



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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PATC MOUNTAINEERING SECTION FIRST ANNUAL WASHINGTON MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL

The Section's First Annual Washington Mountain Film Festival on February 18, 1988 was a smash success. Three hundred tickets were sold, including 20 SRO's!!! Many more tickets could have been sold if the Biograph Theater had a larger seating capacity. The attendees included many Section members, local rock jocks, and miscellaneous others. It appears that such an event can draw from a fairly large and diverse pool.

The Festival was cosponsored by REI which held a raffle at intermission. Lucky winners walked off with a variety of odds and ends and a few big ticket items. Rich Cunningham deftly avoided possible scandal by picking almost exclusively the tickets of non-Section members.

Three of the films, "E Pericoloso Sporgesi," "Christophe," and "Cumbre" were modern foreign films each highlighting a star of the current rock and alpine scenes. Anne Baron simultaneously translated the French films and Ed Cummings gamely tried to translate the fast and copious narration of the Italian "Cumbre." (Ed had the disadvantage of seeing the film

for the first time and trying to choose between enjoying it himself and sharing its meaning with the audience.) "E Pericoloso Sporgesi" creates a humorous contrast between the beauty and drive of Catherine Destivelle and Monique Dalmasso on a tough Verdon classic and a pair of degenerate males who have been lounging and partying in hammocks near the top of the cliff for the past week. "Cumbre" depicts the late Marco Pedrini's incredible, if occasionally absurd, solo ascent of Cerro Torre. In "Christophe," French phenom Christophe Profit free solos the West Face of the Dru. The evening's most gripping scene occurs when he becomes pumped and slightly unnerved midway up the huge dihedral that is the crux of the route (or was it just acting?). A little downclimb, shake out, powder the fingers, blow them dry, and it's in the bag. Both "Cumbre" and "Christophe" failed to show how the climbers got down from what appeared to be substantial predicaments.

"El Capitan" is a hilarious account of three sixties climbers surviving their way up the Nose. The film was at its best when it highlighted the interactions and casual conversations of the climbers. Its attempt to depict

the enormity of El Capitan seemed to drag. The film was essentially a sitcom and was occasionally disjointed. At one point, Lito Tejada-Flores raps down the Texas Flake and engages in a nearly endless series of pendules across the base of the flake for no apparent (at least, to me) purpose. On the strength of its characters, the film was voted "Best of Festival."

"Sherpa" was a sensitive, if failed, attempt to communicate the cultural decline of the Sherpas to an audience which came to see flesh, humor and airtime.

The Festival was a modest financial success with brisk T-shirt sales. There are some T-shirts left for those who missed out. The audience was treated to a nice wine and cheese reception during a crowded intermission.

All persons connected with the Festival, especially organizers Ken Andrasko and Madeleine Carter, are to be congratulated for putting together a class act. The Section has again successfully raised its profile in the local climbing community in a rather positive way. The Festival represented a tremendous effort by Section members and we should find the energy to make it an annual event.

Tom Isaacson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following threat was received at the UP ROPE editorial office wrapped around a chunk of rock which looked suspiciously like a piece of the old Gendarme...

To the Editor:

It was only a matter of time until terrorism struck Seneca Rocks. The Gendarme is being held hostage and will be returned when:

1) The USFS drops its requirements for permits for those who guide on Forest Service land;

2) Someone pays our insurance bill (insurance is a prerequisite for a permit) or;

3) We sell 10,000 Gendarme Memorial T-shirts (available from guess who).

The Organization of Children for the Abolishment of Bureaucracy at Seneca Rocks takes full responsibility for the Gendarme's abduction since all members are less than 12 years old and are not subject to prosecution.

Pending the meeting of the above demands, reservations for clandestine ascents of the Gendarme for the 1988 season can be made by leaving a scrawled note and \$50 atop the others on the door of the Gendarme Climbing Shop. (\$50 may seem high but the Brat now needs major work and tires!)

