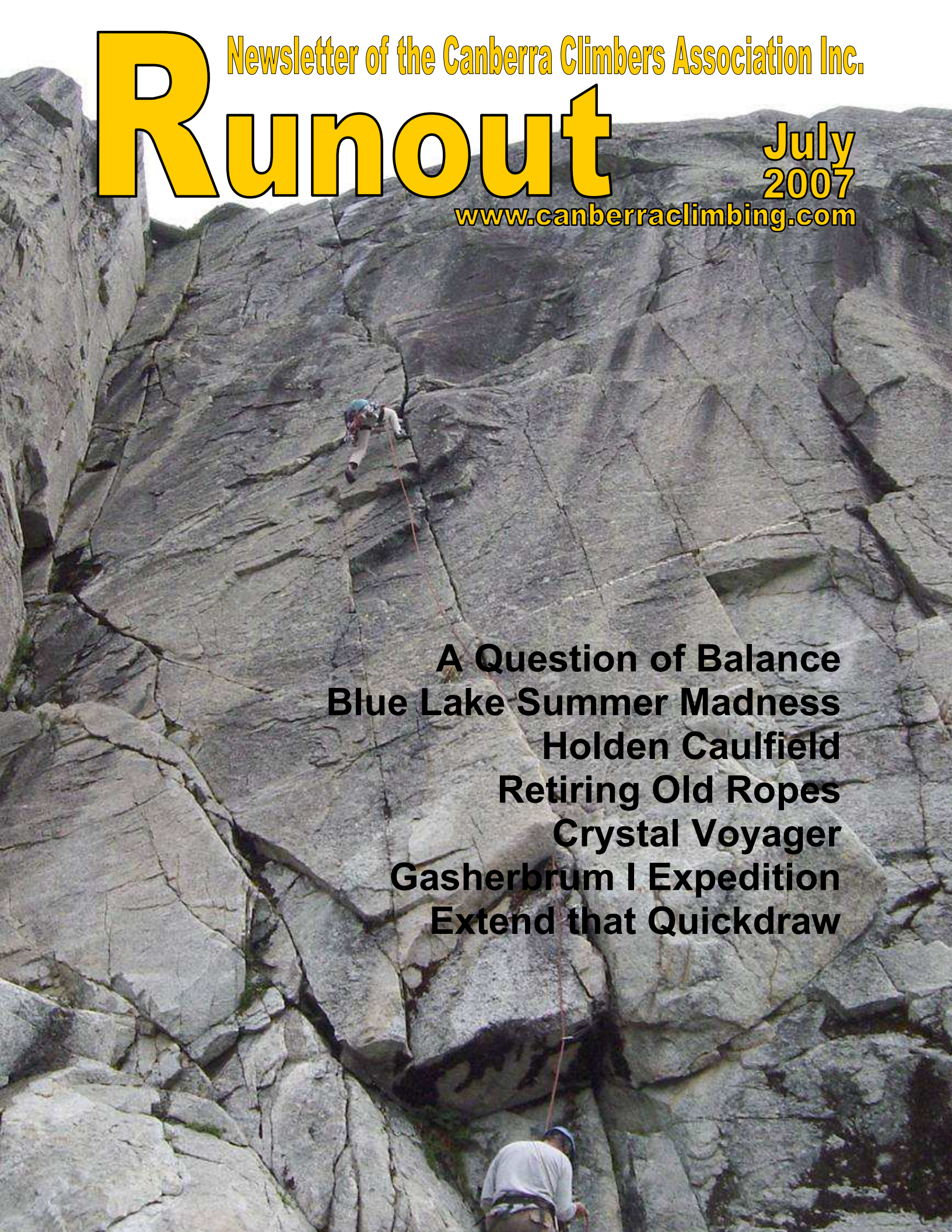


Runout

Newsletter of the Canberra Climbers Association Inc.

July
2007

www.canberraclimbing.com



**A Question of Balance
Blue Lake Summer Madness
Holden Caulfield
Retiring Old Ropes
Crystal Voyager
Gasherbrum I Expedition
Extend that Quickdraw**

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Special Thanks

Thanks to all the people who have helped in the production and supplied material for the use in Issue 6 of *RUNOUT* including Garry Miller, Hatice Sitki, Brain Mattick, Mike Law-Smith, Max Fourman, John Wilson, David Cregan, Armando Corvini, Zac Zaharias and Paul Day.

Contributions

RUNOUT is the official newsletter of the Canberra Climbers Association Inc. (CCA).

Please feel free to submit any material concerning the Canberra region climbing community. New route descriptions, access issues, updates to the Canberra Granite Guide, trip reports and tall tales of discovery are all welcome.

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Cover Photo

Dave Cameron, *Bends it like Beckham* on 'Minder Bender' (19) whilst Gilles Bonnin belays. Blue Lake, Kosciuszko National Park.

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Editorial

Last year the tragic news of Todd Skinner's death rocked the climbing community. The reports of him falling 500 feet to his death in Yosemite National Park while rappelling seem unbelievable, especially when the preliminary reports of the accident pointed to equipment failure. When was the last time you heard of a climbing accident attributed to failure of the gear?

The latest reports of Todd's accident indicate that his fall was solely attributable to the failure of the belay loop on his harness. A number of people had commented on condition of his harness in the days before the accident and he had in fact ordered a replacement.



Todd's accident highlights the importance of replacing old and worn climbing equipment, your life depends on it. If it looks worn and ratty, **It is** – get rid of it right away.

If you need any more convincing then read Kolin Powick's article "*Retiring Old Ropes*" later in this issue.

As usual we have a great series of articles. Mad Max Fourman's report on his aid climbing escapades at Mount Buffalo is particularly entertaining.

Climb often and climb safely

Dave Cameron
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President's Foreword

Our President, Zac Zaharias with Chris Warner, is currently on Expedition to Gasherbrun I in Pakistan. They are expected to return in early August. In the meantime, Armando Corvini is filling his role while he is absent.

Orroral Ridge Fire Trail

In early May the CCA was asked to make a submission concerning the proposal to create a number of new fire trails within the Namadji National Park. It was determined that the Orroral Ridge Trail would be of immediate concern to the climbing community. The CCA did a field survey on the 20th May plotting the climbing areas on a map and comparing the alignment of the road to the grid references provided to us by the consultants.

As a general observation, the climbing sites lie on the western side of the ridge line whilst the road tracks either along the ridge top or to the eastern side. This alignment is logical given the number of randomly scattered boulders and tors along the ridge top, with earthworks being less costly on the eastern side.

The closest that we could ascertain that the proposed trail came to the climbing areas was about 60 metres. The CCA position is that we did not see any major impact on climbing activities in the area as long as vehicular access to the general public is not permitted beyond the current 'Tower Rocks' car park. The CCA would prefer that the road was not built as it will attract additional visitors and mountain bike traffic to a unique and relatively undisturbed area.

CCA Annual Subscriptions

Your subscriptions for this year are now due.

Our Annual Membership Fees are the amazingly low \$15!

Please contact Steve Halpin (shalpin72@yahoo.com.au or on Ph. 02 62 442 788) to pay by cheque or money order.

EFT payments can be made to our bank account at:

Account Name	: Canberra Climbers Association
BSB Number	: 801009
Account Number	: 1064291

Please ensure that you put your name as the payee so we can update our records.

CCA Membership Card

CCA members receive a Membership card which entitles them to discounts of between 10 - 15% from a number of the outdoor stores in Canberra including, Canberra Indoor Rockclimbing, Mountain Designs, Paddy Pallins, Jurkiewitz and The Great Outdoors Centre.

If you have not received your membership card, please contact the CCA membership Secretary, Steve Halpin.

Keep well and fit see you all at the meeting on the 11th of July.

Armando Corvini

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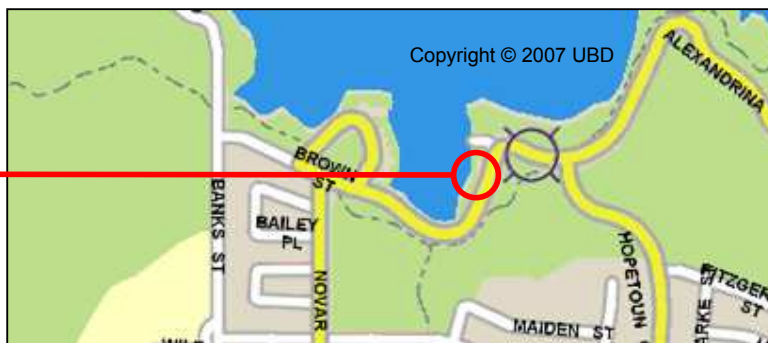
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Vice President CCA.

