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JAN AND HERB CONN

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

Vol 46 no. 2

April 1993

Vegas Notes and Helpful Hints by Mel Banks

First Impressions

Your reaction when you see the Red Rocks sport climbing area from the park's loop road will likely be, "That's it?" Rounded, indistinct tiers of slabby red sandstone, layer upon layer, recede into the desert. It's the junk you might have glanced at in passing if you were ever in Las Vegas to do Rock Warrior, or Levitation 29, or one of the many other classic multi-pitch routes in the canyons. Upon closer inspection, you spot white-dotted faces, tucked here and there amid the jumble of stone. It doesn't look like much, but what the hell, you're here, the sun's shining on the cliffs, it's too cold to climb in Black Velvet Canyon, and it wouldn't do to start gambling already at 10:00 in the morning.

The scale is deceiving. The routes turn out to be steep, well-featured, and long enough to sustain interest. The developed crags are spread out, interconnected by a fun house maze of slabs, boulders, corridors, ledges, dry stream beds. Fifteen to twenty minutes and a little scrambling will typically get you where you're going, once you figure out where that is. (Hint: Ask directions.)

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

The trophy is a remarkable formation: overwhelmingly steep, it sits atop an immense slab at the end of a shadowy canyon known as the Twinkie Narrows. To find it took us over an hour, led astray by wild burro trails and the footprints of lost climbers, scrambling over sandstone ridges and up dead-end gullies in a quest worthy of Coronado's search for the Seven

Cities. (Hint: the approach maps in the guide-book are not to scale.)

The easiest route at Trophy is *Dodgin' a Bullet*, 5.12a. Two Italians were on it; we settled in to wait. They climbed shirtless, gold necklaces on Riviera tans, earrings glinting. We watched, half dozing, until the leader pulled off a brick-sized hold which shattered nearby. "It's OK, you don't need that hold," a local assured us. Plenty more where that came from. (Hint: In Vegas, beware of loose rock and loose women.) Actually, the sport climbing at Red Rocks was for the most part quite solid, with beafy, well-placed bolts and anchors. What breaks off is mostly scabby stuff you shouldn't have been using anyway. Moving as far away from the Italians as we could, we watched local climber Chris Lindner, age 8 (that is not a typo), coolly work moves on the severely overhanging *Shark Walk*, 5.13a. He'd redpointed a 5.12d the week before. The Italians wanted to know if he was a midget. (Hint: do not pass puberty if you aspire to 5.13.)

When Day is Done

As you drive into town at dusk Las Vegas comes into view, spilling across the dark desert floor like glowing pirate's treasure. Above, bright points of light hang motionless in the purple sky - jetliners frozen in place by the perspective of distance, forever arriving or departing. The panorama sparkles with laser clarity in the desert air, even from 18 miles. We slow down on Highway 159 to take it all in.

I assume you will be staying in town, to be near the Soup Exchange (Hint: this is the only place you will ever need for dinner) as well as the casinos, the bunji tower, and other sundry enter-

tainments. (The Oak Creek campground, which, to quote the guidebook, has "no facilities whatsoever," was a zoo. Your car will be blocked in by some bozo in the middle of the night.)

As for places to stay in town, if you're inclined to throw away big bucks at the tables, try to get "comped" at one of the casino hotels. Consider "Sam", chainsmoking next to me at the blackjack table in his black t-shirt and gold chains, betting \$75 a hand, losing steadily and loudly. "Where's my comp?" he demanded every 10 minutes. By the time he got his comp he'd dropped at least \$500. (Hint: find a \$25 motel in the North Vegas sleaze district. Don't worry, it's safe enough - the cops patrol Vegas on mountain bikes. You can fit in at least five climbers. Your thermarests will cover the stains on the carpet. Plus you get local color: Dan, big sweet guy that he is, offered a box of Cheerios to a guy rummaging in the motel's dumpster one morning. The man stared at it, then at Dan. "What the hell am I going to do with that?" he asked. "I don't have any milk.")

What Goes Up

On the bunji tower at night, cantilevered over the street 160 feet up in the chill air with the lights of Vegas dancing crazily all around you, there's a feeling of vertigo you can't quite achieve on a wall of solid rock. Ben acquitted himself well, holding back his scream until the zero G apogee of the first rebound. (Hint: everybody chip in for the price of one jump, then cut cards - it's Vegas, after all - to see who gets to take the dive.)

