try to consciously intervene to experiment and try to control and learn technique, things often fall apart.

Try climbing a route at your onsight limit, but concentrate on trying to climb it with especially good technique. Another good way is to climb a route in front of someone you'd like to impress with your climbing, or at least look your best. What happens? Try it a few times and you'll see that most often the result is a poorer performance than normal! Why, when you are concentrating extra hard?

The reason is that stepping in with the slow and clunky conscious brain does nothing more than interrupt the seamless subconscious decisions your mind already knows how to make.

So what to do? The best time to consciously learn better technique is sometimes away from your limit and on easier climbs where you have more thinking space to take and process the feedback from your body on how you are moving. Warming up is a good time, easier routes and bouldering is also good. Repetitive training on climbs you know well can also be good for fine tuning movements, although this is bad in other ways as your body gets too used to knowing what's coming next.

But hard routes are important too because this is where all the pieces of the performance jigsaw must fit and work together. How do we get round the problem that we are too busy just trying to stay on the rock to worry about moment-by-moment analysis? The answer is we must do it afterwards. A crucial skill as you advance in climbing is to be able to record what you did and how you did it in fine detail for recall later. This is a learned skill and will take years to get really good at. But with some effort, you'll learn to work back through routes you've just done in your mind's eye, and 'feel' the body feedback in retrospect. What's even better is that once you get good at this, it happens so subconsciously that you don't even know you are doing it.



Technique Time



Dave showing composure and good technique on Present Tense E9 7a, Torridon.

— Claire MacLeod Collection

from the office...

Wow! What a year! With only the European Youth Series left to go in the BMC competition season, it has been a whirlwind tour of the various competitions that we run in the UK since I took over the Competitions Officer role in November last year.

From running the BMC Leading Ladder throughout the winter, organising the Youth Climbing Series in the spring and then I was truly thrown in at the deep end in June/July with the YCS Final, the BBC and the BLCC all within a 4 week period, whilst trying to fit in Ironman training at the same time!

It was incredibly hard work, but it would have been significantly harder if I had not have had the great support of you guys the BMC competition volunteers! Without you, none of the BMC comps would happen at all, and for that reason your work is greatly appreciated by the competitors, the parents, the spectators and most of all by me.

You have all put so much of your own time into this years comps, as you have I am sure in past years. But seeing the commitment to the cause, week in and week out has been truly inspirational.

A few people have stepped back from the competition arena this year after many years of hard service and these people deserve a special mention – **Jill Whittaker** – who has been on the Junior team management for several years and has put many hours into sculpting our youth into a well honed team along with **Tom Randall** who manager the Senior team for two years, running the training programmes and organising workshops to further their fitness and technique has been a hard job, that hopefully

the new manager Scott Malina-Derben will continue with style. So a great vote of thanks goes to these guys for all their hard work.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers especially the team managers and the BMC competitions committee for putting up with me this year whilst I bumbled about picking up the ropes of competition organisation. Next year will hopefully be a lot more organised and professional, and at least I got finally got the volunteer's lunches right after several attempts!! A big vote of thanks should also go to our Comps. committee chair Iain McKenzie, who has put this amazing new Competitions Newsletter together for us!

Next year promises to be even bigger and better than this year as competition climbing gathers pace and popularity, I hope all the volunteers will stick with me through what promises to be a very exciting year of competitions.

And hey if you are reading this thinking I want to get involved in competition climbing, whether it be as a competitor, a spectator or a volunteer please do not hesitate to get in touch with me – I can't wait to hear from you – rob@thebmc.co.uk

See you all at the European Youth Series at EICA, Ratho in a couple of week's time.

Cheers

Rob Adie
BMC Competition Officer

events...

