



#4 Aug 2006

Those of us that climb are only too well aware of the dangers that climbing presents, whatever form it may take. The risk of personal injury is real, although greatly reduced if standard safety procedures are followed. For a lot of people this risk of injury is used to encourage a climber to give away this foolish folly or as a reason for not taking it up themselves. Others simply say they have no time as there are too many things to do around the house in the weekends, well I have an answer for those of you who fall into this category, climbing is safer than DIY.

Home maintenance is a dangerous occupation, take for example digging a few post holes; sounds simple doesn't it until the posthole digger hits a root causing it to kick sideways and jam your hand between it and a tree splitting the webbing of your finger. Six stitches and a month later you're ready to hit the crags again.

It's no wonder that "*handy man*" equipment comes with a list of safety instructions as long as your favourite long extender. How often do you pick up your favourite power tool and start work without doing a safety check on it, you would not dream or should not dream of leaving the ground climbing with out first checking that you have doubled back your harness, checked you figure of eight, checked to see if your belayer has you on belay properly and then informed them that you are about to start climbing. Yet we will pick up a power tool without hesitation and rip into our latest DIY with not a second thought. Visit the emergency department waiting room at any hospital most weekends and you will see the weekend DIY brigade waiting to be stitched, bandaged and/or plastered up.

So my advice is go climbing while the weather is perfect and if you should be so unfortunate as to do yourself an injury, then you can spend your weekends recovering doing those little things around the house getting brownie points for when you're fully recovered to hit the crags again.

Keep cranking Warwick.

P.S. This theory has no scientific basis, however it has been personally tested.

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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.



Steve Warren concentrating hard as he gets close to the top of Tomboy Shaves His Legs (16)

#### Krish's Corner

There are very few records of the achievements of Neil Melan during his stay in the centre. We do however know that he was responsible for establishing the first recorded climbs on M&M Wall during 1996-7, including one of my favourite climbs Tomboy Shaves His Legs (16).

This climb has a certain class about it, making it stand out from an array of brilliant harder climbs found on this crag.

The bottom section may at times feel airy, but it is not until you need to break out onto the headwall that the true meaning of exposure is learnt.

While this magnificent headwall looks blank, holds appear when you most want them. Even if at times a certain amount of trust is needed to make the moves to find them. Gear abounds if you carry a full and varied rack, but you need to keep a level head to find and place it.

A visit to M&M Wall is a prerequisite for anyone bold enough to tackle these physically and mentally more challenging lines. Some are as long as 40m, and all of them will test your nerve. Hats off to Neil, who must have been very satisfied when he first ascended the classic Tomboy Shaves His Legs (16). Krish

### Your First Time

The Continuing Saga ...

She makes it look easy. The way she lays back on straight arms and always places her feet precisely on holds you can't even see from the ground. As you feed the rope out and watch her every move, it occurs to you she's climbing as much with her eyes and feet as her arms. It doesn't look that hard, her face is calm and her eyes are focused and soft as she feels the contours in the rock and moves herself so that every feature she encounters can work in her favour. She climbs at a steady pace and your nervousness turns to excitement as the pile of rope at your feet gets smaller as she gains height and you know it will be your turn soon.

"Looking good," you yell out, more so because that's how you honestly feel about her style, for she clearly does not need the encouragement. She evenly spaces about seven pieces of protection on the thirty-metre climb. You sense you're doing the right thing because she only yells out "slack" once. All of a sudden she pulls through a roof and disappears, and after a brief delay you hear her call out, "safe".

"Okay," you yell instinctively, then remember your job is not over yet. "Off belay," you yell as you remove the rope from your belay device and harness.

"Okay," she says.

As you pull on your new rock shoes you realise your stomach has not gotten any better, and you're not sure if it's the sun beating down or the millions of butterflies inside you that is the cause of the sweat pouring from your body. What's left of the rope pile begins to get to get pulled up the cliff. You watch it mesmerised, like a snake dancing out of a charmers basket.

You think you should drink some water before you go as your mouth is drier than the insides of an Arab's sandal. But you feel the tug of the rope at your harness and can't get to your pack, which is leaning against a tree a few metres away.

"Is that you?" She yells from above.

"Yeah, that's me. Sorry." All thoughts of water are lost as you attempt to concentrate on the job at hand. You stretch your arms out against the rock and try to absorb the pools of



We have all heard of the saying '*falling into bed*', and know that beds have more purposes than just sleeping. Well here's one more use, as a crash pad when you convert your bed room into a training gym by creating your own rock wall. This can be achieved with our latest range of climbing holds by 'Metolius climbing wall holds' starting at \$2.00 for screw on foot holds to \$27.45 bolt on roof jugs. Metolius web site even has plans and training advice on building and training on your own private training wall. What better way to start your day than opening your eyes, looking at the ceiling and plan your route and literally climbing out of bed to start the day.