Cheers and Good Climbing,

The Gendarme Snatchers
Seneca Rocks

HELMUT MICROYS ON BELAYING

The following has been excerpted from the Alpine Club of Canada's newsletter. It was written by Helmut Microys, one of the leading authorities on ropes and rope management. It has been shortened somewhat for space reasons. PLEASE NOTE THAT

"BRAKING" IS SPELLED AS "BREAKING" THROUGHOUT!! Microys is talking about slowing down a falling climber, not destroying gear!

"Let me state a few of the major requirements a belay method should satisfy:

1. No injury to the belayer.
2. No injury to the leader due to a very high impact force.
3. Operable without gloves.
4. Variable breaking [braking] force within a range of approximately 2.5 to 4.5 kN.
5. Applicable to all kernmantle ropes regardless of diameter.
6. Simple operation (pay out or take in rope).
7. Independent of direction of pull.
8. Simple method of tying off (after a fall).
9. Simple operation not requiring a rational reaction, i.e., it should work independent of the action of the belayer.
10. Sufficient heat dissipation (critical temperature for nylon is around 60 degrees C).

All these requirements must be satisfied for the maximum fall, i.e., a fall directly on the belayer without any intermediate protection or any other situation which produces a very high fall factor.

This must be kept in mind in the following discussions. The majority of falls are held at low fall factors and forces which can be stopped by any number of inadequate belay methods. It is generally forgotten that hardly any climber has ever held a maximum fall as described above. The major drawbacks of the Sticht

plate are:

1. The breaking [braking] force for downward pull is too small (only about 2.4 kN while the maximum of the range is required) and therefore, the run through is too much. The leader falls too far. Although the breaking [braking] force can be increased (by adding a second carabiner) I have never seen anyone do this. Most people are not aware of this deficiency.

2. The belay fails for pull downward (always assuming the maximum force). This has been demonstrated many times. The belayer must bring the belaying (breaking) [braking] hand above the device. However, the force on the rope (particularly if the rest of the rope hangs down the face) is so high that the hand gets pulled down and belay failure results. This will occur even to an experienced belayer who knows what is going to happen and reacts even ahead of the fall.

3. The belay requires a very definite rational reaction to a fall situation. Merely holding the rope does not activate the belay. Several documented accidents have taken place where the belayer reacted inappropriately and the leader kept on falling.

4. Breaking [braking] force varies with rope diameter, hole diameter in the plate and carabiner diameter.

The Friction [Munter] Hitch on the other hand has none of these problems:

1. The breaking [braking] force is higher for pull down than for pull up and is

within the recommended range. No adjustments are necessary for this change in force (the rope has an added half wrap around the carabiner for pull down).

2. The belay works for pull in all directions.

3. The belayer merely has to hold the rope during a fall and even if the rope is not held, the fall will be stopped eventually (although with more run through).

4. Works for all rope diameters although an HMS carabiner is highly recommended because of the larger opening required for smooth operation (rope could block in a small opening).

Disadvantages of the Friction Hitch which have been voiced:

1. A special carabiner is required for smooth operation. The carabiner should be of the locking type. Thus, a special device is required.

2. In a severe fall, the mantle of the ropes can get fused. However, the rope is still able to hold many more falls in the very same location.

3. At maximum force, operation without gloves becomes marginal. Rope burns may result if the rope is held too tightly. The same problem exists for most other dynamic belays.

None of these are major problems. Finally, why should a belay not be attached to a climber:

1. Injury to the belayer. The belay force must be transferred through the belayer's body to the anchor. Furthermore, the belayer will be pulled in the direction of the force. Belayers have been pulled into overhangs or off belay

ledges, turned upside down, often with injuries to themselves and subsequent belay failure.

2. Lack of control after holding the fall. It is very difficult to tie the fallen leader off quickly and safely. Often the anchor is not within reach. A Prusik needs to be used, etc.

The Sticht plate is more conveniently used on one's body, in fact, it may be impossible to operate properly, if the belay anchors are not suitably located. This problem does not exist for the Friction Hitch.

It is also argued that the body absorbs energy, and therefore, acts as another energy dissipating element. This is correct up to a point, however, is of no consequence in a maximum fall. The anchor must be adequate to take all the force. One should keep in mind that the maximum force is only about 4.5 kN. If the anchor does not hold this, it is a very poor one indeed and totally unacceptable as a belay anchor. All the equipment is designed to take far more than this.

