

Hopefully you've had a look at the report of my ascent of Kilimanjaro, downloadable at www.k2010.org/updates.htm
Here's a few pictures and thoughts which didn't make it into the main report.

Trekking up Kilimanjaro had been a long-held ambition for me, but I only really started to take the possibility seriously after my trek in Malawi in 2009, when the guide said that he thought anyone getting up the Sapitwa peak in Mulanje could probably do Kilimanjaro - although Sapitwa is not at serious altitude.



Like lots of Brits, it's difficult not also to be encouraged by the 2009 Comic Relief climbers who popularised what is still a very difficult and potentially dangerous trek.



We were conscious of following in their footsteps when we signed in at the entrance to the Kilimanjaro national park - a record exists of everyone entering and leaving the park, and at most of the campsites along the way.



It appears that just entering the national park had a rejuvenating effect for the women on the trip, as all the female Red Nose Day climbers were strangely only 21 years old when they signed in!

1/13/09	GARY BARLOW (STAR)	38	M	UK
"	CHRIS MOTLES (GARY)	35	M	UK
N	Ben Shepherd	34	M	UK
"	Ferne Colton	21	F	UK
"	Cheryl Cole	21	F	UK
"	Rachel Keating	25	M	UK
"	Denise Van Outen	21	F	UK
"	Kimberly Walsh	21	F	UK
"	Alaska Dixon	21	F	UK

The entrance gate also has the only sign - a slightly chaotic sign - which is of a vaguely "Health and Safety" nature.

One of the great things about trekking is that while I apparently can't be trusted to "push the trolley off the end of the conveyor" at Tesco without a shrill reminder, when trekking - and indeed on the training walks I did in the Lake District - you can, for several days, decide for yourself that rocks may be slippery when wet. In the case of my descent from Helvellyn, it would have spoilt all the fun if there had been a sign saying "walkers along this ridge may be bombarded by hail stones travelling horizontally at 30mph". Actually that could be marketed as exfoliation - maybe that's where the women on the Red Nose day climb did their training, and so were able to swing it that they were only 21 when they arrived at Kilimanjaro.

But Kilimanjaro can be dangerous, and from time to time we came across stretchers used to evacuate people down the mountain.



high altitude cerebral oedema - where the brain swells and which can be fatal after a few hours. Descent usually leads to speedy recovery, as it did in this case. It turned out that the woman who was ill was actually herself the doctor for that other group.

We were told that about 20,000 people a year - from across the world - attempt Kilimanjaro and about two-thirds make it to the summit. Sadly about 10 people a year die. It is still a serious challenge, and I'm delighted to be back, safe and sound, having achieved the ambition - and having encouraged you to make such generous donations to Teenage Cancer Trust.

THANK YOU!

Nigel Turner

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On our summit day - in the early hours of the morning - our trek leader had to pick up and carry a young woman from another group about 1,000m down to the camp we had started from - as she was incoherent and barely conscious, and the guide with her was not taking the action necessary when you suspect someone has HACE -