

SWISS CLUB NATAL



SOUTH AFRICA

SWISS CLUB NATAL
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3200.

NOV. 1990 .

BULLETIN.

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

This must be one of our best supported Bulletin and "Guggi" must be very pleased with his Sub-Editors. Well done Priscilla and Michael!

As the only Club from South Africa we entered into the Jass-Weltmeisterschaft 1991 and under the leadership of our Secretary André the whole event was well organized and it was great fun to participate. The 8 players who survived the qualifying round met at the La Brasserie for the semi final. Players and supporters enjoyed the excellent Swiss Luncheon and the entertaining afternoon. Congratulations go to our "Gastgeber" Daniel who was the worthy winner and will represent us in the Final in Switzerland next year, for which we wish him now already all the best. Walti Grab made an impressive late charge and made 2nd place followed by Peter Wunderlin.

You may have read in the Swiss Review that some of our Swiss compatriots in Durban are going to start a Swiss Choir. What an excellent idea and I hope that the Roebi's, Elizabeth's and all other gifted singers from Durban will support this move. According to the organizer Marion Russek (Tel 031-849035) it will be nothing "Tierisch Ernst" but more fun, joy and good fellowship. So please dial the above number and make the important first contact, it would be lovely to have a little choir amongst us!

Our next function will be our Klaus Schiessen on 1 December at Hammersdale. It will be a family affair and I am sure Hanspeter will have some surprises up his sleeves - so please participate!

For the coming festive season Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 1991.

René

EDITORS CORNER.

SUNDAY JUNE 3RD.

I think this was our 12TH club bowling day we have had so many I am getting confused. I do know our very first was also at Mandalay on 10TH June 1979, & for the next four years to 1983 also at Mandalay. 1982 we had an extra bowls day because of the week-end at the OAKS. 1984 no green available. 1985 back to Mandalay, 1986 we seemed to have missed. 1987/8/9 all three at Midmar. Mandalay 1990 was a bit dicey as the Hotel is now Indian & we did not know quite what to expect. As it turned out everything went well, the place was clean, bar service to the green regular, a well cooked tasty very good lunch at a fair price. The green was a bit of a problem but made no difference to our laughter & enjoyment. The four teams all pretty even with Hans-Rudi, Robi, Annelies & Aggie the winners. A prize for everyone which was nice as everyone played well, & we had several stars. A happy day together enjoyed by all, thanks to Hans-Rudi, Emmy (& probably Michael) for all the work & effort put into yet another successful bowls day. Annelies had a good time in Switzerland & met up with the Germanns, who will be in South Africa in July. Nature Walk JULY 1ST. A wonderful idea, pity Aggie & I had no chance of taking part. If Priscilla added to the beauty of nature perhaps she will give us a write up. SAT. 7TH JULY. Interclub shoot. Most unusual for Nic to miss a shoot but he has a lot of work to do on his house. Once again Hans-Peter very kindly gave me a lift, on the way he told me there was a very good turn out for the nature walk & a super day enjoyed by all hikers. (When you have a good thing hold on to it, so more walks in future.) At the range quite warm a misty sun making haze over the butts so shooting difficult for some. Fourteen present including 3 visitors, a prospective member Thomas who seemed quite at home, two members of Swiss Club Cape Town who enjoyed the shooting, I was hoping they would join us at "Colorado". We missed Fritz Kaufmann who was probably watching tennis. Hans-Rudi & son Michael put in a hard days work to dark working on the Braai which is just about complete, Thanks from all. The other good news is that while we were shooting a bulldozer was working on the range roads, cars can now be driven to the club house, & there is a smooth run off from

the main road. Full House of regulars & Thomas at "Colorado" for usual beers & gemütlichkeit.

1st. August Dinner for Durban Types held at Daniel Wyser's "La Brasserie" in Pinetown. Daniel has a really good set up here, decor is sensible polished pinewood giving the place a cosy, comfy, atmosphere. There is a slightly elevated restaurant area big enough for the very good attendance of about 50 to sit & be served in comfort. A nice ladies bar with some extra bar tables. Daniel not only gave us an excellent meal & had decorated with all the Canton flags, lanterns & photos of Switzerland. Felix Moser introduced the tape of our State President's National day speech which is done every year.