You may be interested to know the drawbacks of one of the other common methods of belaying--the Figure Eight. Here the breaking force for pull down is too small, while it becomes too high for pull upward. In addition, of course, the belayer must react properly during a fall similar to the Sticht plate."

FROM THE EDITOR, PLEASE NOTE: We offer this discussion of belaying as food for thought, not as a recommendation. Microys makes some good points, but there are others that can be argued. The bottom line for belay safety is that every belay anchor should be

bombproof, that both climber and belayer be aware of the climbing situation at all times, and that should a fall occur, the belayer must stop the fall.

TRIP REPORTS

RIEGELSVILLE ICE CLIMBING JANUARY 30-31

While fellow club members basked in the sun at Great Falls, the hardy contingent went ice climbing near Riegelsville, PA for the weekend. Warm weather there too caused the icicles to drip. The group consisted of Madeleine Carter, Rich Cunningham, Pete Grant, Paul Torelli, Gordon Swenson, Dave Coffey, Greg Christopolous, and Jeanette Helfrich. Local member Jesse Nogradi was unable to join us.

Some drove the 4-hour trip on Friday night but most left early Saturday morning. We arrived to find 6" of fresh snow creating an Austrian ski village atmosphere in quaint Buck's County bordering the Delaware River.

The cliffs at Riegelsville face north, rising 500' from the road in 4-5 steps. From Riegelesville, one encounters in order: 45 MPH Gully [I'll bet Pete didn't go 45!], Dead Deer Gully, Main Gully, and the Big Banana Face climb just east (left) of the main gully.

On Saturday, most of us climbed in Dead Deer Gully (we understand the locals have a different name). Some soloed and some led up the gully in moderate steps to a wider area where steeper climbs could be led or top-roped. Due to a drought last fall, the climbs were not as formed as last year the same time.

Although we had temperatures in the 30's and 40's, the climbing is apparently reliable most of January and February. Some of the north facing gullies never see the sun we were told.

By Sunday the sound of dripping water increased alarmingly and we had the main gully to ourselves. The main gully also consists of moderate steps opening into a rather large amphitheater with a number of distinct climbs and pleasant lounging for top-roping.

Rich led an impressive small overhanging column which creaked and dripped. His second, Jeanette, was much more sanguine about the climb after Rich set up his belay on a large tree above. Everyone had a turn at leading. Rich reluctantly decided to leave the imposing Big Banana for a cooler day. We enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Great American Grill, a mile from the cliffs in Kintnersville. The standard place for breakfast is destined to be the Borderline Cafe in downtown Riegelsville.

HOW TO GET THERE

Take I-95 north to Baltimore, I-695 west around Baltimore, I-83 north to Harrisburg, I-81 north to where I-78 heads east to Allentown. Continue east to Easton. Take PA Rte. 611 south to Riegelesville (10 miles) and continue south to the junction of 611 and PA Rte. 32. Head left on 32 south along the Delaware River. Cliffs are about 1 mile past a junction, on your right. A large smoke stack can be seen across the river directly across from the main gully. **ALTERNATE ROUTE:** Take I-95 north through Philadelphia to PA Rte. 32, take Rte. 32 north along river to Riegelesville. Both routes take

about 4 hours.

BREAKFAST:

Borderline Cafe, turn east at light (only one) in Riegelesville, go several hundred yards, on left before canal, 215-749-2798.

DINNER AND MESSAGES:

Great American Grill and Food Store of Kintnersville, 215-847-2023, going south, on left just before junction of PA Rtes. 611 and 32.

CAMPING:

Colonial Woods Campground (and RV sales!), 215-847-5808, Upper Black Eddy. Go south a couple of miles on Rte. 611 past the junction at Rte. 32. Turn left at first light (only light in Ferndale), onto Center Hill Road, up hill (half mile), right on Lake Warren Road (immediately on left is Nockamixon Township Municipal Building). At 4-way stop sign, turn right onto Kintner Hill Road, for about one half mile, turn left into campground. Fee \$11 per campsite for two people, hot showers, heated restrooms (good for drying gear). Close to climbing. ALTERNATE CAMPING: Deerwood Campground, Buck's County, turn northwest off Rte. 32 in center of town in Point Pleasant. Go about 1 mile, on left. Just beyond Deerwood is Tohican Campground. 20-30 minutes from the cliffs. MOTEL: Oak Grove Motel, about 15 miles south of junction of Rtes. 611 and 32, near Pipersville, 215-766-8931.

