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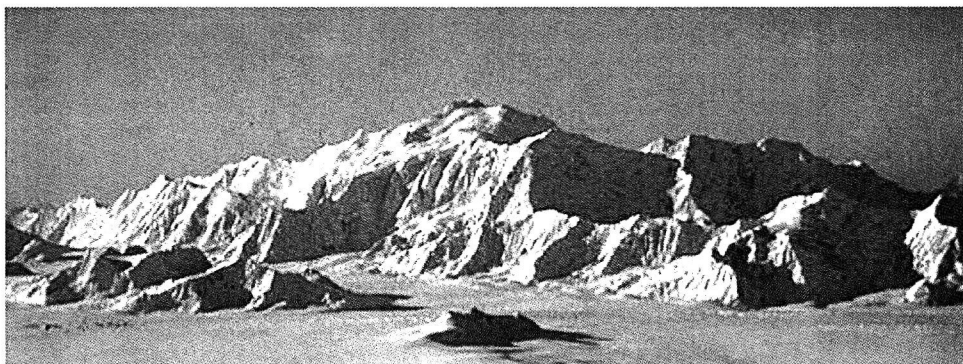
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Alaska, St. Elias Range

by Lee Jenkins, Falls Church, VA
April 27 to May 5, 2000

Saint Elias Mountain Range, Alaska : stock photo

On Thursday April 27, 2000. John Race of Seattle, WA and Lee Jenkins of Falls Church, VA were flown onto the upper west fork of the Barnard Glacier by Paul Claus, owner/operator of Ultima Thule Outfitters. The glacier is breathtakingly beautiful and sits between two of the St. Elias Range highest peaks, University Peak at 14,470' to the west and Mount Bear at 14,831' to the east. Since this was my first trip to Alaska and John's first to the St. Elias Range we had planned to explore and climb a few of the easier 10,000' peaks in the area. Many of these peaks have never been climbed and there is little to no route information available. This was truly going to be a wilderness adventure!

We established a base camp at 7,000' on the glacier and after a day of scouting decided to concentrate on two peaks due south of camp. These were peaks PK-10170 to the south east and PK-9695 to the south west.

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ROCKFALL

2001 Nominated officers:

Mack Muir - Chair
John Smith - Vice Chair
Dave Green - Treasure
Charlotte Bonilla - Secretary

New River Gorge

Greg Mistler, April 14-21

I took five rolls of slide film this week, at least some of them should be interesting. Especially the ones of us cliff diving into Summersville Lake (Yes, we almost froze to death. And yes, it was after Pete, Simon and Eric went home, they are much to sensible to try a thing like that). So much happened on this trip that I can't even begin to write about all of it. Here are some of the highlights.

I drove down to the New River Gorge with Eric Sigler on Friday. We stayed at Rogers where we were meeting Pete Grant and Simon Carr for a weekend of climbing. I drove my car down because I was on spring break and I had promised myself that I wasn't going back home until I had to go back to school.

On Saturday and Sunday we managed to climb quite a bit. Pete prevailed in his struggle to climb cracks, and he sent Springboard, a 5.10c handcrack. Simon led the world's hardest 5.10a handcrack/offwidth from hell, and then he had the

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Traveler's Diarrhea

Christiaan A. Maurer, M.D.

When making an epic trip in the outdoors, whether in the United States or on foreign soils your gastrointestinal health is at risk. Even with appropriate precautions of food and water, gastrointestinal illnesses are the most commonly acquired ailments a climber may encounter. Diarrhea can be devastating, especially if it pitches up a big wall or 160 miles to the nearest hospital. Traveler's Diarrhea occurs when fecally contaminated food or water is ingested. Bacterial agents cause approximately 75% of diarrhea episodes with greater than 50% are due to enterotoxigenic organisms like *Escherichia coli* (*E.coli*). Other leading bacterial agents include *Shigella*, *Salmonella*, and *Campylobacter*. Parasites that provoke GI illnesses include *Entamoeba histolytica* (amebiasis [amoebic dysentery]), *Cyclospora*, *Cryptosporidia*, and the well-known *Giardia lamblia*.

Enterotoxigenic *E. coli* is the most common cause of traveler's diarrhea. Transmission typically occurs from

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Musings of a new climber

by Carol Garfinkel, August 23, 2000

This is my first season climbing outdoors, and I can't help wondering if others had similar experiences as beginners. Almost every move on the rock is exciting. I want to climb as much as possible, because I'm impatient to learn. I'm giving up other activities and rearranging my schedule to accommodate climbing. I hope this feeling wears off when I get more experience—I'm afraid it will interfere with making a living!

I took a climbing course 20 (!) years ago at Cornell University. We rappelled and fiddled around with ropes a lot, but we didn't climb. Since then I've been interested in climbing but didn't figure out where to go or what to do to get involved with the sport. I took up social dancing and kept busy in other ways.

