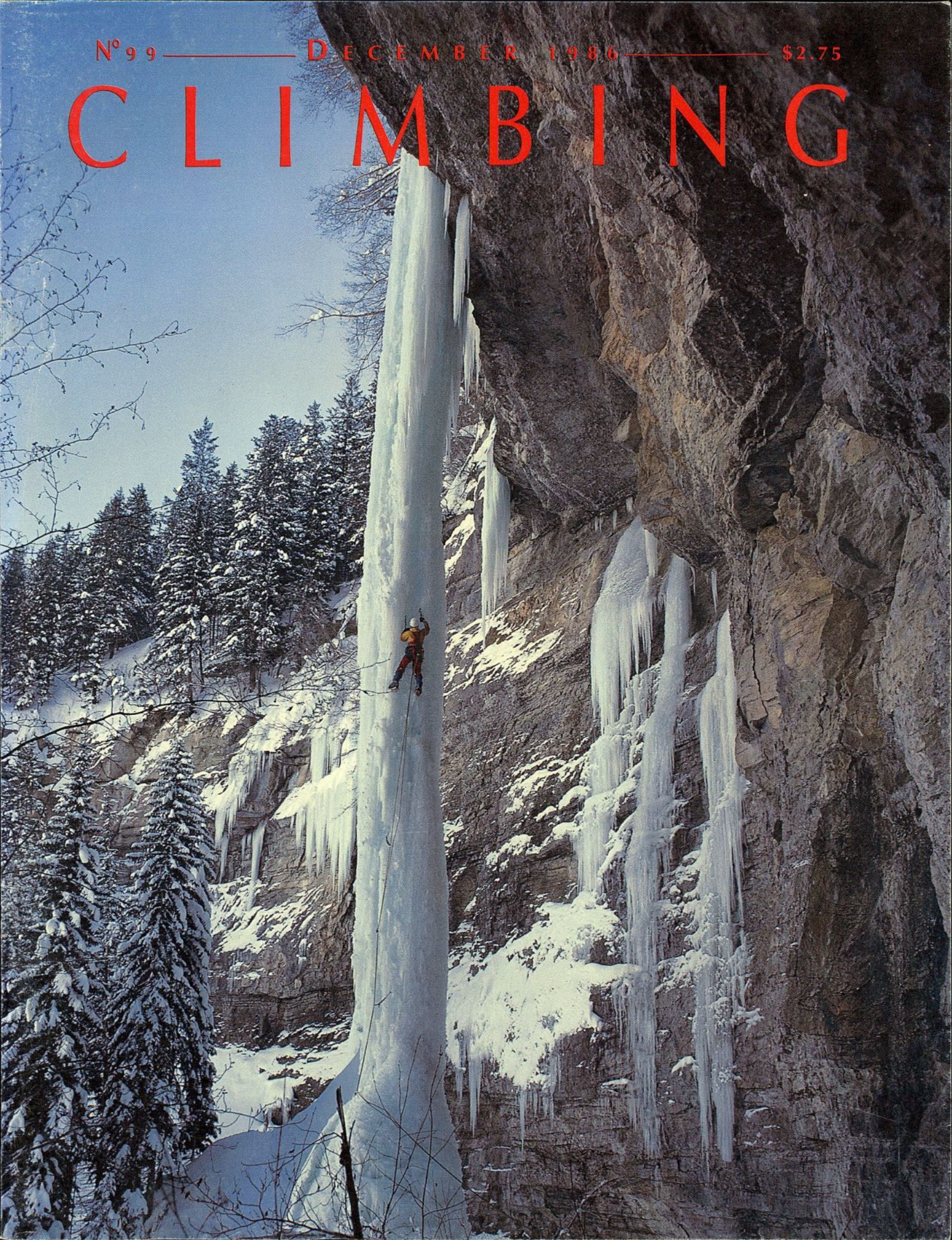


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# CLIMBING

N° 99 DECEMBER 1986

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Photo: Beth Wald.



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# BASECAMP

## ALABAMA

### THE SOUTHERN GUNKS Steep and Plentiful

The word is out. The climbing in Alabama is rapidly becoming known as some of the best the States have to offer, and the South's few but motivated climbers continue to crank out high quality routes on the Cotton State's numerous sandstone cliffs.

Rob Robinson, neighboring Tennessee's leading activist, describes the potential in Alabama as, "the Fort Knox of sandstone," adding, "The sandstone is so vast, it won't be long before the Alabama climbers kick into overdrive."

There is so much undeveloped rock that it appears several first ascensionists are sticking to known crags to avoid being overwhelmed. Most first ascent activity is taking place on the previously overlooked "blank" faces between established routes. As the more featureless faces are sought out, bolts are becoming more critical, and standards are steadily spiraling.

Two fitting examples are the excellent *Jet Stream* (5.12-), near Steele, and the astonishing *Man Eater* (5.12+), at Yellow Creek. Both are very sustained and most protection is fixed.

*Man Eater* has been labeled as the premier climb of its kind in Alabama. Locals Mark Cole and Curt Merchant worked on freeing this old aid line from a toprope, eventually finding the sequence and realizing the tiger-striped line would make one of Alabama's best leads.

Two pins, three bolts, and one wire were fixed on rappel before Cole and Merchant took up the sharp end. After several 20-footers by Merchant, Cole came within ten feet of bagging the pitch on his first lead attempt. On his second try from a good rest at a jug midway up, he pulled over the top.

Cole comments: "It took us a total of four days to complete this one, and even with what some will undoubtedly consider dubious style, we know it was all worth it for the creation of a climb of this stature." Cole has since redpointed the 100-foot line.

Other areas receiving new lines were Jenkins Farm and Peters Point,

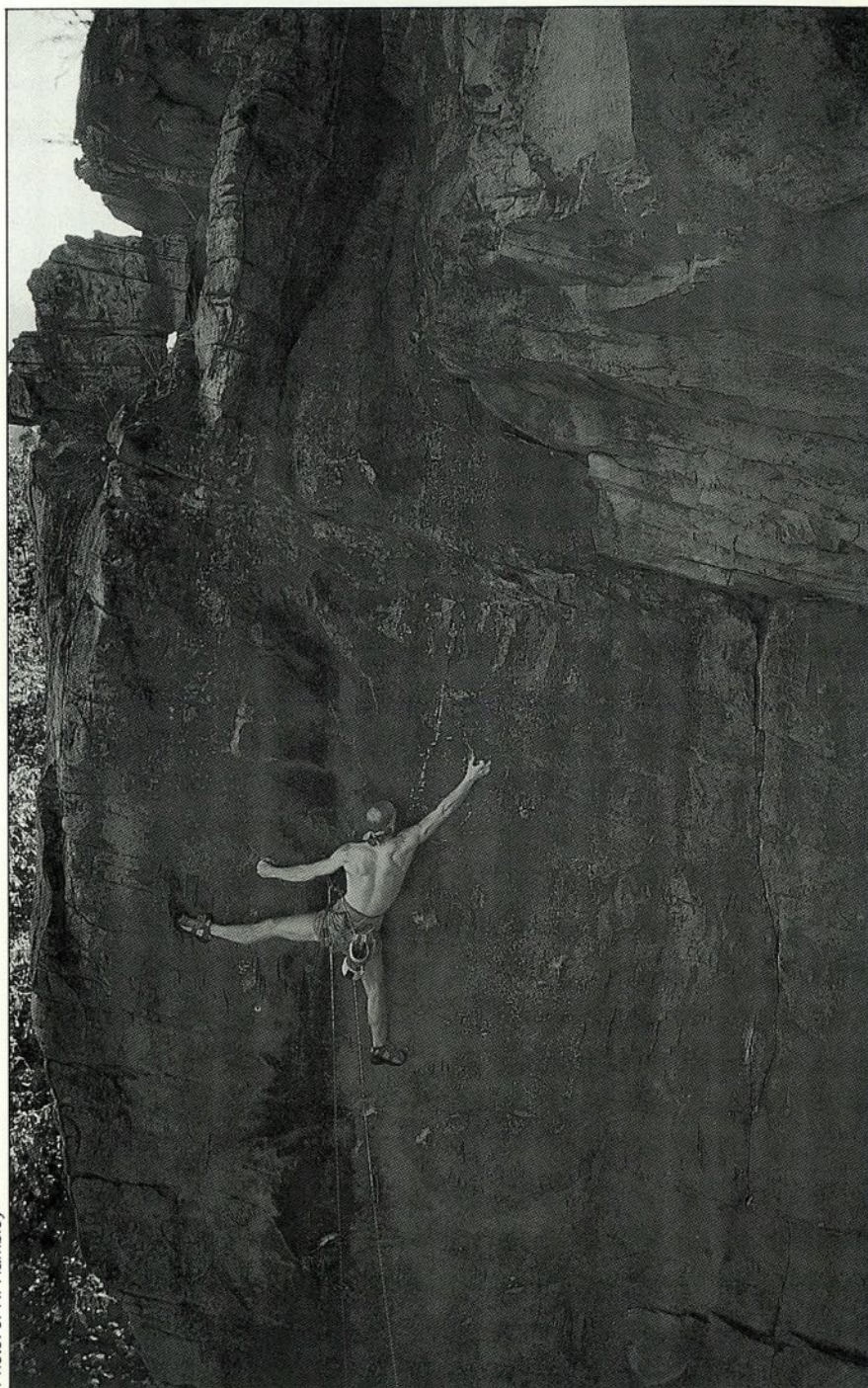


Photo: J. R. Hambley

Curt Merchant on the second ascent of *Jet Stream* (5.12-).

two little-visited areas near Steele; Griffin Falls, another seldom-visited area about 30 miles north of Gadsen; and Sandy Falls, four miles north of Griffin Falls. Routes of note are Reed's *The Ultimatum* (5.12b), a powerful roof problem, and Gene Smith and Rich Romano's free version of the second pitch to the striking *Knife Crack* (5.11).

At Jenkins Farm and Peters Point, Reed, Mac McNeese, and Bernard Wolfe have practically had both areas to themselves. So far they have produced *Nuclear Genie* (5.10+), *Oppenheimer* (5.11+), and *Ethiopian Holiday* (5.10 X) at Jenkins Farm, and *Y-crack* at Peters Point, among others. Descriptions for these and *Quiver* (5.10, by Cole, Ken Day, and



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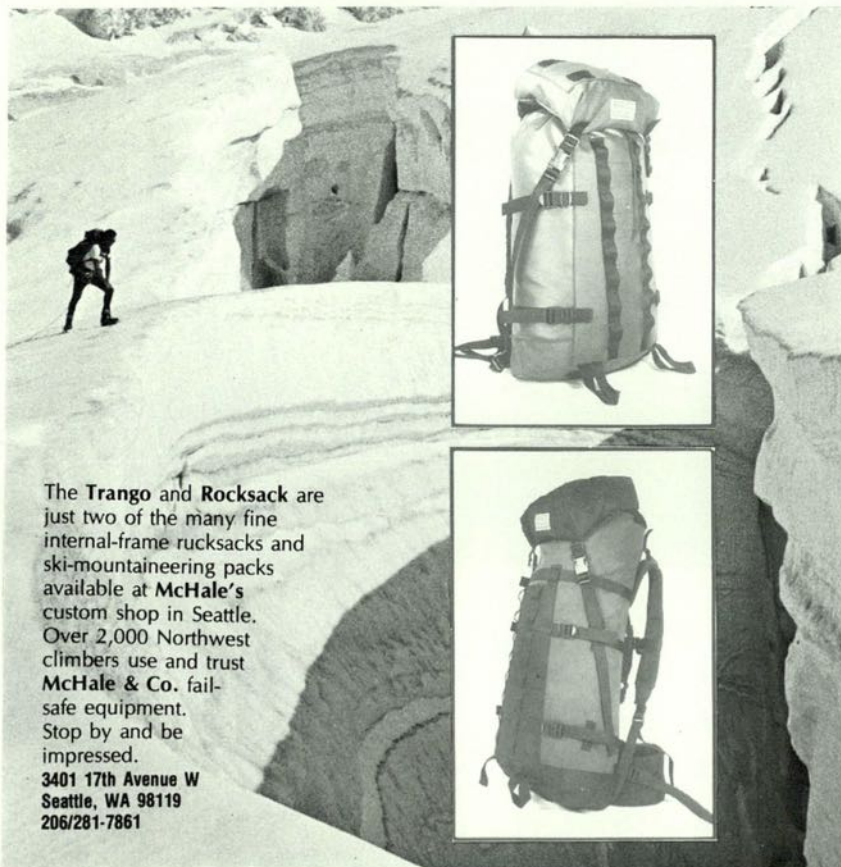
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Ken Pitts) were unavailable at press-time.

Reed, climbing in top form, made one of the most impressive ascents of the season by flashing *The Grand Dragon* (5.12), at the time Yellow Creek's hardest route. A month before Reed's ascent, Hidetaka Suzuki had climbed it with two or three falls, uprating Rob Robinson and Gene Smith's original grade of 5.12a to 5.12b.

In the past, Southern climbers have enjoyed their crags in relative isolation. But with high standard routes becoming more common and news of high quality climbing being circulated by visitors who are among the nation's leading climbers, there is little doubt that the South will soon be entering the mainstream of American climbing.

## STEELE

**Electric Mongoose** (5.11), Golfball Wall. L of Pin Roof. Bolt. (FA: Smith, Cole, 2/86).

**Challenger** (5.12). Lip of 20' roof, starting at base of *Bird's Nest Crack* and traversing R to arete. Protection hard to place. (FA: Robinson, Smith, 5/86).

**Olympia** (5.10). 1) Start L of *Wisdom*. Face to finger crack under roof, then R to base of *Wisdom* hand crack. 2) L 10' and up to bolt between *Wisdom* and *Sugar Magnolia*. Over roof, to face (fixed RP), bulge. (FA: Cole, Merchant, 5/86).

**White Hot** aka **Hot Steele Direct** (5.11c). Direct start and finish to *Hot Steele*. 2 bolts. (FA: Smith, Cole, 3/86).

**Aerial Boundaries** (5.11 X), Amphitheater Area. Face 10' R of *Exit Right*. Upper half 5.10-X. Pin at crux. (FA: Jamie Silliman, Merchant, 5/86).

**Jet Stream** (5.12-), Amphitheater Area. Vertical to overhanging face between *Black Magic* and *Cloak and Dagger* arete. 3 bolts, 50'. (FA: Cole, Merchant, 9/86).

**Ichabod Crank** (5.12a), Revelation Wall. 150' L of *Graham's Crack* area. Between *Sunspot* (or *Divine Wind*) and *Revelation* roof. Marked by 4'-long R-facing corner 20' up. (FA: Cole, 6/86).

**Zelda Row** (5.10-), Revelation Wall. L side, turn roof L of *Sunspot*, go L to arete. (FA: Cole, Jennifer Cole, 5/86).

## OTHER AREAS

**Hot Tamale** (5.12 tr), Peters Point. Short finger crack. (FA: Reed, fall-winter/85).

**The Ultimatum** (5.12b), Peters Point. 5.11 face to roof protected with 2 bolts. (FA: Reed, fall-winter/85).

**French Benefits** (5.11 +), Peters Point, Eastern Bloc. 5.11 roof (2 pins) followed by 5.11 face (1 pin). (FA: Cole, Wolfe, fall/85).

**Knife Crack** (with free 2nd pitch) (5.11), Griffin Falls. Obvious 50' finger/hand crack (5.9). 2) Free through roofs. (FFA: 2nd pitch, Smith, Romano, winter/85).

**Lost Humanoids** (5.11 +), Griffin Falls. L of regular area. Large improbable-looking roof. (FA: Smith, Merchant, winter/85).

**Maco Moves** (5.11), Griffin falls. R of *Knife Crack*. Thin face to fixed knifeblade. (FA: Smith, winter/85).

**Boardwalk** (5.10), Sand Valley. R of walk-in, area with low-angle roofs. Roof 15' off ground, bearing pin. (FA: Cole, Smith, 3/86).

**Whimsical Promise** (5.12), Sand Valley. ¼-mile R of walk in. Thin crack through small roof, overhanging face above. Fixed RP's, 40'. (FA: Smith, Cole, 3/86).

**Man Eater** (5.12+), Yellow Creek. L of *Counter Point Arete*, on *Grand Dragon* side of canyon. Overhanging face. Pins, bolts, 100'. (FFA: Cole, Merchant, 7/86).

## References:

*Basecamp*, Climbing, nos. 94, 96. *New route notebook*, Alabama Outdoors, Brookwood Village, Birmingham, Alabama. *Guidebook in preparation*: Yellow Creek and the Tennessee Wall, Rob Robinson, spring 1987.

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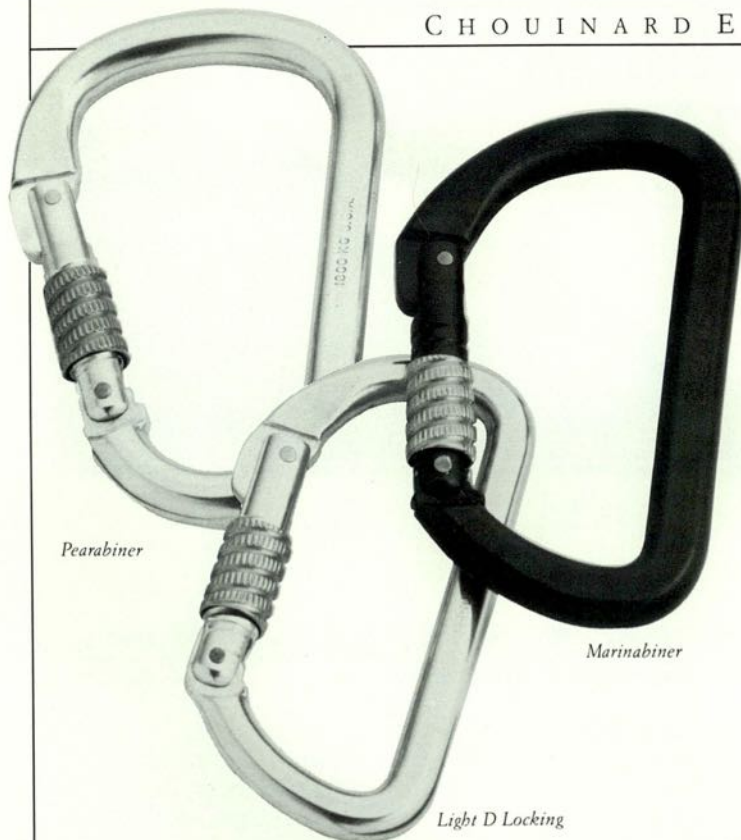
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## ARIZONA

### MOUNT LEMMON

## State's First 5.13 claimed by Suzuki

Perhaps the biggest news in Tucson this fall was the ransacking of Beaver Wall by Hidetaka Suzuki. Once again the wiry Suzuki nabbed two plums on this extraordinary cliff.

First Suzuki led *Golden Beaver Left* (5.13c), which he had topoped last spring ( *Climbing* no. 97). His best effort consisted of one fall at the crux, where he lowered to the ground, rested, then led through on his next try. Fifty feet to the right he bagged the first redpoint of *Right Tissue* (5.12c), scooping locals who had been walking under its bolts for nearly eight months!

Just below Windy Point, in the heat of the summer, Josh Tofield and several others established three routes in the newly-discovered Transformer City, a group of indistinct crags, but with "more than meets the eye." Tofield and gang also found three new routes at the Green Slabs, all with pre-placed bolts.

Several others were active on the new route scene, including Paul Davidson, Ray Ringle, Peter Noebels, Bob Kerry, and John Hayes. With a growing number of locals interested in first ascents and the best weather to come, 1987 may see the Santa Catalinas with over 800 routes!

*Phoenix Rock*, an updated guide to the crags in central Arizona is slated for publication later this month. Not surprisingly, route activity has steadily increased ever since guidebook author Jim Waugh began collecting information.

Over the years the most popular crags in the Phoenix area have been Tom's Thumb and Pinnacle Peak. These collections of 50- to 170-foot crags are within an hour's drive of the Phoenix metro area, and are undoubtedly the warmest winter crags in Arizona. The rock is reminiscent of that in Joshua Tree, perhaps less abrasive but certainly as crowded on a good winter weekend.

According to Waugh, however, the future of Phoenix climbing is in the nearby Superstition Mountains, home of the yet-to-be found Lost Dutchman Mine and its reputed riches. The numerous cliffbands and towers, some nearly 600 feet tall, offer tremendous potential, only limited by occasional loose rock and long approaches for some of the more remote crags. Waugh and John Ficker's first free ascent of the *South Face of the Acropolis* (IV 5.11b) underscores the possibilities of this infamous range.

The many crags of the McDowell Mountains have received the most

route development over the last few months, primarily the work of long-time locals Jason Sands and Jim Zahn. (Their routes may have not made the deadline for the new guide and are reported below).

The most well-known northern Arizona crag, Granite Mountain just north of Prescott, is in danger of losing its stature. The mile-long basalt cliffs of Paradise Forks, a half-hour west of Flagstaff, now have two guidebooks and an increasingly good reputation for the finest crack and dihedral climbing in Arizona.

Although the cliffs range between 40 and 120 feet, there is an amazing amount of climbing. Routes exist nearly every 10 feet. For many years there was a severe no chalk and no fixed gear ethic here, but as a new generation slowly replaces the original pioneers, these concerns apparently are being ignored.

Of the new routes established here this last summer, Sands and Steve Smelser's *Shittin' Bricks* (5.12a) and Smelser and Chris Raypole's *Pilgrim's Progress* (5.10a) are perhaps



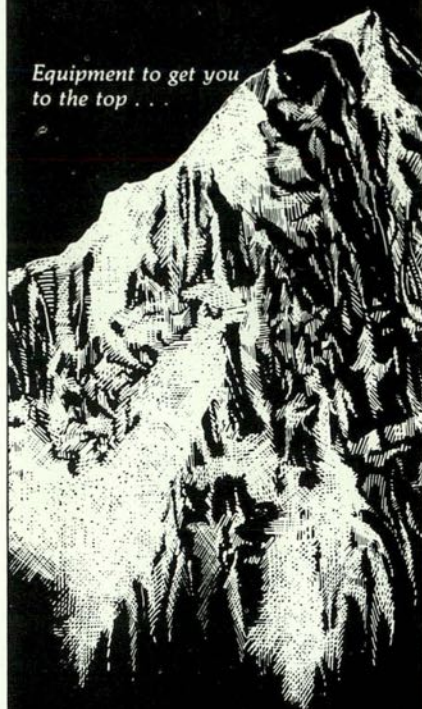
Hidetaka Suzuki in action on *Golden Beaver Left* (5.13c).

Photos: Rick Hlava



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the most noteworthy (they were the only two reported!). On a more negative side, *Americans at Arapiles* evidently was chopped, perhaps the first in Arizona to suffer vigilante action; the route was established on rappel, of course. Finally, many of the undone, yet recorded, routes in Tim Toulas guide, *A Cheap Way to Fly*, were done last spring. The question remains whether the author was a visionary or a classic sandbagger!

— Michael Jimmerson

### MOUNT LEMMON

**David and Goliath** (5.10), Green Slabs. Buttress just R of *Here and Gone*. 60' to bench, exit L. 3 bolts. (FA: Tofield, Kerry, Hayes, 8/86).

**Toy Roof** (5.9), Green Slabs. Between *Amateur Night* and *Rock Candy*. 2 bolts. (FA: Kerry, Hayes, 9/86).

**Jump for Joyce** (5.8), Green Slabs. Buttress R of *Rock Candy*. ends at start of *Real Treat*. 2 bolts, 80'. (FA: Tofield, Davidson, 9/86).

**Back to the Future** (5.11a), Chimney Rock. R-arching seam to buttress 10' R of *Tomorrow Is Today* (Climbing no. 97). Pin. (FA: Hayes, Davidson, 10/86).

**Daddy's Day Off** (5.10), Transformer City. Park at mp 13.3; uproad, walk down scree to top of rock. Obvious L-slanting crack just R of L-facing corner (start). Pass roof on L. (FA: Tofield, John Diaz, 7/86).

**David's Turn** (5.8), Transformer City. From mp 13.2 follow ridge to SW until it ends in group of buttresses. Crack/alcove/crack on NW side of N-most buttress. (FA: Tofield, Diaz, 7/86).

**Mental Block** (5.10d), Transformer City. Block R of *David's Turn*. Dihedral on E side. (FA: Davidson, Tofield, 8/86).

**Golden Beaver Left** (5.13c), Beaver Wall, Windy Point. Free version. 2 pins, 1 bolt. (FFA: Suzuki, 9/86).

**Right Tissue** (5.12c), Beaver Wall, Windy Point. Lead version. 2 pins, 3 bolts. (first lead: Suzuki, 9/86).

**Crankbugs** (5.12c), Aegir, Reef of Rock. 30' R of *Castles Made of Sand*. 7 bolts. (FA: Ringle, 8/86).

**Solitude** (III 5.10 A1), Leviathan Dome area. 6-pitch route. See notebook, Summit Hut. (FA: Davidson, Noebels, 4/86).

### PHOENIX AREA

**South Face of the Acropolis** (IV 5.11b), Superstitions. Free version. (FFA: Waugh, Ficker, 8/86).

**Dogfight Giggie** (5.9), Gardener's Wall, McDowell Mountains. Directly below *Gravity*. Thin-hand crack. 1 bolt. Excellent. (FA: Sands, Zahn, 8/86).

**Black Streak** (5.10a), Gardener's Wall. Face L of *Dogfight Giggie*. 3 bolts. (FA: Sands, Zahn).

**Seamin'** (5.11a), Gardener's Wall. Face/seam R of *Dogfight Giggie*. 2 pins. (FA: Sands, Zahn).

**Southeast Arete** (5.10c), Gardener's Wall. Start in 10' finger/hand crack. 3 bolts. (FA: Zahn, Sands, 8/86).

**Born Ready for a Thrill** (5.11b), McDowell's. Underclimb R out R-facing corner. (FA: Sands, Zahn, 8/86).

**It's Only 5.6** (5.8), McDowell's. 75 yds L of *Born Ready*. (FA: Sands, Scherry Duncan, 8/86).

### PARADISE FORKS

**Shittin' Bricks** (5.12a), Gold Wall. 50 yds L of *Prow*. Fingers/stemming. (FA: Sands, Smelser, 8/86).

**Pilgrim's Progress** (5.10a), Prow Area. R of *Ship of Fools*. Finger/hand crack to roof, fist crack above. (FA: Smelser, Raypole, 9/86).

### FOUR CORNERS AREA

**The Primal Yawn** (5.10 A3), Round Rock formation, near Chinle Spire, The Pope. 4 pitches on W face. Easily recognized by *Supercrack of the Desert*—like 2nd pitch and huge alcove/roof 2/3rds way up. (FA: Dave Evans, Todd Gordon.)

#### References:

*Basecamp*, Climbing no. 97. Climbers Guide to Mount Lemmon and Sabino Canyon, John Steiger, 1985. New route notebook, Summit Hut, Speedway store, Tucson.

Climbers Guide to Central Arizona, Jim Waugh, et. al., 1980?, out-of-print. Phoenix Rock, Jim Waugh, December 1986.

*A Cheap Way to Fly*, Tim Toulas, 1986. A Climber's Guide to Paradise Forks. Michael Lawson, 1986.

#### Corrections:

Climbing no. 98: p. 5. Something Else was first climbed by Eric Fazio-Rhicard and John Hayes rather than Fazio-Rhicard and Steve Amter as reported; p. 6. Once Upon A Time is between The Sorcerer and King Pin, rather than Dream Weaver and King Pin as printed.

## CALIFORNIA

### YOSEMITE, JOSHUA TREE

## Valley Winds Down, Action Moves South

Several earlier-than-usual storms cut the Tuolumne season short this year, forcing locals and visitors alike to the Valley floor or Joshua Tree. Those who decided to stick it out, however, were rewarded with some fine fall days.

Among the more newsworthy ascents of Yosemite's fall season were Wolfgang Gullich's outrageous free solo of *Separate Reality* (5.11d), shortly after climbing it roped, but without using his feet! In a more usual vein, John Bachar's ascent of the thin crack forming the backside of the *Iota* is certainly the highlight of a surprisingly subdued first ascent scene.

The 130-foot line, entitled *Phantom* (5.13a), was one of the more prominent but unclimbed one-pitch cracks in the Valley. Bachar climbed it over three days, yoyoing to establish protection, primarily #0 and #1

Quickies. Pins would have undoubtedly fractured the fragile flake-formed crack, so none were used. Bachar hopes future ascents will hold the same regard.

Another outstanding first ascent, not so much for difficulty but for unbelievability, is Tucker Tech, Mike Strassman, and Alex Schmauss's 12-pitch line on Fairview in Tuolumne Meadows. One would expect a new route on this well-traveled dome to involve substantial work and difficulty, but the route rated out at 5.10c and only required two bolts!

Not surprisingly, the early migration to Joshua Tree has resulted in a fast start for new route activity, primarily by the driving Brit-turned-Ventura-resident, Jonny Woodward. After the first wave of storms, however, JT warmed up and activity subsided. If last season was any indication,



though, Joshua Tree can expect another incredibly busy winter.

Finally, another extraordinary feat by Walt Shipley has been reported. Correspondent Frank Sanders writes: "Not only did Shipley free-solo the 5.10c route on Mt. Conness (reported in *Climbing* no. 98), but he also free-soloed the *Steck-Salathe* on Sentinel and *The Harding Route* on Keelers Needle, all this in a two-week period!"

*The Harding Route* (V 5.10) is one of the more spectacular alpine rock climbs in the southern Sierra.

## YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

**Same As It Ever Was** (IV 5.10c), Fairview Dome, Tuolumne. 12 pitches starting on L side of huge arch on N face, joining last pitches of *Inverted Staircase*. (FA: Tech, Strassman, summer/86).

**Malletosis** (5.10a), Stately Pleasure Dome, Tuolumne. Between *Sweet Nothings* and *Dixie Peach*. 5 bolts. (FA: Schmauss, Strassman, summer/86).

**Negro's Folly** (5.8+), De Gaulle's Nose, Tuolumne. 3 pitches up obvious dihedral in center of the face. (FA: Strassman, Paul Linaweaver, summer/86).

**Escape from Freedom** (IV 5.11a), Mt. Watkins E face, Tuolumne. Start in large bowl 1/4 mile W of *The Golden Dawn*. Moderate cracks and slabs to prominent tower. Continue up and R, traversing across dikes on E face proper, then up single dike to rap station. 7 pitches (FA: Urmas Franosch, Bruce Morris, 8/86).

**Phantom** (5.13a), Reeds Pinnacle Area, Yosemite Valley. Thin flake/crack backside of *Iota* crack. (FA: Bachar, 10/86).

## SIERRA NEVADA

**Daknucklehead** (5.10d), Rock Creek Canyon. Zig-zag dihedral R of *The Gong Show* area (FA: Strassman, Linaweaver, summer/86).

**The Magnus** (5.10c), Rock Creek Canyon. R of *Daknucklehead* on hidden formation. 150' crack capped by finger crack reminiscent of Yosemite's *Mr. Natural*. (FA: Scott Ayers, Strassman, summer/86).

**Sbruno-Sbruski** (III 5.10), Mt. Russell. 6-pitch crack system on S face, R of *South Buttress*. (FA: Linaweaver, Ayers, summer/86).

## SUICIDE

**Blade Runner** (5.12b tr), Weeping Wall. Just R of *Warm Up*, sharp arete. (FA: Bob Gaines, summer/86).

**Unknown** (5.11d tr), Sunshine Face. Between *New Generation* and *Race With the Devil*. (FA:?).

## JOSHUA TREE

Numbers refer to Vogel's 1986 guide.

**The Schrodinger Equation** (5.10c), Hemmingway Buttress Area. Lead version of toprope (#199). (First lead: Woodward, 9/86).

**Snap on Demand** (5.11+), Real Hidden Valley. 50' L of *Houser Buttress*. 3 bolts. (FA: Darryl Hensel, Woodward, 10/86).

**My Favorite Things** (5.10c), The Near East, Afro Blues Wall. Lead version of toprope (#918). Bolt added above roof. (FA: Woodward, 9/86).

**Blue Ribbon** (5.11a), Afro Blues Wall. Dikes R of *My Favorite Things*. Difficult traverse R from top of crack is crux. (FA: Woodward, Robert Raker, Hensel, 9/86).

## References:

Rock Climbs of Tuolumne Meadows, Don Reid and Chris Falkenstein, 1986. Yosemite Climbs George Meyers, 1983. New Yosemite guide in preparation: Chockstone Press, 526 Franklin Street, Denver, CO 80218.

The Climber's Guide to the High Sierra, Steve Roper, 1976.

Rock Climbs of Tahquitz and Suicide Rocks Randy Vogel, 1985.

Joshua Tree, Randy Vogel, 1986. Supplement in preparation: Randy Vogel, P.O. Box 4554, Laguna Beach, CA 92652.

## COLORADO

### Routes Chopped in the South Platte First Ascent Frenzy in Colorado Springs

Controversy flared up along the Front Range after it was discovered that Mark Sonnenfeld's *I Turkey* and Dale Goddard's *The Infraction* had been chopped at Turkey Rocks in the South Platte.

While placing bolts on rappel is a common and largely accepted practice in the Boulder area, an unknown and unannounced Colorado Springs local has apparently made the decision to stem the use of rap-placed bolts in the Turkey Rocks area.

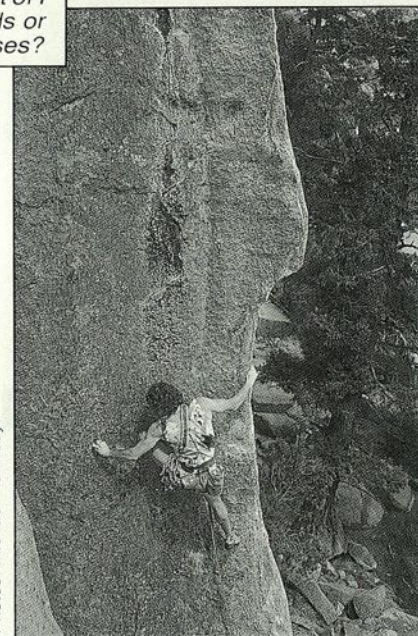
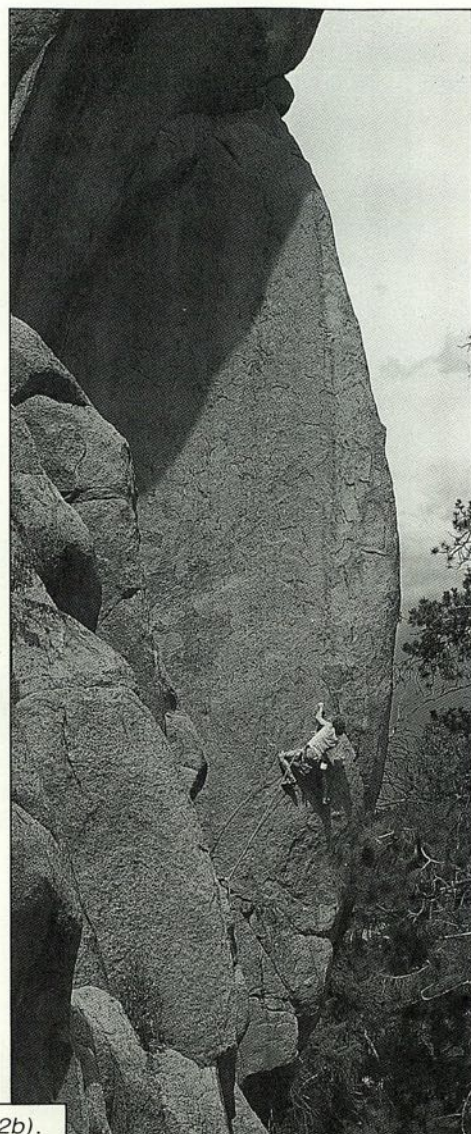
Last spring, Goddard established *The Infraction* after placing four bolts on rappel (*Climbing* no. 97). Soon after, a petition designed to gather consensus for chopping the route was circulated among the Colorado Springs climbing community. A number of locals were very outspoken, but after several months the furor calmed down considerably.

Sometime in September a note, with a chopped bolt taped to it, showed up at the Mountain Chalet in Colorado Springs. An unsigned poem chastised "rappellers" and promised to chop any more bolts placed on rappel. It was soon discovered that the bolt came from *The Infraction*, and that the rap-placed bolts on *I Turkey* (*Climbing* no. 98) had also been chopped.

An attempt on *The Infraction* (5.12b). Bill Myers during the second ascent of *I Turkey* (5.11d/5.12a). Unique leads or difficult-to-rig topropes, who chooses?

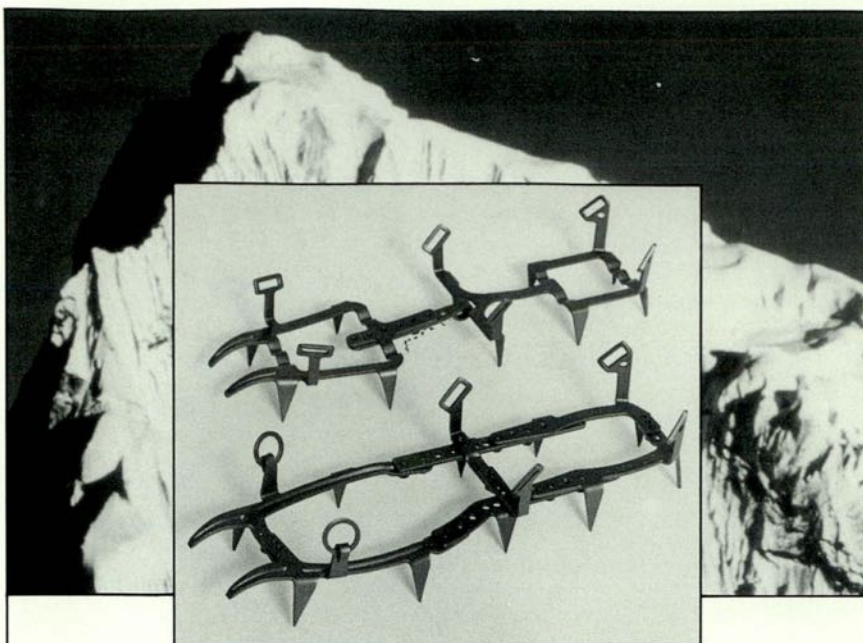
Questions being raised are: Do local communities have the right to enforce perceived stylistic standards? Is the South Platte, an hour from Colorado Springs and three and a half hours from Boulder, a Colorado Springs — rather than a Boulder or Denver — area? Does the majority of the Colorado Springs climbing community support the chopping?

The first two questions are difficult, perhaps impossible, to answer, but there is considerable doubt whether the third could be answered yes. Local C-Springs activist Bob D'Antonio has certainly let his feelings be known. Two of his new routes, *Little Men*, *Big Chisels* in nearby Cheyenne Canyon and *Simple Minds* in Eleven Mile Canyon, 45 minutes from Colorado Springs, have rappel-placed bolts and were named with the chopping poet in mind.



Photos: Michael Kennedy.





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Several other Colorado Springs locals strongly support the chopping. According to one local, they haven't objected to rap-placed bolts in Eleven Mile Canyon or some of the dome areas in the Platte, but feel that Turkey Rocks should be left as an area to be developed traditionally. Callousness toward their attitudes on the part of the first ascensionists involved has apparently elicited a like response, despite the likelihood that the callousness has been wrongly perceived.

Although Goddard has no immediate plans to replace *The Infraction*, he is disappointed at what he feels is the myopia of the bolt choppers and their

supporters. He writes, "While the question of 'who' and 'how' bolts are placed on new routes provides short term, trivial interest on who's who lists, the enduring issue is whether a route is justified on the basis of its quality and the craftsmanship with which it was created. Years down the road, the climber half-way up the pitch will not be asking whether the bolts were placed on tendons, hooks, or ropes, but whether the bolts protect essential sections, are reasonable to clip, and are in an aesthetic position."

Meanwhile, the Boulder first ascent scene is as vigorous as ever, despite several snowfalls over the last few

months. Both Goddard and Christian Griffith have established new Eldorado testpieces.

Goddard's *The Sacred and the Profane* (5.12d/5.13a) was quickly repeated by both Griffith and 17-year old Chris Hill, who is clearly one of the most talented teenagers in the nation. Griffith's *Wingless Victory* (5.13b) has yet to see a second ascent.

*Desdichado* (5.13b/c), established by Griffith last summer (*Climbing* no. 97), has seen some strong attempts by both Goddard and Belgian Arnould T'Kint, to name a few, but so far no second ascent. T'Kint's few weeks in the Boulder area were very impressive; a few-falls ascent of *Psycho* (5.12c/d) and a four-try successful effort on *Rainbow Wall* (5.13a) were among his highlights. His last day in the area before heading to Smith Rocks was spent trying *Desdichado*, suspected by Griffith to be the most difficult route in Colorado.

The Colorado Springs area has finally recorded a route breaking the 5.13 barrier. *Little Kingdom* (5.13a) in Eleven Mile Canyon required pre-placed bolts and considerable rehearsing before Bob D'Antonio, assisted by Richard Aschert and Mark Milligan, claimed the 45-foot pitch in a yoyo effort. D'Antonio hopes to red-point it soon.

Four Mile Area, near Florissant, has received extensive attention from a group of C-Springs locals. Ashcert, Ed Pearsall, and Bob Robertson have been the most active, establishing nearly 20 new routes this past year; most are two to three pitches, and several are already rumored to be Colorado classics.

The area is fairly compact; the majority of domes are within a ¼ mile radius. With the right directions, approaches are less than 20 minutes, even though the only public access to the area is a four mile walk from Highway 67, an approach now rarely used. Most come in from Florissant, an eight-mile drive on a good dirt road ending on private land. The owners, so far, have not objected, but a low-key presence is recommended. (Directions are given below).

There are four major areas. Four Mile Dome, shown as Dome Rock on maps, is the largest. Directly across the valley to the west, separated by Four Mile Creek, is the real Dome Rock and Central Dome, a smaller crag just below Dome Rock. A quarter-mile south of Dome Rock is West Rock, a slabby cliff reminiscent of Bucksnot Slabs in the South Platte area. Split Rocks is ½ mile upridge from West Rock, and bears an unbelievable amount of potential on its steep, ⅓-mile long, 300-foot face.

So far, all the routes established in this extensive area have been done from the ground up, necessitated primarily by the multi-pitch nature of



most first ascents. As a result, 1/4-inch bolts are common, although more and more 3/8-inch bolts are found protecting crucial sections. Bolts are found on most routes. There is no guidebook, no route notes under the counter at a mountain shop, and usually no one around to ask — a rarity for a Front Range climbing area.

Colorado Springs locals also are leading the way in the development of the San Luis Valley, near Del Norte. Although short (30-60 feet), the numerous rhyolite crags are typically vertical to slightly overhanging and littered with limestone-like pockets. Most recent first ascents have been bolted on rappel and top rope rehearsals is becoming common among a small but rabid group of San Luis devotees.

## ELDORADO

**Sanctuary area** (5.12b-5.12d tr), Bear Canyon. Walk up Bear Canyon trail to where small stream cuts across trail. Cliff on S side of canyon (faces N). Slightly hidden in trees, has prominent blunt arete. *Love* (5.12c), L arete; *Fire* (5.12d), face R; *Sanctuary* (5.12b), further R. (FA: Griffith, summer/86).

**Wingless Victory** (5.13b), Redgarden. Arete just R of 4th pitch of *Naked Edge*. 5 bolts. (FA: Griffith, Sonnenfeld, 9/86).

**Little Fish that Die Abruptly** (5.12a tr), Redgarden. Smooth face just L of *Mr. Natural*. (FA: Peter Hunt, Wayne Burlison, fall/86).

**Friends in High Places** (5.10), West Ridge. Start in face crack 10' R of *Purple Hazel Joke Crack* dihedral. 50' (5.7). 2) Do tricky face moves of *Purple Haze*, work L to R-facing dihedral, past 2 roofs (pin). (FA: Bruce Hildenbrand, Robert Mueller, 9/86).

**The Sacred and the Profane** (5.12d/5.13a), Peanuts Wall. Blunt arete just R of *Peanuts*. 3 bolts. (FA: Goddard, 8/86).

**Evening Stroll** (5.9-), Cadillac Crag. After first 60' of *Moonlight Drive* (to where it goes L), traverse R 20' around and up. 2) Low-angle fist crack to thin crack through roof. (FA: Hildenbrand, Mueller, 9/86).

**Brand New Cadillac** (5.11), Cadillac Crag. Face around arete from *Highway of Diamonds*. 3 bolts. (FA: Kirk Petersen, David Houston, summer/86).

## BOULDER AREA

**The Route that Dan Missed** (5.10a), Bell Butress. Var to last pitch of *Cosmosis*. Arete to R. (FA: Marc Gay, Mark Tarrant, 9/86).

**Frontier** (5.11), Bell Butress. Arete/face just R of *Front Line*. 2 bolts, 40'. (FA: Tarrant, Anne-Marie Bierbaum, 8/86).

**Alien Sex Toy** (5.12), Castle Rock. L-leaning flake R of *John Gill's Route*. Over bulge, then R past bolts to *Jackson's Wall Direct*. Runout. (FA: Kyle Copeland, Charlie Fowler, 8/86).

**Twistin'** (5.10), Twinkie, Dream Canyon, Flatirons. N-most rock in N gulch. On R side of wall, by large pool, small overhang/crack, face above. Bolt, 90'. (FA: Copeland, Alison Sheets, summer/86).

**Shiny Toys** (5.9), Twinkie. R of *Twistin'*, steep black streak. Bolt, 90'. (FA: Copeland, Sheets, summer/86).

**Center-tap Corner** (5.7), Twinkie area. Rock just N of Twinkie. Obvious dihedral w/hand crack. (FA: Sheets, Copeland, summer/86).

## SOUTH PLATTE

**Prime Line** (5.10), Cynical Pinnacle. Across gully from backside of top of Cynical Pinnacle. Finger crack to face. 1 bolt. (FA: Olaf Mitchell, Jerry Rock, 5/86).

## COLORADO SPRINGS AREA

**Snively's Route** (5.12c/d), Garden of the Gods, North Gateway. Free version. (FFA: Will Gadd, Richard Aschert, Dave Dangle, summer/86).

**Little Men, Big Chisels** (5.11c R), Cheyenne Canyon. R of *Practice Crack*. 1 bolt. (FA: D'Antonio, Brent Kurtzman, fall/86).

## ELEVEN-MILE CANYON

(mileages from signed canyon entrance, 1/2 mile S of Lake George)

**Aerial Boundaries** (5.11+), Turret Dome, 4.2 miles. Finger crack to horizontal crack, then L. (FA: Darryl Roth, Kim Steiner, summer/86).

**Balls, Balls** (5.11c R), Turret Dome. 2nd corner R of aid crack. (FA: Roth, summer/86).

**Run for Your Life** (5.11- R), Teal Tower, 5.2 miles. L of *Candidate for Space* (*Climbing* no. 96). Dihedral. 3 bolts, 1 pin. (FA: Roth, Aschert, 10/86).

**Reality Check** (5.10+), Teal Tower. R of *Candidate for Space*. Overhanging hand crack, traverse L to finish. (FA: Roth, Steiner, summer/86).

**Statement for Youth** (5.12-), Springer Gulch, 5.3 miles. Obvious corner. 2 bolts, 50'. (FA: D'Antonio, Aschert, fall/86).

**Little Kingdom** (5.13-), Springer Gulch, 10' R of *Statement for Youth*. Overhanging wall. 3 bolts. (FA: D'Antonio, 10/86).

**Here's to Old Flake** (5.11+), Springer Gulch. Small band of cliffs below *Here's to Future Ways* (*Climbing* no. 96). Obvious corner to overhang. (FA: Bryan Becker, Brent Kurtzman, summer/86).

**Simple Minds** (5.12-), River Wall, 6.3 miles. R of *Captain Cod Piece*. Overhanging wall leading to crack. 2 bolts, 45'. (FA: D'Antonio, Aschert, fall/86).

**Genetic Imbalance** (5.12-), 7.9 miles. 40' boulder. Overhanging corner. 2 bolts. (FA: D'Antonio, Aschert, fall/86).

**Golden Dreams** (5.12-), Idlewild Campground, 8.2 miles. First gully past Pine Cone Dome (*Climbing* no. 96). Steep gold wall to crack. 2 bolts. (FA: D'Antonio, summer/86).

**Pumping Flakes** (5.11+), Idlewild Campground. Other side of *Golden Dreams*. Short crack to overhanging face. (FA: Mark Milligan, D'Antonio, summer/86).

**Rock Busters** (5.11+/5.12-), The Fortress, 8.4 miles. Lowest band of cliffs. Crack. 2 bolts, 70'. (FA: Aschert, D'Antonio, fall/86).

**Bits and Pieces** (5.11c), The Fortress. Highest band of cliffs. Take L of 2 overhanging cracks to arete (4 bolts), ledge. 2) overhanging finger crack. 190'. Classic. (FA: D'Antonio, Aschert, Dave Dangle, fall/86).

