

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

1718 N St N W Washington, D. C. 20036

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A
SENECA SWAN SONG from Bob Robinson (across the seas)

(This is the text of a most interesting letter from Bob to Sally Greenwood.)

Dear Sally,

This is a voice from the not so distant past and as it is going to echo sentiments expressed in a recent Up Rope on the U.K. attitude on the philosophy of climbing and will, inevitably call attention to the opening pages of the Seneca Guide, perhaps you would, or will, be kind enough to publish a paraphrase of this letter in a forthcoming Up Rope. Maybe you could entitle it "Seneca Swan Song."

The fact is that I cannot but recall that my last climb at Seneca was to lead Soler Route, and that I neither carried or used pitons, except those already in place. I used a couple of slings over horns (at the diamond block 15 feet from the base of the direct start and near the end of the traverse) but otherwise, in my very humble opinion, none are necessary. Need I add that I do not consider myself a "hard" man and here in the U.K. I would feel extremely self-conscious to even be seen carrying pegs and a hammer. All this means that in my opinion the ethics of climbing in the U.S. will have to change so as to preserve the rock and a sense of proportion as to what it is all about.

May I quote from the 1971 Alpine Journal, part of the valedictory address by the president of the A.C., Sir Charles Evans of Everest 1953 expedition: "Please do not think that I presume to belittle the satisfaction of making the first ascent of an extreme route: it is a creative achievement which, for lack of experience, I must be content to suppose must satisfy enormously. But, in sport, to accomplish is not all, and there are plenty of signs that at least in Britain and France, and perhaps in Austria and America, these very exceptional men capable of such achievements are thinking that simply to achieve may be less important than to perform the act within some conventional self-imposed rules, to observe 'the spirit of the law'. Robert Paragot (a noted French "hard" man) says (translated freely): 'although artificial means brought to perfection will enable man to solve any climbing problem whatever, can one then say that the particular accomplishment is nobler than any other or that it has enabled man to realize

himself more fully?' He and the climbers of this country who regard it as bad form to peg a climb which has been led 'free' are reminding us that the way a game is played may be more important than the bare result, a characteristically English attitude which is far too easy to mock. In the approach to a sport or game that English attitude, which traditionally has been the attitude of this Club, is the sign that we are rational beings with a sense of proportion." (End of quote)

Sally, the quote above expresses what I attempted to say in the mildest terms in the "Introduction" to the guide, which is to my mind the most important part of the guide. I hoped my introduction might suit the U.S. climber. For the sake of the future, I sincerely hope it does.

I also ask you to publish this letter in full, and you might also like to add that in my 5 years in the U.S. when I enjoyed my climbing as much as I have ever done, I drove less than 5 pitons (in anger) in the entire time and can in fact recall quite specifically those I drove; also that for all the climbs I could lead (and 5.7 was probably my limit) I found either enough old pins to buoy me up psychologically, or was able to use nuts or slings. I make no apologies for this (I am getting old remember -- 50 soon) but I would remind all the readers that climbing is not a mere physical exercise -- it is in fact a mental exercise in which one learns one's own limits in the company of a few chosen friends -- the paradise one finds after the purgatory of perhaps years of climbing with the (forgive me) hoi-polloi membership of a large club, to which, of course, one owes allegiance to defend the sport together and which enables one to meet other climbers before and after the chosen ascent, but to which one should not otherwise be continuously obligated, except morally and ethically, with respect to "the sport" not "the club."

This is all rather hasty, but, having had another quick read of the guide (which pleases me, though I am fully aware of the imperfections of my contributions) I feel impelled to write.

Best wishes to all.

Love, Bob

P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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ON BEING CHAIRMAN by Tom McCrumm

Next month the members of the PATC Mountaineering Section will elect a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman to administer the Section for the year 1972. I would like to present to the readers of Up Rope and especially to the Section members my views as to what the responsibilities of the Section officers are, and what is to be expected of them. In this way the members who will be voting can consider who they think will best handle the responsibilities involved.

The Constitution of the Mountaineering Section lists the duties of the Chairman as follows:

1. To represent the Section in contacts with the PATC, other mountaineering groups, and the public.
2. To schedule and conduct business meetings.
3. To administer a training program in safety and climbing techniques.
4. To prepare an activity schedule.
5. To appoint trip leaders for each scheduled activity.
6. To appoint and act as ex-officio member of committees.
7. To appoint additional officers as provided in the Constitution.

Over the past three years I have held positions as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Mountaineering Section, and during this time I have gotten a good feeling for the needs of the Section. I have also been able to travel quite a bit to visit most of the major climbing areas in the U.S., and a few overseas, and have witnessed the growing popularity of climbing, and the problems that have come along with it. The number of climbers in the Washington area is probably 5 times what it was when I first climbed with the club 8 years ago -- and most of this growth has been recently -- since I've been an officer of the Section. I FEEL THAT CLIMBING WILL SURVIVE UNDER THE BURDEN OF EVEN GREATER NUMBERS OF CLIMBERS ONLY IF ALL CLIMBERS ARE AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS AND ARE ANXIOUS TO SOLVE THEM.