Finally, on the streets of DC early last fall, I ran into an acquaintance of mine who asked if I was interested in starting weekly workouts at a climbing gym. She looked surprised when I eagerly agreed to do it. She said, "It's expensive..." I said, "No problem. But I'm going to want to climb outdoors as soon as spring comes, and you have to promise to climb with me."

I got a taste of outdoor climbing in November when I took a climbing class at Yosemite. I didn't get to climb much and regretted not hiring a private guide. But I did get initiated into the climbing culture. I hung out in Jim Bridwell's camper, and met lots of climbers in the bar—mostly the twenty-somethings who live there, work occasionally for Search and Rescue, eat Spaghetti-O's out of the can, and endlessly debate the merits of Five Ten rubber. I had no idea at that point if I would ever get ambitious about climbing. I thought I'd be satisfied doing the same easy top-roped climbs over and over, never wanting to do anything too risky. These were certainly not people I had a lot in common with. But these young climbers who hardly knew me were friendly and welcoming, even offering to share their cabin space when I returned.

Well, late last year my friend broke her ankle (while bouldering in a private lesson at Earth Treks) and hasn't been climbing since. What could I do without a climbing partner? I found the PATC Web site and learned of the Mountaineering Section. Then I watched the climbing calendar to see when it would stop saying the Wednesday Carderock climbs are discontinued for the season. It only took one Wednesday at Carderock in May for me to decide to reschedule conflicting obligations. I began climbing at club events every chance I could get. Every climb was a land

mark. I learned with each foothold I stood on, every move I tried, and each type of rock I gripped.

In late June I traveled to Oregon with my family and refused to make the mistake I made at Yosemite. I hired a private guide, invited my brother to join me, and scheduled a day at Smith Rock. The guide taught me to use my big toe (instead of the ball of my foot) to stand on tiny pebbles in the rock.

Though I was really glad to be able to experience the beauty of Smith Rock, I came back and discovered that I could have as good a time climbing at Great Falls! I could try routes more than once and get beta from other climbers. I have to say how completely thrilled I am to have discovered the Section. The opportunity to climb with people on a regular basis is invaluable. I now consider this organization one of the DC area's greatest attributes. Not only has it given me the opportunity to take up a new hobby, I've met fantastic people of all ages and abilities who are welcoming and supportive. I've already seconded a multi-pitch climb at Seneca—something I thought I might never do back in the fall. I also stepped outside my usual bounds of good judgment—I climbed even though severe lightning and hail had been forecast and had to finish a pitch and rappel off in a downpour.

I'm thankful that you don't have to be an expert climber to provide a belay for one. When I compare climbing to dancing, I think that's one thing that makes climbers, as a group, more accepting of novices. When you reach an advanced level in dancing, you want a similarly skilled partner. It makes people seem competitive and unfriendly as they seek particular partners and avoid others. But in this club, the most experienced climbers are friendly, patient, and encouraging—and happy to exchange belays. I really want to thank everyone I've met for helping me find—and maintain—the joy in climbing. See you on the rocks!

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Tom Isaacson said I could forward his article to MS on climbing on rainy days at the New River Gorge. He gleaned this information from about 10 years experience at the New. I was there during some of those experiences and they are true! He omitted that it also helps to have an apartment there to wait out the rainy nights and mornings.

Tom was an active MS member from about 1984-1990 when he began to climb at the New almost every weekend. Two years ago he moved to Boulder to climb even more and is telecommuting to his old job in DC. From the thoroughness of the article, you can see he's a meticulous climber and also helped inspire many of us MS members to climb better than we thought we could.

Jeanette

(the actual article follows on the next page)

Rainy Days at the New River Gorge

By Tom Isaacson
MountainWeb.com member

If you plan to spend any meaningful amount of time climbing at the New, it is very important that you learn to make productive use of rainy or semi-rainy days. For the vast majority of climbers at the New, the drive is simply too long to just waste a rainy day. Also, no matter how hard you try, you are certain to encounter plenty of wet and rainy weather down there. Friends of mine and I have watched the weather forecasts very closely for years. We came to one conclusion. The weather forecasts are not reliable predictors of whether you should go to the New. The area often has odd micro-climates. If you stay home whenever there is a threat of rain at the New, you'll never do any climbing there. The only sensible strategy is to just go to the New whenever you feel like climbing (at least between April and October) and be prepared to deal with wet weather. It is pure folly to think that you can do a lot of climbing at the New without encountering some rainy days.

This piece will help you make the best use of rainy days at the New. I have spent more than 100 weekends at the New. Because the drive from DC took about 5.5 hours, I simply learned how to deal with rain down there. I probably climbed on roughly 75 rainy days at the New. Out of approximately 225 days at the New, I only had one in which the rain completely prevented us from climbing anywhere.

Several of the guidebooks to the New contain some useful information on which climbs stay dry during the rain. However, the issue is much more nuanced than the way it is presented in the guidebooks. Whether a route actually will be dry depend on a lot of variables which are not easily catalogued in a guidebook covering 1000+ routes.

