



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE
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COMING EVENTS

The Mountaineering Committee meets each Sunday morning at Howard Johnsons restaurant, Western and Wisconsin Avenues, at 8 a.m. Bring lunch, water, and sneakers for climbing. A note is left behind the south east drain pipe so latecomers may know where we have gone. There will usually be a Sunday trip on the out of town weekends. Please do not phone the restaurant.

July 10 CARDEROCK, Maryland

July 17 THURMONT, Maryland

July 24 HERZOG ISLAND. This is just across from CARDEROCK. If the water is too high, we will climb "down by the riverside" as has been our custom in recent months.

July 31 STONEY MAN, Virginia

August 7 CARDEROCK, Maryland -- No Oscar

12- 14 THE HERMITAGE, Pennsylvania. Bob Molle, Leader. If you can't reach Bob call Betty Johnson at Em. 2-4789

August 21 Open

28 CAMP LEWIS Maryland. Down from Carderock about 1 mile.

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There will be no UP ROPE until September. Editor on "vacation"

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LOST AND FOUND

A blue parka with white lining, and a pair of leather gloves, size 7 or 8, have been found at Carderock. Contact Harold Kramer if they are yours.

SOME QUESTIONABLE BELAYING PRACTICES
AND AN ACCIDENT REPORT

A. C. LEMBECK

As one becomes more expert in balance climbing the drag of the rope is an annoying and sometimes a critical factor. To reduce drag to a minimum, the climber can resort to a variation of double rope technique wherein one ties into two ropes and later abandons the initial belay rope and clips into the most advanced carabiner with a second rope. Another method has grown common with local climbers, that of reducing drag through avoiding sharp alterations in direction produced by carabiners, when the resulting path of the rope is not a straight line. This method has been to clip several carabiners into one piton making a chain of carabiners and thus restoring the relatively straight line direction of the rope. By so doing a possibly fatal error has been introduced. Unless safety (i.e., a threaded collar screwed over the gate keeper) carabiners are used, and a fall results which exerts a twisting force around the axis of the chain of carabiners, the pressure of one carabiner can press upon the gate of another and the carabiners separate. The likelihood of such a twisting force after a fall I could not estimate but I do know that use of a proper system, piton-carabiner-sling-carabiner-rope, will eliminate this danger and do a better job than the chain of carabiners.

So now we are up to slings - PROPER slings. A sling must be able to do the job for which it is used. The Conns had a fine article on slings in SUMMIT* sometime ago. The British use slings much more than most of us in this country, perhaps because slings are evidently not an artificial aid in the way that pitons can be so considered. A sling which is only used as a rappel seat or an upper belay for a rappel can be relatively weak, even $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter nylon or 5/16" manila. A sling which is in the direct belaying chain where it might have to absorb the force of a falling leader must be stronger. UP ROPE ** published some data on breaking strengths of Armed Forces nylon tubular webbing which might be of interest to the reader who prefers this versatile, readily obtainable material for made-up slings as an alternative to 7/16" diameter nylon rope. The 1" (flat) nylon tubular webbing has a breaking strength of about 4200 lbs. with a fisherman's knot further secured by overhand knots or whipping. The dynamic belay is an absolute necessity for causing minimum strain on any part of the protection system, but each part should have a reasonable reserve strength for peak loads.

Reprinted below is an accident report from the British Mountaineering Council Journal, MOUNTAINEERING 111: 7, p. 29, 31 March 1960, which concerns improper slings, in this case nylon rope less than $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter.

* The Versatile Runner, Jan and Herb Conn, SUMMIT MAGAZINE 11: 11, p. 8, Nov. 1958

**a. Knots in Nylon Slings, Lembeck and Stirton, UP ROPE X:15, p. 2,
21 January 1954

b. Knots in Nylon Slings, Part 11, Stirton and Lembeck UP ROPE X11: 11, p. 3
3 June 1956

A BELAY LOOP FAILURE

From MOUNTAINEERING 111, 7, p. 29, 31 March 1960

The Accident.-- On Sunday, 7th June, 1959, a party was climbing Shadow Wall on Carreg Wastad. As the leader approached the overhang pitch, his second offered to move higher to give him more protection, but the leader was confident and continued, setting three running belays as he went. These consisted of rope loops slipped over the rock and linked by karabiners to the leader's rope. The leader fell while treading the crux about 10 ft. above and to the side of the uppermost belay. The belay loop broke and the two succeeding belays were jerked off, the leader was finally arrested by the second at the full length of the rope and suffered severe head injuries.

The Belay.-- The broken belay loop, recovered after the accident, is of nylon, 5/8 in. circumference, corresponding to British Standard 3104, Rope No. 1. It was formed by knotting a length of about 2 yards. It appeared to be new or almost new, clean and unworn except where obviously damaged in this accident. There were lacerations at three points, one severe near to the knot where the rope had broken. The break was clean with no fusing or other sign of excessive heat or soiling from the rock. Two of the strands had broken 1 in. further from the knot than the third.

