

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

Vol 46 no. 3

June 1993

Spring Update from Old Rag Mountain by Alex Tait

Despite the wet spring this year, climbing activity has been relatively busy on Old Rag Mountain in the Shenandoah National Park. This means that there have been weekends where climbing parties have actually seen each other!

Several new routes have been put up on the east side of the Mountain, adding to the substantial supply of excellent routes on the beautiful granite slabs and faces. Those Washington area climbers who haven't made it to Old Rag are truly missing out on superb climbing in a mountainous setting!

Of course, there is the longish hike up and the vegetation on the mountain seems more suitable to Costa Rican rainforest than the mid-Atlantic, but to persevering souls there are bountiful rewards.

Club members Dave Godwin and Bill Farrand made the trek up the mountain this spring and enjoyed Old Rag classics such as the Doby Gillis Route on the PATC wall (5.8 hand crack) and the thin face climb "Pincer Perfect" at the Whale's Lip area (5.9+ friction). Rick Dotson was also up on the Rag that day and finished off the ultra-classic "Strawberry Fields" crack (5.9) and upper face (5.11a) at the Reflector Oven. All are highly recommended climbs.

For those of you interested in climbing on Old Rag, there was a guide published in *Rock & Ice* about two years ago. (One warning though, the topo of the routes along the Bushwhack Trail is completely misnumbered and confusing.) Basic directions are: drive to the Weakly Hollow parking area (back side of the mountain) and take the ridge trail over the summit and down the north-east ridge a ways. The PATC wall drops off the ridgecrest's northwest side and scattered on the southeast side are many excellent slabs and crags.

To aid in finding some of the mentioned routes, I have included a rough guide here to several sections of cliff on the east side of the mountain to use with the *Rock & Ice* guide. Also, I have included the location and description of three new routes put up last fall and this spring on the east side.

The bushwhack trails depicted in the map here are very overgrown and on very steep slopes, be forewarned. The PATC Wall, Whale's Lip, and Gutterballs Crag are probably the easiest to find.

Sandy Fleming, longtime Old Rag climber and creator of many of the classic routes on the east side of the mountain, has been active last fall and this spring. He has developed a new section of cliff called Gutterballs Crag after the first climb put in there (see topo). The route Gutterballs, which Sandy put up last fall, climbs a shallow unjammable crack (the gutter) and then climbs through a thrilling overhang and dihedral with fingercrack (5.9).

Next to this is Simple Man in a Complex World, a route that Sandy put in with the help of Bruce Hayward, Bill (I don't know his last name), and, to a very limited extent, myself (I climbed it right after it was in). This is a face climb through two overlaps (5.8?). There is a nice rappel/belay station at the top of the Gutterballs Crag for accessing the base of the climbs, a very easy spot to reach from the ridge trail any time of year.

The weekend after Simple Man I rejoined Sandy to try a new line in the Bushwhack Corridor area of the God Buttress. There are several fine, hard routes here (mostly 5.11s) and we hoped to add another one. We diligently brushed lichen and moss on rappel perusing the route as we went, it looked hard but there were good stances to drill from and a few holds amid the little crystals. Looked reasonable, maybe

5.10ish. Hah. Old Rag is always harder than it looks!

From the base Sandy started up the route and the first three bolts went in relatively quickly. The climbing got very hard at a bulge past the third bolt. Sandy came back down and I went up to try a few moves. Indeed, very hard. Straight up was a no go and up and left had potential but after breaking a few good crystal foot holds I came back down. Sandy continued the ground-up assault and after several short penduluming falls managed to gain the top of the bulge. For those that try this route be sure to move four feet or so to the left to find some edges to pull on at the crux. They aren't big edges but they work.