**Vapor Drawings** (5.11-), The Fortress. R of 2 overhanging cracks described above, then face (3 bolts). 2) overhanging hand crack. 165'. (FA: Roth, Dangle, Aschert, fall/86).

## FOUR MILE AREA

Turn S on dirt road at Thunderbird Inn in Florissant. At 7 miles, road forks (at Evergreen Gas Station), take L 1/4 mile further take R. After 1/2 mile road gains ridgetop; Four Mile area below.

**Central Station** (5.9), Split Rocks. Prominent dihedral on E side, just N of summit block. Hand crack. 325'. (FA: Pearsall, Aschert, summer/86).

**Marmaduke** (5.11a), Split Rocks. Below Central Station, on lower tier. Offwidth. 80'. (FA: Pearsall, Aschert, summer/86).

**Slippery When Dry** (5.9+), Split Rocks. Continuous finger/fist crack just N of *Central Station*. 300'. (FA: Chuck Daggert, Aschert, summer/86).

**Front Burner** (5.10d), Split Rocks. Dihedral just R of prominent face on E side. Offwidth (crux) start, 5.9 above. 300' (FA: Aschert, Pearsall, Lori, summer/86).

**Finger Locking Good** (5.10d), Split Rocks. Dihedral system on W side. Offwidth (crux) start, hand crack (5.9+) finish on NW summit. 325'. (FA: Pearsall, Aschert, summer/86).

**Sugar Plum** (5.11a), Split Rocks. Just N of *Central Station*. Bolt-protected seam and knobby face to finger crack. 250'. Excellent. (FFA: Robertson, Aschert, Ed Quesada, summer/86).

**Lucky Seven** (5.11c), Rat Rock, across the valley from Split Rocks. Most prominent crack system. Fingers/flaring hands. 200'. (FA: Aschert, Quesada, summer/86).

**Kamikaze Clone** (5.12b), West Rock. Face to tips crack to steep face. 400'. (FA: Aschert, Eric Harp, summer/86).

**Max Overhead** (5.12a), West Rock. Between *Ladybug* and *Kamikaze Clone*. Steep slab to

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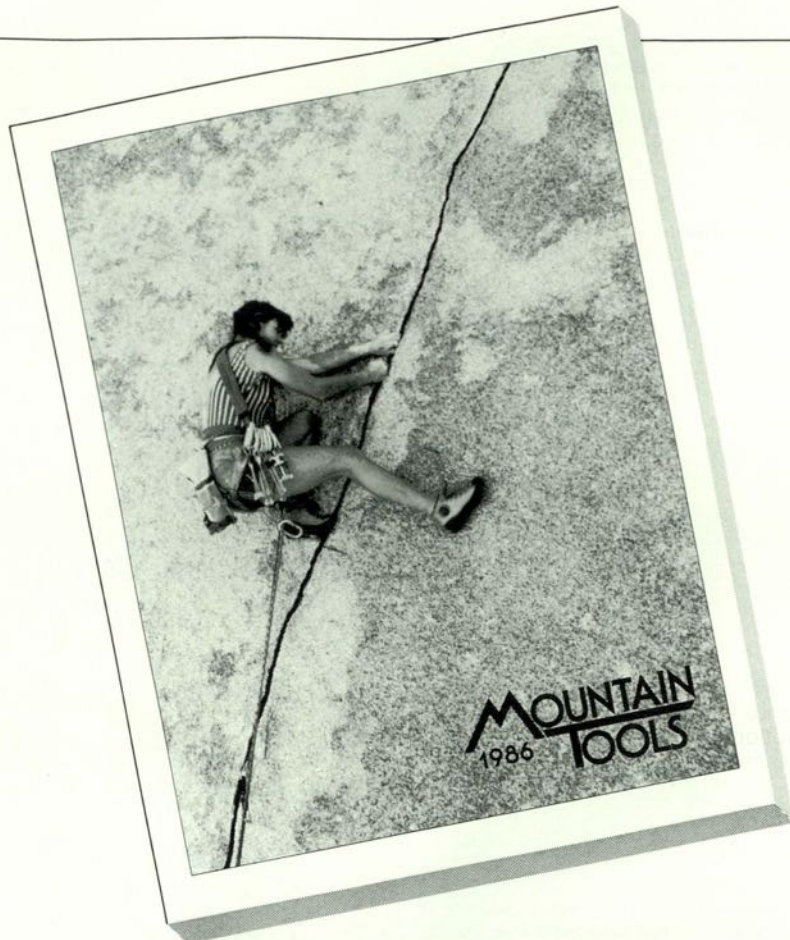
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overhanging headwall. 4 pitches. 400'. Excellent. (FA: Aschert, Dangle, summer/86).

**Cling On Treachery** (5.12a), West Rock. L of Ladybug. 3 pitches up steep slab w/bolts. Nut belays. (FA: Aschert, Harp, summer/86).

**Bold Runner** (5.11c), West Rock. Follow inconspicuous, short hand crack, then L-leaning seam to main water streak. (FA: Robertson, Aschert, Peter Gallagher, summer/86).

**Ironing Board** (5.11b), West Rock. 1) steep thin seam, hard to protect. 2) slab (5.9). (FA: Aschert, Pearsall, summer/86).

**Peter Principle** (5.10b), 100' face across from West Rock. 2 bolts. (FA: D'Antonio, Aschert, Quesada, summer/86).

**Dome Roof** (5.11b), Dome Rock. Prominent 25' roof marks route (roof is only 5.9). 450'. (FA: R. Aschert, Fred Aschert, Pearsall, 86).

**Dorsal Fin** (5.11c), The Dolphin, The Crags. Start *Thunder Route*, then up steep face. (FA: Robertson, Aschert, summer/86).

**The Dragon** (5.12c), Pangborn, The Crags. Follow *Dead End Crack* to steep face (4 bolts). (FA: Aschert, Robertson, summer/86).

## SAN LUIS VALLEY

**Pick Pocket** (5.12b/c), Rock Garden. First bolted face, 100' from road. Steep, concave face w/3 bolts to seam. 50'. (FA: Kjell Swedin, Ray Ringle, 9/86).

**Court Jester** (5.11d), Rock Garden. 200' from road, dihedral R of *Terror* (pocketed face w/2 bolts; *Climbing* no. 91). 2 bolts, 35'. (FA: D'Antonio, spring/86).

**Come a Time** (5.12c/d), Rock Garden. Arete w/4 bolts 100' R of *Terror*, just L of short, arching dihedral w/wide crack. 50'. (FA: D'Antonio, 10/86).

**Pumping Pockets** (5.11c/d), Rock Garden. 70' L of *Come a Time*. Pocketed Wall. 3 bolts, 40'. (FA: John Steiger, D'Antonio, 10/86).

**Mysterious Redhead** (5.11b), Penitente Canyon. First face of any appreciable size just inside canyon, near well-used fire ring abutting crag. 2 bolts (1st w/no hanger), 30'. (FA: D'Antonio, Mark Milligan, spring/86).

**Camino de la Sonia** (5.11d), Penitente Canyon. E-facing wall (French Wall) just inside canyon, around corner from *Redhead*. Double seams, one w/edge. 2 bolts, 40'. (FA: Steiger, D'Antonio, 10/86).

**Whipping Post** (5.11b), Penitente Canyon. 75' L of French Wall. Concave face just L of obvious black streak. 2 bolts. 50'. (FA: Milligan, D'Antonio, spring/86).

**Apocketlips** (5.11d/5.12a), Penitente Canyon. Just L of *Whipping Post*. Steep seam/crack jogging L after 40'. 50'. (FA: Steiger, Mike Benge, Nancie Brabec, 10/86).

**Not My Cross to Bear** (5.11c), Penitente Canyon. Obvious dihedral R of painting of virgin, "brown Jesus" in *Climbing* no. 88. 4 bolts, 55'. (FA: D'Antonio, Milligan, spring/86).

**Los Hermanos de la Penitente** (5.12b/c), Penitente Canyon. Face just L of painting of virgin. 5 bolts, 60'. Superb. (FA: D'Antonio, 10/86).

**Morada** (5.12a), Penitente Canyon. Crack 15' L of *Los Hermanos*. 3 bolts, 55'. (FA: D'Antonio, Will Gadd, 10/86).

## OTHER AREAS

**Crestone Peak Northeast Buttress** (III 5.7), Sangre De Cristo Range. Obvious L-facing, L-leaning corner/ramp system. 700' of moderate rock, 300' of mixed (rock, snow, ice), to the North Ridge. (FA: Brad Shilling, Warren Banks, 5/86).

**The Dog** (5.7), Left Book, Lumpy Ridge, near Estes Park. Start 10' L of *White Whale*, thin dihedral. 2) L-facing dihedral 10' R of 2nd pitch of *Manifest Destiny*, over roof, then R and up. 3) cracks and face to small red roof. (FA: Bernard Gillett, Robert Gillett, summer/86).

## WEST SLOPE

**Gothic Triangle** (III 5.10c R), East Face of Gothic Mountain, near Crested Butte. Start 100' R of huge boulder near face. 4 pitches up prominent gully system, to just below smooth 150' triangular-shaped face near top of wall. 5) 30' jamming, L to thin crack. 6) Shallow L-facing dihedral to grey ceiling, traverse L. (FA: Dan Bradford, Angelo de la Cruz, 7/86).

**Pasteup** (5.11c/d), Grotto Cliff, Independence Pass, Aspen. Just R of *Wire and Fire*. Roof start, crack above (on L), at end traverse R and over bulge. (FA: Steiger, Steve Galls, 9/86).

**Bag Lady** (5.12a), slab on approach to Watch Crystal, Durango. Very R end (S) of slab. 3 bolts. (FA: Steve Kolarik, Clay Patton, Scott Draper, summer/86).

**Dog Day Afternoon** (5.11a X), 30' L of *Bag Lady*. 1 bolt. (FA: Tim Kuss, summer/86).

**In Search of Amanitas** (5.12b tr), 10' L of *Dog Day Afternoon*. (FA: David Kozak, summer/86).

**Anasazi** (5.12a), Watch Crystal. *Loads of Fun* to L crack of *Sweeney's Special*. (FA: Hidetaka Suzuki, 9/86).

## References:

Pictorial Guide to Boulder Climbs (4th ed.), Richard Rossiter, 1986. *New route notebook*, International Alpine School, Eldorado Springs. The Hard Stuff, Climber's Guide to the Turkey Rock Area and other South Platte Crags, Mark Rolofson, 1984. For Turkey's Only, Steve Cheyney, 1984.

Soft Touch (*Garden of the Gods*), Mark Rolofson, 1979.

Climber's Guide to Eleven Mile Canyon, Dave Bamberger and Bob Glaze, 1979 (*out-of-print?*). *Climbing* no. 82 (p.7-8), "Eleven Mile Canyon," Mark Rolofson, Feb. 1984. *Guide in preparation: Bob D'Antonio, 1032 E. Platte, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. Climbing* no. 88, "San Luis," Lew Hoffman, February, 1985. Also see *Basecamp*, *Climbing* nos. 88, 91, 94, Lumpy Ridge: Estes Park Rock Climbs, Scott Kimball, 1986.

Rock Climbers Guide to Aspen, Larry Bruce, 1985.

Southwest Rock, A Climber's Guide to Southwest Colorado (*Durango*). David Kozak, 1985.

## Corrections:

*Climbing* no. 98, p.16, A Walk in the Park is on Pass Walls rather than Wall Walls as printed.



## IDAHO

### CITY OF ROCKS

## Into the Mainstream

A deluge of hard new routes this past season is washing away Idaho's status as a climbing backwater.

The state's most famous area, the City of Rocks, recorded dozens of new routes from an excellent spring and summer season. While the National Park Service mulled over proposals for the long term management of the City, including the possibility of declaring it a National Monument, climbing standards were being pushed via still-controversial rap-placed routes (see *Climbing* no. 98).

Possibly the most difficult new route of the season was guidebook author Dave Bingham's *Bombs over Tripoli* (5.12). Toprope rehearsal and rappel-placed protection allowed this period-piece to go, but even with two subsequent ascents by visiting climbers, the route has yet to be redpointed.

Tony Yaniro, supposedly in retirement, cracked the unbelievable opening moves of what later became *Odyssey* (5.12). Now that Yaniro's accomplishments are finally becoming well-respected, perhaps he's ready to step back into the fray of world-class climbing. (He was profiled in *Climbing* no. 97).

Stan Caldwell bagged the first lead of the complete line, however, pulling the rope after each fall, and placing the only fixed piece on lead. Obviously the "new style" can't be assumed to be the *modus operandi* on the City's increasing number of very difficult routes.

## Competition & Style in the Green North

With Randall Green's northern Idaho guidebook near publication, locals have been in a frenzy to log first ascents, typical of a situation being seen in more and more climbing communities across the U.S.

Controversy over style had been something to read about until visiting climbers from the Coeur d'Alene and Spokane areas introduced their version of style while bagging several new routes. Not surprisingly, there was some heated competition for new lines, resulting in several locals adopting the visitor's first ascent tactics, and a considerable list of new northern Idaho testpieces.

The granite in the low-lying crags is generally sound but covered with heavy moss and lichen, often requiring extensive cleaning. Locals were content to clean potential lines on aid (occasionally rappel), and attempt

routes from the ground up. After several visitors swept through, redpointing first ascents after toprope rehearsal, traditional style began to be overlooked.

Bolts placed on rappel are slowly becoming more common with virtually no opposition. Toprope is viewed as a requirement by several first ascensionists to insure that fixed protection can be easily clipped. Hangdogging is not common, although it is sometimes used to fix pro or clean while trying a route from the ground up, and always eliminated during a free ascent.

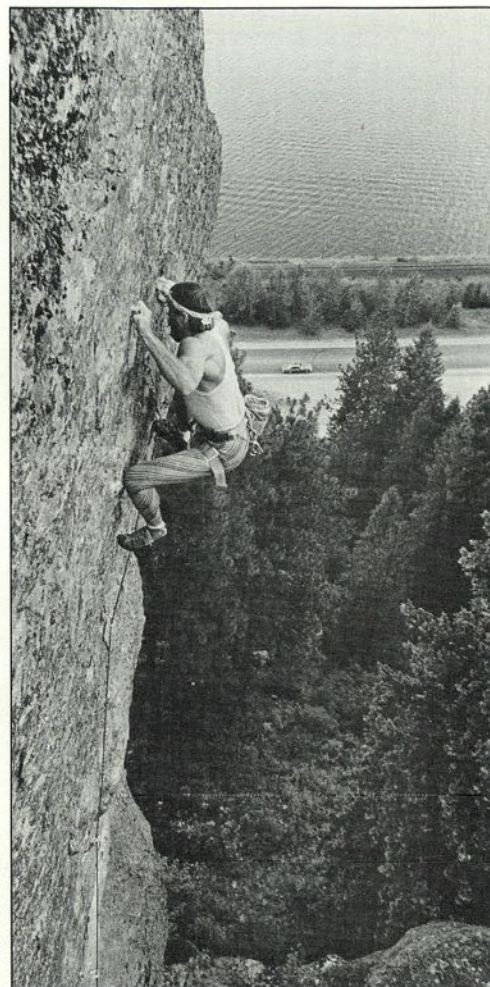
"These low-lying areas are relatively new, and people have been fairly impressed by the new routes," reports Green. "These crags are basically considered practice areas, and it's not a big deal how routes get done. Obviously, we're approaching the ethics issue on the mountain crags a little differently."

Green is primarily referring to Idaho's most famous mountain crag, Chimney Rock. Virtually all the new routes going up there are done in traditional style, not because of stylistic devotion, per se, but because of circumstance. The rock is typical alpine granite — clean, well-fractured, and hard to get to the top of. Green concludes, "The ethic there is to approach it from the ground, which is the only way to climb it!"

Several areas are represented in this issue's new route notes. Schweitzer Rocks is an established practice area on Shadow Mountain, near a ski area access road. Perhaps the most newsworthy event occurring here was Green's first free ascent of the *East Face Direct*, now known as *Stonemaster's Delight* (5.10c). A few other new lines were literally unearthed by two other locals, Terry Jensen and Karl Birkencamp. After Jensen created *Metamorphosis*, there was a foot of moss and lichen at the base of the climb!

Laclede Rocks is a newly developed area 12 miles west of Sandpoint, Idaho, on Highway 200. The highway parallels the Pend Oreille (pronounced pond-er-ray) River and cuts through a portion of the grayish granite just west of Riley Creek campground. Southern exposure and low altitude results in a milder and drier climate than most other areas in northern Idaho. This year, a warm and relatively dry spring enabled the locals to begin climbing here consistently in early April.

Laclede is where the competition was the most intense. Two of the raiders were Dane Burns and Dave Fulton, who snatched a couple gems from under local noses: *Weasels Ripped My Flesh, Side 1* (5.10d) and *Side 2* (5.11c) both sustained, technical crack climbs. Green retaliated with *Psycho Killer* (5.11a) and *Poster Child* (5.11d), but Fulton had



Green on *Poster Child* (5.11d).

the final word, redpointing *Road Kill* (5.11c R). Jensen and Birkencamp also contributed a lion's share of new routes as did new Sandpoint resident Tom Applegate.

Granite Point, a secluded area on the eastern shore of Lake Pend Oreille, is the only local area that hasn't seen any outside influence. Access to the half-mile long series of crags is the deterrent: the routes are approached by boat. Locals are exploring the many cliffs south of Kilroy Bay at a relatively casual pace.

The most publicized area in northern Idaho is Chimney Rock, which has technical ascents recorded as early as 1934. Yet, difficult free climbing standards have not progressed much since Dane Burns brought 5.11 to the area in 1980. Today he continues to pioneer most of the new, hard routes on Chimney's 400-600 foot walls.

Burns and Jay Koopsen's *Tsunami* is the hardest route on the rock to date, bearing three pitches of continuous 5.11. Sections including cracks ranging from offwidth to very thin fingers, a four-foot roof, and dicey, poorly-protected face have so far disabled any would-be second ascents.



## SCHWEITZER ROCKS

**Astro Monkey Roof** (5.10b). Direct finish to *Fern Crack*. Offwidth to off-hands through 8' roof. (FA: Green, Rod Gibbons, 6/86).

**Muskrat Love** (5.9). Face/crack 10' L of *Shortcake*. (FA: Birkenkamp, Teresa Rowe, 7/86).

**Metamorphosis** (5.10c R). Flake/crack/face L of *Blind Man's Bluff*. 90'. (FA: Jensen, Gene Klein, 6/86).

**Stonemaster's Delight** (5.10c). Free version of *East Face Direct*, 40' L of *Metamorphosis*. 95'. (FFA: Green, Gibbons, Theresa Green, 4/86).

## LACLEDE ROCKS

**Road Kill** (5.11c R). Lower East Side Cliff. Vertical drill marks left from blasting highway right-of-way. Pins, 85'. Excellent stemming. (FA: Fulton, Burns, 7/86).

**Jensen's Dihedral** (5.9). Lower East Side Cliff. 200' L of *Road Kill*, 80'. (FA: Jensen, Klein, 6/86).

**Lock Tight** (5.10a R). Lower East Side Cliff. Face/crack 40' L of *Jensen's Dihedral*. (FA: Birkenkamp, 6/86).

**Sod Buster** (5.6). Lower East Side Cliff. 50' L of *Jensen's Dihedral*. Cracks leading to hanging meadows. (FA: Jensen, Klein, 4/86).

**Shook Me** (5.10b). Lower Main Cliff. On extreme lower right side, 30' overhanging flake to easy slabs. (FA: Green, Gibbons, Applegate, 4/86).

**Hitch Hiker** (5.8). Lower Main Cliff. Hand crack 20' L of *Shook Me*. 50'. (FA: Jensen, Gibbons, Applegate, 4/86).

**Crap Shooter** (5.10a). Lower Main Cliff. Dihedral 10' L of *Hitch Hiker*. (FA: Applegate, Gibbons, Larry Peterman, 5/86).

**Radioactive** (5.10c). Lower Main Cliff. R wall of *Crap Shooter* dihedral. Bolts, 50'. (FA: Green, Gibbons, 6/86).

**Weasels Ripped My Flesh, Side 1** (5.10d). Lower Main Cliff. Corner crack 150' L of *Crap Shooter*. 50'. (FA: Burns, Fulton, 4/86).

**Weasels Ripped My Flesh, Side 2** (5.11c). Upper Main Cliff, E side. Slanting finger/hand crack directly above *Weasels, Side 1*. Pins, 80'. (FA: Burns, Fulton, 4/86).

**Chicken McNabbins** (5.10b). Upper Main Cliff, E side. Face 40' R of *Weasels, Side 2* and 20' L of *The Dihedral*. Bolts, 80'. (FA: Green, Gibbons, 4/86).

**Poster Child** (5.11d). Upper Main Cliff, E side. Overhanging, W-facing wall 40' L of *Weasels, Side 2*. Bolts, 80'. (FA: Green, 7/86).

**Psycho Killer** (5.11a). Upper Main Cliff, W side. Thin crack 20' L of *Grunty Chimney*. 50'. (FA: Green, 4/86).

## GRANITE POINT

**Mainline Direct Finish** (5.10d). Little Wall. Short finger crack alternative to original finish (see *Climbing* no. 94). Excellent. (FA: Green, Jensen, Bensen, Chris Hecht, 7/86).

**Fingerling Direct Finish** (5.10c). Big Wall. Continuation (see *Climbing* no. 94) directly up thin crack to hanging belay below roofs. 85'. (FA: Green, Jensen, Birkenkamp, 5/86).

**Reasonable Alternative** (5.9). Big Wall. 20' R of *Fingerling*. Pin, 85'. (FA: Green, Jensen, 5/86).

**Bombay Chimney 101** (5.7). Big Wall. Chimney 400 yds uphill from *Fingerling*. (FA: Bensen, Hecht, 7/86).

## CHIMNEY ROCK

**Wayward Son** (5.10a). E face. L of *Yahoody*. Start hand crack/flake. Move L to finish on South Nose ledge below *Magnum Force*. 1 pitch. (FA: Green, Gibbons, 6/86).

**Sudden Impact** (5.11b). E face. 1 pitch directly to base of *Magnum Force*. Pins. (FA: Burns, Peterman; FFA: Green, Burns, Fulton, 6/86).

**Kimmie** (5.11c). E face. Continuation of *Wayward Son*. 140'. (FA: Burns, Koopson, 7/86).

**Tsunami** (5.11d R). E face. 3 pitches connecting *Cooper-Hiser* and *Free Friends*. 2) Hand crack through roof. 3) Unprotected 5.11 face (avoid by finishing on *Free Friends*). (FA: Burns, Koopson, 7/86).

**West Side Girls** (5.10a R). W face. Dihedral R of *Twin Cracks*. 75'. (FA: Burns, Jim Purdy, 7/86).

## IDAHO BOULDERING CONTEST Success All Around

Despite cool temperatures and threatening clouds, a good crowd gathered for the 1986 Boulderling Championships of Southeast Idaho, held on October 18 in Pocatello. Fortunately, no rain materialized and the sun finally came out for the 39 contestants who had traveled from as far as Boulder and Jackson Hole for the event.

The competition was held on the high-quality basalt rim-rock of Ross Park, and consisted of 20- to 30-foot toprope problems closely spaced along a quarter-mile of cliff. In past years, the Pocatello contest had been a speed climbing event, but this year the organizers decided to change the format to a points system based on similar American contests.

Categories included Recreational, Open, and Masters divisions, with men's and women's classes in both the Recreational and Open competitions. Over 40 problems were graded from 8 to 20 points (roughly 5.8 to 5.12) with the majority of climbs in the 5.10 to 5.11 range. In the Recreational division, one hour was allowed to climb as many problems as possible, with two falls allowed on each. The Open and Masters divisions used a harder set of 28 problems, on which contestants were allowed 90 minutes and three falls per problem.

The atmosphere was certainly competitive, yet friendly and cooperative, with climbers from different classes belaying for each other. Locals who admittedly had climbed most if not all the problems often helped visitors with minor coaching. Contestants from out of town were also allowed to practice the routes before competition began.

Because of the time limit, the Recreational division got off to a rapid start, with Eric Stroud of Salt Lake City racing against local Marty Thompson down to the bitter end. When the points were finally tallied, it was Stroud in first place after flying up an easy eight-pointer in the final seconds — the margin of his win. Stroud was followed by Greg Young and Tom Whittaker. Fourth place finisher Whittaker deserves special mention; he is an amputee climbing with a prosthetic in place of one leg.

In the Women's Recreational division, Michelle Caldwell of Pocatello outscored Jan Sterrett of Ketchum, with Michelle Ford and Mary Stephens, both of Pocatello, coming in close behind.

The Men's Open also powered to a quick start with high speed scrambles up arm-blowing problems. Drew Bed-

## RESULTS

### Mens Recreational

208	Eric Stroud
200	Marty Thompson
162	Greg Young
140	Tom Whittaker

### Womens Recreational

145	Michelle Caldwell
85	Jan Sterrett
66	Michelle Ford
51	Mary Stephens

### Mens Open

302	Drew Bedford
290	Dan Sperlock
221	Brents Hawk
187	Willie Mien

### Womens Open

77	Amy Barns
72	Rebecca Jenkins

### Masters

334	Stan Caldwell
230	Chris Barns
197	Rex Hong
195	Charlie Dean

ford of Salt Lake City flashed all but a few of the problems, impressively upsetting local favorite Dan Sperlock. Brents Hawk of Jackson Hole captured third place followed by Willie Mien of Boulder. Only two women competed in the Open, with Amy Barns of Pocatello outscoring Rebecca Jenkins of Jackson Hole by a slim 5 points.

Stan Caldwell, a local hardman who did the first ascents of many of the problems at Ross Park, declined entering the Open class, opting for the Masters, "old man's" class instead. Climbing with religious fervor, Caldwell cranked through all but three problems before the whistle blew, earning a total of 334 points, the highest of the day. Chris Barns, another Pocatello local, took second, followed by Jackson Hole climbers Rex Hong and Charlie Dean.

The contest, hosted by the Idaho State University Outdoor Program and sponsored by Rainier Beer, turned out to be a solid success and is destined to become an annual event. An awards party was held following the meet, with \$50 cash and gear going to the top finishers in each category. Prizes included ropes, hardware, climbing shoes, clothing, and chalk. Tee shirts with the contest logo were given to all contestants.

Gravity Sports Films was on hand for both the contest and party; a film of the event is planned. Sponsors included Etho-chalk, Synthetic Dreams Lycra, The Raven's Nest, A.L.F. Designs, and The Elephants Perch. Special thanks are extended to Scott Tyson who masterminded the contest, and all of the volunteers from Pocatello who helped make the event such a success.

—Dave Bingham



**Youranalysis** (5.11b), W face. 1-pitch continuation of *It Ain't Hay*, crack R of *Air Time Roof*. (FA: Burns, Koopsen, Wendy Rockafellow, 7/86).

## ROOTHAAN CIRQUE

**Notchos** (5.8), E face of ridge leading to Chimney Rock. 2 pitches on R (N) side of obvious ridgeline notch, 50' L of *Dirty Harry's Revenge*. Flakes/cracks. (FA: Green, Gibbons, Birken-camp, 6/86).

**Black Crack** (5.8), E face of ridge leading to Chimney Rock. 2 pitches on L (S) side of notch, 20-30' R of cirque prow (North Nose). Flakes/cracks. (FA: Jensen, Birken-camp, 7/86).

### References:

Idaho Rock, A Climber's Guide to the Sandpoint Area and Selkirk Crest, *Randall Green*, scheduled for April 1987 (Mountaineers Books, Seattle). *Basecamp*, Climbing no. 94, February, 1986. *New route notebook*, *Outdoor Experience*, Sandpoint, ID.

## CITY OF ROCKS

**Stolen Thunder** (5.12), Upper Breadloaf. Face and offwidth L of *Interceptor*. 60'. (FA: Caldwell, Dan Sperlock, 7/86).

**John Wayne Never Wore Lycra** (5.11-), Bloody Fingers corridor, N wall. Overhanging zig-zag cracks. Difficult pro. (FA: Caldwell, 7/86).

**Akimbo Limbo** (5.10+), W side of Bloody Fingers formation. Short dihedral. 1 bolt. (FA: Thom Rahn, Mike Pleinis, 6/86).

**Box Lunch** (5.10+), Asian Wall (S of Decadent Wall). Steep face 50' to alcove. 3 pins, 1 bolt. (FA: Chris Barns, 8/86).

**Self Abuse** (5.10+), Asian Wall. 20' R of *Box Lunch*. (FA: Bingham, J. Goodwin, 8/86).

**Ghetto Blaster** (5.12), Buzzard Perch (N of Rabbit Rock). Prominent crack 100' R of *Terror of Tiny Town*. (FA: Sperlock, Caldwell, 8/86).

**Bombs Over Tripoli** (5.12), Parkinglot Rock. 30' R of *Stress Fracture*, beginning in Juniper tree. Hairline crack to thin R-facing corner, face finish. 3 bolts, 3 pins. (FA: Bingham, Jan Sterrett, Reid Dowdle, 8/86).

**Strategic Defense** (5.11+), Morning Glory Spire. Prominent arete L of *Acceptable Risk*. 5 bolts. (FA: Bingham, Mark Defournoux, 6/86).

**Seasonal Employment** (5.12-), Rabbit Rock SE face. Prominent, slightly-leaning corner 40' L of *No Satisfaction*. 4 bolts to bolt stance (150'). 2) 5.8. (FA: Bingham, Goodwin, Caldwell, 8/86).

**Wheat Fat** (5.11), The Anteater. Thin crack between *Body Snatcher* and *Holding out for a Hero*. Pins. (FA: Rex Hong, 7/86).

**Silent Partner** (5.10+), Creekside Crag, N corridor. 30' R of *Scar Tissue*. Flake to face (2 bolts), thin crack over roof. (FA: Bingham, Goodwin, 7/86).

**Moderna Zieten** (Modern Times) (5.12-), Creekside Crag. 30' L of *Smucker's Jam*. Slightly-overhanging face on L wall of large dihedral. 3 bolts. (FA: Goodwin, Bingham, 8/86).

**D.B. Visits Idaho** (5.11-), The Clamshell. In alcove 400 yds up and L of *Infinite*. Friction past 4 bolts to 3-bolt anchor. (FA: Rich Folsom, Roger Knight, 9/85).

**Odyssey** (5.12), Odyssey Wall. 80' overhanging diagonal crack L of *Pigeon Crack*. (FA: Caldwell, Bingham, Sperlock, 6/86).

**Holidays in the Sun** (5.10), Picnic Dome, Twin Sisters Area. Friction/face past 4 bolts. (FA: Goodwin, Chris Barns, 7/86).

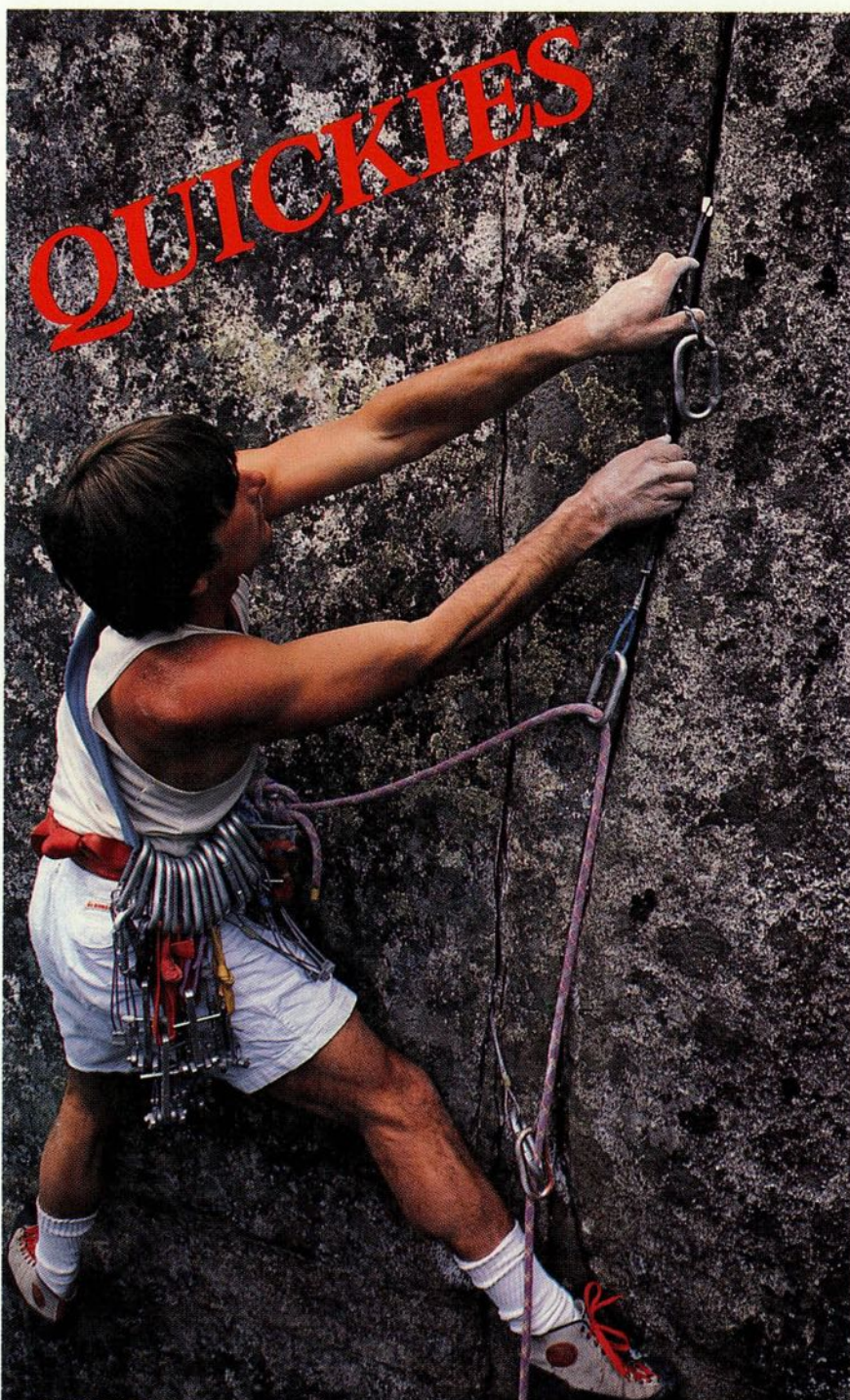
**Static Cling Direct** (5.11), Eberhorn-Higher Sister, NE face. Start just L of original crack start. Face (3 bolts) to R-facing book. Join original at its 1st bolt, straight up (avoid traverse). (FA: Barns; direct start, Goodwin, Bingham, 8/86).

**The Ranger's a Psycho** (5.10), BLM Rock (formation above the Twin Sisters Picnic Area). 2 bolts lead to crack in W-facing corridor. 50'. (FA: Bingham, Goodwin, Neil Cannon, 9/86).

**The Wages of Sin** (5.11 R), Yellow Wall. Between *King of Suede* and *Yellow Wall*. 2 marginal pins. (FA: Reid Dowdle, 6/86).

### Reference:

City of Rocks, Idaho, A Climbers Guide, *Dave Bingham*, 1985. *Guide in preparation*: *Dave Bingham*, Box 1932, Ketchum, ID 83340.



RON KAUK

FA: "BACK TO THE FUTURE" (5.12) YOSEMITE photo: KEVIN WORRALL

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## MASSACHUSETTS

'TIS THE SEASON

### The Iceman Cometh

Ice is where you find it in Massachusetts, and in any normal winter there is plenty. Between iced-up natural crags, roadcuts, gorges, and quarries, there is an excellent supply of frozen climbs.

The west face of Mt. Tom has a dependable collection of ice, undoubtedly because the ski resort on the mountain's other side keeps the water table high. This basalt escarpment sits atop an atrocious talus slope, giving a commanding view of the Connecticut River valley. There are approximately nine routes here, the obvious gullies — *Birch Gully* (NEI 5) on the left, and *Green Gully* (NEI 3) on the right — holding the most ice. Also of note are *Scottish Climb* (NEI 3+), a slender ice chimney left of *Birch Gully*, and *White Wing* (NEI 3+), the only steep route right of *Green Gully*. Most routes are 70 to 100 feet high; approach via Route 141 and park within the State Park.

Farley's Ledges, the state's best granite crag, ices up in winter much like a New Hampshire cliff. Unfortunately, its southeast exposure doesn't hold ice that well. Some routes are more sheltered than others and come into condition every year; these include the gully on the far right (NEI 3), and the routes far left in the Amphitheater area. When they do form up, the best routes are the magnificent ice sheets that drape over Farley's central slabs, which vary from a few inches to a foot in thickness, and are up to 170 feet high. The crag is on the north side of Route 2 in Erving.

With belay-off-your-bumper ease, the Route 8 roadcuts in Sandisfield and Colebrook (Connecticut) offer approachless ice climbing that will turn many a motorist's head. A half-mile north of the Connecticut state line is a series of 40- to 80-foot vertical flows, with a convenient highway pull-off across the way. Down the highway, the southmost roadcut offers a 150-foot, 80- to 85-degree sheet (NEI 4+). Right of that and just 20 feet from the highway is the most popular area, which contains a half-dozen steep climbs up to 75 feet. And just north of this area is another roadcut housing a 125-foot flow (NEI 5-).

In Becket, where the Boston-to-Albany Railroad follows the Westfield River, there are several north-facing roadcuts. The main one holds some massive bulges of blue ice. Most of the dozen climbs here are NEI 3 and 4, and up to 80 feet high. Park at the railroad arch near Middlefield, then walk east on the tracks to the climbs. If



Photo: Scott Kimball

*Cheshire Cheese* (NEI V).

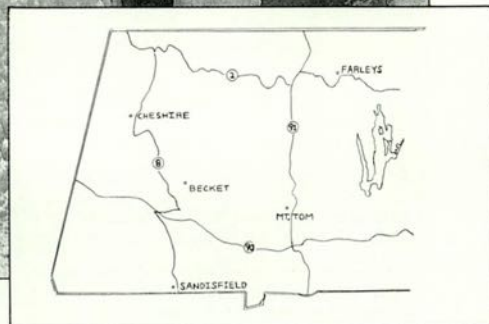
the ice bashing isn't exciting enough, the freights roaring by periodically might shake things up.

Perhaps the state's most impressive ice climb, *Cheshire Cheese* (NEI 5), is hidden in an abandoned limestone quarry in Cheshire. The slabs to the right (NEI 2) offer the only other ice here, although in an exceptional year, several death-defying smears nearby might form up enough to climb. This is private property, but climbers using discretion should encounter little trouble, as the ice lies a good distance

from any houses. From Cheshire, take the road that crosses the reservoir to its end, then go left on Lanesboro Road. Take the first right onto a dead end street, park at its end, and follow an old access road to the quarry, about a half-mile from the car.

There are many other frozen falls in the hills of Massachusetts to sink curved picks into, and several secret spots remain that rival anything yet done — reason enough to leave a warm hearth on a cold day.

— Scott Kimball





## SHAWANGUNKS

## More Bolts, New Routes, More Controversy

Despite Russ Clune's proclamation that most of the leading locals support the use of bolts (Basecamp, *Climbing* no. 98), there is considerable discord within the Gunks community on this issue.

Battle lines seem to be roughly drawn between those primarily in search of difficulty and those still favoring traditional style. Members of the former group point out that no one (here or elsewhere) is climbing anything "really hard" using traditional tactics, that without resorting to bolting there is nothing left to be done, and that the redpoint ascent is a purer form than sieging with ropes left in place. Traditionalist arguments center around issues like fair play, respect for the rock and surrounding area, and the long term value of self-restraint (such as leaving things for others to do in better style).

Probably the group most offended by what appeared to be an overnight abandonment of the area's longstanding no bolts-no pins ethic were those past activists who denied themselves good routes out of respect for tradition.

For a short time it appeared that all hell had broken loose, with five bolts placed in as many days, and the removal of a large tree from the base of a coveted face (soon to be *Pumping Pygmies*), but the situation now seems to have calmed considerably. In retrospect, a small group of protagonists appear to have been summoning the courage to do the dirty deed for some time, and once someone stepped over the line, a rash of others followed suit.

Those seeking to find fault with the bolt squad could point to the poor, contrived quality of at least one line, a poorly-placed bolt on another (the first ascensionists had never placed one before), and the fact that almost all the new climbs were being done with extensive toprope rehearsal (which apparently contributed to some bold climbing when they were finally done on lead).

Over the past few years, some of the world's leading climbers, such as Patrick Edlinger, Wolfgang Gullich, and Kim Carrigan, have visited the Gunks and ticked off all the area's hard new climbs with relative ease, each pronouncing that without bolts the area would see no routes that are hard by today's leading standards.

With the addition of bolts, and, more importantly, the acceptance and widespread use of currently-favored time-saving techniques (defined as a: rehearsing, b: aid, c: cheating), the num-

ber of 5.13 routes is rapidly swelling. Whether or not something has been lost in the process will no doubt remain a hotly-debated topic. It is however, interesting to observe the way that time-saving methods are gradually filtering down to easier climbs, or climbs where they are not necessarily needed.

A good example of this is *Survival of the Fittest* (*Climbing* no. 94), a new

5.13 which was led in traditional style, and left with enough fixed protection to make it a safe lead. After Scott Franklin completed the first ascent, it became an instant toprope favorite, with no locals aspiring to an on-sight second ascent. There seems to be something contradictory in claiming that there's nothing new to do without bolts, then showing no interest in "doing" a demanding new climb that counts as one of the area's best. (In today's jargon, people who have toproped *Survival* say they have done it).

A focal point of the current controversy is Al Diamond and Russ Clune's *Pumping Pygmies* at Skytop. After a 10-inch diameter tree was re-

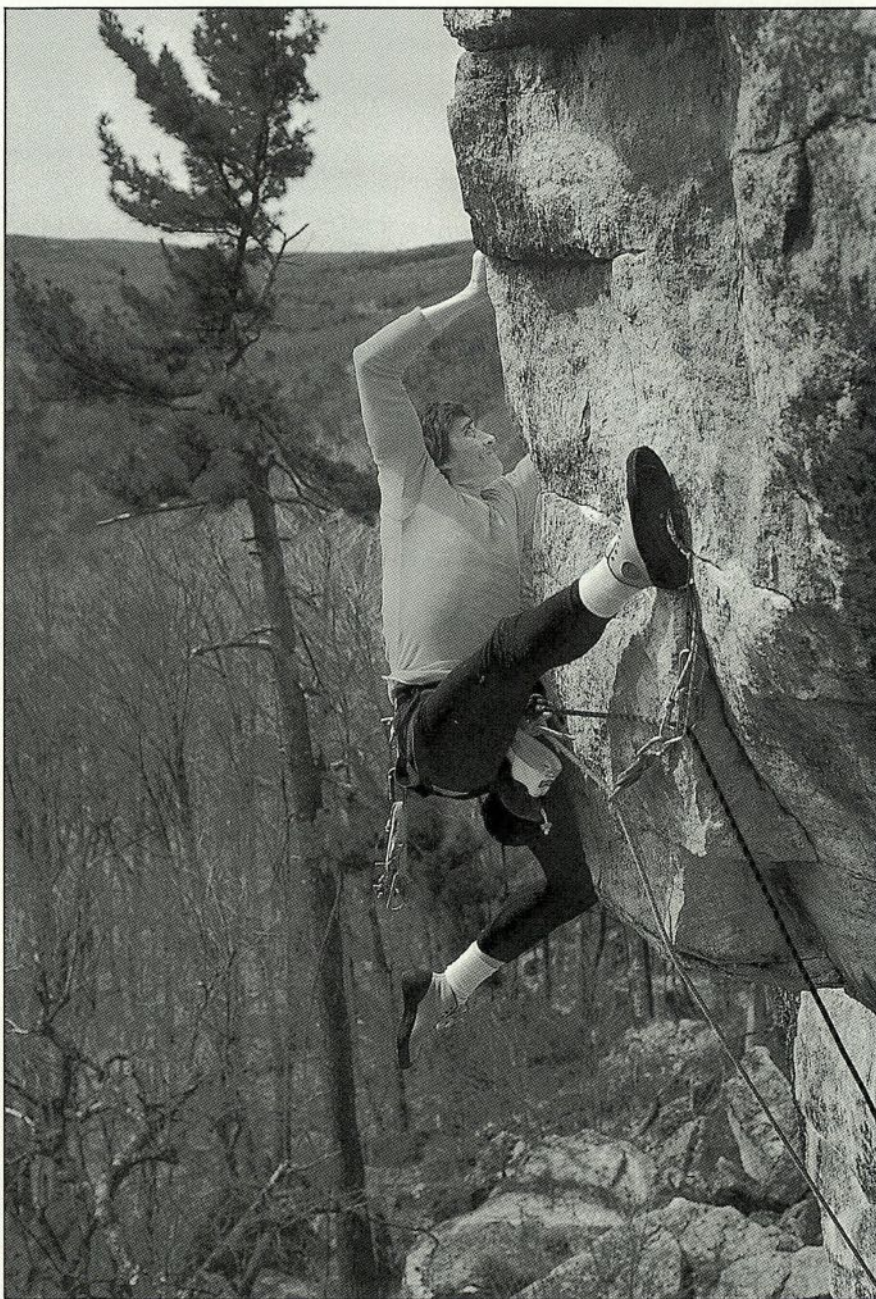



Photo: Russ Clune

Jack Mileski attempting *Clairvoyance* (5.13b/c).



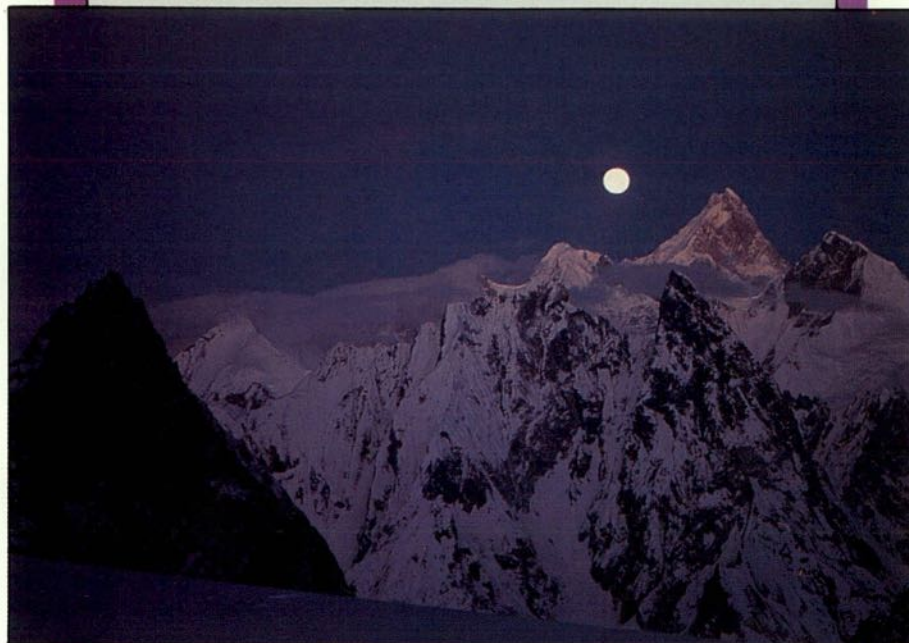
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moved from the base (its branches interfered with the climb), the route was top roped, fixed on rappel (pin and a bolt), then led. Soon after, Bill Ravitch removed the fixed pieces, causing even more discord and leading to a new name, *Ravitched*.

—Rosie Andrews

## SHAWANGUNKS

**Pangallactic Gargleblaster** (5.11+), Skytop. Arete L of *Pilgrim's Progress*. (FA:?).

**Crank'N'File** (5.11), Skytop. Thin seam and edge R of *Single File*. (FA:?).

**Pumping Pygmies** aka **Ravitched** (5.13a/b), Skytop. Face R of *Single File*, L of *Max Factor*. (FA: Diamond, Clune, 86).

**Wipe Up** (5.10+), Skytop. Follow corner at L end of *Wipe Out* belay ledge to face and thin cracks. (FA: Darrow Kirkpatrick, Caroline Blizzard, 7/86).

**Milk and Cookies** (5.10-), Skytop. 50' R of *Simple Pleasures*, at base of white arete. Over bulge below roof, R to corner, then L to nose of arete. (FA: Kirkpatrick, Blizzard, 7/86).

**Clumsy Foot** (5.8-), Skytop. Obvious R-facing corner L of *Manual Labor*. (FA:?).

**Alphabet Arete** (5.10+), Trapps. Just L of *DD Route*. Pin. (FA:?).

**Unknown** (5.10 R/X), Trapps. Between *J'Acuse* and *Absurdlard*. (FA:?).

**Future Schock** (5.12- R), Trapps. Clean white face between *Left Hand* and *All Thumbs*. Bolt? (FA: Kirkpatrick, Frank Minunni, 9/86).

**Renaissance** (5.12), Trapps. Prow and roof just R and down from *All Thumbs*. Fixed nut, pin. (FA: Kirkpatrick, 9/86).