Next Meeting

Next months CCA meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th of July at the YMCA Sailing Club at Yarralumla Bay. The meeting room is downstairs as you enter through the front door.

YMCA Sailing Club
Alexandrina Ave, Yarralumla.
(west from the junction with Hopetoun
Circuit)
Canberra UBD Map 58 M11



Guest Speaker

Mt Aspiring via The North West Ridge



Sue Donoghoe will be making a slide presentation of her December 2006 ascent of Mt Aspiring, via The North West Ridge.

Sue Donoghoe, OAM is the Director of Outdoor Education at Canberra Grammar School. She started climbing in 1986 while completing her Diploma of Education in Victoria. Her first climbing experiences were at Mt Arapiles, later while working in Queensland, she climbed at

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Frog Buttress, Mt Maroon and The Glass House Mountains. Sue has climbed extensively in The Blue Mountains, The Warrambungles and recently in the South Island of New Zealand.

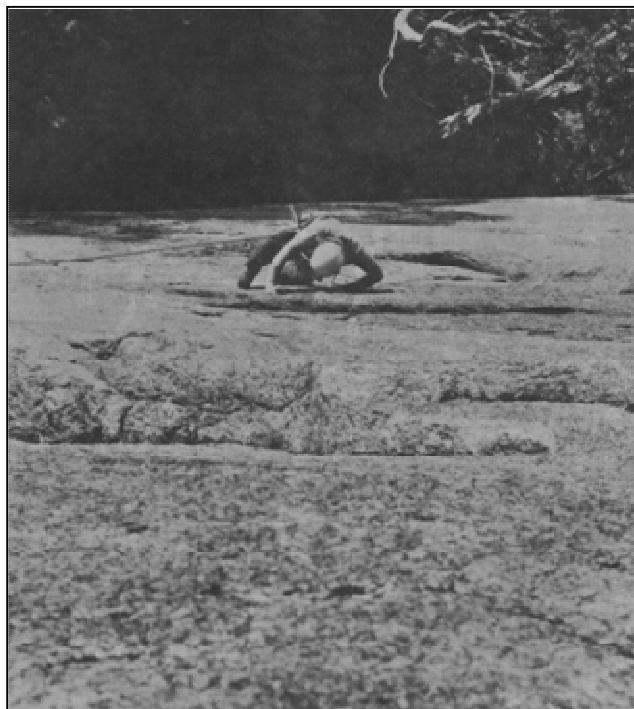
A Question of Balance

by Brian Mattick

Memories

I can't remember when I first climbed Balance, I think it was late 1970's. In any event it was after the bolt runner was mysteriously removed from the top of the second pitch. Where is Balance you say? It's located on the right hand end of Booroomba's northern slabs and starts a few metres left of Denethor.

Bill Wilson and Rob Warner's ascent of Balance in 1974 was for its time one of the harder slab climbs in the region. Balance was originally described with five pitches, these days it done in three by running the first two pitches together.



No Chalk Marks

Route finding was difficult without today's ever present chalk marks. The use of chalk had yet to gain widespread acceptance within the climbing community at this time. My main memory of the ascent is getting lost on the second pitch and in a highly anxious state covering a lot of rock looking for signs of the route.

Booroomba's slabs are often sparsely protected and can be intimidating, requiring few visits and careful reading of the guidebook, to sort out where the routes wander and with the bolt runner gone, Balance was no different.

This photo shows Bill Wilson on the 2nd pitch during the first ascent of Balance. It was originally published in Thrutch No 64, September 1974.

Thrutch was the Sydney Rockclimbing Club's newsletter, going national in the 1970's, foundering, then returning to the club. It is still published as the club newsletter.

Last year Keith Bell and I revisited Balance. Keith ran the first two pitches together and as I remembered where the belay was on the third pitch I headed straight for it. There was no getting lost this time and we did not find any evidence of the mysterious bolt, so we were still a bit uncertain about the line.

Victoria's Secrets

Now I'll let you in on a little secret, it's not in the guidebook but the crux is in the first pitch. The first ten metres are unprotected and the serious section is in the first five. It can be used as an alternative start to Denethor, as they share the same ledge, particularly when Denethor's start is wet.

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We thought we had sorted the route out, but as to why the bolt was removed when there is a second crux just below the top of the second pitch was still a mystery. Keith placed a small cam and a nut in a shallow crack behind a flake near the top of the second pitch. Both held when he climbed past them, but they didn't inspire much confidence and a fall from here would result in a skin-tearing slide to the ground from over 30 metres up if they failed. I have since repeated this move and had runners pop out, the pro is dodgy.

Fossilized Logbooks

It's now just over 40 years since Booroomba was discovered by the climbing community. A series of logbooks were kept at the top of the cliff for many years. In 2005 the CCA celebrated this anniversary at the mid year meeting, with some of the fossils dragging out their old equipment for display including several of the old logbooks. Amazingly, I found an entry concerning the removal of the bolt on Balance, where someone had commented, 'The bolt was removed as there was a crack a little bit above'. Now there is only one crack on the second pitch so I knew we were on route.

Another reading of the guide solved the mystery, the original route traversed right to avoid the bulge that Keith and I had climbed. The removal of the bolt now made sense in the context of Balance's original route.



First and Second pitches of Balance

The dots show the original route on the first and second pitch. The star is the direct finish to the second pitch. The second pitch is severely foreshortened, as it is 30 m long.

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Built for Comfort

Booroomba has great slabs but few are comfortably protected climbs. The well protected slab climbs and therefore the most popular routes are Counterbalance (14), Equilibrium (17) and Closer In (20). Few people climb Bird of Prey (17) for instance, where the crux is pure smearing and no pro for 35 metres. Just in Passing (19) also requires special care, with delicate smearing past one bolt in the middle of a 35 metre pitch.

Perhaps Keith and I accidentally added a direct finish to the second pitch of Balance (see Footnote) but I believe this second crux really requires a bolt runner to avoid a ground fall. With a solid bolt runner it just may allow Balance to receive more ascents, which it justly deserves. Two ascents in four months are probably more than this climb has had in the last twenty years.

Question of Balance

Retro bolting is a question of balance and has caused great controversy in the past (see Yellow Point News). My suggestion is not retro bolting but replacing the original bolt. Perhaps Keith and I have the moral right to place a bolt at the second crux as it appears to be a new variation. Comments on this proposal would be appreciated.

Incidentally, the current guidebook still mentions a peg belay at the top of pitch two but a medium to large cam is fine. The first and second pitch can be top roped by easily traversing from the Counterbalance ledge to the 2nd belay and lowering off. A 60 m rope is probably needed. There are also some great photo opportunities from the Counterbalance ledge. Give it a go and enjoy one of Booroomba's fantastic slabs.

Balance Variant

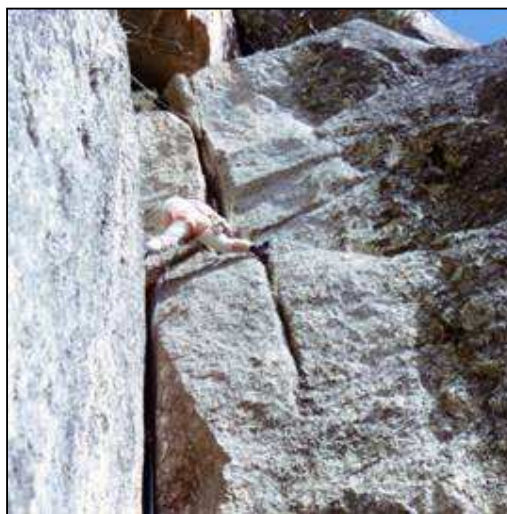
Thrutch 66, (probably June 1975) reported that Victor Mylec and Tony Nemec had completed 'a harder variant to the wall route Balance' but didn't give any details. The 1976 guide 'Granite Climbs in the ACT' noted the bolt had been removed, if the variant was the direct finish to pitch two then it's likely it was climbed with the benefit of the original bolt runner. Later guidebooks made no mention of Victor's and Tony's variant.

