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News of the

Washington Rock Climbers

Founders

Jan & Herb Conn
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* MEETING, Jan. 31, 1946, 8:00 P.M. *

With Elizabeth and Bert Vos

2901 Allison St., NE, Wa. 1762

For directions see UP ROPE, Jan. 9, 1946

Or call the Vos': it's very complicated

How to Judge a Sport

By Paul Bradt

Not that one has to sell rock climbing, as a sport, to any UP ROPE readers, but just to be sure that they have been put on record somewhere, I would like to mention several of its distinct advantages over other sports. If people ask you why you climb, these are possible answers.

1. The sport isn't standardized, and the most experienced climber will find interesting variations in his playground avoided in such games as baseball or tennis.

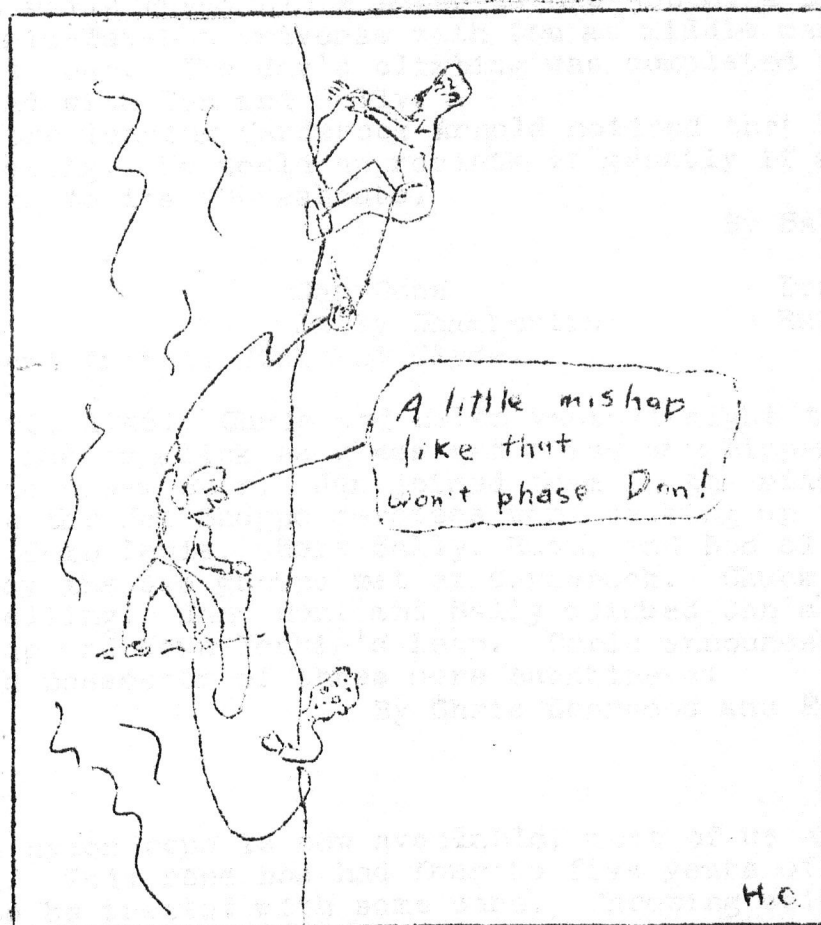
2. The number of men on a team can be varied enough to accommodate any number over one. With adequate rope, cliff space, and leadership, there is no need to have bench-warmers. Those not climbing are usually beginners awaiting instruction or those insufficiently anxious to put out the energy. Reckless and unreliable people are, of course, consigned to the bench, if they are allowed that near.

3. It offers at least nearly equal chances for both sexes. There is probably no other strenuous competitive sport that exceeds rock climbing in this respect. I can climb better than plenty of men whom I regard as good climbers, but I am not ashamed to acknowledge that I have repeatedly tried and always failed to climb Herby's Horror. It has to date been climbed only by Herb Conn, his wife Jan, and Dick Leonard of the Sierra Club. Nor am I terribly ashamed to acknowledge that Dolores Alley, a staid mother of two children, has climbed the Bird's Nest Climb, while its horizontal layback section has, at least until now, repulsed me.

