

“Reaching the summit is optional. Getting down is mandatory.”  
Ed Viesturs

## Newsletter – August 2019

### Tip of the Month

When to wear a helmet? Ultimately it comes down to this – look around; think; be aware; make your own risk assessment and decisions; and ignore what anyone else around you is doing. Make sure you can justify in *your own mind* why you are not wearing a helmet.

Here are some of my own usual practices (not “rules”):

- I usually put on a helmet as soon as I arrive at the foot of a crag.
- For that reason, I carry my helmet at the very top of my rucksack.
- At sports climbing venues the belayer may be at more risk than the climber so I will usually wear a helmet at the foot of many sports crags.
- Scrambles in particular demand respect, and I will often wear a helmet on busy Grade 1 scrambles if there is loose rock and there are other groups above me.

### Fact of the Month

Magnetic declination is the angle between magnetic north (where your compass needle points) and true north (a straight line between your location and the North Pole). This angle will vary depending on where you are on the earth’s surface.

The angle also varies over time (due to changes in the earth’s magnetic field). When I first learned to read a map in the UK the difference was 8 degrees. It is now just 0-2 degrees depending on where in the UK you are.

Perhaps even more interestingly, the rate of change has itself increased and is no longer following the predictable path it was on. Roughly speaking, magnetic north will have moved as much in the last 20 years as it did in the preceding 100 years.

### Route of the Month

This is a great time of year to visit the Alps and undertake one of the greatest mountain crossings in the world – the walker’s *Haute Route*, the high-level route from Chamonix to Zermatt, finishing in the shadow of the Matterhorn.



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## Photo of the Month

Here's a superb view of a group on top of Crowberry Tower on Buchaille Etivee Mor – a fitting end to the completion of the classic scramble Curved Ridge.



@thesummitisoptional

## Forthcoming Events

These are some of the scheduled events coming up in the near future:

- **21-22 September.** National Navigation Award Scheme Bronze Award (Ilkley).
- **23-25 September.** Learning to lead climb (trad) and rig top ropes – 3 days. (Peak District).
- **5-6 October.** National Navigation Award Scheme Silver Award (Ilkley).
- **12-13 October.** National Navigation Award Scheme Bronze Award (Ilkley).