



# NEWSLETTER

## New Year's Message from the Chairman

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

COC 4 Peaks Challenge	2
Club fleeces	2
Dermot Somers talk	2
MS training	3
Maamturks Challenge	3
ML2 report	4

2009 was a busy year for Clare Outdoor Club. A combination of a hardworking committee, dedicated leaders and a great bunch of enthusiastic members made it an interesting and eventful year.

*This year, 2010, is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club.* We are all indebted to those who founded the club and served on past committees. All have made a significant contribution to building an active club with a diverse range of outdoor activities being introduced over the years.

The club now has a brand new logo, we have club fleeces, hoodies and hats to mark the 25<sup>th</sup>

anniversary, but more importantly we are planning a series of special events to mark the occasion. Our first plan is the inclusion of the highest peak in each province on the club calendar. The first three are on the spring calendar with the fourth to follow. Surfing is to be added to our activities for the year with an introductory day in March. There will of course be a party in true Clare Outdoor Club style, and that's just for starters. We would like to hear your ideas as we plan the rest of the year's events.

What are your plans and aims for 2010? Why not give rockclimbing a go or swap your climbing shoes for hiking boots occasionally; find

a new challenging route up a familiar hill; plan a camping trip; try surfing or kayaking; run a marathon; try a triathlon; cycle the Tour de Burren; complete your log book and Mountain Skills /Mountain Leader Assessment – the possibilities are endless.

*Broaden your horizons, set yourself new challenging goals. Together we can make 2010 a year to remember.*

- Mary Conway

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Deposit for Four Peaks Challenge payable by **31<sup>st</sup> Jan** – see page 2.
- First MS training session rescheduled to **23<sup>rd</sup> Jan** – see page 3.
- OSI maps offer closes **31<sup>st</sup> Jan** – see page 4.
- Club fleeces **now available** – see page 2.



ML training is a picnic!

## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Four Peaks Challenge.



Typical ML weather!

As part of the clubs 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, plans are afoot to climb the highest peaks in all four provinces. The first peak, our tallest, Carrauntoohil (1039m) takes place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March. The second and third take place over a bumper Easter Bank Holiday Weekend taking in Slieve Donard (850m) in Co. Down and Lugnaquilla (925m) in Co. Wicklow

but leaving time for celebrations on the Sunday night! Mayo's Mweelrea (814m) will follow in the Spring/Summer calendar.

To book a place on the Easter Weekend, a €50 deposit must be paid to Rory Murphy (087 2457540) by **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> of January** as accommodation needs to be booked.

So why not join us and help celebrate our clubs special milestone and make standing on the top of Irelands four provinces your New Year's Resolution!

*Interested in learning to use a compass, interpret maps, find your way on the mountains in the dark? Check out the club training programme.*

### Club fleeces, beanies and hats.

The new official range of COC fleeces, hoodies, beanies and hats was launched at the Christmas party in Leenane on Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>! Many members have already placed orders, and will shortly be sporting the new club logo on the hills.

To order yours, please contact Hugh Carthy (086 8055220)

Prices are as follows:

Fleeces: €37

Hoodies: €20

Beanies/hats: €10

Hoodies are navy; fleeces are black/grey or light blue/grey.

Check your size before ordering with somebody who has already purchased – the fleeces are large fitting!

### Dermot Somers – talk in Galway.

Dermot Somers will give an illustrated talk on **Tuesday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> at 8.15 pm** in Club Áras na nGael,

45 Lr. Dominic St. Galway. He will talk - **as Gaeilge** - about his adventures in Nepal, Iran, The Sahara and

elsewhere. A small fee of €5.00 will be charged for the talk, and all are welcome.

## Mountain Skills Training

Mountain Skills (MS) is the entry-level training programme for hillwalkers in Ireland. Participants learn the basic skills needed to walk competently and confidently in the mountains.

During the January – Easter term, the club will be providing Mountain Skills training for members who would like to learn or refresh some of these basic skills without the expense of registering for formal MS1 and MS2 courses with an outside provider. We plan to arrange a Mountain Skills Assessment (MSA) for

interested members during the following term.

We'll be providing training in:

- map-reading and interpretation,
- using a compass,
- route planning
- preparation of a route card
- night navigation.

The training will include opportunities to practice these skills on the hills during club walks.

