



A New Club for Young Members

By Tanya Tennant

Over the years the MCoFS Youth Climbing Series (formerly BRYS) charged full steam ahead until the day of the finals and then the structured training stopped. The kids had an extended break until training resumed around September time and so the cycle went on.

The same scenario came around again following the finals at EICA: Ratho in June 2008. Everyone was on such a massive high and the Scotland South kids had just returned a fantastic team result which placed them second overall, rewarding the expert tuition delivered week in week out by Neil McGeachy and his team.

However, one significant change during this year was that whilst the kids were off receiving training, the parents also began 'climbing'. Of course this was after the après, the one and a half hour chat over a coffee. It was during the coffee time that it became clear everyone was keen to keep the training going throughout holidays. Then somewhere along the way we all agreed to form an official club, with clear achievable goals and a view to supporting the development of young climbers.

On September 8th 2008, we finally sat down and brought the idea to fruition. That first committee meeting started something that has been snowballing since. We elected our Chairman Scott Forsyth, our Treasurer Alison Bosi, and myself as Secretary.



Photo: Mark Tennant

The club was officially born.

The easy bit out of the way, we set about deciding what we actually wanted to achieve. First and foremost was the identity. We wanted this to be something our kids felt was cool, something instantly identifiable, but most importantly something to take pride in. We had debated at length a name and then subsequently put three names to the kids, asking them to vote for their favourite. It was a tight vote, the winning decision being The Quickdraw Climbing Club.

Next we wanted a snappy logo to go with the name. Several designs were put forward, but the unanimous choice was the one you see here, designed by the parents and subsequently sent to Les at Inkbomb.com, who did an expert job of bringing the club's idea to life.

Our next challenge was working out how to secure funding which would enable us to put our logo on T-shirts, hoodies etc, and have the kids wearing them. Luckily we landed on our feet relatively quickly. Within a couple of months we'd secured sponsorship for our team

clothing from Virgin Money.

Just in time for Christmas we received delivery of the kit, printed for us by Paul at Printthatshirt.com. The kids looked brilliant in the new kit and now when we attend comps throughout the country, we will be sporting our logo with pride, hoping to make that all important first impression which had previously been lacking in our Scotland South Team.

Keeping the momentum going, we then had to decide what else we wanted to achieve for the kids. Quickly we realised we simply wanted to try to provide the best possible coaching, training and instruction in both indoor and outdoor climbing and a programme of events to back up the already brilliant training that the kids receive at Ratho every Saturday morning.

Ideas from the kids included having more coaching sessions, building on last year's series of six master classes run by Scott Muir for the MCoFS. The six coaches who ran these sessions made an enormous impact, each delivering a different session pitched at the youngsters' level.



Jamie Davidson

Photo: Scott Forsyth



Parent Power: Sandy Carr and Grant Saunders

Photo: Mark Tennant

Another request was to go outdoors more, an ambition which has been brought to life with funding from a private individual who, hearing of the club's plans and having an interest in climbing and promoting the sport, made a very generous donation to pay for club equipment for outdoors. Roll on spring time when we can finally get out there!

We also consulted with Neil McGeachy, a senior instructor at Ratho and South Scotland Area Youth Coordinator for the MCoFS, and asked him for his input on what he thought we could provide for the kids.

One of Neil's suggestions was something that the club had actually talked about. That suggestion was to find someone to coach the kids who could also mentor them:



someone who they really looked up to and aspired to be like, someone who had also come up through the BRYCS comps and could relate to our kids on a personal level. The name he suggested was exactly the name we had in mind, Jonathan Stocking.

Who could be better: a fantastic young Scottish climber who had just placed fourth at the IFSC World Youth Championships in Sydney, Australia. We approached Jonathan and he was full of enthusiasm right from the off. He readily agreed and we quickly organised his first session with the kids in December. This was a momentous event as it was the Quickdraw Climbing Club's very first own training session. The club feel this is a fantastic coup, to bring someone who is so clearly talented and destined for great things in the climbing world on board at this early stage. We hope to develop this relationship, and to make the sessions Jonny has with the kids a monthly event.

The club currently has sixteen junior members, the majority of whom attend the Saturday morning YCS training club at Ratho.

Quickdraw members have taken the climbing world by storm during 2008 with achievements ranging from four first places in the Scottish Youth Championships to three in the British Youth championships. More recently four of the Quickdraws attended the British Team Trials at Ratho. These were Calum Forsyth, Jaime Davidson, Eleanor Hopkins and Rachel Carr. With all thirty-one club members there to support them on the day, all four did amazingly well. I'm sure this was down to all the whooping and hollering from the sidelines.

Jaime and Eleanor have now been accepted onto the British Team as Aspirants, an inspiring achievement in their first Team Trials. Calum and Rachel were not far behind, getting through to their semi-final and final

respectively, and giving it their all until the very last hold.

Looking towards the New Year we have many things planned, not least to get some serious fundraising underway. Our first major fundraising event is arranged for February 22nd 2009, when we hope to climb the North Face of the Eiger, well, figuratively speaking anyway.

EICA Ratho have kindly offered the use of three walls for the day and by the end of it, as a club, we hope to have climbed the equivalent distance to that of the iconic mountain. And of course we hope to be sponsored for a great deal of money to do it.

We are also involved in the early stages of discussion about the production of a DVD. This would record the activities of the club with the intention of promoting the quality of youth climbing in Scotland and Jonathan's coaching sessions will form an integral part of this venture.

So, the Quickdraw Climbing Club is now a fully operating club, and we have our identity in the form of a cutting edge logo, which you will see much more of in the months and years to come. A fantastic website is updated regularly and has sections for everyone, most importantly the kids are encouraged to add updates and start their own topics in the Forum (maximum use of 'smilies' is essential). We have produced a Christmas newsletter to update everyone on where we are at the moment and where we are heading. We have a detailed development plan as our guide to the coming years and hope that our efforts will initiate more Quickdraw Climbing Clubs across the country. For the remainder of 2008 the focus is on our first training session and of course the Christmas party. In 2009, hopefully the sky is the limit.

For anyone who is interested in joining the club, providing sponsorship or simply wants more information about us and our activities, please visit our website at www.quickdrawclimbingclub.com.



William Bosi on the boulders at Ratho

Photo: Scott Forsyth



Eleanor Hopkins, Angus Davidson, Alasdair Darroch

Photo: Scott Forsyth



Eleanor Hopkins

Photo: Mark Tennant