The first principle is mental: don't be discouraged by the rain. Of course, if your project for the weekend is a slab route, you may need to adjust your plans a bit. Otherwise, it is important to see rainy days as an opportunity to focus on the climbs you have been saving for a rainy day. Remember, it rains a lot down there. Adjust your mindset to that reality. Many hard redpoints have been done on rainy days. Fly'n Brian did the Racist on a rainy day. I had one of my best efforts (a very quick ascent of Armada) in an absolute downpour. On cool rainy days the rock is often crisper than on a sunny humid day.

The second principle is: save many projects for a rainy day. Don't do all of the good rainy day routes when it is dry out.

The third principle is: there are not many good trad options on rainy days. Even if trad is your first choice, if you want to climb a lot, plan on having some sport climbing goals to tide you over during rainy periods. High Times (10c, Bridge Buttress), Back in the Saddle (10d, Fern Point), The Good The Bad And The Boltless (10c, Summersville) and Pre-Marital Bliss (10a, Fern Point) are four viable options. If it is really raining, finish Pre-Marital out right (on the Through the Never anchors) rather than the left finish as shown in the guidebooks. This increases the difficulty only slightly. Leave it to Jesus (11d) usually stays dry in the rain, unless the wind is blowing from the East.

The fourth principle is: think carefully about the nature of the wetness problem. If the day starts nice with a threat of rain later, you perhaps only need a contingency plan that includes a climb that stays dry for the first few hours of a storm. If it has been raining during the night and you think it will clear, you should think about routes that dry quickly. Those are two almost completely separate considerations. There are many routes that are gently overhanging and will stay dry early in a rain but will eventually seep from the top after several hours of rain. Those routes may continue to seep long after the rain has stopped. There are many other routes that are very exposed, such as arêtes, and will get wet almost as soon as it begins to rain. However, they also dry very quickly, often within 15 minutes of the cessation of rain.

The fifth principle is: think about the color of the rock. This is not an iron clad rule but is a generally useful guideline. Orange and yellow rock are more likely to stay dry in the rain. I am not a geologist, but I believe that the reason the rock has retained this sandy color is because it has not been subject to as much water, which gradually turns the rock gray.

The sixth principle is: think about the trees. Good air circulation is vital to condensation and drying the rock. Areas where the forest is either thin or

set well back from the cliff are much more likely to dry quickly than are areas where there is thick tree cover close to the cliff. For example, the Cirque has a large treeless beach and has excellent air circulation. Butchers Branch and much of Beauty Mountain are too close to the woods and have very poor air circulation. I have seen Beauty Mountain routes dripping wet on a completely rain free day. The air gets so choked with moisture and the rock will bead up.

The seventh principle is: be creative. Don't get too fixated on the correct definition of the route. Adjust to the weather, it is part of nature. The start to Freaky Stylee (12a) is often wet on rainy days while the upper section (where the best climbing is) stays dry. Do the first few bolts of Techman and then traverse into Freaky. The top of Harbinger Scarab (12c) may be wet, but the lower three-quarters, through the roof, offers plenty of great dry climbing. Yes, you will need to use a retreat biner or two, but so what?

The eighth principle is: think about the temperature. I am not an expert on dew points, but experience at the New has taught me that the temperature makes a big difference. On a cool day, the rain only seems to affect routes on which the water actually falls or drips. Otherwise, conditions can stay very crisp. On hot days, the rainy weather is much more likely to cause condensation even on routes that are not directly subject to rainfall. Thus, on a hot rainy day, you need to be much more careful in selecting a destination and make sure that it has good air circulation to prevent condensation. (That may not be a correct description of the science, but I am confident of the advice).

The last principle is: don't give up too easily. It will take some trial and error to figure out what sorts of routes are likely to be dry on what sorts of days. Sometimes you need to check out a few areas before finding the right one. Cell phones may soon ease this problem somewhat. If you are skeptical that anything is dry, and reluctant to make the hike, drive to the Bridge Buttress and do the one minute hike to High Times. If this is wet, chances are pretty good that everything will be wet and you can go home with a fairly clear conscience. But, if it's dry, then get out there.

Following are my suggestions on rainy day destinations. Obviously, a lot depends on what level you climb. The hard sport routes tend to be steeper and drier. Still, there are a fair number of rainy day options at lower levels of difficulty.

