



March 2007 Newsletter

Editorial

Spring has sprung! Though the reports of winter meets in Scotland suggest we didn't have much of a winter. The climbing walls seem to have been well frequented, giving some of us an edge to our fitness and preparedness for climbing outdoors. The recent mild weather has prompted some Oreads to get on to outdoor rock this past month. I'm sure standards of climbing are improving.

The AGM is upon us – 8.00 pm on Saturday 24 March in The Bear, Alderwasley. Anyone who has not paid their membership fee will be out of time at the start of the AGM.

There is an abundance of meets and you will be welcome on any and all of them.

Forthcoming meets

March	Tues 6th	Indoor Meet - Mountains and their use in Art	Rob van Beek	
	10th - 11th	Patterdale	Stuart Haywood	01332 834449
	Tu 13th	Committee meeting - Smithfield		
	Sat 24th	Annual General Meeting - The Bear, Alderwasley	Derek Pike	01332 670459
	Sun 25th	Spring Stride	Rob Tresidder	01629 823953
	Wed 28th	First Evening meet - Wildcat	Rob Tresidder	01629 823953
April	6th - 9th	Easter - Swanage and Portland	Sharon Fletcher & Roger Gibbs	01246 238039
	Tues 10th	Committee meeting - Smithfield		
	24th - 26th	Tan-yr-Wyddfa mid-week meet	John Green	01332 832101
	Wed 25th	Evening meet		
May	5th - 12th	JMCS Hut Coriusk, Skye	Rob Tresidder	01629 823953

Meets Secretary Message

The 2007 meets list is in full swing - so now I'm thinking about 2008. Please let me have your ideas, and most importantly let me know which meets you want to lead.

Last Winter Lecture Indoor meet of the season

Our series of indoor meets draws to a close on the first Tuesday of March. This meet needs your support. Tim has done a first class job of providing us with an entertaining and varied diet of slide shows for 4 years. This is the last indoor meet before Tony Howard takes on the role of indoor meets (winter lecture series) leader. Please come and show your appreciation for the good work Tim has done and give Tony support and encouragement to take on this important role. Rob van Beek will be talking about Mountains and their use in Art. It will give us a different perspective on our activities and will help us see our world in different ways.

Annual General Meeting of the Oread Mountaineering Club, to be held at The Bear Hotel Alderwasley, at 8 p.m. on Saturday 24th March 2007.

The Committee has decided to ask the Membership at this year's A.G.M. to vote to delete Rule 12 so that all members are 18 years of age or over.

At present Rule 12 states:-

A person may be elected as associate member if under 18 years of age and a minimum of 16 years old (they should have permission from their parents). Associate members shall not be eligible to vote at any official meeting, nor lead official Meets.

This proposed alteration has been brought about because the B.M.C. advises all affiliated Clubs to have a Child Protection Policy.

Derek Pike, Hon. Sec.

Patterdale: 10th - 11th March

Last year we enjoyed a real Alpine weekend, the type of mid winter weekend we seemed to experience before the onset of global warming. As far as this year is concerned – well I'm afraid you will have to decide for yourself!

I'm sure this area of the Lakes will not need any introduction as its virtues and opportunities for climbers, mountain walkers and bikers have been extolled in many previous newsletter articles for this traditional meet.

We've booked all the beds in the George Starkey Hut again this year so 28 beds are available, although at the time of writing 20 beds have already been taken so it's a case of book early to avoid disappointment.

Andrea and I intend to arrive mid evening, hopefully in time to meet everyone at the White Lion. However other members have already indicated that they intend to travel early on the Friday so the hut should be open late afternoon. To reserve your bed please give me a call on 01332 –834449 or 07836 –314403. Stuart Haywood.

Membership Renewals for 2007

Thank you if you have already renewed your membership. Subscriptions were due on 1 January. The AGM on 24 March is the final deadline. You

should have already received an individual request, but in case yours has gone astray, here are the charges for membership:

Full Member	£26.00
Family	£39.00
Senior Member	£13.00
Senior Family	£19.50
Prospective Member	£13.00

Please send payments by cheque, payable to Oread Mountaineering Club, to:

Reuben Dakin, 14 New Street, Little Eaton, Derby DE21 5AF.