4. The competition is directly between the climbers and the cliff, rather than among the climbers themselves. The natural response, when one team sees another in difficulty, is to give helpful suggestions or real help. This tends to develop friendships rather than to arouse animosities. However, rock climbers have to be careful in selecting their climbing friends. Your entire rope is in real danger if it includes one man that isn't careful, cooperative, and trustworthy.

5. A tall man can climb as well as a short one, and vice versa. In general, reach, or other linear dimensions of your skeleton, give you no advantage or disadvantage. A step ladder or a basketball court has been designed with the dimensions of the human body in mind. Man's dimensions were not considered when cliffs and mountains were formed. For a particular short climb there is undoubtedly an ideal stature; but this would be different for different parts of a long climb. No one, in the long run, has any advantage because of stature.

6. Your weight in itself gives you no advantage or disadvantage. You compete as an equal, which is the sporting way. In climbing, you have to carry your own weight. If you are heavy you have more to carry. This is going to delay you if you attempt to climb a mountain or cliff. That is granted. But it will delay you no more than the light man's weight delays him. Take the extreme case: An elephant weighs a hundred billion times as much as a flea. If they independently jump into a truck the flea accomplishes only 1 one-hundred billionth as much as the elephant.



In other words, the amount of energy spent in gaining a given height is, in each case, proportional to the weight of the animal.

The important thing is, what one's weight is made of, i.e., his energy to weight ratio. If you have more muscular energy available for your weight, you have an advantage over the other fellow. But don't get too cocky about it, you may be the one that runs out of energy five days in from the start of the climbing expedition ascending K2.

7. No social pull winning personality, or financial advantage will make it easier for you to reach the top of a cliff. If you do well, you can be sure it was not because some judge had his money on you.

In short, rock climbing is a clean sport that takes you into beautiful surroundings where you can engage in an activity having the best qualities of a true sport. If you try it you will still find it interesting at 80.

Ups and Downs

Chris Scoredos
Helen Scoredos
Don Hubbard
Arnold Wexler
Pussy Behrenberg

Andy Kauffman
Betty Kauffman
Eleanor Tatge
Roger Morrison
Jimmy Maxwell

Joseph Murhar
Harriet Hulbert
Mary Neilan
Sally Chamberlin

January 13, 1946. What started out to be a none too pleasant day as the group walked up the towpath to Carderock turned into a day that, on the one hand was so clear it sent Pussy into ecstasies about the blueness of the sky, and on the other hand was cold enough to make Joe shiver just to watch the climbers use their bare hands on the rocks. Joe has climbed with Chris in Colorado and has also done some climbing in the Swiss Alps. Chris and Helen were showing him some of the Carderock climbs. After Helen climbed Ronnie's Leap, the three went up to Great Falls. Betty, Andy, Harriet, and Mary limbered up on Kindergarten Corner, Beginner's Crack, Ronnie's Leap, and the Barnacle Face. Don and Arnold walked up along the river gathering edible plants to supplement their lunch and arrived with several specimens of plantain, wild carrots, onions, and a (partly fermented) thistle root, which they prepared with great care and pride. Every one helped eat the plants, with no apparent

ill effects. After lunch Arnold, Jimmy, and Roger climbed on Arnold's Arduous Ascent while Pussy did a super-deluxe job of a piton lead along part of the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse with Don as middle man and Sally bringing up the rear. The day's climbing was completed when Jimmy did Don's Piton Lead with Don and Sally.

Just before leaving Carderock Arnold noticed that his brown plastic canteen was missing. He would appreciate it greatly if anyone could give him some clue as to its whereabouts.

By Sally Chamberlin

Chris Scoredos

Jan Conn

Don Hubbard

Helen Scoredos

Sally Chamberlin

Ruth Anderson

Chuck Haworth and friends Jack and Clyde.

January 20, 1946. Chris and Helen went straight to Carderock where they found the ice as slick as glass and twice as slippery, and the skating something to dream over. Jan joined them in the middle of the morning. Meanwhile the Hot Shoppe devotees were walking up the towpath and stopped off at Camp Lewis, where Sally, Ruth, and Don climbed the Dome. Later in the day the two groups met at Carderock. Chuck, Jack, and Clyde practiced rappelling. Jan, Don, and Sally climbed Jan's Chimney, and Helen climbed up and down Ronnie's Leap. Chris announces that, hooray, he is the proud possessor of three more carabiners!

