



## NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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SOUTH FACE OF THE WASHINGTON COLUMN  
Grade V, 5.9, A-4, Yosemite Valley

Tom Evans

Having been in the incomparable Yosemite Valley for a week, Bob Williams and I decided to try the Kor-Fredericks Route on the South Face of the Washington Column. As we had gained valuable experience while failing on the North face of Quarter Dome, we felt ready for this classic Yosemite route.

Early in the morning of 23 May, we set out for the base of the 2,000 foot Column. "Hope we don't die of thirst. I'd hate to take a leader fall up there. Keep cool weather - keep cool. I sure hope we can avoid that 5.9 somehow." Putting such thoughts out of our minds was not easy - especially in Yosemite.

Bob took the first lead and was up in no time - next came the hauling bag followed by myself. Nice and neat, only 13 more pitches like that and everything would be fine.

The climbing got a bit more serious on the second pitch as I avoided a steep dihedral for 100 feet to a small ledge. Then Bob led up and right, then back left to another ledge.

The next pitch went up a groove to the left to a large ledge - dinner ledge. We planned on spending the night there, so we left one hauling bag and continued on up to fix the next three pitches so we would have a good start in the morning.

The climbing really begins in earnest on the fifth pitch. Bob led up an expanding flake to the base of a 7 foot overhang. The placement of an A-4 knife blade in a bad crack enabled him to get started on the overhang, but as he stood up to clip into a bolt already in place I was sure glad to be belaying! The wind had come up and Bob was having trouble keeping steady. Another bolt and a long blind reach to place a 3/4 inch angle and he was in Fat City - 60 feet of A-1 bombers. He stretched the lead out to include the very short sixth pitch. After tying into some good pins on a 3x4 foot ledge, under yet another overhang, Bob yelled, "Off belay, Tom!" - which in Yosemite means it's ok for the second to jumar up. The wind was still roaring as I started up removing pins easily from the expanding flake. Then the overhang started. My enthusiasm rapidly disappeared as the wind buffeted my free-hanging body about.

Look down - 800 feet right to the ground - don't look down again! Push those jumars up, beat those pint out - push and beat and sweat, only 40 feet to go, then 15 feet, then 5 feet.

"Probably the greatest lead I have ever seen!" I said to Bob as I clipped into the belay pins. It was getting late, only time for one more pitch. Standing on the left edge I was just able to reach a bolt. "Kor must have a 20 foot reach," I thought. The bolt was two feet under a three foot ceiling. The route description said there was another bolt up there somewhere, so I hung back and stretched as far as I could... Oh yes...there was a bolt but it was well out of my reach.

Swinging back down I discussed the situation with Bob. Later we were to learn that Dougal Haston and Bev Clark had torn off a flake in which an intermediate placement was required. I quickly lashed a snap-link to the head of my hammer and tied its gate open with a hero loop. Then, hanging an aid sling from the end of the handle, I went back up for another try. Holding the hammer by the very bottom, I was just able to hook the open biner into the bolt hanger. Success! However my spirits soon sank as I moved higher in my slings. The next placement was out of my reach. Mantling the bolt on the near vertical wall, I was able to stand precariously in the top rungs of my slings. By stretching as high as possible, I could just put the nose of a 3/4 inch angle into a shallow crack. It would only go in about 3/4 of an inch, so I carefully tied it off. It somehow held my weight as top-runging got me to the base of a long left-leaning arch. The nailing was interesting and a little shaky (A-3) but really great. At the end of the arch, Bob lowered me 25 feet from a fixed knife blade. I swung to the right, pendulumed back to the left, and was able to land on a small platform. Climbing up a crack to the level of the pendulum point brought me to the end of the pitch - a belay bolt. What a groovy pitch, I thought, this is what it's all about. Bob hurried up and we rappelled on two ropes down to the dinner ledge for food, water, and sleep.