If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, the sort code is 05-04-07 and the account number is 45028744 (Yorkshire bank). Please let me know if you have paid by bank transfer. If you have any queries regarding your renewal, please contact me at reuben@signet-solutions.com , or on 01332 834543.

Sunday 25th March Spring Stride: Rob Tresidder

Last year's walk, the day after the AGM, seemed only to attract the hearties, so this year I have chosen a shorter route. But I am hoping many of those walking will take the bus option.

arrive		Operator & bus number	Depart
	Derby. Derwent Street	Trent / Barton TP	09:55
	Belper Bus Station		10:15
	Matlock Bus Station		10:37
11:13	Taddington		
	Baslow Nether End	TM 174	17:23
17:52	Matlock Bus Station	Trent / Barton TP	18:25
	Belper Bus Station		18:45
19:10	Derby, The Morledge L3		

If you are looking for some other way of reaching Taddington by public transport, you may find this link useful: <http://www.transportdirect.info/TransportDirect/en/>

There is a free long stay Car Park in Matlock close to the Peak Rail Terminus on the W side of the River Derwent. Alternatively, a car could be parked in Taddington for a loop back before the rest of us get to Baslow, or you could arrange to leave a car at both ends... I don't really need to spell this out, do I? If you do opt for the car approach, please let me know beforehand, so I can keep you

abreast of any last minute changes! I intend to walk from Taddington to Baslow via Litton Mill, Monsal Head, Great Longstone and Hassop. With the slightly shorter walk this year, there will be even more time to spend in hostelry en route!
RobTresidder@virgin.net txt: 07951 625 378

Mini Working Party: Heathy Lea March 28th.

We have decided to have a mini Spring clean at Heathy Lea on Wednesday 28th. March, All those out of work, or between jobs are most welcome to join in the activities and afterwards we can move onto the evening climbing meet. Anyone requiring more information please contact the Hut Sub. Committee in the persons of Colin Hobday, Chuck Hooley or Keith Gregson.

Tan-yr-Wyddfa Meet 24th – 26th April (Mid week meet)

This is a new venture for the Oread. We are trying to stir into action the many retired and semi retired members with an attractive package of an official meet during the week in our superb accommodation in Wales. There will be no charge for beds, so please, let us have as many as possible out there doing something. I have no fixed agenda for the meet only that we try to keep up the main reasons for being a mountaineering club, i.e. mountaineering, climbing, walking and mountain biking. I think it would be helpful in these days of global warming to car share as much as possible, so let me know and I will try to organise transport. April is one of the best months for wildlife, so even if you cannot get about as much as you used to, please still come and have a look for something special, remember there are Ospreys in Wales as well as Scotland and Rutland. Sylvia will be doing this, I am sure, so lets have a good turnout with hopefully a return meet in the Lakes later in the year. John Green. 01332 832101.

Skye meet 5 - 11 May 2007 Rob Tresidder

An error crept into the provisional meets' list. I have booked the Coriusk Memorial Hut for the nights of 5 - 11 May. Many of you will be familiar with the amazing location of this hut belonging to the JMCS. Those on SAS training may want to walk in via Camasunary and the Bad Step with

provisions for a week, but for the rest of us I intend to hire a boat to carry us from Elgol into Loch Scavaig for disembarkation almost outside the front door of the hut. The launch will be booked for the 5th and again for the 12th when we sail out. NOTE: this is not the half term week (Roy's Cornwall meet).

Skye should need little introduction. It is almost my all-time favourite place. The hut puts us in a unique position for attempts on the main ridge without the huge walk in from Glen Brittle. Also highly accessible is the simply beautiful Dubhs ridge as well as the less accessible rock climbing areas. I have booked NINE places; Jane and I have already taken two of those places. I will accept bookings on payment of £7 deposit. The balance of £28 will become due in March. For more information on this unique opportunity, please contact me: Rob Tresidder, 61 West End, Wirksworth, Derbyshire DE4 4EG

May Day Weekend - May 4th to 7th

I know Rob's got a splendid meet to Skye, but since I'm neither retired nor taking a year off, I find I haven't got the spare holiday to go. So I'm offering to lead a meet for similarly disadvantaged Oreads to somewhere closer to home. I was thinking of heading to South Wales, either to the Gower or to South Pembroke. If you're interested in coming along, let me know which you prefer.