The big surprise of the evening was the presence of Veronica Rieder, it must be over 20 years since Veronica & Hans left us for South West, her huge son must have grown two metres since I saw him last. Sorry to tell you that Hans passed away last year. Expect we will be seeing more of Veronica in the future

Pleased to see Libby & Cherry & the Packhams, regulars missing were the Hames & the Ernsts, also visitors Elsa Abbey, the Gerhard boys, & really in from the cold the Sifrigs & Kangaroo (like old times). Our recruiting Sergeant Hans Deubelbeiss has been working over time bringing in the following prospective members, Mr. & Mrs. Ernst Honegger, Peter Wunderlin, Peter Von Moos, & Mr. & Mrs. Werner Steiger, who are now running the Overport bottle store, Mrs. Maria Voysey is also joining the club. So welcome to you all & trust you will support our functions. For the men we shoot the first saturday of every month at Hammarsdale range at 1.30 - 2p.m.

Many thanks from us all to new member Werner Steiger who donated two bottles of Kirsch & Swissair who donated one bottle, so everyone finished their meal with coffee kirsch. Several people mentioned to me that "La Brasserie" was the best venue we had ever had, so it looks like a return visit next 1st August for Switzerland's important 700TH birthday. (La Brasserie is also the new home for the Jass players) A very big thank-you to Hans & Anni Deubelbeiss for organising the evening & Daniel & his staff for ensuring its success.

The evening ended with good singing under the finger-baton of Robi as we have come to expect over so many years. A most

enjoyable evening in good & happy company.

I hope most of you will support the Amanzimtoti Beach Breakfast on 14th October, one of our most popular events nothing to do (except for Robi & Elizabeth) but have a drink with & get to know fellow members.

I missed the shoot on 4th Aug. (too close to the 5th) which was a pity as my young friends Reto, Roje, & Daniel Grab were at the range, & Daniel only here for a few weeks from Switzerland. Hans-Peter told me there were about a dozen shooting before the usual beers at "Colorado".

National Day celebrations 5th Aug. back at Hammarsdale, inspite of road across the donga (I nearly wrote wadi) not quite complete. Looks like a good repair job this time with wire mesh Gabions. Good weather chilly to start warming up P.M. to slight drizzle in the evening. I made it about 80 adults & a host of lovely kids & youngsters. A great welcome for our old friends Karl Germann on holiday from Switzerland & Veronica Rieder with us again. Guest of the day was our new Consul Alphons Frey who really enjoyed him self & showed great enthusiasam in the tug-of-war, apart from a good score at golf & I believe a score of 19 out of 20 in THE RÜTLI CUP, which was won by Hans-Peter Grabe with a full house of 20, very well done, Bob Wyss second & Hans-Reudi Planzer third.

Hans.Reudi & son Michael saw their recently completed braai well christened. Always nice to see the Zimmermanns, Vogels & Scherzers, names well known in the club for so many years. Some open shooting results Men 1st. H.R. Planzer, 2nd H.P. Graber, 3rd. W. Steiger. Ladies. 1st. A. Schmid, 2nd. P. Planzer, 3rd. K. Wyss. Boys. 1st. M. Planzer 2nd. N. Scherzer, 3rd. D. Schmidhauser, Girls. 1st. V. Kuhn, 2nd. M. Kuhn. Ladies RÜTLI 1st. N. Schmidhauser, 2nd. P. Planzer, 3rd. R. Kuhn. Congratulations to all. In the evening a short chat from President Rene, the prize-giving, & Rene introduced Consul Frey who made a short friendly speech, I expect we shall be seeing more of our Consul.

Swissair ticket drawn in the presence of Mrs. Dawn Adams of Swissair. The winner Ticket No. 000102. Mr. L. De Wet C/O the Dutch Club, Tara Rd, Bluff.

So many hard workers to make the day possible, from the Club many thanks to you all. From Aggie & myself a big Thank-you to Hans-Peter Grabe, for taking us to yet another excellent 1st August.