**Hawaii Five Ten** (5.10- R), Trapps. Crack and face R of *Tennish Anyone?* (FA:?).

**Boron Destroyer** (5.10+), Trapps. Thin seam L of *Fancy Free*. (FA:?).

**Clairvoyance** (5.13 b/c), Lost City. Face 15' L of *Survival of the Fittest*. (FA: Jeff Gruenberg, Jack Mileski, 9/86).

**Greaseballs and Junglebunnies** (5.11+ R), Lost City. Thin seam around corner R of *Gravity's Rainbow*. (FA: Minunni, Mike Freeman, Kirkpatrick, 10/85).

**Black Boys and Backsliders** (5.11+), Lost City. Corner and face R of *Gravity's Rainbow*. Direct start (5.12-) has not been led. (FA: Freeman, Minunni, 10/85).

**Abdominus** (5.12c), Bonticou. Obvious V-slot below and R of *Arachnius*. (FA: Colin Lantz, Chris Bay, 9/86).

**Better Late than Never** (5.8), Millbrook. 100' R of *Apollo Theater*. 2 pitches up obvious R-facing corner. (FA:?).

### References:

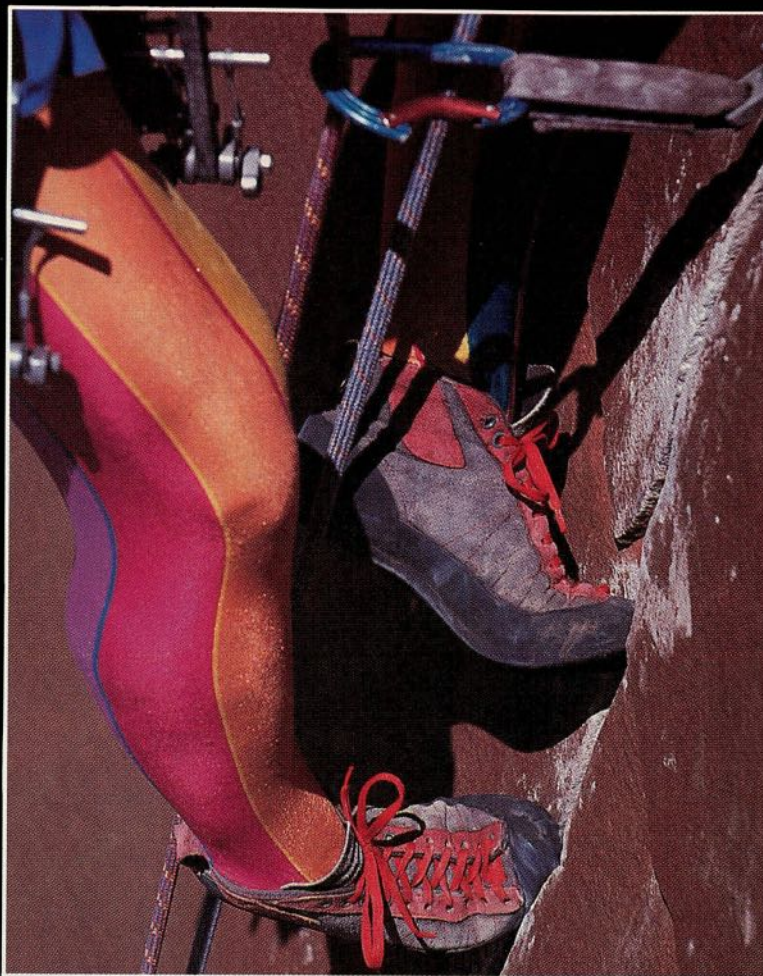
The Gunks Guide, Todd Swain, 1986. Shawangunks Rock Climbs, Richard Williams, 1980. New guide in preparation: *Rock and Snow*, New Paltz.

### Corrections:

Climbing no. 97, p.19, the first ascent of *Twilight Zone* was by Jeff Gruenberg and Jack Mileski rather than Gruenberg as reported.

# CALMA

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

### CATHEDRAL, WHITEHORSE, BAND M

## Action Limited but Fierce; Liquid Sky 5.13!

Lousy weather, stylistic controversy, and general lunacy characterized New Hampshire's 1986 rock season. When it wasn't raining, it was cold, and even when the weather did allow a little climbing, it was dog-eat-dog.

This year's soap opera unfolded when Peter Beal rappelled down and placed five bolts on his new face pitch, *A Room with a View*, just right of *Reverse Camber* on Cathedral Ledge. With Tom Nonis and Steve Angelini,

Beal led the route with no falls at 5.11+/5.12. Before the day was over Steve Larson, Paul Boissonneault, Scott Stevenson, and Lonnie Smith chopped the route on grounds of poor style. With visiting British climber Andy Holmes (who seemed to think the weather here was just great), Larson returned, placed a bolt on the lead at half-height, and went for the top. "It was bloody terrifying," says Holmes. "I kept pluggin' things into the crack 'cause I didn't trust the belay tree."

After a couple of falls, Larson came down.

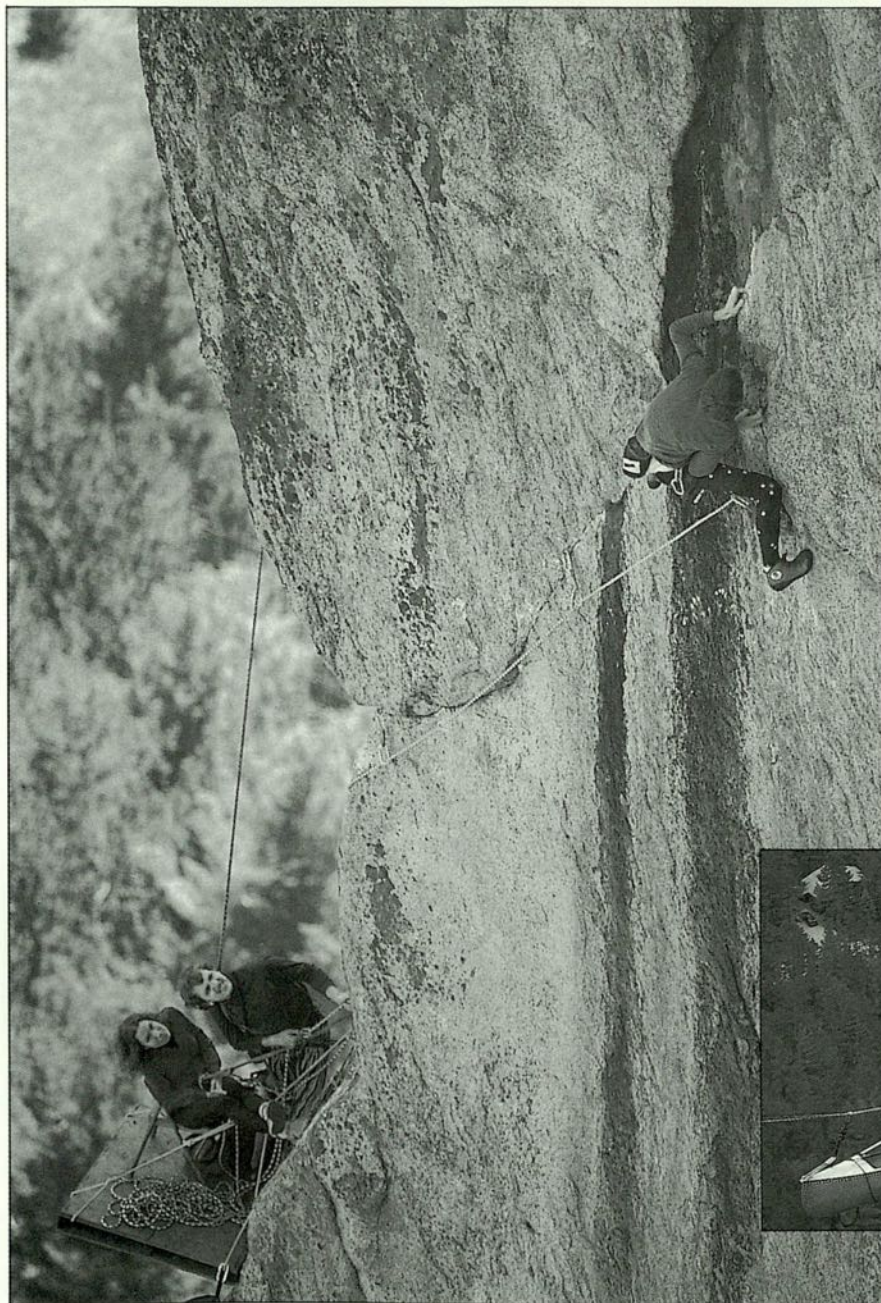
"Chapter six, Jason Lives," said Jim Ewing as he dangled Larson's broken bolt between his fingers. The bolt had snapped when Ewing accidentally stepped on it while rappelling down for a top-rope ascent. If Larson had broken it in a fall, the results would have been horrible.

John Bouchard then replaced Beal's bolts on the lead, but was unable to do the last moves. With the route now thoroughly abused, Jim Surette, just back from an outstanding trip out west (see Basecamp, *Climbing* no. 98), gave it the finishing touch, leading it with three falls and rating it 5.11. His comment: "I can't believe all of North Conway spent so much time quibbling about a 40-foot piece of rock. It's ridiculous."

Later in the season Surette brought 5.13 to the area when he freed the last pitch of *Liquid Sky* after many attempts. Working off his custom plywood belay ledge, he slowly whittled away at the pitch until he could eventually do it with one hang. "I'll get it, but maybe not this season," he said as fall was fast approaching. But then one last try gave him a no-fall ascent. The completed *Liquid Sky*, with pitches of 5.10 (runout), 5.11+, 5.12-, and 5.13b, is surely one of the hardest routes in the East.

On the lighter side, John Bouchard gave us all a new way to get spaced out when he began jumping off the area crags with his Para-Sail. Successful leaps were made from Cathedral and Cannon, as well as one particularly hairy jump off Whitehorse in which it is reported that he "had to lift up his feet to clear the tree-tops" before finding a landing spot. Look out, this may catch on.

Also worth noting was the area's first canoean traverse by Peter Lewis, Dave Rose, and Jeff Brewer. The traverse from the top of *The Prow* to *Camber* took seven hours and landed the trio right in the hands of the irritated local police. "We let you guys get away with this," they said, "and



Jim Surette on *Liquid Sky* (5.13b).  
World's first canoean traverse.



pretty soon everyone will want to do it. The next thing you know we'll see people going across in outhouses." A hefty fine was threatened but nothing ever became of it.

— S. Peter Lewis

### Cathedral Ledge

**Liquid Sky** (5.13b). Var up *Yellow Brick Wall* face. (FA: final pitch: Surette, 9/86).

**Medusa** (5.12). Free version. Thin crack/face R of *Lichen Delight*. (FFA: Surette, 9/86).

**Endless Summer** (5.12). Var between *Tourist Treat* and *Camber*. Bolts. (FA: Peter Beal, Chris Hanson, 8/86).

**The Joke Book** (5.12). Short R-curving arch between *Black Lung* and *The Book of Solemnity*. (FA: Bob Parrot, 8/86).

**Kill Your Television** (5.11). Thin crack L of direct finish to *Airation*. (FA: Beal, Hanson, 7/86).

**Petty Larceny** (5.12 tr). Orange face L of *Kill Your Television*. (FA: Beal, 7/86).

**One Hit to the Body** (5.11 + /5.12). 2 pitch face L of *Funhouse*. (FA: 1st pitch, Tom Callaghan, John Strand; 2nd pitch, Chris Gill, Hanson, 5/86).

**A Room with a View** (5.11/5.12). Short face pitch R of *Reverse Camber*. (FA: Beal, 6/86).

### WHITEHORSE LEDGE

**Brown Star** (5.10). R of last pitch of *Surreal*. (FA: Parrott, Rob Adair, 4/86).

**The Taint** (5.11 +). Just R of *Brown Star*. (FA: Parrott, Adair, 4/86).

**Droid Where Prohibited** (5.10 +). Face R of *Horse of a Different Color*. (FA: Ward Smith, Jon Regini, Chris Smith, summer/86).

### BAND M LEDGE

**Three Wags** (5.10). After 5.11 + crux of *Heavy Weather Sailing*, move R under roof to dihedral. (FA: Parrott, Barry Rugo, Harry Breilman, 10/86).

**Sacred Space** (5.12). Large dihedral L of *The Steps*. 2 pitches. Excellent. (FA: Parrot, Steve Damboise, 8/86).

**Leather And Lycra** (5.12-). "Climbs what is described as the easy walk off in the guidebook." L of *Way Radical*. (FA: Parrott, Damboise, 10/86).

**Doggie Style** (5.11). Short arete R of *Finally Done*. Protect in tree. (FA: Parrott, Damboise, Rugo, Breilman, 10/86).

**Altered States** (5.12). Horizontal crack leading L across wall above *Heavy Weather Sailing*. (FA: Parrot, Dan Hutchins, 10/86).

### SUNDOWN LEDGE

**Fat Girls with Acne** (5.10 + /5.11). Corner and crack link-up L of *Rough Boys*. 2 pitches. (FA: Steve Larson, Andy Holmes, 9/86).

**Generally Motored** (5.10 A2). Corner, roof, thin crack somewhere R of *Little Flush*. (FA: Dave Anderson, Dave Sheehan, summer/86).

### PAINTED WALLS

**Straits of Magellan** (5.9 +). Free version. "Not worth the walk in." (FA: Larson, Chris Gill, Chris Noonan, 10/86).

### JOCKEY CAP (Fryburg, Maine)

**Hammerhead** (5.12). Horrendous short roof pitch. Old aid route. (FFA: Parrott, 7/86).

### WHITES LEDGE

**Groovedogs** (5.10). Shallow groove L of *International Mountain Crack*. 1 bolt. (FA: Tom Stryker, Tony Tulip, 6/86).

### MT. SUGARLOAF

**Get The Lead Out** (5.8 +). Start on *Bullet*, stay R. 3 short pitches. (FA: Todd Swain, Peggy Buckley, 7/86).

**Sugar And Spice** (5.9 +). Slab R of *Brown Sugar*. Bolts. (FA: Swain, Buckley, 7/86).

### References:

Rock Climbs in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, *Ed Webster*, 1982. New guide in preparation: *Ed Webster*, P.O. Box 210, Eldorado Springs, CO 80025.

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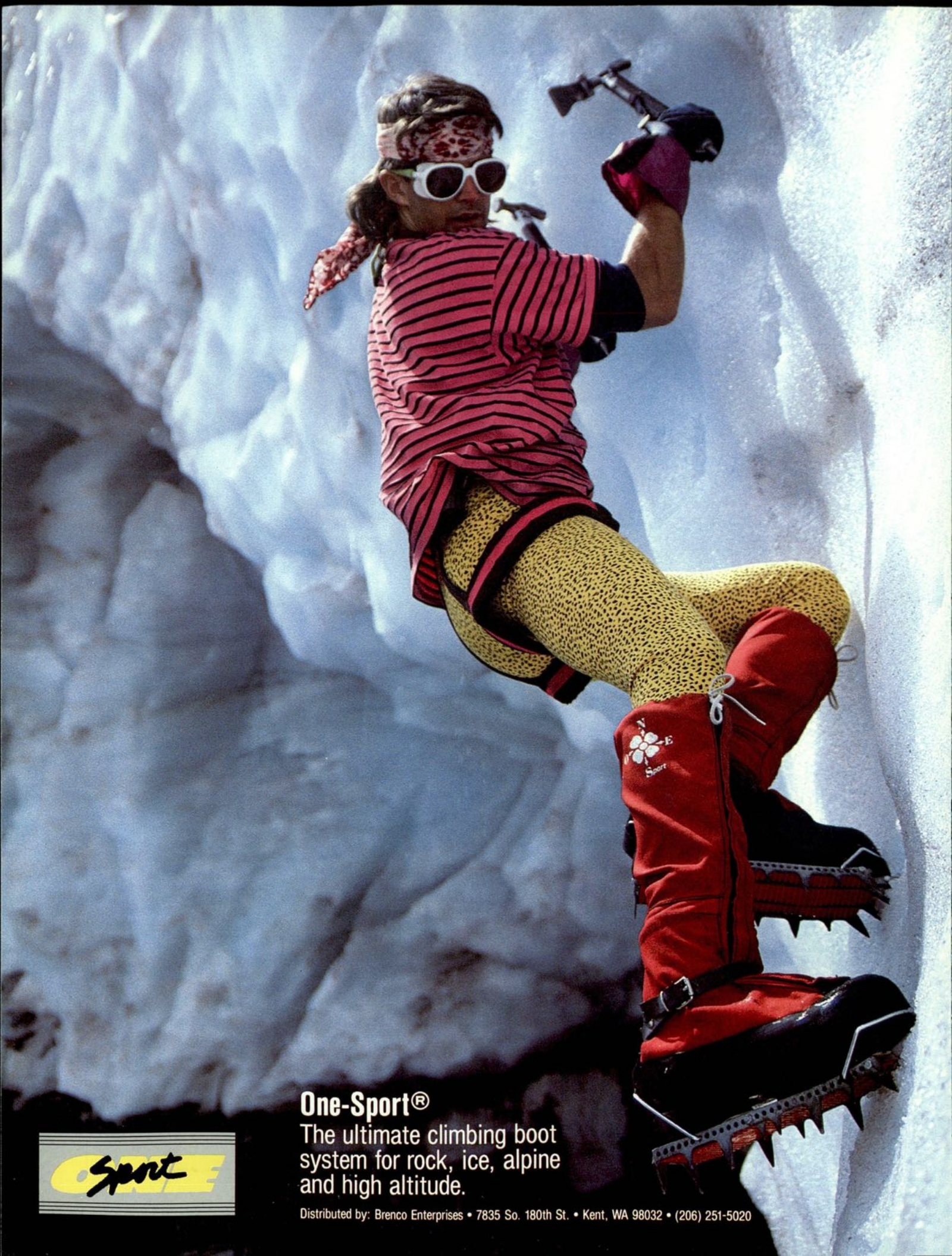
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SMITH ROCKS

# Rude Boys, East Face of Monkey Face fall to Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Tribout

Jean-Baptiste Tribout, one of France's leading climbers, stunned Smith Rock locals by bagging the first ascent of *Rude Boys* (8a+) and the second ascent of *East Face of Monkey Face* (5.13d) during a two week period in October.

Alan Watts, shown on the second crux section of *Rude Boys* in *Climbing* no. 98, had been working on the route for nearly two years, his best ascent with a single restpoint (5.13b A0). Not only did Tribout eliminate the restpoint, he found easier sequences through both of *Rude Boys'* cruxes, resulting in a grade much easier than anyone had anticipated (8a+ is equivalent to 5.13c).

Tribout also made the long-awaited second ascent of Watts' *East Face of Monkey Face*. The crux pitch, originally climbed in two pitches (5.12d, 5.13c) separated by a hanging stance, had been climbed only by Watts, his best ascent being a yoyo effort in September 1985. On Tribout's first attempt, he managed to flash the 5.12d section, an incredible feat in itself. Only Patrick Edlinger's 1985 flash ascents of *Genesis* (5.12d) in Eldorado and *Thunderdome* (5.12d) in the Shawangunks can match Tribout's performance on the American scene.

After three days of lead rehearsal, Tribout finally climbed the entire pitch in a continuous no-fall effort, clipping the rope through preplaced protection. Tribout's rating of 8b — or 5.13d — confirmed Watts' initial grading and the fact that the *East Face of Monkey Face* is the hardest technical free pitch in the United States.

Tribout also made the third ascent of *Darkness at Noon* (5.13a), redpointing it first try after a previous day of lead rehearsal. Soon after, the route received three more redpoint ascents by Belgian Anrould T'Kint, an unidentified German climber, and Tribout's compatriot Jean Marc Troussier. Interestingly, of *Darkness at Noon's* six ascents, only one has been by an American (who else but Watts).

Not only is this group of Europeans repeating Smith's most difficult lines, with consistent flash performances on moderate 5.12's such as *Watts Tots* (5.12b) and *Latest Rage* (5.12b), they are beginning to search out new routes.

Troussier has already redpointed two new lines (both 7b+) between *Watts Tots* and *Sunshine Dihedral*, drilling the bolts in typical Smith Rocks fashion — on rappel — but in atypical

French fashion — their cordless power drill weighed too much to bring over.

Their most ambitious project is the left wall of *Sunshine Dihedral*, bolted and bearing the obsession of Tribout. According to Watts, Tribout thinks the line may be 8b+/8c which would be as hard or harder than any route in France and perhaps the world! If Tribout succeeds, Watts believes that it would raise U.S. standards "by a greater amount than the *Grand Illusion* raised U.S. standards when Yaniro did it in 1979, over *The Phoenix*."

Tribout thinks he may not have enough time, despite his plans to work on nothing else during his remaining two weeks in the States (as of November 1). "He looks good on it, but at this point he hasn't put together substantial sections," observes Watts, adding, "I'd be surprised if he did it this visit — he plans to be back next year. But you just don't know."

So what does Watts, now a full-time business student at the University of Oregon, think about all this?

"Smith Rocks will never be the same. It's helped the other locals realize that these routes really aren't that bad. The French reaffirmed what became obvious to me in Europe, that the climbs in France are quite a bit harder. A lot more people will be visiting Smith Rocks, because of the press this trip will receive, and also by having a route which may be the hardest in the world waiting to be done. Smith Rocks will see a lot more new routes. We're planning to really work hard, largely using their tactics — we have a Bosch power drill."

## Stop Press

## Tribout does Left Wall of Sunshine; Introduces 5.14

The leading American standard jumped at least two letter grades with Jean-Baptiste Tribout's startling success on the *Left Wall of Sunshine Dihedral*. Calling it 8b+, Tribout believes it is one of the three hardest "gymnastic" routes in the world, the only other 8b+'s being in France (*Le Rage de Vivre*) and in Switzerland (*Ravage*), both the work of another Frenchman, Antoine Le Ménéstrel.

Alan Watts, who had previously worked on the route from a toprope,

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Marc Francis Twilight

photo by:

Jonathan Carpenter





describes the line as combining a 5.14a pitch with a 5.13c pitch, the only shake-out point being two, one-finger holes, with quarter-sized edges for the feet, on a dead-vertical wall. Both Tribout and Watts concur that the American rating for the *Left Wall of Sunshine* would be at least 5.14b.

"It is a very long route compared to the hardest route in Europe," said an ecstatic Tribout a few days after his ascent. "*Ravage* is very short, 15m, and very overhanging compared to

the *Left Wall*, at 43m. They are a different sort of problem, but the route is the same grade for sure."

When asked if he realized what this did to American standards, Tribout chuckled. "Well, you have just one route that is 8b, *The East Face of Monkey Face*. In France we have ten 8b's and two 8b+'s including the route in Switzerland. These routes are different than here, to climb 8b+ in America is just different."

The *Left Wall of Sunshine* took

Tribout nearly two weeks to come away with a redpoint ascent, but he was "very surprised" that he had done it so quickly. He left for France four days later.

The 24-year old Tribout, nicknamed Jibé by his fellow countrymen, is sponsored by EB and Mammut, but will still need to scrape up the money for a hoped-for trip back to the U.S. next spring. Perhaps by then there will be an American capable of matching JB's outstanding breakthrough.



## EUROPE

### INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

## Lynn Hill First in Grand Prix D'Escalade U.S. Team Third in Soviet Speed Contest

Lynn Hill in France and an American team in the Soviet Union climbed their way into the international spotlight this fall.

Hill easily won the women's division of the Grand Prix De France D'Escalade Pyrenees 1986, and Todd Skinner, Russ Clune, Beth Wald, and Dan Michaels took the third-place team title in the 1986 USSR International Speed Climbing Championships.

The French contest was held over four days in mid-September on the limestone of Troubat, near Toulouse in southern France. Hill, who placed second in a similar Italian contest in July, cruised through the qualification rounds, then easily outclimbed the rest of women during the finals.

Unfortunately, Frenchwoman Catherine Destivelle, who won the Italian contest, did not show up in Troubat, putting off a return match

### Russian in the fast lane, USSR Speed Climbing Championships.

between what many are heralding as the two finest women climbers in the world. Ron Kauk and Alan Watts both competed but were eliminated during the qualifications. A relatively unknown Frenchman, Gilbert Ogier won the contest, followed by Jean-Baptiste Tribout, who recently repeated "America's hardest route" (see Oregon report).

The American men did much better during the four-day speed competition held in October in Yalta, using their "galloping" technique to land Skinner fourth and Clune fifth in the Individual Men's division. Although Wald took third in the second of two women's events, a fall in the first event took her out of the top ten. Michaels was injured and chose not to participate.

Ten teams competed in the Soviet meet, most representing Eastern Bloc countries. There were three events for the men, a 40m top rope (5.11b), 60m top rope (5.10a), and a four-pitch route climbed by two-person teams. Climbers were penalized for stepping outside of red boundary lines bordering the routes and eliminated from the event if a fall was taken.

"All in all, it was a quick week on routes we really didn't have time to savor," comments Clune, "The Russians are really fast... but probably not unbeatable if speed is worth training for." The contest is held every two years, although the organizing committee is considering making it an annual event.

This year's team was organized by Wald, who speaks fluent Russian and had the necessary enthusiasm to overcome bureaucratic foot-dragging and skepticism among the American climbing community (the American Alpine Club offered no support and apparently asked that they not represent themselves as *the* American team). Donations are requested to help defray the costs of the team's expenses (send to U.S. Speed Climbing Team, 1833 Pearl, Boulder, CO 80302).

### RESULTS

#### Grand Prix De France D'Escalade Pyrenees 1986

##### Men's Division

- 1) Gilbert Ogier (France)
- 2) Jean-Baptiste Tribout (France)
- 3) tie: Didier Raboutou (France)  
Robert Cortijo (France)
- 5) Chris Gore (Britain)

##### Women's Division

- 1) Lynn Hill (USA)
- 2) Corin Lebraun (France)
- 3) Franciose Lepron (France)
- 4) Rene Guiren (France)

#### 1986 USSR International Speed Climbing Championships

##### Team Competition

- 1) USSR
- 2) Poland
- 3) USA
- 4) Bulgaria
- 5) Romania
- 6) West Germany
- 7) Japan
- 8) East Germany
- 9) Czechoslovakia
- 10) Hungary

##### Individual Competition (Overall)

- 1) Valeri Balezin (USSR)
- 2) Andrzej Marcisz (Poland)
- 3) Dionisie Daro (Romania)
- 4) Todd Skinner (USA)
- 5) Russ Clune (USA)
- 6) Gheorghe Jimnga (Romania)
- 7) Vasil Nikolov (Bulgaria)
- 8) Isao Ikeda (Japan)
- 9) Frantisek Kori (Czechoslovakia)
- 10) Jorn Beilke (East Germany)



## HIMALAYA

### CHINA

## Swiss Pair Climbs Everest in Record Time

Climbing mostly at night to take advantage of better snow conditions, Erhard Loretan and Jean Troillet made an astounding ascent of the North Face of Everest at the end of August. Following the Japanese direct start to the Hornbein Couloir, the Swiss pair took 43 hours round trip, descending the same route in just 3 1/2 hours of glissading from the summit.

The pair started up the route with two others, fellow Swiss Sandro Godio and Frenchman Pierre Beghin. Climbing through the night, they reached the snowfield below the Hornbein Couloir (c. 7500m), bivouacking there at midday. Godio, having dislocated a knee, headed back down. The three remaining set off at about 7 that evening, but Beghin turned back shortly afterwards.

Loretan and Troillet continued climbing through the night, encountering thigh-deep snow on the upper part

of the route. Roger Marshall, on the North Col, observed their progress as they neared the summit: "They were switching leads. You could see them lying down; the guy that wasn't leading would be lying flat on his face in the snow while the other broke the trail ahead."

The ascent was made during the monsoon after a lengthy acclimatization period. Loretan and Troillet, who made a very efficient ascent of the East Face of Dhaulagiri last December with Pierre-Alain Steiner, adopted similar lightweight tactics for their Everest climb: no oxygen, no tent, no sleeping bags, no ropes. All they carried was what food they could fit in their pockets, a bit of spare clothing, and a stove for melting snow. Although allowing little room for error, this approach is obviously successful on routes with the right combination of moderate difficulty and directness of line.

Poor weather and snow conditions foiled Marshall's attempts to solo the North Col/Northeast Ridge, although he reached the North Col itself four times in July and August. Towards the end of August, he was also under some pressure to abandon the route: "The Chinese wanted me to go, and the Mallory expedition wanted me to go, and I was feeling a bit unwanted. And also, I was getting a bit tired." In hopes of finding better snow conditions, he shifted his attentions to the steeper and more direct North Face route just completed by Loretan and Troillet.

Starting from an advanced base-camp at 5800m on the Middle Rongbuk Glacier, and climbing through the night, Marshall reached the snowfield below the Hornbein. Tired from his earlier efforts on the peak, and faced with still more deep, unconsolidated snow, he elected to retreat.

Marshall, who climbed Kangchenjunga alone in 1984, plans to return to Everest as soon as he can, commenting: "It's quite big, but I didn't feel I couldn't do it. I've done two-thirds of the route, and I did that in one night. One way or the other, I'm going to be up there again next year."

### PAKISTAN

## K2 Tragedy Unfolds

Since our report in *Climbing* no.98, further details of the events of the first two weeks of August on K-2 have become available.

On the evening of August 2, seven climbers in three separate parties were established in Camp IV (8000m) at the top of the prominent shoulder on the Abruzzi Ridge. Alan Rouse (Britain) and Dobrosława Miodowicz-Wolf (Poland) were climbing as a pair, as were Julie Tullis (Britain) and Kurt Diemberger (Austria). Willi Bauer, Hannes Wieser, and Alfred Imtizer (Austria) made up the third group. All utilized camps and fixed ropes left in place by a South Korean expedition.

Using oxygen, three members of the South Korean team reached the summit on August 3 and returned to Camp IV, where Rouse and company were taking a rest day.

A strong Polish team had been active on the South-Southwest Ridge, on the "Magic Line" attempted by Messner in 1979. They had established three camps and fixed 2500m of rope, and started their summit push on July 30. After nights in Camps II and III, and two higher bivouacs, Przemysław Piasecki, Wojciech Wrocz, and Peter Pozik also reached the summit on August 3. The trio elected to descend the Abruzzi, reaching the now-crowded Camp IV after dark. Wrocz never showed up, and is presumed to have rappelled off the end of a fixed rope.

Photo: Ed Webster/Mountain Imagery.



*The North Face of Everest from the Lho La; the Hornbein Couloir is the prominent gash just below the summit, with the Japanese start leading directly up to it. Inset: Jean Troillet in Beijing, receiving his Everest certificate from CMA official Shang Zi Ping.*

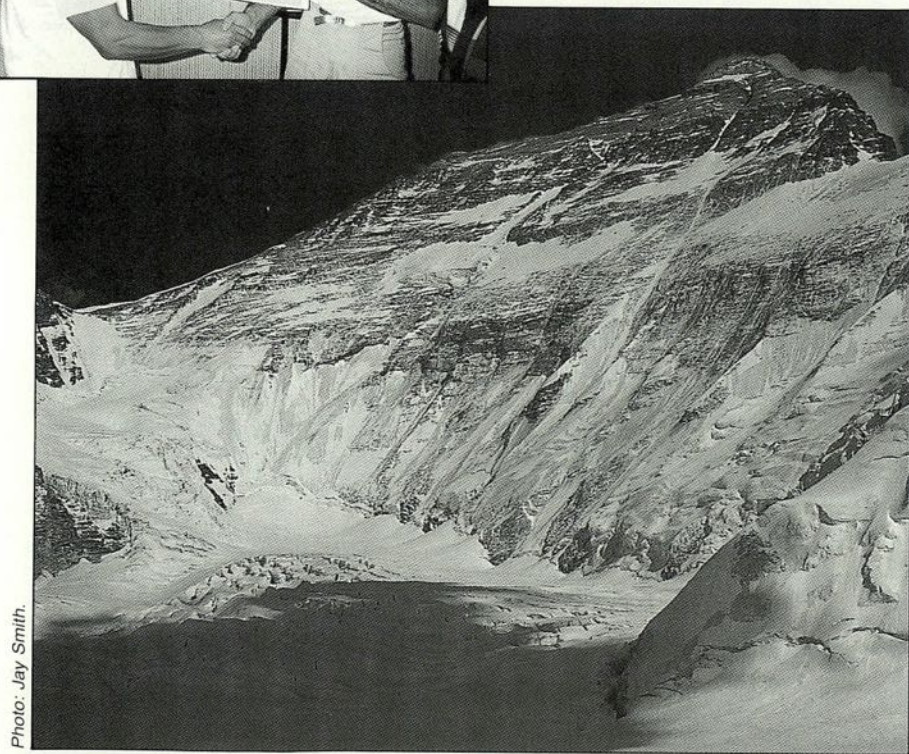


Photo: Jay Smith.



The Poles and Koreans continued their descent on August 4, eventually reaching basecamp without further incident. In the meantime, the British/Austrian/Polish group set out for the top in rapidly deteriorating weather conditions. Imtizer and Bauer were first to reach the summit, at about 4 pm, followed shortly afterwards by Rouse. Miodowicz-Wolf and Wieser turned back lower down, and all five reached Camp IV safely that evening. At around 7 pm, Diemberger and Tullis reached the top, but unable to regain Camp IV before nightfall, were forced to bivouac in the open.

On the morning of August 5, Diemberger and Tullis regained Camp IV. By this time, the weather had worsened considerably, with winds over 100 km/h and temperatures of -30°C. The pair's tent was destroyed; Tullis moved in with the Austrian trio, while Diemberger squeezed in with Rouse and Miodowicz-Wolf.

Unable to descend, the group sat out the increasingly-violent storm. Sometime during the night of August 7, Julie Tullis died in her sleep, presumably of high-altitude exhaustion.

By August 8 the group had run out of food and fuel, but the storm continued unabated. The weather showed some signs of improvement on the morning of August 10, although it was still very cold and windy, and the decision was made to descend.

By this time, the survivors had spent eight nights at 8000m, the last six in storm, with minimal food and fuel. Alan Rouse, too weak to move and drifting in and out of delirium, was left still alive, as there was no hope of evacuating him given the weakened state of the rest of the party.

Imtizer and Wieser collapsed soon after starting the descent, and were also left for dead. Bauer, Diemberger and Miodowicz-Wolf continued through waist-deep snow, high winds and heavy fog to Camp III at about 7300m, which had been destroyed by the wind. The trio pressed on towards Camp II (6400m), which Diemberger and Bauer reached late that evening. Dobrosława Miodowicz-Wolf never arrived, and is presumed to have fallen from the fixed ropes above Camp II. The Austrian pair waited in camp

*Continued on page 29.*

## NEPAL

### Messner's Milestone



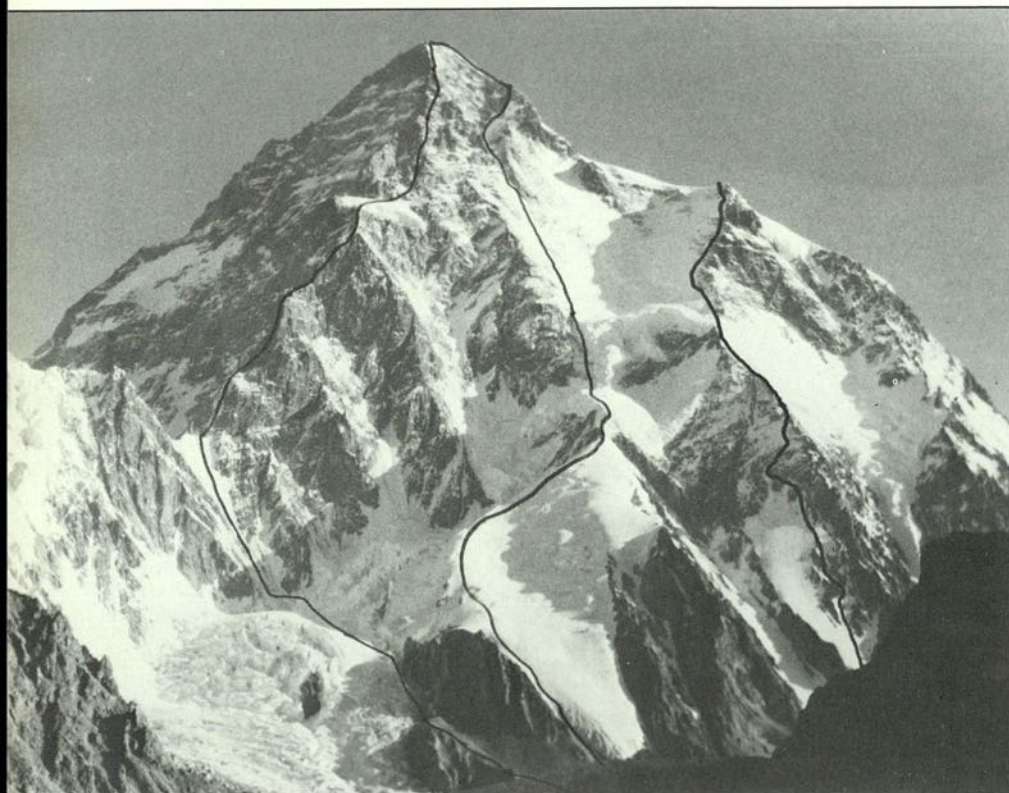
In mid-October, Reinhold Messner and Hans Kammerlander reached the summit of Lhotse. For Messner, it was the culmination of a 16-year quest to climb all 14 of the world's 8000m peaks.

It's not too difficult to put Messner's climbs into perspective: he is clearly the most influential and prolific Himalayan climber in history. Coming from a very strong alpine background, he participated in several traditionally-organized expeditions in the early 1970's. After this, he concentrated on his own lightweight expeditions, bringing the lessons of the Alps to play on the giants of the Himalaya.

All of Messner's climbs have been made without the benefit of supplemental oxygen; most have been made in alpine style, or with a minimal use of fixed ropes and camps. He has not only climbed all of the 8000m peaks, but has climbed two routes on four of them: Nanga Parbat, Everest, and Gasherbrum I & II.

Messner's most significant climbs have influenced the course of Himalayan climbing immeasurably. Moreover, they were acts of vision. In 1975, he and Peter Habeler made the first ascent of the Northwest Face of Hidden Peak; this was the first time an 8000m peak had been climbed in pure alpine style by a two-man team. Three years later, the pair stunned the mountaineering world again by climbing Everest without oxygen, a feat that many believed was physiologically impossible.

As if that wasn't enough, Messner returned to Nanga Parbat later in 1978. Alone, he made the first ascent of a new line on the Diamir Face, scene of his and brother Gunther's tragic descent in 1970. And in 1980, he was back on Everest: this time, he soloed the North Col/Northeast Ridge, during the stormy monsoon season. The magnitude of these climbs — solo, without oxygen, and without any support climbers — is almost beyond comprehension.



*The South Face of K2, with the 1986 routes marked (left to right): South-Southwest Ridge, South Face (incorrectly captioned in Climbing No. 98), and the new Yugoslav line. The latter was climbed in a 17-hour solo effort by Toma Cesen; after reaching the Abruzzi Ridge, he descended that route in worsening weather on August 4. Camp IV, the scene of the British/Polish/Austrian ordeal, is on the prominent sunlit shoulder just left and above the end of the Yugoslav route.*

*Photo: Savenc Franci.*



# 8000

## **1970 Nanga Parbat (8125m)**

This traditionally-organized expedition made the first ascent of the Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat, one of the largest mountain walls in the world. Reinhold and his brother Gunther reached the summit together, but were forced to descend the unprepared Diamir face on the opposite side of the mountain when Gunther became ill with the altitude. Near the end of the descent, Reinhold went ahead to scout a safe route through the lower section of the glacier. During the short time they were separated, Gunther was killed in an ice avalanche.

## **1972 Manaslu (8156m)**

This was also a traditional expedition, which made the first ascent of the South Face of Manaslu. Very difficult technical climbing was encountered in the lower sections, and a fourth camp was established just below the summit plateau. Tragedy struck once again, when Franz Jaeger disappeared in a sudden storm on the descent, and later when Andi Schlick was lost while searching for Jaeger.

## **1975 Hidden Peak (8068m)**

Messner and Peter Habeler's first ascent of the Northwest Face was made in three days of alpine-style climbing. This was the first time that an 8000-meter peak had been climbed by a two-man team, with no fixed ropes, oxygen, or support of any kind. It was a very pure and bold ascent, and a major breakthrough which paved the way for future climbers.

## **1978 Everest (8848m) Nanga Parbat (8125m)**

Messner and Habeler climbed the world's highest point without supplemental oxygen, becoming the first to do so. At the time, many thought it impossible for anyone to survive such great heights without bottled air. The pair was attached to a larger expedition, and climbed via the standard South Col route, factors which undoubtedly helped im-

mensely in their success. Nevertheless, this was a major step into the unknown, and a landmark climb.

A few months after Everest, Messner returned to Nanga Parbat alone, making the first ascent of a new line on the Diamir Face in an epic 12-day round trip from basecamp. In some ways, this was the highlight of Messner's Himalayan career: a new route on an 8000 meter peak, solo, with no oxygen and no support climbers.

## **1979 K-2 (8611m)**

With the help of a strong, six-man team, Messner originally planned an ascent of the "Magic Line," a route which wasn't completed until 1986 by a Polish team. However, poor weather and limited time forced Messner's party to switch to the Abruzzi Ridge. The route was equipped with three camps and some fixed ropes, after which Messner and Michel Dacher made a routine, if rapid ascent.

## **1980 Everest (8848m)**

In what can only be described as a visionary climb, Messner soloed the peak from the Chinese side, during the monsoon, via the North Col and Northeast Ridge. Although technically easy, the commitment was immense. After an extensive acclimatization period, Messner climbed the route in just three days from an advanced camp at 6500 meters.

## **1981 Shishpangma (8013m)**

Messner climbed the lowest of the 8000m peaks by a minor variation on the regular route on the north side, with Friedl Mutschlechner.

## **1982 Kangchenjunga (8598m) Gasherbrum II (8035m) Broad Peak (8047m)**

In the spring, Messner, Mutschlechner and Ang Dorje Sherpa climbed Kangchenjunga via the North Face and North Ridge; Messner now was the first person to have

climbed the three highest peaks in the world.

It was to be a big year, for a few months later he went to Pakistan, and climbed the normal routes on both Gasherbrum II and Broad Peak in rapid succession; his companions on those were Pakistani climbers Nazir Sabir and Sher Khan.

Although all three peaks were technically easy climbs, this was the first time that a single person had climbed so many 8000m peaks in a single year. Messner later said that this season enabled him to foresee climbing all 14 in his lifetime.

## **1983 Cho Oyu (8153m)**

After trying the Southeast Face in the winter of 1982/83, Messner returned and made a very rapid ascent of the Southwest Face in early May, with Hans Kammerlander and Michel Dacher. Again, this was a technically easy climb, completed very quickly.

## **1984 Gasherbrum II (8035m) Hidden Peak (8047m)**

Climbed with Kammerlander, this was a very bold traverse of two 8000m peaks, accomplished in poor weather via a major variation.

## **1985 Annapurna I (8091m) Dhaulagiri (8167m)**

After establishing two camps, Messner and Kammerlander made a rapid (5-day) ascent of the Northwest Face of Annapurna I, via a new route. Immediately afterwards, the pair switched basecamps, and made a three-day ascent of the normal route on Dhaulagiri.

## **1986 Makalu (8481m) Lhotse (8511m)**

Kammerlander and Messner succeed on the normal routes on both peaks. Kammerlander has now climbed seven of the 8000 meter peaks, all within three years, while Messner has become the first to climb all 14.

Many of his other climbs were less inspirational, and some would argue that Messner's record has been eclipsed by a new generation of Himalayan climbers. His closest rival is probably Pole Jerzy Kukuczka, who has climbed eleven 8000-meter peaks, seven by new routes, three in winter, and one solo; several have

matched Messner's record of three big peaks in a single season. And difficult technical climbs on the world's highest peaks, such as the South Face of Annapurna and the West Face of Gasherbrum IV, are beginning to see alpine-style ascents.

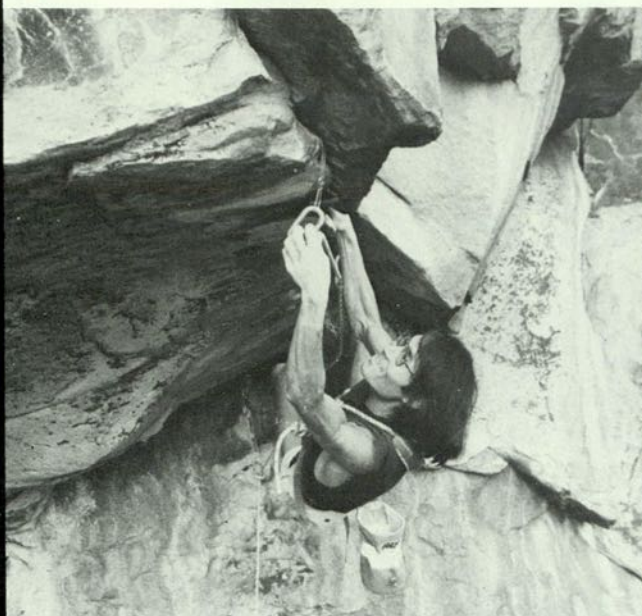
Nevertheless, Messner's influence on Himalayan climbing over the past

two decades has been profound, and his success in being the first to climb all 14 of the world's highest peaks is well-deserved. As Erhard Loretan commented in *Time* after he and Troillet's incredible Everest ascent: "The reason we can now climb so quickly and easily is that Messner served as an example for us."



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Continued from page 26.

until noon on August 11, hoping that she had survived, before continuing their descent.

That evening, Bauer reached basecamp, which was still occupied by the Polish and South Korean expeditions, and a search party was immediately organized. Diemberger was found at the foot of the mountain shortly before midnight and taken back to camp.

Two members of the rescue party then climbed to 7100m on the Abruzzi in hopes of finding Miodowicz-Wolf, but were unsuccessful.

Both Bauer and Diemberger suffered severe frostbite to their fingers and toes, which was treated by doctors in basecamp. After several days of waiting, they were evacuated by helicopter to a hospital in Skardu, and later flown to Austria for more extensive treatment of their injuries.

*This reconstruction of the events of August 2-11 is based on a number of sources, most notably High (October, 1986) and Mountain 111. The story also received extensive press coverage in Europe, including a lengthy photo story and interview with Willi Bauer in Bunte, the German equivalent of Life.*

### Editorial Note

Several abbreviations and terms are used to describe a route or the style of its ascent. "R" and "X" are seriousness ratings, the latter indicating virtually no protection. The use of seriousness ratings depends on the area and the correspondent; often, seriousness is not reported. "tr" indicates the route is climbed with a top-rope. "FA" and "FFA" are abbreviations for first ascent and first free ascent.

Style of first ascents, quality of line, and rack lists generally are not reported; this should be information recorded in local guidebooks and judged by the local community. However, style is often referred to when discussing local trends.

"Redpoint" is used to describe an ascent where the rope is not weighted and all non-fixed protection is placed on lead. "Flash" is a redpoint ascent with no prior rehearsal, lead or top-rope. "Yoyo" is an ascent where a fall or falls have occurred, the leader lowering to the ground but the rope remaining in place for the successful attempt.

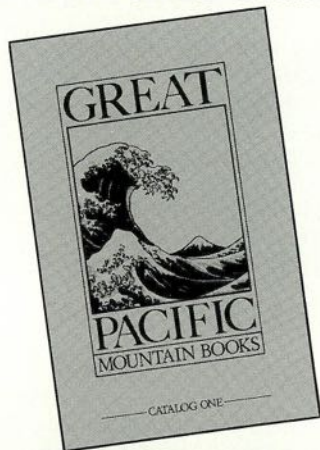
First-hand information and corrections are necessary to the validity of this column, and correspondence and criticism are heartily encouraged. The deadline is 5 weeks before the month of issue. Deadline for the February issue is December 20.

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Profile by Dougald MacDonald

# Robert Bates

A few minutes into my conversation with Robert Bates I began to feel a twinge of envy. This was a man who had climbed for more than 50 years, traveling to every continent but Antarctica, and he hasn't stopped yet. Last year, at age 74, he led a self-described "geriatrics' expedition" to Ulugh Muztagh in far-western China.

The envy grew as Bates recounted his adventures. Many well-known climbers can look back wistfully at their role in the Golden Age of a particular area. Yosemite, the Alps, the Tetons — all had people who made them shine. Bates was lucky enough to star in two Golden Ages: the exploration of Alaska and the Yukon in the 1930's, and the attempts on the great Himalayan peaks in the 1930's and 1950's.

Bates began climbing when the northern half of North America was still an unexplored place, with whole mountain ranges that had yet to feel human feet. "It was just wonderful having this whole continent to yourself," Bates exclaims. "You could go wherever you wanted, climb anything you wanted. We were just lucky to be climbing in the days when everything was so new."