The next morning it was up early and jumar to the start of #8. Bob led off on a second arch (A-3). At the end of the arch a misguided hammer blow smashed his left thumb - a very painful injury that would hinder him for the rest of the climb. He finished the pitch, straight up to a small ledge. The next two pitches went straight up perfect cracks.

The eleventh pitch had kept our minds busy all day - after we did that one, things should get considerably easier. The first half of the pitch went up and right in a good crack to the base of a 5.8 jam crack. I managed to drive an angle into some dirt for "protection" as I entered the jam. Man, was it ever hot. Struggling desperately, I was able to advance a few feet and placed a 3 inch bong to rescue my failing technique. I belayed in a chimney as Bob started on up moderate free climbing to the base of an ugly 5.9 crack. We avoided this by nailing the face on the right, but Bob ran out of pins before reaching the belay spot.

"Come on up Tom, but be careful the belay pins aren't very good!" It was with a certain reservation that I started up the rope. 1,500 feet to the ground - come on belay pins - be tough! Bob ended up finishing the lead on the hauling line. I led up a mangy, rotten corner on poor pins to a free traverse left - then over a 5th class overhang up to a belay in the branches of a tree. Bob started the last pitch as night fell. Straight up a rotten groove to the end of the

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## P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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356-4584

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530-0007

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683-5091

BUSINESS MANAGER

Arthur Wilder  
630-9055

## President's Corner

### On Being Chairman

At the last business meeting the Section found itself once again having to look to choosing a new Chairman.

This brought me to thinking firstly about the Chairman's office and next about the fortunes and future of the Section. This note expresses my personal views and the Section may perhaps find them of some interest in as much as I, a foreigner among you, may be able to speak as a relatively detached observer. I hope so. I also hope the reader will press on to the bitter end, which is not so far away.

I suppose I should add that as I shall be in England for the whole of October (on duty) I shall not be available to receive the brickbats.

Let me begin by saying I have enjoyed my spell in office, though I regret not having been able to put in as much time as I would have liked. I also regret that, should I be asked, I could not accept a second year in office as I do not know if I shall be here in the U.S.A. after July.

The reason for this regret is simple to explain. It takes several months to assess the limits of the chairman's obligations, to get the feel of the Section's needs, and how to get things done. The remainder of the year there is not enough time to achieve much. I am not suggesting the Section has a tremendous amount of business, but it has a function other than merely providing a means for climbers to meet one another. This I will come to later.

So for the future, I recommend that the Section look at the past when chairmen frequently served for several years and choose a new chairman who could do so if asked. In my opinion continuity for more than one year in this office is needed in the interest of the Section.

Dare I add what may be self-evident, that your chairman should also be one who holds the respect and will command the support of the entire membership and be a competent representative outside the climbing world. He is your Secretary of State as well as your President.

I wish the Section well in its choice and offer my best wishes to my successor.

### On the Future of the Section

As to the Section, I recently recalled Joe Nolte's homily before he departed. Joe asked the members to re-examine the Section's activities and policies with the future in view.

I have no wish merely to echo what Joe said but I have formed some opinions in the last three years which I would like

to express.

Firstly I believe it is no small compliment to the members that the Section continues to survive, even thrive. Despite its loose structure, members appear to be socially aware that the Section can offer more than being a medium of exchange of views on climbing, or a means of meeting other climbers. Members do appreciate, it seems, that the Section may be able to help defend the ethical and aesthetic matters that go with climbing as a recreational activity.

The Section is a collection of people who together represent their common aims, sometimes in concord with those of other societies, in the interests of climbing and other related activities. Their collective voice helps defend their aims, needs and especially the physical environment which they enjoy.

The value of UP ROPE should not be overlooked. I am sure it has been a major influence in holding the Section together over the years. Members should thank UP ROPE staff.

The question which I now voice is how can a small Section such as ours play a proper part in the future of climbing. For that matter, need it do so at all. I believe it must.