Lost Wages

Insert your plastic card into an ATM in the casino. Out drops a crisp new hundred-dollar bill. The blackjack dealer turns it back into plastic for you: one black chip, four greens, or 20 reds. It's less painful that way. Plastic to plastic, dust to dust. (Hint: Hit 11 or under; stand on 17 or over; stand on 12 - 16 if the dealer is showing 2 - 6; always split aces and eights; double down on 11 unless the dealer is showing an ace. Got it?) (Hint: after a long night in the casinos, two 20 oz. coffees from 7-11 and a few whiffs of clean desert air will get you climbing again.)

For route information see *A Climber's Guide to the Red Rocks of Nevada*, Randy Faulk. A condensed version appears in *Rock and Ice* #49, May/June 1992. See also *Winning Casino Blackjack for the Non-counter*, A. Cardoza.

Getting the Hang of Heel Hooking

by Tom "Ten Cows" Isaacson

When I learned to rock climb through various PATC trips, I was told that proper technique primarily involved using four fingers and the front/inside of your shoes. We considered using your knees to be such poor technique as to almost invalidate an otherwise clean ascent.

Those basic principles served me reasonably well on slabs and "merely" vertical rock. With the advent of sport climbing I, like so many others, ventured onto overhanging, and sometimes radically overhanging, faces. By watching other climbers, it became apparent that the techniques used on steep and highly featured rock differ significantly from traditional vertical face climbing that are relied upon at Carderock and Great Falls. Suddenly the use of knees, elbows, shoulders, hips, thighs, calves, thumbs, etc. became obligatory. An essential aspect of climbing steep rock is being willing to slam, jam, lock, bar or otherwise lodge some part of your anatomy, perhaps any part of your anatomy, into the rock if it will serve to take some weight off your arms or hands.

Some of these techniques are fairly obvious, but many are devious and difficult. You could climb right by many sections of rock and not realize that a "hands down" rest could be crafted there. Some techniques for resting your arms, such as "bat hanging" upside down by your feet, are so painful and strenuous to other muscles that their utility is either highly suspect or at least dependent on your being willing to suffer a lot (at least by the standards of fun activities). Other techniques, such as sticking your feet in a horizontal with the soles of your feet facing up (people claim this really works, at least it's popular among highly talented climbers) depend on a high level of flexibility and a willingness to break an ankle or knee if you fall at the wrong time. Describing all of these techniques would take far too long and is well beyond my knowledge.

By far the most basic and useful of these techniques is heel hooking. I am not an expert in the art of heel hooking, but I know enough to help those of you who may just be getting started. I can say this with confidence, if you don't learn how to heel hook in a wide variety of situations, you will have a much tougher time getting up steep climbs.

I remember only two heel hooks commonly used on top rope climbs that PATC frequently rigged. Pine Tree Face at Annapolis Rocks has a heel hook at the crux near the top. James Eakin pointed out that beta to us years ago. Shoulder of the Road at Great Falls is made much easier with a left heel hook on the flake at half-height.

Some people can still do this move by smearing their feet, but it seems much more strenuous that way. A few climbers, like me, will heel hook their left foot to gain the ledge on One Lane Highway at Great Falls. Most climbers prefer to solve this move by mantling or by good-old cranking. Most of us weren't good enough to bother rigging Blitzkrieg at Great Falls back then but it, too, generally requires a heel hook to overcome the first crux.

Heel hooking, as you've probably guessed, is the art of placing one of your heels on the rock. There seem to be two principal uses of heel hooking. On a face climb it usually serves to allow you to gain some leverage, take weight off your arms and either reach up for a hold or clip a bolt/place protection. On arete climbs, heel hooks are commonly used to stop you from swinging to the side, and help keep you in some semblance of balance.

The first step is deciding which foot to use. In most cases you don't have any choice since the hookable holds only appear on your left or your right. Occasionally, you have a choice. The simplest rule of thumb is to heel hook on the same side as the hand hold that you'll be reaching for. If your next move involves reaching up with your right hand, you probably should heel hook with your right foot. This will rotate your hips in the direction you're reaching. The same holds true for clipping bolts. If you're clipping the bolt with your left hand, you probably want to heel hook on the left.

I've found a few instances where double heel hooking is required. This is rare. You might hook both feet simultaneously in a horizontal crack (not on a ledge) in order to reach out a roof. You also might hook one foot to clip a bolt and then switch to hooking the other foot in order to move up.