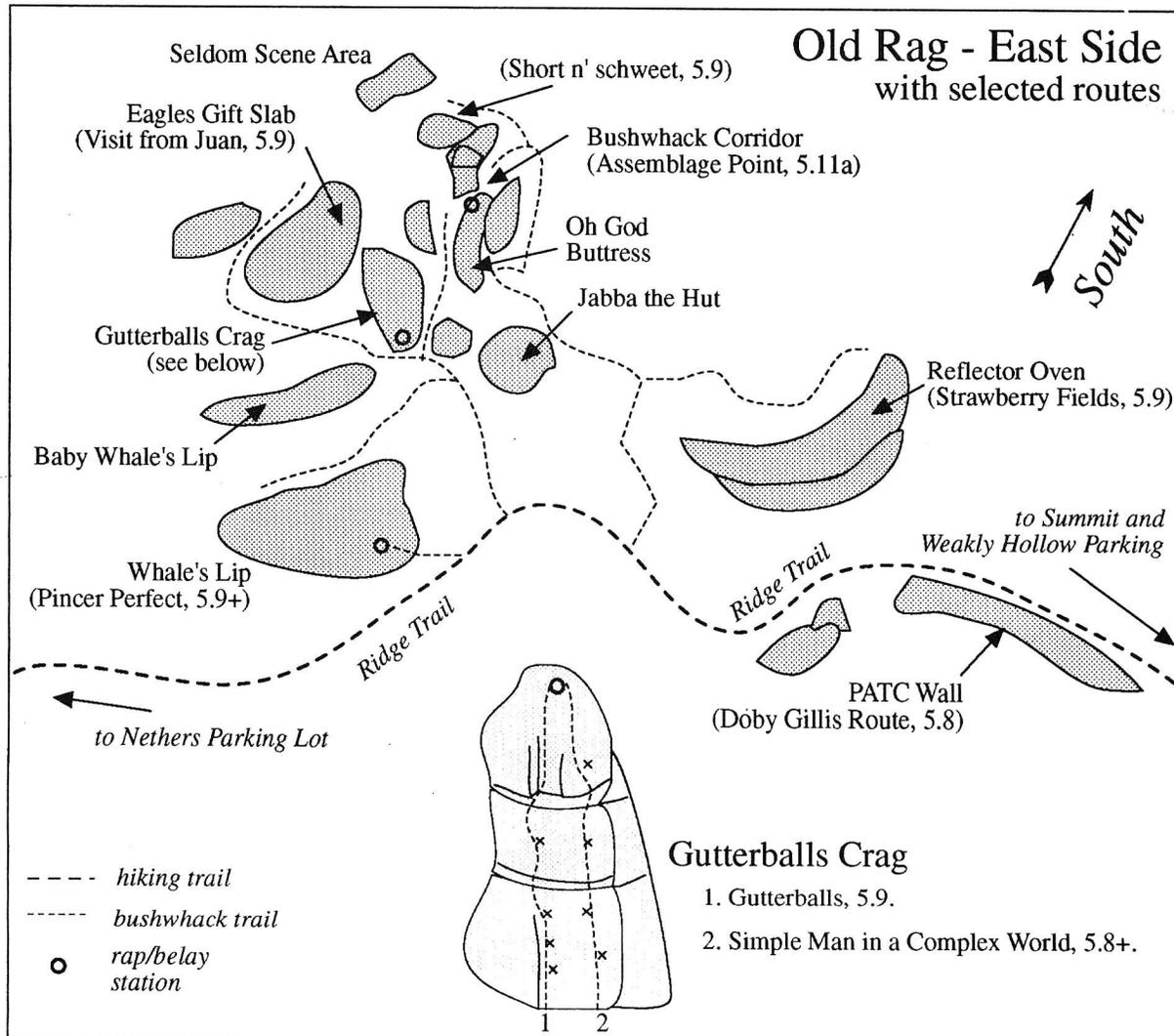
Watching Sandy try to drill the final bolt was somewhat frightening. He was only 6 or 7 feet from the last bolt but I could imagine Sandy and his drill all coming tumbling down and me catching them. No such excitement. The bolt was good and so was the route which we figured went at easy 5.11. Named Assemblage Point, it adds another fine route to the Bushwhack Corridor.

At the top of the route we put in a rap/belay station that will help people access the Bushwhack corridor from above when scrambling down the gully along the east side of the Oh God Buttress.

I managed to lead a couple other moderate climbs on the east side so that people climbing in the 5.8 to 5.9 range have a full day a good climbing there. Visit from Juan (5.9 friction) is a fine route on the Eagle's Gift Slab and Short 'n Schweet (5.9 friction and hand crack) along the Bushwhack Trail are both well worth climbing.