Yellow Point ?

After 37 years and hundreds of traditional ascents Denethor has finally been yellow pointed. Unable to match the skills of previous climbers a bolt was placed at the crux of a mere 14, which is only a couple of metres off the deck. I am prepared to return the bolt to the owners and arrange a public flogging.



Bill Wilson leading Ephemeris (15)



Bill Wilson leading Singularity around 1973

Gasherbrum I Expedition June-August 2007



A team of 9 Australian climbers including two of our CCA members, Zac Zaharias and Chris Warner, are currently climbing Gasherbrum I. They are attempting the Japanese Couloir, a steep direct line up the north face.

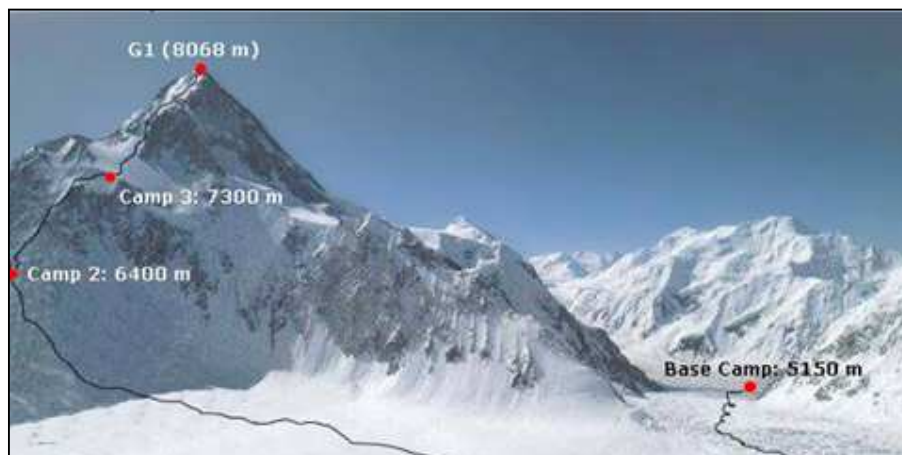
The Expedition is being led by Zac Zaharias and is one of the strongest teams to tackle an 8000m peak with 27 8000m expeditions and 13 summits between the expedition members. We wish them the best of luck and a safe return home in early August.

The Mountain

Gasherbrum I (8068m) is also known as Hidden Peak or K5 and is located on the border of Pakistan and China. Gasherbrum is often mistakenly translated to as "The Shining Wall", presumably a reference to the highly visible face of the neighboring peak Gasherbrum IV but in fact it comes from "rgasha" (beautiful) and "brum" (mountain) in Balti language, hence it actually means "Beautiful Mountain."

The Route

The Expedition will be tackling the Japanese Couloir, a steep direct line up the north face of Gasherbrum I. Depending on the seasonal snow and ice conditions there may be sections of steep mixed climbing. Base camp will be established at 5150 metres on the South Gasherbrum



glacier, with three high camps at 6000, 6400 and 7200 metres.

The foot of the Japanese Couloir starts at Camp 2 at 6400 metres. With an average angle between 45-55 degrees, the team will fix 1000 metres of rope over the trickier sections leading up to Camp 3 before the planned summit push in mid July.

Zac and Chris's progress can be followed at www.armyalpine.org.au.

Blue Lake Summer Madness by David Cameron



The view of Hedley Tarn from the main range walking path

Wrong Again

I always thought that Blue Lake was largely a winter ice climbing location, boy was I wrong!

In February, Andrew Bowman, Garry Miller, Gilles Bonnin and I came up with the fiendishly simple plan to go climbing at Blue Lake in the luxurious style we were accustomed. Garry sweet talked the staff at the ski lodge in accepting three ruffians, one with a foreign accent as visitors from overseas.

Early to Bed, Early to Rise?

All we had to do was drive up to Charlotte's Pass on Friday night, sleep in the luxurious but recently renovated twin bed suites at the lodge, wake up early in the morning and walk the walk into Blue Lake. Seemed simple, well it was except for the waking up early.

Access to Blue Lake involves descending from Charlotte's Pass, crossing the raging torrent of the Snowy River and following the well maintained main range walking track past Hedley Tarn. It takes about an hour of easy uphill walking to reach the lake at 1880 metres.

The majority of the climbing is on the 30-35 metre high Elephant Buttress which is fortunately only a few hundred metres off the walking track. There are a number of other buttresses scattered around the western end of the lake with more difficult access.

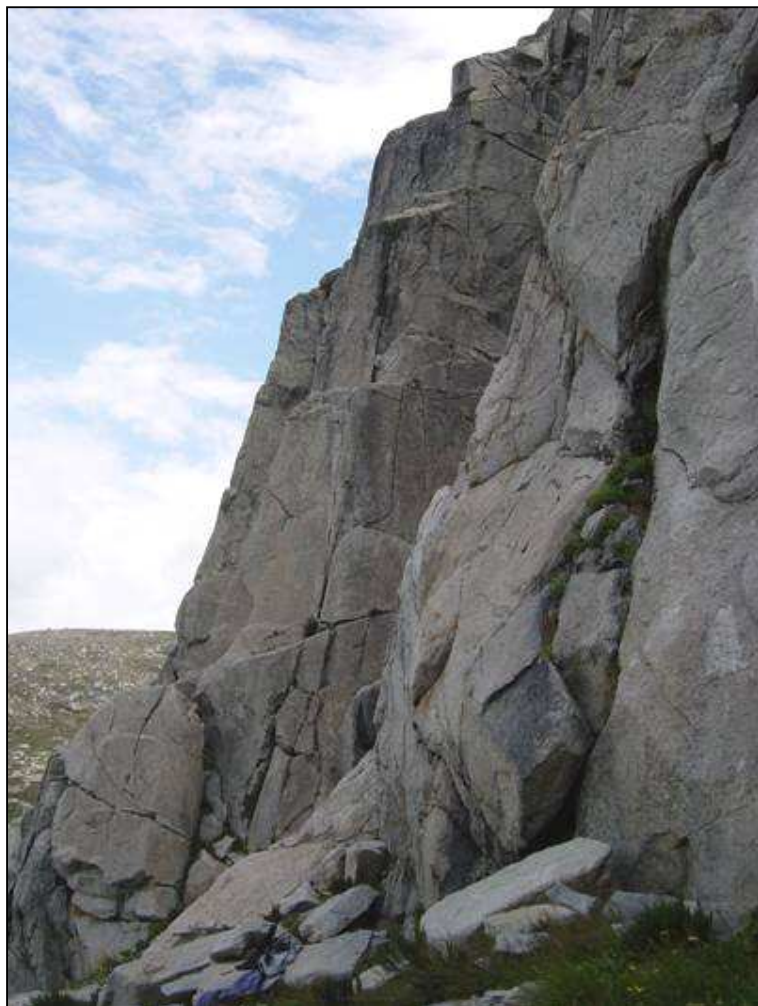
The main climbing area is located on Elephant Buttress at the western end of the lake



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The approach to Elephant Butte from the walking track takes you across relatively undisturbed alpine grass land and bogs. Where possible you should spread out and not follow the existing track to avoid erosion in any one area.

Super Styling

The routes on Elephant Butte tend to follow corner systems and cliff splitting crack lines. The style of climbing can range from jams and bridges on '**Dihedral Corner**' to the overhanging pump of '**Cat In a Corner**'. Then there is the absolute mega classic line of '**Mind Bender**' that just eats up as much or little protection as you choose to employ.

Blue Lake is a brilliant summer climbing destination, I can't recommend it enough.

As Arnie says... I'll be back.

The view of the classic of the crag, '**Dihedral Corner**' 30M 13

Andrew Bowman
seconds '**Clog Dance**'
40M 17



Gamauli Primary School by Garry Miller

Gamauli is a small rural village in the Dailekh District of Nepal. The village is located west of Kathmandu and north of Nepalgunj. It takes a three day journey to reach the village from Kathmandu. The journey involves an eighteen hour bus ride, transferring to another bus and finally a three to four hour walk.

