



Climbing @ Nowra (Aug 11 & 12)

Beginners climbing with Pez, Mahmood, and Bill began on Saturday with some casual 17s at The Grotto on the north side of the Shoalhaven. We picked up the pace a little with a lazy afternoon 20, but the old Volleys made short work of that one. (Quite literally a short climb!)

When we eventually met up with the rest of the group for a few quiet beers and a solid pub meal, at the local, we reflected on the day's climbs and how much we had enjoyed them. David Cock's entourage had been toughing it out on the 7s at the undisclosed location that Pez, Mahmood, Bill and I somehow managed to overlook. In any case the mood was bright and the conversation lively as the action moved to the campsite, and everyone rallied to cap off the day with friends by the fireside.



All the crew on the beginners climbing trip at Nowra

The following morning saw the requisite sleep-in to shake off remaining inebriation, followed by brekky and a quick pack up to head out to Thompson's Point, directly opposite the campsite, on the southern side of the river. After a short walk in, the early mist cleared and the sun shone through the leaves of the eucalyptus trees.

The more experienced climbers, like Pez, Mahmood, and Dave lead a variety of climbs with grades ranging from 14 up to 22. With top ropes set up, the day was prime for some more rock action and there was certainly no lack of choice. Some learnt to belay, others to chimney climb and I ditched the volleys. Calls of "On Belay," "Climbing," "Take" and "Slack" were sometimes interspersed with "Falling" or "Rope" as either the ropes or the people above our heads threatened to succumb to gravity. Body sizes varied and if not for Dave, little Alison (on belay) might

have shot half-way up the rock face when Saskia lost her grip on the 15.

After a pretty cruisy day snacking on bread and spreads, and maybe a little climbing, the light began to fade, and we realized that a great weekend was almost over. We said our goodbyes, packed the cars and began the journey back home.

Blake Bambrook

Mt Wilson to Bilpin Bush Run (Aug 25)

A few crazed UNSWOCers searching for something a bit different from the Oxfam Trailwalker decided to venture up to the Blue Mountains to do almost a marathon through the bush. The Mt Wilson to Bilpin bush run is a 36km event, mostly on fire trails with a bit of single track and road running too. Around 180 people with a strange idea of Saturday morning fun limbered up at the starting line. It was quite a friendly event and well catered for by the volunteers from the Rural Bush Fire Brigade who even served us some pre-event scones and tea!

At 10am the runners set off through the quiet, leafy town of Mt Wilson and along the first 21kms of undulating hills on fire trails and bush. We were treated to some magnificent views of the valleys and canyons below as we wove our way, up and down, along the ridges. At the aid stations about every 4 – 5km we shovelled down jelly beans, fruit, water and sports drink to keep us going.

The last 15kms included 8kms of downhill dirt road, which has quite a gradual gradient giving you quite good value (none of this steep descent business) although by the time you get to the creek at the bottom it is almost a relief to put a bit more load on the tired old legs and push back up the 7km hill on the other side. It was surprising how high and how quickly we climbed while steadily jogging up the gradual incline. At about the 25km mark I decided that training would probably have been a very good idea... After a smashing time of 3hrs 11mins Stewart Johnston crossed the line, followed by Christine Quigley and Shelley Bambrook in 3hrs 39mins. The event winner did it in 2hrs 20mins. It was a great run that was very well organised, the volunteers were fantastic and the course was a pleasure to run.