After deciding which foot to use, you need to decide where on the hold to place your foot. Often there is no choice in the matter because the hold is small. If there is a choice, the first consideration is finding a place where the ledge/edge is wide and in-cut. It helps to find a place where you can get all of your heel on the ledge and dig in. If there are no such features and the ledge is fairly uniform, you still must choose -- albeit quickly -- where to put your foot. If you are reaching up with a hand on the same side as the hooking foot, don't put that foot on the far end of the ledge. You may need some additional room to rock over that foot at the end stages of the heel hook maneuver. If you're reaching with the other hand, it's less likely that you'll be rocking over that foot. Apart from that consideration, I like to have my foot as far away from me as possible while still keeping my knee bent. I find this takes the most weight off my arms. If

your foot is so far away that your knee is not bent, you'll lose a lot of leverage and you can rip a hamstring. If your knee is bent too much because your foot is in too close to you, you'll probably have your hips thrown off. Also, that form of heel hooking requires more hamstring power than most climbers possess.

Toe positioning. Having decided what to do with your heel, you must look at toe options. On highly featured steep rock, there frequently are opportunities to hook the toes (of your hooking foot) behind a flake or against the underside of a roof, etc. The combination of heel hook-toe hook can be especially powerful.

If no toe hooks are available, you still have a couple of choices to make. Most of the time you will leave your toes pointing straight up. This works best when you're reaching up on the same side as the heel hook. If, on the other hand, you're reaching up on the other side, you may want to turn your foot/toes to the outside so that the outside of your heel rests on the ledge, and your toes point away from the rock. Turning your leg in this manner will help turn your hips in the direction you're reaching.

A few notes. First, watch the rope if you're leading. If you heel hook over the rope, you'll flip upside down when you fall. I've learned this the hard way. When you're bringing your foot up to the hooking position, catch the rope with your foot so that the rope rests on top of your ankle.

Second, heel hooking is good for static movement and resting, but is a very poor technique for dynamic movement. With a little experience and common sense, you should be able to calculate the maximum distance you can reach in a heel hook position. If the only usable hold is higher than that, you probably need to keep your feet under you and try a more dynamic movement.

Third, think about your shoes. Most work just fine since sensitivity in the heel is not critical. However, some slippers will pull off your heel when subjected to certain types of heel hooking.

Last, you shouldn't think too much about your other leg. Each heel hook maneuver requires getting into the flow/balance of that particular situation. Often the other leg will want to hang free as you crank with the hooking leg. Let it. This is especially common when you're reaching above the hooked leg and it serves to raise your hips in the desired direction. If, however, you have the misfortune of needing to reach with the other arm and you need to bring your other leg up to a higher hold to make the reach, you're staring at a hard move. (This is the crux of Apollo Reed.) Ask someone else for help.

Hot Flashes

Since our last issue, Rick Dotson flashed Terra Firma Homesick Blues (11c) at Seneca, a bold traditional lead. Rick currently is working on Leave it to Jesus (11d) at the New.

Jeanette Helfrich flashed the Chameleon (10b) and Passing It (10c/d). She and John Rayner both redpointed New Tricks (10c), a route they helped establish two years ago. John also redpointed Wild Seed (11b) at the downstream section of the Endless Wall.

Tom Halicki and Elizabeth Erskine both redpointed Aesthetica (11c) on a sweltering day. Tom also flashed Wild Seed and Sheer Strength (11b).

Stuart Pregnall flashed Pockets of Resistance (12a) and redpointed Lost Souls and Freaky Stylee (both 12a) on his second try each. He did Bourbon Sauce (11d/12a) on his first lead try after having flashed it on a top rope. Karen Pregnall did Rico Suave and other 5.10s.

James Eakin lead the thin Fragile Ego System (10a).

Tom Isaacson flashed Maximum Overdrive (12a) and redpointed several other 5.12s, including Thunderstruck (12b), Dionysius (12b) and Yowsah (either 12a or 12c, depending on which guidebook you use).

Dan Hague sent Maximum Overdrive (12a) and MENSA (11d/12a), a sporty sport climb at Beauty Mountain featuring only four bolts in its 75 foot length. Dan also flashed Disturbance (11d) another Beauty beauty.

Our fearless leader, Alex Tait, led the classic Seneca 10a Castor.

Eric Horst's Just Send It (grade currently in dispute) as was reported elsewhere. This year long-time New River resident Doug Reed has been in top form and has established several new routes which rank among the most difficult at the New.