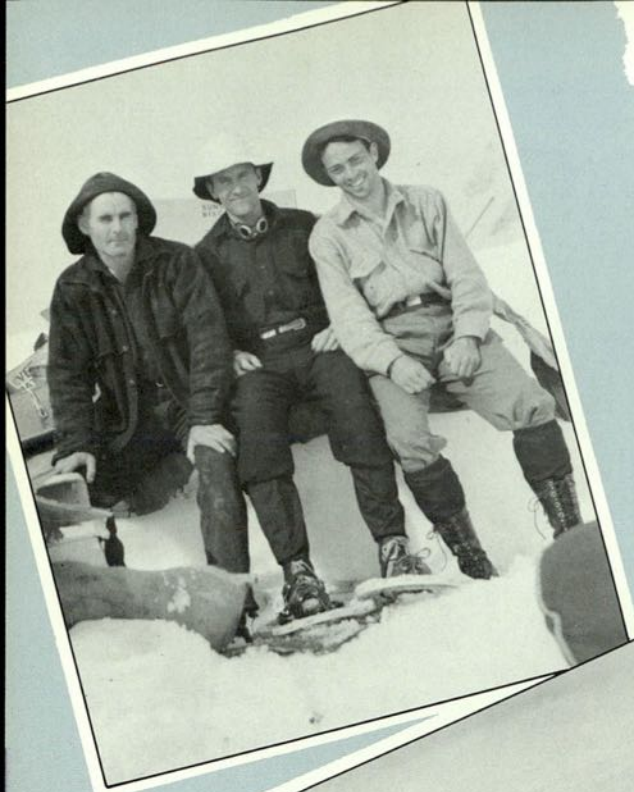
Lucky, and plucky as well.

Take, for example, the first ascent of Mt. Lucania (17,147 feet) in the Yukon. Bates says this was his favorite climb, and it certainly ranks as one of the great mountain adventures of all time.

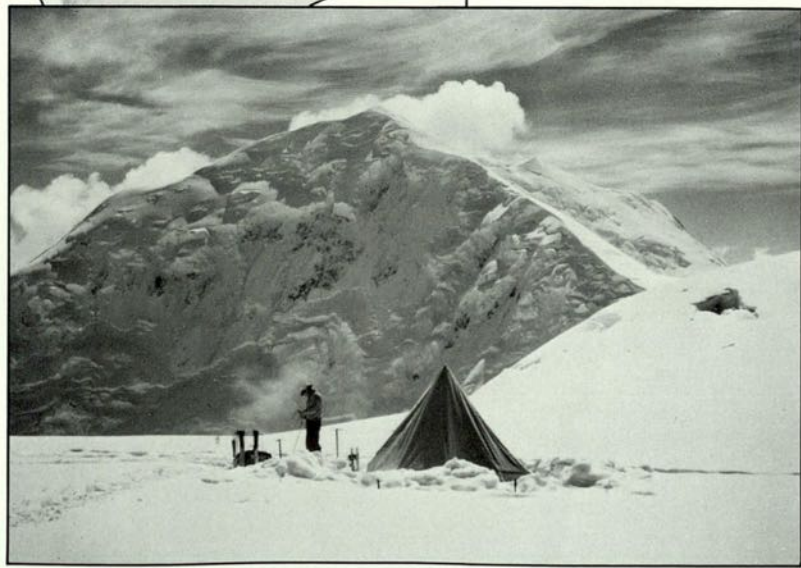
In 1937, with ten seasons in Alaska and the Yukon between them, Bates and Bradford Washburn took off with bush pilot Bob Reeve for the Walsh Glacier below Lucania. Two other members of the expedition waited with the rest of the gear for a second flight.

Reeve had just figured out how to land on glaciers that year. Using skis fashioned out of a stainless steel cocktail bar, he would take off from the mud flats near his home. The flights were unpredictable, to say the least. A shack near Reeve's makeshift airstrip bore his handpainted sign: "Always use Reeve Airways — slow, unreliable, unfair and crooked."

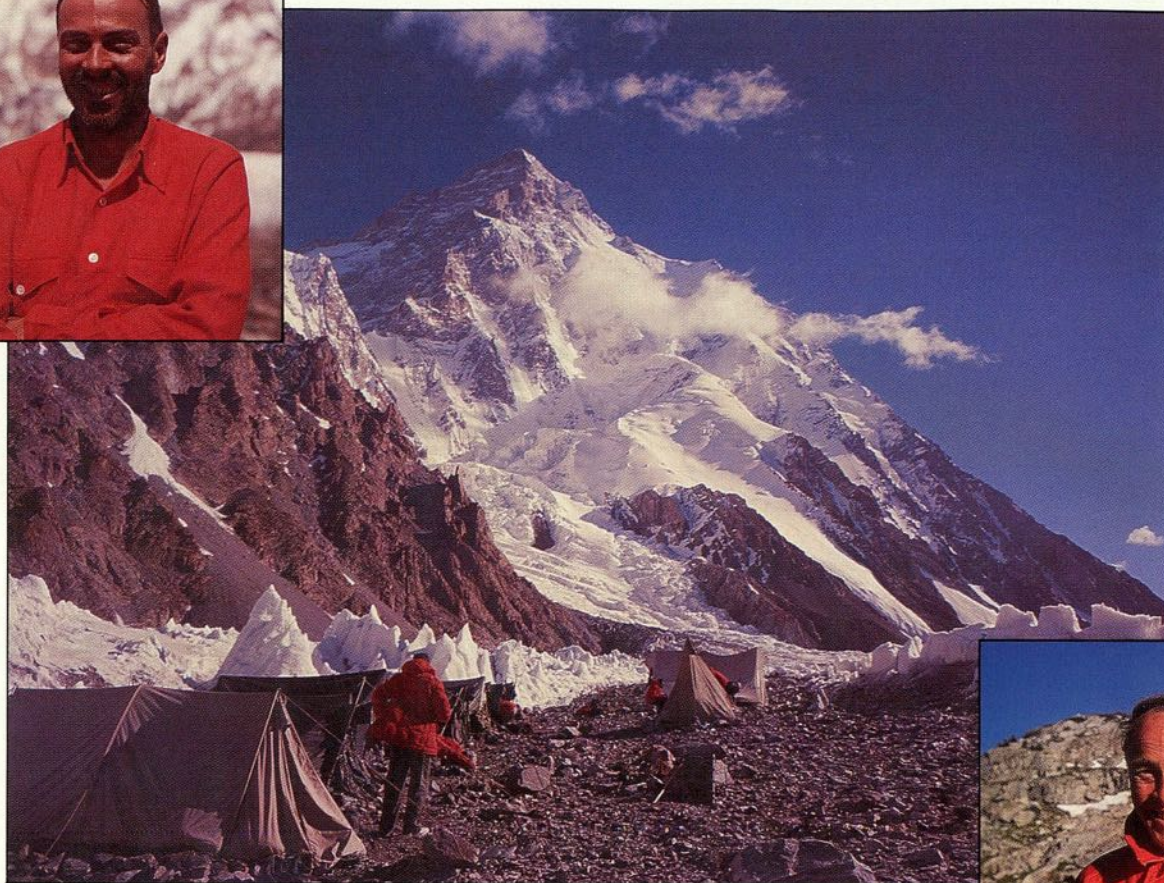
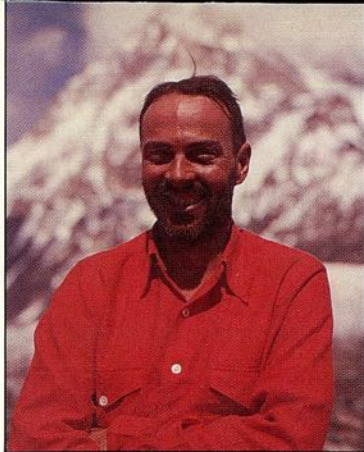
*Photos: Bradford Washburn.*



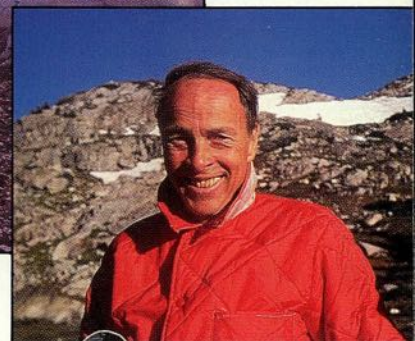
*In the Yukon, 1937: Reeve, Washburn and Bates after digging out the airplane (above), and camp on the saddle, looking towards the summit of Mount Lucania.*







*Some things never change: K2 looks the same now as it did during the 1953 expedition, and Bob Bates still has that same old smile (at K2 basecamp, above; in the Wind Rivers in 1978, right).*



*Photo: Dee Molenaar.*

This time, luck was against Reeve. When the plane came in to land on the Walsh Glacier, it broke through an icy crust formed by a rare high-altitude rainstorm and nosed into several feet of slush.

Reeve had no radio and a three-week old baby at home. He allowed that *if* they could get the plane in the air, there was no way he was coming back with the rest of the team. After digging the plane out, he stripped it of excess weight, changed the pitch of the propeller with a ball-peen hammer and roared off the glacier at full throttle. "Obviously, he couldn't take us out, and we wouldn't have gone out anyway," Bates recalls. "We wanted to climb the mountain."

Stranded on an unclimbed peak, Bates and Washburn weighed their options. They could walk down the glacier and bushwhack to civilization, but the glacier below them was dangerously broken up; already, one of them had dropped into a crevasse right at the door of their tent. The only other way out was over the top. Lucania's neighboring peak, Mt. Steele, had been climbed two years before by Walter Wood. If they could get to the top of Steele they could get out the same way Wood had come in.

After two weeks of relaying loads, they had established a camp on the col between Lucania and Steele. From there, it was a relatively easy two-day climb to the summit of Lucania, although they were plagued by waist-deep snow.

Now all they had to do was get home. To save weight, they cut the floor out of their tent and threw away extra food, clothing, and one of their 12-pound

sleeping bags. They took the zipper out of the bottom of the other bag so both men could sleep in it, "...with one fella's head in one way and the other fella in the other way."

The two made their way over 16,644-foot Mt. Steele uneventfully and began descending the 8000-foot East Ridge. "We were counting on caches from Wood's expedition," remembers Bates. "We knew there were two, but there were about a dozen gullies at the bottom of Steele and we just could not find the first cache. Finally, we said, 'Well, heck, we know where the second cache is.' We found it alright, but the bears had found it first. There was just one can of peanut butter left."

It was 60 miles to the road, across untracked taiga and icy rivers, and Bates and Washburn had no food.

The march took six days. They lived off some dried baked beans, and mushrooms they found, and managed to shoot a squirrel and a rabbit with the revolver they had brought to frighten bears. The most dangerous moment came while trying to cross the swollen Donjek River. At the normal ford, which Wood had crossed on horseback, the two men were swept off their feet by the current. They decided to head upstream, away from the road, hoping to cross the river at the glacier.

To their dismay the glacier paralleled the river for miles. Finally, they were able to work across the Donjek at a shallow stretch, using rocks in their packs for ballast. "The last branch was way over our heads and fast, but we sort of swam and hopped off the

*Photos: George Bell.*



bottom and got across." The next day they bumped into a pack train and were soon riding on pack saddles, after gorging themselves on sheep steak.

At no point in the adventure did they have second thoughts about their audacious plan. "The chips were down. There was no other way of going back. We accepted it as a matter of course. If Walter Wood could get in from the opposite side, and if we could get to that point, we could get out the way he came in. It was as simple as that, really."

Like many of the great mountaineers of that era, Bates learned to climb at college. For Bates it was Harvard University, where he met partner-for-life Brad Washburn. Washburn had already done a lot of climbing in the Alps and had published a book about his experiences before his freshman year. "He made enough money from the book to buy a little sport coupe with a rumble seat," says Bates. "You could get four or five people in it, and we'd go up to Mount Washington in the winter almost every weekend."

Bates and his cronies made early ascents of *Pinnacle Gully* and some of the other ice routes on Mount Washington, whose ferocious storms and brittle ice prepared him well for step-cutting up Alaskan peaks. "You did it for fun," he says, "but you were figuring that this was a good thing to give you practice for expeditions. Of course, we enjoyed it immensely. We always kidded ourselves that we were doing it with another purpose in mind, but obviously we were having fun doing it or we wouldn't have bothered."

In 1930, Washburn made his first trip to Alaska and was hooked by the isolation and wild beauty. Bates joined him for the first time in 1932, and for years they made annual trips to attempt Alaskan and Yukon peaks. In 1935 they were the first to explore the 10,000-square-mile St. Elias Icefield, naming peaks as they went.

"The mountains were pretty much unknown. In those days practically no one climbed in Alaska. You could get a letter addressed to you: Robert Bates, Alaska."

The climbing on these expeditions was not technical; the challenge lay more in the long approaches and the isolation. "We spent the winter in the Yukon with no doctor or any way of getting out in case of trouble. We thought that was the norm, not anything unusual. Some of the things we did may seem more risky now, although what seems very risky to me are the people doing these amazing solo climbs. It seems to me as if they're pushing it a bit."

In any case, the Alaskan trips weren't all hardship. "If you were going west from Boston, you'd go up to Montreal, buy some food, and get in the Colonist Car, which had a stove and refrigerator. But no colonists were traveling during the 1930's: it was the Depression. So you'd have your own private car to go right across the continent."

Bates' experience didn't go unnoticed, and in 1938 he was asked to join the American Alpine Club's reconnaissance of K2 in the Karakoram. Thus Bates entered his second Golden Age, a 15-year American battle with K2 in which they would nearly reach the top three times before the Italians climbed it in 1954.

These efforts on K2 took place simultaneously with the British attempts on Everest, but the Americans didn't feel they had the inferior peak. "Everest in those days was sort of sacrosanct: it had been saved

for the British, and we didn't see any possibility of breaking into that sphere. But having read the Duke of Abruzzi's stuff on K2, it seemed a much more exciting place, really. We felt like we had the real mountain."

The 1938 expedition was set up as a reconnaissance. "It didn't occur to anyone that a mountain that big could be climbed on the first try." The team spent weeks exploring different lines, climbing above 20,000 feet on four different routes before committing to the Abruzzi Ridge. They reached 26,000 feet, an American altitude record at the time. All were in good shape, but the exploration had depleted their food supply, forcing them to descend.

"If we hadn't gone through all the reconnaissance, and had just used our time to go to the top, I think we would have made it. On the way in we had stopped in Paris to talk to members of the Hidden Peak expedition, which was the last big expedition to the Karakoram, and they all had said, categorically, that the human brain cannot stand more than 20 days above a certain elevation — I think it was 20,000 feet. Whatever it was, we doubled the number of days, and even that wasn't enough."

Bates vowed to return, but other commitments prevented him from going in 1939 with Fritz Wiessner, who nearly succeeded. Then the war intervened.

Like many active climbers, Bates was asked to help develop cold-weather and mountain equipment for the military during WWII. He was happy to oblige, as that meant testing the gear in the mountains. On one such trip, Bates, Washburn, Terris Moore, and others made the third ascent of Denali testing two-piece Swiss Army skis, newly-developed mummy sleeping bags, and four different kinds of boots. None of the boots were ideal, but they wore all four kinds to the top without frozen feet.

Throughout the war, America's leading mountaineers dreamed of returning to K2. Bill House and Bates met with the Indian ambassador in 1946 to apply for permission, but he wanted to wait until India's troubles with its frontier provinces were resolved. An extremely able group of climbers chomped at the bit for more than a decade. "I don't think we thought of ourselves as being at the forefront or anything, because there wasn't any front that we knew of that was going to follow! We just thought it was a wonderful opportunity, and all through the war we talked about it. We were just plain lucky to be able to take a big mountain like that and figure out what's the best route on it without saying, 'No, that route's been done and that one's been done.' The whole mountain was ours!"

Permission finally came through in 1953, and Bates and Houston returned to K2. All went well until Camp 8 at 25,500 feet (although Bates had to have a tooth pulled at Camp II). Seven climbers were in position to place an assault camp and go for the summit. All seemed healthy, but then a four-day storm pinned them in their tents. Art Gilkey developed a blood clot in his leg that threatened to move to his heart. The painful choice was made to descend.

Several hundred feet lower, disaster struck. One climber fell, dragging his ropemate with him. Their rope snagged Bates and two others, and all five plunged toward the brink. Then, miraculously, they all



tangled in one rope belayed by Pete Schoening, who managed to hold the five falling men in what is surely the greatest catch of all time.

When they had recovered enough to look for Gilkey, they discovered that he was gone, swept away by an avalanche. The epic descent became the centerpiece of *The Savage Mountain*, which Bates coauthored with Charlie Huston, forever establishing K2's ferocity.

Bates retains vivid memories of the descent. He remembers sitting up immediately after the fall, "in surprisingly good condition. I had landed on my back, but I had my pack on which cushioned the blow. I came to rest on a rock that was sort of wobbling, and I expected to come loose at any minute and go down that whole 6000 feet. Then I heard a sort of gasp right under me. I pulled my hood up and there was (Dee) Molenaar looking right in my face, a little blood dripping off his moustache. He was pop-eyed and his hair was standing right up on end."

The team struggled down to basecamp where, Bates recalls, "the porters greeted us very emotionally. They rubbed our legs and prayed, and fed us milk and rice." Bates had escaped the Savage Mountain, and K2 remained unclimbed by Americans until 1978.

An English teacher at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire for almost 40 years, Bates used his summer vacations well, traveling around the world to climb. In 1958 he spent the summer in Chile trying to resolve a dispute over the height of Nevado Ojos del Salado, which the Chileans believed to be higher than Aconcagua. Before an attempt on the mountain could be made, however, a fierce snowstorm began, threatening to block the road back over the altiplano. The South Americans told Bates that if the truck the expedition had borrowed didn't make it back he'd have to pay for it.

Unfazed, Bates asked, "How much?"

"\$50,000."

"Well, we couldn't afford to pay that no matter how much we wanted to climb the mountain, so out we went" Bates says, laughing.

Bates' last expedition began with a conversation in a tent with Eric Shipton, the famed British explorer. "I'd met Shipton at the Centennial of the Matterhorn in 1965. We spent three weeks together in southern France and Andorra, and we got along very well, taking long walks from peak to peak." The two men

shared a love for exploratory mountaineering with small parties, and Shipton soon revealed his dream of climbing Ulugh Muztagh in western China. The peak was thought to be well over 25,000 feet high and hadn't been visited since 1895.

Bates and Nick Clinch began seeking permission for the climb in 1974, but it took 11 years for the Chinese to open the peak to Americans. Bates had hoped for a small group of "geriatrics," including Clinch, Schoening, and Thomas Hornbein, but the Chinese had other ideas. In the end, the Chinese succeeded in climbing the peak with their 43-man team (they weren't all climbers), while the Americans called off their attempt — to help rescue two fallen Chinese climbers. Bates generally confined himself to the 17,400-foot basecamp area, determining with surveying instruments that the peak's elevation was 2500 feet lower than the 1895 survey said.

"As one reaches a certain age," says the septuagenarian Bates, "one's endurance is good, but one can't sustain intense physical demands. The climbers had to carry 50-pound loads up steep slopes. I figured I'd be a hindrance."


Just back from the Ulugh Muztagh expedition, Bates told a newspaper reporter, "The older climber may want to get to the top. But there's an intellectual side of mountaineering. Even if you don't get to the summit, if you have a share in the climb, you get a great kick of accomplishment."

Indeed, talking with Bates convinced me that the summit was not the most important thing to him and his fellow climbers. At the risk of using a horribly old-fashioned phrase, I'd say what motivated them was good fellowship. Bates' climbing stories and the books he wrote lack any mention of the bickering and disharmony that plague accounts of modern expeditions. These fellows were out to have a good time in the wilderness, and friendships that have lasted half a century attest to the fact that they found it.

"I've been very, very lucky with the people I've climbed with. I don't remember a single trip with any bum guys."

Bates says his first expedition partner, Brad Washburn, is still his best friend. The day before I spoke with him, he and Washburn and Ad Carter were tramping around Mount Madison in the White Mountains, surveying for Washburn's new map of the area.

"Yep," Bates admits. "The three of us old-timers still play around a lot."



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# VINSON

An Ascent of Antarctica's Highest Peak

by P.R. Caffrey





He grappled over a sharp brittle cornice, then stood on top. Ice covered the expanse below to every horizon, and sunlight streamed through to countless tiny crystals glittering under his feet. He pulled a pink plastic flamingo from his pack, mounted it on two bamboo wands and jabbed it into the snow pack. A few cackles were heard. It was one small prank for a climber, one giant caper for mountaineering.



The seed of expeditionary mountaineering was planted in my fully-oxygenated brain when I was 17 and read about the first conquest of Antarctica's highest peaks, the Sentinels. Fifteen years later I didn't have to choose where to go for my last big one. It had long ago chosen me.

In 1983 Dick Bass and Frank Wells reached well down into their deep pockets rather than bum one dime, and in the first private trip to reach the Sentinels pulled off their audacious third ascent of Vinson Massif, Antarctica's highest point at 16,059 feet. A year later Canadian Pat Morrow attempted the peak in a bid to be first to climb all seven continental summits.

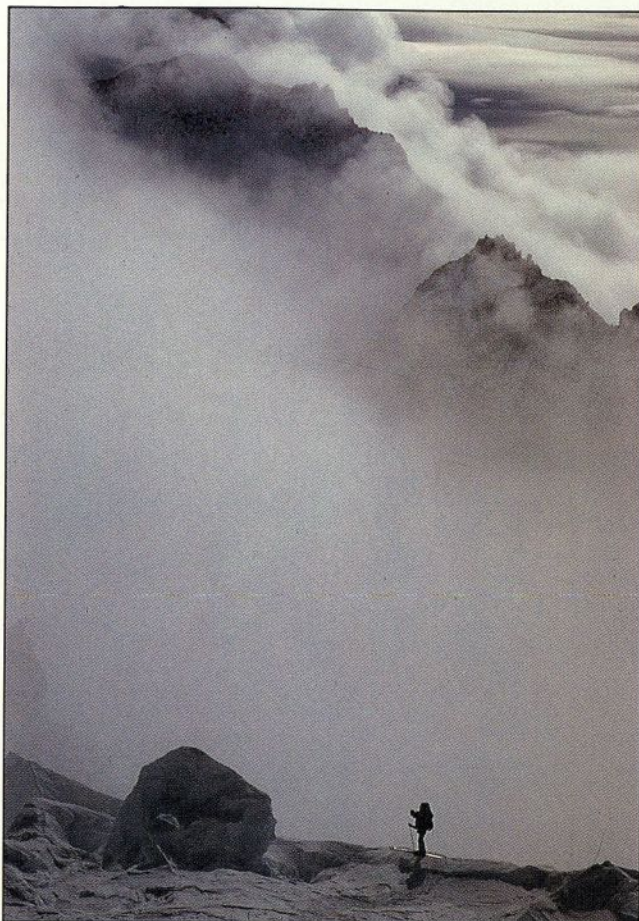
*Pat: Mild-mannered photographer and actualizer of dreams. Assembles high-strung crazies for his adventures, then serves as stabilizing influence.*

He and some friends made arrangements similar to Bass's, including chartering the same DC3 Tri-Turbo, an oddball aircraft ideally suited to the short runways and long distances of polar air travel. They hired the same pilot, Giles Kershaw (*like the arctic tern, migrates between the polar regions annually. In 1983 landed at the North Pole 23 times. Has over 5100 flying hours in Antarctica, more than anyone else*).

They got as far as a coastal research station, where their aircraft was blown down a glacier and damaged. The plane went to Argentina for repairs. Giles, a British subject without a visa, found bad feelings from the Falklands War and was arrested. After his return seven days later, the trip came to an abrupt end with ice damage to an engine. The group went home with nothing to show but penguin shit on their climbing boots.

Four months later Dick Bass made Everest and won the Seven Summits Race. The "race" was over for Pat, and gone was the potential for significant commercial sponsorship. Although the Tri-Turbo was committed to a large contract in the north, he pressed on through the summer of 1985 to arrange one more try because he was "still interested in the place." The 1984 trip had been a valuable experience for him and co-leader Martyn Williams. All the contacts and mistakes had already been made. The bet was that their quota of bad luck was behind them, too.

## Photos by Pat Morrow



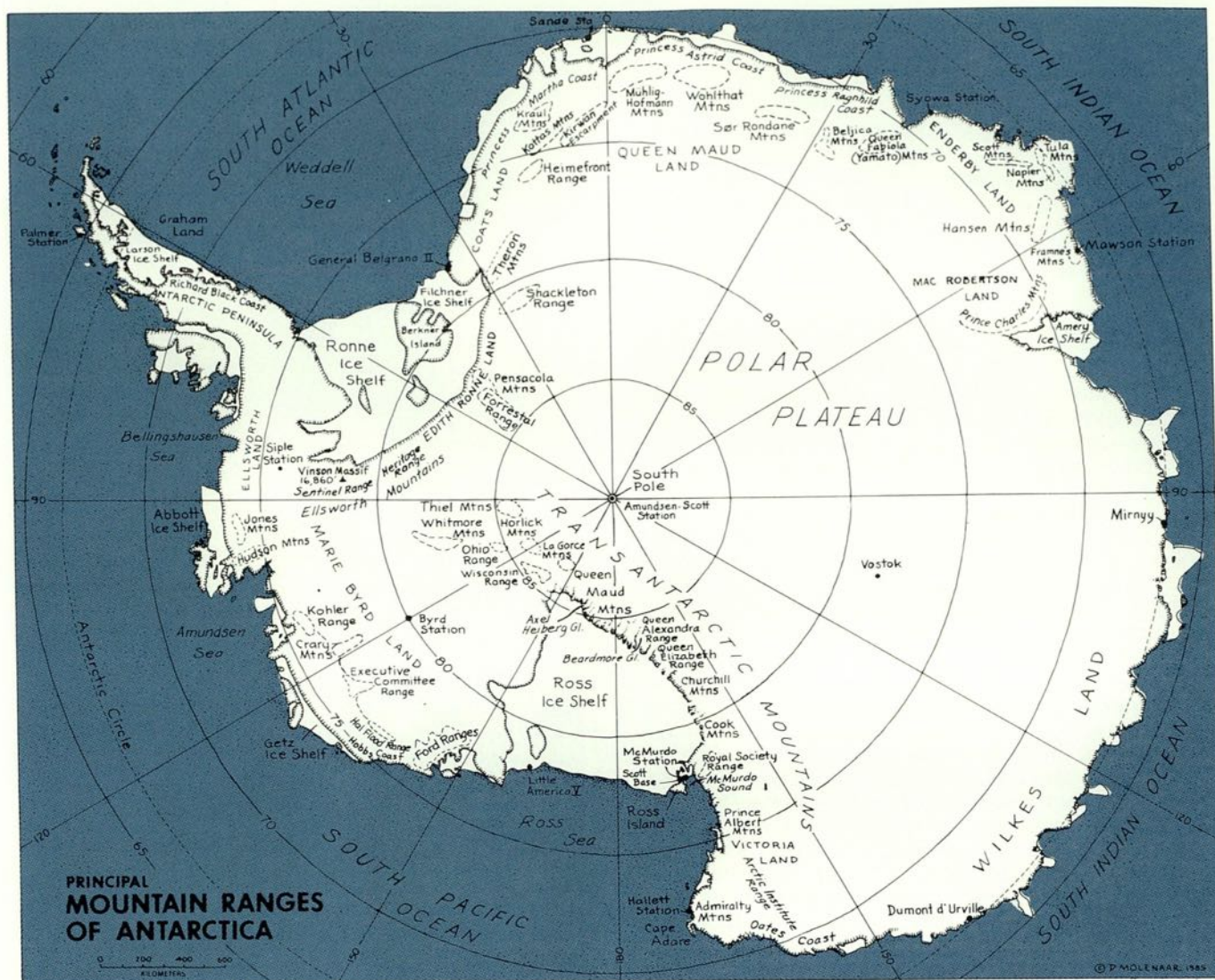
*Skiing in Vinson's upper icefall. Opposite, the Chilean base of Carvajal.*

*Martyn: Ph.D. in Logistics. Polar powder junkie. A mere mortal when it's above 0°F, otherwise irrepressible. Skied across Greenland.*

Pat and Martyn set up a corporation with a "front office" of Maureen Garrity in Chile, and an operation support crew of Baiba Morrow and Bart Lewis in Canada. To help with logistics they joined forces with Mike Dunn (*organizer of exclusive adventures for team players. Parachuted the North Pole. Allergic to prolonged periods in any time zone. Type of guy to lead the first commercial climb of Nix Olympus volcano on Mars*).

After an exhaustive search they located a Twin Otter fitted for polar use. Additional climbing parties from Korea and the U.S. helped disperse the enormous cost of its round trip from Canada. The Chilean Air Force was paid a bureaucrat's ransom to airdrop aviation fuel and a month's food right at Vinson Basecamp. An underwriter for the Twin Otter was found, insuring it by the highest listed classification, the same applied to supertankers in the Persian Gulf: 1 in 14 odds.





What they were doing was historic. Individuals with access only to conventional commercial aircraft and their own modest finances were attempting to access the great mountains of the last continent. If the experiment succeeded, they might then take clients to the antarctic interior. This would add new depth and meaning to the term *high-risk business*. A climber could now realistically travel anywhere in the world.

As for the climb, just setting out in front of the Sentinel's 8000-foot cliffs would be tough to comprehend. They expected delays getting there and maybe weeks tent-bound by ground blizzards. They'd be raptured to gain the summit in 40°-below temperatures and a wind that wouldn't knock them down.

All that remained was to find five volunteers to fill the plane. They had to be experienced in polar survival, high altitude climbing, and financial nonchalance. One of them was this writer (*Adventure opportunist. Internationally unknown. Avid laurel-rester. Has done all continental summits in Western Hemisphere, but was blown off Australia's Kosciuszko*).

As the departure date approached, I had mixed thoughts. On previous climbs I'd developed ideas

about what's important back home while being stormed in for a week at a time. Persevering with those climbs gave me enthusiasm to accomplish my new priorities. My greatest challenges were no longer limited to mountains.

I knew well the rewards and anguish of gambling time and money on the motivations of people I'd never met. In the struggle for cooperation, I'd seen the incompetence, delusions, or impatience of one cavalier doom the entire effort. But I also remembered success when each climber overcame his darker motives. Better for now if I just worried about my own shortcomings. Any endeavor begins with self-interest, yet those ending in camaraderie are always worthwhile.



I hadn't anticipated the obvious catastrophe. When I arrived in Santiago with Steve Fossett early in November, an airline had lost my baggage for my fourth trip in a row. Nothing to do but sit in a downtown hotel and watch young communists on their way to throw a molotov cocktail party at the Presidential

Map by Dee Molenaar.



Palace across the square. Steve popped us a couple beers, and I fired up my camera in time to catch the *carabineros* make arrests and haze the crowd with their water cannon. Such are the singular delights of the traveling mountaineer.

*Steve: Endurance and investment athlete from Chicago. Was on the 1984 Vinson attempt. Skied all seven World Loppets. Swam the English Channel two months before the climb.*

Next day we flew to Punta Arenas, jumping-off point of the trip, and found logistical details meeting local standards. The Air Force had not grasped the limitations of the Twin Otter and decided we didn't need the airdrop. An encore performance of the customary sweating-blood dance obliged them to renew their assurances.

Bill Hackett arrived with his pretty wife. She was unreserved with innocent adoration, like showing up at the prom with the star quarterback. But she wasn't half as stunning to me as my old bag, which arrived next evening from the Land of Lost Luggage.

*Bill: Infantry officer in the Battle of the Bulge. After WWII took a theodolite to places where climbers still take only survival gear while helping Bradford Washburn survey McKinley. Was with American K2 attempt in 1960. Still shows up with the pioneers.*

We had a delicious farewell dinner, drank a few, threw some dust in the air, then phoned home one last time. Next morning our plane, Antarctic Airways Flight No. 1, soon had Tierra del Fuego, its glaciers cascading to tidewater, under its stout wings. We huddled around a 250-gallon fuel tank mounted in the cabin, there to increase our range. Bundled in back was our liason man, Chilean climber Alejo Contreras (member of the Chilean Alpine Rescue Corps - has saved many climbers. Fluent in several languages. Skied Aconcagua in winter).

After refueling in the drizzly South Shetland Islands, we climbed above the cloud deck and saw the mainland, its ice cap fractured off at great bluffs above fog and ocean. At this point a breaker tripped in my psyche, so all I know for a fact is the trip was an enjoyable, busy, whiz-bang phenomenon with precious little time for reflection on the place. We refueled again just past the Antarctic Circle at a British station, in the first open sky seen for a month. After we waited one day, skiing and gawking, satellite photos gave the go-ahead to the interior. Six hours later, in blinding glare from an unclouded sun, we landed at 7500 feet on the continental ice cap, every monster and pinnacle of the Sentinels lined up for 50 miles to greet us.

We set up Basecamp, making it bomb-proof from the wind with the technical assistance of snow-block architect Roger Mitchell (trip doctor from the Yukon. Doesn't push drugs at high altitude. Likely to jump at chance to do field surgery with Swiss army knife).

The sun rolled around the sky but never set. When it went low on the ridges to the south, we called it night.

Next day a Chilean Hercules with our combat armaments thundered in, trailing black smoke from



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*Carrying loads to Camp III on Vinson Massif.*

its four turboprops. Military-green parachutes big as circus tents blossomed in the Pleistocene skies, curtisied, and settled before us ecstatic troopers.

With three unbuilt camps, nine miles, 8500 feet, and the weather to oppose us, it was now only a climb. We knew exactly how to proceed: time to shoulder the old packs crammed with the trappings of survival and drone on up the hill.

Giles flew out to fetch the Koreans. To establish Camp I, we twice skied with makeshift sleds to 9000 feet at the foot of Mt. Shinn, third-highest antarctic peak.

Snow walls and dome tents went up, sleeping bags rolled out, and we settled in to get warm. I curled up with a copy of *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Roger, Steve, and Mike were muttering and chuckling in the other tent where Martyn read aloud from a book of mountain myths. One involved a climber dangling in a crevasse, refusing rescue until champagne was lowered. Bill sat next to me in paisley underwear, writing in his journal. Alejo was sewing duct tape to ripped gear, swearing in Spanish when the needle got him. Pat crouched amongst cooking utensils and bags of his film, preparing dinner over the muffled roar of the stoves. Inside the nylon, all was familiar

and hadn't changed over the years. On any flat spot, dirty bowls, frivolity, paperbacks, and b.o. make a tent a home.

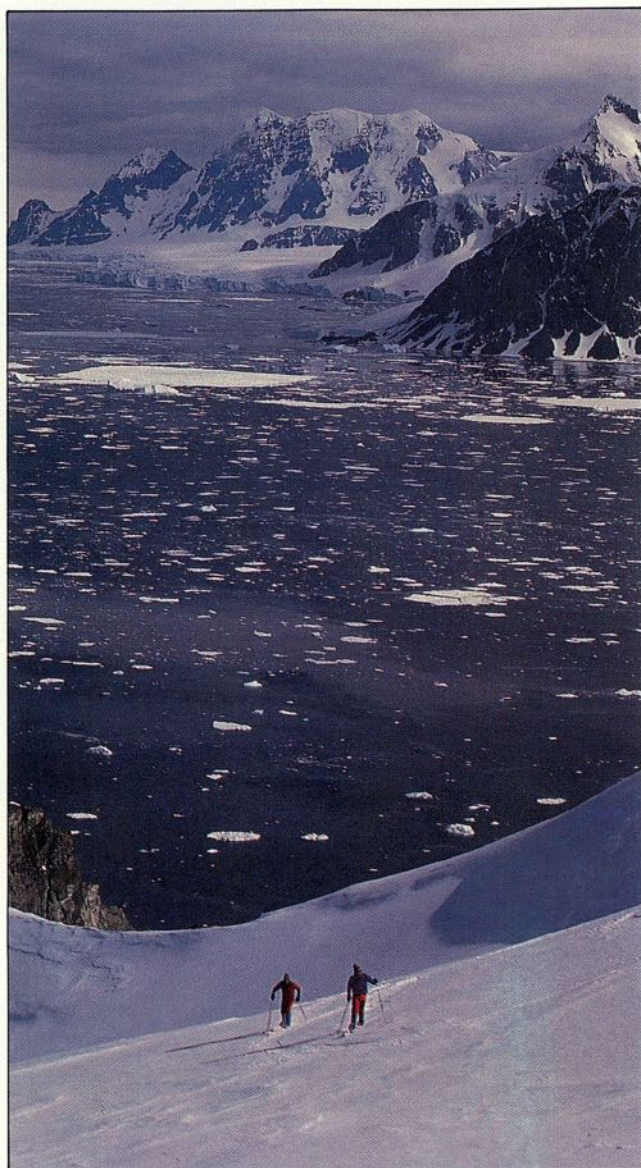
We made another two carries up a steep slope, installed 1000 feet of fixed rope near the ridge, and dropped over for Camp II. After this strenuous trek, snow began racing off crags and out the saddle between Shinn and Vinson. Tempers became short. Yet despite our fatigue and the hostile skies, no ancestors were insulted. We paused for a day of rest and apprehension. Late next afternoon the gusts simmered down and things looked good.



While snow melted on the stoves, we thought we heard engines. Suddenly our Twin Otter shot the gap where we'd crossed the ridge. Giles flew close enough for us to see the faces of the Koreans in the windows. He circled, buzzed us once more, and headed off to Basecamp. Business had never been better.

Next morning we meandered through an ice fall to our high camp location in the saddle, about 12,000 feet. It was a hard pull for Bill. Age and torn shoulder





*Skiing near the ocean on Adelaide Island.*

cartilage were making his summit try unrealistic. Of course he wanted to continue. Pat and Martyn talked to him about his options, but deferred a verdict.

Leaving Camp II on our last carry, Bill hesitated. He had paid his money, taken his shot, and was entitled to deal with his situation. He made his own decision, and turned to descend.

A price had been paid. No one would now put personal fantasies and recklessness above prudence and teamwork. Our group jelled and acquired an edge to flaunt against bad luck. Yet a little piece of each of us went down with Bill.

He had reached for a challenge that belongs to younger men, hoping to savor that one last triumph. It was an ill-advised effort.

*I'd rather die than not be reaching when I'm his age.*

After we fortified High Camp with a double wall of blocks, Martyn left to see Bill to the plane. Early next morning Martyn and Giles staggered into High Camp after an all-night ascent of our entire route. They

invaded our sleep with boisterous harangues and air chilled to a hefty -35°F.

On the third Vinson expedition Giles had wanted to do the peak, but was informed that pilots don't climb mountains. They are responsible for the flying out and subsequent survival of the party.

We found him competent to climb. Nothing else was considered, bearing in mind that someone had to carry his flamingo to the summit — might as well be him.

Bill was safely at Basecamp, along with mechanic Rick Mason to care for the plane should a storm develop.

*Rick: No-nonsense blue-collar journeyman. Blunt, practical, 100% reliable. Doesn't indulge in illusions of grandeur. Doesn't climb.*

A summit try for some of us was now possible. Yet we squandered a perfect day as Martyn and Giles rested. All eight of us agreed we'd go together. In the meantime, there was always the scenery.

Next morning looked great. The cold was the usual brutal deal, so we wore dust masks over our noses. Soon the masks came off as the sun tracked its warming arc. In eight hours we covered three miles and over 4000 feet to the icy summit cornice. We chipped through the overhang and had a short stroll to a ski pole marking the turn-around point.

We took photos, looked at things, stood around with our hands in our pockets, did little rituals. Typical summit stuff.

Pat Morrow — fresh out of continental summits — cleared the cornice, clamped on skis, and eased into a graceful telemark which immediately chattered on the glare ice and flung him into a boulder field. His next goal: Be first to ski the highest rocks of every continent?

We descended to High Camp, ate, slept, and descended some more. The place looked like it did coming up, except more so. The Koreans were at Camp I and served up ginseng tea as we straggled through. We skied to Basecamp individually, feeling haggard and sassy.

Bill, bless his heart, was out climbing a nearby nunatak. I always wanted to do that. Didn't have time. We had a short nap, the weather still hung wonderful, and everyone except Alejo flew out. The inevitable front soon followed, and it was ten days before Giles could return with the final group of our campaign.

Two refueling stops and a low-level flight over startled penguins, seals, and ice breakers gave us a last taste of the beautiful Antarctic Peninsula. Before our last takeoff we had dinner and a drinking bout with Russian scientists. I vaguely recall it being a lot of fun. I'm sure it was in the spirit of the Antarctic.

Punta Arenas still had excellent cuisine. We checked that thoroughly. Some of us stayed to see Dan Emmett's American squad to the ice. For Steve and I, continuing north was the now-familiar golden oppor-





*Vinson Massif, with the upper icefall on the left, and Camp III on the Vinson-Shinn Col.*

tunity. In rare cloudless skies we saw Torres del Paine, Cerro Fitzroy, and the Patagonia Ice Cap.

In Santiago our taxi had to wait a couple minutes before turning the corner to our hotel. The revolutionaries had burned a bus, and the street was blocked. It was great to be back.

The Chilean people want peace and liberty. Though police conduct has been questioned, they will deal with unrest until an impoverished minority sees better days, and yanqui dollars could help. So: Long live tourism in the Deep South.



In the end, all three groups were delivered and recovered on schedule, chiefly due to Giles' impeccable skill as a polar pilot.

The Koreans were socked in at High Camp for a week, smoked hundreds of cigarettes, then placed three men on Vinson. They returned to Basecamp to find Alejo hallucinating after being alone 10 days. When the plane arrived, he was first to climb aboard.

Yvon Chouinard and Doug Tompkins made the second ascent of Shinn by a new mixed route on the West Face. Then the Americans got trapped five days by a tremendous storm. Temperatures dropped to  $-45^{\circ}\text{F}$ . High Camp was buried. Elsewhere the snow was carried away, exposing miles of glare ice. Boulders and ice blocks flew down the glaciers. Sustained gales of 100 mph tore through Camps I and II for two days, sandblasting the walls into oblivion.

With time and food running low, Glenn Porzak and

Gerry Roach dashed up Vinson in diminishing winds. 33 folks have now taken a breather there.

Roach became the third fellow to attain the seven summits. He reported no trace of the flamingo. With the seventh continent now open, it had departed on the wind, after freezing its pink ass.



I'll always be a climber but I'm going to miss the big expeditions. I have three kids to raise. My wife's still my wife. Beyond that are yet-imagined good things to be done, evil to be negated, perhaps a world to save, an afterlife to rehearse.

But as a sketchy course into the future is set, special memories on great mountains will bring peace and clarity. Prominent among them will be two hours at the summit of a lost white continent on the third planet out from a star in our universe of who knows where. It was  $-16^{\circ}\text{F}$  in air completely still, and our flags would not unfurl but hung straight down in some classroom of the Great Beyond. There were no clouds, and we identified isolated ranges 300 miles south. Eight men were vindicated by an insignificant crest of metamorphic strata and sastrugi. Each walked onto the summit in his own daze and elation. The forces of global weather were restrained by an unseen hand just beyond the horizon. Time stood still and became eternity. Life arrived, and is remembered there. Like those two hours that linger, life is a privilege. This intimacy is available whenever you take an intimidating place and make it your own.



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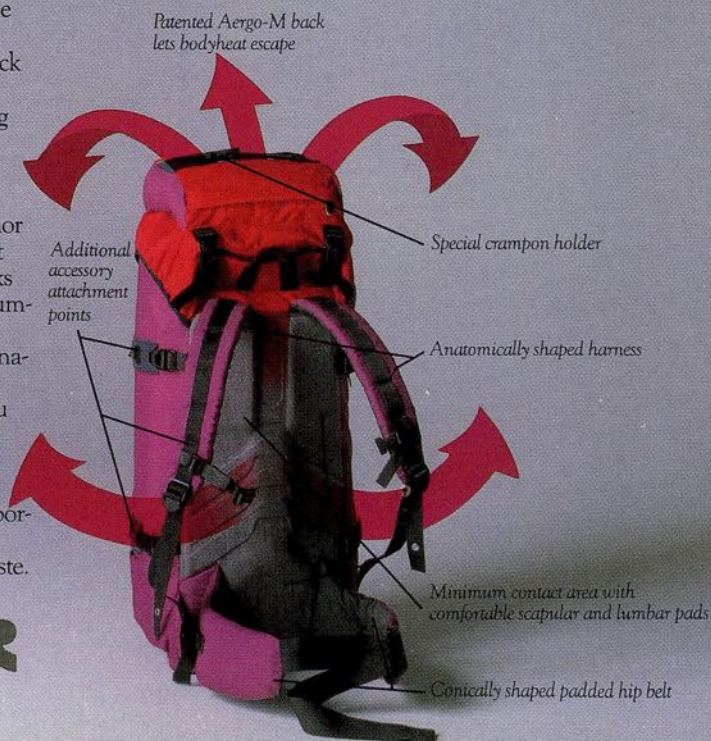
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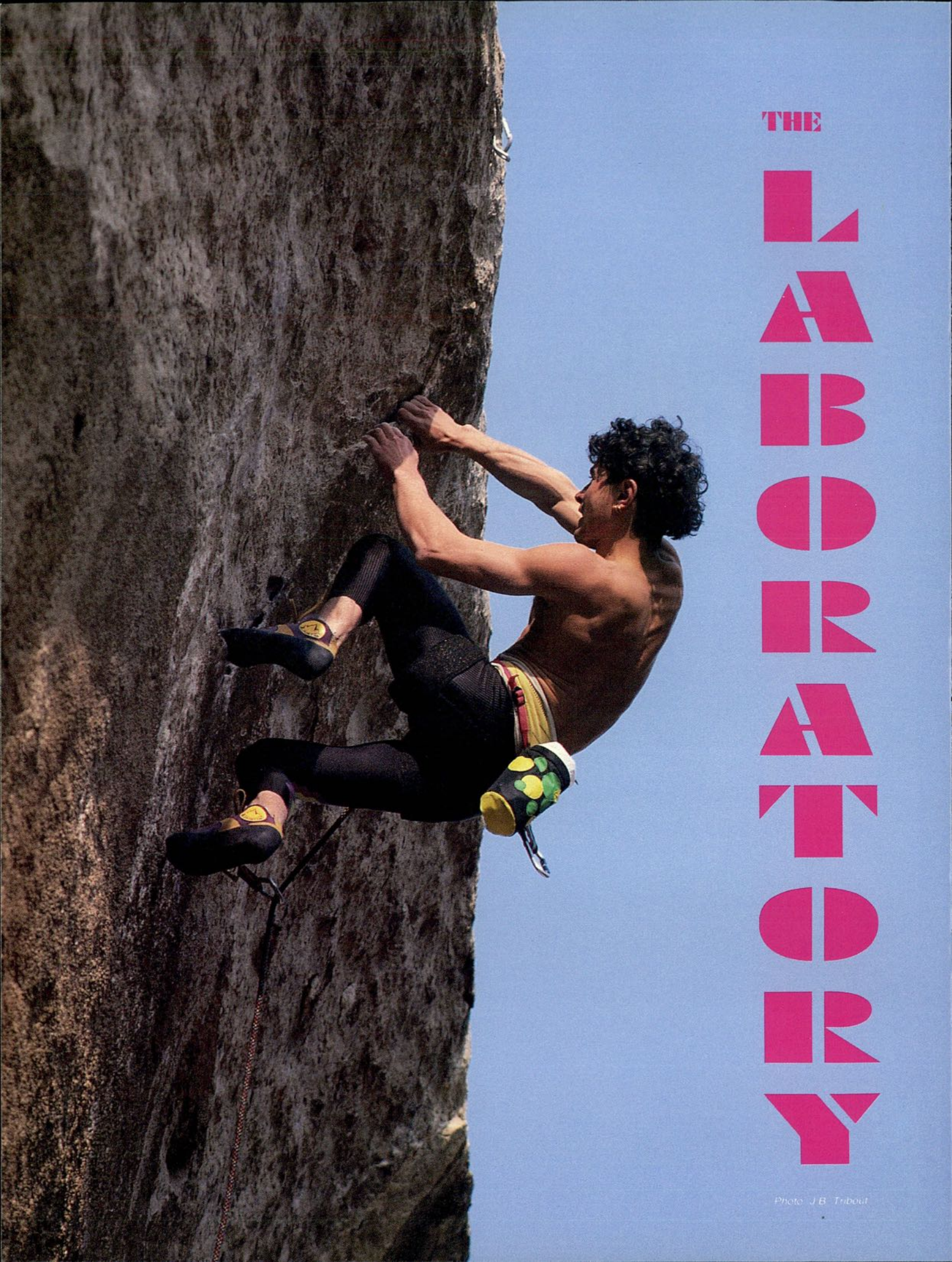
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## An American in Buoux by Bart Cannon

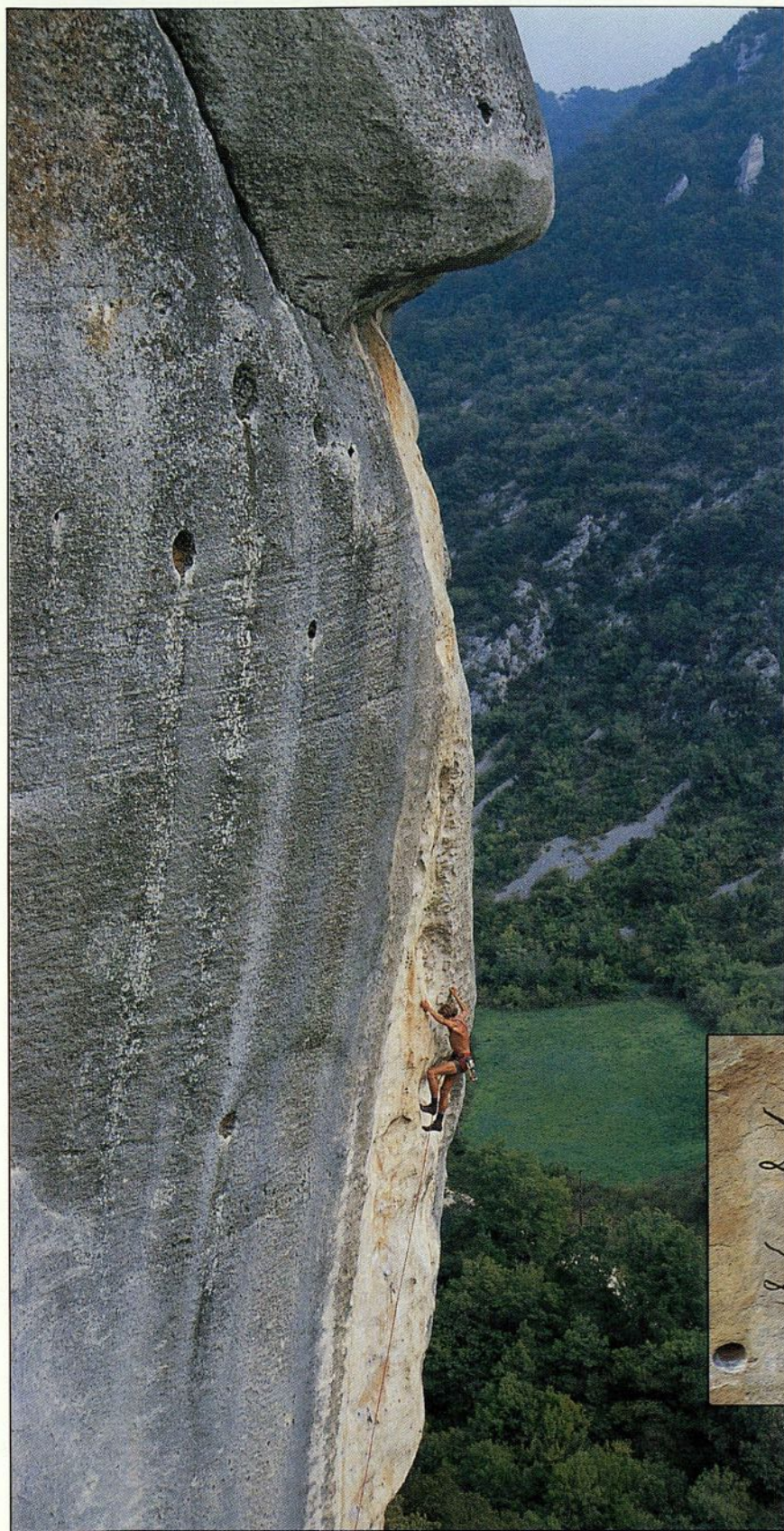
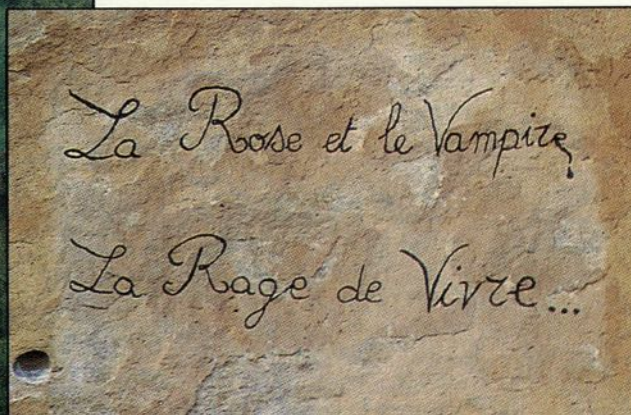


Photo: Beth Wald.

