

# NEWSLETTER MONTHLY



Trip Reports:  
**Field Day**

What Else We've Been Doing:  
**195m Abseil**

April 2008

## In this issue

Last Meeting	3
Next Meeting	3
Quote of the Month	3
Announcements	3
Trip Reports	3
Field Day, Lindfield Rocks - 19th April, 2008	3
What Else We've Been Doing	4
195m Abseil, Pierces Pass - 16th April, 2008	4
Dexter's Photo Competition	4
Future Trips	5

Cover Shot:  
Min on the 195m abseil at Pierces Pass.  
Photo by Julie Burton

## Last Meeting

Last meeting we had trips reports from the field day. We also had reports of other activities we've been up to, including a 195m abseil, look for that to appear in the future trips. John Gray entertained us with a selection of slides highlighting the beautiful Blue Mountains.

## Next Meeting

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2008  
Time: 7.30 pm  
Venue: Baden Powell Scout Camp  
Pomona Street, Pennant Hills

## Quote of the Month

"This is fun!" - New member Penny Cook enjoying learning how to prussik.

## Announcements

There will be a committee meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May. This will be to schedule trips for the second half of this year. The meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Please let Dave Stuckey know if you will be attending. Also, whether attending or not, any suggestions for trips would be most welcome. Although not necessary, it'd be an added bonus if you're willing to lead any trips.

NSWSC (NSW Speleological Council) are having a meeting at Bungonia on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May. If you're interested, contact Rod Smith and he can provide details of the agenda etc.

SUSS (Sydney University Speleological Society) are celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> May. We have received an invitation to their celebrations. The celebrations will be held at Jenolan. Contact Rod Smith if you want the details.

Jim Crockett is looking into organising a trip to Wombeyan Caves. However, to do this, we need to join a trip with another club that knows the area. This will require a bit more organisation than for a normal trip, so Jim is wanting to know how many people would be interested in that kind of trip before going any further. So, if you are interested in visiting Wombeyan Caves sometime next year, please let Jim know.

## Trip Reports

### ***Field Day, Lindfield Rocks - 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2008***

Attending: Rod, David, Jim, Warwick, Guest visitors Deb and Penny, Bonus visit from John Marshall, Johan (TL).

Remember the first time you tied a prussik knot? Whilst looking at the knot, you then transferred your weight onto it, and watched in amazement as that little knot gripped the rope and held your weight – all this whilst suspended down a cliff.

That was the exact experience of Deb and Penny on our recent Field day at Lindfield Rocks.

For our visitors and regulars, it was also an opportunity to practice a variety of abseils on different diameter ropes in addition to using a diverse assortment of descenders including Racks, Figure Eights, Piton & Karabiner and even Rod's new Petzl ID (if you want total abseil control on 195m pitches, buy one)

The MSS Field Day is primarily a training and practice day, so that members and guests can familiarise themselves with rope skills such as stopping mid-abseil and locking off, changing from abseil to prussik and back again, self rescue from a rope, learning how to use different pieces of equipment and sharing knowledge and experiences.

What better time to get your mechanical prussik system totally sorted for the next ascent out of Bottomless Pit?

All up, a successful day.

Thanks to everyone for their participation and keenness.

Remember, if any member feels the need for another Field Day to be scheduled – for purposes of refreshing rope skills – please ask and we will schedule a day.

Johan  
MSS Safety Officer

## What Else We've Been Doing

### ***195m Abseil, Pierces Pass - 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2008***

Participants: Roderick Smith, Julie Burton, Min Neville.

With a day off work looming, I contacted Rod and Min and said let's go abseil the Mirraball! But Rod said how about we go try his new rope on a single 195m pitch at Pierce's Pass. Shit yeah, me and Min said. So I arrived at the picnic area to find Rod and Min unreeling 200m of 11mm rope and stuffing it into a pack.

With Rod now lugging two packs, we were at the anchor point after only a 10 minute walk. The abseil today was from the point where basejumpers like to jump and there was a steel reo stake in the rock at the edge that we could use as an anchor. We backed this up to a huge bollard about 20m back. The boys quickly had the rigging under way as I sussed out a good vantage point for photos above a huge amphitheater a little further around the cliffline.

The boys rigged the rope as a single line and Min went first and very quickly observed that the new rope was "fast". And this was at the top where the rope drag was at it's greatest! Min abseiled with a rack (I think), and when he found he needed extra friction as he descended, he just wrapped the rope around his volleys. The melt mark in the sole of his shoe was impressive!