Comment.-- Allowing for the extensibility of the whole rope between the leader and second and friction between the rope and karabiners, and assuming that the second did not use a dynamic belay, it is probable that the force necessary to stop the leader when his rope became taut on the first running belay would have been between 2,000 and 3,000 lb. Allowing for the friction on the karabiner, this would impose a load on the belay loop of 3,000 to 4,000 lb. even if extended in the most favourable circumstances, i.e., if pulled against a perfectly smooth cylinder of large diameter. Knotted as it was and pulled against a rock spike, its breaking load would be only a fraction of its potential strength. A loop of manila or other material of the same size would break at even smaller loads. Such loops are clearly unable to withstand the force which would have been necessary to stop the falling leader. The load on the loop would have been substantially reduced if the second had used the dynamic belay technique and the potential strength of the loop might have been more nearly realized if it had been protected by a leather sleeve where it passed over the rock.

The inadequacy of these belay loops was noted in the report on the accident on Cymr Ias of Easter, 1957 (MOUNTAINEERING, Vol. 111, No. 3, March 1958) and in B.M.C. Circular No. 265. It cannot be too strongly emphasized, that whenever possible belay loops should be of rope of the same quality and size as the main climbing rope. Where the rock belay or other circumstances prevent the use of loops of this size, the heaviest possible rope should always be used, and the rope should be protected where it comes into contact with the rock. Leather sleeves fitted over the rope are best for this purpose. But even with these precautions some risk of failure must be recognized when lightweight belay loops are used.

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UP ROPE still has available copies of the MIT Outing Club booklet, Fundamentals of Rock Climbing for \$1.00, and the 1960 Accidents in American Mountaineering for 25¢. These will not be sent through the mail but will be made available to local climbers on our Sunday trips. Contact the editor or Karl Edler. We are also giving away copies of the USDA bulletin on Poison Ivy. All you have to do is ask, and it's yours.

UPS AND DOWNSSENECA ROCKS, WEST VIRGINIA May 28-30

The Adamses
 Fred Barker
 The Edlers
 Joe Faint
 Sharon Fairley
 Tom Gaines
 Sam Goldin
 Mike Ingerman

Al Kloudahl
 Hal Kramer & son
 Walt Kuckes
 Larry Lepley
 Bob Mole & son
 Alistair Morrison
 Joe Nolte

Mike Rosenheimer
 Joan Ryan
 Jim Shipley
 Alan Talbert
 Carmen Torrey
 Dave Varmette
 Pat Warner

Perhaps the Rain-Dancers did it! Maybe a stray monsoon wafted in from muggy Mogok! But us poor, helpless climbers were welcomed to Seneca Friday night with a drenching downpour. Saturday morning, however, everyone showed up dry and ready for the rocks. Even 10 minutes of sunshine! People swarmed up the cliffs--the Skyline, Old Man, Old Woman, Cockscomb Overhang (Bob and Bobbie Adams and Alistair), Gun Sight and South Peak, Simple J (Jim and Walt), and other routes. Then drizzle changing to rain changing to an enervating downpour changing damp climbers to dripping wet climbers. Alan and Sam were rained off Tony's Nightmare, to seek a dry spot in the little cave below. The rain continued on into the night, but we were allowed to use the Pavilion, and even had a cozy campfire after supper.

Sunday was different: almost dry rocks, except for the usual drippy places, and promising skies. Alan with Dave Varmette went up Conn's East Face to the Gun Sight Notch and No Dally Alley. Bob and Kate and Sam crowded themselves onto the top of the Gendarme. Joe Faint led Fred and Jim up the Ecstasy route (on the south face, near the west edge, first put up by folks from Carnegie Tech last Fall, and climbed two weeks previously by Mike Nicholson and Joe); Jimmy puffed contentedly on his carved briar and turned Veticalsville into Coolsville; sitting on top of a big flake in the upper part of the climb--the first relaxed belay stance in a while--Joe gazed down to the tops of the trees and said, "Ecstasy, huh! More like Insanity!" Later, Jim Shipley made a first ascent of the prominent inside corner that lies about 75 feet north of the Lunch Ledge, named the Ship-Shivering-Shimmy. The first forty feet of this climb are fairly straight forward, then the walls of the corner are almost free of holds for about thirty feet. In this section Jimmy mostly lay-backed with his fingers on the corner crack, with rests on tension-- the crux of the climb, and a very fine performance. The next twenty feet of the corner open into a narrow chimney, with some loose rock (ker-boom to the bottom!). Above the chimney Jimmy moved out onto the south-facing wall and easily completed the climb. A drenching shower held off until he reached the shelter of the chimney. Ten pitons were used, of which eight were retrieved next day. Joe Faint repeated the climb and collected the snap-links.