In the 1970's, the eyes of the European climber were on America. Visitors made the pilgrimage to Boulder and Yosemite, returning home in white baggies, with a better ability to climb cracks, and an ethic that valued a sustained lead without resting on gear.

Now the situation is reversed, with many Americans placing bolts on rappel, wearing physique-flattering clothes, and adopting a style of ascent that encourages falling off a route before leading it "free." Call me trendy, but after enjoying the feel of just a set of quick draws on my waist at Hueco Tanks and Smith Rock, I had to visit France for a taste of their supposedly immaculate limestone and fully-equipped routes. And for that taste, I chose Buoux, the cliff that contains the densest concentration of hard routes in the world, offers the best *trou*, or hole, climbing in France, and epitomizes what the Europeans call "sportclimbing."

It is ten hours from Paris, two hours from the Verdon, one hour from the Calanques, and three hours from Nice and the beaches of the Riviera. Holds are doctored, falls seem obligatory, routes can be so close together as to all but share bolts, and one can climb here ten months a year. No wonder French climbers call it crowded, the Germans flock down at Easter, and I wanted to stay for months. No wonder, either, that *Vertical* magazine has called Buoux "The Laboratory."



*Essence of Buoux: Didier Raboutou on La Rose et Le Vampire (8b, opposite page), and Pete Steers on No Man's Land (7a). Inset: No getting lost here!*

Photo: Bart Cannon.



I hitchhiked to the cliff, expecting the blue-white limestone of the Verdon. The ride came quickly, and like every day that followed, my pack and the word "Buoux" sufficed with the driver. The road climbed high above Apt, then dropped down into a dry valley and the village of Buoux. A few minutes from town, the cliffs came into view: two miles of bluffs the grey-white color of Cookie Cliff. I was disappointed — the color was too familiar. Had I taken a wrong turn into a miniature Yosemite?

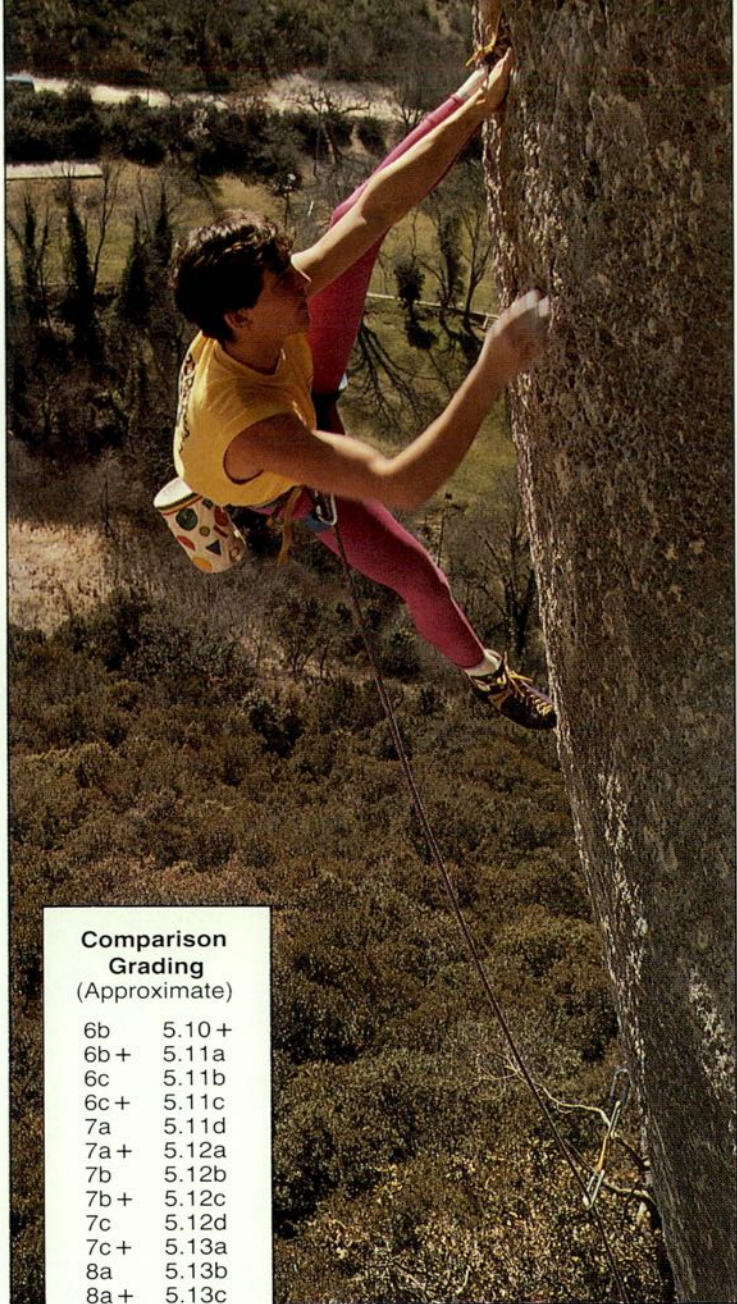
Five minutes further on, however, my spirits were restored: the parking lot was hopping with a full-on European flavor. Instead of VW buses and pickups with plastic toppers, it was packed with boxy Renault 4's, Peugeots, and Citroens. The climbers getting out of these little cars looked "Euro" as well: year-round tans, brightly-colored rucksacks, espadrilles, sandals, and physiques that hardly said rockjock. But I wasn't fooled. Climbing with Englishman Mick Johnston in the States showed me that it is the hands, not the biceps, that climb steep face.

This impression was confirmed during the next three weeks. Thin climbers with thin biceps — and strong backs — were cranking up desperate routes. Sure, many had been on the routes before, but I quickly learned that climbing pockets favored steel fingers over pull-up power. Indeed, the French climbing magazines commonly have articles on tendinitis of the hand, not the elbow.

From the parking lot, it was a ten minute hike up to the always sunny south face of Falaise de l'Aigues-run, the mile-long cliff that has hammered into it the nearly 200 routes of Buoux. Having no one to climb with that first morning, I wove around the piles of gear and found a spot from which to watch. I saw immediately why it is called The Laboratory. Not only did bolts dot the entire wall, but I realized many of them were big cemented-in eye-bolts. It was later explained to me that some new routes are being protected with these four-inch wonders to insure safety in the hard-on-the-surface but soft-or-hollow-underneath limestone, and that popular older lines are being similarly re-equipped.

In true sportclimbing fashion, both these eye-bolts and the standard Petzls are placed on rappel after top roping to determine their "natural" place for clipping and falling. While some English climbers I met muttered about the climbs being too safe, I never saw them skip a clip, nor felt compelled to myself. The yardstick (meterstick?) at Buoux seems to allow 3 to 5 meter falls routinely, 6 to 7 meters occasionally, and 8 to 10 meter falls rarely. When bolts do space out, it is on easier ground for a leader climbing at the route's overall standard; Arapiles-style sandbaggers seem not to have gained a toehold.

The eye-bolts do have something of a gymnasium appearance, but I certainly liked clipping them: they don't spin, won't rip through like aluminum hangers occasionally do, and if you fail you can lower without leaving a carabiner, by hanging off a prussik and threading the rope directly through the eye-bolt. They are also better to stand on.



#### Comparison Grading (Approximate)

6b	5.10 +
6b +	5.11a
6c	5.11b
6c +	5.11c
7a	5.11d
7a +	5.12a
7b	5.12b
7b +	5.12c
7c	5.12d
7c +	5.13a
8a	5.13b
8a +	5.13c
8b	5.13d
8b +	5.14

*Stephan Glowacz on a very early ascent of Reve d'un Papillon (8a).*

Routes at Buoux are short. They are created to be lowered off of with just one rope. Rappel rings are universally in place, and rarely is a route longer than half a ropelength. (Buoux's hardest route, *Le Rage de Vivre*, a link up of two shorter routes, is an exception at 50 meters.) While this length of pitch would seem artificial at some cliffs, it is suited beautifully to Buoux's short walls. This set-up also makes for easy top roping for seconding climbers, who are always belayed shotgun-style from the ground. Knowing how to set up a hanging belay, like placing nuts, is a dead art at Buoux.

The popularity of top roping leadable routes was new to me, even after climbing at Smith Rock, where hangdogging is standard procedure on the harder routes. But to the French, and a growing number of Europeans, top roping and hangdogging are one and the same: the first step towards doing a route "free." "Free French" means leading a pitch without falls, clipping all the gear in a single push. Being a 7c climber means you have "freed" a 7c route, regardless of the rehearsal involved. Falling off to learn the moves is the usual method, with climbers often spending days on a route.

*Photo: Uli Wiesmeier.*



Climbers here do flash routes, but more often they are trying routes they initially cannot do. This goes for stars like Marc Le Ménéstrel, who is working on *Le Minimum*, which soon may become the hardest route in the world, as well as for climbers like Gilles, a Parisian whose current goal is to free a 6c, after only 11 months of climbing. That this style of climbing is fueled by bolts to fall on is not lost on French climbers, but neither is the fact that Buoux boasts 63 5.12 routes, 21 5.13's, and one completed 5.14. So, while the "Free French" style may not encourage on-sight tenacity, the atmosphere at the cliff is full of encouragement, achievement, and the excitement of climbers working to climb better. This aspect of The Laboratory, perhaps as much as the rock itself, is what I liked most about Buoux.

Ethics and style aside, the climbing on Buoux's holes is fantastic. Fingers hooked and feet toed-in, one laybacks, bridges, underclings, and high steps from hole to hole. A few are large enough for an arm to disappear into, but most often they accept only a finger or two. The climbing is delicate and powerful all at once, the trick being to get into balance so you can use your power. Finding the right combination of pockets adds the intrigue of a good boulder problem to each route.

The hands need to be strong and, for the harder routes, accustomed to single finger pulls with little for the feet. That a single finger is the weakest link at Buoux was testified to by Scott Franklin's *Reve d'un Papillon*-torqued hand that sent him to Monaco to climb cracks for a rest. Limbiness is also a big help, both to keep the hips close to the rock for taking weight off the fingers, and for high stepping to the next pocket. (The "in" stretch for limestone is the hip turnout.) One also has to keep track of crucial toe pockets once they pass below the waist; I quickly learned to dab them with chalk as I passed — or hung.

The holes, or *trou*, themselves are great. Unlike the *goutte d'eau*, or water buckets of the Verdon, which are more like little scoops, Buoux's pockets are Hueco-like holes on a coarse face. These mini-huecos seem to always have enough edge, but rarely is that edge sharp, nature having been very good to climbers at Buoux and climbers having been very good with files (The Lab! The Lab!). I was told that *trou* are special to Buoux, and that the Verdon limestone is more typical of southern France.

At Buoux, the angle and character of the rock lends itself to two kinds of routes: steep slabs with shallow pockets more akin to dents, and steeper, more deeply-pocketed routes. The latter are more common, with most climbs 5.12 or harder and, personal preference here, the best 5.11's being on the steep stuff. "Steep" can be as extreme as 135 degrees, as on the mega-desperates *Chouca* (8b) and *Le Rose et Le Vampire* (8b), and can require successive single-digit dynos. Difficult can also mean long reaches and bad

pockets, as on *Les Mains Sales*, which is 8a and only dead vertical.

The slabby routes demand smeary high steps and hard pulls on the merest of divot. Of these routes, *Podium* (6c) is very popular, as are all routes on Zarathustra Wall, which sports 13 lines close together at a grade moderate for Buoux. These routes are also popular because they are as well-protected as the steeper routes.

If the routes at Buoux lack anything, it may be the distinctiveness of the individual line. Bolts, not cracks, define the lines, and while a wall may have 15 routes, they will not look that different from each other. The feature that offers nearly 200 routes in a mile of cliff — the ubiquitous hole — does not offer the singularity of *The Equinox* or *Supercrack* to the granite-trained eye. *Chouca*, however, looking like a line of bullet holes up the underside of a supertanker, is an awesome sight.

If Buoux sounds appealing, bear in mind that to really enjoy it you must climb 5.11, or at least be willing to fall off at this level. Of the 194 routes shown on the most recent German topo, over half are 5.11 + or harder. This leaves about 78 routes between 5.10 + and 5.11c, which is a reasonable grade considering the bolts and the availability of the top rope. Be warned however: I was told that at Christmas and Easter the "moderate" routes are all queued-for by foreign climbers flooding south; and even in the August heat, the top climbers warming up on easier routes and the large number of 6b and 6c climbers make it difficult to get on these routes whenever you want to.

The waiting around at the base of climbs did give me a chance to meet French climbers, and contrary to popular myth, I found that many of them spoke English, and spoke it well. The novelty of British climbers wore off long ago in France, but when they found out I was an American, I found myself talking about *Grand Illusion* with Parisians, the likelihood of Dan Goodwin's Maine route being 5.14 with a climber from Grenoble (Goodwin's *Maniac* was reported in *Vertical* as 5.14a), "Free French" with my partner from Lyon, and overcrowding at Buoux with a man from Orlean. I even caught a ride hitchhiking with a French climber I'd met in Yosemite the previous fall.

A few words of French could be helpful. *Bloc* will get you held in place after a fall so you can better dog-out the move. *Merde*, the word that cost D.H. Lawrence a hoped-for short story contract, is a very popular expletive. I learned to hustle out of the way when I heard *Attention corde!* — a rappel rope was about to be thrown. And when people yelled up to me, *Allez, Allez, Allez*, I was being told to go for it.

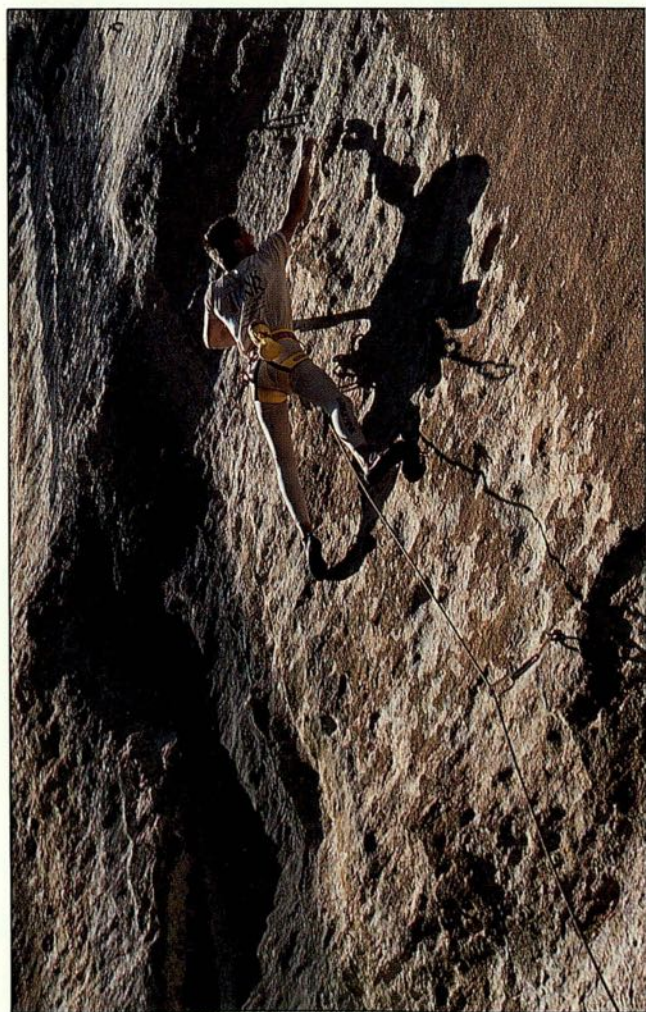
If one plans to visit Buoux, the weather is amenable to climbing nearly all year round, though January and February seem poor months to count on. The summer is very hot, but by migrating from the west face to



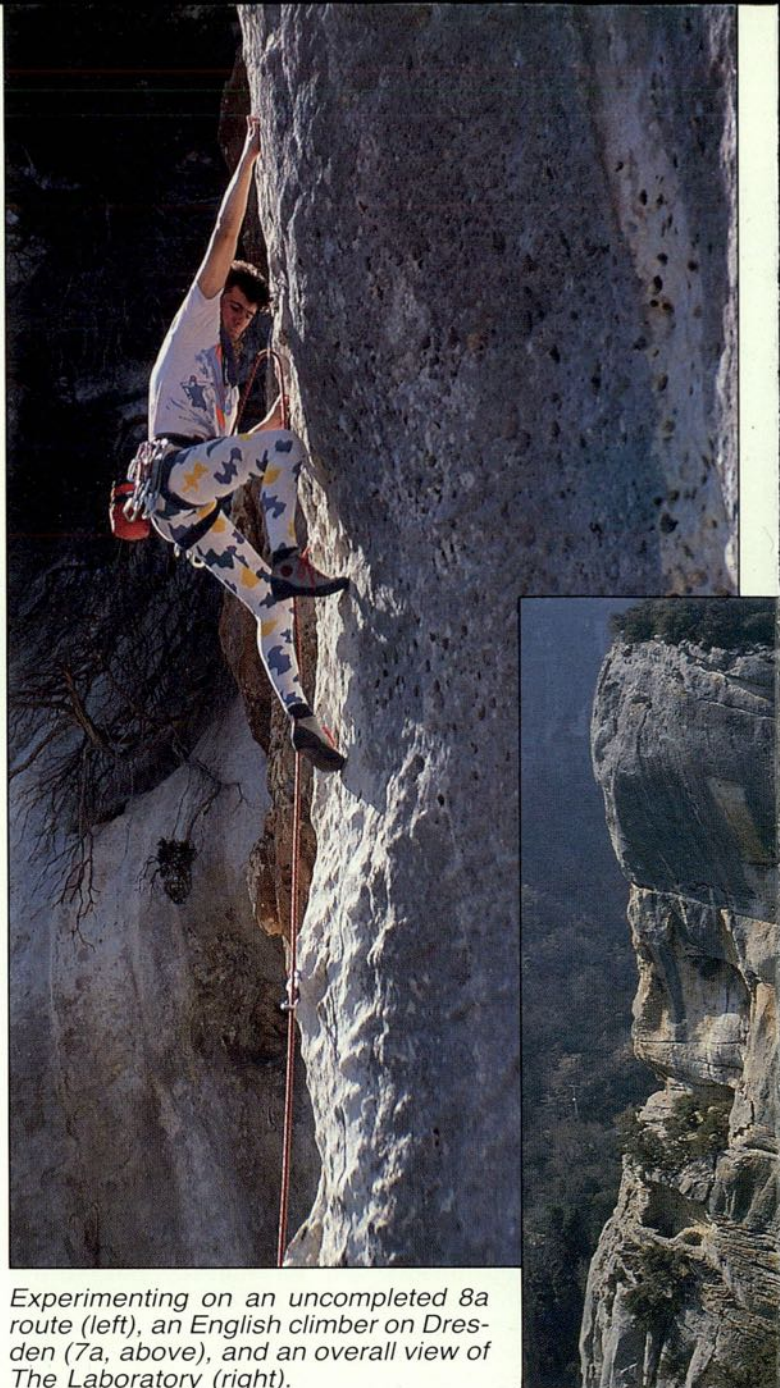
the east and taking a rest between 1pm and 4pm, I could climb from early morning to 9pm every day. Be assured that it will rain very little; in my two months in southern France, it rained a total of four hours. Avoiding the sun, especially on rest days, was troublesome, so — ever hear this before? — the optimal times are spring and fall.

As for gear, ten quick-draws will suffice for nearly every route. One rope is enough, and all the French climb on a single 10.5 or 11 mm. I kept a set of Rocks in my pack for the occasional crack or unprotected move but never used them.

Two matters considering shoes are also worth mentioning. First, bouldering is about as easy to find as a nut tool, so nearly everyone warms up by doing easier routes. The general practice is to wear old boots and to save the crisp, newer ones for when it counts. Considering the rubber it cost me flailing on early attempts, it seems wise to have at least two pairs.



Photos: Beth Wald.

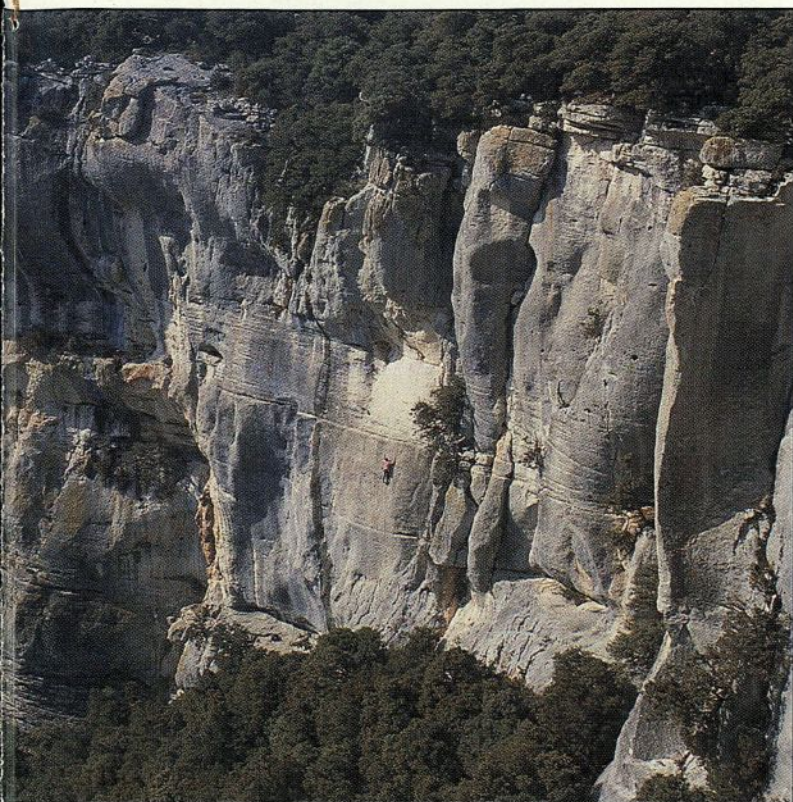


Experimenting on an uncompleted 8a route (left), an English climber on Dresden (7a, above), and an overall view of The Laboratory (right).

Secondly, there are more brands of shoes to choose from in Paris, Marseilles, La Palud, and Grenoble than in North Conway or Boulder, but not at the savings you might expect. Still, a couple brands not available in America are popular at Buoux for the necessary toeing into holes. Many good French climbers are wearing a pink, Sportiva-like shoe, One Sport, which was also notorious for its fast-wearing sole (so much so that it comes with a second pair of soles) and an older, less expensive red Edlinger model from Dolomite. Fires and Sportivas seem to be worn by as many climbers as either of these two, so there is no obvious "best shoe."

One thing is for sure though: quite a few European climbers are sponsored with shoes, and the gear hype seems more intense (and lucrative). I saw *Montagnes* magazine's little van of Sportiva-shod stars at both Buoux and the Verdon; Fire sent out press releases to be posted in stores that listed the Fire-shod finalists in the recent Italian climbing competition; and at Buoux I was introduced to the latest Dolomite prototype by two sponsored Italians and saw the new low-cut Scarpas on a well-known French star. It would seem that in





Europe choosing shoes by what the best climbers wear in photos is as reliable as choosing tires by what won at Indy.

If you do need gear while at Buoux, it is available 90 minutes away in Marseille or La Palud, both of which have very complete selections, and in Avignon, 45 minutes to the west. Chalk, biners, slings, and other gear can be bought right in Apt. There is no up-to-date French guide to Buoux, and Livesey's guide is useless except to get you there. The new German topo is very good, but not readily available. Be cheered however: the route names are painted at the base of 90% of the routes (though without much flair), and people I met were great about helping with grades and suggestions for quality routes — in English as well as French.

Once there, living near Buoux is far cheaper than at Yosemite or even Devil's Tower. Two people with a tent can stay in Apt's municipal campground, Le Cedres, for about \$1.50 per night, and for just slightly more in the village of Bonnieux, which is also about nine kilometers from the cliff. Grocery and restaurant prices in Apt are comparable with those in the States. The English climbers seem to favor Bonnieux, every-

Photo: J.B. Tribout.

one else Les Cedres, and I can recommend the Tavern Septime in Apt for the quality and quantity of its 42-franc meal.

Is Buoux the best crag in the world? If the climbers it attracted while I was there is any indication, it has to be one of the most important. Climbing on ropes around me were Marc Le Ménéstrel, one of the few climbers in the world capable of climbing 8b+; Jackie Godoffe, known both for his style and his third place finish in Italy; Johnny Dawes, "the brilliant rock star of British rockclimbing"; and Martin Atkinson (G.B.), noted for his power and having put up an 8a at Buoux. My Norwegian friend, himself one of Norway's hottest climbers, pointed out "Italy's best climber." People talked of how strong Didier Raboutou and Jean Tribou, two other French 8b climbers, had looked earlier in the year at Buoux; I missed Ron Fawcett by several weeks.

What is also remarkable about Buoux is the scope of the rock *not climbed on*. Several years ago, climbing was banned altogether at Buoux. I met one Englishman who blamed this on the Germans, and perhaps the Germans would blame it on the English (or Italians) if given the chance. The French, meanwhile, would probably prefer that everyone else went home to climb. The truth appears to lie somewhere in the middle, with there having been just too many climbers camping in the nearby woods and climbing routes hanging right over the road.

Anyway, a settlement was reached which closed all but Falaise de l'Aiguebrun (about a quarter of the rock), and banned camping in the valley altogether. You can get a glimpse of what Buoux once was and maybe could of been, by walking up to Buoux village past the banned roadside cliffs. The old bolts and faded slings have a somber and historical look on the perfect, abandoned rock. Were these cliffs and others re-opened and developed, the makers of bolting gear would have a ticket to riches.

*Le meilleur?* Not if you thrive on being alone, climbing cracks, or placing nuts. Not if you want multi-day or multi-pitch routes. Not if mandatory ground-fall runouts are part of the game you like to play. However, if you can get into the notion of *couenne*, short, hard routes with concentrated difficulties that leave the fingers screaming and often take days to master, it is unsurpassed. Add in the superb weather, the availability of French food, the international atmosphere at the cliff, and rock that offers high quality route after high quality route, then Buoux is unmatched.



# IN THE DEEP FREEZE

A COMMENTARY ON NORTH AMERICAN WATERFALL ICE



*Over the past few years, I've managed to check out some of the best-known waterfall climbing areas in North America.*

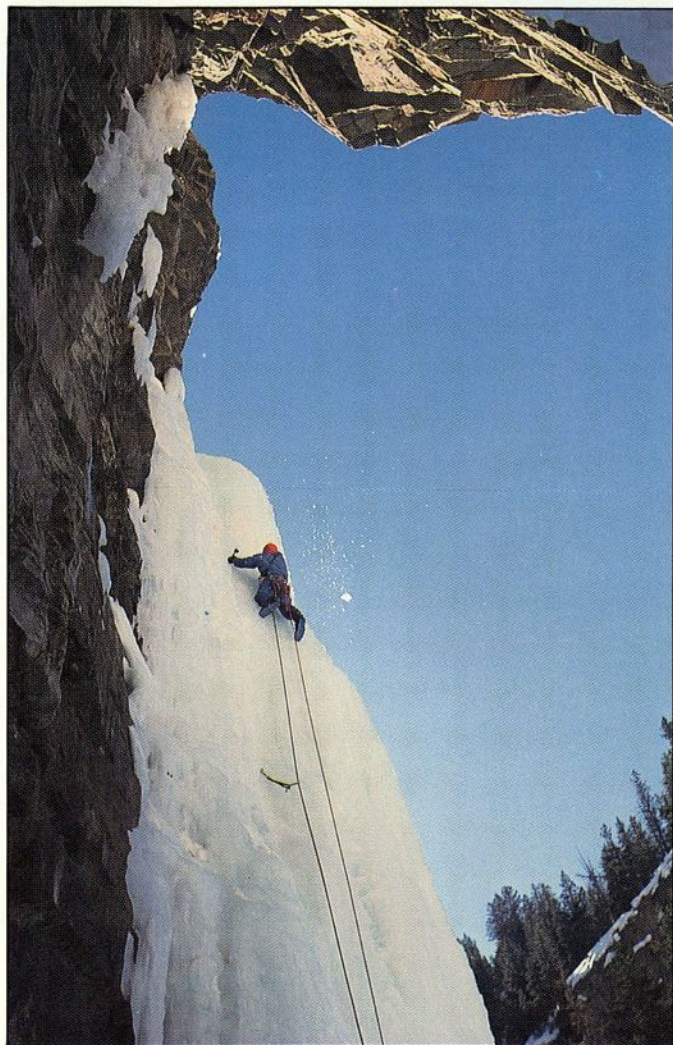
*I've suffered numerous hardships: 3.2 beer in Utah and Colorado, a winter cross-country drive in a VW bus, Reading Week in Banff (the Canadian equivalent of spring break, but without any good-looking women), and road signs in Quebec.*

*But I persevered.*

Photo: Charlie Fowler.



BY CRAIG REASON



#### ON THE ROAD - CALIFORNIA

When we heard that *Widow's Tears* and *Silver Strand* had formed, Jay Smith and I were on wheels within a few hours. Since they only form once in every six winters, these two routes have a mythical quality about them; to date, each has seen only four ascents.

Jeff Lowe has called *Widow's Tears* America's most beautiful ice climb. I have to agree: 1100 feet high and overlooking some of the most spectacular walls in the world, it is truly a unique route. *Silver Strand*, in an equally impressive setting, is shorter (3 ½ pitches) but steeper. Yosemite is known for its short approaches; unfortunately, the same isn't true for its ice: we spent 4 ½ hours of hideous bushwhacking to get to the base of *Silver Strand* and 1 ½ hours to reach *Widow's Tears*.

*Photo: Chris Landry.*

*Colorado ice: Hidden Falls in Glenwood Canyon, and Brass Tacks, near Ouray.*

*Silver Strand* can be seen directly above the Wawona Tunnel viewpoint, while *Widow's Tears* is just down the road, partially hidden in the back of a huge amphitheater. These waterfalls are the first to dry up in the spring, so don't expect to see them during a mid-summer visit.

Since none of the Valley residents are particularly active ice climbers, obtaining reliable information about the status of these routes is difficult. If you arrive only to find unclimbable conditions, I suggest the Mountain Room Bar.

The Valley has the greatest potential of any area in the States — if only it were colder! I found the most reliable ice in California to be in Lee Vining Canyon. Climbable from mid-December through early April most years, this area offers one- and two-pitch climbs of moderate difficulty.

#### A QUICK STOP IN UTAH

Provo Canyon has a good concentration of routes with short approaches. The routes tend to be stepped, with the steep sections being relatively short.

After soloing *The Fang* and *Stairway to Heaven*, nothing else looked good, so we headed to Colorado. At the time I didn't know anything about the routes in Santaquin Canyon, which from the pictures look intriguing. Still, it doesn't seem that there is more than a week's good climbing for a dedicated waterfall addict.

#### COLORADO OF COURSE

Although the greatest concentration of ice in the state is found near Ouray, I preferred the climbing around Telluride. What it lacks in quantity it more than makes up for in quality; not only are the Floradora Saloon and "Baked in Telluride" located here, but *Ames* and *Bridalveil Falls* are nearby as well.

When I did *Ames*, local Antoine Savelli told me it was in the best shape he'd seen for years. Under these conditions I found it comparatively easy, with only a few short vertical sections and several feet of thickness to work with. In leaner years, the first two pitches evidently can be unnerving. The upper pitch and a headwall section at mid-height always seem to form to a reasonable thickness and are set at a pleasant 80 to 85 degrees. Hint: Park at the power station rather than among the vacation homes — these are on private roads.

*Bridalveil Falls* is probably the best-known waterfall in the state, and was at the top of my list until Antoine explained to me its unusual objective dangers. Climbing *Bridalveil* can result in arrest, a \$500 fine, and two years' probation. If you can overcome that mental duress, you'll be rewarded with one of the classics.



The recommended way to avoid capture is a pre-dawn start on Sunday, with your car parked well down the road; the final part of the descent can follow the streambed, and white suits might not be a bad idea. The thought of a \$500 fine was more than I could handle, especially knowing that it had been imposed on several unlucky ascensionists.

Directly above Telluride are numerous pillars dropping over small sandstone cliffs; 30 to 50 feet in length, they allow you to get a route in and still have plenty of time for the bakery and the bar.

*Glenwood Icefall* is the most obvious route along I-70, an hour west of Vail. Four pitches high and only 15 minutes above the road, it's hard to miss. Although not a great route, it breaks up the drive with some reasonably difficult climbing. *Hidden Falls*, also in Glenwood Canyon, looks very good: the river crossing alone appears very stimulating.

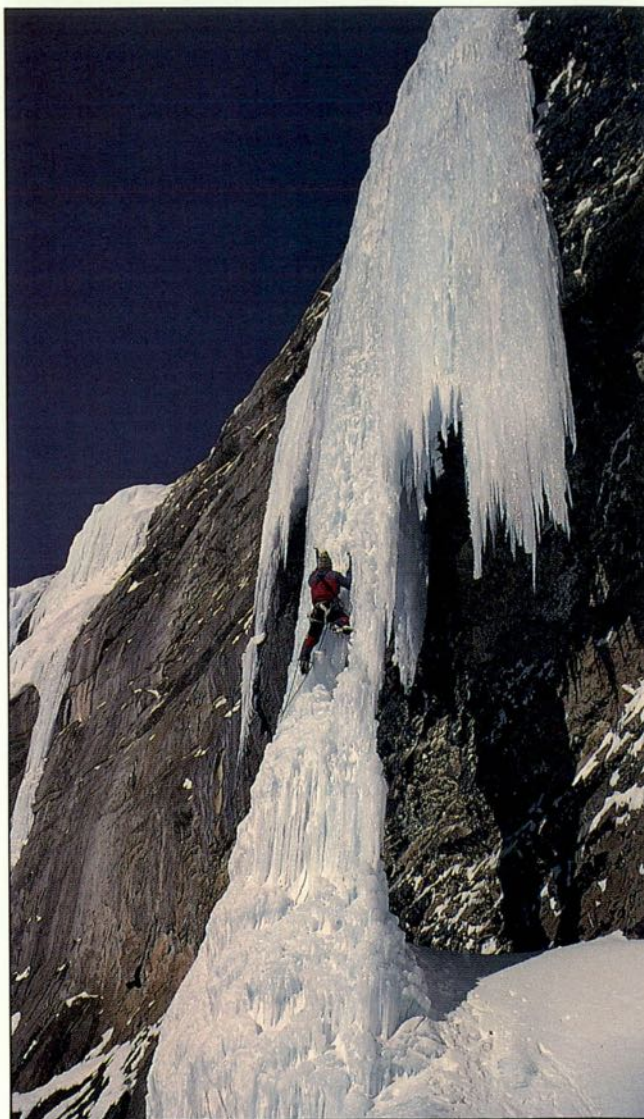
Further east, just outside of Vail, are *The Fang*, *Rigid Designator*, and several easier pitches. *The Fang* is the most incredible one-pitch ice climb I've seen. Six feet in diameter, 120 feet high, and completely free-standing, it's an impressive sight, although it doesn't form every year. *Rigid Designator* does form regularly, and you can run up and climb it in the morning and still have time for a half day of skiing. After walking around Vail for a few minutes seeing more fur coats and designer ski wear than at the Snow Show, I realized that my rather meager budget would be inadequate to properly explore the town's culinary attractions.

The only reason for venturing further east is the quality of the restaurants and bakeries in Boulder. If you feel the need to work off the pastries, Boulder Canyon offers a few short routes. Rocky Mountain National Park has surprisingly little waterfall ice, although I hear *The Squid* is well worth doing.

## CANADIAN ROCKIES, DON'T MISS IT

"And as far as frozen waterfalls are concerned, the Rockies have the biggest and best as well as the most plentiful supply." (*The Ice Experience*, Jeff Lowe.) I would also add, the most consistently well-frozen. More long routes, more hard routes, and more consistent conditions are found here than anywhere else in North America. Should you get bored with the waterfalls, there are plenty of good alpine routes; should you get tired of climbing, the beer is excellent (I personally recommend O'Keefe's Extra Old Stock). The bar in the lobby of the King Edward Hotel in Banff is the most popular with the local climbing crowd.

The availability of Youth Hostels make winter activity much more pleasant than in other areas; for \$5 (Canadian) per night, you get a warm place to sleep, cook, and relax in. Being able to start each day with



Attempting a new route in the Canadian Rockies. The first pitch of *Repentance*, on Cathedral Ledge, in typically thin (and interesting!) conditions (right).

dry ropes and clothes makes it much easier to get motivated. With three Hostels along the Banff-Jasper highway, another at Lake Louise and a fifth in Banff, you'll have no trouble finding one reasonably close to the day's route.

Unlike most other areas, it is possible to count on having plenty of ice if you show up during January and February. As far as I know, the *Weeping Wall*, *Polar Circus*, and *Takakkaw Falls* have never failed to form. Weather stability is another appealing feature of the Rockies; when a weather pattern sets in, it is likely to remain for two or three weeks, so you're not wondering day-to-day if the climbs are going to fall down.

Photo: Jay Smith.



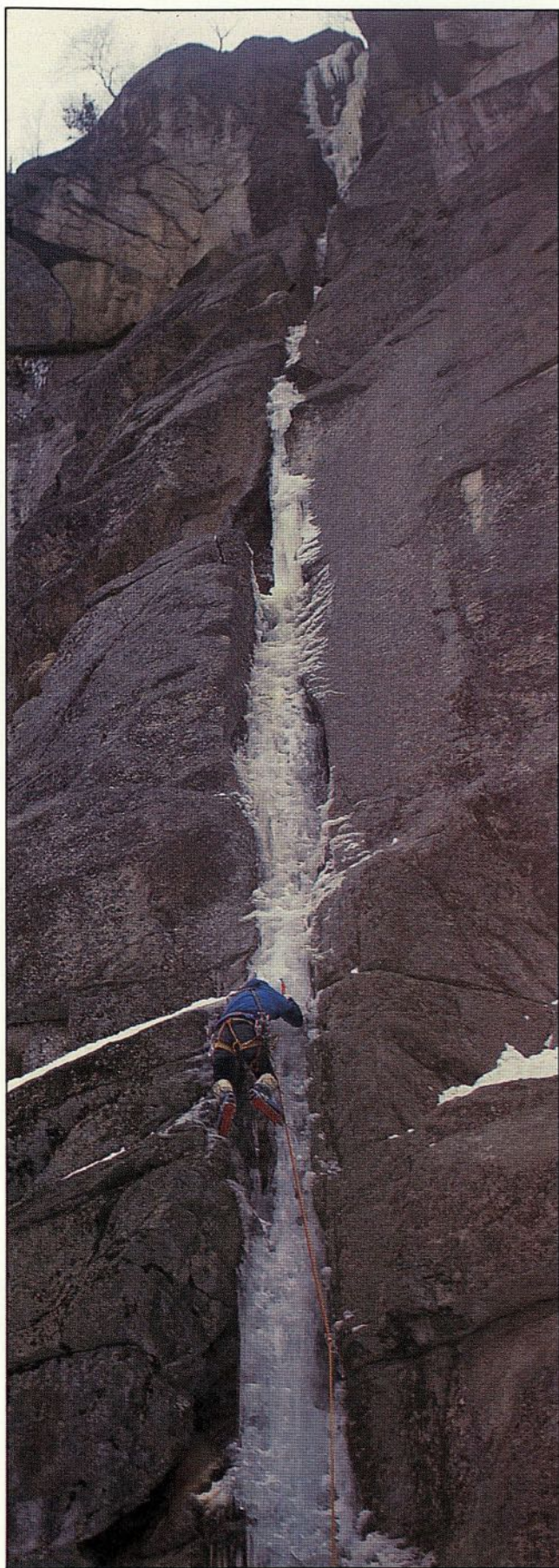


Photo: Dougal MacDonald.

The scale, not only of the ice but of the mountains themselves, is so impressive that I found it hard to relate. After reaching the top of the *Polar Circus*, after 1500 feet of climbing, there is still another 2500 feet to the summit. This setting makes for very inspired climbing. Each time I return, I see some drip in the middle of a big limestone face, and wonder if it might just go.

Albi Sole's guide to the area is excellent. *Waterfall Ice* gives all the information you'll need for each route and lists plenty to keep you busy. The lads at Mountain Magic in Banff have the latest information on conditions as well as new routes. And European-made equipment is usually cheaper here than in the States.

As for the routes themselves, there are more climbs here of all difficulties than any where in America. Most notably, many are long; even without counting the Grade 6 and 7's, there are numerous routes in the four- to six-pitch range. Hint: Due to their length and alpine setting, some routes are subject to objective dangers. An awareness of avalanche conditions is definitely worthwhile; a few parties have been swept away.

If you like routes that aren't quite as long, but are still hard, then try *Pilsner Pillar*, *Carlsberg Column*, and *Curtain Call*. The two hardest routes, *Terminator* and *Gimme Shelter*, don't form very often. The initial pillar on the first usually doesn't touch, and the ice cliffs that feed the latter have apparently shifted. Not even a small drip has been seen on the line of *Gimmie Shelter* since its first ascent.

#### **NORTHEAST, WHY AM I HERE?**

Everything I like about climbing in the Rockies is absent in the East. The routes are short, the weather and conditions are unpredictable (beware the January and February thaws), and the climbing is situated amidst rolling, tree-covered hills. If it was possible to climb just on ice, *Repentance* would be Grade 3 and *Remission* Grade 4, both only two pitches high. The difficulty lies not in front-pointing ice, but in front-pointing rock.

If you happen to see any of the routes in a condition comparable to that in the guidebook photos, consider yourself lucky. These photos must have been taken during one of the few good days in an exceptionally good year. The guide says that some of these routes are "seldom in condition." It's unfortunate that the guide doesn't elaborate; seldom apparently means one out of every six winters, and then for only a week or two.

Lake Willoughby in Vermont has the best ice in the Northeast. The conditions here are far more consistent than at any of the other crags (although the weather can be just as unstable), and there is lots of



ice. Many routes are sandwiched into a relatively small area, but nevertheless some are very fine lines; *Called On Account Of Rain* looked the best to me, but again, it seldom forms.

I found the route lengths given to be quite inaccurate. Rather than list them in feet or meters, they are listed in pitches; we were able to get by with one or two fewer belays than the guide suggested. This isn't much of a problem except that it causes you to initially overestimate the size of the day's undertaking, and leave the bars early.

Being 15 minutes walk from the car and having an easy walk off, the climbs on Cathedral Ledge in New Hampshire were appealing, but turned out to be fairly mellow. Frankenstein Cliff became boring rather quickly; the routes all seemed alike, and the crowds were nothing short of amazing. Cannon was the best-looking crag I saw, but unfortunately, the Black Dike washed away before I could get a tool in it.

#### QUEBEC, BEST OF THE EAST

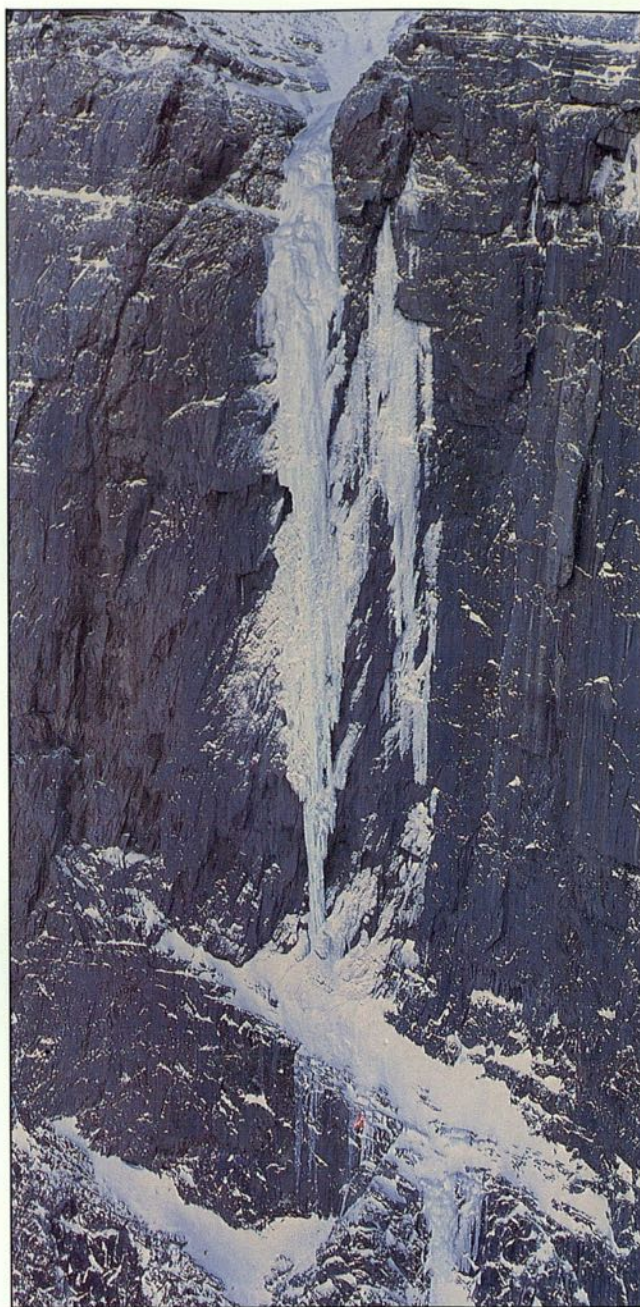
Why droves of northeastern climbers don't migrate up here, I don't know. The Malbaie Valley has several 1000-foot routes, and numerous two- to four-pitch lines of all difficulties. It is a reasonable seven hours' drive from North Conway, but, admittedly, the approach is a major drawback: 22 miles to the base of *La Pomme D'Or*. If you can speak French, it's possible to catch a snowmobile ride for \$30 to \$50, otherwise you'll have to hike or ski — allow a day and a half.