Summersville Lake is the best option for rainy days. When the lake is down (traditionally after Labor Day, but this may change), you can climb at the Pirates Cove where virtually every route stays dry for at least several hours of rain, if not throughout the storm. Some of the trad routes between Mutiny and Reckless Abandon also stay dry (though almost no one does them). Everything in the Coliseum, other than Tobacco Road, should stay dry under most conditions. A major monsoon will cause some of these routes to condense after a day or so of rain. Reckless Abandon (outstanding 12b) tends to stay a bit drier than the other routes because it gets better air circulation than the routes directly under the big roof. If you head to the Coliseum on a popular rainy weekend (only at the New is that not an oxymoron), you may well encounter a crowd under Apollo Reed screaming beta at you, whether you want it or not. The routes on the Gun Wall (also erroneously known as the Perot Wall) usually stay dry early in a rain storm and offer a wide range of 5.10-5.11 options. However, the base of the routes can become a muddy mess. The routes on the Mega Boulder (also erroneously known as the DC Memorial Boulder), other than Psychobabble (a fine and under appreciated 12a route), stay dry long into a storm but eventually become prone to condensation. Milky Way (awesome 11d) dries quickly after a storm, as do the two routes to the right and some of the routes to its left. Satisfaction Guaranteed (an excellent 11b) dries very quickly and may be climbable early in a storm. N cissus (12a) and the harder routes in that cave stay dry under almost any condition. The routes on the Assassins Wall (e.g., Orange Oswald) generally dry quickly. Unfortunately, the easier routes in the Jeff's Bunny Hop area are too slabby for rainy days and the hillside on which you belay quickly becomes a muddy mess.

The Cirque area of the Endless wall (located upstream of Central Endless) is an excellent rainy day option for anyone who can at least pretend to climb 5.12. If you don't climb at that level, you are not going to get much climbing done at the Cirque. The routes at the far left end of the Cirque, which includes most of the warm-ups, can start to condense after a long rain and can suffer some

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Alaska, St. Elias Range

We made two attempts on PK-10170. Both attempts were made via the 8,500' Col between PK-10170 and PK-9695. We bailed on the first attempt on 4/29 due to lack of gear (additional ice screws & second rope) and bailed on the second attempt on 5/1 due to objective hazard and fear of a possible collapse of a cornice above us. We also noticed that it would be a 3,000' fall straight to the glacier below! The crux 3 to 4 pitches just below the cornice were of steep, black, 60 degree ice. Needless to say the route was more difficult and committing than we had planned for.

On 4/30 we attempted PK-9695 on what would become a very long and tiring day. We attacked the peak from the north east and climbed up and over several 8,000'+ sub-peaks on the approach. We then came up into a heavily crevassed area that was surrounded by recently avalanched slopes. We made several attempts to find a route around these hazards over the course of the next 4 to 5 hours. After being continuously "dead-ended" we bailed and returned to base camp. We decided that we would go for a second attempt of PK-10170 the next day then move camp about a mile up the glacier in order to attempt PK-9695 from the north west on 5/2.

On 5/2 we planned to attack a pair of "sister" peaks just south east of University Peak. Paul Claus indicated that he had climbed the PK-9695 a few years back but directly from the Col separating it from PK-10170.

Our attempt of PK-9695 would be via a new route from our high camp at around 8,200' in the upper west fork of the Barnard Glacier Amphitheater. The morning start was cold and overcast but the sun was "trying" to make an appearance. We certainly had high hopes, especially having been turned back the last 3 days. Route finding again proved to be "interesting", we got off route a couple of times but eventually topped out onto a 9,200' sub-peak with a great view of University peak behind us and the summits of PK-9695 and it's sister peak in front of us. We come across a particularly nasty off-width crevasse which I managed to punch into, fortunately only up to my knee! We then arrived at a narrow rock covered ridge that drops off several thousand feet to the glacier floor far below. After topping out above the ridge we began to place ice

screws as we climbed a steep, snow and ice covered face for 3 pitches. We then climbed down 200' to a small saddle with a beautiful 70' blue ice cliff hanging above it. We crossed another nasty off-width crevasse and onto the 600' knife edged and heavily corniced summit ridge. We buried our ice axes to the head at each step and scampered up and onto the summit. After enjoying the 360 degree view and taking the obligatory photo's we headed back down towards the small saddle and the sister peak just south of the ice cliff. We believe this was the second ascent of PK-9695.

From the small saddle we climbed up and to the right around the ice cliff and onto a fairly easy 35 degree snow slope. After about 200' elevation gain we found ourselves on the narrow 2' wide by 30' long summit of PK-9720. We believe this was first ascent of this unnamed peak. We returned to high camp, broke camp and headed back down to base camp for the evening.

All in all the weeks weather was great and all was well until our last day when we got hit by a slab avalanche on an 8,500' peak due north of our base camp. John named this "Peak Insignificant" since the only reason we bothered to climb it was the fact that Paul was to pick us up at 5 p.m. (on 5/4) so we didn't have much time for anything else. Fortunately we were able to stay on top of it and "ride" it out. Both of us ended up with a sprained knee and bumps and bruises but it could have been a lot worse! We managed to get safely back down to base camp where the weather had changed for the worst. It was snowing hard and visibility was maybe 100'. We spent a miserable night in the tent but the weather improved by morning and Paul was able to fly in and pick us up at 8:30 a.m. the following day, May 5, 2000.