A final note. Sandy and I put in a rappel station at the top of the Whale's Lip Slab to make access easier, look about 40 feet down from the top of the slab, about 20 from where it gets really steep and you will find two rappel bolts.

So, grab a partner, bring your long pants for the bushwhacking and lots of water and head up to Old Rag. Its only a two hour drive from DC and it'll remind you of Joshua Tree! (Especially if you imagine briars and nettles in the spaces between all the rocks in the Wonderland area!)



1993 Cathedral Crank

by Beth Logan

April 3 was a nice, sunny day, but too cold to climb outdoors, a perfect day for the Fourth Annual Cathedral Crank indoor climbing competition. Spring could be felt moving into the area and fingers around the city were preparing for torture. The torture began at 10 am. But it wasn't all torture. After months of hibernation, I (and presumably others) was glad to see many climbers that I hadn't seen in months.

This year St Albans School Activity Gym had more climbs than any other year. Competitors had to choose four climbs from the eight top-rope climbs and three traverse problems. The 5.9 and 5.11 traverses went through the double doors, but were shorter than previous years. The 5.11 traverse had an extremely long leg reach even for people with my flexibility. Steve Jones wins the "most interesting move" award for this climb. He became a true monkey by hanging from his arms and moving across the doorway while doing a 360 degree turn - quite impressive. Becky Diamond was the only woman who attempted this route in the competition. The second half of the 5.10 traverse was slightly overhanging causing some arms to become very pumped. This was a beautiful traverse.

Another overhanging/roof climbing area was added to the Activities Gym providing two top-rope climbs to the competition. One was a grueling 5.12. (Okay, the "grueling" was subjective, but undoubtedly, most would agree.) The 5.11, which was supposedly the third hardest route, was avoided by almost everyone, for good reason. The elite men had no choice but to climb it, since they were required to climb the four hardest routes. Jana Gill was the only other person brave (or foolish) enough to climb it (that I know of). (Next year we'll tell Becky and Jana to do the easier routes and then they'll win the elite category.) General concensus was that the last move on this climb was harder than the 5.12 climb. Having heard several of these comments, I avoided it, even after the competition was over.

Bosco, the Route Setting Team Leader, created a unique 5.10 climb. It tested a climber's "wimp" skills, that is a climber's ability to back off a climb without taking a whipper. The climb went up a corner, than down a face. At the bottom, the competitors had to unclip a bell and reclip it to a different bolt hanger. The finish was to climb back up the face along a new

path. Personally, on real rock, I would have backed off the second ascent phase and moved to the easier corner.

After the competition was over, many climbers continued climbing, figuring out routes they had missed and trying ones they avoided in competition. This was the more enjoyable climbing, especially when I got those "Eakin belays," i.e., enough tension in the rope to create a thirty pound weight loss. (Named for James Eakin. He's very good at belaying this way when I ask.)

There were 90 climbers in all. Below is the list of the top ten climbers and their scores in each category. (This covers all the women who participated, and all the elite men.) Some of the rules and restrictions were discussed above. When looking at the scores below, remember the elite men were restricted to the four hardest climbs. The elite women chose between the climbs rated 5.10 or higher. In no category except men's elite did all the climbers attempt the same four climbs.

Name	Score
Women's Junior	
Elizabeth Carroll	224
Lindsay Davidson	205
Women's Recreation	
Jeanette Helfrich	1036
Katherine Hitch	982
Yael Hoogland	867
Paige Timmerman	861
Karin Vantine	837
Dede Hague	790
Leslie	655
Cathy Shubkin	502
Suzanne Laifsky	313
Patricia Horning	188
Women's Elite	
Steph Davis	1313
Elizabeth Lee	1240
Beth Logan	1182
Becky Diamond	1015
Jana Gill	788
Men's Junior	
Colin Krause	1425
Matthew Goodall	1240
Trevor Hill	1231
Adrian Kugajevsky	1182
Matt Farmer	1084

