



What impact have the recent articles in *Rock* #64 had on climbing in Central Australia? Who cares? As it's very unlikely that we will have an influx of interstate and international climbers descending on our crags like the proverbial plague of locusts, necessitating the need to queue for climbs. This climbing isolation I consider one of the more enjoyable experiences of climbing in central Australia, the fact you can call up a climbing partner and head out to the crag, climb, then return to Alice without encountering any other climbers. Don't get me wrong I'm not anti-social (well may be a little) but it is really hard to enjoy the experience of being in the bush if there are a 101 other climbers crashing about causing distractions, that I thought was the job of the flies this time of the year. Speaking of the time of the year and space, shaded climbs are in high demand so please show each other some courtesy if for some strange reason we all decide to cognate on the same shady crags.

On a personal note I would just like to put the record straight. The reason that I enjoy climbing at Glen Helen apart from the fantastic climbing that can be found there is not the water hole, or the close proximity of the bar (well maybe) but the fact that the bowls of wedges with sour cream and sweet chilly sauce are fantastic, just what the doctor ordered after a hard days climbing. Try it I'm sure you will agree.

Keep cranking
Warwick

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Warning: Climbing and the activities in this newsletter can carry a significant risk of personal injury and/or death. These activities are inherently dangerous. The producers and contributors of this newsletter do not recommend that anyone participate in these activities without the full knowledge of the risks involved, have sought expert qualified instruction and are willing to personally assume all responsibility associated with those risks.

Krish's Corner

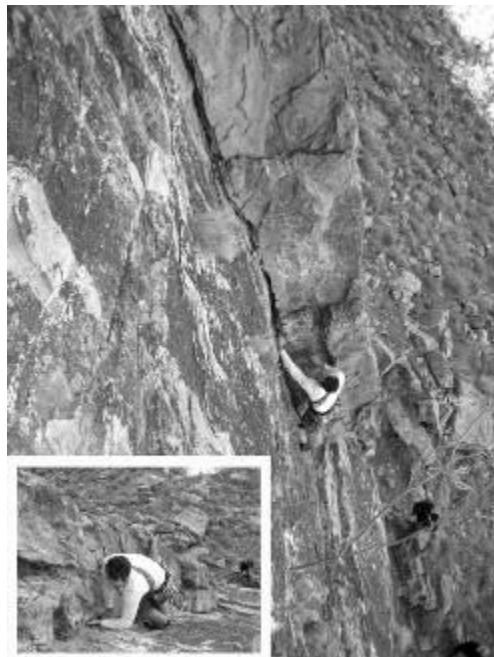
Route 9 (8) will be a climb many people will have seen but not realised it, as it is on the front cover of the climbing guide for Central Australia. I would usually ramble on about the history of a climb in my corner, but this little gem has not been recorded by anyone until I decided to write the guide. But it will most certainly have had many more ascents before this time.

Cont over...

Krish's Corner continued...

Being 25m long, for the area it offers a fine lengthy expedition with some good positions and an exciting but safe crux about two thirds of the way up. The only negative that could be found with this climb is the difficulty in setting up a good belay. While it is possible anchors need to be placed at quite a distance so some long slings would be useful.

I have sent numerous people up this climb on their first lead, including the editor of the RACK! Each and every person who has started his or her leading career on Route 9 (8) has appreciated the excellence of the climb. The photo brings out the best aspects very well as it shows the strong natural line, exposure, interest, good holds and bomber gear which all add up to make this one of the best first leads anyone could do. I have talked this line up as a great early lead and so some may disregard it as being too easy, but I would say 'more fool them'.



Paul Coull on his first lead,
coming up Route 9 (8)

Rock Tapa's

A bit of knowledge and a chat about safety are all important when it's:
Your First Time

You're about to head out for your first climb on real rock, you're very excited because over the last month you've been down to the local indoor wall a few times and you're starting to feel like you're getting the hang of this climbing business. Up and down, up and down. Easy.

