



HiTAC May 2026

Kia ora, welcome to the latest issue of the HiTAC.
Feedback and content can be emailed to hitac.tac@outlook.com

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President's Report

Kia ora team,

As I type the power to the lodge should just about be restored! One of our trusty life members is going up to the lodge tonight to check everything is functioning properly again. Thanks Stephen!

Currently I'm away in Aussie swanning around in the warm sunshine hence this report will be brief. In case the club grapevine hasn't found your ears recently I will be away from 31st May for 5 weeks trekking in the Himalayas. So, I leave the reins of the club in Ivan's capable hands!

Snowcraft dates are lining up nicely so hopefully winter will be kind to us this year! We will also be hosting the NZ Mountain Film Festival at 4th Wall in August-something to look forward to!

Keep safe on the slopes at this change of season time as it brings some challenges!

Ngā mihi nui ki a koe

Sheryl

Madam President

Club Trips- Mt Messenger track -16 May (backup 17 May)

From our Trips Co-Ordinator

With the snow season arriving, I'll be looking to secure dates for Buddy Walks. Please if you can help lead any, keep us in mind when planning your winter schedule. Buddy walks are an essential part for our members to grow confidence, develop skills and add to their knowledge with the support of experienced members. It would be great to see a full calendar of Buddy Walks this year with loads of fun and learning on the white stuff.

Keep an eye out for updates in HiTAC and on our members only Facebook page.

Mt Messenger track to White Cliffs Walk Saturday 16th May (backup day Sunday).

Charmaine has organised vehicles and drivers to meet at the White Cliffs end and ferry everyone to the start of the Mt Messenger track. This is considered an advanced tramping track that climbs to the summit of Mt Messenger then descends to the coast, with an approximate walking time of 5 ½ hours

Cost will be \$15 per person to be paid to the driver on the day.

There are a few spaces left so please let me know directly if you are interested. Once we have reached our capacity, I can take names for a backup list.

Rachel Alford

Taranaki Alpine Club – Trips Co-Ordinator

Email: committee4.tac@outlook.com

Mobile: 027 865 5916

Trip Report

Dragons Teeth 2026

After finding out about the tramp called 'Dragons Teeth' Jeremy decided that this was a trip he wanted to achieve, he just needed some suckers to accompany him. That shouldn't have been too hard as he knew a few and we agreed to go on the trip with him. It was only after doing a little bit of research that we worked out it wasn't going to be a walk in the park! (Jeremy knew)

"For experienced trail adventurers only, and that would be 0.001% of the population, the Dragons Teeth offers a decent challenge. (tramping.net.nz)"

"Helicopter plucks climber from Dragons' Teeth in Kahurangi National Park (Stuff)."

So, after trying to make it happen for a few years, what with weather, working on the Maunga and travel issues, 2026 looked like the year we would get there. We departed for the south island on the 1st March and actually managed to get straight across on the ferry. We stayed at a campground in Havelock and headed off early the next morning for Takaka to get sorted. The forecast was looking very good and settled so we decided to head into the hills on the 2nd to see how far we could get. Information had been gleamed that the route to Anatoki Forks hut had been damaged by storms and would take a lot longer than usual. We left the road end at 11am and thought we'd see how far we could get and camp if needed, it was only 17km and followed the river all the way up. How hard could it be? We arrived at the hut at 7.30pm, after navigating numerous windfalls, a couple of decent slip faces, and falling into the river. This was the only time I've seen genuine concern on Jeremy's face for me, although secretly he was just hoping that I hadn't ruined his trip! The hut had a fire and hot water cylinder which provided hot showers, a great little spot, especially watching the Whio playing around in the river.

Next day we headed off towards Adelaide Tarn via Yuletide Peak. The sign said 5-7 hours, 5km and the description noted a brutal climb up to the tops, it wasn't wrong! We spent the morning walking along a ridge, going up and down until we finally got our first view of Dragons Teeth. It was at this point I started to think "what the hell was I doing here?", then I saw where we had to go for the rest of the day and that confirmed my thoughts! After what Jeremy described as an 'easy day', 8 hours later we made our way off the saddle down to Adelaide Tarn where we met some DOC workers who were putting in an empty toilet tank for us. They provided some useful trip information and indicated there were some tarns mid way through the route where we could camp to break up the 10-12 hour day. The hut was no bigger than a shoebox, with bunks so narrow you struggled to turn over without falling out!