Rod halfway down the abseil  
Photo: Julie Burton

Rod was next cab off the rank and rapped on a Petzl ID. A smooth and slow descent, then it was my turn. I used my Piranha and stepped over the edge for my first very long abseil. My longest pitch previous to this was 70m. I quickly found how different this stuff is. I used a self belay which I normally don't bother with, and rapped slowly, very aware of the the heat generating in my abseil device. I noticed too how much harder it is physically on such a long drop. The strain on the abdominals as I held my body upright, and being aware of maintaining the blood flow from my legs back into my upper body to prevent harness hang syndrome. I touched down beside Rod and Min to hear how Rod had made about 6 landings. He'd touch down on the stretch of the rope, which then acted like a rubber band and lifted him back off his feet several times before he stayed down!

With no de-rigging to do from down here, we set off bashing through thick scrub. Min executed a beautiful pirouette before pausing, and tumbling head first down an incline. it was so elegantly done that I had to sit down to appreciate the spectacle (and recover from laughing). The fresh gashes oozing blood from behind both knees inflicted by the loya vines that resulted in that impromptu dance, Min led the way and found the basejumpers track that took us to the main walking track and back to the cars. Then back to the cliff edge where we de-rigged and soaked the the awesome views for a while.

Excellent day, top rap, and even better company . Safer than than teaching, eh Min!

<http://imageevent.com/jburton/abseiling/longdroppiercespass160408>

Julie

## Dexter's Photo Competition

We are launching a new competition this year. Yes, it's a photo competition. Unfortunately, Sinister has gotten his hands on it, so it's not your average photo competition. The idea of this competition is to select an item (for example, a hairdryer). Then, during the year, you must photograph this object at various locations (for example, halfway down an abseil). Submit your photos to the Newsletter editors for judging.

\* The judges descision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Bribes may work.

# Future Trips

Welcome to the new look future trips section. Anyone with artistic abilities are welcome to submit their own icons for any of the categories here, and/or any other categories. If we use your icon then you'll have to be prepared to accept the praise and admiration from your fellow club members. Send your icons, or any other feedback, to [roderick\\_smith@hotmail.com](mailto:roderick_smith@hotmail.com).

## Legend:

### Activity



Caving



Canyoning



Diving



Hiking



Abseiling



Cycling



Horse Riding



Kayaking



Climbing



Skiing

### Grade



Easy



Easy/Medium



Medium



Medium/Hard



Hard



Extreme

### Accommodation



Camping



Cottage
















### Extras

























Kites



Camp Ovens

Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
Castle Head	3 <sup>rd</sup> May			Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 dstuckey@acay.com.au			30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Malaita Wall	4 <sup>th</sup> May			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au			30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Boars Head	17 <sup>th</sup> May			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 boonara@tpg.com.au			14 <sup>th</sup> May	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Africa	18 <sup>th</sup> May			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 boonara@tpg.com.au			14 <sup>th</sup> May	
Mt Solitary	31 <sup>st</sup> May - 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun			Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 dstuckey@acay.com.au			28 <sup>th</sup> May	
<b>Other Info:</b>								

Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
Jenolan	7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> Jun		TBA	TBA			4 <sup>th</sup> Jun	12
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Jenolan	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug		TBA	TBA			31 <sup>st</sup> Jul	12
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Pierces Pass and ...	TBA			Rod Smith 0438 444 262 <a href="mailto:roderick_smith@hotmail.com">roderick_smith@hotmail.com</a> (that's 2 underscores)			TBA	
<b>Other Info:</b> 200m abseils. Massive exposure!!								
Jenolan	1 <sup>st</sup> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov		TBA	TBA			29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	12
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Danae Brook	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 <a href="mailto:johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au">johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au</a>			N/A	Trip Full
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Wyanbene	TBA		TBA	Jim Crockett 0407 284 256 <a href="mailto:jim.crockett@reach.com">jim.crockett@reach.com</a>	TBA	TBA	TBA	7

Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Snowys	TBA 2008			Rosetta Lidano 0439 696 006 rosetta_l2002@yahoo.com.au		\$390 accommodation + potentially transport, hire, etc. See other info	TBA	
<b>Other Info:</b> Accommodation will be booked at The Lodge for Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> July – Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> July (2 nights). Check in between 2pm and 4pm. Cost of \$390 per person (twin share) includes breakfast and dinner. This MUST be paid upfront. Additional costs include: ski hire (including skis, poles and boots) - \$73.00, snowboard hire (including board, boots and risk guards) - \$90.00, Parker and Pants - \$43.00, Mountain Pass - \$190.00, Coach from Central to Bullock Flat ski tube - \$178.00 return, transport from Bullock Flat ski tube to The Lodge - \$53.00. If you plan on catching the coach, it leaves Central at 8:00am on Friday, arriving at 3:10pm and leaves Bullock Flat ski tube at 4:50pm on Sunday, arriving at 11:55pm								
New Zealand	Dec 2008 – Jan 2009			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au		TBA	TBA	
Tasmania	TBA	 	TBA	Jim Crockett 0407 284 256 jim.crockett@reach.com	TBA	TBA	TBA	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Nullarbor	TBA		TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	
<b>Other Info:</b>								