On your last visit a person who you'd noticed looking rather tasty in a pair of tights came over and introduced herself (this is my fantasy, please feel free to adjust as per your needs) and said she'd be heading out to the crags on the weekend and asked if you'd like to come along. You explain you've never climbed outside before and she says, "No problem. I've been doing it for years so just bring along your harness and that cheeky smile and you'll be fine." You exchange details and she says goodnight, as you watch her walk out you're filled with an almost religious appreciation (well, maybe not) of the human body. As she nears the door she turns and gives you a wave and flicks her hair back just so.

Cont over...



Christmas Specials at Lone Dingo

As we find ourselves getting up earlier and earlier to beat the heat down at the cliffs, we also realise it's getting nearer to the time that the fat jolly man will visit (and I don't mean your stepfather!). Christmas isn't far away and Lone Dingo has some climbing gear going cheaper than normal. Just mention this article.

- Beal Rope Cleaning Brush
\$24.95 (RRP \$29.95)
- Magnesium Powder 75g
\$5.00 (RRP \$6.25)
- Magnesium Chalk Balls (2 pack) \$9.00 (RRP 11.50)
- Vertical Rope/Harness Wash \$10.00 (RRP \$12.95)
- Scarpa Helix Rockshoes
\$99.00 (RRP \$179.95)
only a few left

Big Black Diamond Savings!

- BD Camalots 15% off
- BD Positron Anodised 12cm Quickdraw
\$32.95 (RRP \$39.95)
while stocks last



Scarpa Helix

Rock Tapa's Continued

The fact she was just shooing a fly away from her face is none of your business, you return her wave and one thought fills your head, I am a LEGEND. You climb much harder for the rest of the night, fuelled by a strength that is only found in self-belief.

Saturday morning arrives. A leisurely ten o'clock start is organised and at eleven she appears in your driveway. Better late than never. You make pleasant chitchat on the half hour drive to the cliff and when you arrive you hop out of the car and crane your neck, the cliff is three times higher than the gym wall and there are no ropes hanging down, "shit" (you silently say to yourself). "Looks good" you say out loud, and follow her up the short track feeling a lot less confident, and when you put your packs down your stomach is decidedly queasy and you pray you don't throw up in front of her (or on her, for that matter).

In your excitement you forgot to pack sunscreen and are too embarrassed to ask for some when you see her screening up. Just as you pull your hat down around your ears she hands you a helmet and says, "better put this on, can't have you cracking that lovely head of yours". Your hat is off in an instant and as you hear the click of the buckle under your chin you feel the sun hitting your cheeks, though you forget as soon as your sunglasses go on. You spend a leisurely half hour going through knots and she explains how the protection works and how to remove it, which will be your job. She gives you a thing called a nut key and you practise with it a few times. Easy peasy.

There are other climbers about and you mention their strange talk, you go through the terms together. 'On belay' means it's safe for the climber to leave the ground, you're familiar with belaying from the gym so that's good. 'Climbing' means the climber is leaving the ground and it's time for everyone to be awake and alert. 'Rope' or 'slack' means the climber wants you to feed out more rope to them. 'Take in' means there's too much rope fed out and you need to take some in. When she gets to the top she'll make a belay and when all is safe you'll hear a call, 'on belay, climb when ready.' When you're ready to go you yell out 'climbing.' You wait for an 'okay' then off you go. She explains that if you hear 'rock' yelled by anyone at the cliff it means there are hard dangerous things falling from the sky and a beast will cause you grievous bodily harm if they manage to find you, so always be ready to do a quick side step if you happen to be in the wrong place. "Even a rope dangling down the cliff can dislodge a rock," she says, tapping you playfully on the helmet, "so stay alert."

You go through figure eights a few more times together, and then tie into one end of the rope and she gives it a few tugs to make sure it all looks good. You enjoy the sensation probably more than you should. She ties into the other end, then throws a sling around a boulder on the ground and attaches you to it; you put her end of the rope through your belay device, clip it into your harness and say "on belay."

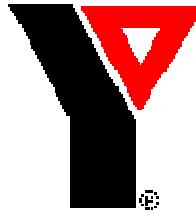
"Very good," she says, "you're a quick learner."