The parking situation at Beauty Mountain is up in the air. You might ask around before parking there. The Honeymoon ladders at Central Endless have been repaired. The New Guidebook has helped increase the popularity of the many new sport routes at the downstream Endless Well, but it's still a pretty good destination on crowded days.

A recent accident makes it worth reminding members that many routes having cold-shut anchors are more than 25 meters long. Therefore, a 50 meter rope won't get you back down safely. Tie a knot in the other end of the rope and pay attention.

It bears repeating from a previous Up Rope that the bolt counts in the new guidebook frequently are inaccurate. If you rely on them you often will find yourself short-handed. Use some common sense; try to count the bolts yourself and, if you're still unsure, bring a few extra quickdraws.

Because of some recent reports of theft, you shouldn't leave your gear unattended, especially at areas that have quick access. It is, unfortunately, true that there are few, if any, rock climbing venues in the East which are theft-free. In addition to theft of packs, some dirtbags have been stealing hangers, cold-shuts and quickdraws from sport routes at the New. It's rather discouraging.

New River Miscellany

Doug Cosby completed the first ascent of White Lightning after considerable effort. It awaits a second ascent to confirm the grade which probably is 13a or 13b (not 13d as Up Rope erroneously reported in a previous "correction"). Doug did the probable second ascent of Long Dong Silver (12d, third try) and had quick ascents of Blood Raid (13a), Sanctified (12d) and Lactic Acid Bath (12d). New arrival Chris Baroody (from Leesburg) flashed Yowsah and Dionysius.

The hardest new route at the New last year probably was Albatross (13c) at Kaymoor, established by Jim Woodruff (of Frederick, MD), not

Member News & Miscellany

Jeanette Helfrich, Ian Cruikshank, Ed Cummings, Charlie Dorian, Gretchen Schwartz and Charlie's sister are spending two weeks in Zermatt, Switzerland and Chamonix, France. We hope to get a full report in a later issue.

Elizabeth Erskine has been showing a selection of her black and white photographs at an exhibit at The District of Columbia Arts Center. Some of her photos are from climbing trips.

Doug Dupuie, now residing in Denver, visited the area recently to climb at the New and compete at Clipper City. Doug's work as a disk jockey at the Paradise Rock Gym was praised in a recent issue of Sport Climbing magazine.

Madeleine Carter and Alec Graham have returned to the area after a five month trip to Africa and Asia. They both hope to successfully move their businesses here from Boston. They also have been getting back into climbing by visiting the New, among other places.

John Yanson and Alex Tait recently had an opening at their new studio. They both have been very busy - John as a graphic designer and Alex as a cartographer.

Diane Connolly, who left DC to pursue climbing out west, recently came in fourth at the Phoenix bouldering contest, one of the major climbing competitions of the year.

John Raynor took his physics and math skills to Loral, a major defense contractor. John is said to enjoy life in the private sector after many years at the University of Maryland.

A recent issue of Newsweek had a cover story on rock climbing and other adventure sports. For those of you who saw the cover and were wondering, the climber is on Chain Reaction (12c) at Smith Rocks, Oregon.

Dan and Dede Hague recently visited the Red River Gorge in Kentucky reporting hot, humid and buggy conditions. Go in the spring of fall they recommend.

Wuthering Heights at the New! Tom Isaacson, Tom Halicki, Elizabeth Erskine, John Rayner, and Jeanette Helfrich have rented a charming vacation lodge for the summer in Anstead, West Virginia near the New River Gorge (wishful thinking; it's actually a quite ordinary apartment in a two-story garden apartment building). All you other gourmet cooks (other than Tom Halicki) out there are invited if you don't mind sleeping on the kitchen (or laundry room) floor!

The recent visit of the Dali Lama to Washington has kept some MS members busy. Anne Baron assisted in the filming of his visit along with Christine LaPorte and Lavinia Currier, associated with the Friends of Bull Run. Kate Hughes worked on various project and wrangled an audience with the Dali Lama. Also seen at the gala concert at the Warner Theatre were Ken Andrasko, Julie Shannon, John Christian, and Jeanette Helfrich.

Ken Andrasko and Julie Shannon recently vacationed on Maui, camping in the rain forests and hiking on the volcanoes. With the EPA, Ken has traveled to China and to Tibet. They are expecting a baby this summer and are enjoying their new house in Cabin John.