The residents of Gamauli live without electricity, phone services (available only after an hour-long walk) or a post office. The residents of the village are mostly illiterate with only 5% of the population having completed 10th grade schooling. The majority of the people come from two ethnic groups the Chhetris and Dalits. The Chhetris are considered upper class and generally own most of the farms. Dalits work as laborers and because of their poverty and class discrimination, they can not afford to send their children to school.



Gamauli has a small primary school, but the education leaves much to be desired. Teachers are not adequately trained for their tasks, parents are generally not involved because of poor or no education themselves. Each year approximately 70 children enroll in 1st class with only 18-20 graduating.

The School management and community are seeking to improve the school's facilities. The school building currently consists of five classrooms in poor condition, furthermore the schools capacity is insufficient for the 200 children enrolled. They would like to construct an

additional two class rooms as the estimated cost of rebuilding the entire school is around \$US7000 which is way out of their budget.

Last year CCA members contributed around \$200 to fund wages and teaching materials. Various avenues were explored for transferring funds to maximize the amount reaching the teachers. 8 months salary - \$880, has so far reached the school mistress, Mrs Shahi. A further \$440 remains to be transferred for this Nepali school year. If anyone has knowledge of a safe and cheap method for transferring money to a remote village that is a 10km trek to the nearest bank or post office please contact me on email (gjaqua@aussiemail.com.au)



Blue Lake Ice Climbing 14th-17th July



Nice Ice from a few seasons ago

The CCA is planning a Snow and Ice Climbing trip to Blue Lake and possibly the more remote Watson's Crag during the period of 14th to 17th of July. Watson's Crag is a seldom visited ice climbing area located on the western side of the Kosciuszko main range. The plan is to catch the over-snow transport to Charlottes Pass, then snowshoe or ski in via Hedley Tarn and snow camp near Blue Lake.

Blue Lake is located within Kosciuszko National Park which has been protected for its conservation values for over 50 years. The impacts on Blue Lake prior and after its protection have been minimal, consequently the lake remains in a near natural state.

Blue Lake at 1900 metres offers the best conditions for ice formation and climbing on the mainland of Australia.

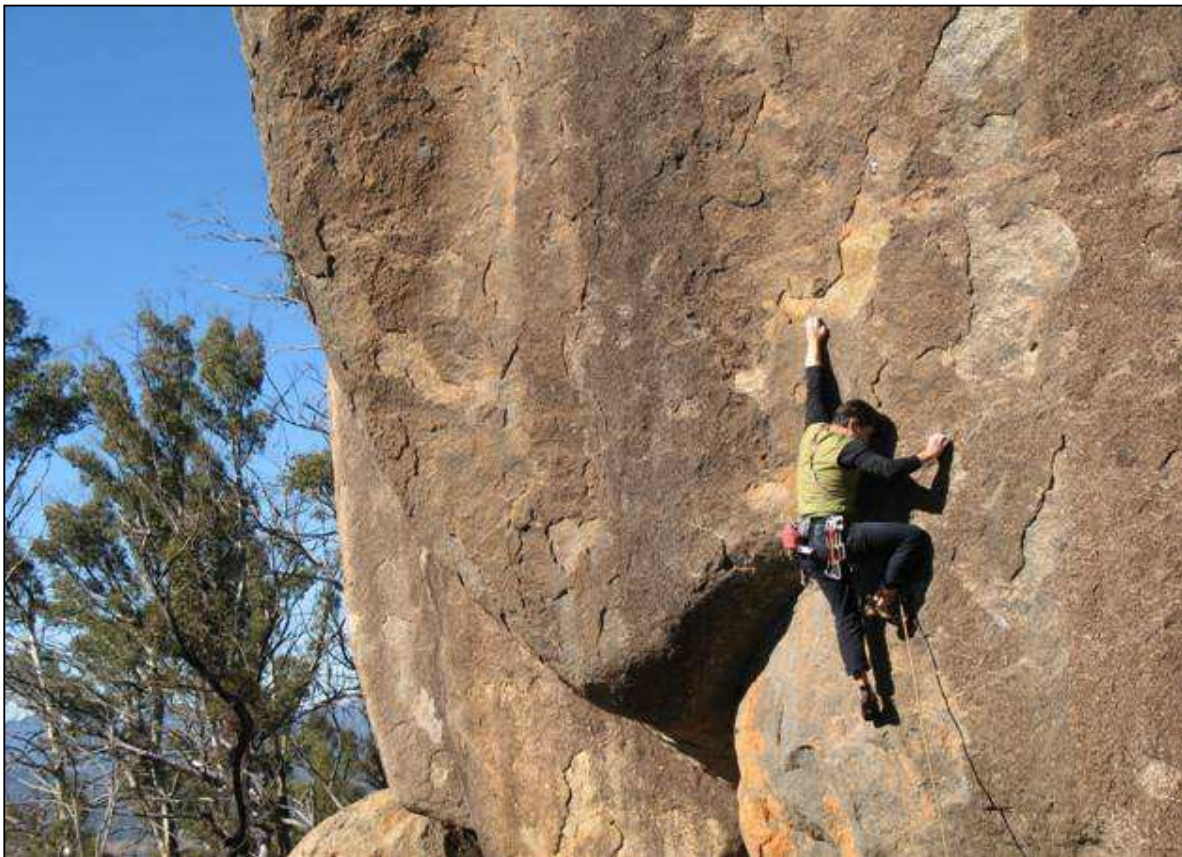


The view of Watson's Crag from 'The Sentinel'

Contact Details :

Armando Corvini 0419 693 493 or
Mike Law-Smith 0402 646 833

Crystal Voyager by Mike Law-Smith

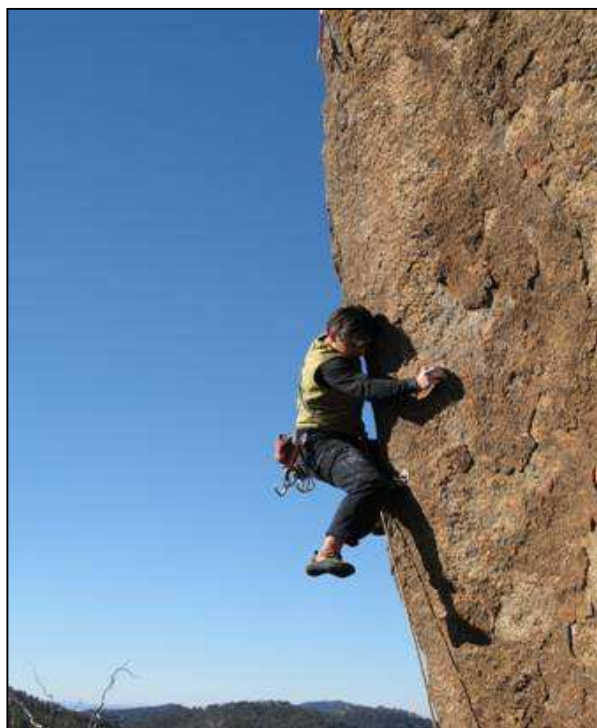


Jamie Valdivia looking stylish on the start of Crystal Voyager

Crystal Voyager follows the unlikely north-east arête of The Belfry. Put up by Tony Barten in 1988, it is one of the finest pieces of over-hanging granite in the ACT. Perhaps the relatively modest grade of 25 could be reconsidered as the climb involves a long series of precise slaps on razor thin holds up a hanging arête.

Almost 20 years later, today's Hard Lads reckon it's a solid 26 and every bit the test piece it was in 1988. Taking a big fall off the crux is bit easier to cope with these days as the bolts have been replaced with nice new stainless steel ones.