1st SEPT. Mild & sunny for Fun Shoot which really lived up to its name, thanks to Hans-Peter for thinking up the following:- 3 trial shots, 3 at the prone position, 3 kneeling (I have never seen so many misses) & one shot at the lucky target (only 3 of the 15 shooting managed to get a shot into one of the few yellow patches to score.)

Results:- 1st. Bob Wyss (a 9 on the lucky), 2nd. Phil Stevens, 3rd. H.P. Gräber, 4th. Heinz Mäder, (a welcome visitor), 5th. Hans Deubelbeiss. Super meat prizes from "Koebi's Crossways".

Sixteen present including young Michael & a big welcome to our old friend Felix Thoma back in S.A. for a spell & looking so well. I did not shoot but earned my beer with some scoring.

In spite of previous week's good rain all roads at the range are quite O.K., & one can drive to the club house. Usual beers & harmony at "Colorado" like old times with Felix in the party. Thanks again to Hans-Peter for giving me a lift.

"Hammarisdale Regulars" have been wondering what has happened to Nic Hames, Nic apart from being one of our best shottists has for several years been very much part of the shooting scene, always helpful at the butts, on the radio etc.,. I do know Nic is doing a lot of work on his house. I am sure he will be back with us shooting again before long. We also miss him at Colorado.

In this issue there will be the July Nature Walk write up from Prissilla & also an article from her brother Michael. My thanks to these two youngsters, I wish more members would contribute to our little bulletin.

SAT. OCT. 6TH . Handicap Shoot. Pleasant surprise I was picked up by Nic Hames, son Alistair & a friend. Another nice surprise Terry on very much a flying visit from Johannesburg to shoot with his old friends. Weather cool, misty, & a

continual light drizzle, never the less the results were good several scores in the nineties & eighties. We had a round dozen plus the two lads & apologies from Hans-Rudi. The results. 1st. Albert Schmid, 2nd. Fritz Kaufmann, 3rd. Bob Wyss, this forms part of the Club Championship over the year. Final results 1st. Phil Stevens, 2nd Hans-Peter Gräber, 3rd Bob Wyss., Well Done !

Harmony at Colorado with Nic back in the fold & Terry a quick beer before driving back to Johannesburg. The beer tasted extra good after a toast to Natal's Great Currie Cup Victory,

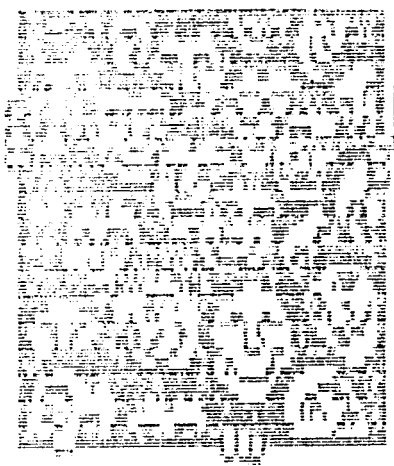
OCT. 21ST. Our 6TH 'Toti Beach Breakfast. I made the count between 35/40., After 3 days of continual non-stop rain perhaps some members were under the impression that the day had been cancelled. From P.M.B., only Hans-Rudi. Emmie & Michael, I think they have never missed this enjoyable function, good to see old friends the Ernsts, Hames, Packhams, Saunders, Mosers, Libby, Cherry & Family, Krook, & new members the Steigers, & I was so pleased to see Hans & Anni Deubelbeiss, I seemed to have missed them lately Another super day THANKS to Elizabeth & Robi (once again the robot barman) & help from Heidi for organizing yet another Beach Breakfast, repeat again next year please. As this will be the last bulletin this year from Aggie & myself FROHE WEIHNACHTEN, I don't think next year will be very kind to South Africa but nevertheless all the best for 1991

GUGGY.

NATURE WALK TO FERNCLEIFFE

On the nice sunny Sunday of 1 July a big crowd of us met at Cascades.

Whilst Walti led the way up to Ferncliffe, in his car, we came across a lot of frost on the side of the road. On arriving we all put our walking shoes on and Walti led the way. Along the entire path we had a beautiful view of Pietermaritzburg. The path which was like a carpet covered with pine needles, had some steep up-hills and down-hills, but it was nice to be surrounded by nature again. Some of us found the hills a bit exhausting.