"I've got a good teacher," is your very unoriginal reply. She gives you one last smile before leaving the ground and you watch her athletically up the cliff. You see the muscles in her legs tense up as she balances on a foothold, and you think to yourself, "I'm going to enjoy this rock climbing caper..."

To Be Continued...



Quarry Wall - Stegar Road Crags



YMCA of Central Australia
P.O. Box 2458 Alice
Springs NT 0871
Sadden Rd.

(08) 89525666 Open wall nights:
Fax (08) 89527082 Mondays 6-8pm*
 Wednesdays 6-8pm*

*Instructors present during these times. Belay
certification available.

**Flyers with more information available at the YMCA.
Rockwall membership passes coming soon!**

Rock Ratz Kid's Climbing Club

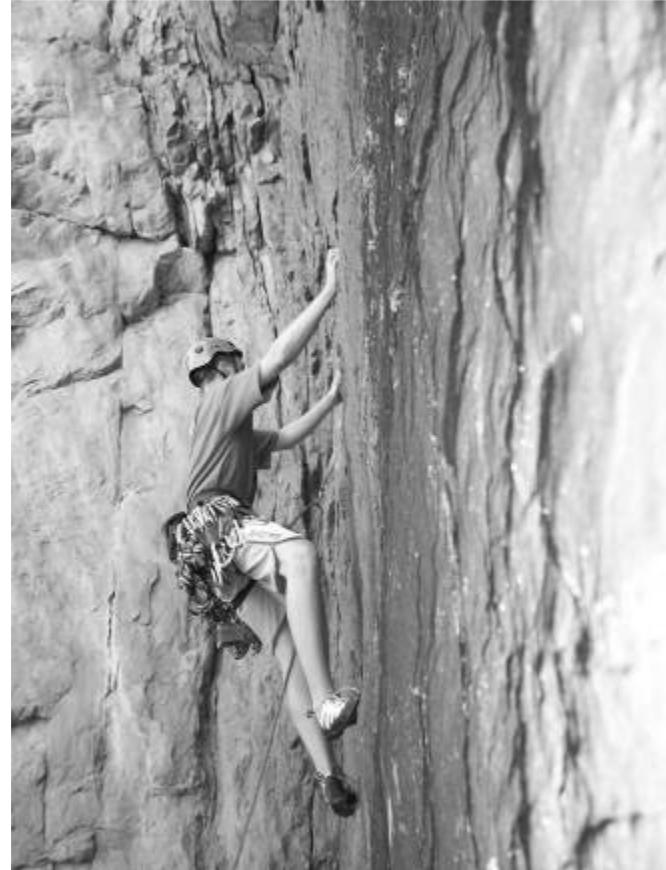
For kids ages 4-12, with parent involvement!

New body harnesses now available.

Program is 10 weeks of instructed sessions on knot tying,
belaying, climbing techniques and safety procedures. Kids
climb as parents belay and coach their child to the top!

Program will start in Sept/Oct. Brochures with information
and registration can be picked up any time at the YMCA.

Call or email for more details. yprogram@bigpond.net.au



Dean on Crusty's Crack (13)

Letters/Notes

In the next issue we will attempt to round up all the new climbs that have been put up since the publishing of the Central Australian Climbing Guide into a format (A5) that will appear as an appendix in RACK so it can be folded and fitted into your copy of the guide so you will always be up to date with the latest routes. For this to happen we need to call upon you the climbing community to furnish us with this information. So don't keep that latest classic project you have been working on a secret any more, its time for the world to know unless for some reason you have named it something that the censorship board will not let be published. Details of climbs can be left where you collect your copy of the RACK.

The most recent old man of the crag has headed west although his legacy will live on (and his guide). I would like to thank Krish on behalf of all the climbers in Central Australia for your commitment to climbing in the centre and wish Krish, Lisa and Elsia all the best in your new adventure. I'm sure we will be seeing some new routes being put up along the western seaboard before long.

Cheers Warwick