Jeanette Helfrich

PENNSYLVANIA ICE

FEBRUARY 12-15

Undaunted by rising temperatures, a group of PATC climbers toured various ice climbing areas in Pennsylvania this weekend (yes, there is good ice climbing in PA). Attending: Rich Cunningham, Jeannette Helfrich, Jacques Tamisier, Ken Andrasko, Tom Kaweck, and Stuart Rosenthal.

Rich and Jeanette went to Riegelesville on Saturday with their picks set on the Big Banana, three pitches of reputedly high quality, exciting ice (grade 4+). Though Jeanette came away with a bruised hand (too much knuckle bashing) the pair were successful and brought back further reports of the excellent ice routes at Riegelesville.

Sunday morning, Jacques and Ken (in one car) and Tom and myself (in another car) rendezvoused to head north. The plan was to meet at Roy's at 6 AM, but both cars, apparently suffering from early morning inattentiveness, got off at the wrong exit. Miraculously, however, both cars got off at the wrong exit at the same time. Rendezvous completed, we drove to Sunbury PA where we met up with Rich and Jeanette. They had received a tip from "those climbers from Harrisburg" that there were good ice routes in Shikellamy State Park, on the opposite side of the Susquehanna River from Sunbury.

To get to the Sunbury ice routes, drive north on PA Rte. 11 to Shikellamy State Park. Park in the turnout just before crossing the bridge on Rte. 11 which crosses over to Northumberland. Three good quality, two to three pitch ice routes are within 1

mile of the turnout along an obvious trail which parallels the river.

Rich and Jeanette did a fine route (repeated by Jacques and Ken on Monday) on the first ice fall. This route is located roughly 1/2 miles from the turnout. The route begins with a very steep 15 foot wall, and then proceeds up a gully in a series of steps (grade 3+). This route is probably the most aesthetic of the three at Sunbury (in the authors's humble opinion).

Jacques and Ken climbed the second ice gully located about 3/4 of a mile from the turnout. This route also contained considerable steep ice, including a 15 foot vertical pillar on the second pitch just to maintain interest (easy grade 4).

Tom and I climbed the third route, about 1 mile from the turnout. This route is the easiest of the three, and is also the longest. The route contains some step ice, particularly in the first pitch, and is a good lead for people with limited experience on ice (grade 2+).

In all, Sunbury is a good place for ice climbing. The routes are lined with trees making belays secure. The protection along route is generally all on ice, although I was able to place one friend and girth hitch a suspect branch protruding from the ice. What's more, Sunbury is only 3 hours from Roy's making it close enough for an energetic day trip or an easy overnight.

Flush with success at Sunbury, Ken, Jacques, Tom and I moved one hour north to Ricket's Glen State Park, where again, rumor had it that there were many short steep

ice falls awaiting to be climbed. Rich and Jeanette went skiing having now bashed their knuckles against the ice for two days running.

Monday morning at Ricket's Glen began with a memorable breakfast at Zel's diner, located in Red Rock just outside the park. Zel provides new meaning to the term "greasy spoon" diner. Following our "breakfast" we searched out the ice routes. The principal appeal of Ricket's Glen from an ice climber's perspective is a series of 20 waterfalls ranging from 15 to 95 feet in height. The falls are easily accessible and are spread along a 3 mile trail. With sufficient cold weather, Ricket's Glen would likely provide many good short steep ice routes. As it was, temperatures had taken their course, and the waterfalls were better suited to viewing than to climbing.

Stuart Rosenthal

AID BOX

JANUARY 30, 1988

Messrs. Pregnall, Craun, Isaacson and Ms. Genesis were joined by Tony Rickert and spent a nice, if short, in the Aid Box. Stuart tried to put up a new route just left of the big corner but blew out a digit in his efforts. Doug did Splinter and I finally got off the ground on Monkeyfinger. Tony blasted up Lost Arrow. Everyone was in rather rusty form.