Once we got to Breakfast Rock, we all got our breaths back whilst admiring the view of Pietermaritzburg.



When we got back down, everyone was starving so the braai was quickly prepared for lunch.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the walk, through the forest with yodelling and some imagination it felt as if we were in Switzerland.

Thank you Walti for organizing this walk, it was lovely. I'm sure everyone enjoyed the day and are looking forward to the next nature walk.

"Priscilla"

BERGTRIP TO AMPHITHEATRE

On the misty morning of 8 September, 5 enthusiastic swiss mountain climbers (young and old, 15 to 52) set off to conquer yet another mountain. In their 2 cars they started on the long drive to the Drakensberg Mountain Range, a different climbing style to the Alps they know so well. The Alps with its peaks and the Drakensberg with its stepped mountain, flat on top with steep slopes eg, The Amphitheatre the 5 were going to conquer.

07:00 was the meeting time at the Bird Sanctuary, strangely enough the Planzers were first at the correct place, since Felix Thoma drove past and waited somewhere else. After we waited an hour for Felix to arrive, Walti went home to phone, and to his surprise Felix phoned him from a call box and was wondering what happened to the Maritzburgers.

After the one hour delay we were on our way hoping that all the mishaps were over, only to see our car break down in Qwa-Qwa, despite the service it had the day before. Luckily we got the car to a garage where the local mechanics scratched their heads to think what they could do. They found an oxidized connection but it wasn't the problem nevertheless the car sounded normal again.



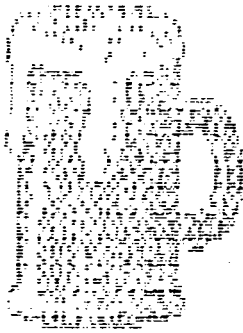
The car broke down again but luckily at the gate of the reserve. We all crammed into one car and drove the last 10 - 15Km to the car park, at about 2 500m above sea level. There the register was signed and to my surprise, given a number for a camping place.

After hiking for half an hour, our stomachs began to moan, and a scenic place was found for lunch. No sooner where we comfortable, when some unexpected guests arrived - baboons. They dislodged small pebbles which they rolled in our direction but we ignored them and finished our lunch.

About one hour of strenuous hiking we arrived at the chain ladder. The youth showed how to do it, but the older got a couple more grey hairs - 40m of a swaying chain ladder was not everyone's idea of having fun, but to be on a 3 000m mountain was worth it. The last half hour walk to the camp site was easy going because it was the flattest part of our walk.

At the camp-site, which already had about 30 to 40 small tents erected, we all searched for a flat camping spot next to the Tugela. From there we walked to the Tugela waterfall and admired its beauty from the top. To see the lovely Tendele Camp from there, like a small zulu kraal, was amazing. The more we stood and admired the view, the more it seemed worth to have climbed the escarpment. We would have enjoyed the view much longer but the sun was setting and the tents had to be erected and supper prepared.

Our supper was cooked in the dark, but only after emptying the six-pack carried up! Then to warm up with some Kirsch!!



In the morning, our brave Robbie Wyss who slept outside in his swiss army sleeping bag, was ill, as it had gotten well below freezing point during the night. Robbie's sleeping bag was frozen solid to the ground. Our singly layer 2 man tent had frozen ice particles on

the inside of it. Walti and Felix had the most luxury in their 2 layer tent. The sun was shining but it was still cold. It seemed as if we were standing on the edge of the world as there was a cloud cover (Nebelmeer) just below us, a different sight to the one the day before.

After breakfast consisting of cereal, bread and coffee out of beer cans, we went for a walk along the edge of the escarpment, on which we went up and down in a zig-zag way to avoid the gullies. Due to the mist blown up the gullies it looked like a "Wösch Chuchi". By 10:00 the mist had risen over the escarpment and we were forced to go back in fear of loosing our way in the mist.



We said good-bye to the guards of the camping place and made our way up towards the Sentinel and the alternate route down as the others weren't going down the chain ladder. Dad battled to keep up with the fit and energetic leader, Walti and often lost sight of him in the mist. Before the steep descent of the gully, we had a short rest to recharge our weary legs. At the bottom of the gully we had lunch in the mist, and then off it was to the car park.