John managed to get away with only muscle sprains and would return to Alaska to climb Mt. McKinley on May 15th. Once back in Virginia I went to the Doctor and was informed that I had a torn Medial Meniscus cartilage in my left knee. I ended up requiring arthroscopic surgery to remove the damaged cartilage. I am on the mend and planning a trip to the Tetons in July.

Climb high, climb safe!

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VOLUME NUMBER CORRECTION

To start the Millennium year off right Up Rope's 2001 volume number will be corrected to be consistent with the original numbering of volumes. Several years ago Up Rope began renumbering with Volume 1 after being published since 1944 (confusing for Archivists). The volume numbers are less than the years because Up Rope Started in November 1944 and Volume 1 continued into 1945. Eventually the volume numbers became aligned with each year. The corrections are: Volume 1 of 1997 should be Volume 52. Volume 2 of 1998 should be Volume 53. Volume 3 of 1999 should be Volume 54, and Volume 4 of 2000 should be Volume 55.

And for 2001, the Millennium Year, it will be Up Rope Volume 56.

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Traveler's diarrhea

fecally contaminated food. The disease is characterized by mild to moderate non-bloody diarrhea and is usually self-limited to 2-3 days. Treatment is supportive with rest and replacing fluids and electrolytes lost with diarrhea. If diarrhea is severe or prolonged the antibiotic ciprofloxacin is taken twice daily for 3 days. Enteropathic *E. coli* is a much more severe disease characterized by severe bloody diarrhea, abdominal cramping and fever similar to *Shigella*. Treatment is the same as for enteropathic *E. coli* infections.

Shigellas are the most effective pathogens among enteric bacteria. Ingestion of as few as 100 organisms causes dysentery. The 4 F's: fingers, food, flies, and feces are the principle factors in transmission. Incubation period is 1-4 days. Symptoms begin with fever, abdominal pain, followed by watery diarrhea, which can progress to bloody diarrhea. Diarrhea usually resolves within 2-3 days. Treatment: supportive and ciprofloxacin 500mg twice daily for 3 days.

Salmonella infections typically occur after ingestion of fecally contaminated food or water. The most frequent animal source is poultry and eggs. The hallmark of the disease is invasion of the lining of the small and large bowel. The incubation period is 6-48 hours. Symptoms begin within 6-48 hours characterized by nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and mild to severe diarrhea. In contrast, infections with *Salmonella typhi*, typhoid fever results characterized by fever, constipation, delirium, a tender abdomen and enlargement of the spleen. "Rose spots" erupt on abdomen. Typhoid fever resolves in about 3 weeks but complications of intestinal perforation and hemorrhage can occur. Supportive treatment includes keeping the patient comfortable and maintaining food, water and antibiotics as needed. *Campylobacter* begins with watery, foul smelling diarrhea followed by bloody stools. Bloody diarrhea is typically accompanied by fever and severe abdominal pain. Treatment: supportive and ciprofloxacin 500mg twice daily for 3 days.

Cryptosporidia is a parasitic diarrhea that is characterized by watery, non-bloody diarrhea. Transmission is via fecal-oral route and contaminated water. This organism is resistant to chlorination. Antibiotics are ineffective; therefore, treatment is supportive, with rest and fluid replenishment.

Cyclospora is another parasite that causes diarrhea through water-borne transmission. Incubation period is 1-2 days. Symptoms include diarrhea, flatulence, burping. The disease may be short lived or prolonged (> 1 month) Treatment: Bactrim DS one tablet twice daily for 7 days.

Giardia lamblia is one of the leading causes of water-borne infections. *Giardia* is a parasite that adheres to the small intestine wall via a sucking disk. This adherence results in intestinal inflammation that causes the characteristic watery diarrhea and fatty stools. Ingestion of as few as 10 organisms can cause a symptomatic infection. Transmission occurs via water and fecally contaminated food. Fresh water sources that are contaminated with fecal material are the usual mode of infection. *Giardia* cysts survive in extremely cold waters. Like *Cryptosporidia*, *giardia* is resistant to chlorination. All mammals are susceptible to *giardia* resulting in a number of animal reservoirs like beavers, deer and cattle. *Giardiasis* (*giardia* infection) can present itself as an asymptomatic (no symptoms) carrier state to severe diarrhea/mal-absorption syndrome that occurs when the numbers of the organism are so great that they completely cover the lining of the bowel and prevent absorption of nutrients or fats (which later appear in the stools). The incubation period is about one week. Symptoms include diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and bloating. Of note, this type of diarrhea is

non-bloody/ non-invasive. Treatment: metronidazole (Flagyl) 250 mg three times daily for 7 days.

Amebiasis is an infection caused by *Entamoeba histolytica*, a fresh water parasite (amoeba). 90% of infections are asymptomatic, while the remainder 10 % of infections produce severe symptoms. These symptoms begin with lower back pain, mild bloody diarrhea, followed by severe back pain, profuse diarrhea, and fever. The diarrhea episodes may be as frequent as 15-20 times daily. A severe complication of amebiasis is toxic mega colon, a condition where the large bowel balloons and perforates. Furthermore, *E. histolytica* can also result in liver abscesses that symptomatically produce right upper quadrant pain and fever. The treatment is metronidazole (Flagyl) 750 mg three times daily for 10 days.