Jamie Slaps the crux

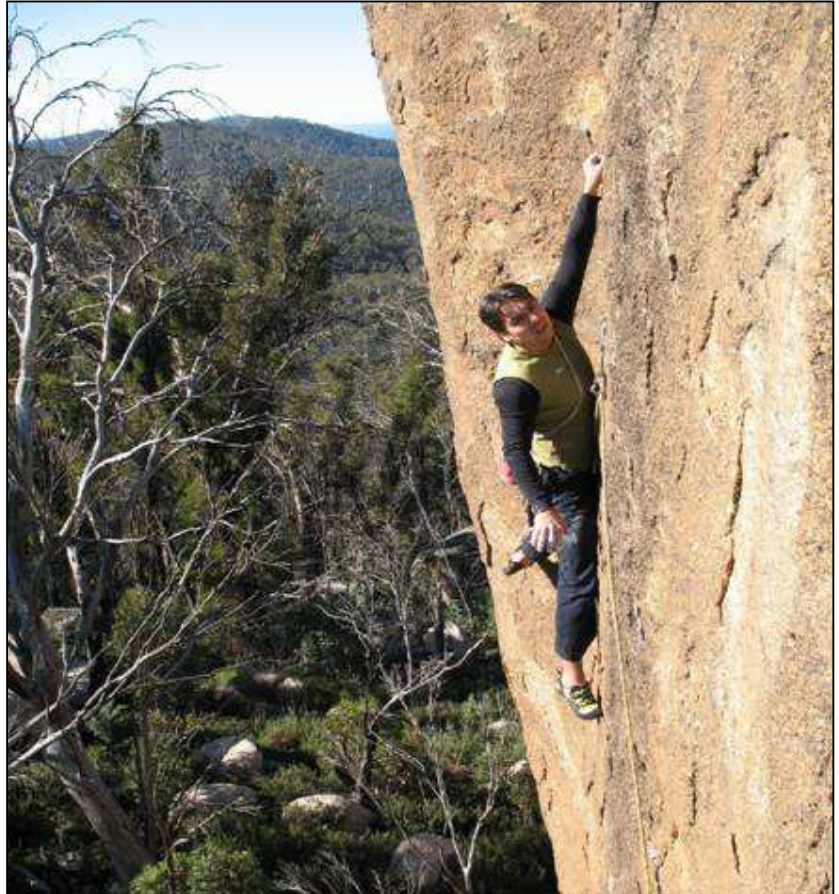


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Shaking out from a crimp

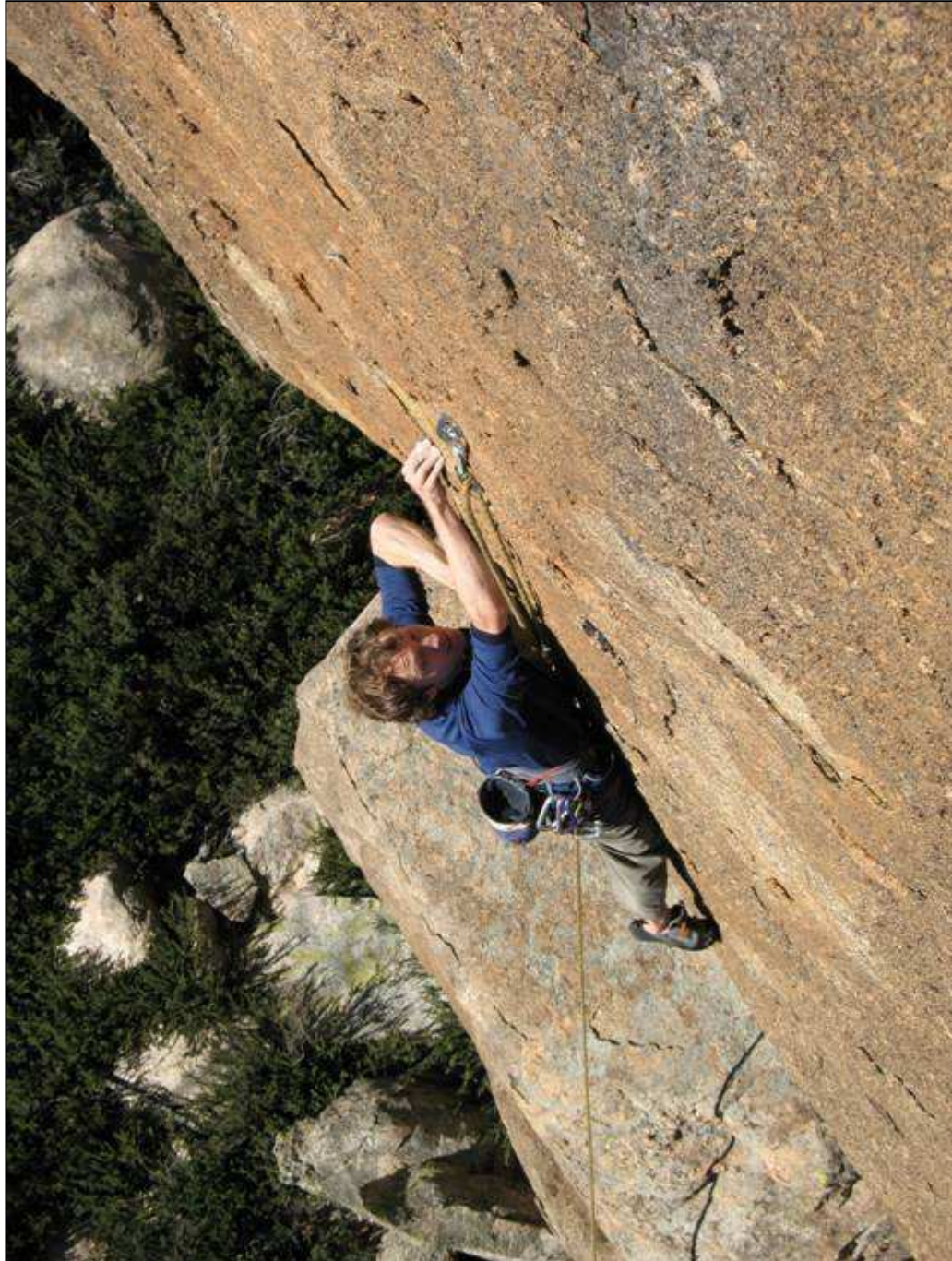


Jamie tops out, fingers intact.

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Oliver Storey traverses through Tracey Anne (24) to the Crystal Voyager arête.

All Photos provided by Mike Law-Smith

New Routes



Bittangabee

Stuart McElroy reported several new routes Bittangabee bay.

Next main obvious crack line left of Flight 11	17
Arête between Aero Guard Chimney and Not Nostradamus Again Campus start on jugs then straight up the arête	16
Up the line of shallow pods/pockets passing a two finger pocket en route to the right of Johnny Shoot the Messenger Boy	18
The wall a couple of metres left of Sedition	17

Pulpit Rock

Neil Monteith reports several new routes at Pulpit Rock

Dan Would Be Proud (Sport)	8m 22
---------------------------------------	--------------

Very Cataract Gorge. Short sharp bouldery arête with two FHs and single bolt lower-off around left from Bindun at entrance of small dark chasm right of Hydraulic Flush.
FFA Neil Monteith 6/1/2007

Porpoise Prow	V0
----------------------	-----------

Steep arête on isolated block in front of crag. Jump start from big pocket to hold on arête.
Neil Monteith 7/1/2007

* Wanted In Seven Countries	8m 17 (trad)
------------------------------------	---------------------

In the middle of the main wall. A wee bit bold on the mantle. Up juggy wall then swing left onto mantle ledge and finish up with a tricky finale move. Pro is not great.
FRA Neil Monteith 7/1/2007

* Pet Porpoise Pool	8m 16 (trad)
----------------------------	---------------------

4m right of WISC. The best, and most obvious trad line at this crag.
Small right facing flake to start then up to under rooflets; over these with caution to top.
Pro is good.
FRA Neil Monteith 7/1/2007

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Euro Tan

7m 16 (trad)

15m right of PPP at heuco filled face just right of leaning corner. Boulder start up right then step left onto face. Fiddle some marginal gear in and blast up big heucos to top.
FRA Neil Monteith 7/1/2007

Booroomba

The Valerie Plume Affair

20m 23

Follow the bolts a few metres to the right of Cakes and Ale.
Justin Ryan July 2006

Red Rocks

See the mini guide at Paddy Pallins and Mountain Designs for further details

Dubious Tactics

Glitz Rock at the Cantaloupe bouldering area has seen a new hold created by the removal of rock in the Vendetta crack line dropping the grade from V9 to 7 or 8. Its also made Cerebro (V11) a little easier with the drop down move. Please don't anyone continue the modifications as it will ruin Cerebro and turn Vendetta into a V4.

Re-Planting

Andrew Bull has been planting gum trees around some of the bouldering areas that got hammered by the fires. So please watch out for them and perhaps offer them some of your water as the weather warms.