Day 3 dawned fine and calm, a bit of a theme for the trip. We headed off to the saddle at the head of the valley, and once there, the real trip began. We had already worked out that most problems on the route were caused by navigation errors, so we planned to take our time with route finding so as to not waste time being lost. The route was marked by cairns (sometimes called Kens, Barbies or Tarns); some of which were very subtle. There were 2 main sections to get round today then it was supposed to get easier! The going was slow...very slow. Hanging onto trees, climbing up/down rock faces trying not to get lost. We got through the day in 7 hours and covered a whole 4km, found the tarns and decided that this was going to be a good place to spend the night. Just upon dusk a cheeky Kea showed up, and seemed to be very interested in shredding Jeremys tent, but decided better of it. That night was an awesome moon rise and at some late hour we all ended up wandering round looking at the beautiful scenery.

Day 4 we were awoken by the Kea, that decided it was time to get up at 6am by screeching it's head off beside our campsite. As we all struggled up to see what was going on it laughed at us and flew away. Once more we were informed that it was going to be an 'easy day', "kind of like a rest day" and we'd be at Lonely Lake for lunch. It was definitely an easier day with nicer terrain with navigating our way through rock bands and across smooth rock faces. The navigating was on point this day as yet again great weather, wouldn't like to do it in low visibility or with wet ground! After finishing the route at the saddle we dropped down to Lonely Lake hut. We made it for lunch, albeit a bit of a late lunch, but Jeremy claims he was right. It was yet again good timing. The hut had just been worked on by the Backcountry Trust the week before. New long-drop toilet, grounds all cut, hut tied up, great spot. We relaxed here for the afternoon, with some washing of clothes and bodies, swimming in the lake and just chilling out. The hut was another shoebox, but we managed to fit in. The hut had all of its intention books going back 50 years, amazing reading! First names from Taranaki were Jeremy, Alec and Jeanne who'd been there 15 years prior.

Day 5 we headed back up to the saddle we came through the day before with the plan to find the track/route to take us back down to the river and onto Anatoki Hut. Having studied this up we were confident of where we had to go and dismissed Vaughan's suggested route. Here was our biggest error. We spent the next few hours bashing our way through prickly scrubby crap, getting bluffed on numerous occasions and having to resort to some real route finding decisions. Eventually we made it to the valley floor and the Anatoki river which we followed down. Ironically passing the well marked exit/entry point for the route we should have been on. The trek down the valley was gentle, wandering through the beech forest and occasionally crossing the river. We found the track at the fork of the river and followed this back to Anatoki Forks hut. This had been another 'easy' 8 hour day! We had some locals for company at the hut that night and 2 of us even managed to get stung by the wasps!

Day 6 was to be the walk back to the car, 17km! Unfortunately the weather was fine and hot, no wind. At least we knew what we were in for on the section having already done it. It turned into a gruelling 7 hour trip to the car, which was a great sight!

So, approximately 62km over 6 days, our hardest was a 4km day! No wind and fantastic weather for the whole trip. And no one got the anticipated helicopter ride out.

Mike Johns, Vaughan Smith and Jeremy Beckers (award winning photographer on the trip).







Dates to keep - More details Later

July 25th - Movie & mid year Christmas dinner - Tahurangi Lodge

Club News

D/News 16/4/26

Taranaki teen reaches new heights with national selection

CLIMBING

Will Johnston

A Taranaki teenager who has been climbing since he could walk is set to take on the world after being selected for New Zealand's youth team.

Conrad Bolger, 16, will represent New Zealand at the Youth Climbing World Championships in Italy from July 18-25, following a breakthrough season that confirmed his place among the country's top young athletes.

The Francis Douglas Memorial College student earned selection after finishing second at the national bouldering championships in Christchurch last year.

He was then named by selectors as one of the country's leading prospects.

"I was stoked," Conrad said.

"I'd been pretty nervous for a long time because the results kept getting delayed, so I was worried I wasn't going to make it. I trained pretty hard to get there, so yeah, I'm stoked."

Conrad got an early start to climbing. While still a baby, his father Dave would leave him sleeping in his capsule while he climbed in Queenstown.

By the time he was three or four, he was climbing himself.

"It hasn't been easy, he's had some tough calls go against him in competitions and it's hard being based here, but he's stuck at it and put a lot of time and effort into his training," Dave said.

"We're really proud."

That early exposure has developed into a full-time pursuit, with Conrad training up to six days a week, often for five to six hours a day.

The sport's appeal is in more than just physical strength.

"I like the challenge and the problem solving and the adventure, it takes me to a lot of really cool places," Conrad said.

Bouldering, the discipline he will compete in, is a fast-paced and technical format in which climbers attempt short, complex routes within a limited time.

He said climbers have four minutes to work out each problem.

"It's about reading the route, figuring out the sequence and executing it. You want to do it as quickly as possible with as few attempts as you can."

Competitors must be well-rounded,



Conrad Bolger will compete in the bouldering discipline, which is a fast-paced and technical format.



Conrad has been climbing with his father Dave for years.

combining power, balance, flexibility and coordination, while also maintaining composure under pressure.