Black Sail Meet – July 6th and 7th 2007

It is a long while since the Oread had a meet for climbing and walking in the upper Ennerdale area. It is ideal for the classic routes on Pillar and Engineers Slabs on Gable. The classic walk is the Ennerdale Horseshoe, an ideal shortened version of which can be done from here. The hostel does meals if you require them and has showers and most conveniences. It is the nearest thing we have to an alpine hutte in England. I think that alcoholic beverage is also available if required. (The nearest pub is rather a long way off!!)

I have booked 8 beds for this meet at the Black Sail Youth Hostel. Non members are welcome but have to pay a supplement of £3 per night. For 2006 members pay £10.95 per night. If you would like to go please let me know ASAP. I have already had 4 bookings and if the demand is there I will try to book a further 4 beds if possible. Please let me know if you are interested. It will be on a strictly first come first served basis. A deposit of £8 per

person would be appreciated.
John Green. Telephone 01332 832101

Dolomites - July 21st - August 4th

This year's Alpine meet will be in the Dolomites, camping at Cortina. A full write-up will follow in due course, but if you want more details or to register an interest, please get in touch with Simon Pape.

LUNDY September 15th- 22nd. 2007

Only fifty yards from the Marisco Tavern, the Barn will be our home for a week of climbing, walking [though not far as Lundy is only three miles long], idling, snorkelling, seal watching, feeding the ducks or just exploring. The Barn accommodates just fourteen people so this early notice will enable you to book your holiday early and get your name down on my list before the rush starts. The cost of the accommodation and the boat to get you there and back will be around £95.00. More details on this nearer the time, so hurry up and give me a ring on 01332 670459 or e-mail derek.pike1234@virgin.net to book your place. Derek.

Hut Bookings March 2007

HEATHY LEA.

March 23rd -24th John Salmon cottage/barn.

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

March 2 nd - 3 rd	Bedford M.C.	16 beds,
	Oread room	2 beds
March 9 th - 10 th	Tuesday C.C.	6 beds.
March 16 th -17 th	Surbiton/Kingston M.C	16 beds.
March 23 rd - 24 th .	South Cheshire C C	16 beds.
March 30 th - 31 st .	vacant.	

PLEASE NOTE Colin will be away from 11th to 18th of March, so please send any last minutre bookings to Chuck Hooley.

Reports from past meets

Report from the February Committee meeting
Rob Tresidder reported that he enjoyed a good dinner with the Pinnacle Club on our behalf.

The Hon. Sec. has written to the Chatsworth Estate again about Heathy Lea but has still not received a reply.

Some money has been spent at T.Y.W. on a hot water heater for mashing etc. and a new radiator

in the kitchen. Derek Pike reported that they are both excellent bits of kit but unfortunately the water heater does not dispense either beer or curry. Hoping this oversight can be remedied in the near future. Tony Howard proposed a vote of thanks (carried unanimously) to the H.S.C. for fitting the new water heater.

The accounts have been sent to Reg. Squires for auditing.

The treasurer has a new e-mail address: s.pape@virgin.net

A Huts Sub-Committee meeting was held on the 17th January 2007.

Colin Hobday compiled some figures for bednights for Heathy Lea for the past year, which show the Heathy Lea is grossly under-utilised.

It was agreed to keep a log book at each hutte for recording work done, inspections etc.

Chuck Hooley is to arrange for a valuation to be done on T.Y.W. for the full rebuilding cost and the current market value.

Rob Tresidder is to bring to the members' attention at the next A.G.M. the necessity for a debate on the future of Heathy Lea so that members will be able to decide on its future at the 2008 A.G.M.