Matt Kronman	1065
Doug Hankins	1061
Andrew Hessick	1029
Craig Hirsch	884
Jon Wilson	805

Men's Recreational

Steve Amter	1425
David Godwin	1313
Robert Clark	1310
Adam Merce	1240
Toby Beard	1233
Alex Tait	1225
Eric Angel	1213
Bill Farrand	1200
Colin MacLeod	1195
Douglas Meyer	1195

Men's Elite

Doug Cosby	1584
Van Eitel II	1237
Chris Schenking	1235
Marshall Plymale	1229
Philip Olinick	1215
Steve Jones	1077
Dan Hague	998
Michael Link	932
Troy Dezwart	893

Hot Flashes

Hot Flashes will report notable lead ascents by PATC/MS members. Send info to either Tom Isaacson or Dan Hague.

Things seem to be heating up early at the New River this year and a number of significant achievements have already been reported.

John Raynor redpointed The Bonemaster Gearfling (11b) at Central Endless.

Tom Isaacson, in a moment of sheer brilliance, flashed Pockets of Resistance (12a) at Kaymoor.

Elizabeth Erskine flashed Wild Seed (11b) at downstream Endless Wall.

Stuart Peggall redpointed Fly Girls (12a) also at downstream Endless and wife Karen, not to be outdone, flashed Fragile Ecosystem (10a) four climbs away.

Rick Dotson is noted to have flashed several 11b (names unknown) routes at Bubba City.

Dan Hague flashed Out of the Bag (11d) at Kaymoor and in a maniacal push at Franklin redpointed Dynosaurus (12a), Brand New Dance (12a), and Sanitary Fishmarket (graded 12b/c, but probably 11d/12a).

Courage vs. Skill

A recent Washington Post article (3/16/93) by Angus Phillips, the Post's outdoor columnist, outlined the difference between taking calculated risks based on ability and experience and stepping over the line into dangerous situations. Our own Dusty Wissmath was quoted saying "The motivation is different (today). Most people who got into adventure sports 10 or 20 years ago did it gradually, as a way of getting deeper into the wilderness experience. You might start out backpacking, see a ridge and think how nice the view would be from there, so you'd learn a little about mountaineering."

Dusty informed Angus that people today want "instant high-risk adventures". The quote continued "People want to perform right away at a level that requires experience and judgement in addition to physical prowess. A big, strapping guy sees a little scrawny guy out rock climbing and thinks 'I can do that'. The trouble is, he doesn't know his knots". Hey! Let's hear it for all us little scrawny guys!

John Berry, Post financial reporter and climber, is also quoted. He recalls watching an inexperienced climber fall 100 feet when an improperly anchored top rope failed.

The conclusion of the article? As Dusty puts it "The notion of an accelerated learning curve just doesn't work in the outdoors". Take the time necessary to acquire skills and experience before pushing too quickly into the next level.

Climbing in North Carolina Continued

By Rick Dotson

Whitesides & Sauratown

Regina Pieper and myself took another trip to North Carolina a couple of months ago and two of the places we climbed were Whitesides and Sauratown.

The cliffs at Whitesides are impressive. The wall is 700 feet high and a couple thousand feet long. Right below Whitesides is another cliff just as big called Wildcat Cliff. The rock at Whitesides is steep to overhanging knobby granite, without too many cracks to worry about protecting.

We wanted to do the Original Route III 5.11a or 5.9 AO. This route is ten pitches long with mostly 5.7 - 5.8 climbing. Most of the easier pitches are run out with the first pitch (5.7) having no protection, although we did a variation to the first pitch

with two pieces of psycho pro (expanding flakes). The route wandered quite a bit so route finding was essential. We also had to be careful to watch out for rope drag.

When we got up to the fifth pitch we had to turn back because the route was soaking wet. We could not see that the route was wet from the ground. We decided to repel. It turned out to be about three hundred feet. The second repel was exactly 180 feet plus stretch. We were happy to have taken the long ropes for just such an emergency.

Although we did not get to finish the route we got to check out a new area. I hope to go back to Whitesides later this year.

