



## **MCofS News Release**

13 November 2009

For immediate release

### **GPS for the ladies**

Girls - are you fed up with following others around the mountains? Do you want to gain the skills to competently navigate yourself?

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) and Chicks Unleashed are joining forces to run two 'ladies only' one-day GPS (Global Positioning Systems) training courses in May next year.

The MCofS runs a number of safety-related courses throughout the year, including regular GPS courses, but this is the first time a 'ladies only' course has been organised. The two courses will be held at Glenmore Lodge on Saturday May 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday May 16<sup>th</sup>, and will be run by the MCofS Mountain Safety Adviser, Heather Morning (MIC)\* and Rosie Goolden (MIC) of Chicks Unleashed.

Heather Morning explains the thinking behind the 'Chicks' courses: 'Ladies can often be discouraged from signing up for an outdoor training course, particularly when it involves use of technical equipment. So often when mixed groups are out on the hill, men take a lead role and ladies just follow, assuming that the guys are more competent (big assumption!). We all know the old cliché that 'women can't navigate!' Well, here is the chance to prove all those guys wrong! The Chicks GPS course will ensure a sympathetic, fun and friendly learning environment for ladies who wish to learn how to use GPS to enhance their navigation skills'.

Rosie Goolden has made the following statement: "I'm delighted to be teaming up with the MCofS to put on these first two courses for women. Most people who don't yet have the skills are a bit nervous of navigating, and although the 'techie' thought of it can be quite daunting, a GPS is a fabulous piece of safety equipment that is quite straightforward to learn to use effectively. Learning to navigate is superb for your mountain confidence – and so it should be given the number of mountain-related incidents that begin with being lost in them. So, what better way for women to learn these valuable GPS skills than with the enthusiasm and expertise of two female mountaineering instructors and in a fun and relaxed group of other women?"

The courses are offered on a 1:4 ratio so places are limited. For further information and booking details, visit: <http://www.mcofs.org.uk/chicks-gps.asp> or phone Heather Morning on 01479 861 241.

Ends

**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.

**Chicks Unleashed** was created in 2003 by Rosie Goolden, a freelance mountaineering instructor based in Strathspey. As well as working at various centres and with a number of mountain guides Rosie also runs her own private courses, tailoring them to her clients' needs. In recent years she has been on some 40 expeditions, taking her to work and play in the mountains of South America, Africa, Canada, the States, Greenland and all over Europe. The first Chicks Unleashed seminar, the Women's Winter Mountain Seminar, was held at the National Outdoor Centre, Glenmore Lodge in March, 2004. It was meant to be a one-off, winter event. The aim was simple: to see more women fulfil their potential. The atmosphere on and off the hill was fantastic. The Seminar had clearly opened a forum, a space that women were reaching out for. The continuing response and enthusiasm from these Chicks has ensured that Chicks Unleashed continues. For further information go to: [www.chicks-unleashed.co.uk](http://www.chicks-unleashed.co.uk).

\* MIC = Mountaineering Instructor Certificate