Pam Storer has volunteered to become a member of the H.S.C.

Tony Howard has agreed to take over from Tim Cairns as winter evening meets leader, and Rob Tresidder is to write to Tim thanking him for his good work over the last 4 years.

J.Green has agreed to focus on environmental issues that affect the Club.

Graham has finally added a committee page to the website, with photos.

Lagangarbh 9-11th February

Neil Weatherstone

The trip got off to a very wintry start. At rush hour, snow fell in Derbyshire thwarting one carload of Oreads near Buxton. The others, though few in number, managed to brave the testing driving conditions and arrived safely at the cosy Lagangarbh cottage in Glen Coe. There wasn't much ice locally, so Mike H and Simon P arose early on Saturday morning and headed to the Ben only to be repelled by the high winds near the CIC hut. So, they managed to amuse themselves by staying in a pub all afternoon watching the rugby. Neil W, Pete T, Charles, Ceri and Blue the dog attempted Creise and Meall a Bhuiridh, but cut

short their route due to the high winds and driving snow and just reached Meall a Bhuiridh. Sledges were carried and the party descended rapidly down the pistes of the ski area, which was fun until one sledge broke on a rock and caused a coccyx to ache. Derek wandered lonely and aimlessly like a doomed soul in search of salvation across the barren land between the Devil's Staircase and Sron Gharbh. He then battled courageously against the hurricane blowing along the Old Military Road back to the hut, where salvation was found at the bottom of a bottle of red.

A good night was had in the Clachaig Inn, where additional Oreads were found and a beer festival was just starting. Mike's taxi was cramped in the back but quick and efficient as usual. No one was up early on Sunday for some reason and most just headed back home at a leisurely pace. But a few hardy types walked up onto Stob Dubh of the Buachaille Etive Beag before returning home via Glasgow stopping for a delicious deep-fried battered haggis.

"It Ain't Half Hot, Mum" (Ice climbing in Italy in the age of global warming) by Malcom Leick

Snow and ice can be an elusive thing in January as winter rolls relentlessly closer to July. A week in Scotland was a study in rain in all its many guises – torrential, persistent, and horizontal. A four day winter climbing course was aborted after 3 days with the only ice spied at the bottom of a whisky glass. However, indoor sessions at the Ice Factor honed the skills in vertical ice needed for Trient and Cogne. Ok so we expect dodgy weather in Scotland but surely the Alps would offer pure, spectacular ice, the blue stuff of Stevie Haston's dreams.

Flying into Geneva there was a distinct lack of snow and texts from Cogne described temperatures of 11 degrees, (C not F!) Undaunted we set off up the Trient valley and were soon slipping about like Bambi. An hour and several hundred feet higher, we were tooling up beneath ice sheathed slabs and the first screws were sunk to start the days climbing in an impressive mountain setting. Derek and Neil thought they were in Scotland. While the rest of us stopped when the ice ran out, they pushed on into the turf, bushes and rock till there was no pro left and the only way down was a meandering and lengthy descent. So lengthy, that as darkness fell we feared that they were lost for good.

The next day brought rain, and we split for Cogne driven by ecstatic visions of razor sharp front points sinking into high quality ice. Meeting up with friends the word "thin" fell into the conversation with alarming frequency but there was definitely stuff to have a go at.

Sentinel de Troll offered 350m of mostly easy angled ice with a couple of short, steep, and melting sections. However in my haste to get ahead of the ice school following hot on our heels, a few things got left behind in the sack. Including... yes of course.. head torches.

At the end of a long and fulfilling day, each abseil got more gripping as night and the snow swept in. And then the ropes jammed. Having left our last pair in the Lakes and suffered the ridicule that only the Oread can provide, honour had to prevail. Besides which we had another 3 pitches to go down. The traditional skills of swearing, and prussiking back up the rope (twice!), finally did the trick. In the pitch dark, laying the ropes against the snow and squinting was the only way of working out the colours and which one to pull next. By now the ropes resembled an upturned pot of spaghetti and my swearing rate and volume was increasing dramatically. But we made it down with ropes and reputation safely intact knowing that much can be lost in a moment's haste. To prove the point, at midnight we were leaving A&E with a friend's arm in plaster. The path out of the valley was an ice slick and advice to keep the crampons on had sadly been ignored. A booked 5 week trip to New Zealand instantly went out of the window, replaced by a date with the surgeon's knife.