George's Boulder

A large plate of rock tore off George's boulder recently which resulted in the loss of a new V7 put up by Chris Warner. This has created the new problem 'Shapeshifters' going at V10. It goes up the new obvious high flake from a sit start on the back side.

Andrew Bull also recently added a new mega-dyno on the boulder, 'Leg Spinner' goes at V6 from a sit start below the finish of 'Phone Sex'. He also added a phone extension to the classic V8 'Phone Sex' finishing up 'Leg Spinner'. The problem now tops out, creating 'Phone Sex Leg Spinner' V9.

George's boulder still boasts the two hardest problems to be done in Canberra.

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Working Bees by John Wilson

29th October 2006

The CCA had its first working-bee with ACT Parks Rangers present on the 29th October 2006. We started work on rationalizing the numerous tracks spread around the top of Booroomba. On this occasion we surveyed and mapped the tracks leading up to and around the northern pinnacle. This is where climbers top out and make their way back to the camp/lunch spot when climbing on the Northern and Central Slabs. Some work was also done on the area leading to the South Buttress. A number of duplicate trails were cut off with the work in earnest to commence on the 26th of November.

26th November 2006

A copy of 'Canberra Granite' was donated by John Wilson as a prize for one of the willing workers.

An energetic band of six and a half, (sorry Nicholas, just joking! ... you may be at this stage only pint size but you put in an effort as good as the rest of us) plus the Ranger, worked on the tracks around the pinnacle to the north of the campsite. Two tracks were developed and all the other meanderings cut off.

Climbers who top out on routes from the northern buttress along to the central slabs should now walk south along the track on the summit ridge, mostly on rocky slabs. This leads to a major track above Cave Wall returning to the camp/picnic area.

For routes on the northern slabs you should use the lower track accessed from the middle buttress southern end. It will be interesting to observe over the coming months to see how well the new tracks are working. Please help us by sticking to the new tracks and not bashing through the bush!

The "ACT Granite" guide was gratefully accepted by yours truly ... with the predictable comments of "rigged!" coming from the rest of the gang.

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27th May 2007



A large group of CCA Members, in conjunction with ACT Parks & Conservation Service gathered at Booroomba Rocks to carry out some much needed track restoration work. Areas that received attention were tracks leading to the South Buttress, Cockers Gully, Middle Rocks and the North Buttress. The work which included track re-alignment, clearing and stabilization has significantly improved cliff access.

Many hands make light work, so a fair bit got done in a relatively short period of time. After the work was finished and it being a perfect day for climbing, most of the participants stayed on to sample some of the many climbing delights Booroomba has to offer.



The joys of the solid jams On Vomit (17) Cockers Gully, Booroomba.



Kambah Rocks Anchors

Over the last few months there has been some discussion on the CCA Forum concerning the condition of bolts and lack of anchors at Kambah Rocks. There have been a number of suggestions made and the list below summarizes thoughts so far: -

- Removal of the old lead bolts, on the basis that no one leads the climbs anymore.
- Re-bolt the entire cliff as has been recently done at Red Rocks.
- Single bolt anchor on the top
 - Pros : Reduces the visibility of anchors to the general public with only one bolt at each anchor point.
 - Cons : People would probably continue to use the railing as a backup. Difficult to rig with Traditional protection required to make it safe. The anchors are visible to the general public. More susceptible to vandalism.
- Single bolt anchor over the lip
 - Pros : Reduces the visibility of anchors to the general public.
 - Cons : People would probably continue to use the railing as a backup. Difficult to rig, requiring you to lean over the edge of the cliff with traditional protection required to make it safe.
- Double bolts anchors on the top
 - Pros : This setup would require that two slings be used to extend over the lip, making top roping access easier.
 - Cons : It would be more fiddly when leading, as the climber would have to reach over the lip to clip the anchors. The anchors are visible to the general public. More susceptible to vandalism.
- Double bolts anchors over the lip
 - Pros : The anchors are not visible to the general public. More suitable for leading. Less susceptible to vandalism.
 - Cons : This setup would be fiddly for top roping as you would need to lean over the lip to attach quick draws to the anchors.



If you want to have your say on what happens at Kambah Rocks, then contact Justin Ryan or make a post on the CCA Bolting Forum.

Re-Bolting

Booroomba

Climbs Cakes and Ale and Dr Slaughter have been re-bolted. Tony Barten's Cave Route has also been worked over so get on to them and have a go.

The Ridge

Check out The Belfry as the lads have been busy updating the bolting technology to 21st century standards.

Red Rocks

Red Rocks has now been completely re-bolted and several new climbs have been added over the last few months. A pocket guide is now available at Paddy Pallins and Mountain Designs.

Nerriga

The Dyna Bolt of Death

The 'Unknown' 19 on Sponge Bob Wall has been re-bolted. The original 40 by 8mm rusty mild steel dyna bolts and hangers have been replaced with stainless steel ring bolts. The route shares double ring bolt anchors with the grade 20 next to it. Twist shackles have been added as the DRBs were showing signs of wear. Unless the First Ascensionist objects the climb has been tentatively renamed to '**The Dyna Bolt of Death**'



This picture shows the state of the bolts removed from '**The Dynabolt of Death**'

Holden Caulfield (A3+) by Max Fourman

Making Up Lost Ground

After our last buffalo visit it seemed my climbing partner (Mr Marcus "Sparkletronics" Morley) was getting way better than me at this aid climbing silliness. He was nice enough to give me the chance to make up some lost ground. On our last visit to Mt Buffalo, Marcus had led the two harder pitches of 'Holden Caulfield' after abseiling into them. This ascent was to be ground up and I was to lead the crux pitches...



Marcus Morley leading the crux pitch of Holden Caulfield. Marcus tests the two fixed RURPS equalised with a shoelace!

Photo Max Fourman

Dish Pigs Can Fly

Originally, we had planned on leaving on Wednesday night after I finished a brutal night dish pigging. I was too wasted after work. we left in the morning. We arrived on Thursday afternoon and started rapping down intending to sleep at the bottom or a couple of pitches up. A stuck rope foiled our plans so we ended up sleeping in the car park. The next morning we awoke to intense fog and rapped down "Defender of the Faith" without any further rope problems.

Promise of Rain

Marcus lead the first pitch and we swung leads from there, following Ozymandias up to Big Grassy. It was a good feeling to see how much easier these pitches felt in comparison to when we first climbed them a year ago. After chilling out a bit on big grassy and setting up the porta ledge and fly, (the weather report promised rain) I set out on the next pitch. This pitch follows Ozymandias 4th pitch, then scoots off right instead of going left into the 'Magnificent Corner'. It started to get dark and as I hadn't seen a topo, I ended up belaying at a couple of bolts 10m below the actual belay.

Disgusting Desert

I descended back to Big Grassy to find Marcus with dinner ready and all the bivy gear set up (great climbing partner). We enjoyed a fantastic feast of falafel, humus, wraps, and cheese followed by a rice desert, mixed with chocolate custard powder! The desert was disgusting, some weird chemical reaction between the two artificial deserts created red and green streaks throughout the whole mess. It looked revolting! Then it started to rain. Then snowing, shortly after. We had decided not to take the hanging stove so as to lighten the haul bag and were quite comfortable without warm food.

RP's Equalised with a Shoelace

After a somewhat wet night Marcus finished the last 10m of my pitch from the night before. This left us at a hanging belay below the main roof. About here it started snowing. The next pitch is the feature of the climb, 15m of hard nailing (mostly beaks and some blades/arrows) taking you to the roof. A couple of decent cams protect you before you set out across the roof. It's awesome... First there is a flexing fixed knife blade, then two RPs equalised with (No Kidding!) a shoelace. Four 3mm bolts with dodgy (flexing) hangers take you to the lip of the roof. Three rivets and a few moves up an expando flake lead you to the belay!

Cool Aid Needed



Self portrait I took whilst on the 2nd rivet in the roof. If I look scared its because I bloody well was!

Probably the coolest aid pitch I've ever done!

Photo Max Fourman

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Epic Echoes

Marcus cleared the lip after cleaning the roof pitch. I think there was some sort of mini epic under the roof while cleaning (I only heard the echo of a lot of profanity!)