KING OF THE MEZZ BOULDERING LEAGUE - LONDON

The Castle

Free fun monthly bouldering comp in The Castle's best bouldering area "The Mezz". 20 problems for men & women with self judging. Grades range from super easy to V9. Monthly guest setter for the best boulder problems in London. Resident DJ all night creates a great atmosphere. 1st, 2nd & 3rd places prizes sponsored by Urban Rock. Free Pizza for all. 7pm – 9.30pm

Dates

Round 1 Friday 2nd October with Gaz Parry
Round 2 Friday 20th November
Round 3 Friday 8th January
Round 4 Friday 26th February

The Castle Climbing Centre
Green Lanes, London N4 2HA

Tel: 020 8211 7000
Fax: 020 8211 7720

www.castle-climbing.co.uk

THE CLIMBING WORKS WINTER BOULDERING LEAGUE - SHEFFIELD

The Climbing Works

1st Round: Friday 6th November 19:00 - 22:00
2nd Round: Friday 4th December 19:00 - 22:00
3rd Round: Friday 16th January 2010 19:00 - 22:00
4th Round: Friday 26th February 2010 19:00 - 22:00

£250 cash prize for each round
Cost: Normal wall entry + £2 for scorecard

www.climbingworks.com/events

RAB JUNIOR BOULDERING SERIES - SHEFFIELD

The Edge Climbing Centre, Sheffield

Round 1 Nov 22nd 11.30 - 3pm
Round 2 Dec 13th 11.30 - 3pm
Round 3 Feb 21st 11.30 - 3pm
Round 4 Mar 14th 11.30 - 3pm

20 boulder problems set specially for competition and for each age /sex. Graded between V0 and V8. Cost will be £7.50, prizes provided by the Competition Sponsor.

www.sheffieldclimbing.com/competitions.php

WELSH CLIMBING CHAMPIONSHIPS - VARIOUS

Llangorse Activity Centre (Brecon)

September 13th 2009 - 10.00 till 1600
Round 1 of a 4 round event to find the Welsh Champion.

www.welshclimbingchampionships.co.uk

Boulders Climbing Centre (Cardiff)

September 27th 2009 - 10.00 till 1600
Round 2 of a 4 round event to find the Welsh Champion.

www.welshclimbingchampionships.co.uk

Dynamic Rock Adventures (Swansea)

Oct 11th 2009 - 10.00 till 1600
Round 3 of a 4 round event to find the Welsh Champion.

www.welshclimbingchampionships.co.uk

Summit centre (Nr Merthyr)

Nov 1st 2009 - 10.00 till 1600
Round 4 of a 4 round event to find the Welsh Champion.

www.welshclimbingchampionships.co.uk

'THE RUCUS' BOULDERING SERIES - SWANSEA

Dynamic Rock Adventures (Swansea)

Round 1 - October 17th 2009 - 11.00 till 14.00
Round 2 - November 14th 2009 - 11.00 till 14.00
Round 3 - December 12th 2009 - 11.00 till 14.00

30 problems - 3 hrs - self scoring.

www.dynamicrock.co.uk

MY (MIDLAND YOUTH) CLIMBING SERIES - VARIOUS

Creation - Birmingham

Round 1 - 11th October 2009

Bear Rock - Warwick

Round 2 - 8th November 2009

Redpoint - Birmingham

Round 3 - 6th December 2009

Wolf Mountain - Wolverhampton

Round 4 - 10th January 2010

The Tower - Leicester

Final - 7th February 2010

MY (Midlands Youth) Climbing Series is a fun event sponsored by Wild Country and Red Chili, that has been organised by BMC Area Youth Coordinator and the climbing walls of the Midlands for young climbers born between 1991 and 2002 inclusive.

£8.50 for each individual event.

Entry forms and rules available from each individual wall or visit:

www.myclimbingseries.co.uk

THE CLIMBING WORKS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 2010 (CWIF)

The Climbing Works - Sheffield

10th March 2010. All day
1 day only festival

Open to all, free to enter

www.climbingworks.com/events/CWIF09

This Newsletter has been put together by Competitors, Wall Managers, the BMC Competition Committee and the Volunteers that tirelessly help out at Competitions and events around the country.

If you would like to get involved or contribute to this Newsletter, either by sending an event your wall is running, a report on a competition you have taken part in, or just a general update on what is happening, we would love to hear from you.

Please Email: competitionnews@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

If sending photos through please make sure they are Hi-Res JPG's with the appropriate credits attached, articles and profiles should be sent as Word or Works documents and photo's accompanying an article should be sent separately.

If you would like to subscribe to receive a PDF Version of this Newsletter direct to your inbox, please send an Email to the above address with the word "subscribe" in the subject box.

The Deadline for submissions for the next Newsletter is 17th November 2009.

Psyched!

production team



Edited and Produced by Iain McKenzie.

— Chair of the BMC Competition Committee



Natalie Berry, Assistant Editor.

— British Junior Team Member