Liz Lee has been traveling for her job as a population editor to Rome, Karachi, Bombay and Jakarta. She also placed second in the Clipper

City climbing competition in May in the Women's Combined Elite/Intermediate class. Rebecca Noyes from Boston won first. Liz also won first in the women's recreational class this spring in the "Kentucky Bourbon," a competition in Lexington, Kentucky. At the time of this writing, Liz is in Yosemite/Tuolumne Meadows with Troy Dezwart.

John Christian and Kate Hughes plan to climb in the Canadian Rockies this summer near Lake Louise then on to the Columbia Ice Fields near Jasper. The Alpine Club of Canada is building a new hut there. Get John to tell you how he witnessed an hair-raising avalanche while skiing in the Canadian Rockies this winter which buried some of his party. Unbelievably they all survived with minor scrapes and bruises.

Andy Kauffmann gave a very successful slide show at REI this winter relating to his new book just out from The Mountaineers, K2-the 1939 Tragedy. REI made copies of the book available for signing by the author. The show featured original film footage obtained from relatives of one of the climbers.

John Berry, Washington Post reporter, and wife Mary visited the African country of Malawje, celebrating the 50th birthday of a friend who heads the Peace Corps in that country. They found the season too early for climbing adventures.

Ed Cummings is now a "certified" scuba diver. He and Clair Witt have been diving in the Cayman Island this spring.

If UPROPE makes it out in time, you're all invited to the annual pool party at James Eakin's parents house in Silver Spring on August 7, 3:30 p.m., bring food, booze, kids, volleyballs, friends, tall tales, swimming suits and bug dope. Call James for details.

The Washington Post on July 9, 1993, reported that Governor Wilder has "ordered an investigation of land dealings between some super-rich residents of Fauquier County and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, a state-established group charged with protecting scenic areas from development. Wilder ordered National Resources Secretary Elizabeth H. Haskell to 'make sure nothing is happening to give preferential treatment to anyone after reports that the foundation sold land without public notice, at what some local real estate agents considered cut rate prices, to three multimillionaires who had lent money to the foundation.'" One of the parcels VOF has under contract to be sold is the land on which PATC purchased an easement in 1985, and because of boundary disputes concerning the easement, the contract has not closed.

"Cliffhanger," the rock climbing moving starring Sylvester Stallone, opened Memorial Day in many cities. On the rocks will we soon experi-

ence Stallone-clones? The Access Fund held a benefit in connection with the opening in New York, Boulder, and Boston.

David H. Battaglia, 34, died February 20, 1993 on a mountain climbing expedition in Argentina, as part of a privately organized six-person party climbing Mount Aconcagua, a 22,835 foot peak in the Andes. He was just below the summit when he was reportedly stricken by a heart attack. He was a Washington lawyer who was an official of the Virginia Department of Human Resources during the administration of former governor Charles S. Robb. In 1989, he made an unsuccessful bid for the Virginia House of Delegates seat vacated by former Del. Dorothy S. McDiarmid of Fairfax. This information is from his obituary in the Washington Post of February 26, 1993.

July 4 weekend saw a few Washingtonians on the cliffs - Doug Craun, Don Holtzer, Dave Coffey, Robert Fenichel, John Rayner, and Jeanette Helfrich. If only we could import Bacchus, Barnaby's, Loup Garou, sunning at Coxing Kill, and the spirit of New Paltz to Fayetteville, West Virginia, we would have a fantastic climbing area at the New River Gorge.

The Mohonk Preserve has opened the new parking lot at the Gunks which was built with climbers' funds. Most people still park along the road, but the lot is unobtrusively settled into the landscape just west of the Trapps. Parallel with the road, it is hardly visible and pleasantly landscaped. It certainly contrasts with the concrete monstrosity at the National Park Service's Seneca Shadows parking lot at the campground.

The Access Fund has been awarded a \$30,300 grant from the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance (OICA), to buy a forty-acre parcel of private holdings along the Shawangunk ridge. This strategic parcel is one of the few pieces of land along the ridge not yet protected from development. This parcel will extend the Mohonk Preserve's holdings to the south of the Near Trapps.

Don't forget to renew your contribution for 1993 to The Access Fund. There are more closures of climbing areas in North Carolina and Pennsylvania. Safe Harbor and Bellefonte remain closed. Access problems continue at Beauty Mountain at the New River. Why don't people understand climbing?

