

THE NEXT CHALLENGE

What's yours?



Next Challenge News, July 2009
www.thenextchallenge.org

Welcome!

Welcome to Next Challenge News.

I document my activities and those of my friends in several different ways - [my website](#), on Facebook, through [Twitter](#) - and some methods suit people more than others.

The newsletters I wrote for my recent [Tim-to-Thom triathlon](#) got a lot of good feedback so I'm carrying on the tradition with my latest venture - The Next Challenge.

If you've got an opinion - you enjoy the updates or would rather I stopped clogging up your inbox - then please let me know. Otherwise, just go ahead and have a browse...

Click the red writing to read more online

What I've been up to recently...

My recent activities have included a three week [climbing expedition in Russia](#), preparing to help lead a [youth expedition to Norway](#) next week, and training for up for a rickshaw journey later in the year. I've also spent a lot of time creating a new website and I am keen to hear what you think.

I've also been lucky enough to spend some time with Rob Cousins who is preparing for an [almighty triathlon](#) in September based on Wainwright's Coast-to-Coast.



www.davidtett.com

This month...

- Climbing in Russia
- Norway Expedition (and cycling home)
- Coast-to-Coast Triathlon
- Rickshaw Riding



All photos this issue are taken by David Tett who came with me to Russia - [www.davidtett.com](#)

Norway Expedition

Next Monday I depart for a month-long expedition to Norway with the [British Schools Exploring Society](#) (BSES).

The expedition will comprise some 36 teenagers and a dozen leaders, of which I am one. We are destined for the Loppa Peninsula, a few hours' drive from the town of Alta at the very top of Europe. The Young Explorers ("YEs" as they're known) will split their time between mountaineering on the icecap south of basecamp and kayaking out to sea. My legs, however, will stay largely on land and, in particular, the Oksfjordjokelen ice cap.

I visited the base camp area on a recce last September and have spent the past year working in the BSES office, helping to organise the logistics for the trip.

After the expedition's completion, I plan to spend three weeks cycling south towards Oslo.

You'll be able to track my progress on my website.



It was a year in the making and we were told time and again that it wasn't going to work but, last month, I went to the Russian Altai with five friends and found myself on the tops of some rather nice mountains. Here is a brief account:

The plan was simple, walk into the mountains, set up a base camp and get up some mountains that hadn't seen much previous action. And the plan went well...

After some heated negotiations with our in-country agent, Igor (aka "Red Fox" the KGB operative) we drove from the city of Barnaul to the village of Kurai in the Altai Republic.



The local "clan society boss", Oleg, sorted out some horsemen for us, we loaded them up with supplies and marched off into the mountains. Two days later we arrived at the beautiful alpine pasture we would call home for the next week. That, and excited reports of a bear sighting from our horsemen. A fact later confirmed by numerous prints in the snow.

Over the next week we summited five peaks. We're almost certainly the first British climbers to ever go into the area and it's possible that these were first ascents (i.e. *no one* had climbed them before!).

After most of the team had gone home, I stayed out a little longer with my friend Matt and headed for a better known range with some stunning peaks. When we set off from Kurai village, a dog came with us. She followed us 15 miles across a plateau and matched pace with a jeep we flagged down for another 10 miles. She bivvied out with us in the woods for two nights and walked back to Kurai at the end. The first canine Alpinist?



Find out more:

You can see more of these stunning photos from my good friend David Tett (www.davidtett.com) on my website or at www.flickr.com/nextchallenge

I'm working on an expedition report and will write a full story about the trip once I'm back from Norway.

We climbed these mountains...



Coast-to-Coast Triathlon

This September, Mr Rob Cousins will attempt to complete a triathlon from one side of the country to the other.

The walking route is some 190 miles so you can imagine how tough this is going to be running from the west coast, swimming several miles through a Lake District tarn and mountain biking until he sits the sea.

I'll be providing support and encouragement (e.g. "Stop whinging and start swimming!") on the way and joining Rob as he "sleeps in a ditch" on route. Let me know if you'd like to help out.



⚡ you enjoyed reading this...

You might consider one of the following:

Checking out my website - I keep a regular blog of my own and other peoples' activities as well as the odd musing about life in general

Passing it on to a friend - If you think someone else might like reading this newsletter then let me know and I can add them to the mailing list

Letting me know what you think - It's hard to know whether or not what I write is interesting and exciting or a load of old drivel. Either way, it's good to get feedback so don't be shy!

Rickshaw Riding

For some years now I have had a notion to undertake a long distance cycle by rickshaw.

It's an idea that has taken various forms in my head over the months and years that it's been festering there but has now begun to formulate into what might generously be called a plan.

I took my first steps towards making such a trip happen in the last few weeks. It started with a tentative registration on the Rickshaw Forum and culminated in my riding the streets of London with Bug Bugs - one of London's oldest rickshaw companies.

And now, with the generous support of Bug Bugs, I will be undertaking my first trip when I get back from Norway later in the year. Watch this space!

Other challenges...

The British Winter Swedish 2000ers recently returned from conquering some of the highest mountains in Arctic Sweden.

Expedition Clayoquot head off to kayak around Vancouver Island on August 1st.

Francis Charlesworth, who aims to one day climb a very big mountain, just walked the South Downs Way on his own and is preparing to attempt the newly opened Sutherland Trail in Northern Scotland solo this summer.