I suggest that there is a need for you all to recognize that for the future of climbing and for that matter of recreation in your country, the rapid increases in population, leisure time and activities necessitate that you take active steps to help preserve what you now enjoy because the competing pressures on the facilities for other purposes may change them irreparably or deprive you of them, or even put your activity under the paternalism of government control.

I would add that for the Section to play an active part it needs to pay attention to its membership to ensure that there is a reasonable intake of new members who will carry the banner in the future.

Personally, I support clubs for the broader reasons I have expressed. In my view, climbing with a club, as a whole may even be a form of purgatory leading to the paradise of climbing with a chosen few. However, on the broader, basic issues, my voice alone is useless.

Coming to the Section membership, the numbers have remained static in recent years and the number of active climbers has probably declined. On the whole, however, I suggest the Section needs an intake of more members than it has had in the past to help smooth out the crests and troughs of its future which always occur in a small organization.

As to the means of finding new members, I would not advocate any form of positive recruitment programs. For me, this produces a paradox. On the one hand climbers are individualistic, independent people who possess and use initiative in what may be a demanding activity, but the number of kindred spirits that are likely to be found by a recruiting program will probably be small. At the same time the active climbers would have to deny themselves the (selfish) pleasure of enjoying their own activity by taking part in a not exactly fruitful activity, assuming they would be persuaded to become involved.

I believe that the only satisfactory method, which is also closest to the nature of the activity, is for individual members to regard the membership problem as a personal obligation because of its relationship with the future of the

Up Rope

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sport. I am inclined to think that this should extend to training as well because a formal program may well put active members in a dilemma which they solve by avoiding becoming involved.

To end my homily, the point I wish to make is that climbers are personally and individually responsible for the protection and development of all that goes with this chosen sport and they cannot slough off their responsibilities onto some impersonal body such as the Section because if they do, in no time at all, not only will it cease to be what it is but all that is necessary for its enjoyment may disappear.

#### On Guide Books

Many questions have been asked about the need for guide books and the same questions have been asked about the Section's planned guide for Seneca. The main issue is always whether or not the guide will spoil the area for those who now enjoy it and wish, not unreasonably, to continue to do so without interference.

I think we have to bear in mind that guide books fulfill many functions. The first is that they may stimulate climbers to protect and preserve the environment they enjoy. For example, as the numbers of climbers increase, the climbing areas on the cliff and perhaps other nearby cliffs will be developed by those who have no wish merely to follow in the footsteps of others. An increase in numbers of climbers will certainly lead to more competition overt or otherwise, not merely in degree of difficulty but in performance on old and well tried climbs. Again for example, on some climbs the limit seems to have been reached on the use of pitons. More will damage the cliff. The guide may establish realistic standards and persuade some types that climbing has more to it than being a civil engineering exercise and they have to be psychologically as well as mechanically equipped to get the most out of it.

More climbers give the sport a greater influence.

A guide need not, nor should it, merely give a blow by blow account of every climb but it should have the broader aims I have attempted to state briefly above, namely of encouraging the development of all aspects of the sport with the idea of preserving it for ourselves and future climbers. Somewhat regretfully, as I now see it, a guide is needed for this purpose and also for helping in the creation and maintenance of basic aesthetic and ethical standards to the benefit of all climbers.

## Hanging Around

Great Falls, Va.  
Sept. 7

Mike Hill - Trip Leader  
Nellie Widmayer  
Chuck and Scott Twentymen  
Mike and Pete Warburton  
Chuck Sproull  
Don Milligan  
Pat Milligan  
Mark Milligan

Bob and Kate Adams  
Sallie Jordan  
John Cain  
Chips Janger  
Roger Birch  
Dan Clark  
Don Schaefer  
Art Wilder

It was a hot and humid day and one could identify the climbs by the trails of sweat left on the rocks. We decided to start at the Juliet's Balcony-Romeo's Ladder area because it was shady and less poison ivy-infested than other areas. Romeo's Ladder was the busiest climb and almost everyone made it at some time or other during the day. The outside corner next to Romeo's yielded only to Wild Man Wilder who must have used imaginary holds on that smooth route.

