

**Kili Climb Report, Day 2 from the Mountain
Camp Shira, 3840m ASL (above sea level)
Correspondent: Paul Francis**



Right now the Kili Club is at 3840m above sea level, but better yet, we are above the cloud line.

Yesterday's six hours of walking actually took us through clouds and we are now looking at the most amazing blue skies and the snow-scattered peak of Mt Kilimanjaro. I know I get a bit emotional at times but honestly, this is beyond all our expectations.

The trek from Camp Machame to Camp Shira yesterday was seriously hard work. All of it was up hill. Steep ones. Really, really steep ones. And big rocks. We had lots of climbing up and over, and the terrain makes the Balmoral Burn's Awaba Street seem like a speed hump. Hard to believe, I know.

Kelly Cartwright, our 19-year-old Paralympian, had an incredible breakthrough yesterday and managed the rocks like a mountain goat. It was wonderful to watch and when we pulled up for the afternoon she announced that she would absolutely make it to the top. Her confidence in the climb blossomed yesterday, and lifted everyone's spirits.

Ditto the entire Kili Club. We've been a bit on tenterhooks wondering if we would make it, but now that we've had two days of climbing, we've settled into a routine and know what it's all about. Each and every one of us is feeling stronger and confident about making the summit in four days time – and we are hoping for a full moon to be shining on us when we get there to plant Humpty's flags.

You might be interested in the weather. It's bloody freezing. Correction; it's below bloody freezing and we're all wearing more clothes than we've ever had on. I reckon I'm wearing more than I've got in my entire wardrobe at home. The funny thing is, though, that you don't notice the cold when you're climbing; it's overshadowed by the amazing views and the landscape, which is scattered with the prettiest wild flowers in full bloom.

Our porters are doing a brilliant job and they are constantly telling us, "*pole, pole*" – which is actually pronounced poh-lay. It means slow down. The idea is to acclimatise as we climb and you can only do that at a relatively slow pace, which is why we ascended 840m yesterday.

Today's climb will take us to Camp Barranco at 3950m ASL. If you do the arithmetic, that's only another 110m higher than we are now but it's going to take us up to nine hours and several kilometres to get there. This will be the longest day of trekking on the schedule.

Kili Climb Report, Day 2 from the Mountain
Camp Shira, 3840m ASL (above sea level)
Correspondent: Paul Francis



Behind-the-scenes, things have been fun. No names, but one of our climbers has had a bad case of the trots courtesy of a dodgy curry back in Jo'burg. This morning he came running out of the loos shouting, "I'm back, I'm back". Thankfully, he'll be a lot more comfortable going up Kili today.

I reckon our Kili Club entertainer Joe Brown will come up with another jingle about it, which will be highly amusing. He's been inventing ditties and songs all the way from base camp. Joe is 50, an entrepreneur and a funny bloke: he's reckons he's fitter than he was at the age of 25, thanks to all his training.

On another note, the snorers have been miraculously rearranged and herded into tents on the outer perimeter of the camp. Willingly, I might add.

We've got birthday news: Joe Hockey turns 44 today and we've got a huge big cake for him when we arrive at Barranco later today when the porters will sing Happy Birthday. Sadly, there's no alcohol but we'll toast him with a cup of tea.

And speaking of cups of tea, that's how our incredible porters wake us up each morning – with a cuppa in bed! Not a bad way to start the day on a triple volcano.

Righto! We're off. Nine hours of climbing and Kili is calling.

Join us again tomorrow at www.humptysmountain.com.au for a progress report.

Until then, *tutaonana*.