Tom Isaacson

CRANKO AREA

GREAT FALLS

JANUARY 31, 1988

The Stuarts, Don Holtzer, Hugh Brown and the Jays, Kit Pollock, and Michael Mergi spent a glorious day at the Cranko area

wondering how our ice brigade was faring in the 60 degree weather. Ken Andrasko's spare tire reduction program (and attempt to join us via bicycle) was thwarted due to a flat tire. Much attention was focussed on Darius Green's which only Stuart P. conquered (I thought the other Stuart made it, too). Michael and I did the overhang to the left of and below the Cornice. Don and Kit did the Cornice. Stuart R. sieged his first day on Tiparillo, ultimately failing at the last lunge. Hugh did First Blood, I think.

Tom Isaacson

CARDEROCK
FEBRUARY 14, 1988

While most of the club was seeking ice, Brad Cohen, the family Brown and I enjoyed a beautiful day at a muddy Carderock. We rigged and climbed (giving the term its most generous meaning) most everything from Flutterby to Trudie's Terror. Hugh Brown discovered that, with a little practice, Trudie's isn't quite so terrifying. Brad seemed reluctant to adopt the prevailing Carderock tradition and showed that Fingernail is reasonable if you ignore the six inch rule. In his first visit to Carderock, Brad also flashed Triple A, made a no-falls off route ascent of Flutterby and cruised the truncated Easy Lay. I did something in the vicinity of Zig Zag and figured that the route must follow a rather arbitrary set of holds--I must await our guidebook for the answers. We finished the day by rescuing a hapless tourist who became paralyzed by fear midway up the Laundry Chute.

TRAINING

TRAINING REPORT

During 1987 there were five basic climbing courses conducted with attendance of a total of 53 students. [Ed.'s note: We estimated the number to be substantially higher] The classes were usually a bit too large, so for 1988 I plan to arrange for more frequent courses. Also, because of the insurance and liability scare, lead training was temporarily suspended, but will resume in 1988. Many thanks for those who helped instruct: Rich Cunningham, John Christian, Tom Russell, Tom Isaacson, Stuart Pregnall, Helen Grant, and others. As you can see from the tentative 1988 schedule, I will need much more help this year. Please let me know if you might be available for one or more of the scheduled training dates.

TRAINING SCHEDULE FOR 1988

BASIC CLIMBING COURSES FOR BEGINNERS

March 5	Caudey's Castle WV
March 6	Carderock MD
April 17	Great Falls VA
May 14	Carderock MD
June 12	Carderock MD
July 17	Carderock MD
August 20	Great Falls VA
September 17	Sugarloaf MD
October 15	Carderock MD

INTERMEDIATE (LEAD CLIMBING) COURSES

Mar 26-27	Seneca Rocks WV
Apr 30-	
May 1	Shawangunks NY
Jul 2-4	Shawangunks NY
Jul 16-17	Seneca Rocks WV
Mid August	TBA

Sep 3-5 Shawangunks NY
 Oct 8-10 Shawangunks NY

GENERAL INFORMATION

No experience or special equipment is required for basic climbing courses.

Intermediate training prerequisites are:

- Must have attended a basic climbing course;
- Must have participated in at least three top-rope trips;
- Must be able to rappel down a vertical face; and
- Must own (or be able to borrow)
 - Climbing harness
 - Climbing shoes
 - Figure 8 or other belay/rappel device.

The basic climbing course includes instruction in the following skills.

Introduction to climbing equipment: Rope, harness, shoes. Knots: Bowline on a coil, Double Figure 8, Bowline.

Climbing safety: Do's and Don'ts. Rappelling.

Setting up anchors.

Belaying.

Basic Climbing techniques.

Intermediate (lead climbing) courses are held differently. During this course, the students may not actually lead any climbs, but will learn lead climbing by seconding an experienced climber while observing the techniques used. Leading by students can be permitted after demonstrating proficiency and judgement and only on easy climbs. Skills learned include the following.

- Big wall conduct and safety.
- Belaying techniques.
- Tools of the trade.
- Placing protection.
- Removal of protection.
- Practice and more practice.
- Rope management.

