



Rock Rendezvous



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September Meeting Notes

By Simon Kenney...

Well here we are again! Ricardo thank you for letting us use your pad for the monthly RR gathering. A reminder for everybody that the newsletter is going to be prepared early this month and so people need to get their articles and photo's in within the next 2 weeks. (Of course you are reading this in the newsletter that has already been prepared!!). But on a more general note please send anything you have that you feel would be of interest to the club; from a picture with a caption to a full on trip report, please feel free to send anything you have (new or old) to Carolyn (carolynldent@yahoo.com).

As promised last month I have now included a note on the website signup page that should reduce the number of people that pull out of trips to late to allow others to fill their spots. If you cancel less then 3 days before the trip then you will have to pay for your spot on the trip.

Joshua tree. This is about as much fun as you can have standing up so take a look at the article later in this newsletter that will give you more details. Spaces are beginning to be eaten up so go to the website sign up sheet and get your name down as soon as you can

to confirm your space. (If you have any problems with the website or signing up then contact me or Tom Lambert (tom@lambert.net) so that we can sort it out for you.

Website. Don't be shy, and give Tom or me any feedback you have on our website so that we can make adjustments or additions. Did you know that there is a link on the trips page that will bring up only the trips you have registered on? Take a look. Big cheer for a great job done by Tom!!

Trips. A roundup of death defying trips from the various assembled members then followed; Scott Johnson just returned from one of the hardest ice climbs in the Sierras "ice 9", 500ft of ice then 5 pitches of steepening ice and mixed terrain near Bishop, starting from the parking lot at 9000ft and up over Lamarck Couloirs at 12880 and back down the other side to Darwin Lakes and the base at 11000ft all carrying 50lb packs and that is even before you start! Ricardo did the classic South Crack on the Stately Pleasure Dome (Tuolumne) followed by the new route on Medicott Dome 'Shagadelic' (which I will give a shot this weekend). Micha (our slide show host) did the even more classic Matthes Crest with his girlfriend. This





climb is a spectacular knife-edge crest with stunning views of Cathedral Peak and back towards the meadows - a must!

Kathy Nerud was one of 5 girls that had a girls weekend climbing in Sonora pass where they climbed Green Acres among others (It was rumored that Bruce was the 'base camp bitch' whilst the girls climbed.

Whilst we are on the subject of Bruce. Bruce just completed a re-bolt of a rout he put up on Whitney 17

years ago. The widely spaced 1/4" bolts have now all been replaced with lovely new 3/8" bolts (All hand drilled!! Took about 7 days to do) Thanks Bruce.

On a final note from Bruce and Em, look out for the bear boxes supplied by the parks services around Whitney as they are awkward to lock (they use a star shaped key). Check to see that they are actually locked.

Ascent of Conness, North Ridge

By Joan Marshall



Photo: Mt Conness viewed from the North Peak. Credit: Ron Karpel

Sept.6, 2004

The day before was perfectly clear, pleasant temperature, and not a cloud in the sky the entire day, so being a glutton for punishment, I decided to give the North Ridge of Conness a FOURTH attempt.

Dragging my partner, Hal, out at 5am, we were on the trail at 6:30ish, beating the ferry by a half hour.

The route takes you along the west side of Saddlebag Lake, about a half hour of flat hiking. Take





a left turn at the first large boulder as you pass the lake, far out to the right. Follow the trail until it comes to the end of Greenstone Lake. Cross the lake, using stepping stones. Easy...Rejoin the faint trail as it meanders up and toward the north ridgeline of Conness. Keeping generally along the lakes to the right side, staying low is best. Pass three lakes. At the last lake, (and last place to get water) we were below a series of gullies and cliffs. The first and lowest gully looked best. A short 4th class climb surrounded by lots of loose sand and talus takes you up to the tree line, where you traverse about 20 minutes until you come to a notch even with the Conness ridgeline. We got to this place at 9:30. About three hours of hiking.

The real approach begins just below the first tower, 3rd and 4th class climbing over blocks. Exposed! But, not difficult. Here's where I put on my climbing shoes.

At the third tower, we got out the rope (50m 9mm) and set up a rappel partway down to the base of the tower. Lots of slings and a rappel ring. Then a short upward traverse ending at the second rappel. This station had a fixed rope which we used for the second rappel. Single rope rappel.

Now, we had the last climb...we had still not roped up. So far, the climbing was not difficult. The climbing now got a little harder, more fifth class, but not harder than 5.2, if you picked the route carefully. We made the summit at 12:30...2 1/2 hours climbing. Lots of fun. Hal climbed along the edge and looked

down the exposed northeast side. I wasn't as enthusiastic and stayed on the less exposed west side.