The Section officers must contend with this growth and the associated problems. The responsibilities now go far beyond the managing of an often unruly but fun monthly meeting. It is the Chairman's job to keep check on the mail file at the PATC headquarters and answer the mail as is needed -- we get many requests for information about our group, for information about other clubs and stores in other cities, and requests for training activities. One of the prime responsibilities of the Section Chairman is to represent his group to the rest of the community. This means getting involved in present climbing issues such as: communication and meetings with the National Park Service about climbing in the Potomac Gorge, and about the plans for developing Seneca Rocks as a recrea-

tion area; concern with Park Service actions in other climbing areas, i.e., closing climbers' camps in the Tetons and Yosemite, and the outrageous fees and restrictions imposed in Yosemite Valley. Problems exist now that threaten climbing in Huntington Ravine at Mt. Washington, as well as at Seneca, and both areas are managed by the Park Service. A few years ago we had the use of a cottage at the Gunks for the winter months -- that, and the possibilities of a cabin at Seneca might become a reality if it was to become a club issue again.

Good relations and communication must be kept with the PATC and with the American Alpine Club. The Chairman must attend the monthly PATC Council meetings. The AAC relies upon the nation's climbing clubs like ours to report activities, accidents, and be a general representative for climbing issues and activities in our area. Within the Section itself, the Chairman has responsibilities to Up Rope, to training, and to increasing membership. Probably the largest responsibility of the Chairman is not necessarily to do all the work himself, but rather to delegate authority to other individuals and committees, and to follow up to see that the work is being done. The Section has a long history of work getting put to a committee then dying. When I was Chairman I tried to solve this problem by doing all the work myself, and I soon learned how much there was to be done, and that one person could not do it alone.

The Chairman has two other other officers to help administer the Section. The Vice-Chairman should help in more than just filling in at meetings when the Chairman is not present. He too can shoulder some of the jobs of administration. The Secretary should at least be conscientious about keeping some minutes at meetings and keeping a permanent record of these. One reason so much work has been lost after being assigned to someone is because there is no record of who was supposed to do what with who and when.

I have not been able to devote all the energy that I wish I could have to the Mountaineering Section over the past two years because I have been gone so often. However, this past year with both Terry and I gone so often it is apparent that the Club needs a strong and efficient administrator for the year to come.

NEWS FROM SENECA ---

The U.S. Forest Service has asked the Mountaineering Section to outline the content of an exhibit on rock climbing for the proposed Visitors' Center at Seneca Rocks. The Exhibit Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will construct the exhibit. The Forest Service is interested in having an exhibit which will explain to the visitor how rock climbing is done, show examples of equipment, and convey a safety message about the need for proper training and equipment. The exhibit would be adjacent to a large window overlooking Seneca Rocks and occupy space about 8 feet wide and 12 to 15 feet high. The exhibit would need to be oriented toward a 10th grade comprehension and non-technical. The Forest Service will need this outline from us by January 18. Any people who are interested in working on this project, i.e., to outline the content of an exhibit (not to construct it) should contact John Christian (office: 382-7825; home: 229-2792.)

Up Rope

UP ROPE is the Newsletter of the PATC Mountaineering Section, founded by Jan and Herb Conn in 1944. Publication is on the last Wednesday of each calendar month at PATC Headquarters. Deadline for submitted material is the next to last Wednesday of the month preceding an issue. Material for inclusion, comments or questions on editorial policy should be directed to EDITOR, UP ROPE, c/o PATC, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Subscription rates are \$1.50 per year for PATC Mountaineering Section members and \$2.50 per year for non-members. The additional dollar may be credited towards membership dues. New subscriptions and address changes should be sent to Business Manager, UP ROPE, etc.

CLOGS* by John Stannard

It is no longer possible for the American climber to pretend that chromolly can be repeatedly driven and removed on routes and still have those routes even vaguely resemble their original condition. If a major revolution in American climbing does not occur soon, it is inescapable that all of our climbs will become both ugly and unnatural. Serenity Crack in Yosemite has already reached this advanced state, (see photo) and no climber can look at this route without having grave doubts about the future of American climbing. Alternatives to repetitively driven chromolly must be found and their use must become widespread. Climbing nuts promise to replace chromolly to a significant degree, and they are presently in that process of familiarization and evaluation that every new technique must go through. Although nuts have been in use in this country for several years, there has been no widely published study of their strength when used with various kinds of nylon sling. The absence of such information can only cause climbers either to take nuts less seriously than they otherwise might, or cause them to be overly concerned with obtaining the ultimate strength in each size of nut. In hopes of alleviating this situation, a series of tests using a tensile machine has been made on the six sizes of Clogs with a variety of common sling materials.