Jugging On Out

Marcus lead the next pitch, a couple of hooks, rivets then a tension traverse off a bolt. An easy corner takes you to the Gledhill Bivy. After this we decided to go left into the "Fang" pitch on Ozy. I led this quite quickly with Marcus jugging up the next A1 pitch (the one with the horrible chimney). We had left a fixed line as we hadn't been able to find a #5 cam to protect the final off width pitch.

Photo Max Fourman

Rolling On Empty

We drove home through the night making plans to come back and do a Lord Gumtree /Holden Caulfield combo. We almost had to walk on the way home with the car rolling into Wangaratta on our last few litres. In the end we made it home safely.

Let's continue the aid climbing revolution!
Climb Safe
Max

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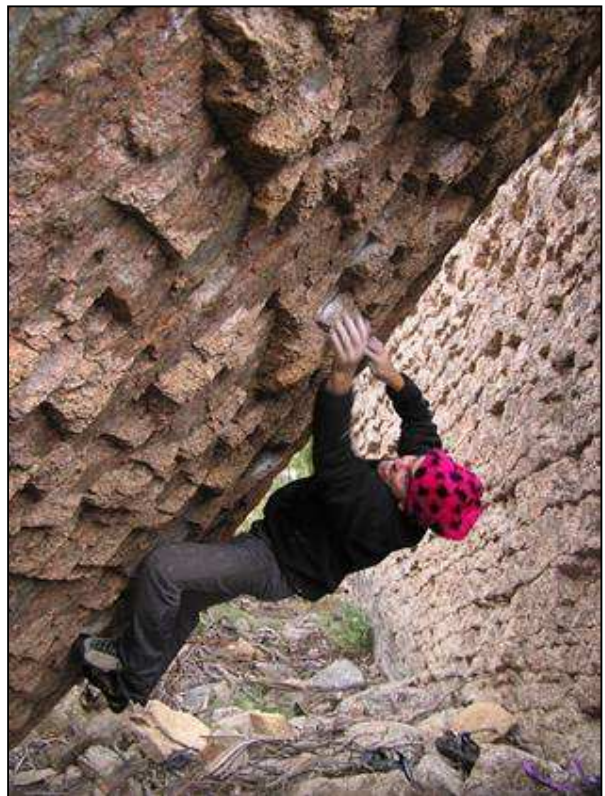
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Out & About



Mikl Law leading Closer In (23) Pitch 1



Bouldering at Prism Rocks



NZ Summer Mountaineering Course

For those of you who haven't yet heard the rumors, the Australian section is organising a 14 day summer mountaineering trip to those hills across the Tasman in balmy November. The trip is a combination of a technical mountaineering course, to refine your skills or learn more advanced ones, followed by time dedicated to just climbing.

Participants are expected to have at least some mountaineering experience, a high level of fitness and will need to bring all their own equipment.

This email is a call to register your interest and/or ask further questions about the trip. Confirming your interest will take place shortly in the form of a non-refundable deposit. Please note that places are limited and we will need a group size that is a multiple of four. If enough interest is registered (ie, more than 8) there is also the option of running multiple trips.

Email is my preferred method of contact, but I can also be contacted during on 0411 488706 or AH on 03 9017 5245 if you would prefer to discuss.

Please reply direct to Paul Day at paul@enigma.id.au

- All details and pricing below are subject (and likely) to some change due to:
 - Weather
 - Local price changes
 - Flight out
 - Group
 - Size
 - Ability
 - Preferences
 - Decisions
- Trip to be run with the support of Adventure Consultants (AC), Wanaka.
 - 14 days from the morning of Sun. 4th Nov. to the evening of Sat. 17th Nov.
 - ~7 day Technical Mountaineering Course, ~7 day ascents week, based on participant preferences.
- The price:
 - Base cost of \$NZ3350 inc. GST (see below for ex/inclusions)
 - Non-refundable deposit of \$NZ837.50 required to confirm a place.
 - Balance of base cost due 3rd Sept.
 - All payments to be taken by AC.

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- The location:
 - Mt Cook region on the western side of the divide
 - ex-Wanaka
 - Most nights in an alpine hut, some nights snow caving, camping or bivvying based on participant preferences.
- The participants:
 - Group size of either 4 or 8 people.
 - Some mountaineering or rock climbing experience required.
 - Maximum expected fitness: 12 hour day with a 25kg pack and a 1000m climb.
 - Must be a current Alpine Club member.
 - Must have travel insurance which covers mountaineering (eg, IHI)
- The equipment:
 - BYO all personal gear (as per gear list to be provided - typical NZ summer mountaineering gear list) other than ropes/stoves/tents.
 - Some gear will be available free of charge from the NZAC National Office's equipment store in Christ Church.
 - Rental gear from AC will be available and may be forced upon you if BYOed equipment is not suitable.
- Provided/included in the above price:
 - GST
 - Hut fees
 - Ground transport from Wanaka
 - Inwards helicopter flight from Fox Glacier township to a high hut
 - Food and snacks
 - Qualified guide/s
 - Stoves and fuel
 - Ropes
- Not provided/included in the above price:
 - Outwards helicopter flight
 - Transport to/from Wanaka before/after the trip

NZAC Australian Section - Canberra Inaugural Meeting

The inaugural NZAC meeting will be held in Canberra on the 16/08/2006, with guest speaker Jonathon Clearwater - Mountaineer and film maker. Jonathon will screen some of his exciting award winning film, Southern Faces. The film includes climbing footage and interviews about seven of the South Island climbing areas. The film is about Kiwi climbers in their element pushing their personal limits.

Doors open at 7.00pm at the Lecture Theatre - Lower Ground Floor, Department of Earth and Marine Sciences Australian National University. Daley Road, Acton.

Entry is by gold coin donation to offset costs. For more info, contact David Cregan at pinotd@grapevine.net.au

Extend that Quickdraw by Dave Cameron

Sports Central

On a recent climbing trip to the Blue Mountains, I had a very sobering experience with a quickdraw that I will not easily forget. I was sport climbing at Mount York and had just pulled through the crux bulge of the climb and was on the easy bit. This section traversed 3 metres to the left and up and I fell off. The fall resulted in the quickdraw being dragged heavily across the rock face, jamming the webbing between the carabineer and the rock as the rope tension increased.

75% All Lean Beef

Approximately 75% of the webbing where it loops around the carabineer was ground off. Luckily the remaining webbing was strong enough to hold my fall and I was no worse for wear.



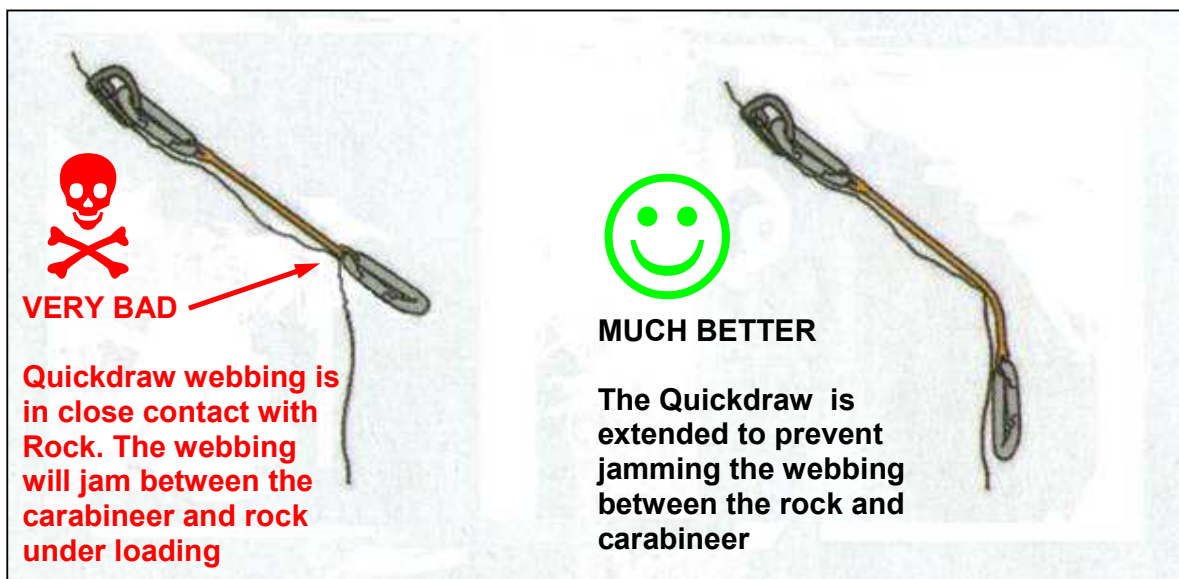
Clip N' No Go

This experience has taught me that even on sport routes, you should never treat climbing as a 'Clip N' Go' experience. You should always think of how your position on the rock will effect your protection in the event of your fall.