The following days the snow fell, and fell, and the temperature slumped. But there was now so much snow, we couldn't reach the bloody climbs. Sometimes you just can't win. Nevertheless, a stunning place and Nordic ski lessons and a posh sauna compensated nicely.

Future newsletters - call for reports and notices of meets

Please send me all articles, notices of future meets and reports of past meets by **23 March 2007**.

In particular I would like to receive reports from Stuart Hatward on Patterdale, Rob Tresidder on the

Welcome to new members

Please welcome into membership Dave Roscoe and Nigel Briggs.

Ski reports

1) for Hochgurgl/Obergurgl resort, located in southern Tirol near Austro-Italian border.

Conditions to middle of January have made for poor skiing - lots of sunshine, temperatures above freezing but very little snowfall. The end of January saw rain falling up to 2500m, and temperatures at the top of Wurmkogel (3082m) were just below freezing. Hochgurgl is well supplied with snow cannon, so all bar one of the runs were open with artificial snow, but this turned to porridge by the afternoon. Obergurgl had a number of runs closed as the cannons don't cover as much of the skiing area. Hochgurgl lost a couple of days skiing as the winds were gusting over 100kmh, closing all the lifts.

During February, the sunshine continued, as did the lack of snowfall. The temperatures plunged to around -25 Celsius at the top of Wurmkogel, -12 in Hochgurgl. Unfortunately, winds continued to be high and this caused a number of ice patches to develop on the piste, making for difficult skiing, as there was very little snow to pull over.

The last week has seen approximately 35cm of snow fall, and temperatures remain below freezing, around -5 Celsius on top of Wurmkogel, 0 Celsius in Hochgurgl. The winds are still gusting, so some days may have closed lifts, but they rarely sustain the levels of January and February. The lower slopes in Untergurgl (around 1800m) have artificial snow to 25cm, but the upper slopes have a much healthier 115cm. Conditions are best in the morning, as the snow becomes slushy in the afternoon. Currently, 20 of 22 runs are open, with all lifts working.

2) for Alpe d'Huez located in Isere, France

The half term week started with poor weather: low cloud and warm temperatures. During the first few days overnight the temperatures only just dropped below freezing, and high winds closed some lifts putting the majority of Black runs out of bounds. Wednesday was pivotal; during the day warm weather gave rain

at 2100m and lower, but overnight a healthy snowfall dropped around 1m of snow to give good powder. Thursday and Friday were days of clear skies, sunshine and good ski-ing. On Friday the classic long black run Sarenne was opened for the first time this season, but as the afternoon wore on the long schuss started to lose cover.

Easter (6th - 9th April 2007) meet Dorset

Sharon is organising her very first meet to glorious sunny Dorset over the Easter weekend. Dorset has something for everyone:

- super safe bolt clipping (for red point heroes like Chris Radcliffe) at Portland;
- an enjoyable, fun introduction to sea cliff climbing at Subliminal;
- classics across the grades on perfect rock in a stunning setting in the Boulder Ruckle

Route descriptions to wet your appetite are here:

http://www.rockfax.com/databases/results_area.html?id=6 including the best HVS in the country (happy to debate this over a pint):
<http://www.rockfax.com/databases/r.php?id=4322> Details on accommodation: Tom's Field, see

<http://www.tomsfielcamping.co.uk/index.html>
Unfortunately Tom's Field won't take bookings and it has been busy at Bank Holidays recently. I suggest the first people to arrive spread out and book lots of spots! If we can't get on other camping options are here:

<http://www.rockfax.com/areas/dorset/accommodation.html>

The pub is the King's Arms in Langton Matravers. Please will you let Sharon (or me) know if you would like to come so that we can get an idea of numbers.

See you in the King's Arms! Sharon & Roger

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