Art, Chuck S., Don S., Sallie, the Twentymen's, and the Warburton's cut out around noon for various reasons. Art and Don couldn't make up their minds whether to go to Carderock or Touhey's but I can guess which one they finally settled on.

Two easy-to-moderate climbs were rigged up river from Juliet's Balcony. Bob, Pat, and Chips worked for an hour trying to come up from under the Balcony on the right side. Some called it upgrading-your-abilities while others called it just

plain belay practice.

The ranger told me that he was besieged all day with people looking for our group, so we apparently missed a goodly number of prospective climbers.

Seneca Rocks  
Sept. 13-14

Chuck Sproull - Trip Leader  
Sallie Jordan  
Pete Gardner  
Roger Birch  
Chris Perry  
Mike Westfahl

Bob and Kate Adams  
Bob and Joan Robinson  
Mike Hill  
Sue and Beth (cavers from Ohio State)

We awoke early Saturday morning and noticed that the sun still hadn't burned the dew from the grass and the car windows. This, of course, was just one of many reasons why some of us kept trying to catch a few more minutes of warm comfort in our sleeping bags. Nevertheless, after a lengthy breakfast and planning session we set out for a climb on that stately rock. The weather was good to us that day. Sallie, Roger, Pete and I showed the gals from OSU what outdoor exposure was like. It took the six of us six hours to climb the 600 feet of Lower Skyline. It should be noted that the most peculiar predicaments happen to six people on four ropes and on small belay ledges. We almost decided to bivouac but decided against it since we had not enough water for evening tea.

That evening we had a good ol' party - as usual. Mike provided the light with a rusty lantern that he had found on a four-masted square-rigger while in the service. Roger supplied us with adequate portions of liquid entertainment. I twanged away on my guitar while the rest sang when they remembered the words. During an intermission Sallie displayed her musical virtuosity by singing an impressive medley of one-note songs. I tried to accompany her but somehow the guitar was never quite in tune with her voice very long.

Sunday morning came quickly and so did Mr. Harper to collect the week end camping fees. At around 0800 the Robinsons showed up and we had to rise and shine.

Most of the climbing that day was done on the East and West faces under the South Summit and the Gendarme. The week end was quite eventful and fun for the small D.C. gang that showed up at Seneca Rocks.

#### BELAY LEDGE

Address changes and new UP ROPE subscribers:

Bob Anderson 407 Second St. S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Wes Stiles Box 1243  
Frederick, Md. 21701

Larry Burfield 10703 Norman Ave.  
Fairfax, Va. 22030

Mike Hill 909 Sitka Lane  
District Heights, Md. 20027

John Kemple 6818 Shamrock Dr.  
Little Rock, Ark. 72205

John Thomas 48 Fairview Ave.  
Madison, N.J. 07940

Tom Evans 336 Mississippi Ave.  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

#### NOMINATION:

The following person has been nominated for membership in the PATC Mountaineering Section.

Name	Sponsors
Mike Hill	Bob Robinson Sallie Greenwood

The nominee should be present at the next scheduled business meeting so that the application can be voted on.

## CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

Date	Place	Leader
Oct. 8	Meeting, PATC Headquarters 8:00 PM	Program: Summer slides. June Lehman, co-ord.
Oct. 11-12	Seneca Rocks, Greenland Gap and Champe Rocks (Conservancy week-end)	Bob Lyon (521-2388)
Oct. 18-19	Shawangunks	Sallie Greenwood (683-5091)
Oct. 26	Carderock	Chuck and Margaret Wettling
Nov. 2	Cupid's Bower (Training)	Bob Robinson (356-4584)
Nov. 9	Seneca Rocks	Dick Sideman (347-7390)
Nov. 12	Meeting, PATC Headquarters 8:00 PM	
Nov. 16	Annapolis Rocks	Tom McCrumm (527-6272)

Trip Leaders are reminded of their responsibility to arrange for a report and, if a leader is unable to make his assigned trip, to appoint a substitute leader.