At about 14:00, 5 weary climbers reached their cars and made their way home, luckily without mishap.

We thank Walti for organizing this trip and hope more trips like this will be organized in the future. Hopefully more people will come and join in the fun!!

Michael

BETWEEN CAMPAIGNS. PART 7.

After breakfast next morning we folded our tents & packed our six desert vehicles. The farewells, handshakes, & good wishes must have taken half an hour, all the monks turned out to see us off, I think our two day camp had made a pleasant break in their very lonely life. In the years ahead I was to return to Sinai several times but not to the extreme south so I was never to see the Monastery again.

The last week & the last leg of the journey was to cross the full length of the peninsula from southern tip at the gulf of Akaba to the administration headquarters at El Arish in the extreme north just south of the Israeli border. A zig-zag journey about 600 Kilos. So we headed south to where the Gulf of Akaba joins the Gulf of Suez to become the Red Sea flowing south east to the horizon on its way to the Indian Ocean. Quite a view from the tip, so much blue sea.

Before leaving we checked mileage on the speedos, the sun compasses would have a good final test on this last long trek.

From the southern tip to Port Suez there is a camel track which runs parallel & close to the shore passing through only two Arab fishing villages Tor & Abu Zeneima, at least we would not have to live out of tins as fresh fish, mutton, lamb & camel milk would be available at both villages. Quite a pleasant run but the track like most in Sinai was very rough & needed careful driving & a lot of concentration, which is nothing new in any Desert. Tor was just a small village & Bay for anchoring fishing dhows & feluccas. We picked up supplies at Abu Zeneima where we were to leave the track & head into the open featureless desert north east toward the Mitla mountains which we should sight the next day. No camel tracks just desert so navigation would be by compass & marking our route on the maps & in the log books.

When on the move in any Desert by vehicle, horse, or camel desert types never like to make camp if possible where there is nothing but sand & rock, we always like to camp by ~~at~~ what I used to refer to as "A Something", this could be a shallow wadi like a dried up river bed, or a deeper wadi with a few stunted trees or bushes, a couple of lonely palm trees, even a rocky outcrop rising a few metres out of the sand, at least there is something to mark your camp site on the maps & log books.

Between 4 & 5 p.m. is the time to start looking for a camp site, we were v-lucky as a large rocky outcrop appeared in our binoculars, but someone had beaten us to it, two or three knee-haltered camels were our first sign of life, camels & horses are knee-haltered to prevent them from straying from camp during the night, with the front legs tied together the animal can only hop or take tiny steps yet is free to move short distances & graze on any available camel scrub. A police camel patrol had made camp, we had a great welcome & would have good company for the evening as these Arab troopers are fine types & do such a good job in assisting the few settled Arabs & nomads in recovering lost or stolen camels, sheep & goats, & any queries the Arabs may have as these patrols are just about the only link these lonely people of the Desert have with Government. As no pack camel is taken they carry very little food & water each man has his service water bottle which is usually kept for the last day of a patrol (8 days maximum). Other water is in skin bags carried in the saddle bags, each man has fresh dates & olives enough for a handful of each per day, the skin of fresh dates is bright red the flesh is yellow & very sweet, fresh olives taste horrible & bitter (nothing like stuffed & pickled olives.) But it is the sugar in the dates & the oil in the olives that can keep a man going for weeks in the Desert. A small amount of flour mixed each evening with a mug of water to make the Chappattee bread if enough camel scrub is around to make a fire. A pack camel would be a hindrance in the event of trouble with baddies & bandits so no luxury of a bivvy tent should the patrol run into a rare desert down pour. Each man takes only 1 warm army blanket rolled in a ground sheet cum rain cape like a swiss roll & attached behind the saddle with two leather straps. As one blanket is not enough for most of the cold desert nights the troopers bed down together like sardines in a tin, 3 men that is, as one is always on guard duty which is shared during the night except for the leader who is excused. This calls for great compatibility & comradeship. Sometime later I did several of these patrols & was always given the middle position which of course is the warmest. That evening we had a good meal & chat together, as we had plenty of fresh & tinned food the patrol did not have to make use of their meagre rations.