Sauratown is a nice sport crag about six hours from Washington. Sauratown is in the same rock band as Moore's Wall. The rock is a sandstone\quartzite. The cliffs face due south and gets direct sun in the winter so even when it 40ish you can climb in comfort. The routes that we did were 5.10's climbing though bugles and overhangs on some of the biggest holds outside of the gym. There are about 40 sport route and about a dozen gear routes at Sauratown. Unfortunately Sauratown is located on private land and was closed to climbing last month. There were several reasons. Two of the reasons I heard were overbolting and cutting trees down. Also there were problems with people partying at the cliffs and leaving trash (I think these were teenagers). Hanggliders and climbers are working to get access restored to these cliffs. I hope they are successful because this was a really nice place to climb in the winter.

Televising the New

Although firmly planted on the couch for the long winter, I saw more of the New River Gorge than expected. National Geographic ran a one-hour program on B.A.S.E. jumping — leading up to a jump off of Trango Tower — which included considerable footage of a recent Bridge Day at the New. One automotive company has been running frequent ads of a vehicle being tossed off the bridge at the New, attached to a bungee cord.

A series of tourism ads by West Virginia have included scenes from the New. The latest ad, which begins with an aerial panorama of Seneca, has several shots of the New, including a very brief sequence of Mississippi's own Doug Reed hanging precariously (from the layman's point of view) from one hand. None of these contained any depictions of snakes, rain, abandoned cars or noisy rafters at 2:00 a.m.

Corrections

The article "The New - 1992 in Review" generated an unusually strong reader response. As a result, I should make the following corrections/additions.

Beth Logan did not attempt to lead Moon Child or Out of the Bag, although she top-roped both of them. Her major project is a new route at the Meadows. It will be entitled "Third Shift at the Dairy Queen", as soon as she overcomes the dyno at the top.

Although I did not comment on Jana Gill's climbing at the New, she was there on many weekends and I saw her working on a few 5.11s at Summersville. I was too busy flubbing around on Skull in the Stone (5.12c/d) to see exactly how she did.

Doug Cosby's project "White Lightning" at Kaymoor might be rated 5.13d, when it's done. My description of his numerous efforts to lead it was meant as a tribute to perseverance, not an insult. A few other phrases in my article were needlessly flippant and I'm sorry if anyone was offended.

— The Ed. (for now)

Ice Climbing in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado

by Don McIntyre

In February my wife Linda and I went to ice climb in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. During the mid-winter some of the best frozen waterfalls are to be found in this part of the country. Ouray, Pagossa Springs and Taos have a number of exciting and challenging ice routes.

We started our short 8-day vacation by flying to Albuquerque on a supersaver flight. The first waterfall climbed was a local classic in the Sandias called appropriately enough — Waterfall Canyon Falls. It was in good condition and at 30 feet is a good warm up to the bigger ones further north. The next climb was at Taos, New Mexico. This climb involves a hike in of an hour from the road. The falls is 130 feet high and is consistently vertical — it's called El Salto.

The next stop was Ouray near Durango, Colorado. Ouray is a fantastically wonderful old town set in a steep mountain-alp valley. In fact, it has been called the Little Switzerland of America. We climbed a number of local classics in the Box Canyon, Cascade Falls, and Dexter Creek areas.

The longer climbs were one of 300 feet and one of 160 feet. Most of these climbs are near vertical and require thought while leading. All were in great condition as this winter in the West had enough moisture and cold. Staying in the Box Canyon Motel, we were able to avail ourselves of the natural hot springs outside tubs after a full day of ice work!

The last stop was at Pagossa Springs, where we climbed the 165-foot Treasure Falls. This is a real classic vertical thriller! During our trip we were also able to get in some crosscountry and alpine skiing — the base levels were over 100 inches this year at Wolf Creek and Purgatory ski areas. All in all, a terrific trip!

Monthly Puzzler



Last month's puzzler was solved by Brian Dietz who correctly identified the climber as Dan Hague, the area as Great Falls and the climb as Tiparillo. Brian had a distinct advantage in that he had seen the promotional brochure in which the picture is used. Way to go Brian!

This month identify the boulderer, spotter and the climbing area in the picture above. Hint: CMI, a maker of climbing hardware, is close by.

