

A Rousing Success



Claire Michael has been living in the Chamonix valley for a number of years and was a participant in the MCI Alpine Meet in Saas Grund this year. She thoroughly enjoyed the experience

We rolled into sunny Saas Grund at about 6pm. The first thing that struck me was that it was sunny - we'd had torrential rain in Chamonix for the previous two weeks - and the second was how many people were there, including lots of familiar faces. Tents were thrown up and we were off for a *rosti* at the Hotel Dom.

On Sunday morning we drove up to the Dam early and walked for two and a half hours to the base of the Joderhorn - lovely rock all the way to the summit, a very pleasant re-introduction to the Alps.

Monday started with the spectacular walk up to the Almageller Hutte. We ditched some gear, had a quick picnic and then followed the dotted yellow flashes to the base of the Dri Hornli (3,096m). What a great climb: lovely solid rock, interesting pitches all the way and a straightforward walk off.

When we got back to the hut it was swarming with MCI meet members: four of the five course groups were there for the night. There was great banter and discussion about what everyone had done that day and where they were off to the following day.

We managed to get up and out just ahead

of the crowd. Two hours later and we were at 'Port', at 3,290m the start of the traverse of the Portjengrat.

We started off on loose rock, which rapidly progressed to lovely, solid, often airy, pitches with sections where we moved together along a fantastic, seemingly never-ending ridge. Route finding was often interesting, one section led to rucksacks being discarded and some less than elegant moves up through an overhanging chimney. The two lads went the correct way and trotted up a little rock face wondering what all the fuss was about. By the time we had reached P. d'Andolla (3,653m) and negotiated the soggy snow slope back to the hut, we'd been on the go for twelve hours. We had a quick cuppa at the hut before our two hour walkout back to the valley floor.

On Thursday morning we got the cable car up to Kreuzboden and climbed the SE ridge on the Jegihorn (3,206m), very straightforward climbing on more solid rock. From here we walked across and up to the Hohsaas Hut. Our next objective was the Laggenghorn (4,010m) by the SE ridge.

Up and out before 4.30, we reached the col Lagginjoch (3,499m) to gain the ridge, which was a bit crumbly to start with but got rapidly better. Wonderful climbing and a great end to a brilliant week.

New Training Leaflet

The new MCI Introduction to Mountain Training leaflet is available, covering BOS (Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe) and all its associated mountain training schemes. If you would like a copy contact Tim Orr (+353 1) 625 1115 or email tim@mountaineering.ie

MCI Youth Scottish Winter Skills, €16 -21 March 2008

This programme aims to provide young people with an opportunity to learn the skills necessary to handle Scottish winter conditions under the supervision of experienced instructors and mountaineers. An ideal candidate for this course would be aged 16-21 and would have a good level of fitness, and some hillwalking or rock-climbing experience. They should be enthusiastic and eager to learn skills, with a view to using them independently in the future.

If you are interested in applying, please contact: Angela Carlin, MCI Youth Development Officer. Email: angela@mountaineering.ie Tel: (+44) 284 372 5354.

Upcoming Events

Thursday 29 November

Sir Chris Bonington lecture

53° North Store, Blanchardstown
Tickets €15 or €10 for MCI members.

3 or 8 December / 21 or 27 January

Introduction to Hillwalking Skills

Killarney, Co Kerry

Contact Nathan Kingerlee, email:

info@outdoorsireland.com

22 - 23 December

ML Holders Workshop

Donegal

Contact Bren Whelan, email:

bren@mountaintraining.ie

Date TBA

MLA Weekend

Cappanalea OEC, Co Kerry

Contact Tim Orr, email:

training@mountaineering.ie

The Mountaineering Council of Ireland (MCI) is the National Governing Body for the sport of mountaineering in Ireland.

The MCI covers the full spectrum of mountaineering activities including bouldering, hill walking, rambling, rock climbing, alpinism and indoor climbing.

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