There were two other people at the summit. There was also one other guy who passed us starting the hike in...he soloed the North Ridge, and then, the West Ridge, and got back to the cars about the same time as we did. We met him on the road as we were heading out.

The real difficulty was finding our way back down. The descent is fairly obvious getting off the plateau, and above the small lake just below the mountain. But after that, the trail peters out, and one just has to pick their way over the rocky cliffs. We could see where we needed to go, but cliffs made it not so apparent as to how to get there.

We finally hit the trail lower in the valley, and then we thought the last mile would be a piece of cake, but not so. There were trails and old jeep roads going off in all directions. We took a guess and headed toward the creek/river in the general direction of Saddlebag Lake. This proved to be good and not so good. It did take us directly to the truck, parked near the dam, but gave us yet another steep downhill and then steep uphill, not a welcome grunt at all.

The whole day was about 9 and a half hours. No mishaps! No altitude issues. A beautiful climb and a beautiful memory.

The Daddy of all Climbs

By Ross Capdeville

Friday, August 19, 2004.

Morganton, NC. "Weren't you in here yesterday", the young lady behind the Wendy's counter asks the customer in line ahead of us. Its comforting knowing I'm back in the South, where everyone knows your

family and small talk is required. While not New Orleans, I feel like I'm home. There's definitely a slow pace of life here as Mark, my climbing partner, and I eat our triple cheeseburgers and sip sweet tea. We know we will need the energy for our objective. Tomorrow we will climb The Daddy - a 5 pitch 5.6 in the Linville Wilderness near Asheville, North Carolina.





Ever since my first trip to Linville Gorge in 2001, I wanted to climb The Daddy. Its impressive buttress rises almost 2,000 feet from the valley floor. Its allure is not only in the difficult nature of the climb itself, but the adventure it provides. Nestled almost 2 hours into a roadless wilderness with few visitors, Mark and I will be alone and independent. Driving into the Table Rock parking lot for the 3rd time in as many years, I remember the epics of past visits and am gripped with anticipation of how our story will unfold.

The sun rises over the valley on a beautiful, cloudless Friday morning. Mark and I wake slowly and take a casual approach to the climb, leaving the trailhead at 10:30 am. We bring an extra rope, enough food for 2 days, and almost 2 gallons of water. We know that the Gorge does not take kindly to the inexperienced.

A 30 minute hike along a narrow ridgetop trail leads us to the descent gully. Climbers usually approach The Daddy from the ridge top, by following a number of unmarked trails and drainages. Some parties search all day for the base of the buttress. Luckily, Mark and I know the way from prior trips and do not waste any time. We arrive at the base in under 2 hours, making up for our late start.

Both Mark and I know about the seriousness of the task we are about to embark on. Unlike Yosemite, where cell phones work and helicopters will come to your rescue, we are completely alone and independent. This is both scary and rewarding. We know that even the slightest injury could turn serious very quickly. After calculating that the response for medical attention would be over 10 hours – very likely the next day - Mark and I decide one safety measure we would both have to agree on. Don't Fall.

With that discussion complete, I lead off on the first pitch. The climbing is solid on two corners with a ledge in between. It sucks up gear and brings me to an outstanding belay ledge. After I am tied to a

bomber anchor of 2 cams and a nut, I turn and look over the valley. Lush green trees cover miles in every direction. The Linville River roars hundreds of feet below.

By the time we change gear at the belay, we notice the pitch took 75 minutes. With 5 pitches, we would be on the route for over 6 hours. I figure that would be okay, because we would definitely top out before dark. And after 3 years of climbing, Mark and I know always to bring our headlamps!

Pitch 2 is quick and uneventful. The only problem is the belay ledge. Apparently, a tree that had been used for the belay was dead! The only other anchors on the ledge are a small cam placement and another tree hanging over the edge. I use these two, and also the dead tree. By planting my foot firmly on a root, I remembered Mark saying he wouldn't fall. He successfully completes the pitch keeping our agreement.

Pitch 3 is mostly a traverse along a broad ledge to blocks. I am able to make a little shortcut. I easily set up a belay by slinging two blocks with the rope and using a medium sized cam.

All of the trad leads I have done in my life have been onsite leads. I've never yet lead a climb I've seconded or top-roped. Mainly because if I wanted to do a climb, I'd have to lead it - as most of my friends do not lead. This makes things very interesting, as each climb is like a good book. It keeps me in suspense and I never know what is next. Rarely can I see even the entire next pitch. I'm venturing off into the unknown. I am in control of the exploration. This is one of the lures of traditional lead climbing - not knowing what is next. This uncertainty creates adventure. It often causes me to push past my limits, sometimes because I have no choice.