National Park Service Climbing Regulations

On June 14, 1993 the Federal Register contained an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on rock climbing in National Parks. The National Park Service (NPS) is concerned that their mandate of protecting park resources is

being compromised by the recent "explosion" in climbing use. Consequently the NPS is in the process of creating Climbing Management Plans (CMP) for each affected park.

According to the Advanced Notice "CMP's, with the aid of public involvement, will determine for each applicable park area

1. What park resources and values are being affected and under what circumstances;

2. What, if any, types and levels of impacts associated with climbing in the area are acceptable (do not impair park resources), and are not in derogation of park values;

3. What climbing practices are used and are necessary and appropriate for the pursuit of climbing, and what their associated impacts are; and

4. Based on the above determinations, what manner and levels of climbing uses, along with attendant levels and kinds of mitigating actions, are appropriate."

Nationally the CMP's would all carry the following provisions:

1. Climbing would be a generally allowed activity in all park areas. (*Ed. - Local park management would, however, have the ability to restrict climbing use 'based on the unique resources and other activities in a park area'*)

2. Gluing holds for reinforcement, chipping holds, removing loose rock or vegetation (including lichen) are viewed as not essential or appropriate for climbing and an unacceptable use of park resources.

3. Motorized drills allow the rapid proliferation of fixed anchors and new routes leading to a rapid increase in direct impacts to park resources and would therefore be specifically prohibited.

4. The use of fixed anchors to some extent is necessary and appropriate but their use must be managed by the NPS.

5. Climbing might be restricted to protect certain vegetation or wildlife.

6. Wilderness areas would carry further restrictions.

The Advanced Notice specifically asks for comments "on recommended ways in which to manage rock climbing in accordance with the above discussion."

Climbing in some very important areas could be drastically altered by the regulations including the New River Gorge which is managed by the NPS. **YOUR COMMENTS ARE NEEDED! WRITE THE NPS AND EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.**

The deadline for submissions is September 13, 1993. Send your comments to:

National Park Service, Climbing Docket 1
Division of Ranger Activities
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7027

A Letter to the Editor

by Phil Olinick

I've been climbing since 1975. I solo — conservatively — and I find placing gear bothersome, so I only place it when I feel it's absolutely necessary. In all these years, despite loose rock, vicious birds and not finding the Catwalk on Middle Cathedral, I've never been injured worse than a sprained ankle.

It angers me when people, particularly climbers, call the sport dangerous. But in recent months, I've been giving in. I still disagree that the sport is dangerous, but I do agree that we have a problem. However, I don't think the solution is terribly complex.

Bear with me for a brief anecdote. It illustrates my point. My wife, Jana, and son, Julian, climb now. Recently Jana was belaying me with a Petzl Grigri, which neither one of us had used before. I was about 40 feet off the deck, took what should have been a 10 footer but stopped about five feet off the ground. My wife had instinctively grabbed the Grigri. You don't grab a Grigri unless you want to lower someone. To catch a fall, you let go.

One more anecdote. My wife was on a rescue at the New recently. She tells me an experienced climber, being belayed by an inexperienced climber was being lowered and the rope ran out when the guy was 25 feet off the deck. He fell to the ground and waited the requisite zillion hours for a rescue.

But just one more — and I promise this will be the last. I think the best illustration of the point I'd like to make is forgetting to finish your knot. You know, how Lynn Hill decked out. Say you're tying a Fleishman's Bend (Figure Eight follow through). You tie the eight, pass it through your harness, and then turn around to chat with someone, forget about the rest of the knot and start climbing. According to my unofficial, personal, survey, not finishing the knot has been the most common serious risk to experienced climbers.

What do all of these incidents have in common? Answer: A new system. Yes, even example two with the green belayer. Why? Because even five years ago you could assume that anyone belaying you would a) watch the end of the rope or b) tie a knot in the end of the rope.

We're going through some extraordinary changes in this sport -- and fast. It's high time that we start addressing the problems. The way I see it, either someone with the time and energy organizes

this thing now, or it'll be a situation analogous to the traffic light that doesn't get installed until after the first traffic fatality. I don't like fatalities or traffic lights.

Here are my suggestions:

1. If you're new to the sport, spend the money and get guided instruction. If you're too poor to do that, try paying an unemployed, experienced climber under the table.