So with so many infectious agents in the wild what can you do to prevent these gastrointestinal ailments? In 1985 the National Institutes of Health recommended AGAINST prophylactic antibiotics for traveler's diarrhea secondary to the possible adverse effects of the antibiotics and the role of developing antibiotic resistant organisms. However, patients going to high-risk areas may wish to consult their physician for antibiotic prophylaxis.

Non-prescription means of prophylaxis can be obtained in the form of iodine tablets used to treat fresh water, a good water filter and Pepto-Bismol. Pepto-Bismol prevents up to 65% of diarrhea episodes. Indicated dose is 2 tablets four times daily with meals. Note: Pepto-Bismol causes black stools and black tongue as a side effect.

Most cases of diarrhea are self-limiting and may require only rest and fluid/electrolyte (salts) replacement found in juices and soups. Severe diarrhea needs to be treated with oral dehydration solutions (ORS), which are easily obtained in most pharmacies. If ORS are not available make solution of ½ teaspoon table salt, ½ teaspoon table baking soda, 4 tablespoons of sugar to every liter of water. Patients should try to replace via oral intake roughly the amount of diarrhea fluid lost per day. If baking soda is not available a full teaspoon of table salt is recommended.

Antimotility agents such as Lomotil and Loperamide may provide temporary relief when diarrhea is especially inconvenient. However, they may prolong the dysentery secondary to slowing of the bowel motility and thereby retain the causative agent in the bowel. Kaopectate is not effective and should NOT be used for infectious diarrhea.

Victims suffering from severe diarrhea and vomiting who do not show improvement in a few days should seek available medical care.

See ya on the crags!

Dr. Maurer

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A note from the editor: With this issue of the Up Rope, the newsletter is current with no pending articles awaiting to go to print. With the hundreds of articles and photographs submitted, the Up Rope staff works hard to ensure every article gets published. We apologize if even after our best efforts something was missed. Tough schist. The new millennium newsletter will be published quarterly.

Happy New Year!

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New River Gorge

added pleasure of working for a half hour on a cam that I (of course) had managed to get stuck. After telling us he could only climb 5.9's, Eric surprised all of us by floating up a couple of 5.10's. And I tried to lead (and subsequently downclimb) the nastiest, dirtiest, smelliest 5.9 trad climb in the world. It turned into a chimney that was just covered in owl shit, and rotting rodents.

On Saturday we ate breakfast at the Cathedral Cafe; their Breakfast Burrito's are excellent. And we ate dinner at the Sedona Grille (at the new location), it was good too. After the guys left on Sun. I went to Bazils, and I liked it a lot; especially the hot bread and butter. That night I set up camp on Rogers front porch, where I met several other people who were also looking for climbing partners.

On Mon. I climbed with a high school teacher from California named Bert (he stayed at a bed and breakfast and took showers). I redpointed a route named "Baby Got a Bolt Gun," that I had followed Simon up on the day before, and I lead a really cool 5.9. But it started to rain so we went to the DC Memorial Boulder and, for lack of anything easier, I jumped on "Year of the Psycho Bitch," but I fell right by the first bolt. Since the rain refused to stop we packed it in a little early. That night on Rogers porch we thought up the first "Challenge": to do a bat hang from the rafters of the porch, and get back up without falling. Steve (another resident of Rogers front porch) landed on his face in the gravel. It was then that we (the four guys staying on Rogers porch and I) decided a crash pad might be a good idea. But people still hurt themselves.

It rained most of Tues. and we decided to explore an abandoned coal mine at Kaymoore (SP?), it was kind of spooky, but nothing bad happened. After that we decided to go see "American Beauty" in Beckley, after the movie we were kicked out of the theater, but we stayed long enough to put up a V3 traverse across the outside wall and two doorways of the theater. Then we went to Wall Mart in search of a better place to boulder, where we purchased 5 liters of wine, and three cases of beer before we were kicked out of there as well.

With bad weather and nothing else to do, we went back to Rogers and focused all our efforts on consuming the beverages we had just purchased. That night the "Challenge" was to lock off on the hangboard and chug one unit of alcohol (either a beer or a glass of wine). Our goal was perfection, and practice makes perfect, but somehow it didn't work that way.

The next day (Wed.), when we could move again, the weather had improved, but not much. We didn't climb a whole lot that day, but I did lead a really nice 5.10b next to "Hippie Dreams" before it started to rain again. We went back to the DC Memorial Boulder where I tried "Year of the Psycho Bitch" again, and fell again (this time right before the shuts). Then Lee (another rogue climber) led a 5.11a right next to it. Some of the other guys in our group jumped on some 5.12's next to the climbs I was working on.