Murdering Bedouin lurked behind every limestone ridge.

If Desert patrols are still operating I imagine modern 4 wheel drive desert vehicles are gradually taking over the duties from that amazing animal the camel.

The Middle East 50 years ago was really very peaceful, apart from the everlasting friction between Jew & Arab in Palestine & the annual 2 weeks of Cairo student riots. I know I felt a damn ~~deal~~ safer then than I do in South Africa today, give me the Egyptian Fellahin peasant & Bedouin Arab any day before the Africans.

We had few European visitors to Sinai, some archaeologists looking for the past, geologists hoping to find rocks of value, zoologists seeking the elusive Ibex in the Mitla. As governor Major Jarvis mentions in one of his many interesting & humorous books, "now & again one of these visitors would let his imagination run away with him & expect murdering Bedouins lurking behind every ridge", but they all left the territory unharmed & no doubt with a new opinion of the friendly Bedouin.

The next morning when I emerged from my Bivvy just after first light the patrol was already saddling up having had breakfast just one small mug of coffee (the Bedouins delight). An early start means several miles covered before the intense heat of the day & as these patrols are expected to ride give or take 50 miles a day it is a great help, they would cover the first few miles at a jog trot to loosen up the camels. Once again handshakes & "peace on your day" before they disappeared in line ahead into the desert.

An hour later we were also on our way on a northerly bearing coming up to Major Jarvis' Trans-Sinai single track bitumen road (Part 3) we were on the road a couple of hours & apart from a few pot holes was in a good condition. Jarvis built a few roads in the northern area where of course they would be of more use than in the mountainous & desolate central & southern parts. Jarvis that amazing Governor built his roads almost single handed his only help a handful of simple but willing Bedouin, no doubt his roads are still in use.

Leaving the road we headed north east again in open Desert skirting the Mitla Mountains. The last couple of days of the expedition & I think some of the team were beginning to tire of the Desert, but I was still enjoying every minute, I was no longer "A Pinkie" now having a good tan & realized I was now one of those odd characters hooked on Deserts. Every day I had spent some time with my English - Arabic phrase book & when we had met up with Arabs was able to

manage passable colloquial Arabic conversation of a sort. We crossed over the track of the Mitla Pass where we had been in the first days of our journey. The mountains as fascinating as ever, in the wadis the small communities of settled Arabs with their patches of stunted barley & maize, but strange how the fruits of the Desert contain so much moisture, melons, marrows, squash, pomegranites, natures compensation perhaps. During the so called winter months central Sinai gets several heavy rain storms, causing streams cutting through the sands & temporary waterfalls in the mountains, but in no time all this badly needed water has soaked away into the sand. Jarvis built a few small dams, but the rain storms only hit the same areas every few years.

Our camp that night was our 30TH & the last of the expedition, we must have been about 150 miles south west of El Arish where we arrived at our final destination next day early afternoon, & as expected quite a welcome. El Arish the H.Q., of Sinai Administration is just in the Desert & close to the Israeli border has some greenery & cultivation also quite civilized with electricity, so we enjoyed hot showers & our first cold beers. Here Major Jarvis has his "Governors Palace" just a small double story house, the Admin. Offices, Quarters, Small Barracks & a tiny Jail (mostly empty) at one end of the complex the camel lines, the other end as far away as possible the stables for the horses, this is because camels & horses just cannot mix, even the most passive horse may perform like mad at the sight or smell of a camel.

The Desert track which runs some miles south of the Toy Train passes through El Arish where there is a frontier & customs barrier. That last evening Sinai Admin., gave us a good party, as you can imagine after 30 days in the Desert there were a lot of thirsts to be quenched with our first unlimited supply of cold beer. The rough maps we had made would be forwarded by courier to the Cartography Dept., of the War Office in London & in a few months ~~be~~ available as perfect Ordnance Maps. Unlimited copies to H.Q., El Arish for those who wished to travel the Sinai Desert. Each member of our expedition would receive a full set. In the 2nd Desert Campaign all my kit was destroyed by enemy action including my treasured set of the Sinai maps.

GUGGY.