



GAUTENG CLIMBING

2024 / 2025

**CLIMB.
CONNECT.
TRANSCEND.**

304-144 NPO



GAUTENG
CLIMBING

HI THERE!

At the heart of our mission lies the sport of climbing, where we challenge both ourselves and others in the relentless struggle against gravity.

Through this experience, we cultivate deep and meaningful connections; few things foster trust as effectively as entrusting one's life to another.

This process of self-assessment and community building serves as a powerful tool, enabling us to transcend limitations imposed by society and by our own perceptions.

As a non-profit organization in good standing with the South African National Climbing Federation (SANCF), the Gauteng Sport Confederation (GSC), and the sport climbing industry, we are dedicated to enhancing the quality, quantity, and diversity of competitive events available to participants.

Although climbing is currently a niche sport, its recent inclusion in the Olympic Games and its status as one of the fastest-growing sports globally suggest a promising future for sport climbing in South Africa.

We aim to establish a strong foundation for a successful provincial sporting presence in this dynamic discipline.



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ABOUT GAUTENG CLIMBING

Gauteng Climbing was established in 2010 and serves as the provincial governing body for competition climbing, recognized by the South African Climbing Federation (SANCF).

Initially, Gauteng Climbing operated a single facility in Johannesburg and one in Pretoria. Today, Gauteng boasts five commercial climbing facilities and two university climbing walls.

With our recent acquisition of non-profit status and strong partnerships with the South African National Climbing Federation, Gauteng Sport Confederation, and the rock climbing industry, we are committed to enhancing the quality, quantity, and diversity of competitive climbing events. Although climbing remains a niche sport, its inclusion in the Olympic Games and its rapid growth worldwide inspire us to ensure South Africa keeps pace with these trends. We aim to establish a substantial sporting presence throughout the province.

Our membership consists of clubs and schools that engage directly with individuals, nurturing their talents and fostering a sense of community—a home base for both training and competition. Through our events, we identify promising athletes to represent Gauteng in competitions against other provinces, thereby providing opportunities for them to advance to the international level as representatives of South Africa. Our athletes have achieved significant success, winning National Championships and competing in IFSC World Cups, World Championships, and both the Olympic and Youth Olympic Games.

Our federation is managed by a committee of eight dedicated volunteers, each contributing their energy to sustain and promote the sport in South Africa. A substantial portion of our efforts focuses on administration, ensuring the smooth operation of our sporting community. Furthermore, we play an integral role in the national community, contributing a significant number of members and financial support to the national federation. We have successfully hosted numerous competitions, including the IFSC Continental Championship, where four South Africans qualified for the Paris Olympics, as well as National Championships and selection events. Additionally, we have organized fun days for other non-profits, including the para-sport community and the Winnie Mabaso Foundation, to raise awareness of climbing as a sport.

Climb. Connect. Transcend. These words were chosen deliberately to reflect our singular focus: to leverage this remarkable activity, which transcends its initial appearance, to empower individuals to become the best versions of themselves while supporting others along the way.



GAUTENG
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WELCOME MESSAGE



Representing the Gauteng Province is a profound honor, and I am genuinely appreciative of this opportunity.

Sport climbing holds immense significance within our province. Over the past several years, we have concentrated on enhancing our performance on both national and international platforms.

I am proud to report that our athletes have not only met but exceeded our expectations, demonstrating remarkable advancements in their climbing skills.

This year, Gauteng has set a new standard by introducing our very own sports photographer, Danie Du Toit. Many of you are familiar with and appreciate his work, and we eagerly anticipate his upcoming photo releases.

Another significant development is our ongoing collaboration with DJ van Wyk, the TopRoc developer and fellow committee member. It is exciting to have a scoring app that provides real-time scores for spectators, significantly easing the process for our judges.

We are also committed to strengthening our partnership with Discover Sport, a streaming platform that is revolutionizing opportunities for young athletes across various sports in South Africa.

Gauteng Climbing is home to exceptionally talented and dedicated athletes. Together with the 2025 elected committee, we must explore ways to enhance our standing within the climbing community. Our objective is to build upon the foundation laid by our predecessors. To this end, we need to establish subcommittees that will encourage greater community engagement in climbing initiatives.

With our recently acquired NPO status, Gauteng is now well-positioned to seek funding from diverse organizations. This financial support will enable us to host additional events, offer advanced performance workshops for our athletes, provide comprehensive training for our judges and scorers, and ensure that our belayers are trained according to international competition standards.

Recognizing and leveraging the connections within our community is invaluable; by doing so, we can navigate the funding landscape more effectively.

I look forward to what the 2025 climbing year holds and am excited for us as a community to unite in this sport that we love.