These tests were designed to indicate the strength one can expect from new Clogs and nylon sling that have been bought "off the shelf". The tests were also designed to show the strength one can expect when all six sizes of Clogs are carried on hero loops of 9/16 Chouinard tubular nylon. This was done because nuts carried in this way give the best chance of obtaining good placements in the Shawangunks. Carrying all the Clogs in exactly the same way also makes their use simpler and more efficient. Six specimens of each of the six sizes of Clogs were taken off the shelf along with: 1 inch and 9/16 inch Chouinard blue tubular nylon webbing, 9, 7, and 5 mm. Chouinard nylon rope (perlon), and 11 mm. Edelrid nylon rope (perlon).

In this study six specimens of each state of the Clogs were tested with the applicable sizes of nylon sling. The nut was mounted above a hole in a plate and pulled against the plate by the sling which ran through the hole. The sling did not touch the plate and it was pulled using a Chouinard carabiner. All tests were dead weight tests to failure, which in all cases occurred due to failure of the sling at the nut. In no instance was there any visible damage to the nut. The results are shown in the figure. Each datum point is the average of six tests performed on six different nuts, and the error bars equal two standard deviations. For each point the results of the tests fell within a range of three standard deviations or less. This means that the individual tests for each point fall almost entirely within the error bars shown for that point.

The gross features of these results were as expected. Heavier nylon slings are stronger and a given weight of sling is strongest in the largest Clog. If a climber uses aluminum oval carabiners which break at 3000 lbs., the combinations giving strengths well in excess of 3000 lbs. do not serve any purpose other than to guarantee that it is the carabiner that breaks. Since most climbers use aluminum ovals and they almost never fail, it seems clear that falls seldom generate forces as high as 3000 lbs. This implies that nuts which will withstand forces of 2000 lbs., while not over-designed, should stop all but the most desperate falls. These results do indicate that the sling material should be replaced two or three times a year in those combinations with a new strength below 3000 lbs. This will guarantee that the slings have not been weakened by abrasion. In comparing 7 mm. perlon with 9/16 inch tubular, it seems at first that 7 mm. is the stronger of the two. However for Clogs 4, 5, and 6 the error bars overlap considerably indicating that this difference may not be statistically significant. For Clog 3 this difference does seem to be real, and the 7 mm. perlon is somewhat stronger than the

SERENITY CRACK (5.10), Yosemite Valley
by John Stannard from "Eastern Trade", October 1971



9/16 tubular. The real surprise was the Clog 2. When 7 mm. perlon is forced through this nut it does not prove to be any stronger than 5 mm. perlon in that nut. At least in the case of a Clog 2, no additional strength is obtained by forcing the largest possible perlon through the nut. As to whether a Clog 1 fitted with 5 mm. perlon will stop a long fall, one can only say this: in a fall, the nut sling will feel a force somewhere between one and two times the force exerted on the climber. For a fall to break this sling, the climber would have to feel a force something like that he would get by doing a leg lift with the front end of a Volkswagen tied to his waist loop! An unusual mode of failure was found for 5 mm. perlon in the Clog 1. The core of the perlon often broke cleanly leaving the mantle intact, and this by itself was able to hold 800 lbs.

These tests indicate that the dead weight strength of 7 mm. perlon in Clogs is not significantly greater than that of 9/16 tubular. It has been suggested however that the higher elasticity of the perlon may put more give in the protection system thereby allowing it to hold a more severe fall. In order to answer this question, measurements were made of the elongation shown by all the forms of nylon for many values of applied force. These tests showed that for all the forces applied, the per cent increase in length was very similar in all of the forms of nylon. The only exception was the 7 mm. perlon, which was more elastic than all the others when the applied force was in excess of 1000 lbs. These measurements indicate that under a force of 2500 lbs., an eight inch nut sling of 7 mm. perlon will stretch 2 inches while a similar sling of 9/16 tubular will stretch 1 1/4 inches. In most climbing situations a nut will be at least five feet above the lower protection points, and these measurements indicate that this five feet of climbing rope alone will stretch 8 inches while stopping a fall that exerts a force of 2500 lbs. on the highest protection point. Clearly the stretch in the climbing rope is so large that the system really does not care whether the short length of nut sling is as elastic as it might be. From considerations of both strength and elasticity, it is apparent that 7 mm. perlon and 9/16 inch tubular are equally good as slings for Clogs.