2. If you want bolted climbs easier than 5.11, you're going to have to pay for them. Believe it or not the hardware business is booming despite all the bolts, because if you don't climb harder than 5.10, you have to place gear. So don't look to the manufacturers to solve your problems. Bolts and hangars for one route usually cost about \$40. Poor climbers won't spend that unless it boosts their ego or gets them sponsorship. In Europe, by the way, there are areas with 5.5 sport climbs. In France bolts are replaced regularly by the Federation Nationale.

Possible solution: Tom Wendell at the Hard Rock at New River, 304 574 0735, would be happy to buy a climb for you. Same goes for Jim Ellis at Clipper City in Baltimore 401 467 9727, or Doug Cosby in the DC area 703 569 4924. That's right. You name the grade, and they'll make a climb for you. John Markwell or Tom Cecil at Seneca probably will do the same thing, but I haven't talked with either of them about it.

We can do it on a climb by climb basis, or we can make a bolting pool for various grades (e.g. the 5.8 pool).

3. We need a new set of basics for sport climbing and for indoor climbers venturing outdoors for the first time — kind of a simple text book. Could we boil it down to one page and publish it in Up Rope?

Here's a list I dashed off for my wife in a moderately panicked moment before she took off for the Gunks. It's hardly complete, but perhaps it will provide a useful framework.

* BE SURE YOUR FIRST NUT OR FRIEND IS GOOD FOR AN UPWARD PULL, OR HAVE YOUR BELAYER STAND NEXT TO THE ROCK. (OTHERWISE THE NUTS CAN "ZIPPER," ASSUMING THEY ARE GOOD FOR DOWNWARD AND NOT UPWARD PULL).

* USE LONG SLINGS WHEN NECESSARY TO REDUCE ROPE DRAG AND KEEP THE LEAD ROPE IN A STRAIGHT LINE.

* TEST OR BACK UP QUESTIONABLE RAPPEL

ANCHORS.

* MOST PINS AT THE GUNKS ARE OVER 30 YEARS OLD.

* NUTS IN HORIZONTAL CRACKS ARE OFTEN SAFER WHEN PLACED IN PAIRS IN OPPOSITION.

* USE THE MIDPOINT TIE-IN ON FRIENDS WHEN PLACING THEM IN HORIZONTAL CRACKS, AND WHENEVER YOU SUSPECT THERE MIGHT BE LEVERAGE ON THE SHAFT. Ö* THE NEAR TRAPPS: BEWARE OF SECOND PITCHES PAST ROSELAND. ASK BEFORE YOU ATTEMPT A SECOND PITCH DOWN THERE. ALL PITCHES PAST BIRD CAGE ARE GARBAGE.

* IT'S CROWDED: SO USE YOUR PARTNER'S NAME W/SIGNALS. KEEP SIGNALS DOWN TO ONE SYLLABLE. [When you get experienced, why not develop tug signals? A mere tug on the rope will wake up a sleepy leader belaying a second from above. Aren't three sharp tugs and the rope moving up as the second climbs at least as good as yelling "on belay" into the wind?]

One last thing if I have any readers left. It's arguably a relevant tangent. There's a growing schism between the "elite" climbers and the not so elite climbers. I have some advice.

1. Ignore it. It's holding you back.

2. Ignore it, because it's quite distorted. For some reason I'm classified as an elite climber (even though I have trouble redpointing 12.C), but I'm happy to use that leverage even if it is bullshit. When I go climbing, I feel as though I'm at a huge cocktail party (no booze being served yet though). There are friends I haven't seen for months. Sometimes there are people I haven't seen for years. (I've known John Gregory since I was a sophomore in high school.) Plus, I've got my own agenda — rock climbing — for which I'm spending 11 hours in a car. There's no time for anything else. There's no excuse for anyone who isn't courteous, but, hey, even introductions were unusual in rock climbing circles until recently, so have some patience.

Mark my words, it's all in your head. Once you get rid of it and just climb, you'll be dealin'.