Seneca Rocks and Champe Rocks, W. Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 to Gainesville and bear right onto Va. 55 to Moorefield, W. Va. Turn left onto U.S. 220 to Petersburg and right onto W. Va. 4 and 28. Champe Rocks is 15 miles down W. Va. 4 and 28. Mouth of Seneca is 7 miles beyond Champe Rocks on W. Va. 4 and 28.

Greenland Gap, W. Va.

Drive west on U.S. 50 to New Creek, W. Va. (60 miles past Winchester). Pick up W. Va. 93 south and follow it for 15 miles to Scheer. Watch for a dirt road and a bridge over a creek just to the left of route 93. Turn left on the dirt road and drive .3 miles to a fork. Turn right and drive .3 miles into the Gap. Park in any one of several turnouts. Climbs are on the left side of the road.

Shawangunks, N.Y.

From the Beltway take the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (or U.S. 1 or U.S. 29 in heavy traffic) to the Baltimore Park-

way. West on I 83 and north to the Pennsylvania Turnpike just before Harrisburg. East on the Turnpike to Pa. 283 north (10¢ toll). East on U.S. 22 and I 78 to Pa. 512 north. Get on Pa. 115 north to Wind Gap and onto U.S. 209. Follow U.S. 209 past Ellenville, N.Y. and turn right onto N.Y. 55 and U.S. 44 east. Go approximately 8 miles and turn left onto Trapps Road and camp in one mile at the Coxing Camp. The rocks are 2 miles up N.Y. 55.

On the return trip, follow U.S. 22 directly to I 83 (don't use Pa. 283 and the Turnpike). Also, be sure to use the bypass section of U.S. 209 around Stroudsburg.

Carderock, Md.

From the Beltway take the last exit in Maryland before the Cabin John Bridge, or, from Virginia, the first exit after the Bridge toward Great Falls and Carderock (note signs). Go one mile to Carderock sign, bear right, go left over overpass, under canal in tunnel, and right to the last parking lot. The rocks are beyond the Bulletin Board.

Cupid's Bower, Md.

From the Washington Beltway, take the last exit in Maryland before the Cabin John Bridge, or from Virginia, the first exit after the Bridge toward Great Falls and Carderock. When the Parkway ends turn left onto MacArthur Boulevard to the Old Anglers Inn. Park in the dirt lot on the left and cross the canal. Walk right (upstream) toward Widewater. Take the blue-blazed trail left near Widewater to the river. Cross the river to the island. Cupid's Bower is near the foot of the island nearest D.C.

Annapolis Rocks, Md.

From the Beltway take I 70 S north past Frederick to U.S. 40. At the top of South Mountain park at the roadside on the left (there is a gas station on the right). Follow U.S. 40 (on the right) to the Appalachian Trail which parallels I 70 for 100 yards. Go right uphill. In 2 miles turn left at the Annapolis Rocks sign. Go 100 yards to the cliffs.

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climb. I jumared up in the dark, and arrived on top at 10:00 PM. My god, we've done it! We shook hands - a couple of happy kids!

We slept on top of the East face and awoke to wonderful views of Half Dome. "Ready for the Nose yet, Tom?" Bob asked. "No, but there are other good things," I said, looking at Half Dome. "It's All Over Baby Blue" - a song by Bob Dylan went through my mind once; and once again as we descended the North Dome gully.

Later that evening we went out into the warm meadows and looked at the Column. I could not help feeling that I had broken through some personal barrier and that I had finally arrived. Good rock, great climbing, solid friendships, and wonderful memories are the essence of a great Yosemite climb.

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