The area is hard to find. Even though Kurt Winkler assured us we wouldn't have any problem, we still spent the better part of a day in Malbaie City trying to get directions. Drive northeast out of Quebec City towards Malbaie; a few miles before Malbaie, take a left towards St. Aime du Lac and follow the Rue Principal until it turns into a snowmobile track.

No guide exists, but there is plenty of ice, so just climb whatever looks good. The most unique feature of the area is that all of the ice is yellow, ranging from a very light tint to a dark carmel color. Malbaie itself is like any small eastern town except the people are even harder to talk to, and finding a decent pastry shop is grim. Nevertheless, *La Pomme D'or* is the prettiest ice climb I've ever seen, and if you're in the East, this is far and away the best area for waterfall climbing.

#### WHAT'S HARD, WHAT WILL BE

Conditions make all the difference in the world when determining ratings. Unlike rock climbs, where the 5.11 finger crack you did today will still be a 5.11 finger crack tomorrow (unless a new shoe comes out!), ice climbs change constantly. The inch-thick vertical smear you did last week may be two feet thick and 85 degrees next week, and a Grade 3 can easily



*The Terminator, Canadian Rockies.*

assume Grade 4 difficulty in exceptionally poor conditions.

What do I mean by good and poor conditions? Good conditions usually mean several feet of solid, well-filled-in ice, within a temperature range of 25 to 30°F. Poor conditions generally involve thin ice (less than a foot thick), ice that is hollow, jellyfished, or cauliflowered, or temperatures below 10°F.

You've just bagged a new route, and now you're sitting at the bar trying to decide on a rating. It is best to get this out of the way before you start any serious drinking. Whatever you decide, base it on experience. What was the condition of the route compared to what it normally would be? How did it compare in technical difficulty to other routes you've done? In length? In objective danger?

Photo: Tim Auger/Courtesy The Polar Circus.



In the Northeast, ratings seem to be given based solely on technical difficulty. The result is that a 30-foot route on Cathedral and a three-pitch climb at Willoughby can both be Grade 5 — no section on one is harder than a section on the other. However, the latter may have ten times the amount of steep ice and be a far more serious undertaking. While this may be fine for rock, it is unrealistic for ice; the technical difficulty is constantly changing with conditions.

The biggest problem in ice ratings today is the close-ended nature of the grading system. Grade 5 was being climbed 15 years ago in Scotland, 12 years ago in North America. Even though harder routes have been done since that time, there has been no commensurate numerical increase. Consequently, the system has become top-heavy, with far more Grade 4's and 5's than anything else, and a wide range of difficulty within these grades.

Led by the late Bugs McKeith, the Canadians have been the only ones to add an additional grade to the system, thus moving on in a logical fashion. However, now that Grade 7 is upon them, there is some talk of making the system close-ended at Grade 6, thereby reinstating the same problems that exist elsewhere.

Is there a solution? Perhaps, but it will require guidebook authors and first ascentionists setting aside their egos and honestly evaluating comparative difficulties.

In any case, your own judgement is likely to be far more accurate than any number in a guidebook. If the guide says Grade 4, but it looks harder than any Grade 4 you've done, it probably will be. On a waterfall, what you see is what you get. Hidden holds or rests won't appear, and if the ice is funky at the start, then it will probably stay that way until you rap off.

Having said all this, how does the ice compare from one area to the next?

The Northeast has the most forgiving ice I've ever climbed; it was rare to find anything I'd consider hollow or chandeliered. Even on thin ice I felt in control, despite the lack of protection, so long as I didn't swing too hard. California also offers some exceptionally secure ice. Both of these areas have good melt/freeze patterns, which allow the climbs to fill in nicely. And although the ice in Utah was a bit funky in places, it generally afforded a high level of security.

The ice in Colorado, Quebec, and the Canadian Rockies is much more varied. All three areas offer similar conditions: when less than 75 degrees, the ice was well filled in and very solid, while the steeper flows tend to form in layers of semi-bonded icicles. Climbing on this is a matter of patience, swinging until you get a placement you feel good about.

Even though it's not always possible to place a bomber screw, the climbing can still be safe; just don't lose your concentration and start worrying

To give some idea of comparative difficulty, I have rated a number of routes according to what I feel they would be graded using the Canadian system. In its present form, this is the most accurate grading system around, taking into account length, continuity of difficulty, and objective danger involved.

Route	Grade	Meters	Area
<i>The Terminator</i>	7	300	Canadian Rockies
<i>Nemesis</i>	7	175	Canadian Rockies
<i>L'Pomme D'Or</i>	6	350	Malbaie, Quebec
<i>Polar Circus</i>	6	625	Canadian Rockies
<i>Widow's Tears</i>	6	350	Yosemite Valley
<i>The Fang</i>	5	50	Vail, Colorado
<i>The Promenade</i>	5	120	Lake Willoughby, Vermont
<i>Ames Fall</i>	5	175	Ophir, Colorado
<i>The Pilsner Pillar</i>	5	200	Canadian Rockies
<i>Borgeau Left-Hand</i>	5	150	Canadian Rockies
<i>Silver Strand</i>	4	175	Yosemite Valley
<i>The Squid</i>	4	40	Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado
<i>Rigid Designator</i>	4	40	Vail, Colorado
<i>Remission</i>	4	100	Cathedral Ledge, New Hampshire
<i>Professor Falls</i>	4	225	Canadian Rockies
<i>Stairway to Heaven</i>	4	225	Provo Canyon, Utah
<i>Dropline</i>	3	60	Frankenstein, New Hampshire
<i>Cascade Falls</i>	3	150	Canadian Rockies
<i>Repentance</i>	3	100	Cathedral Ledge, New Hampshire

about your last piece. If it's so bad that you can't get a good axe placement, then you won't be able to get in a good screw either, so the best thing to do is keep moving. And if you can get good tool placements, it really isn't necessary to place a screw, which only uses up extra time and energy.

Where will the Grade 7's and 8's of tomorrow be found? In the Canadian Rockies. The potential for extreme routes is vast, as long as you have the imagination to see them. Connecting ice ribbons up big alpine faces is where it's at; the East Face of Howse Peak is a prime example of a truly spectacular route still waiting to be front-pointed. Another direction will be fast ascents of the existing desperates, such as linking up *Polar Circus*, *Weeping Pillar*, and *Slipstream* in a single day (*Jeff Marshall soloed the first two in a day last winter - Ed.*). In other areas, new routes will be done that are harder than the existing testpieces, but I suspect few will be "pushing the envelope."



# Bluegrass Rock

## Kentucky's Red River Gorge

b y M a r t i n H a c k w o r t h

Steep and strenuous.

These words occur with great frequency in the local guidebook, and for good reason: they aptly describe many of the routes in Red River Gorge.

Located in eastern Kentucky, on the west edge of the Cumberland Plateau, the Gorge is less than two hours from several major cities in the central Ohio Valley, and only about one hour from Lexington. Yet for its size, accessibility, and potential for rock climbing, it remains seldom visited.

Why?

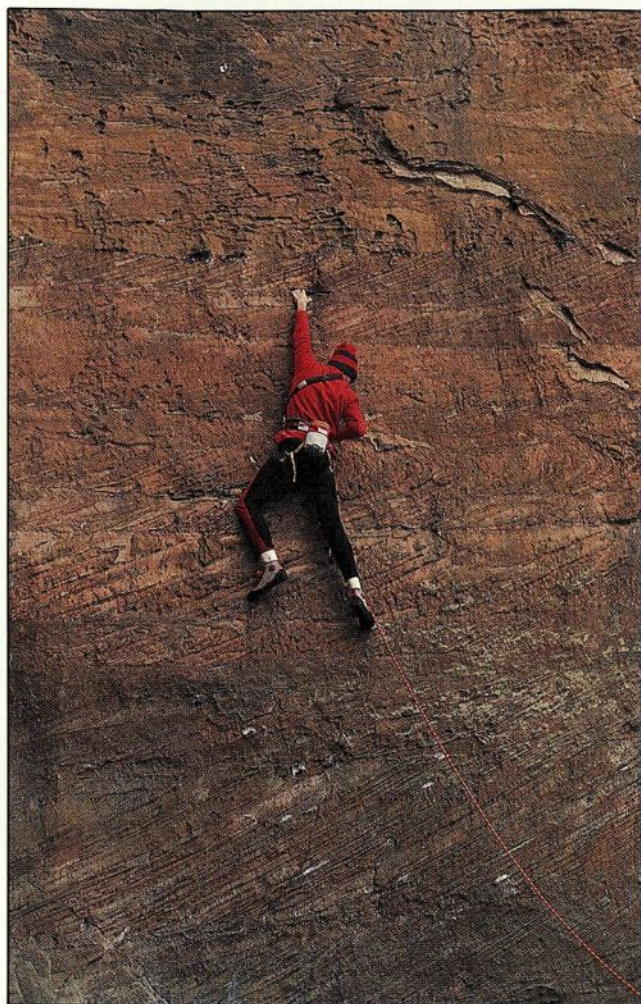
Arduous approaches, rustic surroundings, persistence of inclement weather. Then there is the rock, a conglomerate sandstone which varies in quality from okay to extremely brittle, stratified into cliffs that are generally dead vertical or overhanging.

On the other hand, Red River Gorge is filled with unclimbed walls, in the midst of one of the most scenic and rugged natural areas left in the East. Similar to a forested Canyonlands, the Gorge abounds in arches, pinnacles, cliffs, and rock shelters. There are scores of cliffbands which have never even been approached. The opportunities for those with an urge to explore are incredibly rich.



Photos: Hackworth Collection





*Close to the Edge (5.10-), Hen's Nest. American Wall (5.3), Fortress Wall.*

Only a few routes were recorded in the Red River Gorge before the late 1960's. While these routes were being established, the Army Corps of Engineers was planning a dam-created lake, which would have flooded much of the Gorge. Debate raged over this proposal from its inception in the late 1960's to 1975, when it was finally defeated. The publicity attending this controversy eventually attracted throngs of people to the area, and contributed, in part, to a climbing boom in the mid-1970's.

Efforts on the most obvious lines started around 1968. A group affiliated with the local chapter of the Sierra Club, the Cumberland Climbers, was responsible for much of the activity during this period. The more prominent formations in the Gorge, such as Chimney Top Rock, Half Moon Arch, and Tower Rock, were their primary objectives, yielding routes such as *Chimney's Chimney* (5.2), *Tunnel Route* (5.3), *Rockhouse* (5.3), and *Groundhog* (5.3). All were short and primarily followed chimneys.

In 1970, Bob Compton and Chuck Kifer climbed a discontinuous line up the foreboding east face of Raven. Requiring several pitches difficult free climbing (for the day) and strenuous direct aid, this route, at 5.7 A2, represented a marked jump in Gorge standards.

When Compton and Kifer finally reached the top, they were greeted by the rifle-toting owner of the property, who was banking on the proposed Red River Lake to popularize his fledgling resort on the top of Raven Rock. (Although nearly all of Red River Gorge is on public land today, there were large parcels which were privately held at the time). The hapless pair narrowly avoided violence by acquiescing to demands that they climb back down the route and measure it with a surveyor's tape. Climbed free in 1982 (5.9+), this route is now one of the more enjoyable face climbs in the Gorge, generally eliciting excitement of a more routine nature.

Compton and Kifer's route on Raven Rock was probably the apex of early efforts. The equipment locally available consisted of goldline, a few pitons, and either hiking boots or sneakers. Given an almost limitless supply of moderate new routes, unrefined equipment, and modest experience, it is not surprising that highly technical routes were not pursued.

Another factor in the Gorge's early development was the feeling that it was not really a "legitimate" climbing area. Big wall climbing was becoming popular, and little attention was given to free climbing on small, out-of-the-way crags. Pushing the limits of free climbing seemed a bit dubious, given the risks involved with confronting the unknown on steep and often dangerously-loose rock.

In 1971, a Chouinard equipment catalog introduced lightweight chocks, and the philosophy of "clean climbing." This had an immediate impact. Many of the routes that looked feasible followed continuous cracks too wide to protect with anything other than large angles or bongs. Others flared and bottomed in a manner that made for difficult nailing. A "Gorge rack" of the pitons useful for these lines amounted to quite a load. Aluminum hexes and Stoppers were much lighter, easier to place, and simply worked better. The switch to nuts was rapid.

New faces were also appearing on the scene, eager to probe the fresh horizons which were now appearing. Tom Seibert and Larry Day were two of the strongest and most prolific local climbers of this era. Seibert was a powerfully-built ex-college wrestler. His tremendous strength and deliberate climbing style were responsible for many early successes. Day was bold and naturally talented, with a flowing and graceful style. This pair produced many fine routes in the 5.6 to 5.7 range during the early part of the 1970's.



## Red River Gorge: Local Information

Visiting climbers are likely to notice a few things immediately: the coarseness of the sandstone, the doubtful integrity of many crucial holds, and the scarcity of climbs which are less than vertical. One need only caress a sheet of 50 grit sandpaper to experience the feel of Gorge sandstone. Taping is strongly advised for crack climbing.

Also, the sandstone is often loosely cemented. Many routes, especially new ones, are very friable. Although much of the area contains compact and reliable rock, buckets on popular climbs have been known to pull off, so it's best to be skeptical until some familiarity with the area is gained.

There are few low-angle climbs anywhere in Red River Gorge. Most of the routes in the lower grades follow chimneys which are technically easy but quite steep. Most of the harder routes are vertical to overhanging. An aggressive, high-energy approach, combined with cranking power, will generally lead to success.

Visitors would be well advised to obtain a guidebook or become acquainted with local climbers before attempting to locate routes, which tend to be spread out. Several areas, however, are noted for a concentration of quality climbs. Tower Rock, in addition to having many excellent routes, is a popular gathering place. Other areas suitable for a short visit are Hen's Nest Rock, Sky Bridge Ridge, Roadside Park, Long Wall, Muscle Beach, and Military Walls. The Friction Slab is a fine place to visit at the end of the day, offering some of the only slab climbing in the Gorge.

Usually, the climate is conducive to climbing seven months out of the year. January through late February is typically too cold for any serious cragging. Late winter, spring, and early summer are fine, but the weather may be unsettled. Foliage, insects, heat, and humidity usually halt most activity beginning sometime in June and ending in late August. Fall is the best season, with cool, sunny days, long periods of stable weather, and fall colors.

There are a few Forest Service regulations concerning access and use of the Gorge. Camping is not allowed within 300 feet of a road or trail, and fires are prohibited. Many rock shelters in the Gorge contain petroglyphs and artifacts; removing material from or damaging any archeological site is of course forbidden.

There are few limitations on climbing other than an April-October restriction on climbing at Sky Bridge, Gray's Arch, and Chimney Top Rock (near the overlook). Natural Bridge State Park, which lies just outside the Gorge, is currently closed to climbing.

Although most visitors are appreciative of the area, and conscientious about maintaining it, many are not. Litter abounds at Tower Rock and Half Moon Arch, much of which can be traced to climbers. The scrub on the summit of Tower Rock was recently damaged in a fire started by a pair of climbers. Trash may be found stuffed into cracks on the belay ledges of *Autum* and *Arachnid*. It is not unusual to find mes-

sages, many written by climbers, scrawled over official notices posted on the Forest Service bulletin boards around the Gorge. The Forest Service does not have the funding to keep up with the tide of litter and vandalism that is beginning to sweep the area. Please help keep the area in its natural state, free of litter and restrictions, by using discretion and good sense, and by seeing to it that others do so as well.

Red River Gorge is culturally, economically, and geographically part of Appalachia. Many of the small communities in the region are economically depressed. When dealing with the area's residents, realize that you are on their turf. Many of these people lack the resources to insure the minimum standard of living which most of us take for granted. Be very careful about crossing private land without permission, and do not ignore no trespassing signs.

Friendly patronage of local businesses may pay off some cold night when your car refuses to start, or if an emergency ever comes up. Also bear in mind that Red River Gorge might be Red River Lake were it not for strong opposition from the area's residents, many of whom fought to preserve the area purely because they like it as is, in spite of the economic windfall that they might well have derived from the tourist trade.

### Services

Slade and Pine Ridge, located along the Mountain Parkway at the entrances to the Gorge, are very small communities where most essential services can be found. Stanton, located about 15 miles west of Slade, is the closest town with amenities such as supermarkets, drug stores, and full-service gas stations. Spencer's grocery at Pine Ridge, and Parkway grocery at Slade both have food, bottled water, fuel, sundries, the guidebook to the area, and USGS topographic maps.

Two miles south of Slade on Highway 11 is a small store which sells ice cream, the best pizza around, and health food snacks at very reasonable prices. Located in the same building is a small climbing store where one may pick up equipment, route information, or scout for partners.

For those who wish to dine in style, the lodge at Natural Bridge State Park offers tasty, if highly-priced, dinners, including a buffet and salad bar. One may also find lodging at the Park campgrounds or at Hemlock Lodge, although the cost and difficulty of getting reservations make these poor alternatives to camping.

For those who wish to stay in a campground, Koomer Ridge, located along Highway 15 four miles west of Slade, is the only alternative to the Park. It is expensive and often booked in the summer. The best areas to car camp in the Gorge are along Edward Branch near The Dome, and Indian Creek near Muscle Beach. Both are easily accessible by auto. Auxier Ridge and Raven Rock are excellent ridgetop camping areas for those disposed towards a bit of hiking. A look at a topo map or trail guide will reveal other possibilities.



The fall of 1974 was a particularly intense period of exploration. Many of the now-classic routes in the middle grades were climbed during this time, including *Diamond in the Crack* (5.6), an exposed line on Military Walls, by Day, Seibert, Bob Hill, and Eric Bostrum. The season was capped off when Day and Seibert brought 5.8 to the area with *Arachnid*, a strenuous dihedral capped by an imposing roof. The free ascent of this line, which most had previously believed improbable, caused quite a stir. *Arachnid*, along with the ominous-looking *Frenchburg Overhangs* (5.8), by Day, Seibert and Hackworth, were breakthrough routes which pointed the way to greater possibilities.

About a year later, when EB's became available (canvas jungle boots being the footwear of preference to that point), Day pioneered 5.9 with *Slip or Grip*, and 5.10 a short time later with *Fallout*. Although both of these climbs were initially toproped, they represented significant increases in technical difficulty.

When Day moved to Colorado in 1977, his place as prime mover was taken by Ed Pearsall. Although Day and others introduced hard free climbs to the Gorge, Pearsall made them commonplace. Bold and athletically gifted, Pearsall was the driving force behind nearly every route 5.9 or harder for many years. When Day returned to Kentucky for annual visits, he,

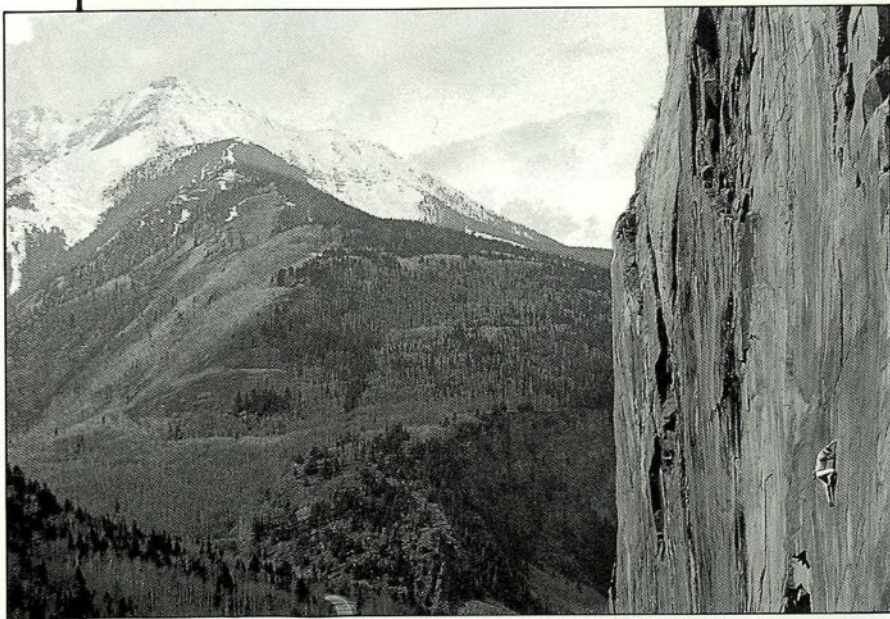
Pearsall and occasionally Tom Seibert teamed for climbs that were lightyears ahead of the prevailing standards. *Tower of Power* (5.10), and *The Quest* (5.10 A1), were bold, spectacular, and obvious challenges that most locals had dismissed as projects for the future.

These ascents, all done in excellent style, brought the Gorge closer to standards being pushed elsewhere. The elusive 5.11 grade probably arrived in 1979 with *Insanity Ceiling*, a mind-boggling technical problem which surmounts the roof above the South Face of Tower Rock. This route was originally rated 5.10, giving rise to speculation that holds might have fallen off since the first ascent by Pearsall, Day, and Seibert. Since this is unlikely, it is generally accepted as the first Gorge 5.11.

A few months later, Pearsall provided a major boost to the scene by completing *A Climbers Guide to Red River Gorge*. Although two previous guidebooks had been written, neither contained the amount of information, nor the number of climbs, as Pearsall's book. After completing the guide, Pearsall's interest in the Gorge diminished. Without his driving force, the climbing community was without a strong figure at the forefront for several years. Although several individuals were actively putting up new routes, not much was being done to surpass the standards which had already been established.

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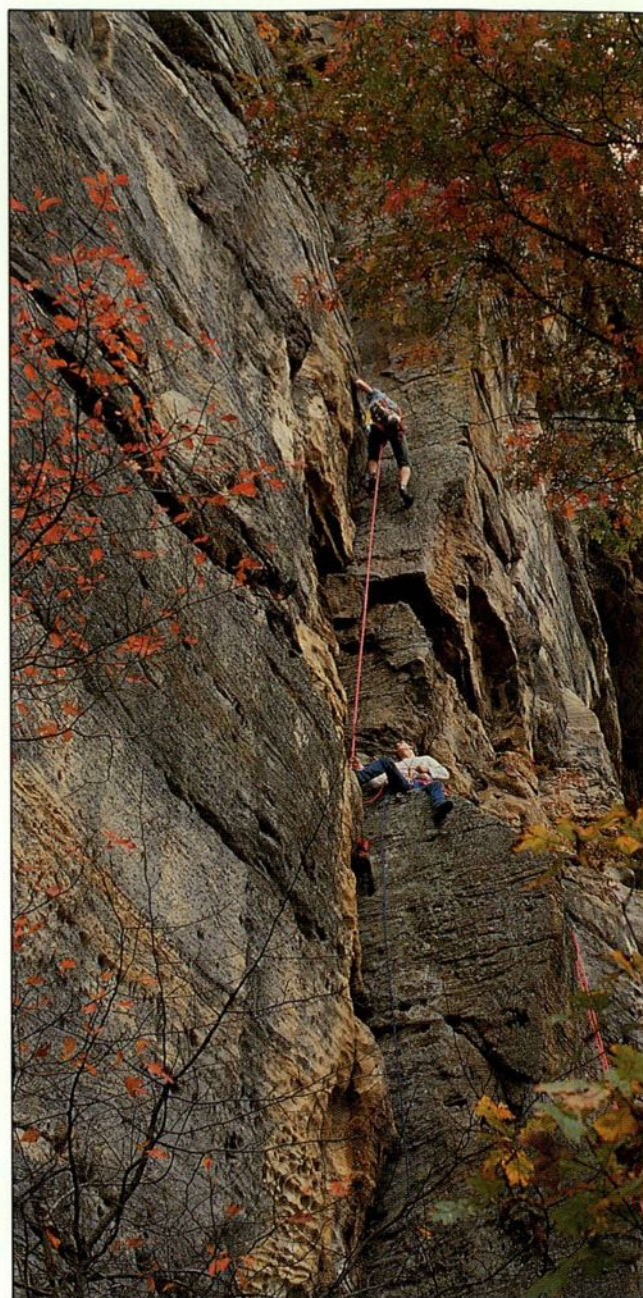
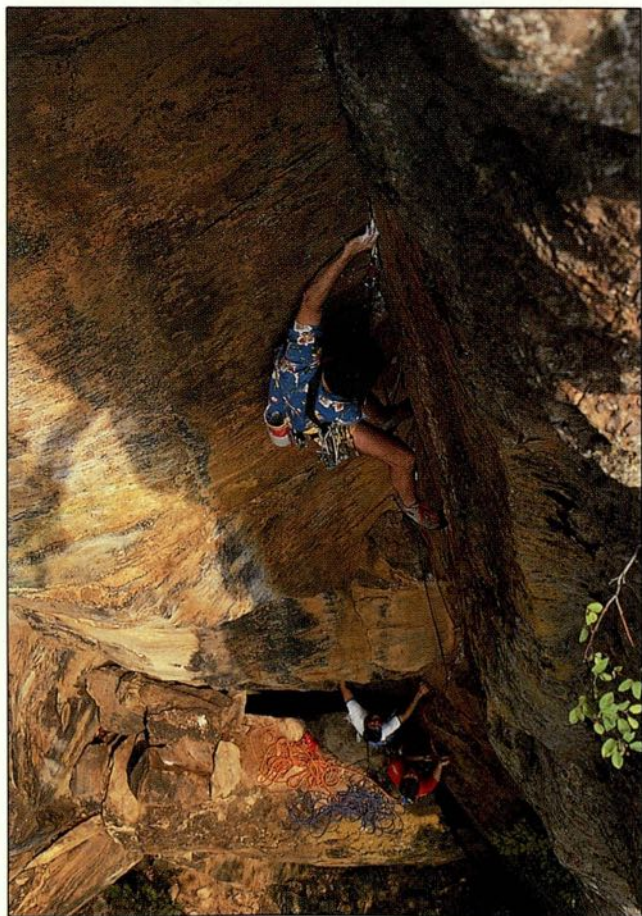
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In 1983, Greg Smith, Jeff Koenig, and Tom Souders began to emerge from the pack. First, Souders, with Ron Snider and Bob Hayes, led *Inhibitor* (5.11-), a long, overhanging jamcrack that had been attempted by several strong parties. A few weeks later, Koenig and Souders put up *The Return of Geoff Beene* (5.10+), a technically difficult and sustained hand/finger crack in the same area. Both routes featured continuously challenging climbing, accomplished in fine manner.

Early in 1984, Koenig, Souders, and Fletch Andrews climbed *3B*, the third 5.11 in the Gorge and the hardest done in conventional style. "Beene Brothers" Koenig and Souders soon contributed another 5.11 with *Basecamp*. Smith, in the meantime, was in the process of devouring all the hard classics. He also bagged the first free ascent of



*Party Time* (5.6), *Fortress Wall*.  
*Vector Trouble* (5.9), *Long Wall*.

*Black Death*, a huge roof previously completed with some aid by Pearsall and Day, adding a new crux finish.

Smith's contributions to the Gorge are nearly legendary. He established a number of difficult and adventurous climbs during the 1980's, such as *Synchronicity* (5.10+), *Kool Aidless*, (5.11), *Harder Than Your Husband* (5.11-), and *Aah!* (5.11). Smith's forte was boldness on extremely difficult and often dangerous territory. His amazing control, and his ability to work out complicated protection from minimal stances is exemplified by routes such as *Fatal Vision* (5.10), *Wimpering Insanity* (5.11-), *Psycho Killer* (5.10+), and *Invisible Barrier* (5.11), all of which offer ground-fall possibilities.



By now the fray was at full steam. The team of Hackworth and Grant Stephens explored new ground throughout the Gorge, establishing a number of 5.10's as well as several 5.11's, such as *South of Zimbabwe* (5.11-), on Tower Rock, and the short but strenuous *Negative Energy* (5.11+), near Nada tunnel. Snider, John Bronaugh, and Jack Dickey were also adding to the list. Snider's efforts on *Flying Circus*, (5.10+), a difficult and audacious climb on Raven Rock, and Bronaugh's lead of the third pitch of *Fear and Loathing in Nada* (5.10-), are especially noteworthy. More recently, Koenig and Souder's *Labors on Pink Feat* have produced probably the hardest long route in the state at 5.11+. Climbed after top roping, and protected by a rappel-placed bolt, this route is nonetheless a bold undertaking on extremely difficult ground.

In early 1985, the newest climbing guide to the Gorge was published; *Stones of Years* contains information on 300 routes in over 20 different areas. In the year after its release, the number of routes in the Gorge 5.10 and harder has nearly doubled. Armed with the full arsenal of the 1980's climber, locals and an increasing number of visitors are exploring the area at an unprecedented pace.

While new technology may help make some advances possible, increasing standards and the omnipresent soft rock have insured that the element of adventure remains high for pioneers. Given the current level of activity in the area, the next guidebook may well contain twice the present number of routes. But it is likely that most of these, as in the past, will be accounted for by a relatively small number of devotees to the steep sandstone and rugged setting of this wild and adventurous area.

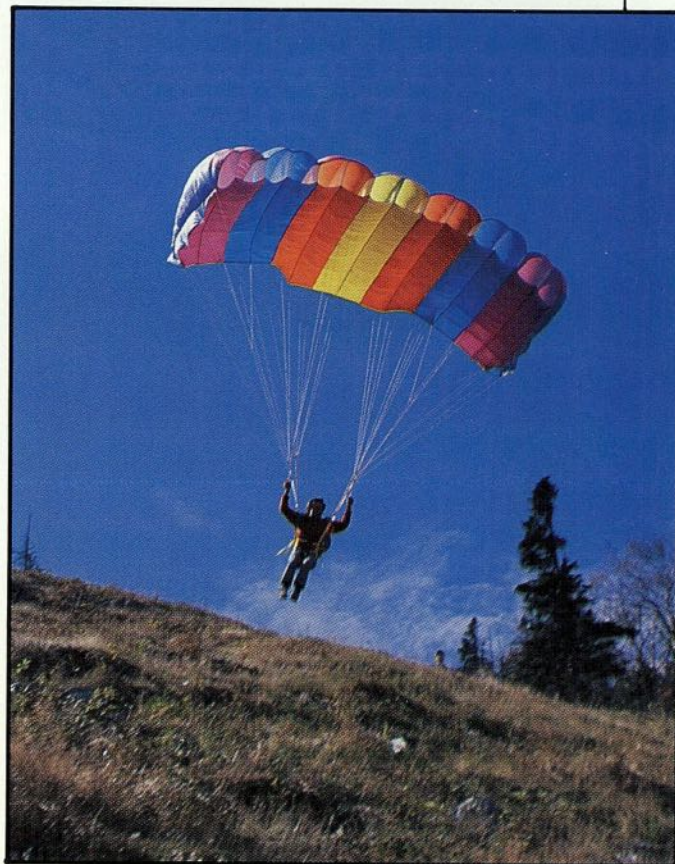


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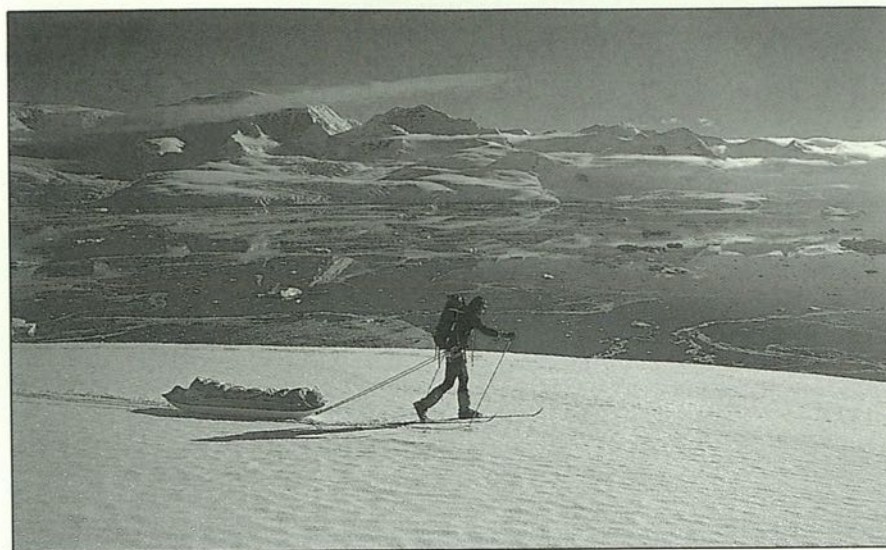
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*Sledging loads on the Antarctic Peninsula.*

Photo: Rick Ridgeway

## ANTARCTICA

### A Primer: Mountaineering in the Land of Ice

This continent's statistics are impressive: much of Antarctica never gets above 0°F; it has the highest mean elevation of all the continents; an ice sheet covers 98% of the land area and averages two miles in thickness; the highest portion of the polar plateau levels off at 14,000 feet; and cold air sinking downslope to the sea generates 200 mph gales along some coasts.

Everything worth climbing pokes up out of the ice or sea. The highest peaks are in the Sentinel Range, 2000 miles from the tip of South America and 800 miles from the South Pole. Vinson Massif, the highest, is a plateau 15 miles long and 10 miles wide, all above 12,000 feet, with five peaks about 100 feet lower than the 16,059-foot main summit. Its "normal" route is similar in difficulty, weather, and altitude to the West Buttress of Mount McKinley.

Nearby Mt. Tyree, only 164 feet lower, is the most serious mountaineering challenge on the continent. John Evans and Barry Corbet made its only ascent in 1967, on a route comparable to McKinley's Cassin Ridge. Their support team, worried and searching the peak with binoculars, knew the ascent was successful when Corbet radioed, "Look on the summit, you lunkheads!"

Southwest of the Sentinels are the Transantarctic Mountains, 1500 miles long and bearing unclimbed peaks over 14,000 feet. Only scientists with government support have climbed here. Famous peaks include Mt. Erebus, an active volcano near McMurdo

Sound, and the landmark dome of Mt. Fridtjof Nansen, which Roald Amundsen discovered, named and photographed in 1911. At 13,354 feet, "Fridge" is only 300 miles from the South Pole.

North of the Sentinels, jagged peaks and technical rock run the entire 600 miles of the Antarctic Peninsula. Elsewhere, smaller ranges and a few volcanoes flank several coastlines. Many are still unexplored.

Anyone who has tried to reach Antarctica has an opinion about the National Science Foundation. The NSF is the arm of U.S. presence on the continent, and is forbidden by well-established national policy from offering assistance to private or commercial expeditions. It's also U.S. policy that the continent shall not become an area of international discord. That's the intent of the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which defers recognition of territorial claims and provides for cooperation between member nations. No government encourages adventurers to wander about seeking sustenance at research stations, become martyrs for the ice gods, or expose the international coalition to the moral obligation of initiating rescue attempts severely restricted by equipment, climate, and distance. Such conduct wouldn't enhance the status of these governments as responsible signers of the Treaty, and could jeopardize their future claims — we're talking coal and oil, fisheries, strategic minerals, and the 200-mile limit.

Despite the NSF, the Treaty, and the emphasis on science, it is the des-

tiny of Antarctica to be enjoyed by people who have no scientific excuse to be there. Chile and Argentina see the adventure tourism market as a way to enhance balance of payments, and extend influence over portions of the continent in a manner from which the NSF is precluded. Going there is now realistic if you don't expect *carte blanche*. No need to stow away on an icebreaker, parachute from a hijacked jetliner, or crunch an outrigger in the pack ice. Be patient. Save money.

### Getting There

Every expedition to Antarctica is a political event. You must make arrangements if you expect to receive any kind of assistance other than a forced evacuation. Adventure Network International provides authorized tours from Punta Arenas, Chile to climbing sites within their reach. (Mountain Travel booked a November 1986 tour to the Sentinels.) The flights will likely stop at Teniente Marsh Base on King George Island to refuel. The Chilean Air Force and private charter aircraft bring tourists there, and a hotel is available. Austral, the world's southernmost beer is also served.

Beyond this point passports, immunizations, bank cards, and cash are useless. The only hard currency is a skilled flight crew. (There are at least 52 aircraft wrecks on the continent). For this reason I suggest the Network before other arrangements, since their flight crew is second to none.

### Costs

Budget \$20,000 round trip from Punta Arenas to the Sentinels, considerably more to go farther, and roughly half that amount to the Antarctic Peninsula. It's about \$2000 to fly round trip from the U.S. to Punta Arenas. Lodging, meals and beverages there are \$50/day if you live it up. Your field costs will include a month's extra food and fuel in case you get stranded.

As opportunities increase to travel to Antarctica, costs will decrease. When enough demand is generated to subsidize local aircraft and eliminate bringing planes from the Arctic, tour costs could be reduced substantially.

### Climbing Season

There is 24-hour daylight November through January. Average mean temperature in this period ranges from just above freezing along the Antarctic Peninsula coast to -30°F near the Pole. Storms can occur anytime, but seem to be more frequent as the sea-



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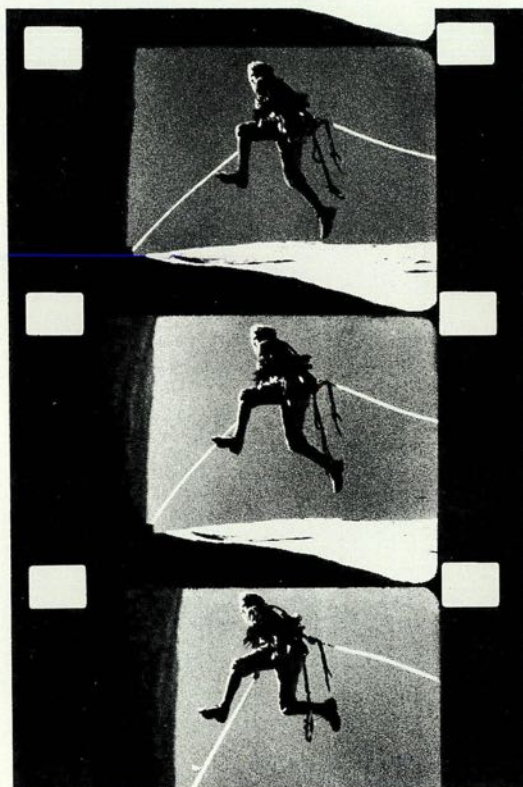
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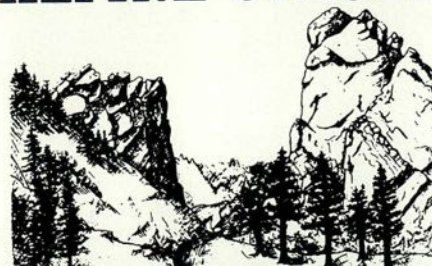


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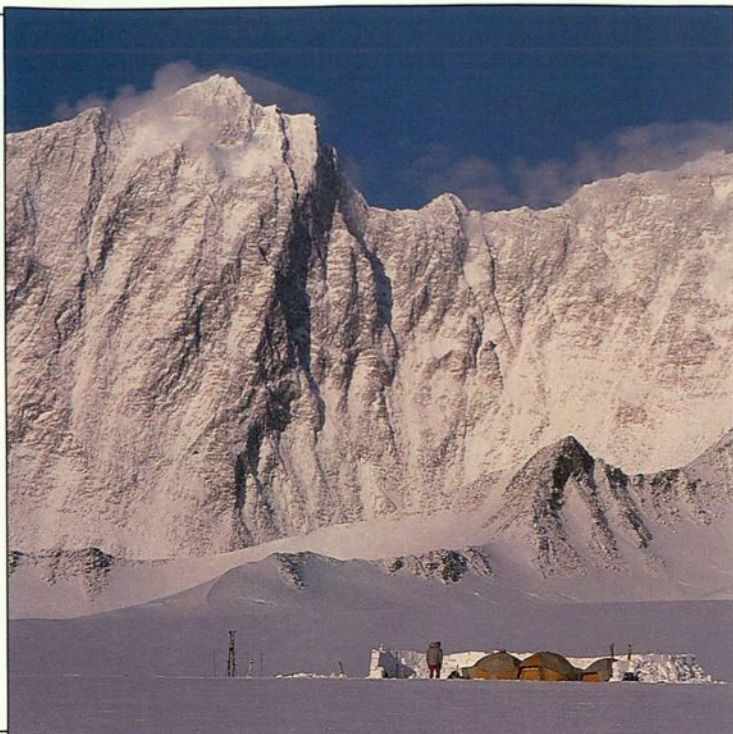


Photo: Pat Morrow.

## NOTABLE ANTARCTIC PEAKS

Name (Elevation*)	Range	1st Ascent
Vinson (16,059)	Sentinel	1966
Tyree (15,895)	Sentinel	1967
Shinn (15,750)	Sentinel	1966
Gardner (15,375)	Sentinel	1966
Naomi Uemura** (15,257)	Sentinel	unclimbed
Epperly (15,100)	Sentinel	unclimbed
Kirkpatrick (14,856)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Elizabeth (14,698)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Markham (14,290)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Bell (14,117)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Mackellar (14,098)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Kaplan (13,879)	Queen Maud	unclimbed
Sidley (13,720)	Executive Committee	unclimbed
Ostenso (13,710)	Sentinel	1967
Minto (13,668)	Admiralty	unclimbed
Long Gables (13,620)	Sentinel	1967
Fridtjof Nansen (13,354)	Queen Maud	1962
Lister (13,206)	Royal Society	1962
Erebus (12,451)	Ross Island	1908
Jackson (11,319)	Antarctic Peninsula	unclimbed
Isachsen (11,237)	Sor Rondane	unclimbed
Menzies (11,008)	Prince Charles	unclimbed
Herschel (10,942)	Admiralty	1967
Siple (10,204)	Siple Island	unclimbed
Stephenson (9800)	Alexander Island	unclimbed

\* Some elevations have not been formally accepted.

\*\* Proposed name of peak 10 miles southeast of Vinson.

## LANDMARK DATES IN ANTARCTIC MOUNTAINEERING

- 1895 First recorded man sets foot on Antarctica.
- 1902 White Island (8800 ft.) climbed by Scott Expedition.
- 1908 Mt. Erebus ascended by Shackleton Expedition.
- 1911 South Pole reached by Roald Amundsen.
- 1912 Captain Scott reaches South Pole, writes, "Great God! This is an awful place," freezes to death two months later.
- 1935 Lincoln Ellsworth flies over 9000-foot outliers of the Sentinel Range, names range without seeing the main peaks hidden by ice fog.
- 1948 Neny Matterhorn in the Antarctic Peninsula climbed.
- 1956 Half of continent still unexplored.
- 1957 International Geophysical Year. Extensive scientific exploration of the continent.
- 1957 Main Sentinel Range discovered, surveyed.
- 1958 New Zealanders climb Mt. Huggins, 12,255 ft., in the Royal Society Range.
- 1958 Argentine party makes technical ascents along the Weddell Sea coast.
- 1958 Sir Vivian Fuchs makes first land crossing of Antarctica.
- 1959 Antarctic Treaty signed. Territorial claims suspended.
- 1962 FA of Mt. Fridtjof Nansen.
- 1966 Tourists visit Antarctic Peninsula by ship.
- 1966 American expedition ascends Antarctica's four highest mountains.
- 1970 Jet charter flights provide air tours of Antarctica.
- 1977 Pioneer mountaineer Bill Tilman disappears in Drake Passage.
- 1979 DC-10 crashes into Mt. Erebus. 257 die. End of jet air tours.
- 1983 The Bass & Wells group scales Vinson, first successful private climbing expedition to the continent.
- 1985 Adventure Network International founds "Antarctic Airways," gets three plane loads of climbers from Chile to the Sentinels and back.

## ADDRESSES

Adventure Network  
International Canada  
44 West 4th Ave.  
Vancouver B.C.,  
Canada V5Y 1G3  
604-873-6338

Adventure Network  
International  
Box 4118  
Carson City, NV 89702  
702-883-3573

Mountain Travel  
1398 Solano Ave.  
Albany, CA 94706  
800-227-2384

Chilean Antarctic  
Tourist Information Office  
P.O. Box 106-D  
Punta Arenas, Chile  
Region 12-24435

U.S. Geological Survey  
Federal Center — Bldg. 41  
Denver CO 80225  
303-236-7477



son progresses. Travel is restricted to emergencies from March through September.

### Special Considerations

- Experience on something like McKinley or Logan, preferably stormed in, is necessary.
- Figure a 3000 foot increase in elevation for the polar effect on barometric pressure. If you try Vinson, expect an altitude handicap similar to 19,000 feet elsewhere.
- Knowing a little Spanish comes in handy both in South America and at Antarctic research stations.
- Double the amount of film you usually take on an expedition.
- Extreme mountain gear is adequate for good weather in the summer. (Nothing works for long in the winter.)
- Calm sunny days feel very hot, and can change in seconds. When going from sun to shade, expect an immediate temperature drop of 40°F.
- Skis are nice on the approaches, and sleds work well for ferrying loads. Snowshoes would be worthwhile only in the most unusual circumstances.
- Often the snow is blown away, with camps set on glare ice. You can't depend on being able to dig a snow cave, and should have a crevasse nearby in event of a storm. When snow is available, it is dry and windpacked. You can shovel off the top few inches, then cut blocks with a saw.
- Flukes, wands, ice axes, and ski poles all work for guying down tents, with the ropes passed through block walls. Each tent needs to be picketed directly into the ice at a couple of points in case a blizzard erodes the blocks away.
- For technical climbing, tubular ice screws do poorly in the brittle ice. Bring warthogs or other drive-ins.
- Sharpen your crampons.

—P.R. Caffrey

### Corrections:

Several typesetting errors were in "Aconcagua, Prize of the Argentine Andes" by John Hessburg (Climbingno. 98). Ruta Normal (p.65) and Nido de Condores (p.69) were misspelled, and the summer temperatures of the region may dip as low as -20 degrees (p.67).

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WHOOSH!

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TOTALLY DYNAMIC, CAPTAIN ETHOS!

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## DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

### Rock and Roll: Surviving a Twisted Ankle

*The smallest deviation . . . immediately punished by limping and lameness, and the innocent ankle and instep are tortured for the vices of the nobler organs. So wrote Sydney Smith in 1840 about an attack of the gout; but he might equally have been describing the pain after a severely sprained ankle.*

You could walk out of the mountains with an injured hand or a dislocated shoulder, but sprain your ankle badly and you're in trouble. One misplaced step, one moment of distracted concentration after a long day, and you're on the ground clutching a painful ankle and swearing at your luck.

The ankle joint is formed by two vertical bones, the tibia and the fibula, resting on a block of bone, the talus, and curved to permit flexing forward and backward with limited movement from side to side. The tibia and fibula are joined to each other by a fibrous membrane and a series of ligaments attached to their tips which fan out on the inside and outside of an ankle joint to the bones of the foot.

"What happened?," asks the doctor. "Well, I just went over on my ankle." Even if you can't remember what happened, the location of the pain will tell the story. If the pain is on the inside of the ankle, the foot twisted outwards (everted), pulling and tearing the ligaments on the outside of the joint. If the pain is on the outside, the opposite occurred (inverted).

A ligament is like a multi-strand rope made from many fibers of tough fibrous tissue. A sprain is a partial or complete tear of those fibers. If only a few fibers are torn the ligaments remain stable. If it is completely torn the stability of the joint is seriously affected. Both immediate and long-term care of the sprain depend on the stability of the joint. Bones may be fractured or chipped at the same time.

In the field, immediately after the accident, it may be difficult to know whether the joint is stable or not. All you know is that it hurts like hell and is swelling up. Your immediate concerns are to relieve the pain, diminish the swelling, and support the ankle enough so that you can walk out.

To talk of on-the-spot treatment presupposes that you have at least an ace bandage and moleskin or felt. If circumstances permit, pack the joint for 15-20 minutes in snow or soak it in an ice-cold stream. Cut out a piece of moleskin shaped roughly like the ankle and remove a hole to fit the tip of the ankle bone. After placing the mole-

skin, wrap the ankle firmly with the ace bandage, starting at the toes and extending almost to mid-calf. If you have heavy boots, put them back on before the swelling becomes so bad that they don't fit.

It may be difficult to tell if there has been a fracture in addition to the sprain. The greater the pain, the greater the possibility of fracture. If the foot is too painful to walk on, *don't*. You may end up seriously damaging the joint.

When you are first examined the doctor will assess the stability of the joint. In order to do this he will bend the ankle from side to side and pull the foot forward in relation to the leg (the "drawer" test). He may also have X-rays taken with the joint stressed in the same way.

Almost all eversion sprains, even those that seem stable, need a cast for about three weeks. These tears involve the membrane between the tibia and fibula which must heal firmly if there is to be no residual instability.