To submit pictures for the puzzler contact Dan Hague at 301-585-5243

PATC/Mountaineering Section Climber's Calendar for June - August 1993

Date	Destination/Event	Point of Contact	Meeting Place	Remarks
6/9 Wed	Membership Meeting (Program TBA)	Climber's Hotline	HQ	8 pm; food, drinks, and slide show; all welcome
6/12 Sat	Great Falls NP, VA	Gail McDonnell (703) 281-4704	GF	
6/19 Sat	Carderrock, MD	Gary Shinner (703) 536-8957	CR	
7/3 Sat - 7/5 Mon	(July Fourth Weekend: TBA)	Climber's Hotline		
7/7 Wed	Executive Cmte Meeting (See NOTE 2 below)	Gary Shinner (703) 536-8957	Gary's Cool Pad	7:30 pm; pot-luck dinner, all invited
7/14 Wed	Membership Meeting (Program TBA)	Climber's Hotline	HQ	8 pm; food, drinks, and slide show; all welcome
7/17 Sat	Sugarloaf Mtn, MD	Stuart Hammett (301) 627-3874	RR	
7/24 Sat	Hermitage, PA	Bill Farand (703) 352-3241	TBA	
7/31 Sat	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
8/1 Sun				
8/7 Sat	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
8/8 Sun				
8/14 Sat - 8/15 Sun	Seneca Rocks, WV	John Yanson (202) 546-0600	TBA	Lead Trip: Arrange your partner or call for referral
8/21 Sat	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
8/22 Sun				
8/28 Sat	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
8/29 Sun				
9/1 Wed	Executive Cmte Meeting (See NOTE 2 below)	Alex Tait (202) 546-5131	TBA	7:30 pm; pot-luck dinner, all invited
9/4 Sat	(Labor Day Weekend: TBA)	Climber's Hotline		
9/6 Mon				
9/8 Wed	Membership Meeting (Program TBA)	Climber's Hotline	HQ	8 pm; food, drinks, and slide show; all welcome
Mid-Week	Climb After Work	Peter Hsi (703) 591-2540	TBA	Call early week for arrangements
TBA	Climber's Seminar II: Seconding a Leader	Rick Dotson (703) 368-3530	TBA	Alternate: Peter Hsi (703) 591-2540

NOTE Please call the trip leader by mid-week to make arrangements and contingency plans. Call the Climber's Hotline for the latest additions and late-to-be-published events -- (703) 242-3501.

NOTE 2: Executive Committee Meetings are usually held first Wednesdays of every odd-numbered month or by special arrangement; Membership meetings are held second Wednesdays of every month except in August.

Rendezvous Locations

Code	Location/Directions	Code	Location/Directions
RR	Roy Rodgers, 465 N Frederick Rd, Gaithersburg Maryland From I-270 north, exit at Rt 124 east (Montgomery Village Ave), right at next light to Rt 355, left at 2nd light and left into Roy Rodgers parking lot. Park in rear by large trees.	GF	Great Falls National Park, Great Falls Virginia From I-495 Virginia, exit 13 (Rt 123/Great Falls), west on Georgetown Pike about 4 miles. Right at signal into park entrance, hard right past booth into lower parking lot. Late arrivals check for note on windshield for specific climbing area.
HQ	PATC HQ: 118 Park St, Vienna Virginia From I-66, exit at Nutley St north, right at Rt 123, right at Park St, building on the left behind Southern States.	CR	Carderock Maryland From I-495 Maryland, exit 41 at Clara Barton Pkwy north, take first exit and overpass to Carderock entrance, turn right after entering park, go to last parking lot. Cliff is beyond restrooms.
AO	Appalachian Outfitters, 2930 Chain Bridge Rd, Oakton Virginia From I-66, exit 16 (Rt 123 north), left just past 4th light into bank parking lot.	TBA	To Be Arranged Please call the Point of Contact for directions or the Climber's Hotline for updates.



**Are those
really bare
feet?**



118 Park Street, S.E.
Vienna, VA 22180

Address Correction Requested

Joe H. Wagner
4528 WINDOM PL NW
WASHINGTON DC 20016-2452

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Vienna, Va
Permit No. 8035