Later, we walked over to watch guys flail on a 5.13 called "Apollo Reed." Matt, after being bribed with a free dinner, jumped off of a ledge into the lake, which (believe me) was quite cold. Not wanting to be left out, and hoping in vain for a free meal, Blake jumped in after him. We went to Rio Grande Wednesday night and Matt ate like a king. The nights "Challenge" was to do a pull-up by pinching the rafters. We also redoubled our efforts to consume as many beverages as possible (we each wanted to get our moneys worth).

It had stopped raining by Thursday morning. It was very foggy, and everything was still damp, but the sun was shining. Fortunately "Rico Suave" was still reasonably dry, so I led that while Matt led a really hard 5.11c right next to it and we both set up topropes. Satisfied, but with the weather getting worse, we went to Summersville, and back to the DC Memorial Boulder. This time I redpointed "Year of the Psycho Bitch," and I was happy. Steven and Lee worked some ridiculously hard route for a while, but they gave up and we went over to Apollo Reed, and jumped in the water. Matt soloed up a good thirty feet, then did a hand traverse out over the water until he reached a ledge. He stripped, and jumped in. It was awesome! After Blake jumped in from a slightly lower ledge, I took the plunge as well. As soon as I felt the water I must have popped a good five feet straight up. It was COLD! After that we went back, ate dinner, and played cards with a bunch of guys from Quebec.

On Fri. it was raining, so we went to the hole and played around on really hard climbs. Blake (a boulderer) led his first climb. It was a 5.12d called "Lactic Acid Bath." But there wasn't much we could do, and I was broke, so I decided to come home on day #8 of the best climbing trip I have ever been on (despite the weather).

Well, there it is, hope you enjoyed it.

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CLIMBERS CALENDAR

January 13th - 15th (MLK)

White Mountains, New Hampshire:

Beginning ice climbing instruction with a climbing school in Conway.

More information TBA

Meeting time: Contact Trip Leader

Meeting place: Contact Trip Leader

Trip leader: Ted Plasse at plasse@erols.com

January 27th - 28th

Riegelsville, Pennsylvania:

A local favorite for winter ice climbing. About a four hour drive from Washington, Riegelsville is the closest reliable ice climbing. With a northern exposure, this area has many good top-rope and lead climbs during most winters. For additional information see < <http://www.edisaurus.com/misc/rville.htm> >

Meeting time: Contact Trip Leader

Meeting place: Contact Trip Leader

Trip leader: Mack Muir at mackmuir@edisaurus.com (703) 768-5724

February 17th - 19th (President's Weekend)

Adirondacks, New York:

Annual trip to the Adirondacks for Ice climbing. Details at < <http://www.edisaurus.com/misc/rville.htm>

Meeting time: Contact Trip Leader

Meeting place: Contact Trip Leader

Trip leader: Mack Muir at mackmuir@edisaurus.com (703) 768-5724

Slide Shows:

January 10; Climbing in the Tetons ; Lee Jenkins and Ron Alt

February 14; Denali; Dave Green

(Continued from page 3)

Rainy Days at the New River Gorge

run-off from the top. Virtually everything in the central part of the Cirque is as close to rain-proof as you can get, though the few routes that actually reach the top of the Cirque can get wet at the end. I have seen New Life (long 11c) get quite wet, though I am not sure whether this is from condensation or spray from the waterfall.

The Central Endless area is greatly under appreciated as a rainy day venue. The classic arêtes (Gift of Grace (12b), Jesus & Tequila (12b/c), Bullet the New Sky (12a) and New World Order (12a/b)), all of which are excellent, though Gift is misbolted, dry very quickly. Legacy (grade depends on finish) and Discombobulated (hard 11a) will stay dry well into a rainy day and dry very quickly. The buttress on which they are located gets plenty of wind. Most people take the right-hand finish to Legacy (10d). If this looks wet, you can head left after the roof, clip a few more bolts and lower off. This 11b finish was the standard version of the route until the right hand version was added later. Something Fierce (10d) is another warm-up option that is almost always dry. If you decide to start there, you might want to take the upstream rap-in, rather than approach from the central ladders. In the ladders area, Quinsana Plus (hard 13a), Rainy Day Route (12b), Big Boss Man (rarely done 12d) and the Racist (13b) are almost certain to be dry. The upper roof on Dial 911 (13a) might get wet, but if you lower off just below that roof you still have an outstanding 12c/d face route. Further downstream, all but the very top of Pudd's Pretty Dress (12d) will stay dry. Even if you must lower off the last bolt, and skip the slab finish due to wetness, you still have more quality 5.12 climbing than almost any other route you'll ever find. At Idol Point, the Spectre (hard and runout 11a) is a virtual lock to be dry and Idol Point Arête (12a) and the Saint (easy 12d) are also good bets to stay dry and/or dry quickly. Alternatively, if you head upstream of the ladders, you will encounter quite a few dry 5.12 routes, including some in the Suspended Sentence area, the Rat Back area and the Pigtail area.

