

VISION 8000

Jill Wheatley

The months leading up to September 2014 had been spent trail running and cycling, enjoying a newfound passion for long distance duathlons in the Alps I called home. However, no amount of training could have prepared me for the trail that followed...



Jill Wheatley approaches camp three on Dhaulagiri.
Photo: Vinayak Malla



The Power of Independent Trucking

Ripley Boulianne

WE LEFT TOWN ON A MONDAY. I always find the transition between the valley and the alpine so enchanting, and that day was no exception. We slowly made our way into the Torre Valley in Argentina alongside a horde of Yosemite climbers. The clouds cleared to reveal the rime they had created after weeks of storm, leaving all of the peaks plastered in a coat of white. We jumped over streams carved into the glacier and went up and over the endless dunes of the moraine. The moment I had visualized for the past year was finally becoming reality, and in that same moment we had our first glance of the serac that would threaten us the next day. We would dub it Big Blue and appreciate its beauty, even though it looked like a giant mouse trap.¶

Mateo Esposito follows pitch seven of The Power of Independent Trucking. Photo: Ripley Boulianne

Reino Hongo

Alik Berg



Quentin Roberts on the headwall on day three. Photo: Alik Berg

ABOVE THE STORM

Bronwyn Hodgins

Angela VanWiemersch on Sea Barge Circus
Photo: Jaron Pham



Tiny Changes

Maarten van Haeren

Ethan Berman on day two at
6,000 metres on Tiny Changes.
Photo: Maarten van Haeren



those that can

Mike Landkroon

Those that can't do, teach. Those that can't teach, take photos, in my case anyway.

My 20s were spent in turbulence. At 30, I granted myself some hobby time and took a date on a climbing lesson. I was immediately hooked—on climbing.

I put a chin-up bar in my office, hand exercisers on my desk and climbing mags everywhere. Soon my linebacker dimensions resulted in elbow tendonitis. While recovering I picked up a camera and swallowed a second hook. In a peanut butter and chocolate moment, I combined the two. Between cameras and climbing, it felt like I was doing something important. I was on a mission. By the time my elbows stopped throbbing, my basement brew black and whites were getting published. This evolved to less climbing and more photos. Much like a celebrity interviewer, I got access to top talent without having to be one.

By my mid-30s, there were responsibilities and a full-time job. Evenings, weekends and vacations were spent chasing a photography career. Assignments were coming in, my client list was expanding and my sleep deficit was growing. The bulk of my work was on transparency (slide) film. Imagine no review of images for days or weeks after clicking the shutter. Each image realized as a physical piece of film. That film then shipped to the client. No copies, no back-ups.


I learned friendly clients weren't friends and policing was a big part of the gig. One client was stockpiling my slides for "the next issue." This sounded great but blocked me from shopping them elsewhere. Eventually hundreds of my best, irreplaceable slides were in a holding pattern. Giving up on the next issue, I asked for their return. A bargain, uninsured courier lost the package, and just like that, years of my best work were wiped out. Imagine erasure and destruction of all your media and hard drives. Zero backups, no cloud, only scorched earth.

The task of trying to rebuild sapped my mojo. In the "eat or be eaten" contest, I was dinner for too long. The big 4-0 was looming, and I returned my attention to the neglected but stable salaried job. With impeccable timing, I went solo and formed a consulting company in late 2019. The post-pandemic economy gifted me the time to climb the routes I once only photographed.

Recently, I've started posting surviving images to social media and lamenting what might have been with a little less of chasing my passion and a little more business savvy.

About the Author/Photographer

Currently living in Hamilton, Ontario, Mike is semi-retired. He divides his time between tinkering on projects like upfitting his Sprinter van and occasional engineering consulting gigs. The 2000 *CAJ* features Mike's photo on the cover.



2008: Brandon Pullan on Dorian Tower, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The human eye has a curved image-capture surface that naturally controls perspective. Tilt/shift lenses attempt to mimic the effect onto the flat imaging surface of the camera. The lens can also be used for selective blur. Many disappointing results taught me where not to use this specialty lens—a hammer in search of a nail situation. I excitedly scrambled up a sketchy adjacent formation and set up my tripod. Beams of sun pierced the fast-moving clouds making for splotchy light. Years of experience had also taught me how to predict when and where a beam of would hit. Brandon spent at least 30 minutes hanging in position, waiting for my shout to climb. In a magic instant, the laser hit its mark.