Monday was a very pleasant day with sunshine, puffy clouds, and NO-RAIN-AT-ALL. And not very many climbers were left, owing to a sort of meteorological attrition. Bob Adams and Hal did Conn's East Face. Walt, Sam, and Al, went up to the Gun Sight and on to the North Peak. Alan and Dave went up the Breakneck, and the climb belied its name for both participants. Joe Faint led Fred Barker and Jim Shipley (cigars this climb, six-centers, too) up the lower half of the Soler route, and Jim continued through to lead the upper, "interesting" half of this climb.

A fine weekend for both climbing in the rain and on dry rocks. But cuss

those wet Goldline ropes; they don't pull so easy through 'biners (either that or Alan was hanging on and was pulled up bodily and solely, but I don't think so).

Fred Barker

June 12 BULL RUN MOUNTAINS, Virginia

Betty Johnson
Ed Goodman
Jim Goodman
Al Klovdahl
Joe Nolte

Betsy Neil
Haynes Walker
Larry Lepley
Sharon Fairley
The Adams Family

Jim Shipley
Alistair Morrison
Doris & Jack Ullman
Fred Barker
Charlie McKhan
Alan Talbert

Wasn't it fun walking 3 miles instead of the usual half, and clearing trail at the same time? We can congratulate each other on all the work done. Interesting climbing was seen (as usual) on Charlies Crack and Two Inches More.

CARDEROCK June 5

Carderock is a pleasant place. Shady and cool it is, and quiet too. Spring comes here casting its bittersweet spell over it all and the gentle urgency of new life is everywhere.

Thus it was on a morning in June when we went there. *

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Harold Kramer and Joe Faint climbed the JAM BOX.

Bob Mole

POT HOLES & ECHO CLIFFS, Virginia June 19

Carmen Torrey
Betty Johnson
Joe Nolte
Al Klovdahl
Ed Goodman
Peg & Bob Bruton

Jim Goodman
The Blinns
The Adams Family
Hal Kramer
Mike Rosenheimer
Phil Sidel

Fred Barker
Alan Talbert
Karl Edler
Joe Faint
Jim Shipley
Hal & Kay Blinn

On a beautiful summer day, a small group of eager climbers took off from Howard Johnson's for the Potomac rocks and started at the Pot Holes area,

where ropes blossomed on all climbs. The sloping balance climb developed new charms when practically all the handholds were outlawed, and the corner overhang, usually climbed as a lead, proved very interesting with an overhead belay. After lunch and a delicious Father's Day Cake (thanks to Kate Adams), we wandered down to Echo Cliffs. For those who did not mind the muddy Potomac, swimming was very refreshing. After supper at Touhey's, we regretfully said goodbye to the Blinns who are moving to Colorado.

Carmen Torrey

* Spring is indeed here and it would seem that the private lives of some of our climbers might prove quite interesting. Ed.

Kay and Hal Blinn have left for Denver Colorado, we'll miss them. Their new address is 2882 South Race, Denver Colorado. They will hold open house for all their climbing friends. So look them up if you are out that way.

John Ackerman will be stationed at the Biological Reserve Station, Moran, Wyoming until September 10. He would like to visit with and perhaps climb with any of the club members who may be out that way. --Studying animal behavior, so he says.

Bill Welsh and wife Dolly dropped in at Howard Johnsons for breakfast. It was nice to see them again.

John Bowling has sent in his Ice Pitons for club use. Seems that he is getting married and has given up climbing for Hill walking. Don Hubbard is the new curator of the equipment.

Don, (getting back to cloud watching for a moment) showed us a newspaper clipping where the winner of the National Spelling Bee won on the word "velleity"

At last Bob Mole has had his wish. We celebrated Jack Doolan's return (if not to climbing, at least to Tuhoey's) by returning to Carderock after supper, on the evening of June 26. Jim Goodman climbed the Spider Walk 7 times in a row,-- and move ahead Art Andraitis, the editor has now joined that long list of Spider Walk Neurotics. If you can't make it in time for our morning session, perhaps you can make it for our newly established after supper climbing club.

It is obvious why the following joke writer didn't sign his name.

Two rock climbers named Hans and Fritz took their mother for an outing. In going up a cliff, the mother fell off into space. Fritz looked at the other climber and said, "Look, Hans, No Mom".

On May 17, at the Georgetown Public Library, a few of us were fortunate enough to hear Anton Nelson, president of the Kilimanjaro Mountain Club speak on the mountains in that area. The hard glazed ice cliffs in this area are what make these mountains especially treacherous and route finding especially difficult. Other hazards are the approaches which are dangerous because of the wild animals. Mr. Nelson will be remembered by many for his climbing on the Lost Arrow with the Sierra Club some years ago.

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