I take a folded piece of paper out of my shorts pocket. On the topo, Pitch 4 looks like the easiest pitch. Face climbing with what looks like big ledges, then a dihedral. I look down at Mark belaying me





from the blocks as I head up a bulging face. Decent holds lead to a placement I wouldn't even trust with bodyweight about 10 feet off the deck. After 3 such placements in a row, I finally get in a good piece after about 60 feet of climbing. I continue up, now more confident with a big cam in a solid crack. I place a nut in a strenuous stance, which isn't too good. I grab it and pull with a good portion of my bodyweight, and it held. If it doesn't come out with rope drag, it may stop a fall. Looking around, it is all I have. I continue going and eventually find my way 20 more vertical feet to the dihedral.

I manage to get in another nut I am not happy with. Looking up, I determine the next 15 feet is the hardest part of the pitch – a bulging dihedral. I delay at the base of the dihedral. I finally get the nerve to do it. I start up, working the moves and feeling a little sketchy. I reach my foot to a small protrusion and as I stand I hear a popping sound! I had just enough time to gape in horror as I see the nut sliding down the rope. A thousand things run through my mind in an instant as I slowly slip off my handhold. I know my only good gear on the pitch is at least 40 feet below me, and I'm looking at a 90 foot fall onto ledges. If I fall, I'd definitely be injured. This deep in the wilderness, even a simple injury could mean a slow and painful death.

But instead of panic, I have the ultimate clarity. I feel something with me that gives me the power to link 5 holds on the face to ascend to safer terrain. I know simply, that there are times when I am climbing that I just can't fall. This is one of them. I don't even consider the possibility of falling. It won't happen.

I get to a ledge, look out at the view, and realize how much I love climbing. I know this climb is within my ability, and standing here on this ledge, looking down at my cam 60 feet below, I feel alone yet empowered. I think about how insignificant I am, that the Gorge could have easily taken me today if it wanted to. I realize there is something greater at work than just my effort alone.

I place two cams and continue over blocks to the belay. I bring Mark up and we enjoy a 45 minute break on the ledge. I look at Pitch 5, a perfect crack in a left facing corner. As far as I was concerned, I'd already beaten the Daddy. Pitch 5 would go down easily, bringing us to the most challenging part of the day.

By the time Mark gets up to the top, the sun has set below the Gorge rim. Darkness is coming quickly. I want to get away from the edge of the cliff and into the woods. We divide up the chores and quickly have everything packed. I find a well worn trail leading to the Mummy descent gully. We look down this gully in the darkness and even though we have 2 ropes decide to take the woods instead. How far could it be to the ridgetop trail running through the wilderness? I set my compass using the shadow of the opposing buttress.

I lead the first 30 minutes breaking trail. The brush is thick and going is very slow. As sweat drips off my face, I take the last sip of my water. Mark says he exhausted his long ago. The rack and rope are snagging on every tree slowing our pace. We follow winding game trails, cliff edges, and most importantly the compass. The briars and twigs enjoy chewing our bare legs to hamburger.

After awhile, Mark sees that I'm struggling and agrees to break trail. He gets frustrated quickly - this worries me. I calculate worst case scenarios. The woods seem endless and repetitive because the visibility is zero in every direction. The ridgetop looks further away with every step towards it. I suddenly feel very alone. I recall similar feelings from last year's trip to Linville:

Being in "survival mode" is definitely an interesting feeling. Sort of like subdued panic. If you panic, you will die. So you are panicking in the back of your mind, but in the panic, you calculate. Thinking of all the options and avenues. Being lost in the vast wilderness is like





being locked in a jail cell. While it would seem you are free to explore in this open space, the fact is you are trapped and isolated. Truly a paradox of open space, with such space itself being restricting and confining....

I calculate we would hit the main north-south trail at the ridgetop within an hour. The timer on my watch says 1h 05m. I make a deal with myself, that I will find the trail, and I will find it within the next hour. We certainly have enough energy for another hour. Seeing the same darkness over and over again, Mark is convinced we were going in circles. I know we are experienced navigators, and I know we will find the trail.

As I am leading and thrashing down trees I finally get to a welcome open space. Wow, its the trail! I turn

around and look into the woods. Mark looks larger than life, his bright headlamp shining at me, and his lanky body distorted by the plump backpack. I yell to Mark, "Time for a break!". Mark knows I hit the trail. He is obviously happy and so am I. Now, I know we will be okay. I tease Mark and we congratulate each other on a great epic day.

Driving slowly out of Linville Gorge late at night, the crickets chirp, the mountains tower, and I catch a glimpse of a brown wooden sign. It says "Linville Wilderness", and its letters elongate in my mind like the blood seeping from the cuts on my legs. I feel something lurking within the forest, something watching us. Something that knows, something bigger than ourselves. The Wilderness let us win this time, but it proved it was almost an equal match.