You may even get some bed making tips from the friendly staff at Lone Dingo.

Metolius web site  
<http://www.metoliusclimbing.com/>



## Your first time contd...

sweat on your hands by smothering them in chalk. You seem to recall she never did this herself. Maybe girls don't sweat as much.

"On belay. Climb when ready," comes the call.

"Okay, climbing," you yell, but deep inside you wish you were laying in bed watching video hits like you normally do on a Saturday morning. As you pull up onto the first holds it occurs to you it's probably the afternoon by now, and all thoughts of last mornings disappear as you realise this is much harder than she made it look.

The bigger holds that got you off the ground are now much harder to find, and all thoughts of straight arms and footwork evaporate about as fast as the strength in your forearms. You fiddle with the first piece of protection, a tapered piece of metal called a nut she slotted into a crack in a matter of seconds. Minutes later you're still poking it with your nut key, and when it finally pops out effortlessly you clip it onto your harness. You look up and realise how long about twenty five metres can actually appear when you're a lathering mess of fear and sweat.

You grunt and groan your way thought the first half of the climb then get to a small ledge where you can rest. You gasp deeply and realise you've only taken a few breaths since leaving the ground.

"How ya doin' down there?" She calls out with concern in her voice.

"Not bad," you lie. "It's not as easy as you made it look." Fear has instilled an element of honesty in you. "Don't forget to use your feet," she says.

"Feet!" You say out loud to yourself, as you look down and admire the glorious colours adorning your shoes, and wonder why the bands of rubber enveloping them don't seem to be working nearly as well for you as they did for her. "Maybe I should have bought some more expensive ones," you think to yourself. "Maybe if I just use these ones better, the rest of this climb would be easier." The reality of your situation is proving fertile ground for honest thoughts.

You look up, step out onto a small hold, and pull up on your arms. The next thought of your feet occurs when you realise your left calf is shaking furiously. You try to down climb to the ledge but you can't commit to the move. You start to panic and realise your biceps are about to give out. Your last thought, as your fingers peal off the massive hold before your eyes is, "I'm not having fun anymore..."

To be continued....

Steve T

## Moving on..... but not forgetting

It took us several years to be able to break free of the invisible bond that keeps so many people in Alice Springs. We now realise that the sense of community, the easy going nature of the people and place, the magnificence of the setting and the vastness of the true outback were all things that held us there; and now we miss them dearly. I am sure this is a natural progression of emotions that we need to go through, especially seeing we left the place where we started and nurtured our life as a family.

I had it fixed in my mind that I had reached a natural conclusion to my climbing in the centre. Establishing literally hundreds of new routes, opening up some great previously untouched areas, publishing the climbing guide and seeing others take the initiative in helping to hold together the fragmented but committed climbing community. Then there also seemed a sense of finality after I went out to Horseyard Crag for the last time with Wassa, and put up Old Man of the Crag (18). Not only is it suitably named as a last climb, but it is also a climb that will reveal what my approach to climbing has always been. To top it off it is on, what some will call, a very centralian piece of rock. I'll leave you to try the climb to find out what I mean by all that.

Now we are in a more hospitable climate, and yes there are beautiful sea cliffs to climb on. So why do I get the urge to be back on centralian rock? It is hard to say why but I imagine some of the reasons include no longer having: a mass of rock close to town; the privilege of having such a vast place often all to myself, an amazing potential for adventure and exploration and a sense of acceptance that the ancient landscape seems to instil into those brave enough to venture out there. These are things I will not forget.

Krish



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Open wall nights:

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!**

(Rockwall open most other normal YMCA hours for climbers with belay cards – no instructor present)

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](mailto:yprogram@bigpond.net.au)

## New Climbs

Two climbs on the north wall at Trephina

*Me either* 16/20 15m

Start: A few metres right of *It Wasn't Me*, this is also a right diagonal line.

With difficulty pull up below roof and place your protection. Then swing up rightwards on good jam to big jug above overhang. Climb easily up and diagonally right to below short overhanging hand crack. Up this to top.

FA Garn Cooper and Andrew Drenen 18/4/5

*La ley de fuga* 18 15m

Start: 3m left of *Little Perentie*.

Climb up diagonally leftwards towards a horizontal break which will clearly provide protection. From here go straight up through the bulge, then avoid loose blocks by climbing left of them to the top.

FA Garn Cooper and Sean Martin 28/3/5