In severe cases with major instability of the joint, surgery may be necessary to repair torn ligaments or to reconstruct the joint.

The principles of taping are not hard to learn, and if you are on an expedition without the advantage of a doctor, an adequate job of taping may be critical. The most important principle is to tape in such a direction that the ankle is held in the position opposite to that in which it was injured. If the ankle twisted inward, tape it with force of the tape pulling the foot outward. Try to visualize how the ligaments were torn

and put the ankle in a position that would bring them back together again (see Figure 1).

If the ankle is unstable, the duration of treatment and rehabilitation will be considerably longer. The objective is to restore movement and the ability to bear weight as quickly as possible. After a minor injury this may be possible within a day or two. After a serious injury it may be several weeks.

If the ankle was unstable immediately after injury, stress X-rays should be retaken after healing to confirm that stability has been completely restored. Injured ankles have a nasty tendency to be reinjured, and a frame of reference may be important in preventing and assessing future injuries.

Boots are an important preventive measure. During the last few years heavy climbing boots have gone out of fashion. The days are long past when college students went to class wearing boots designed for a final assault on Everest. Most approaches are now made in lighter, less supportive boots. Although there is no evidence to prove that the use of light boots has resulted in more ankle injuries, experience in other sports, such as basketball, suggest that sprains and tears are less likely to occur with shoes offering more ankle support. Some organizations, such as Colorado Outward Bound, insist that their students wear sturdy leather boots. In 1985, they had only one sprained ankle in 45,800 student-days of activity.

No matter what type of boot you wear, there is no substitute for caution while on the trail. Remember the old Spanish proverb, "A sprain is like love, the second time it arrives more easily."

—Dr. Bruce Paton

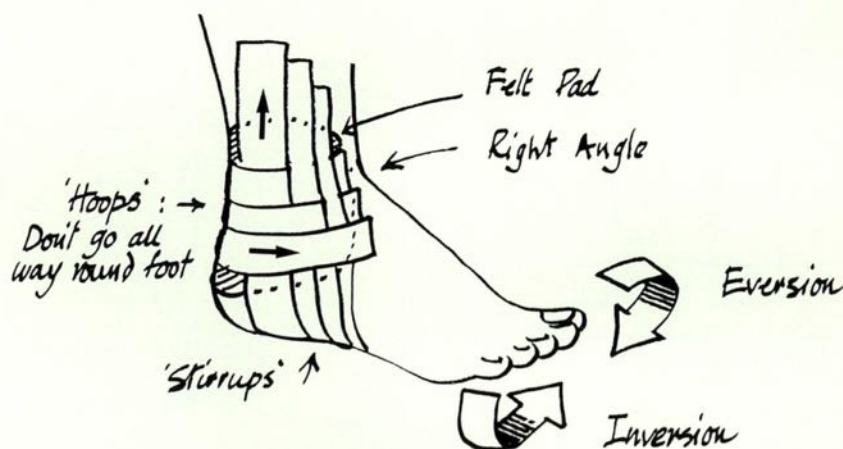


Figure 1. Taping should start with a stirrup, extending from inside the ankle, under the foot, then up the outside. Apply this over a pad of felt. Alternate stirrups with hoops around the joint. Leave an untaped area on the front of the ankle.



## CERTIFICATION

### APMGA Guides Meet

How many accomplished climbers were introduced to the sport through a guide service or climbing school? From a guide's perspective, it's always interesting to imagine how much of a student's potential will be realized.

Mountaineering leads some to careers in photography, journalism, or equipment design and production; others become full-time climbers, specializing in expeditions or rock climbing. A few even take up guiding as a profession. For the latter group, the past year has been a time of questioning. How will guiding evolve in our fast-changing world? And what will determine the survival of professional mountain guiding in the U.S.?

At the national meeting of the American Professional Mountain Guides Association (APMGA), held September 3-4 at the Climber's Ranch in Grand Teton National Park, a collection of nearly 60 high-spirited climbers exchanged ideas and tried to answer some of these questions. Everything seems to be at stake; as American Alpine Club president Jim McCarthy wrote in the APMGA newsletter, it's "time to pull our heads out of our rucksacks."

Even to those whose commitments kept them from attending this fall's meeting, it has become apparent that it's time for the APMGA to get its act together. This is not an easy task. Attempts to organize American guides have failed miserably until fairly recently. But in two remarkable days, the APMGA reached a level of direction and organization that impressed even the most skeptical.

A number of structural changes in the APMGA were decided upon during the meeting, but not without heated debate among differing factions. The most important question was whether certification should be a requirement for APMGA membership. The APMGA was formed in 1980 with two major objectives: to promote the highest possible standards in American guiding, and to gain membership in the Union Internationale des Associations de Guides de Montagnes (UIAGM). The major function of the UIAGM is to oversee certification of guides throughout the world.

Affiliation with the UIAGM could force the APMGA to adhere to very strict standards in certifying American guides in rock climbing, snow and ice climbing, and ski mountaineering. Summing up the arguments in favor of this, Antoine Savelli said, "Without excellence, we have nothing!" However,

since the APMGA is starting with little more than nothing, the need for increased membership, representing those currently guiding, seemed to be the higher priority.

In the end, certification was abandoned as a requirement for membership in the APMGA. Expressing the opinions of Exum Mountain Guides, Rainier Mountaineering, Yosemite Mountaineering School, and the American Alpine Institute, AAI director Dunham Gooding stated: "We feel we're a better judge of safety standards for our operations than an outside certifying group." Collectively, these four organizations account for well over 50% of the technical guiding in the U.S.

Two categories of membership were established. General Membership (\$50 dues per year) is open to all those actively guiding within the past year. Members will have the right to vote on APMGA policies, and can attend technical courses designed to exchange information; certification will be optional. Support Membership (\$100 or more per year), is open to individuals and businesses supporting APMGA activities; however, these members do not vote.

In response to the current insurance crisis, the APMGA will establish an accreditation program for teaching, safety, and risk management procedures; this will accredit programs rather than certify individual guides. Regionally directed, an examining body of the APMGA will evaluate schools and guide services on a voluntarily-requested basis. The purpose is to "promote safe climbing instruction and guiding among professionals in the United States, to improve the public image of professional mountain guiding, and to forestall government intervention or regulation of the United States' guiding industry."

A certification committee was also established to set standards, develop courses, and encourage guide exchanges. Of utmost importance is the initiation of courses (open only to APMGA members) to teach technical skills and exchange information. The ultimate goal is a fully-certified guide status and membership in the UIAGM.

Clearly, the problems of insurance, cooperative promotion of the guiding industry, and relationships with the government and public, all far outweigh the certification issue. As time passes, the priority may naturally shift to certification. The diversity of programs represented at the meeting allowed an understanding among the participants which went a long way towards relieving the threatening anxiety which was so evident as the

meeting began.

New national officers of the APMGA were elected for one-year terms: Ian Wade (Outward Bound), President; Dunham Gooding (American Alpine Institute), Vice-President; John Fischer (Palisades School of Mountaineering), Secretary; and Eric Sanford (Liberty Bell Alpine Tours), Treasurer. Committees on certification, accreditation, safety, insurance, membership, and advertising were established.

The APMGA newsletter, *The Mountain Guide*, is now supported by the Lost Arrow Corporation; Wayne Haack is coordinating this valuable biannual report for the APMGA. Aside from committee meetings to work on specific projects, the next national meeting is scheduled for March 15-16, 1987, at the SIA Show in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Many thanks go to the past officers of the APMGA (Doug Robinson and George Hurley), to Nick Clinch of the AAC, to Eric Sanford and John Fischer (who continue as national officers), and to Allan Pietrasanta, who donated a tremendous amount of time and money to organize the fall meeting.

For information on the APMGA or applications for membership, write: The American Professional Mountain Guides Association, P.O. Box 59, Bishop CA 93514.

— Dick Jackson,  
*Rocky Mountain Climbing School*

## AMERICAN ALPINE CLUB

### 1986 Access Report

Every year, the American Alpine Club becomes more active in defending or gaining access to climbing areas. The AAC has two committees that deal with these problems: the Access Committee, chaired by Armando Menocal of the Sierra Nevada Section, and the Conservation Committee, chaired by Nick Dodge of the Oregon Section.

The AAC depends on the climbing community to bring access problems to the attention of the Club. If a local climbing area is being closed off, do not assume that nothing can be done about it. Let the AAC hear from you. The AAC has assembled a set of documents dealing with the usual excuses for closures, such as safety, landowner liability, and insurance. Local members, backed by the experience and support of the AAC, can use these resources to work with, or even challenge, public or private landowners.



## RECENT KEY ACCESS DECISIONS

**Mount St. Helens.** Jim Angell carried the fight to Washington, D.C., and persuaded Chief of the Forest Service, R. Max Peterson, to reverse local decisions restricting access to Mt. St. Helens.

The mountain had been closed based on "an unacceptable volcanic risk," but no standards on what was an acceptable risk were set. In a written decision, Peterson directed local Forest Service officials to define the level of volcanic risk which is considered unacceptable, and to make that determination available to the public.

The local decision to preserve "a feeling of solitude" by restricting the "number of social encounters" was also reversed by the Forest Service Chief: "The climbing community appears to solidly support (Angell's) position that solitude is not of major concern on Mount St. Helens . . . There are many mountains which can be climbed in solitude; there are no alternatives to Mount St. Helens."

Lastly, the grounds used to prohibit any climbing in the crater were also reversed. Angell and the AAC argued that, once the "acceptable level of volcanic risk" was publicly defined, then the decision of whether the walls of the crater were safe enough to climb should be up to climbers.

**Yosemite Valley.** Jack Moorehead, a former climber and new superintendent of Yosemite National Park, says he hopes to re-establish the pattern of open communications that existed when Raffi Bedayn worked so tirelessly on behalf of Valley climbers. Although Camp 4 will probably be closed again this winter — hardly any climbers are still in the Valley in December, January, and February — Moorehead promised, "Camp 4 will not be closed while I'm Superintendent."

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**Stanford University.** Last spring Stanford University banned all bouldering (see *Climbing* No. 97). The school's sandstone walls have been fertile ground for climbers since the 1960's. Concern about excessive use of chalk and the safety of problems across arches, doorways, and windows, led Stanford to abruptly threaten to issue citations for bouldering.

Local AAC members and students, led by Bill Zauman, put together an impressive survey of the safety and liability literature. They also presented a proposal to voluntarily refrain from using chalk or climbing above arches and doorways when it could endanger pedestrians. This proposal agreed to communicate these guidelines to climbers through notices in shops and at popular spots, and through the example of the leading climbers. Stanford has assented to these guidelines and is working with AAC to select appropriate sites to reintroduce bouldering on campus.

**California and Utah, Public Lands.** National Forest plans in California are slowly being released for public comment. John Hart has been reviewing them, and thus far the AAC has filed public comments criticizing the Tahoe National Forest Plan. The AAC comments concluded: "We have seen few forest plans that are so thoroughly one-sided in their preferences for commodity extraction and motorized recreation over other uses."

Nick Dodge will also be reviewing the plans for the Shasta-Trinity Forests. Local climbers are urged to read plans being released in 1986 on San Bernardino, Lassen, Sierra, El Dorado, and Inyo National Forests. Comments on affected climbing areas should be sent to John Hart or Nick Dodge.

The AAC, through John Hart, is also filing critical public comments on BLM's limited wilderness designation in Utah's Deep Creek Mountains and House Range.

**Lovers Point Closure.** Lovers Point, a popular bouldering area in Pacific Grove, California, has been placed off limits to climbers by the City. The Sierra Nevada Chapter is searching for local climbers to work on the problem.

—Armando Menocal

*Climbers experiencing local access problems, and those willing to work with the AAC in solving such problems, are encouraged to contact: Nick Dodge (Conservation Committee), The American Alpine Club, 113 East 90th Street, New York, NY 10028; or Armando Menocal (Access Committee), 1535 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.*

## ELDORADO MOUNTAIN

### Conda Loses Again, Will Keep Fighting

Another battle in the long fight over a proposed expansion of the Conda mining operation on Eldorado Mountain was won by conservationists at a meeting of the Boulder County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee on October 17.

The Wesley Conda company presented a long and well-organized defense of their proposal to expand the present mine to cover an additional 67 acres. Their plans call for a mine which would extend to the very edge of Eldorado Canyon State Park, virtually bordering the top of the Bastille and Peanuts Wall.

The fact that this expansion is highly controversial was readily apparent from Conda's careful denial of opponents' objections. Conda spent thousands of dollars to have noise, air quality, and mine reclamation studies done. Their presentation left one believing that the mine scar could be effectively rehabilitated, and that noise, dust, and disruption to plant and animal life would be minimal.

The opposition, however, was even better prepared. The "People for Eldorado Mountain Committee," formed earlier in the year to combat the mine, includes many residents of Eldorado Springs. Feelings are running very high in that small community, and many local researchers and ecological experts donated their time to extensive studies of the proposed expansion. Climbers were also represented: Glenn Randall gave an excellent slide show on the drastic effects the mine could have on the environment and climbing atmosphere in Eldorado.

Finally, the meeting was opened to public comment, and of the 25 people who spoke, only one defended Conda's proposed actions. In the end the Parks and Open Space Committee rejected the expansion.

One more major test of the mine plan comes up with the Boulder County Planning Commission meeting in November; a final decision is expected from them in December. After spending so much time and money on their proposal, Conda is expected to fight to the bitter end.

Although things are looking up for those opposed to the mine, "People for Eldorado Mountain Committee" still needs the support of the climbing community. Climbers are urged to write the Boulder County Commissioners (Josie Heath, Buz Smith, and Ron Stewart, P.O. Box 471, Boulder CO 80306), and to call the Committee for further information (303-499-9697 or 303-499-3009).

—Dan Hare



## THIN CRACK PROTECTION Rock-n-Rollers

The latest entrant in the thin crack protection sweepstakes (see *Climbing* no. 97) is the Rock-n-Roller by Go-Pro. Instead of sliding an inverted wedge on one side of another wedge à la Sliders and Quickies, Rollers run a small dumbbell of metal attached to a triggered cable along one side of the wedge. They claim that this arrangement acts as a constant angle cam, thus transmitting more force in a crack than a wedge could generate, which translates to more holding power.

The designer tried to explain the advantages of a constant angle cam to me, but I have a difficult time understanding how a screwdriver works so I'll restrict my comments to description and how they behave during placement and under loads.

Rollers come in four color-coded sizes capable of protecting cracks from 1/4 to 5/8 inches. While slightly lighter than Sliders and Quickies, Rollers can't equal a Quickies' strength. For example, a #2 Quickie with a range of 21/64" to 29/64" fails at 1600 lbs compared to 1200 lbs for the "B" Roller with a similar range (20/64" to 28/64"). The larger Quickies are half again as strong as comparable Rollers.

Usually, a piece of pro doesn't break, it pops out, and Rollers set more easily and grip more tenaciously than other designs. I wouldn't worry about placing one blind. Unlike the competition, Rollers pivot in place; an upward pull spins the Roller in the crack. I found the pivoting disconcerting at first, but once placed, I couldn't tug one out even if I pulled straight up. A single roller/half wedge placement in a bottoming crack served as aid without disaster. I wouldn't want to depend on a half placement for protection, but something is better than nothing, at least psychologically. As with Quickies, you can move the Roller aside and place it like a Stopper.

I had some nits to pick, but it appears Go-Pro beat me to it. The smallest Roller tested at only 700 lbs, a bit fragile. Also, some of the cables attached to the rolling dumbbell were long enough to permit the roller to move past the lip of the stopper. Go-Pro assures me that the newest mod-

els will feature shortened cables and that the breaking strength of the smallest Roller will double. Also, the new generation of Rollers will weigh considerably less. They promised to send me a set of the revised models, due on the market this spring, and I'll provide *Climbing* with a short report on the updates after I receive them. Rock-n-Rollers, Go-Pro, P.O. Box 1357, Healdsburg, CA 95448. Suggested retail price: \$24.75 each.

— Jim Martin

## RAPPEL STATIONS The Eco-Anchor

Tired of sorting through a mass of old webbing at rappel stations? The Eco-Anchor from Alpentech provides a safe, tamperproof alternative to those death slings.

Alpentech doesn't claim to have produced the first cable rappel anchor. The Eco-Anchor just happens to be much safer and more thoroughly thought out than any of its predecessors. It's constructed of 3/16" 7-19 galvanized aircraft cable, which is more resistant to weathering and over 5000 pounds stronger than one-inch webbing. Just as important, the cable will not deteriorate under ultra-violet light. Shrink tubing protects the user from the cable ends, but the double swages are left exposed. This reduces the likelihood of corrosion in wet conditions and makes inspection easier.

The Eco-Anchor comes pre-rigged with two 5/16" diagonal links that can be hooked through existing anchors, or with two SMC bolt hangers (either 1/4" or 3/8"). Since the hangers can hold both the cable and carabiner, they are ideal for establishing stances on new routes.

The Eco-Anchor is completed with a choice of one or two SMC descending rings to make rope retrieval easier. Two rings are recommended for anchors in high use areas, or for new routes destined to be classics.

Removing the old rappel slings is the hardest step in installing the Eco-Anchor. After this is done, simply rotate the open links into the piton or hanger eye. Check to see that the cable isn't kinked, then carefully close the links using short blows with a hammer or hard rock. Care must be taken not to strike the cable, swages or descending ring(s).

All four models of the Eco-Anchor retail for under \$11, not much to pay for a little security. At present, the best place to buy an Eco-Anchor is directly from Alpentech, P.O. Box 494873, Redding, CA 96049.

— Hank Levine

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# TECHNIQUE

## WALL CLIMBING — PART I

### Grade VI: Modern Tools and Methods

Wall climbing has changed somewhat since Robbins published his classic treatise *Advanced Rockcraft*. Styles are different (compare a modern party with porta-ledges and stereos with the ascetic pioneers on the first ascent of the *North American Wall*), techniques have been improved, and most importantly, gear has advanced considerably. Particularly in Yosemite, wall climbing has become as specialized as any other aspect of its parent sport, mountaineering.

Last fall, during an ascent of the *Pacific Ocean Wall*, my partner Werner Braun commented on how this route was the first wall to "cross the line into the absurd." The "line" apparently lies somewhere between the climbing of a long, obvious, soaring crack system, and the climbing of a nebulous series of connected flakes and cracks. But with all the inspiring obvious lines on El Cap already conquered, one can no longer sit in El Cap Meadow, spot an unclimbed line with the naked eye, rack up for it, and go climb it.

Instead, binoculars and telescopes (Celestron C-90's are excellent) have become standard equipment, and the definition of a "climbable line" has been refined. The desire to pioneer new routes has continued, only with a finer sense of what can and cannot be done (which includes the definition of a "reasonable" number of drilled holes). Man's desire to climb where no man has climbed before does not diminish with the smaller number of unclimbed obvious lines; rather, it remains as great as ever, only the gear, techniques, and attitudes have changed.

In this article, I will describe the gear that the modern well-equipped wall-climber sports; Part II will look at the techniques involved. Many of the subjects covered will be a matter of opinion, and no claim of absolute authority is made. In most cases, the information assumes a nailing-wall, as opposed to a clean (hammerless) wall.

#### HARDWARE

**Pitons.** The particular wall will determine the amount of hardware required. In general, if the route has had more than ten ascents, the gear lists given in the Meyers guide are excessive. *The Shield*, for example, used to rely heavily on knifeblades, RURPs and Lost Arrows; now it demands

more baby angles ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $\frac{5}{8}$ ") and standards ( $\frac{3}{4}$ "). (For some of the more traveled routes, it is useful to have some sawed-off  $\frac{3}{4}$ " and 1" pins for shallow pin-scars. Just saw a few inches off the length. One or two of each should be ample.) *The Shield* bears numerous examples of beaten-out cracks: hand-placing  $\frac{5}{8}$ " baby angles to the eye (in holes) is not uncommon in cracks that originally took knifeblades. The overall beauty of the route, however, has not been too diminished.

Many large pitons can generally be left on the ground, largely due to the advent of Friends. Other than routes like *Excaliber*, where wide cracks predominate, bongs are rarely needed. For most routes, three to five 1", two or three 1  $\frac{1}{4}$ ", one or two 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", and a bong (for luck) will generally suffice for the big stuff. This assumes a good selection of Friends, two or three sets up to #4 not being uncommon, and perhaps an oversize (#5 or #6) if needed.

A couple of Leeper Z-pins are very handy to have on most routes. Although some people like to use them independently, Leepers are generally used in conjunction with an angle (stacked) for a shallow or slightly-oversized pin placement.

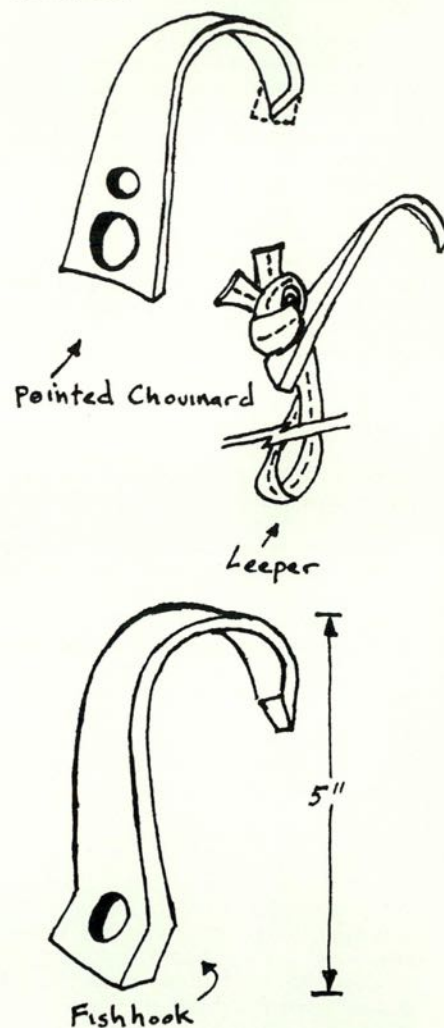
A wall evolves with each successive ascent: pieces get fixed, placements become more obvious and simple, and loose rock gets removed (hopefully). In general, walls become easier with use, and the gear-lists change accordingly. For specific information, consult the experts in the Camp 4 parking lot.

**Hooks.** There are basically three types of hooks, the Chouinard, the Leeper (flat and pointed), and the ring-angle claw.

The Chouinard hook is the classic, most-used hook; even the easiest nailing routes usually require at least two of them. As with all hooks, bring along extras because they're frequently dropped. For some routes (such as *Zenyatta Mendata*), "pointed" Chouinards are necessary — this entails filing down the end of the hook to a sharp point (imagine a 45° triangular point). These hooks are used in enhanced hook placements — where a shallow  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hole has been drilled in a horizontal or sloping shelf to allow the hook to "catch."

Leeper hooks are essential in some situations. The flat Leepers are very stable and secure on certain narrow edges where a Chouinard can rock

(very frightening). On thin low-angle slab climbing, a filed-flat Leeper (where half of the hooking edge is filed off) can be very useful. The pointed Leepers also have a multitude of uses, most notably for bat-hooking; they work so well in  $\frac{1}{4}$ " holes that it is hard to believe that they weren't designed for that purpose. Sometimes a slight tap sets the hook nicely while bat-hooking, but beware, if you hammer them in, they are likely to suddenly spring out.



Ring-angle claws derive their name from the old style of these previously hard-to-find large hooks. Years ago, one would have to search desperately for a long, soft iron, ring-angle piton, and bend it into the proper shape (moreover, this took some practice). There are now easily-obtainable, manufactured models (dubbed Fishhooks) made from chrome-moly steel (2.25" reach; contact: Fish Products, 174 So. Sunnyside Ave., Sierra Madre, CA 91024; less than \$15).



These hooks are essential on some routes, with uses ranging from hooking large, two-inch-thick detached flakes to hooking a large solid shelf. They are essentially an enlarged version of the Chouinard hook. For some routes, several sizes may be required.

**Copperheads.** Don't bother buying these in a store — if you're paying more than \$1.50 each, it's too much; many bootleggers will be happy to sell these cheaper (ask around the Camp 4 lot). If you're worried about quality, buy a Nikkopro gauge for a couple dollars and make sure the swage meets sizing specifications (this will guarantee strength). Also make sure that the doubled-back wire just peeks out of the swage (if it comes out too far, it will fray and be a nuisance catching on slings). You can also make your own for about thirty cents each in materials, but a good swager will cost about \$180.

Sizing: #0 (tiny), #1 (small), #3 (medium), #4 and #5 (cowheads — up to 1/2" diameter). The #0's have a cable that will just about hold a gymnast and aren't really used much. For a given number of required heads, unless specified otherwise, a good proportion would be 10% #1, 35% #2, 25% #3, and 30% of the larger sizes.

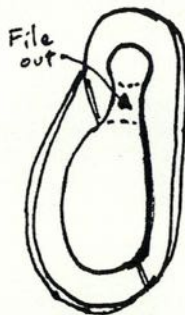
Aluminum is often used for the larger heads (larger than #2), and they are usually more secure (especially in softer rock) than their copper counterparts. They are not very durable, however; alumi-heads typically survive only one or two placements before they're useless.

**Free 'Biners.** Walls tend to use a lot of carabiners. It seems that you can start a pitch with a ton of free 'biners and still run out, forcing you to scarf from other parts of the rack — there never seems to be enough. As a general guideline, a total of 80 carabiners should be considered a minimum for most nailing routes, with some of the harder ones requiring up to 150.

**Friends.** Indispensable on walls. Probably the greatest energy-saving device for wall climbers ever invented (not to mention being absolutely essential for some of the newer routes). Two or three sets are nice to have on most walls, possibly more, depending on the nature of the wall and the amount of leapfrogging a climber is willing to do. Half-sizes are very handy, too. More than two #4's are rarely required.

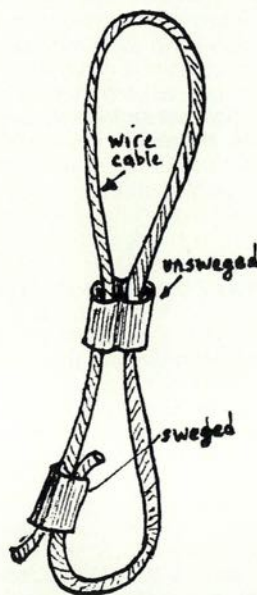
**Bolting Gear.** A small bolt kit is nice to have for any route of medium or harder difficulty. Uses include replacing a bad belay bolt, setting a bivouac rivet, or drilling emergency anchors for retreating. A couple of 1/4" drills, handle, drift pin, and a few bolts and

hangers should be ample (some routes, such as *Never-Never Land*, do not have hangers at the belays — for these, bring five or six). Also include some 1/4" coarse-thread nuts and a wrench for the occasional thread-head Rawldrive.



**Keyhole Hangers.** Keyhole hangers can be fitted over a bolt stud, such as a Rawl buttonhead. They can be made from any hanger (thick 3/8" SMC hangers work well) simply by filing a connecting slot from the carabiner hole to the bolt hole. Australian RP-type hangers work well as keyhole hangers for the larger head machine bolts.

**Rivets.** 5/16" diameter, 3/4" long, coarse-thread grade 5 machine bolts can be hammered securely in 1/4" holes (a #14 drill is perfect — for #12 drills some hammering or filing down of the threads may be necessary).



**Rivet Hangers.** Wired nuts work well as rivet hangers; simply push the nut down the cable and presto. 1/2" tie-off sling also works. Shorter length, specially-made rivet hangers can be fashioned out of a swaged wire loop. (Rumor has it that the *Dawn Wall* requires #1 thin-wired rivet hangers because the rivets are nearly flush with the wall).

## RP Climbing Equipment

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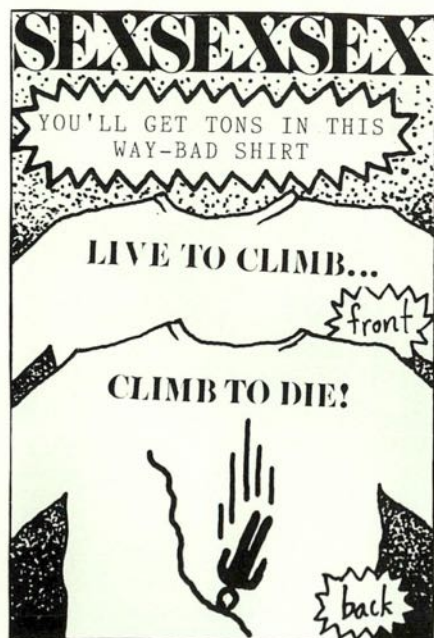


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**Miscellaneous Hardware.** I usually bring about 30 wired nuts of various sizes (leave the perlon-slung ones behind, they only seem to get in the way), and at least two or three sets of RP's (down to #0). I dub the latter "wall-RP's" because they get so trashed they can't be used on my free-climbing rack. Quickies are also very useful for aid-climbing (in fact, the *Atlantic Ocean Wall* requires a #2 Quickie). Lowe cams, HB nuts, and TCU's are good, too. In general, it is a good idea to have as great a variety as possible, since each type of gear may be the best — or even the only thing — for a certain placement.

**Ropes.** Needless to say, the lead line should be in good shape. Walls tend to be harsh on ropes, especially when they go over edges and are being jumared on. 11.5mm ropes are comforting. Haul lines are less critical; either a 9mm or an 11mm can be used. A third line has many uses (to be covered in Part II).

**Tie-Offs.** Anywhere from ten to over a hundred tie-offs may be required (they tend to get trashed on some placements; for example, when tying off a piton in a corner). Although shoelace has sometimes been used, 1/2" tubular webbing is standard. Loops ranging from five to seven inches in diameter seem to be the most versatile; these require about 20" of material each.

**Runners.** Many are required, to keep rope-drag to a minimum. They are also used to equalize anchors at belays. I use a lot of 9/16" supertape, tied a little shorter than regular-length runners, and carry them on a 'biner on the rack (instead of around the neck). These can be easily doubled through the eye of a piton, thus saving a carabiner.

**Energy Absorbing Runners.** Surprisingly, Air Voyagers and the like haven't really caught on in wall-climbing as much as they deserve. I find them very reassuring on the relatively secure-but-somewhat-dubious piece in the midst of a long string of body-weight placements.

**Hammer.** Although legend has it that Steve-the-Brit used a carpenter's framing hammer for the *P.O. Wall* (along with a lawn-chair for a portaledge), the best (and unavailable) wall hammers are the old Chouinard wooden-handled wall hammer or the one-piece Forrest (fiberglass shaft, hole-in-the-head). As far as I know, these are the only two hammers that have the proper weight and balance, and are durable enough for serious wall climbing.

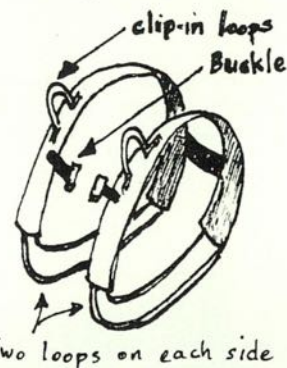
I prefer the Chouinard; wood seems more aesthetic than fiberglass, not to

mention that possible damage is much more visible. But the hole in the Forrest's head has many uses, most notably for the removal of copper-heads. These hammers are scarce; I've seen bootleg prices of up to \$100 for the finest specimens. The connecting sling should be long enough such that the handle of the hammer hangs a few inches below the bottom of your foot; otherwise, it will annoyingly catch your foot every time you move up.

**Hammer Holster.** Make sure to get the soft type so it doesn't dig into your flesh during bivouacs.

**Pulleys.** A good, efficient pulley is essential. The red or blue SARA rescue pulleys are very reliable. Ever since I dropped a pulley and had to haul the remainder of a wall through a carabiner (probably a thousand times the effort), I've always brought along a spare of some sort. Metolius once made a batch of camming pulleys (pulley and locking mechanism in one unit) which didn't work too well (they would slip under high load). The idea was excellent, and I hope a functional design will eventually be produced.

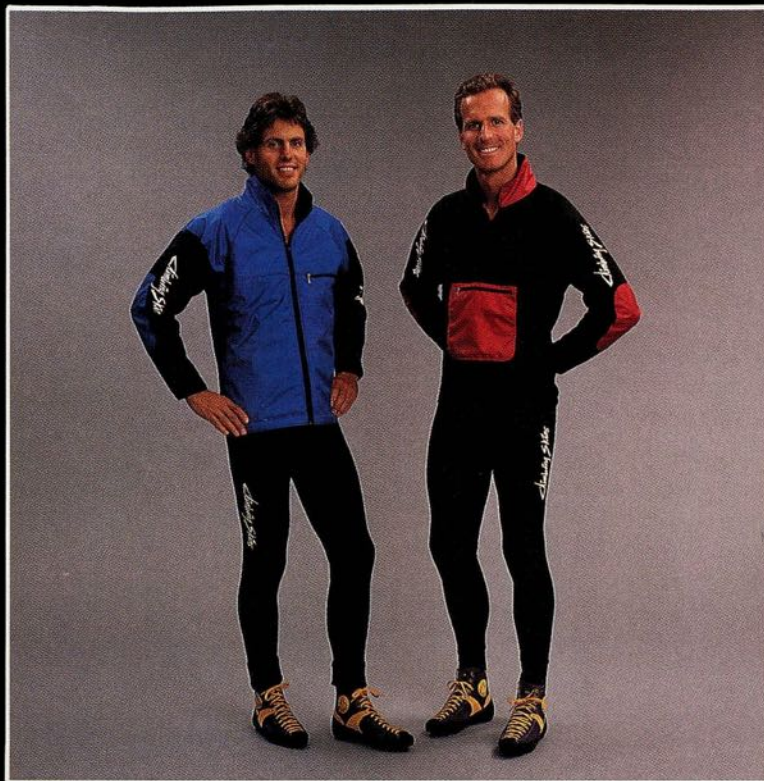
**Haulbag.** Many types are available. Make sure that the material is both tough and abrasion resistant (these qualities do not always go hand-in-hand). Padded carrying straps are nice for the approaches. I've found that the stout, wide haulbags are far easier to get in and out of (and pack) than the long, narrow ones.



**Racking Slings.** Without a doubt, the double wall rack is a great innovation for the heavier gear loads. No longer is the climber strangled by gear-slings criss-crossing his neck; instead, two padded slings sit on each shoulder connected in the back and front. The most versatile have two loops on each side (for maximum organization) and strong tie-in loops for clipping the entire rack in.

**Portaledges.** Many types of portaledges are on the market, some excellent, some poor. In order of importance, a good portaledge will be: stable while set up (does not tend to twist, "hourglass," or "parallelogram"; this





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usually requires a rigid corner section); easy to adjust while in it (and beware, many of the adjusting systems slip, especially when wet, causing the entire ledge to twist out of shape); easy to set up; lightweight; and roomy enough for lounging.

Gramicci's are the standard, but by far the most stable and easy-to-adjust ledges of the eight different types that I've seen are the "Big-Ed Signature Models" available from Fish Products (\$260 with fly). They are slightly harder to set up than other models, but the extra few minutes are well worth a comfortable night (the bed is one-and-a-half times regular width, too).

A good heavy-duty rainfly is essen-

tial. Always expect a storm, and practice setting up the whole system hanging from a pull-up bar a few times; it'll be much worse when raining and windy.

**Water Bottles.** Any high grade plastic jug will work. These tend to get a lot of abuse while in the haulbag; any not up to par will make itself noticed as you helplessly watch the wet spot grow on the side of the bag. I prefer the thick, gallon-sized ones available from chemical supply shops, duct-taped to the hilt (tape the tops on for the initial packing in the haulbag, too). Two-liter plastic soda bottles have also been used with success (they're

impossible to break — try it). Clorox and anti-freeze bottles are also good, if rinsed well with baking soda. Make sure to have a clip-in loop on all water bottles. Fern Springs on the Southside Drive is a good place to fill up. Bring at least one-half gallon per person per day, and more in hotter weather.

**Food.** This is a matter of preference, of course. For a five-day wall, I would typically take five or six cans of dinners (lasagne, Spaghettios, beans, etc.), three or four cans of fruit, a box of Familia to mix in with the fruit for breakfast, four or five packages of bagels and cream cheese (not forgetting to grab a handful of those little packages of Grey Poupon mustards from the Deli), a couple packages of Fig Newtons, and a selection of candy bars (make sure to get the sealed-wrapper type). Hard candy is also good to keep your mind off water while sitting at the belays.

**Shoes.** Robbins wall boots are still the standard, but unavailable. Any shoe can be used, but a wall will pretty much demolish most tennis shoes. Nike Lava-domes are incredibly durable — I have a pair that's survived four walls — plus they have a semi-rigid sole for comfort in slings. They're useless for free-climbing, though, so bring along a pair of climbing shoes as well. Tie-in loops strung through an eyelet are convenient for clipping in your shoes at night; if you drop your only shoes, you can kiss your feet goodbye.

**Knee Pads.** Nice to have — knees are constantly battered.

**Harnesses.** Since you hang in a harness most of the day, a comfortable one is a luxury not to be done without (though John Barbella has done multiple ten-day walls with merely a doubled two-inch swami and one-inch leg loops). A custom-made harness with thick padding (mine has 1/2" X 4" ensolite around the waist — pile is good too), comfortable leg loops, and gear loops around the sides are nice to have. Don't forget a belay seat of some sort.

**Gloves.** For protecting hands, gloves are a must; I only use them while cleaning a pitch. Thin, tight-fitting leather (goat-skin) gloves, with the fingers cut off, are the best.

**Aiders.** My favorites are the sewn, rigid, four-step aiders. Especially when it's windy and the aiders spend half their time whipping around your head, it's nice to have a rigid opening to throw your foot into. I use four aiders — two on each biner. Aidere can also be made from one-inch webbing, knotted; these have the advantage of



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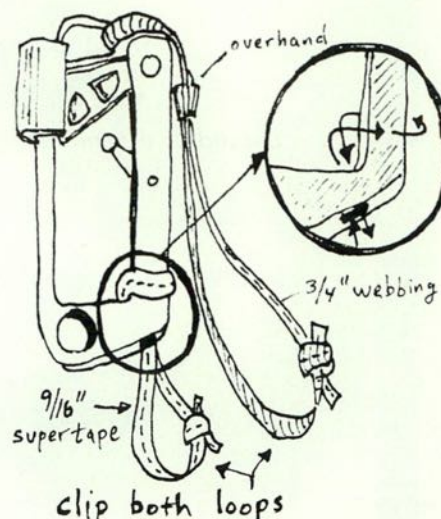
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**Ascenders.** There are three main types: Jumar, Clog, and CMI. The CMI is the strongest, but you need the fingers of Houdini to work the triggering mechanism. Jumars and Clogs are easier, and probably more comfortable, too. It's all a matter of preference. See diagram for rigging the Jumar-type ascenders.

**Headlamps.** Essential for setting up that bivy in the dark. The best headlamps fit entirely on your head with no external battery pack (besides getting caught on everything, the wires invariably have a built-in instinct to strangle). The lithium type are good (but expensive!); my favorite is the Petzolt type with the 4.5 volt flat (European-type) battery — now available in alkaline.

**Sleeping Bag.** Polarguard. A clip-in loop sewed on is nice.

**Rain Gear and Warm Clothing.** Check.

**Miscellaneous.** Stuff sacks are great for organizing food and bivy gear. Sew clip-in loops on. Also bring some cloth tape for gobs, perhaps some duct-tape for emergency repairs, aspirin for that morning hand cramp, and of course, a can opener and the spoon. Don't forget the topo!

—John Middendorf IV

Middendorf is a veteran of 17 El Cap routes as well as over a dozen other multi-day aid walls — all done during a 2 1/2 year sojourn in Yosemite Valley. He was also a member of the rescue team during his stay there. Part II will cover modern wall climbing techniques, ethics, soloing, wall climbing for speed, and will include a partial list of Yosemite walls broken down by overall difficulty.



# REVIEWS

## THE AMERICAN GUIDEBOOK — PART II

### The Trouble with Guidebooks

*This is the second in a series of articles on climber's guides of the United States. The completed series will attempt a preliminary listing of each guide, ever printed, to every U.S. climbing area. This installment covers New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia. Guides are listed and numbered on a state-by-state basis, except for regional guides which are numbered from the beginning of the series (Climbing no. 98).*

That guidebooks are the source of much controversy almost goes without saying; and this is certainly not a new phenomenon. The foremost question is whether guidebooks should even be written at all. Some commentators (1) have called this issue "the guidebook problem"; in this article we shall refer to it as "the trouble with guidebooks."

The trouble with guidebooks, as perceived by critics, are manifold. Should guides exist at all? Should guides be written to areas that have no guide? How detailed should route descriptions be? What duty (or right) do the authors have to discuss, or even define, ethical concerns?

The changes in opinion which have occurred in answering these questions are interesting. In the 1974 issue of *Ascent* (2), Lito Tejada-Flores took a look at some of these questions and presented the views of a number of guide authors. At that time, there was generally a strong reaction against the vast increase in the number of climbers and the appearance of new guidebooks. Some of the observations made by Tejada-Flores about the inclusion of ethical and environmental material in guides have proved insightful. However, his optimism about the motivations of future climbers is almost humorous:

"When the time comes to choose, I believe the climbing community will be mature enough to opt for real mountains and real climbing at the expense (a small sacrifice) of seeing our names in print in every journal and guidebook."

As any reader of *Climbing* can readily note, Basecamp is in little danger of extinction. Perhaps Tejada-Flores' naivete was only a reflection of the idealism of the 1960's which prompted the clean climbing era of the early 1970's. Similarly, the ego-motivated escapades of the 1980's have an integral basis in the prevailing neo-conservatism and general lack of social mores. These changes may in-

dicate that as climbing has become more "acceptable," it, together with its constituents, has also tended more toward the social mainstream.

Today, climbers demand more detailed route information, and seem to care less and less about the "wilderness experience" offered by climbing into the unknown. It is probably safe to say that many climbers care little or nothing for actual wilderness climbing. The current trend seems biased towards pure technical difficulty and accessibility; whereas environmental and aesthetic issues have become relatively unimportant.

This shift in the direction of climbing can be seen in most current guidebooks. Whereas detailed topographic drawings were once thought to ruin the climbing experience, they are now widely accepted. It is difficult to determine whether these changes in guidebooks are in response to popular demand or the actual causative agents. Wide acceptance of topos is but one example in a trend toward more and more detailed route information; a vulgar extreme is exemplified by Robert Yoho's "Betamax" description of *Astro Man* (3).

What makes the relatively new "Betamaxing" of climbs objectionable to many climbers is that a "Beta" route description actually tells one *how* to climb rather than just *where* to climb. Arguably, a topo or verbal description also tells us how to climb a route to a certain degree. However, there is a point at which the description crosses the line between serving as a guide to the location of a route, and a "Guide" up the route. This is not a new debate; but just as each new generation of climbers has pushed the limits of difficulty, so too the guidebooks have pushed that line between *where* and *how* to climb.

Nevertheless, a balance between overdescription and no guides at all must exist. As Royal Robbins (4) honestly admitted "guidebooks are bloody useful for pleasure in climbing." And for most climbers, a world without guides would be quite unpleasant. The majority of rock climbers want a controlled and safe climbing experience. Yet climbers still like to feel on the edge, without actually committing too much. Modern equipment and detailed guides have no doubt helped us attain this goal, while making climbing "safe." In a sense this taming of climbing has made the sport attractive to a greater number of people; and it is to this growing audi-

ence that guidebooks are primarily directed. In reality, the true adventurers have no use for guides at all.

But can such arguments, which seek to justify existing guides, also be used to defend the publication of guides to areas that currently have none? This remains a thorny issue for any guidebook author. This dilemma is often made less problematic by the prior appearance of underground guides, which are quickly disseminated throughout the climbing population via the wonders of the Xerox machine.

Although a "formal" guide which appears on the tails of an underground guide may assuage the conscience of the guide's author, there is no doubt that the appearance of a formal guide to a new area has a tremendous impact on the climbing scene and more importantly on the environment. After all, the vast majority of climbers remain too intimidated to climb at an area without detailed route descriptions. The publication of a formal guide is usually a green light to instant popularity. Of course, in order to justify printing a new guide, promotion of the crags (as well as the guide) is required, which can only exacerbate the impact.

However, will the non-publication of a guidebook really preserve an area? Many fine climbing areas in the United States do remain pristine through the concerted efforts of local climbers to suppress the publication of route descriptions. Nevertheless, a good climbing area, close to a large metropolitan population, with easy access, will eventually be run over with climbers, guidebook or not. In such circumstances, a guide may do more good than harm. A guide can spread climbers out, consolidate approach trails and generally lessen environmental impact.

The potentially devastating impact climbers have on the rock first became an issue with guide book authors in 1973 when David Lovejoy wrote the first guide to Granite Mountain in Arizona (5).

Lovejoy saw his guide "as more than a collection of routes. We see it as a way of transmitting information about attitudes which have prevailed at Granite Mountain since its beginning. A sort of 'city planning' effort in an attempt to contribute some kind of order to the threat of a 'rock-climbing sprawl'..." As Lovejoy succinctly noted, "Without rock we would all be surfers."

When all is said and done, the publication of a guide to a new area is an ethical double-edged sword. Even though we may identify the potential



# MOUNTAIN GUIDES

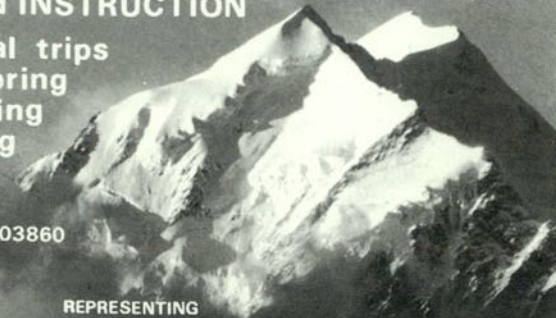
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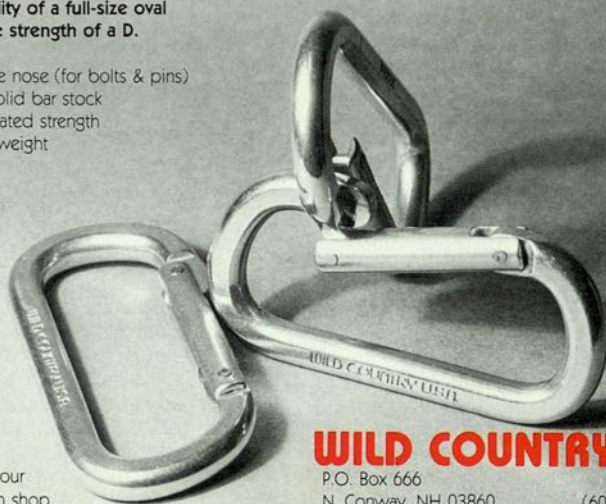
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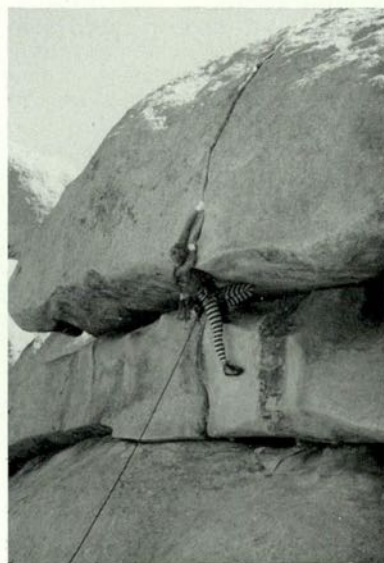
benefits and hazards which may result, each climbing area is unique, and the weight to be given to any factor can never be known with certainty.

One of the most interesting developments in guidebooks has been the inclusion of commentary regarding acceptable (and unacceptable) ethical conduct. The importance of this expanding role of guidebooks can not be overemphasized; neither can the ensuing controversy. After all climbers remain a relatively rebellious lot, and ethical dictates have never gone over too well. However, the number of people climbing has dramatically increased in the last ten to twenty years. And perhaps this has demanded the elimination of some of the more rebellious.

As an illustration of this point, in 1956, when the second edition of the *Climber's Guide to Tahquitz Rock* appeared, only 200 copies were printed. In times past there just were not that many people climbing. The impact on the climbs and surrounding environment was minimal. Nowadays, a press run of 5000 to 10,000 copies is not uncommon for areas as well known as Tahquitz.

Obviously, someone is using all these guides, and the impact on the crags is definitely showing. For this reason, the guidebook author has an increasing duty to address the causes of major environmental damage. Many more authors have chosen to accept this challenge in recent years, and the presence of material regarding ethics is an increasingly common (if not expected) sight in a guide.

However, have these changes been in response to pressure from the climbing community, or are they actually the creators of public opinion? Certainly the crusade against the



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use of pitons can at least partially trace its success to the support guidebook authors lent to this cause. Yet what is odd is that even where authors chose not to promote the clean climbing ethic, the swell of peer pressure accomplished the same end (6). Although a bit of a "chicken or the egg" dialectic, one suspects that guides both reflect as well as shape opinion.