OUR PURPOSE

➤ TRANSCEND

To inspire climbers to transcend their limitations through growth, development and opportunity.

OUR VALUES

➤ COMMUNITY

Our community is the foundation on which we build highly respectful, deeply connected, and lasting friendships between organizers, parents, climbers, and friends.

➤ SAFETY

We strive to create climbing experiences in which all people feel safe to express their emotions, and have confidence to take risks and feel challenged and excited to try something new.

➤ PSYCH

We encourage a healthy dose of psych, PSYCH where people psych each other in rather than out.

OUR MISSION

➤ Climb. Connect. Transcend



MEMBERSHIP

Our membership encompasses clubs, schools, and universities, all of which actively engage with individuals to develop their talents and cultivate a sense of community—a supportive environment conducive to both training and competition. Currently, Gauteng Climbing proudly includes a total of 13 clubs, schools, and universities.

The foundation of sports provision in any athletic system is established through a network of club structures integrated into provincial and national sport frameworks that span both urban and rural areas across the country. The development and excellence of sports cannot be achieved without a robust foundation of club structures.

These institutions play a critical role in fostering a foundational community and bridging the connection between climbers and the province.

The registered clubs in Gauteng Climbing represent a coalition of club owners and coaches dedicated to the sport of climbing. Their primary responsibility lies in establishing and managing the club as an organization, focused on educating athletes about climbing and providing essential facilities.

While this framework outlines the organized administration for Gauteng as a sporting province, our clubs remain committed to effectively addressing the needs of climbing athletes.

Clubs are indispensable as they offer invaluable experiential learning opportunities for our youth, empowering them to make decisions and observe the impact of those decisions on their lives and sporting careers.

Clubs also have the power of bringing together like-minded people for the purpose of individual or collective growth and development in our sport.

As Josephine Brew articulated, *“The club at its best creates a society of personalities with a sense of community, which is the essence of good citizenship... We are not concerned with the making of ‘good club members’ or ‘well-organized youth groups,’ but with a much broader issue: the cultivation of good citizens. This can only be achieved in a society where each member is valued, and each individual is given the opportunity to contribute to the life of the group—where the leader holds no more importance than any member. This is why self-governance is paramount in club activities.”*

MEMBERSHIP

Clubs

InsideEdge

Rock Valley
Climbing

Offwidth

1on1
Adventures

The Barn

Alphas

Schools

The Ridge

St Davids
Marist

Pretoria
Boys

Northcliff
High School

Helpmekaar

Universities

Wits
Mountain

Tuks Explo

OUR PROJECTS

► SUB COMMITTEES

The concept of subcommittees has been a recurring topic of discussion within our provincial framework for some time. Their introduction offers the broader climbing community a valuable opportunity for more active engagement in the sport.

We have identified four primary areas for volunteer involvement:

1. Funding and Sponsorship
2. Marketing and Media
3. Events and Competitions
4. Scoring, Judging, and Belaying

► ATHLETE COMMISSION

One of our key initiatives is the formation of an athlete commission, which is essential for fostering athlete representation and development within our province. Although athletes frequently voice their concerns and provide suggestions, these contributions can occasionally be misconstrued as negative criticism. Nevertheless, with nearly a decade of experience collaborating with athletes, it is clear that there exists substantial potential for growth in this domain.

► MORE COMPETITIONS / EVENTS

To enhance the competitive experience for all participants, we will introduce a competition series designed to cater to both our advanced competitive climbers and recreational athletes. We understand that not all athletes aspire to compete at the international level; some may prefer not to participate in overseas competitions while still seeking opportunities to challenge themselves in competitive environments.

This initiative will allow our elite athletes to be fully tested in competitions where our setters can push their limits, while also providing recreational climbers with an opportunity to compete in a supportive atmosphere that is challenging without being overwhelming.

By implementing this initiative, we aim to strengthen our partnerships with schools and universities and effectively recruit more climbers as members of our province once again.

OUR PROJECTS

► TRANSFORMATION

Through partnerships with our commercial climbing venues, we can enhance and elevate the adaptive climbing community, aligning with SASCOC's core objectives.

We can organize additional workshops and events specifically designed for our previously disadvantaged athletes, thereby fostering greater community engagement.

► WOMEN IS SPORT

Currently, female participation in our athlete database accounts for only 27%. It is essential that we implement strategies to increase this percentage to at least 50%.

Given that sport climbing is one of the few national sports without separate male and female teams, we must prioritize initiatives designed to enhance female involvement in our discipline.

Over the past year, female athletes in Gauteng have achieved remarkable success. Caitlin Bouwer, a Youth A competitor, secured an impressive third overall ranking at the 2023 Africa Continental Championships. Additionally, Senior athlete Lauren Mukheibir won a gold medal, becoming the first female athlete from Gauteng to represent in sport climbing at any Olympic Games.