By Chris Scoredos and Eleanor Tatge

WARNING

Although nylon rope is now available, most of us are still using pre-war manila. This rope has had four to five years of continuous use and deserves to be treated with some care. Throwing coiled ropes over the cliffs to the rocks below is severe abuse for any rope, and with the present rope might so injure it as to cause a fatal accident. DON'T DO IT!

Leonard's Lunacy, Carderock (A-17)

The line of the main Carderock cliffs runs diagonally toward the Potomac; then, when within about eight feet of the water's edge, it makes a corner and follows the river bank downstream. At the river side of this corner, the rock profile includes an overhang that can be reached from an off-balance shelf part way up the face. It was considered lunacy of Dick Leonard to suggest this as a route into the trough above it, and thence to the top. On December 5, 1943 Don Hubbard demonstrated that it wasn't lunacy, and on May 20, 1945 Herb Conn made a three-piton lead of it.

Wexler's Worst and Stretch, Carderock (B-19)

From the top of the Barnacle Face one can step out to the right somewhat astride the top of Marian's Chimney (Buckets of Blood Cave) and reach a handhold quite sufficient for a steady hold. The idea of swinging to the right on this hold was deemed Wexler's worst. It seems quite repulsive, but lands one on a foothold from which it is quite easy to continue the traverse to the right across the Beginner's Crack to the Stretch. The Stretch is made by a finger-tip traverse leading to a corner beneath a large nose. In getting around this corner it is usually necessary to stretch something. The first part of the traverse was climbed by Arnold Wexler in the winter of 1942-43. A few weeks later Chris Scoredos continued the traverse beyond the Stretch.

Notes and News

They come and they go. Tom has come, Jimmy has gone. Tom Culverwell is back in civvies and at the Woodacres address. If anyone wants to spend an interesting evening listening, get Tom talking about China. Jimmy Maxwell, who has been doing some of our super-duper climbing has shipped out from Boston Bay on the U.S.S. Cleveland.

Arthur, who is in Kyushu, Japan, has taken a couple of trips recently, but both have proved disappointing vertically.

In a letter to Donald Hubbard, Donald Jacobs refers to some history of the Enchanted Mesa climbed by Herb, Jan, Don and Eleanor on November 17, 1945: "I have found out something concerning the marks of previous visitation. We found on the Enchanted Mesa by reading 'Mesa, Canyon, and Pueblo' by Charles Lummis. It seems that back in 1897 some professor from Princeton decided to make a Famous First Ascent, so he carted from the nearest railway station several cartloads of assorted stuff. First, he set up a life-saving mortar (one of those gizmos that they shoot rescue lines to beleaguered vessels with) and fired a light line over the mesa. This was hitched to some horses on the other side of the mesa and they hauled it over, thus pulling a heavier line into position. This was continued, with etceteras, until a heavy hawser was in position. Next a breeches buoy was slung on the hawser, and the horses hauled to the very top of the mesa the Intrepid Explorer. Here he posed for a few pictures, and then was horsed back down. Total time: 4 days. Next, another pioneer had a special 36-foot ladder made up into six 6-foot sections, and used this to work from pitch to pitch on the west side, where there is a series of giant steps. There is no evidence that our route, on the sheer east wall, had been taken before.

"Runor has it that there are some more shafts of the Shiprock variety up near Shiprock. Also at least one unclimbed peak of this type. How about thinking over the possibility of some of the rock climbers coming out here in the spring or summer to try some of these gadgets, or even Shiprock? If anyone is interested in this scheme we will investigate the possibilities and report."

Donald Jacobs
542 North Aliso Avenue
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Last but not Least

Herb Conn is East again, and we can hope to see him on some of our local climbs once more. He is stationed for basic training at Camp Lee, Virginia, 36 miles from Richmond. If you know of any climbing down in that part of the country, please let him in on it.

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Camp Lee, Virginia