Fern Point has enough rain-resistant routes to keep most people happy. You can almost guarantee that you'll be able to warm-up on Exoduster (10b) under any conditions. Early in a light rain, the nearby S'More Energy (11c) may also be dry. Once you've warmed-up, you have two sectors that tend to stay dry. The wall with Freaky Stylee (12a), Techman (easy 12c), Stealth & Magic (easy 12c) and Fascist Architecture (not so good 12b) is usually dry, though see the note above re: the start to Freaky. Alternatively, the huge roof usually keeps Modern Primitive (easy 12b), Plyometrics (12c/d), most of Harbinger Scarab (12c) and the Sweetest Taboo (13b) dry. Through the Never (supposedly 12b) is usually dry but I've seen some 5.13 climbers who couldn't do that thing. From Fern Point you can either walk upstream five minutes to Idol Point (see above) or downstream ten minutes (a somewhat nasty walk) to Fern Creek Falls, which has several routes that should be dry. Note: the top of Fall Line (fantastic 12b) may start to run after a long rain, but it is easy enough that you might be able to do the last couple of moves in wet conditions. Beware, the Falls area can be quite chilly on a rainy day.

I am not a big fan of the Hole at Kaymoor as a rainy day option. I find it dark, dank, somewhat infested with rat turds and just a generally depressing place to be. There are no warm-ups in there, unless you're incredibly good. The Hole does have many steep routes that should stay dry throughout a storm. However, the Hole has poor air circulation and is prone to condensation during prolonged periods of rainy weather during the hot/humid season. The slopiness of the rock there makes it a poor option when the condensation turns the holds into chalky soap. But, if you just can't resist the lure of a short approach, steep rock and fixed draws, go hang out there.

The Rico Suave Buttress is a good rainy day option for 5.10-5.11 climbers. Unfortunately, the Buttress is rather small and can get crowded on popular weekends. Rico Suave (sweet 10a) is almost always dry. The two sport routes to its left (10d-11b) are usually dry as well. Out of the Bag (11c) is usually dry. If it gets wet at the bottom, you can access the cold shuts fairly easily from the top of Rico Suave and top rope it. Pockets of Resistance (12a) also has some rain resistance. If you're feeling strong, keep hiking downstream to the Dining area. Both Dining at the Altar (12a, but way hard if you're short) and Pettifogger (excellent 12c) should be dry. You can also play on the open project in between them, which is about 12a to the unclimbed bulge.

There are a few other odds and ends at Kaymoor that also stay reasonably dry or dry quickly after a rain. However, the popular Butchers Branch is not a great rainy day option. Ever notice that the rock is often green? That should tell you something. I do not recommend Bubba City, Junkyard, Cat, Dog, the Bridge Buttress, Ambassador Buttress, Fern Buttress or Beauty Mountain for seriously rainy days. Some of these have some rainy day options (especially Fern Buttress, Beauty Mountain and the Stone Shelter area of the Bridge Buttress), but they are few and far between. If you find yourself at Fern Buttress on a not so rainy day, I recommend Thieves in the Temple (very hard 12a) as one of the best, but almost totally unknown, thin face routes at the New. At Beauty, the amazing Chunky Monkey (12b) will stay dry early in a rain storm and the unappreciated, but excellent and technical, Concertina (12a) will dry quickly in the sun.

In keeping with local tradition, I will not report on the Meadow River routes. But, I can say that I once saw Puppy Chow (12c), which overhangs at least 30 feet, completely wet from bottom to top, due to condensation.

A few closing thoughts. As always, use your own judgment. These are just some guidelines on destinations and particular routes that may get you through a rainy day. If the thing looks wet or otherwise out of condition, don't rely on this or any other guide. Climbing in wet weather obviously presents some additional dangers that you need to assess and resolve before deciding to climb. Bring some retreat biners in case you encounter wetness.

This is not a complete list of dry routes. The guidebooks have other information that may be useful on this subject. I am attempting to provide some more subjective judgments and overall strategic advice on dealing with the inevitable wet weather. Some people carry an umbrella at the New on rainy days. I find that these make the hikes a lot more pleasant. Of course, you won't win any hardman image contests hiking with an umbrella.

A final story. Several years ago, Hurricane Fran was roaring through West Virginia on a Friday. The roads were in dubious condition and virtually everyone thought that going to the New was completely foolish. My partner and I went there anyhow. We both had been actively working on projects which we felt were ripe for sending. It had just stopped raining on Saturday morning. We began with Gift of Grace, which had dried in about ten minutes after a full day hurricane. My partner sent it fairly quickly. We headed up the ladders and drove to Beauty to get on my project, Green Envy (12c). The stream crossing, which usually is a simple stepping stone hop, was a full-blown thigh deep wading affair. Despite its name, Green Envy was reasonably dry and I sent it.

Good luck

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