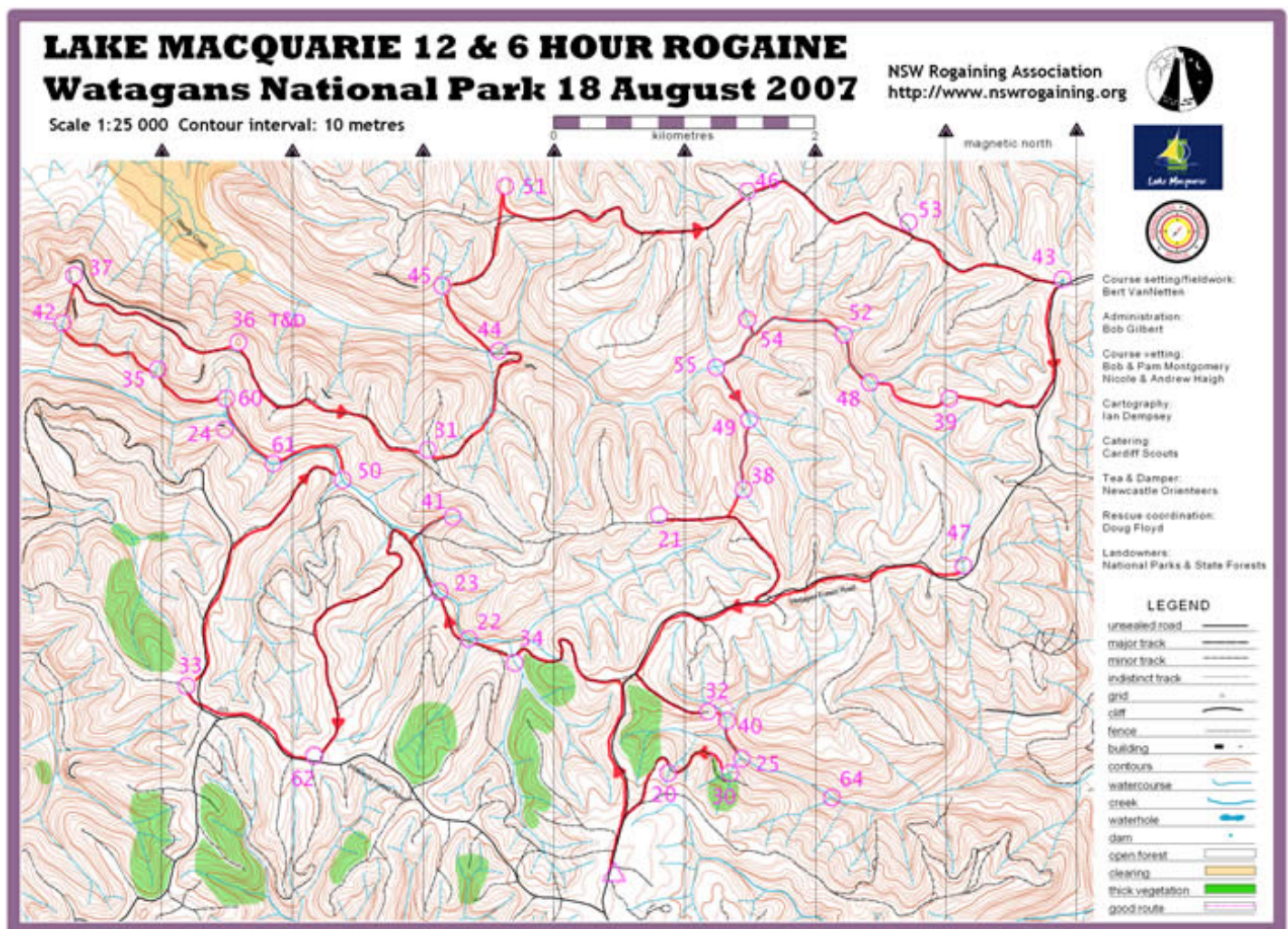


Lake Macquarie Rogaine (18 Aug)

Held in the Watagan State Forest 2 hours North of Sydney this event was great for rogainers of all abilities. There were plenty of tracks, although some were well disguised and had become quite indistinct and overgrown, and it seemed that trees had been deliberately felled to impede progress. The “open eucalypt forest” was not quite as open as one would expect, especially some of the near impenetrable areas close to the creeks and watercourses where it was possible to be completely immobilised by extensive networks of vines, fallen trees and thick scrub. Proceeding along creeks was also a tricky process scrambling over large boulders and mossy rocks. The checkpoints were located on fairly obvious features and not too much compass navigation was required.