"Sometimes things just feel impossible and if you fall early, it can be hard to reset mentally and keep going."

Before heading to Italy, which will be a largely self-funded trip, he will compete in an Oceania competition as part of his preparation, with the international stage expected to provide a significant step up.

He is also setting his sights high.

"I'm going to win."

"But I hope I perform at the level I know I can and be competitive."

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Club Nights

Club Nights are held on the first Thursday of each month, usually at 7:00pm at Fitzroy Golf Club, 3 Record Street, unless otherwise advertised.

No BYO alcohol, as this is a licensed premises.

Next Club Night

Date: Thursday 7th May 2026

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Fitzroy Golf Club, 3 Record Street

Members mix & mingle at 7pm - presentation starts promptly at 7.30pm.

Please note new time for future club nights!

FMC

Printed FMC Quarterly Bulletins & Membership Cards

Available on club nights or by contacting Club President to arrange pickup.

From the Editor

If any members have stories or photos from summer adventures they wish to submit for future editions, please reach out using contact details below.

Claire Jones, HiTAC editor
hitac.tac@outlook.com

Club Information

Members Only Facebook group

When applying to join the group, your membership status will be checked by the admin team.

Help build our TAC community by clicking the link:
<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1BhHF7NiU6/>

A place to share information, inspirational stories, and funny photos!

TAHURANGI LODGE

TAC's lodge sleeps 24, has electric heating and cooking, cutlery, pots and pans, etc. Just like home. Members can request an eKey by completing the application available from the Club's website.

Overnight fee is \$65 for non-members. Members free.

Under 18 rate of \$25.00 per youth per night when staying with a current club member

Anyone who stays at Tahurangi Lodge must write in the overnight book upstairs by the fridge;

1. Their surname and initials.
2. Say TAC or non-member.

Bookings by non-members or members taking a group of 5+ people should be made with the Lodge Booking Officer, or by booking online via the Club's website. The lodge subcommittee looks after all maintenance and can be contacted for help, feedback or suggestions. If you have trouble accessing the Lodge (e.g. due to eKey failure), phone either the Club President, or the Lodge Booking Officer. Contact info on Web page: <http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz/pages/contacts.html>

CURRENT SUBSCRIPTIONS

FAMILY \$80, INDIVIDUAL \$60, STUDENT (under 18) \$50.

Lodge Access Fob Bond \$25.00 (a one-off payment).

Lodge Access Fob \$20.00 annually.

Your membership will be forfeited if subs are still unpaid by the 1st of June. You will be removed from the database and your fob will be deactivated.

MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM

Hello Club is our membership system. See the link below to login & update your details <https://taranaki-alpine-club.helloclub.com/register>

Through Hello Club, you are able to:

- Renew and pay for your membership or any other outstanding fees
- View past transactions and download invoices and receipts
- Update your email address and other personal details.

You will have received an email with instructions on how to setup your account for Hello Club.

For any questions or comments, please contact Sheryl: president.tac@outlook.com

GEAR HIRE

- Winter and summer equipment is available for hire by TAC Club Members. This includes: Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), ice axes, ice hammers, helmets, harnesses, quick draws, carabiners, etc.
- Each item costs \$5/day or a maximum of \$10/day for 2 or more items per person.
- To only pay for the days gear was used, return items promptly. Late returns will be charged for the entire hire period.
- Contact the Equipment Officer AT LEAST 2 days in advance to ensure availability: secretary.tac@outlook.com / 027 266 2330

EVENTS PROGRAMME

Club nights, trips, instruction and social events are important functions of the Club's activities – they need both support from participants as well as volunteers to lead them. If you have suggestions for club nights, contact the Trips Co-Ordinator. If you would like to volunteer to lead a trip, contact the Trips Co-Ordinator: committee4.tac@outlook.com

HiTAC— Newsletter

Sent monthly by email and also available on the Club's website at www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz

Any trip reports, events, or gear for sale can be sent to the Editor at hitac.tac@outlook.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please login to your Hello Club account to make any updates. If you are unable to log in, please contact president.tac@outlook.com

Contacting the Club

Committee:

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Vacant - committee3.tac@outlook.com

Rachel Alford - committee4.tac@outlook.com

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or email Clarissa Benton - secretary.tac@outlook.com

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Stephen Miller - 027 244 2753

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Lodge Maintenance Officer:

Charlie Andrews - committee5.tac@outlook.com

HiTAC Editor:

Claire Jones - hitac.tac@outlook.com

Submissions welcome from any club member. Please contact Kathy for submission info and deadlines.

Club Links

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[Club Homepage](#)

[Lodge & Bookings](#)

[Club Contacts](#)

Members only FB group <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1BhHF7NIU6/>

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We no longer have a postal address.

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