During these tests, measurements were also made to show the strengths of various knots and the strength of nylon when bent over a carabiner. Quite a few numbers were generated, but only one important point emerged. When tying a sling in perlon that must be strong, the double fisherman knot must be used. In 7 mm. perlon the single fisherman, the ring bend, and the double figure eight all broke at around 2500 lbs.,

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CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

TRIP SCHEDULE

Dec. 12	Sugarloaf Mountain, Md.	Don Schaefer 521-5326
Dec. 19	Rocks State Park, Rocks, Md.	Dave Templeton 933-2174
Dec. 26	The Ben Bow Bar	Santa Claus
Jan. 2	Carderock, Md. (No training)	Don Milligan 360-5014
Jan. 9	Little Devil Stairs, Va. Training Trip: Ice (hopefully)	Dave Templeton 933-2174
Jan. 12	Meeting, PATC Clubhouse 8 pm - VOTING FOR 1972 CLUB OFFICERS	+ slides of Tetons and Rainier by Tom McCrumm
Jan. 19	Training Lecture, PATC Clubhouse, 7:15 pm	Dave Templeton 933-2174

Sugarloaf Mountain, Md.

From the Beltway, take I 70S to Md. 109. Go west 3 miles to Comus. Turn right onto Md. 95 and go 2.5 miles to an intersection and follow signs to The Stronghold (a house on Sugarloaf). Park at the top and hike to the rocks, which are on the right halfway up the summit trail.

Rocks State Park, Md.

From Beltway, go north on BaltoWash Parkway, either west (long but free) or east (60¢ fee for harbor tunnel) on Balt. Beltway. North on U.S. 1 or U.S. 40, north (left) on Md. 24 through Forest Hill and on to a notch in the rocks. Park 100 yards past the rocks.

Carderock, Md.

From the Beltway, take the Carderock exit (15). Go 1 mile, bear right at sign, go left over overpass, turn right after passing under canal, and park in the last lot. The rocks are 100 yards past the comfort station.

Little Devils Stairs, Va.

Take Interstate 66 and Rt. 211 to Thornton Gap in the Shenandoah National Park. Drive north on the Skyline Drive passing Elkwallow and Mathews Arms Campgrounds. Park at the Little Hogback overlook (not Hogback Mountain overlook).

Walk north on the Skyline Drive about 200 yards until you reach the Jinney Grey Fire Road on the right hand side of the road. Follow the fire road 1 mile until you reach a 4 way trail intersection. Take the left hand (blue-blazed) trail. This trail may be difficult to follow due to the large number of blown down trees. After .35 miles cross a stream. Leave the trail and bushwhack east (the direction the stream is flowing) gaining approximately 50 ft. of altitude. Cross a talus slope towards its bottom edge. After about .25 miles, a rocky couloir will block all progress. The major cliffs are down the couloir and to the left. (Note from Ed.: best prepare by running 10 miles in a half hour every day -- have fun!)

CLOGS, cont'd from page 3

while the double fisherman was good to 3300 lbs.

To summarize, these tests show that Clogs with slings of either 9 mm. perlon or 1 in. Chouinard tubular are stronger than aluminum oval carabiners. Mounting Clogs on either 7 mm. perlon or 9/16 inch tubular gives a strength that ranges between 2600 lbs. and 1600 lbs. Even the smallest nuts which fail at 1600 lbs. should be able to hold most of the falls that climbers encounter. It has been shown that 7 mm. perlon and 9/16 tubular are equally suitable as nut slings. This article has not discussed the tricks that can be used to obtain nut placements or the strengths of nut placements in rock because these are different for different climbing areas. Such information should be assembled and circulated within each area by the people who have had the most experience and success with nuts in that area.

BELAY LEDGE

The Mountaineering Section and Appalachian Outfitters will co-sponsor lectures and films by Warren Harding and Roger Derryberry on Jan. 5 at 8 p.m. in the Dept. of Commerce Auditorium at 14th & Constitution. Harding's will be "The Wall of Early Morning Light" on El Cap in Yosemite, and Derryberry's will be "The Dome Country." Donations will be eagerly accepted (in order to pay for the thing!)

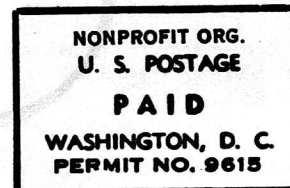
ANNUAL ELECTIONS for Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the PATC Mountaineering Section will be held at the January meeting, 8 pm, Wednesday, Jan. 12. Nominations for officers are: for Chairman: John Christian and Don Milligan for Vice Chairman: June Lehman and Sallie Greenwood

The following lucky individuals have been sponsored for membership in the Mountaineering Section. They should get their applications in at the next meeting, so we can vote.

Joe Wagner -- sponsored by Dave Templeton and Don Schaefer
Jon Larson -- sponsored by June Lehman and Dave Templeton
Beth Waldow -- sponsored by Harold Meyer and Dave Templeton

Up Rope

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DATED MATTER

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