Details of the club training are available

on the calendar. Please note, however, that the first session has been rescheduled, and will now take place in the Old Ground Hotel between **10.00am and 12.00pm on Sat, 23rd Jan.** and NOT on 17th as published. Also, we'll be using Map No. 71, and NOT No. 37 as published.

Anybody interested in taking part in any of the training sessions should contact Hugh Carthy on 086-8055220.

Full details of the MS programme at: [www.mountaineering.ie](http://www.mountaineering.ie)

*Loads of [new photos](#) on the [website](#)!*

## Maamturks Challenge 2010.

NUIG Mountaineering Club has just announced details of the 2010 Maamturks Challenge. It will take place on **Easter Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April**, starting between 5.00 and 7.00 am at Corcóg, not far from

Maam Cross.

The Challenge is a 24.3 km. traverse of the Maamturks, finishing at Leenane and with a total ascent of 2,336 m. A number of Club members have completed the Challenge over the

years and have reported a tough but rewarding day's walking.

Unfortunately, it coincides with Parts 2 and 3 of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary COC Four Peaks Challenge (Donard and Lugnaquilla).

*Previous issues of the Newsletter can now be downloaded from the [website](#). Click on the [Newsletter Archive](#) link.*

**OSI Map offer**

Buy any 2 Discovery Series Maps of your choice and get any other 2 Discovery Series Maps free (limited to 4 free maps per person).

This offer runs until the end of January and is only available to personal callers to the OSI shop in the Phoenix Park in Dublin.

To claim free maps, mention the "Mountain Views" offer when buying.

This offer is promoted by the Walkers Association of Ireland, [www.walkersassociation.ie](http://www.walkersassociation.ie)

## ML2 Report

Rory, Elaine, Dave, Mary, Emma and Jim completed the Mountain Leader 2 training in Kerry during the last weekend in November. The original plan, of basing the course in Sleepzone Connemara, had to be changed to Kerry at the last minute, due to flooding in Galway. The new venue of the Aghadoe House was an excellent hostel and we were the only people staying there that weekend. The course provider was Sinead Pollock ([www.torr.ie](http://www.torr.ie)) who was assisted by Darach Ó'Murchú and John Healy. There were a total of 10 people on the course, of which 6 were from Clare Outdoor Club.

### Day 1

Saturday started with a briefing in the hostel about what the weekend involved and then we departed for the Hags Glen before noon. During that afternoon on Saturday we covered steep ground techniques, while staying below the snowline. We recapped all of the ML1 emergency rope work covering anchors, belays, tying in, abseiling, lowering etc. In the evening when we returned to the hostel we spent about an hour going through the required gear list for camping the following night.

### Day 2

Sunday opened with the gear check and backpack weigh in. Recommendation was that the pack for overnight camping should be around 12-13Kg but not to exceed 15! The weigh in resembled a Ryanair check in desk with people considering how much weight they could save by cutting the handle off the tooth brush or separating 2 ply toilet tissue! After a lot of persuasion Rory left the kitchen sink behind and we headed south west around the reeks to an area called Knockmoyle and Knocknagantee to start our expedition. Sinead and John took one group of 6 people and Darach took the remaining 4

trainees. The weather was cold and windy with showers of hail. Each group spent the day hiking to their respective camp sites and practising various navigation techniques en route. Camp site found, tents erected and dinner ingested, we headed off for 4 hours of bitterly cold night navigation. The almost full moon was a help but lakes appearing that were not on the map and streams that disappeared from the map kept things very interesting indeed. We returned around 10:30pm and jumped straight into sleeping bags while still warm from walking. It was a very cold night in the tent as was evidenced by ice frozen on the canopy in the morning.

### Day 3

We crawled out of the tents at first light on Monday to get some porridge and hot chocolate to bring some warmth back after a cold night. After the initial cold shock I think everyone appreciated the beautiful frosty sunrise we rarely get to encounter on our day trips to the hills. Backpacks reloaded, we headed off and spent some more time practicing steep ground leadership techniques, navigation and also got a chance to put some of the rope work into practice in a real situation. We arrived back at the road where we covered the basics of river crossing techniques and then returned the 45 minutes to the hostel for a quick debriefing session. Next stop was the nearest restaurant/bar where plates were licked clean.

- Jim McHale



COC ML training

## CLARE OUTDOOR CLUB

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