There were both 6 hour and 12 hour categories and these commenced at 12 noon. The layout of the checkpoints provided good route choices for novices while also allowing more challenging, high scoring routes to be taken by experienced rogainers. Stewart Johnston and his partner Roland placed 4th in the Men’s division of the 6 hour event and Blake Bambrook and Shelley Bambrook came 2nd in the mixed division of the 12 hour event. The event was well organised and the food at the hash house and tea and damper stop was excellent. Rogaining events such as this are a good way to improve and test navigation skills, they show the importance of communication and teamwork, and provide a fantastic opportunity to go nuts in the great Australian bush!

Shelley Bambrook



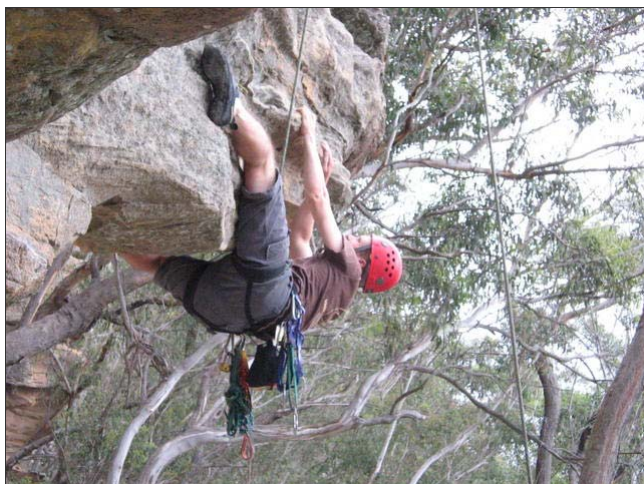
Map showing the route taken by the winning team of the 12 hour category



Club Weekend Away (Sept 1 & 2)

The club weekend away was held last weekend, with around 20 people making the trip up to the mountains.

Once again climbing proved to be the high demand activity, with all participants having a climb at Mount York on the Saturday. For once the weather cooperated, giving us nice, warm (almost hot) conditions. Mount York has something for everyone—after putting up some beginner friendly top ropes, the keener climbers went off to find some lead climbing.



Everyone seemed to have a good time, and a potential new sport was born – vertical skateboarding. Just to mix things up a bit static rope was also put up for abseil training and practice. Most of the newer members had a go, getting their skills (and safety awareness) up to scratch for the multipitch trip down Malaita Point the next day. Late in the day I managed to demonstrate some ascending technique, yo-yoing up and down the rope before finally topping out using prussiks. Keep an eye out for some week-day rope skills, coming soon to a campus near you!

It is nice to see traditions evolving, and that's the way it is with the Gardiners Inn in Blackheath. The weather on Mount York turned wild after nightfall on Saturday, compelling us to seek out the famous deep dish pies (ahh, the luxuries of car camping).

On Sunday, a trio departed to take a Schwing at Medlow Bath, while the eight of us that remained drove to Malaita Point, near Katoomba. We had a good group, and everyone got the hang of things quite quickly, especially as half the group had barely abseiled before. We moved along the route efficiently, with time to spare for lunch at Vera's Grotto on the way out, and for a coffee in Katoomba. Hopefully there will be many more to come!

Stewart Johnston

Upcoming Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>
7 th Sept	Friday Night Climbing	The Ledge, Sydney Uni
7 th Sept	Blue Mountains Climbing	Blue Mountains
14 th Sept	Friday Night Climbing	The Ledge, Sydney Uni
21 st Sept	Friday Night Climbing	The Ledge, Sydney Uni
22 nd Sept	Snow Camping	Snowy Mountains
22 nd Sept	Great Ocean Walk—Bushwalking	Victoria
22-23 rd September	Anaconda Adventure Race	Foster, NSW
23 rd September	Sydney Marathon / Half-marathon	Sydney
7 th October	Sri Chinmoy Multi-sport Challenge	Canberra
13-14th October	Boree Log Weekend	TBA
20-21 st October	NSW Rogaining Championships	Mudgee
27 th October	Hawkesbury Canoe Classic	Hawkesbury River
27 th October	Mont 24hr Mountain Bike Race	Majura Pines, ACT