One observation: guidebooks may be changing, but they are here to stay. When we accept this fact, the responsibility the author bears becomes more apparent. Furthermore, as long as a significant number of climbers wish their exploits to be known to others, the appearance of new guides will continue to increase. Like other aspects of life, there are no easy answers, only balancing the bad with as much good as possible.

— Randy Vogel

#### FOOTNOTES

(1) "The Guidebook Problem," by Lito Tejada-Flores. *Ascent*, San Francisco, Sierra Club. Vol. 2, No. 2, July 1974, p80. An interesting look at the role guidebooks have played in changing the sport of rockclimbing; also presents ideas and proposals for the changing of guides, or even the abandonment of guides altogether. Tejada-Flores makes these proposals with a view toward affecting a positive change in the climbing experience.

(2) *Abid.*

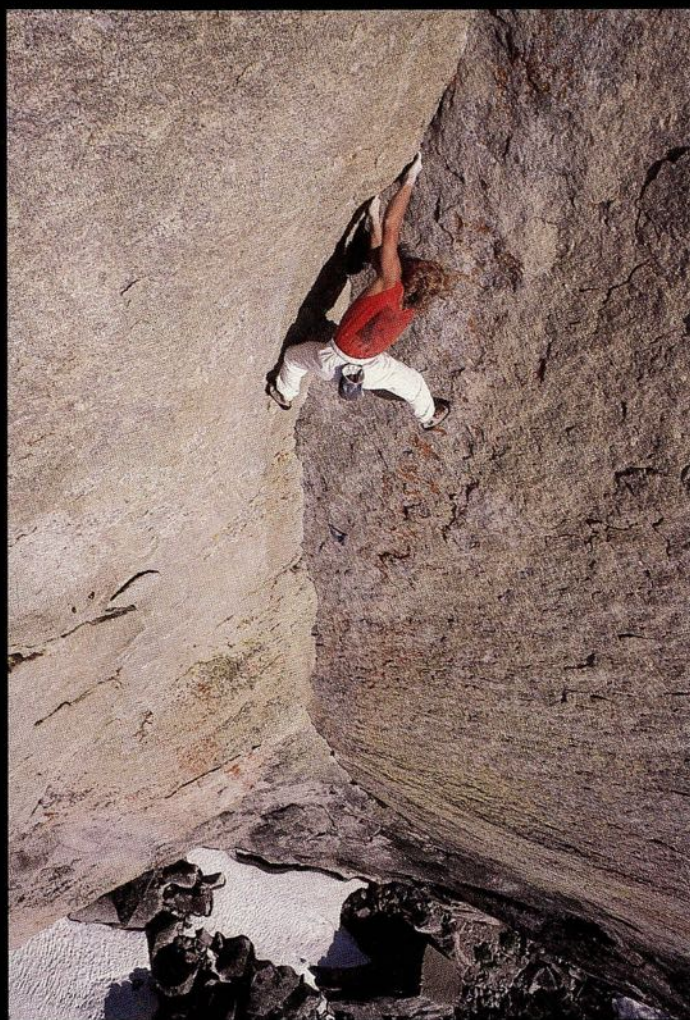
(3) "Fifty Classic Desperate Climbs of North America Betamax'd," by Robert Yoho. *Rock & Ice*, no. 15, July-August 1986, p14. First in a series of articles which propose to "Betamax" the hardest climbs in the U.S. Move-by-move verbal descriptions, crux topos, and sequence diagrams make this endeavor rather controversial.

(4) From: "The Guidebook Problem," supra, p85.

(5) *Granite Mountain, A Pocket Guide to Rock Climbing in Granite Basin, Prescott National Forest, Arizona*, David Lovejoy. Flagstaff, Az., A One Lung Production. 1973. 117pp. This guide utilized a soft vinyl cover and the post-binding made popular by the 1971 *Climbers Guide To Yosemite Valley*. Like most post-bound guides, no supplemental material was ever produced.

(6) A notable example can be found in the 5th edition of *A Climber's Guide to Tahquitz and Suicide Rocks* (Chuck Wilts, AAC, 1973/4), where Wilts felt that the guide should not actively extol clean climbing, so as not to commence a dangerous contest among inexperienced climbers. As most readers may be aware, Tahquitz and Suicide Rocks was a leading center in the clean climbing movement, despite the guide.

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## Northeastern Guidebooks



### NEW YORK

The Adirondacks of upstate New York offer a varied climbing experience, largely on granite, and a wilderness flavor distinctly lacking at the states most popular area — the Gunks. In the past, standards in this Wilderness Park area were well behind the mainstream. Recently, however, climbers have begun to establish harder routes, and a wide range of difficulties may be found. The Adirondacks are a vast area and consequently the cliffs and climbing scene are not concentrated.

Certainly few climbers (if any) have never heard of the Shawangunks. Located near major population centers, this is the most popular climbing area east of Eldorado Canyon. Climbs range up to 250 feet in length and tend to be vertical or overhanging. An extremely hard layer of sedimentary rock has been uplifted to expose steep, horizontally fractured faces. The route names here are some of the most imaginative in the United States.

### NEW JERSEY

The two areas located on either side of the Delaware River are Mt. Tammany (NJ) and Mt. Minsi (PA). Composed of sandstone, these cliffs average about 200 feet and occasionally contain loose rock. Although other cliffs are found nearby, they tend to be loose and vegetated.

- |   |              |      |
|---|--------------|------|
| 1. <i>Rock and Ice In the Gap</i><br>(4 pages mimeo with maps & illus.) | Hugh Dougher | 1978 |
|---|--------------|------|

### PENNSYLVANIA

This large state offers a host of crags and outcrops, hidden away in rural corners. The Explorers Club of Pittsburgh was responsible for much of the early development of some of these rocks, as well as early forays to Seneca Rock in nearby West Virginia. In fact, many Pennsylvania-area guides contain treatment on Seneca (see Nos. 3-6 and 11). Stoneyridge, High Rocks, and White Rocks (to name a few) are some of the principal spots in a landscape rich in obscure crags.

No.	Title	Author	Year			
1.	<i>Climbs in The Adirondacks</i>	James A. Goodwin	1938	1.	<i>Climbing At St. Peters</i>	Jim Dettlerline c. 1978
2.	<i>A Climbers Guide To the Adirondacks</i>	Trudy Healy	1967	2.	<i>Stoneyridge: A Crag Climbers Guide</i>	Richard Pleiss c. 1982
3.	<i>A Climbers Guide To the Adirondacks</i>	Trudy Healy	1971	3.	<i>Pittsburgh Area Climbers Guide</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1971
4.	<i>Adirondack Rock and Ice Climbs</i>	Thomas R. Rosecrans	1976	4.	<i>Pittsburgh Area (2nd Revised Printing)</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1975
5.	<i>Climbing in The Adirondacks</i>	Don Mellor	1983	5.	<i>A K Handbook</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1975
6.	<i>Climbing in the Adirondacks (Supplement)</i>	Don Mellor	1986	6.	<i>A K Handbook (Revised 2nd Edition)</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1977
7.	<i>Rock and Routes of The North Country New York</i> (Very short section on Adirondack climbing)	Bradford B. Van Diver, Ph.D.	1978	7.	<i>Local Climbers Guide</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1955
8.	<i>Shawangunk Climbs List (Topo/drawings)</i>	W. Crother	1964	8.	<i>Local Climbers Guide (2nd Edition)</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1956
9.	<i>A Climbers Guide To The Shawangunks</i>	Arthur Gran	1964	9.	<i>Local Climbers Guide (3rd Edition)</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1959
10.	<i>A Climbers Guide To The Shawangunks (Supplement; spoof)</i>	Joe Kelsey	1966	10.	<i>Local Climbers Guide (4th Edition)</i>	Ivan L. Jirak 1966
11.	<i>Shawangunk Rock Climbs</i>	Richard C. Williams	1972	11.	<i>Explorers Club (McConnells Mills, Seneca &amp; White Rocks)</i>	Unknown 1963
12.	<i>Shawangunk Rock Climbs (2nd Edition)</i>	Richard C. Williams	1980	12.	<i>Guide To White Rocks</i>	Explorers Club 1965
13.	<i>Shawangunk Grit</i>	Ivan Rezucha	1981	13.	<i>Climb Pennsylvania</i>	Curt Harler 1985
14.	<i>Shawangunk Grit 84 240 Recent Climbs</i>	Ivan Rezucha	1984	14.	<i>Stover Park Rock Climbs</i> (A mimeo guide of one sheet, two sides; 1st High Rocks guide)	Bob Chambers c. 1957
15.	<i>The Gunks Guide, Rock Climbs in The Shawangunks of New York</i>	Todd Swain	1986	15.	<i>A Climbers Guide To Boileau Rocks — Ralph Stover State Park</i>	Pete Kolman & Kirby Ellis 1974
16.	<i>Little Falls, A Rock Climbers Guide</i>	R.L. Stolz & Christopher Davis	1985	16.	<i>A Climbers Guide To Boileau Rocks — Ralph Stover State Park</i>	Pete Kolman & Kirby Ellis c. 1975
				17.	<i>Red Rock, A Climbers Guide To High Rocks</i>	Thomas N. Stryker & Warren B. Musselman 1985
				18.	See NJ No. 1	



## MARYLAND

Carderock and Great Falls are both located along the Potomac River, and although close in locality to each other, they are very distinct areas. Carderock is primarily a bouldering spot, although some routes require a top rope. Great Falls, however, is primarily a top rope or short lead area due to the length of routes (30-70 feet) and poor landings.

- |  |  |      |
|--|--|------|
| 1. <i>Climbers Guide To Carderock</i>                                | John Forest                            | 1980 |
| 2. <i>Map D, Potomac Gorge (Virginia, Maryland) Climbers Edition</i> | Gregory Potomac-Appalachian Trail Club | 1971 |
| 3. <i>A Climbers Guide To Great Falls Park</i>                       | B.A. Nelson & Grossman                 | 1975 |
| 4. <i>Climbers Guide To the Great Falls of the Potomac</i>           | James A. Eakin                         | 1985 |

## WEST VIRGINIA

Seneca Rocks and West Virginia climbing are often synonymous terms. Seneca has long been a popular climbing center. As early as 1955 an article containing route information had been published. The extreme steepness of the rock, which is occasionally (but not usually) loose, makes the hard climbs here often serious propositions. Protection on many of the harder climbs is often difficult to place and not always adequate.

- |   |  |              |
|---|--|--------------|
| 1. <i>Gritstone Climbs</i>  | Bill Webster                             | 1978         |
| 2. <i>Seneca Rocks Route Sketches</i>   | Ivan L. Jirak                            | 1965         |
| 3. <i>A Climbers Guide To Seneca Rocks, West Virginia</i>                             | F.R. Robinson                            | 1971         |
| 4. <i>Seneca</i> (A fold out photo-diagram map)                                       | John Bercaw, Herb Laeger & John Stannard | 1976         |
| 5. <i>Seneca Rocks, W. Va., A Climbers Guide</i>                                      | Bill Webster & Richard Pleiss            | 1976         |
| 6. <i>Seneca Rocks, W. Va., A Climbers Guide (Revised 2nd Edition)</i>                | Bill Webster                             | 1980         |
| 7. <i>Seneca Rocks, W. Va., A Climbers Guide (Revised 3rd Edition — yellow cover)</i> | Bill Webster                             | c. 1982      |
| 8. <i>Seneca Rocks, W. Va., A Climbers Guide (Revised 4th Edition — green cover)</i>  | Bill Webster                             | 1980 c. 1985 |
| 9. See PA No. 3   |  |              |
| 10. See PA No. 4  |  |              |
| 11. See PA No. 5  |  |              |
| 12. See PA No. 6  |  |              |
| 13. See PA No. 11   |  |              |

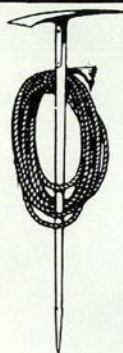
## REGIONAL GUIDES

(Numbered from beginning of series)

- |  |                  |      |
|--|------------------|------|
| 2. <i>Climber's Guide to North America, East Coast Rock Climbs</i> | John Harlin, III | 1986 |
|--|------------------|------|

The author plans to eventually publish this series as a book. The following information is requested for guides not included in this bibliography: exact title, subtitle (if any), author(s), publisher (if any), date (or approximate date if none listed), number of printings/editions, variations between printings/editions, number of copies printed each printing/edition, number of pages, type of cover material (and manner of binding), type and number of illustrations.

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Director: Dick Jackson

**Mountain Light  
In Search of the  
Dynamic Landscape**

By Galen Rowell  
Sierra Club Books  
San Francisco, Cal., 1986  
224 pages, hardbound; \$35.00

I have three distinct recollections of the day I was introduced to rock climbing at Indian Rock. I remember failing on *Beginner's Crack*, a 5.5ish problem that increases only moderately in difficulty when done with one hand and one foot. Then, I almost succeeded on a trick traverse move around a corner. I noticed with satisfaction that others were failing on it too. Maybe there was hope for me yet.

Lastly, I recall Galen Rowell being pointed out to me. He was muscling his way up the overhanging *Flake Traverse* wall, and appeared to be built of cinder blocks. Unable to do a single pull-up at the time, I was easily impressed. All the more so, as I knew Galen Rowell was famous as a climber and photographer. I was so awed that I dared not speak to him that day. It took me weeks to realize that it was Nat and Scott, those skinny kids with the Popeye arms, that were cranking Berkeley's true rads.

Dozens of 5.12's and a score of published photos later, I'm not so easily impressed, but Galen has done it again. Who wouldn't admire a guy who makes more with four quick squeezes of his shutter release than I do after weeks slaving over a word processor? He must be doing something right.

Thankfully, he's written a book telling us just *what* he does right. It's called *Mountain Light*, and it's more than just a technical photography manual. It's as if someone took a exquisite coffee table picture book, a technical color photography manual, a landscape art and photographic history, plus a mountain storybook, and tossed them all into a Cuisinart. The result is an appealing casserole that's easier to digest than one would imagine.

As a picture book it is stunning, perhaps a bit too much so. After browsing through the pictures you get the impression that it's like this: Galen hikes up to the bartender and says, "Gimme a light." The roof lifts off the tavern, God-beams come streaming in, and a snow leopard dashes across a bar enveloped in rich molten alpenglow. Galen just manages to qualify "Bud light" before the double rainbow arcs in.

The 80 color plates are distributed amongst eight exhibit chapters, each of which emphasizes a certain aspect of mountain photography. Most deal with different types of light. Many of the plates are tremendous — worth looking at time and again. Only two

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are disappointing. The glistening breasts of Quarter Domes were unfortunately out of register in my copy, making the picture unsharp. (No, I wasn't shaking).

"Celebrating the Return to Green Grass at Urdukas" has no place in a book of this quality. *National Geographic* felt it looked too posed and they were right. Where it belongs (and has been) is on the cover of *Outside*, which specializes in such hokey, posed photos. This is the one photo that is truly in need of the accompanying narrative to justify its existence. All of the others can proudly stand on their own.

Sprinkled throughout the text are nuggets of technical advice on color transparency photography. The author displays a respectable knowledge of the physics of light as applied to photography. He acquaints the reader with the important properties of his favorite emulsions and how to make the most of them. He stresses the importance of seeing the world as the film does, not as the human eye does.

This is synthesized in a first-person account from the viewpoint of a frame of Kodachrome. This effectively paraphrases much of what is said elsewhere in the text, even if it doesn't convey the true terror experienced by a frame of Kodachrome claustrophobically flattened by a pressure plate inside a light-tight box, waiting for the photographer to open the shutter before him, letting eager rays of light violently rush in to rip apart his crystalline silver intestines.

Luckily for the reader, Galen's prose is more subdued than that. He encourages an intuitive approach to composition, disregarding any rules that tend to make photos more stale than alive. Equipment selection is briefly discussed. Galen's emphasis is on finding the right light, and what to do with it once you've found it.

For someone who used to soup-up Chevy station wagons, Rowell displays a surprising knowledge of art and photographic history. He explains how painters used light effects to enhance their landscapes, and how photography has been used as one of the environmentalist's most potent weapons.

As one would expect, this book contains many mountain stories as well as lots of natural history tidbits. Truly a book with something for everyone, it even gives Galen's tips for getting lucky in chapter seven. Taken as a whole, it presents Galen's philosophy towards the outdoors and photography.

If, like most climbers, you can't read, this book would still be a worthwhile purchase to grace the coffee table inside your tent or van. If you're an aspiring photographer, it's even more valuable. If, like me, you wonder

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Mike Artz on  
"Can I do it till  
I need glasses?"

why Galen's pictures are on the magazine covers, while yours hide inside, it's invaluable.

A friend of mine described Galen's photos as looking like there should be angels in them. I checked carefully, and found none in this book. At first I figured it was probably the split-field neutral density filter Galen uses so often. After reading the text, though, I discovered I was wrong. If there really is a heaven where the good people from this world are rewarded with wings and a harp, then surely they don't make them wake up as early as Galen.

— John Sherman

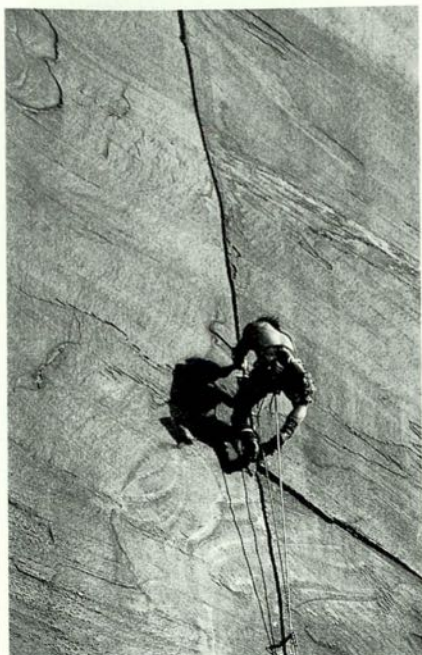
## Moments of Doubt

by David Roberts  
Mountaineers Books  
Seattle, Wash., 1986

256 pages, \$13.95 hardbound,  
\$8.95 softbound

*Moments of Doubt* gathers together a wide array of David Roberts' writings, and unless you have back issues of *Ascent*, *Mountain Gazette*, *Ultrasport*, and *Outside*, you won't find a better collection. Spanning over 20 years of effort, the selections offered in this anthology encompass some of the best of Roberts' work.





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Divided into three categories (Adventures, Profiles, and Reflections), the writings include accounts of climbs that Roberts and others have done, some miscellaneous adventures, and essays in which he puts forth various observations about mountaineering. Roberts was involved with some significant and bold climbing in his early years; this background usually enables him to write with an accurate and convincing voice.

The Profiles demonstrate all of Roberts considerable expository skills. These are fascinating, in-depth pieces, and on the whole are the best part of *Moments of Doubt*. Roberts has the talent to sculpt images of people and display the resulting work from different angles, this giving the reader a multiple view of the subject. Likewise, the narratives draw the reader into the story to the extent that one feels part of the action. Altogether good stuff.

As a longtime Roberts fan, I have often wondered why some of his more recent writing has evoked a less-than-enthusiastic response. Reading *Adventures* clarified the matter, because these pieces are a fascinating study in the development of Roberts as a writer. The reader can clearly sense a change in writing style. Roberts addresses this in his introduction: "My younger mountain writing, it seems to me, was suffused with a romantic intensity that was crucially inarticulate." Later, "Instead of the fervor of partisanship, I go at it now with a detached curiosity."

This "detached curiosity" interferes with veritable mountain action and the writing thereof, and it especially affects the pieces in *Adventures* and *Reflections*. In the more recent pieces, the suffusion of romantic intensity is lacking, and in its place is good, clear exposition. Exposition requires talent, craft, and patience to write well, and it is a pleasure to follow thought development through transition to a conclusion without losing either reader or writer.

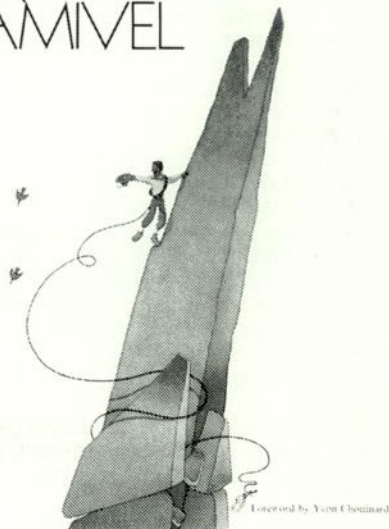
But it isn't exciting; too much has been diluted. Ours is a sport that thrives on adrenaline and languishes with routine. The older pieces work well; they still reflect Roberts' romantic intensity, and one can feel the experience as well as read about it. The newer ones, although stylish, lack authenticity for climbers. They may be better received by a more general audience, such as readers of the upscale *Outside* and *Ultraspport* magazines.

*Moments of Doubt* may send some readers to the dictionary; Roberts' command of language is comprehensive. Technically, his writing shines, polished with a skill not often found in mountaineering literature. Readers may not agree with his observations; some may find him standoffish. But

nobody will deny that Roberts can be very good. Whatever the case, *Moments of Doubt* firmly establishes the author as one of America's foremost writers in this field.

—Stuart Pregnall

## THE SUMMITS OF SAMIVEL



**The Summits of Samivel**  
Forward by Yvon Chouinard  
Alta House  
Port Townsend, Wash., 1986  
104 pages, hardbound; \$29.95

Gourmet ice cream: rich, chewy flavors evoking the real thing, but softened and intensified into a glutton's feast. This is Samivel, the French illustrator whose post cards we often see in climbing shops.

To Europeans, Samivel is also known for his written art. Several children's stories, fictional writings, and essays have added to Samivel's reputation as an accurate, sensitive, and insightful artist. For Americans who have never had the opportunity to savor some of his written work, selections have been included in *Summits*.

But let's face it — Samivel is at his best when reproducing scenes from the Alps in watercolors. Often funny, occasionally hauntingly-poignant, always beautiful, these "visual euphorias" (as one French art critic put it) transport us into Samivel's world with simple ease. Alta House has taken the trouble to make sure that these have been printed with the artistic quality they deserve.

*Summits* will make a handsome addition to your climbing collection, and its publication this fall makes it a great holiday gift. Alta House, Samivel's American representative, has performed a wonderful service to U.S. climbers by making this edition available to us.

—Stuart Pregnall



**The Climber's Guide to North America**

**East Coast Rock Climbs**

by John Harlin III

Illustrated by Adele Hammond

Chockstone Press

Denver, Colo., 1986

397 pages, softbound; \$22.00

With the publication of *East Coast Rock Climbs*, John Harlin has completed an immense effort spanning several years. The final volume in *The Climber's Guide to North America* trilogy, it continues the excellent work Harlin put into both the West Coast and Rocky Mountain editions.

Although some climbers will discover provincial nits to pick, the sheer magnitude and diversity of the areas chosen should satisfy most. As Harlin points out, those of us living in the East must make do with lots of little crags, and they are everywhere. Cataloging them all would be too monumental a task to undertake in this format.

Route information is brief, continuing Harlin's notion that most climbers use reasonable judgment while route finding. The guide shows generally where to go, but doesn't stray beyond that. The maps, photos, and topos complement the route listings—brevity and clarity are the order of the day, and Harlin's work makes it easy to find your way around.

Harlin manages to convey the unique atmosphere of each location; you feel that he focuses on the essence of an area as well as describing its climbing. This added feature is refreshing: it makes climbing more of a total experience by placing it in the context of its surroundings.

At this time, it may be appropriate to comment on *The Climber's Guide to North America* as a whole. Similar to the regional guidebooks published in Britain, these are the first real North American guidebooks for rock climbers. True, many routes and areas, and information on mountaineering and ice climbing are lacking, but it was never the intent of the author to include such material. These guides lay the foundation for a country-wide trip, experiencing the diversity of local practices, rock, ethics, and routes, learning about other climbers and what challenges they face in their backyards.

These guides should claim a position on every climber's book shelf. Planning a trip? Tired of the same old rock? Visiting Aunt Melissa and want to check out the local climbing? Pull out *The Climber's Guide To North America* and have at it. In all, Harlin has accomplished a tremendous achievement. Both he and Chockstone Press are to be congratulated on the vision and persistence needed to put these guides together, and Harlin deserves special praise for his fine research and writing.

—Stuart Pregnall

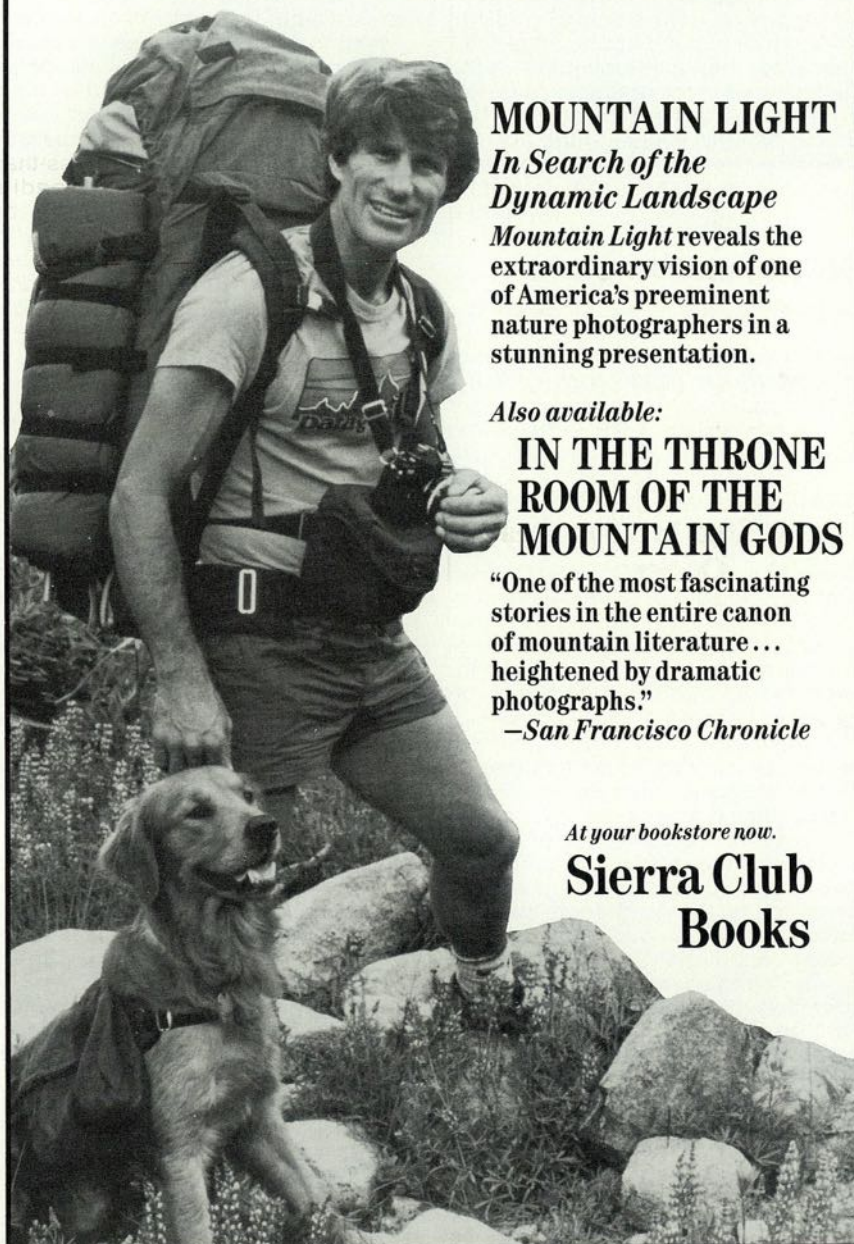
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# LETTERS

## Slick or Sick

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed the humor in *Climbing* no. 97. All the cartoons were great. But best of all was the letter-to-the-editor from Meinig and Tabin concerning homosexuality. This sardonic piece of fiction rivals the best efforts of Hunter S. Thompson.

Of course, there is the remote possibility that this was a real letter from "real" people. Even if intended as a joke, it displays a sad state of mind. Queer-baiting just isn't funny anymore.

Perhaps rock climbing isn't the best sport for these two. I suggest they take up rappelling on a piece of goldline, while smoking a popular cigarette. That way, they can look just like the macho types in the magazine ads. For maximum benefit to the rest of us, they should use the thinnest rope and the strongest cigarettes they can find.

— Francis St. Amant, Kensington, California.

## Strangers No More

Dear "Strangers In A Strange Land,"

I take it from your article (*Climbing* no. 97) that you found that the climbing down South gives credence to the cliché that truth is indeed stranger than fiction. Have your arms recovered yet? About your muddy, mid-night bivouac on the road to Jamestown — how did you get lost? That's a first down here, as far as we know.

You also discovered that Yellow Creek Falls is in a dry county. On your next visit be sure you have John Harlin's East Coast Volume in tow; it provides a map that shows the location of the nearest beer store. A mere 15 minutes drive to the county line and you can get plastered if you so desire.

At any rate, such tough-it-out experiences can only serve to shore up those vast reserves of will power and determination one needs to be a 5.13 fighter jock in the sandstone belt. So, if you think the above qualifies for "sandbagging," I know you'll have fun when you hit the death route circuit in the outback.

Now, about that Southern hospitality you found somewhat lacking, well, overstay your welcome at any salad bar in any state and you'll probably be asked to leave, maybe even given a police escort out of town! Sounds to me like you folks pushed your luck a little too far.

All ribbing aside, I do hope you found that Southern climbers lived up to their reputation for both hospitality and a willingness to help visitors out. Most of us are fairly low-key, non-competitive people interested in turn-

ing you on to our vast collection of beautiful and outrageous climbs.

Maybe next time you are in the Chattanooga area you will get in touch with me so I can show you around. That way you won't miss out on the Tennessee Wall — one of the most outrageous free climbing cliffs east of the Mississippi. Why, you guys would still be there now, even as I write.

— Rob Robinson, Chattanooga

## Exactly

Dear Editor,

It's not the arguments; it's the logic. It's not the emotions; it's their expression. It's not the ideas, it's the form in which they are expressed.

Clarity, brevity, and relevance — where are these qualities in the letters sent to your magazine? I don't care if people want to exchange insults. I don't mind endless squabbles about ethics.

But cloudy, poorly-constructed opinions are what get my goat. I'm embarrassed to read the junk that's printed.

— Dana Bartlett, Philadelphia

## In Roller Skates?

Dear Editor,

The hazards of claiming first ascents in well-explored New England have once again resulted in casualties.

For fear of boring the reader, I will not go into a blow-by-blow, route-by-route, I-did'em-first type of rebuttal, but suffice it to say that St. John's Ledges near Kent, Connecticut had already seen a lot of action by the mid-1970's (Basecamp, *Climbing* no. 97). Don Steel, Peter Thurston, Pete Goodwin, and myself (among others) thoroughly explored both the upper and lower slabs there. Don Steele, I believe, climbed the difficult face route described on the upper slab, in 1977.

We left little trace and did not bolt,

but rather did strange things like traverse way off route to tie off trees on either side. I don't recall anyone driving any pins or drilling any holes. There was plenty of room for new routes and we did not climb every line on the rock, so others may well be pioneers anyway.

Fritz Wiessner may have soloed these routes in roller skates in the late 1940's, but we always had the feeling of being first anyway. If you did these routes way back in the golden years, I retract. If not, give the route a name for the guide, but leave your ego at home. It is a great area with excellent rock.

— Fred Keith, Boulder

## Apologies

Dear Editor,

Please excuse the reporting of my ascent of *Acid Crack* as "on-sight" (*Climbing* no. 95). At the time, I thought "on-sight" simply meant without prior knowledge, and didn't think that this was the same as a "flash." My recent trip to France has cleared this up.

I was not attempting to get credit for something I didn't do, and hope that someday it's safe for me to return to California so I can try some more classic topropes on the lead.

— Scott Franklin, New Paltz

## Hanging in There


Dear Editor,

A couple of thoughts came to me yesterday about hangdogging. Back in 1979 I was taking 30-footers off of *Thin Fingers* and *ROTC*, but eventually making it up them. To my surprise, I have just realized that I never did climb those routes — they weren't "redpoints." I thought that was a new shoe.

Last year I started climbing again. I retired my retreaded EB's, dug up my rack of Friends (the only hardware I didn't sell) and bought a pair of Sportivas. Fatter (20 lbs.) and older (33) I started leading where I left off — 5.11a/b.

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## One Against All, All Against One

This battle cry, which in its opposite form symbolized the team spirit from the days of the Three Musketeers, describes exactly what this article is about.

A large new branch on the mountaineering family tree is growing rapidly. The new buzz-word "climbing contest" is heard all over Europe. Only a short time ago the only climbing contest was the traditional speed-climbing championship in Russia. Insiders also reported a bouldering contest in California. In 1985, Italy introduced a new side to the sport in Bardonecchia.

The atmosphere there was familiar to those who have experienced large sporting events. Weeks before the contest billboards and radio broadcasts advertised the event. On the day of competition, there were traffic jams as people looked for places to park. Brightly-colored posters and banners advertised the sponsors, who obviously wanted to make everyone aware of their financial power.

The world's first well-sponsored and professionally-organized climbing competition was a complete success. During each of the three days of competition, thousands of visitors would hurry to the site of the contest. This was a new and unusual situation for the publicity climber, unusual because the climber not only attempted to defeat the wall and his own inner fears and shortcomings, but competed against rivals, whose chalk-smearred hands were also reaching for prize money. The motto was, "The one who climbs highest, gets the most!"

The second Bardonecchia contest, held this year (Basecamp, *Climbing* no. 98), offered prize money reaching undreamed-of dimensions, especially for those of us who are used to a lifestyle that isn't exactly luxurious. The winner received a small car and 10,000 DM (approximately \$5000 U.S.). The prize money effectively destroyed any camaraderie among the competing climbers. There was some rivalry during the contest in 1985, but this time it was overwhelming. Little was spoken, except for the necessary, and climbers kept mostly to themselves.

The competition format was simple and unyielding. Three qualification routes rated 7, 8, and 8+ (5.10+, 5.11, and 5.11+) had to be climbed to enter the finals, a 9- (5.12-). All those who completed the qualifications and finals without falling entered the superfinals. During the superfinals it was not allowed to watch other competitors. Superfinalists were confined 500m from the site of the competition, like exotic animals in a cage or gladiators

## Competition: What Now?

Everyone knows climbing isn't competitive.

Well, maybe it is a little bit — okay, okay, it's *really* competitive.

Overall, competition shows a healthy state of affairs. If climbing weren't competitive, we wouldn't have grades, and then where would we be? What would we argue about during those long evenings around the bar, campfire, or street corner? There would be no sandbagging; no need for one-up-manship. How boring! Competition, as it exists in climbing, is fun.

In July 1985 I went to Italy with Wolfgang Gullich for the "First International Professional Rock Climbing Championship." Wolfgang and I thought the event would be a good time like many of the traditional meets. We were wrong.

We entered the climbers' camp and saw the somber faces of contestants. Laughs and socializing were replaced by sidelong glances and nervous chatter. Many serious young lizards just spent their time cleaning sticky-rubber soles to a squeak.

The atmosphere was heavy with tension, there was not much to do when not competing, and the rock was an unpleasant breed of greasy limestone. Many contestants I talked to, including winner Stefan Glowacz, said they would never return to this event (though he did this year — a tribute to the power of cash). What was the difference here? Where did the fun part go?

At the professional competition, the motivation for climbing had changed. Intrinsic reward played no part. Money was the reason to be there. When extrinsic gratification became the goal, climbing became work.

Whether you go climbing with a friend, acquaintance, or enemy, there's likely to be a competitive undertone. If you go off alone, you're still issuing a challenge to yourself. But in these situations, the pleasure is mostly in the doing, not the aftermath. It's the thrill of pumping up a route. If you fail, at least you gave it your best shot and can derive satisfaction from a good workout.

In structured, professional competitions, this intrinsic reward is replaced with prizes. The fun part is not the climbing — that's just something you have to do well. The fun part is having it done with and winning. If you win, great; money, prizes, glory. If you lose, get out the whip and start berating yourself (worthless sod). One of the charms of climbing is that it has no winners, at least not official ones. No winners, no losers; just folks who share this strange desire to abrade skin and injure joints on a substance much harder than flesh and bone.

Climbing is superbly irrational. People get into it for many reasons, but I have yet to hear someone say they started climbing because it made sense. Usually climbing is used as an escape from everyday social pressures, like work, or better yet, as an avoidance of everyday working. Professional competitions are a way of getting "serious" about the sport, making it a socially respectable and reasonable pursuit because money can be made doing it.

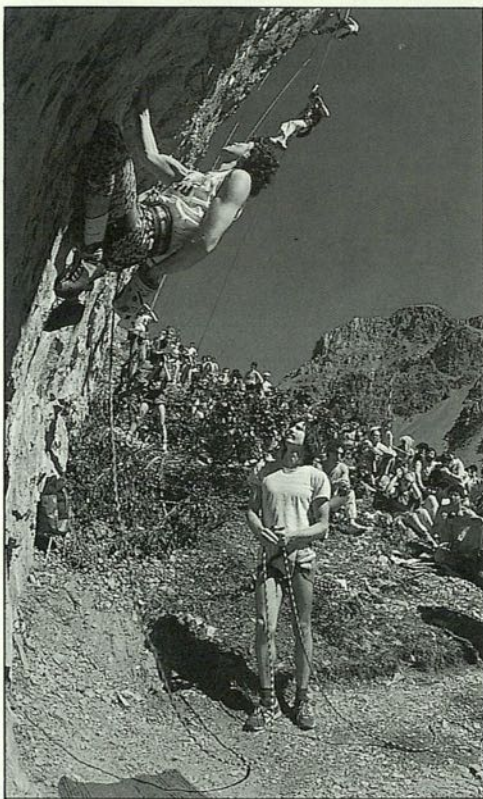


Photo: Uli Wiesmeyer

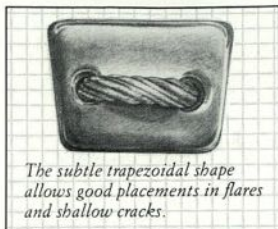
Glowacz at the 1985 Bardonecchia meet.



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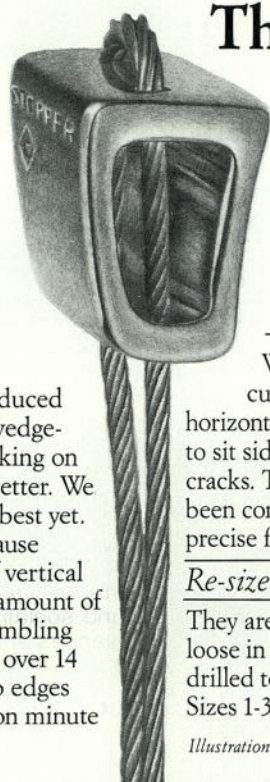
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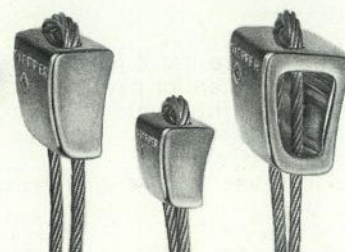
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waiting for battle. From there they were driven in groups of three to their final location, a tent at the bottom of the superfinals route. Here they had to wait for their performance, to insure that there was no possibility for the competitors to hear or see anything about the route.

Competitions like that in Bardonecchia are a mixture of sport, acrobatics, and show, a spectacle not only for the expert, but also for the man off the street — achieved by devising a system to measure performance. In many countries, open air climbing competitions are not possible because of bad weather or environmental laws. However, there is a solution to this problem: take the competition indoors. Neither weather nor the lack of good, accessible rock would stop the show. The first indoor climbing competition, held in Lyon (France) earlier this year, was a total success.

I believe that the rock climbing scene will soon divide into two arenas, and the best climbers in the world will have to demonstrate their expertise in both of them — during competition and on the hardest routes in the world. For young aspiring climbers, competition could be the best way to get started as a "professional." Currently, the sport is still in its infant stage, but perhaps it won't be long before we're watching Ron Kauk and Patrick Edlinger compete for the World Master title during the first American World Championships.

— Stefan Glowacz

Interpreted by Lisa Dawson and Wolfgang Schweiger

Glowacz(21), perhaps West Germany's leading climber, took first in the 1985 Bardonecchia contest, sixth in the 1986 contest, participated in the 1986 USSR International Speed Climbing Championships, and is credited with the first ascent of Lord of the Rings (32, 5.14a), currently the most difficult route in Australia.

Maybe someday it'll be just like tennis! Climbers will argue with judges and throw racks instead of racquets. Future pros will sell space on their lycra tights and muscle shirts and look like skinny billboards as they claw up routes. The pinnacle of success will be co-starring in a beer commercial with Rodney Dangerfield.

If pro competitions are to be the wave of the future, somebody's going to have a good time figuring out where to have them in the United States. In Italy and other European countries, limestone cliffs are about as hard to find as water in the Mediterranean. New crags can be prepared for a competition in a matter of days (bolt, bolt, chip, chip, wink, wink, say no more . . .), and the rock meets all the requirements: no prior climbing, easy access, close to population centers, and good weather. Since meeting these criteria looks bleak for U.S. rock, maybe the competitions will stay limited to Eurocrags.

Another problem is the popularization competitions could bring the sport. If professional competitions ever become big enough for television coverage, and spectators decide they would like to do more than just spectate, local urban crags would face a population crunch. The sport is expanding at a rapid rate already (How far from the Uberfall did you have to park last weekend? Any trouble finding a place to sleep in Yosemite this year?) and faster growth will only lead to more crowds.

The issue isn't whether we should or shouldn't compete — we will. Rather, the question is: how shall we compete?

— Russ Clune

Clune wrote this before competing in the 1986 USSR International Speed Climbing Championships, in which he took fifth (see report this issue). Currently a graduate student at Columbia University, Clune (26) still manages to stay in the melee at the forefront of Shawangunks climbing.



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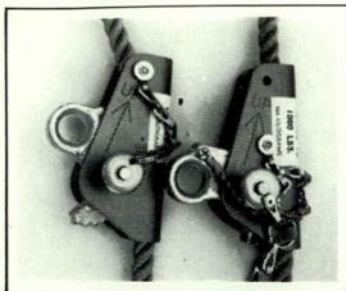
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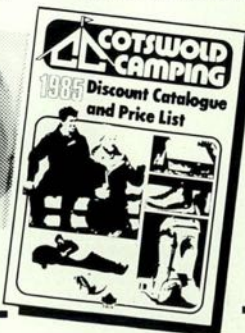
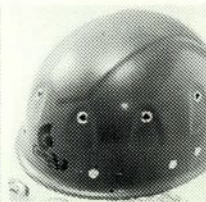
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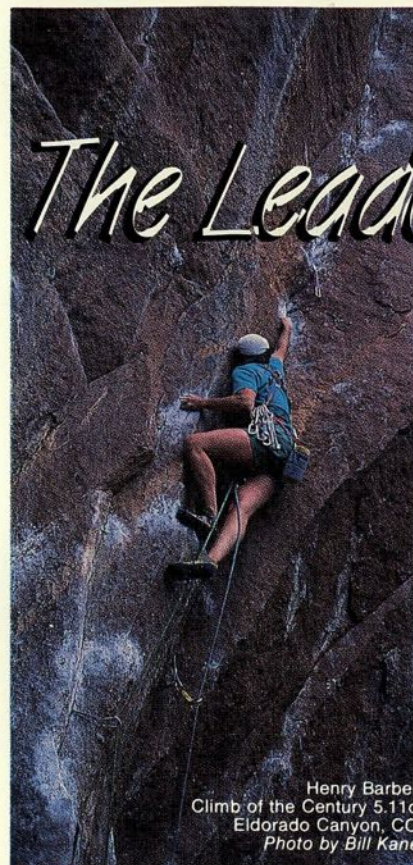
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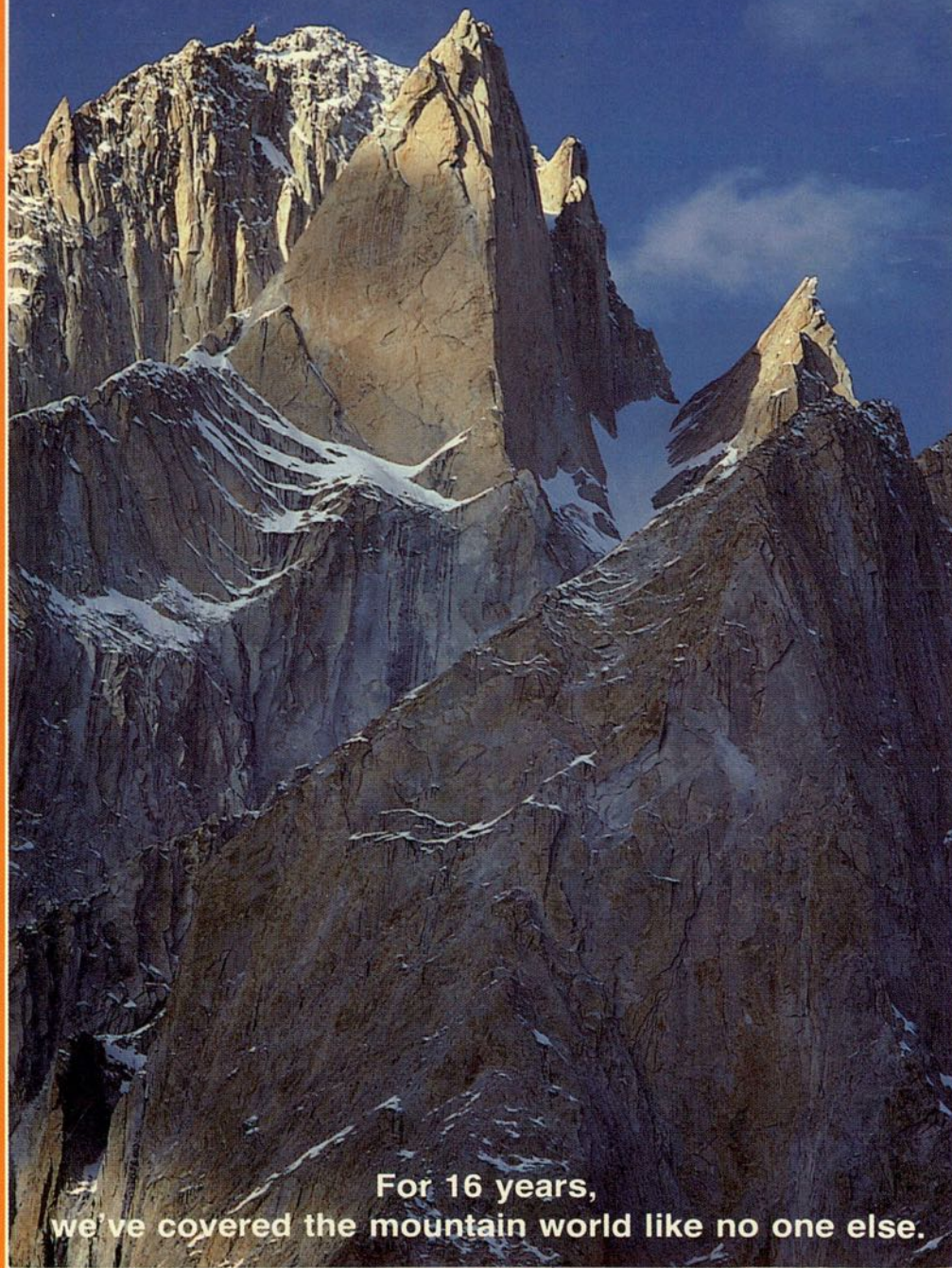
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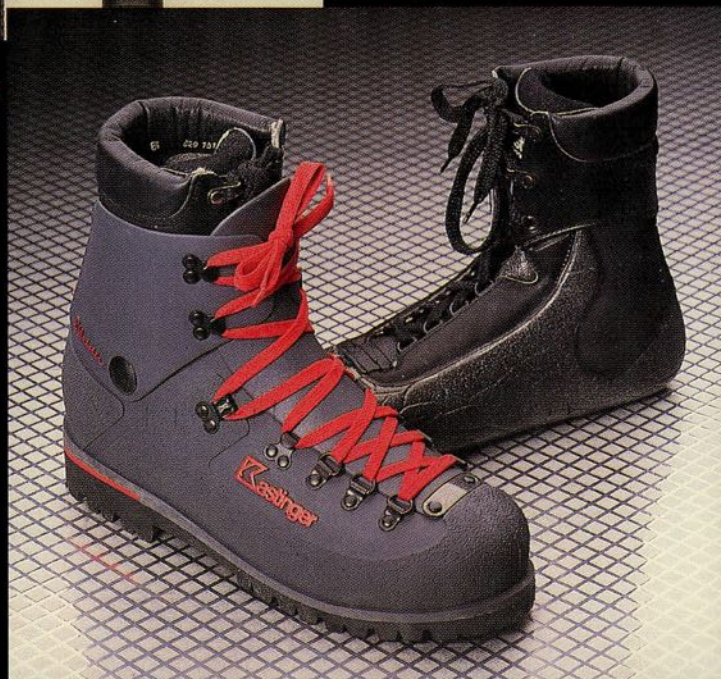
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