Furthermore, Youth B female athlete Jemma Erdey was recognized as one of the finalists at the 2024 Gauteng Sports Awards in the Amayangayanga category, distinguishing herself as the youngest female athlete to be nominated for such a prestigious title.



MEET OUR TEAM

Carmen Bouwer President

Carmen is a wife, a mom to three climbers, a climbing and fitness coach and have been involved in climbing for the past seven years as she co-owns a local climbing gym with her husband.

She represented SA as the Assistant Team Manager to the Youth World climbing team during their 2022 tour in Dallas, Texas, the 2023 tour in Seoul, South Korea and this year, she accompanied the team as Head Manager at the 2024 Youth World Championships in Guiyang, China.

“I Absolutely love what I do and look forward to the 2025 climbing year.”



Nicholas Meinel Vice -President

Nicholas has been a climber for over 12 years. Between 2015 and 2018, he had competed for South Africa overseas. This fueled his love for the sport even more. For the past four years, Nic has been dedicated to coaching young athletes, helping them grow and achieve their climbing goals.

Nic also served as an Assistant Coach to the Youth World team in 2019 and 2024, which were both rewarding experiences.

“Climbing and its community mean everything to me, and I’m passionate about growing the sport and inspiring others to achieve their best.”



Bridgette Erdey Secretary General

Bridgette Erdey has been serving as the Gauteng Climbing Secretary since 2022, where she is known for her dedication and organizational skills.

With a passion for the outdoors, she actively supports the climbing community in her region. “I am a proud mother to a 10-year-old son who has a zest for skateboarding and a 14-year-old daughter who is a Junior Protea Sport Climber”

Bridgette's commitment to her roles as both a sporting administrator and a mother showcases her ability to balance responsibilities with grace and enthusiasm.



Lee Atkinson Treasurer

Lee is a mother to two incredible boys. She owns her own company and specialize in project management, payroll/human resources, taxation, and accounting.

Lee see’s herself as an achiever, an organizer and a solution seeker who aspires to do everything to the best of her ability which includes supporting a sport in South Africa that needs growth, development and new opportunities.

“Being a member of the Gauteng Climbing committee allows me to influence our climbing community, which aligns with my own motto of "changing lives and making a difference."



MEET OUR TEAM

Heidi Marais Committe Member

Heidi Marais is the mother of Jasper Marais, one of GC's athletes.

Heidi is a qualified Goldsmith and Jewelry Designer by trade and is currently the owner of a small jewelry school in Bryanston, Johannesburg.

It has always been in Heidi's nature to support and help wherever she can. The past decade she played the roles of wife, parent, coach, scorer, and climber.

Heidi is currently serving as an active Gauteng Climbing committee member for the second year and would love to see Gauteng Climbing and it's climbers transcend all their limitations.



Debbie McGowan Committe Member

Debbie is a proud business owner, wife and mother to two dedicated Gauteng Climbing athletes. Her family embraces adventure and cherishes the endless possibilities life offers.

“As I embark on my second year serving on this committee, I am excited by the opportunities to develop and grow this incredible sport we all love.”



DJ Van Wyk Committe Member

DJ is a professional software developer whose expertise in information technology led to the creation of the scoring application we now know as TopRoc.

His passion for climbing began in 2023 when he accompanied a group of friends to a local climbing gym. It was there that he developed a deep appreciation for the sport and the welcoming community surrounding it.

“I joined the Gauteng Climbing committee with the intention of fostering positive growth and improvement by leveraging my technological skills.”



Anton Redelinghuys Committe Member

Anton is a family man, happily married to Jeanne and raising two children in high school. His recent foray into the world of climbing, inspired by his son's talent, has ignited a newfound love for the sport. While his analytical mind and structured approach may not be the most natural fit for the dynamic nature of climbing, he remains enthusiastic about supporting the sport and contributing to its growth.

As a new and dedicated committee member of Gauteng Climbing, Anton aims to leverage his expertise in rules, judging, and scoring to enhance the sport's accessibility and understanding for climbers and spectators of all ages. “My goal is to build upon the existing foundation and implement practical improvements that foster a more inclusive and enjoyable climbing experience for everyone.”



OUR AFFILIATES

Gauteng Climbing proudly holds membership and affiliation with all relevant Local, National, and International sporting organizations.

While our National Federations provide a platform for the entire sporting community to achieve their goals, the International federations provide a structure that helps Sport Climbing fulfill their role as a transformative agent in society.



SANCF
South African National Climbing Federation



SASCA
SOUTH AFRICAN SPORTS
COACHING ASSOCIATION

*South African Institute for
Drug-Free Sport*

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