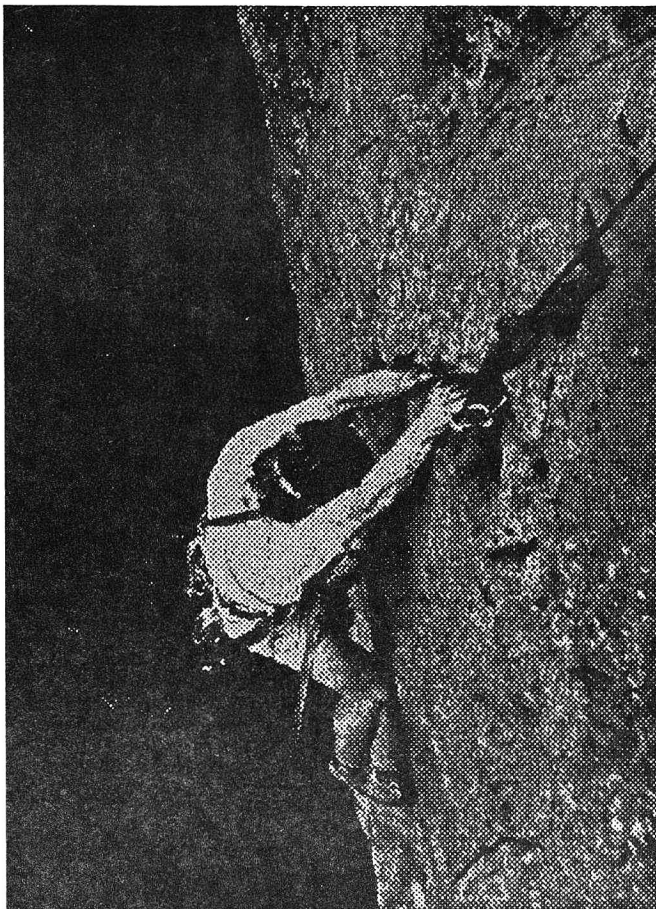
PATC/Mountaineering Section Climber's Calendar for September - November 1993

Date	Destination/Event	Point of Contact	Meeting Place	Remarks
9/1 Wed	Executive Committee Meeting (See NOTE 2 below)	Gary Shinnors (703) 536-8957	Gary's Cool Pad	7:30 pm; pot-luck dinner, all invited
9/4 Sat - 9/6 Mon	(Labor Day Weekend: TBA)	Climber's Hotline		
9/8 Wed	Membership Meeting: Andy Kauffmann, 1939 K2 Expedition	Climber's Hotline	HQ	8 pm; food, drinks, and slide show; all welcome
9/11 Sat	Great Falls NP, VA	Don Holtzer (301) 681-8035	GF	
9/18 Sat 9/19 Sun	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
9/26 Sun	Beginner Climber's Seminar	Alex Tait (202) 546-5131	TBA	
10/2 Sat	Great Falls NP, VA	Dave Godwin (703) 276-2291	GF	
10/9 Sat 10/10 Sun	TBA	Climber's Hotline		
10/13 Wed	Membership Meeting: Chris Warner, South America Mountaineering	Climber's Hotline	HQ	8 pm; food, drinks, and slide show; all welcome
10/16 Sat - 10/17 Sun	1st Annual MS Fall Rendezvous	Alex Tait (202) 546-5131	TBA	Camp out, dinner, all invited, RSVP 10/9
10/23 Sat	Crescent Rocks, VA	Peter Hsi (703) 591-2540	TBA	
10/30 Sat	Carderock, MD	Gary Shinnors (703) 536-8957	CR	
11/3 Wed	Executive Committee Meeting (See NOTE 2 below)	Alex Tait (202) 546-5131	Alex's Studio	7:30 pm; pot-luck dinner, all invited
11/6 Sat - 11/7 Sun	'Gunks, NY	Peter Hsi (703) 591-2540	TBA	Lead Trip: Arrange your partner or call for referral
11/10 Wed	Membership Meeting: Anne Baron, Trekking in Zanskar, India	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 too-late-to-be-published events -- (703) 242-3501.
- NOTE 2: Executive Committee Meetings are now 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
HQ	PATC HQ: 118 Park St, Vienna Virginia From I-495 Virginia, exit #11 to Rt 123/Vienna; after approx 11 lights, left at Park St; building on the left behind Southern States --OR-- From I-66, exit at Nutley St north, right at Rt 123, right at Park St.	GF	Great Falls National Park, Great Falls Virginia From I-495 Virginia, exit #13 west to Rt 193/Great Falls, about 4 miles right at signal into park entrance; hard right past booth into lower parking lot. Late arrivals check at climber's sign-in board for specific climbing area.
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.	CR	Carderock Maryland From I-495 Maryland, exit #41 north (Clara Barton Pkwy), 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 Va. From I-66, exit at Rt 123 to Vienna, left just past 4th light into Nationsbank parking lot.	TBA	To Be Arranged Please call the Point of Contact for directions or the Climber's Hotline for updates.



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