COST

All PATC Mountaineering Section climbing courses are free of charge. Personal expenses, including transportation, must be borne by the students. Some climbing areas charge a daily user fee, e.g., the Shawangunks and Great Falls VA. A typical day fee is about \$3-5 per day.

TO SIGN UP FOR CLIMBING COURSES

Call Pete Grant (703-960-6033) evenings until 10 (talk to Helen if Pete isn't home) or 202-695-1996 during the day (Pete is usually out jogging 10-12).

Space for the intermediate courses is very limited so sign up early.

If you have a group (5 or more) for a basic course, please coordinate with Pete as we may hold an extra class if required.

OTHER CLIMBING INSTRUCTION

Ice Climbing

The weather around Washington is so unpredictable that we cannot schedule any ice climbing classes in advance. If you are interested in learning ice techniques, be prepared to take off on a weekend trip when the weather has been cold for at least three days. We usually decide by Thursday. To participate, you need crampons, an ice axe (one is sufficient, two would be better), and clothing to keep you warm while sitting in the open in the wind with below freezing temperatures. Also, bring a warm sleeping bag and an insulating pad--we often camp out in the open on the snow. Bring some money as we normally eat in restaurants.

Pete Grant
 Training Coordinator
 PATC Mountaineering
 Section

EXPEDITION NEWS

Ken Andrasko and four friends from around the U.S. will leave March 17th to attempt a first ascent of either the South or East Face of Annapurna South (23,383'). The South Face

involves 9,000' of mixed technical ice and rock climbing. They plan to conduct an initial reconnaissance and then climb alpine style, using no porters above base camp. They expect to return in late May. Good luck!

CLIMBERS CALENDAR

Feb 27	Great Falls	Karen Pregnall	202-543-3988
Feb 28	Bull Run Work/Climbing Trip	Be prepared to swing a mattock and shovel! Stuart Pregnall	202-543-3988
Mar 1	Jeff Lowe Slide Show	Time: 7:30 PM @ U. Md. REI is sponsoring this and has ticket information.	301-982-9681
Mar 2	Executive Meeting	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
Mar 2	REI Lecture: Climbing--The Basics		301-982-9681
Mar 5	Caudey's Castle	Pete Grant	703-960-6033
Mar 6	White Oak Canyon	Stuart Rosenthal	703-527-5247
Mar 6	Climbing Instruction	Pete Grant	703-960-6033
Mar 9	Monthly Meeting	PATC HQ 7:30	
Mar 9	REI Lecture: Climbing Training by Eric Horst		301-982-9681
Mar 12	Great Falls	Tom Russell	301-869-8058
Mar 13	Bull Run	Madeleine Carter	202-362-5036
Mar 16	REI Lecture: Advanced Climbing by John Bercaw		
Mar 19	Big Devil's Stair	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
Mar 20	Old Rag	Jeanette Helfrich	301-585-9119
Mar 23	REI Lecture: New Gear for 1988		301-982-9681
Mar 26	Great Falls	Tom Isaacson	202-332-3710
Mar 27	Crescent Rocks	Ken Andrasko	202-337-0498
Mar 26/27	Seneca Rocks Lead Climbing Instruction	Pete Grant	703-960-6033
Mar 26/27	New River Gorge	Stuart Pregnall	202-543-3988
Mar 30	REI Lecture: Climbing Slide Show		301-982-9681
Apr 2	Great Falls	Tom Russell	301-869-8058
Apr 3	Bull Run	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
Apr 6	Executive Meeting	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
Apr 9	Ilchester	Stuart Pregnall	202-543-3988
Apr 10	Annapolis Rock	Ed Cummings	301-589-6261
Apr 13	Monthly Meeting	PATC HQ 7:30	
Apr 16	Great Falls	Jeanette Helfrich	301-585-9119
Apr 17	Old Rag	Stuart Rosenthal	703-527-5247

PLEASE NOTE: Winter weather may change trip plans. Call trip leaders mid-week to make arrangements and contingency plans. In the absence of published trip leaders, call Rich Cunningham or Stuart Pregnall.



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