2004 Calendar of Events

Red Rocks, Smith, Owens River Gorge, Lover's Leap... If you would like to organize a trip please let me know (carolynldent@yahoo.com), and I can add it to the calendar, and advertise it nearer the time too... Please also let me know if you want your contact details (phone number and/or e-mail address) to be included in the newsletter. I am aware that some people do not like personal details publishing, so I will not do so unless you give me permission.

Thanks to Scott Johnston for booking our campsites for this year! All Yosemite Valley campsite bookings are in Upper Pines. Site numbers will be posted at the campsite entrance kiosk under Scott's name, unless otherwise stated in the table. Anyone who contacts Scott, the webmaster or the newsletter editor for campsite numbers will buy a large soda (for Scott) or beer (for the webmaster and newsletter editor).

Proposed dates (dates in bold are confirmed trips)	Trip	Organizer
October 8th –9th	Yosemite Valley, Upper Pines	
Thanksgiving November 24th – 28th	Two group sites booked at Indian Cove, Joshua Tree Site #2 (45 people) booked Wed Nov 24 th – Sunday morning Site #4 (25 people) booked Thursday Nov 25 th – Sunday morning	Simon Kenney





Wilderness First Responder Course

This 80 hour wilderness first aid course provides the skill and confidence that are invaluable when responding to an emergency. The emphasis of this class is on learning to make good decisions by staying calm and safe, performing good patient assessments, and displaying strong leadership skills. We focus on learning principles, rather than memorizing lists. You will learn to respond to and protect yourself from wilderness hazards such as shock and bleeding, head and spinal injuries, wounds, musculoskeletal injuries, hypothermia, altitude illness, bugs, snakes, and contaminated water.

October 16-November 21 - San Francisco - offered by Outdoors Unlimited and taught by Bobbie of Foster Calm.

5 Weekends (Sat and Sunday) with October 30-31 off. Contact OU at 415-476-2078.

<http://www.outdoors.ucsf.edu/programs/detail.php?ID=9206>

Thanksgiving Trip/Party: J.Tree

Most of you would have either been on or heard of our famous (Infamous) Thanksgiving Trips. For those of you that haven't; A quick rundown on previous years trips: Huge amounts of fun, 65+ people have attended our Thanksgiving trips with superb climbing of all levels, a full on thanksgiving dinner, hot springs, beautiful desert sunsets etc...This year is already shaping up to be another awesome experience. We have already booked a couple of group sites (Indian Cove group sites #2 and #4), and the trips calendar is taking bookings on the web site.

Here's a couple of links to wet your appetite;

<http://www.climbingjtree.com/> for more detailed look at climbing

<http://home.primus.ca/~dooley/climbing/joshua/joshua.html> for a quick overview

http://jacob.biola.edu/~daniel/joshua_tree_photos.htm some photo's

<http://home.att.net/~r.miramontes/wsb/html/view.cgi-photos.html-.html> bouldering slideshow

As with previous years; I will be emailing out a list of food to bring for the Thanksgiving dinner (A little closer to the time) when I have got a better idea of how many will be coming, each person selects something to bring from the list (or brings something of their own choosing) and I will coordinate.

This year RR will pay the group site fees, provide the turkey, and some of the beer and wine.

You will need a J.Tree climbing guide and lots of climbing tape! Don't forget you will need to bring your own water.

Most people will drive down and ride share but remember you can also fly to Ontario, J.Tree is just 2 hrs drive from there. If you share the car rental with someone then that would probably work out pretty cheap.

So go to the RR website and trips calendar and book yourself in (Guests welcome)





Next meeting: Tues October 5th, 7pm

For the next meeting we are privileged to receive an invitation to the home of Simon Kenny and Amy Segal.

The slideshow will be provided by Em Holland and Bruce Binder, on their trip to the Ruth Gorge in Alaska this summer.

Directions:

- * I 80 Exit at San Pablo Ave
- * Go south 1 block on San Pablo Ave and turn left on Barrett Ave.
- * Follow Barrett Ave to the top of the hill where it intersects with Arlington Blvd. Turn left on Arlington Blvd.
- * After about 4 blocks turn left on Olive and finally immediately right on Claremont. We are about 4 houses in on the right.

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Warning/Disclaimer

San Francisco Rock Rendezvous is not a teaching organization and does not endorse or insure rock climbing. Trips advertised in the newsletter are private and are only listed to allow for the co-ordination of car pooling and camping. Each participant on a trip is solely responsible for his or her safety during the entire trip, including the transportation to and from the climbing area and site, and any necessary insurance.

