



MCofS News Release

18 October 2010

For immediate release

Have you 'Winterised' your rucksack?

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) has produced the following article as part of our winter mountain safety initiative. Please feel free to reproduce this short story.

Jimmy thinks he is pretty switched on. He should be; let's face it, he's been around long enough! – 182 Munros under his belt and 20 years experience in the Scottish Hills. Jimmy's hill walking buddies always rely on him and push him to the front when the navigation gets serious. In fact, they seem to think he's a bit of a 'pro'.... little do they know!

Jimmy didn't look quite such a 'pro' as he stumbled down the track last Saturday off that last Munro in the dark. Same old chestnut, he falls for it every autumn; nights drawing in, darker earlier and still Jimmy hasn't added those essential bits of kit to keep him safe as winter draws closer. He would have been off the hill and into the pub for that well deserved pint at least an hour earlier, if only he had remembered to put that head torch in. Jimmy got away with it this time but was painfully aware it could have been a different story, had he slipped in the wrong place or had there not been a bit of light from the moon.

If this story sounds familiar to you, then it might be worth taking some time to think about the essential extras to add to your rucksack as winter approaches. Heather Morning, the Mountain Safety Advisor with The Mountaineering Council of Scotland, offers the following advice: "Shorter daylight hours, dropping temperatures and the first dusting of snow on the hill are obvious indicators for hill walkers to think about some extra pieces of kit in their rucksacks. A head torch (and spare battery) is crucial just in case your chosen route takes a wee bit longer than expected and it is wise to check that your walking partners are carrying their torches as well. It's also well worth considering putting away those lightweight, bendy summer boots and changing into a more rigid pair. Extra layers should be considered, with the addition of a synthetic duvet jacket and emergency shelter stored in the bottom of your rucksack just in case you are stationary on the hill for any length of time. Hats, gloves (I recommend at least 2 pairs) and face protection (such as Buff) will all add to your comfort on

the hill as we move towards the winter season. Finally, you will probably need to carry a bigger rucksack in winter in order to have space for those extra pieces of kit.”

For further information contact Heather Morning on 01479 861 241 or go to the MCofS website at: <http://www.mcofs.org.uk>.

For details of the forthcoming MCofS Winter Lecture Series 2011 please go to <http://www.mcofs.org.uk/winterlectureseries.asp>.

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Notes for Editors:

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.

MCofS is a membership organisation with 10,500 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, grants, and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain weather information services, mountain leader training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities. MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.