Fixed Pro Makes No Difference

The use of fixed protection makes no difference to how you should think about your runners. In this case the quickdraw was located just above a bulge and I should have extended the runner to ensure the protection would not be dragging across the rock.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly



In Summary

In summary, treat the protection on a Sports route just like you would on a traditionally protected climb, always be thinking of how a fall is going to load your protection and extend runners where necessary. Just because the route was bolted as a Sport route does not mean that it was well or safely bolted.

Retiring Old Ropes *by Kolin Powick*

Kolin Powick (KP) is a Mechanical Engineer hailing from Calgary, Canada. He has over 15 years of experience in the engineering field and has been Black Diamond's Quality Assurance Manager since 2002. Kolin oversees the testing of all of Black Diamond's gear from the prototype phase through continual final production random sample testing. He is an avid rock, ice and alpine climber and mountaineer as well as a backcountry skier and snowboarder. Kolin gets out probably more than anyone else around who has a full-time job. You can check out more of his climbing action at his website: www.kolin-and-ellen.com. If you have a technical question for KP, please email him at askkp@bde.com and he will TRY to respond.

Pushing ropes to the limit

We've all seen it at the cliffs, and I'm a major offender myself—climbing on old ratty ropes. Yeah, ropes are expensive and that's the main reason people push their ropes to the limit—trying to squeeze every last ounce of use out of them until they become a dog leash or door mat. I'm not going to lie. I get sweet deals on ropes, but still, I don't like to be wasteful and usually end up climbing on my ropes a little too long.

Ropes can develop a sentimental value to some people—maybe it's the rope you sent your "project" with, or had a great trip up a valley wall with, so you just don't want to retire it. I had such a case a special 9.4mm. I kept climbing and climbing and climbing on it. It was beat. It started out as a 70 m, then after endless days of constant whippers, it became a 65 m, then 60 m, then 55 m. I just didn't want to see it go.

So one weekend I was taking REPEATED MONSTER whippers off the VERY LAST move of one of the many nemesis routes of mine. I had to skip the last clip because I'm too weak to clip it and go for a huge chuck to the finishing bucket. I would sail onto the end of my trusty 9.4 mm time and time again. The last 10 ft or so of the rope were absolutely throttled at the end of that weekend, it was time to say goodbye.

Of course, I brought it into the lab and figured I'd do some testing.

Testing

I decided just to test the ultimate tensile strength of the rope in different areas, and compare it to a brand new rope of the same model and make. We didn't do anything fancy just a figure 8 on each end, and pulled to failure in the tensile tester. We were just doing this quick and dirty for comparison's and curiosity's sake.

When tested like this, breakage at the knot is almost always the failure mode. Remember figure eight knots can reduce the strength of a rope somewhere in the neighborhood of 25-30%.

The Results

The first test we did was a piece from one of the totally worn-out ends. It broke at the exceptionally low 6 kN and NOT at the knot.

Yowsa

I had just been whipping all over the place on that rope and it broke at 6 kN and NOT at the knot it was scary stuff. Though the sport falls I was taking were super soft (my wife was belaying and is light and I am fat) chances are the tension seen in the rope wasn't anywhere near 6 kN. If I had gotten slammed hard, low to the ground then it would be possible to see loads in excess of 6kN.

We decided to do more tests on my rope on the ends, and in the middle, as well as on a brand new 9.4 mm for comparison purposes. In all subsequent tests, the sample broke at the knot as expected, but we still saw some frighteningly low values.

New 9.4 mm	KP's 9.4 mm middle	KP's 9.4 mm end
15.6 kN	9 kN	6 kN*
13.8 kN	9.8 kN	8 kN
		7.7 kN

** broke in the middle of the test sample*

We tracked down another beat up 9.4 mm from one of the QA guys and put it through the ringer as well:

New 9.4 mm	Used 9.4 mm middle	Used 9.4 mm end
12.9 kN	11.9 kN	8 kN
13.6 kN	11.9 kN	9.8 kN
	11.6 kN	8.6 kN

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Curious

Still curious and given the results we'd seen, the boys in the lab and I decided to do the same with some other tattered ropes that were around. We did similar tests with more Beal ropes as well as Sterling, Edelweiss, Mammut, etc. We found very similar results:

- The worn out, frayed, end pieces of any rope we tested were consistently significantly weaker than the middle sections of the same rope.
- We DID manage to find other samples that broke in the middle (as opposed to at the knot) – and at relatively low loads—less than 7kN.
- The end pieces and middle pieces were consistently weaker than a section of a brand new rope.

The Bottom Line

- Ropes, like all climbing gear, don't last forever the ends of your rope take a beating be wary of super frayed, worn, puffed out, beat up tattered ropes. Yes, ropes aren't cheap, but they're also your life line literally so take care of them.
- When the ends of your rope get all beat and tattered from dogging up routes, cut the ends off, or a buy a new rope.
 - I always cut equal lengths off BOTH ends so the middle mark is always in the middle.
 - Be sure to mark the new length on BOTH ends so you and your partners know what you're dealing with.
 - And while you're at it tie a knot in one end, all too often you hear of someone being lowered off the end of their rope, this is definitely not cool.
- For me the most important thing is to train harder and get stronger, so I won't be whipping in the first place.

Be careful out there,

KP



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Guide Updates

Updated Climbing Guides for Nerriga and Bittangabee Sea Cliffs North in PDF format are now available on the web site.



Nerriga Guide



Bittangabee Sea Cliffs Guide

www.canberraclimbing.com/pages/climbing/nerriga.htm

www.canberraclimbing.com/pages/climbing/Bittangabee.htm

Runout Back Issues

Back issues of Runout are now available on the website at :

<http://www.canberraclimbing.com/runout>

CCA members get the latest and greatest!

Member contributions are welcome - send your stories to [Dave Cameron](mailto:ddavec@ozemail.com.au)
ddavec@ozemail.com.au

CCA Membership Application



Isabel Perez, Laidback International 23, Mount Coree

The Canberra Climbers Association (CCA) aims to promote climbing in the ACT through education of members and the general public. Fostering a sense of community through social activities and to maintain access to climbing areas in the ACT region.

For further information contact:

Zac Zaharias 0262-572208 email: zaharias@webone.com.au

Damien Janocavic 0262-882829 email: damoiscool@hotmail.com

Or visit our website at : www.canberraclimbing.com

First Name :

Surname :

Address :

Post Code :

Phone (h)

(w)

(m)

email :

Application forms can be sent with a cheque or money order for \$15 payable to:

Canberra Climbers Association Inc.
PO Box 972,
Dickson, ACT,
2602.

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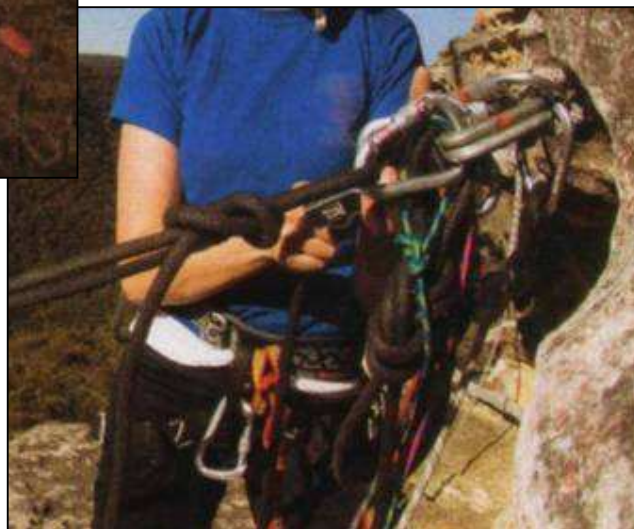
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The Aftermath



Its not often that you see Rock Climbing depicted in the financial paper supplements!



What on earth is going on with this belay?

..... just look closely at the photographs...☺ ☹