

THRUTCH

Newsletter of the Sydney Rockclimbing Club



www.sydneYROCKIES.org.au

Sydney Rockclimbing Club

About the Sydney Rockclimbing Club (SRC)

The SRC aims to be a **meeting point for climbers** and, to this end, runs frequent social events, such as monthly meetings and gym nights.

The SRC does NOT organise outdoor climbing trips (nor does it provide instruction of any kind). Any outdoor climbing undertaken together by members of the club is by their own private arrangement.

SRC Meetings

Meetings of the SRC are held at 7.30 pm on the first Wednesday of every month (except January) at the Petersham RSL, 7a Regent St., Petersham.

Membership Details

Membership is valid for one year from July; half price membership is available for new members from January to June.

Membership gets you:

- Subscription to Thrutch for one year (11 issues)
- Discounted guide books and climbing gym entry
- Socialising and entertainment
- Talks/slideshows by occasional guest presenters
- Access to the SRC library

Download Membership forms from www.sydneYROCKIES.org.au

Send membership subscriptions to:
The Membership Secretary, Sydney Rockclimbing Club
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW 1235

Membership Fees

- Single — \$40.00
- Joint (1 copy of Thrutch) — \$60.00
- Student or Junior — \$30.00
- Veteran (over 55 & 10 year m'ship) — \$30.00
- Hard copy of Thrutch — additional \$10.00

Thrutch

Thrutch is the Newsletter of the SRC. Contributions - preferably typed, on disk or via email - are always welcome, photos especially so.

Send Thrutch Contributions to:
Thrutch Editor, Sydney Rockclimbing Club
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW, 1235
Email: mnl_csb@tpg.com.au

Get Thrutch via Email!

If you received this newsletter as a paper copy, you may be interested to learn that you'll get it a lot faster if you have it delivered via email. To arrange for electronic delivery, contact the membership secretary at garo@dse.com.au

Note: If you use a limited space free email account address (such as Yahoo or Hotmail), you need to keep at least 1MB space available in your account at all times or your electronic copy of Thrutch may not reach you.

Correspondence

Send general correspondence to:
The Secretary, Sydney Rockclimbing Club
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW 1235

Route Descriptions

Send new route descriptions to:
Sydney Rockclimbing Club
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW 1235

SRC Committee — 2002/2003

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<i>Vice President</i>	Grace Tang
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Cover shot!

Steve Ahern on Mosquito Slap (21).
Photo by Mark Banham.

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Howzzat!?!



Lee takes a huge catch!

This time it was Lee Wegner catching a 20m factor 2 fall at Mt Piddington, not Brett Lee taking a caught-and-bowled at the SCG.

Linton (not an SRC member) was leading the second pitch of Neurotic (15) when the accident happened. This climb starts up Psychopath before traversing left to join the arête separating this face crack from the corner system of The Phantom. Lee was belaying Linton from the "skull cave" for which The Phantom gets its name. From there the second pitch goes around the roof to the right and straight up the face above (according to the guidebook).

Watching from below as Linton fell from about 10 meters above the belay I was horrified to see him fall to and bounce off the belay ledge, flip upside down and continue to fall to within five metres of the ground. Once Lee had lowered Linton to the ground and we had established that he was not seriously injured (bad rope burn, cuts, a bruised ankle and the loss of a big toe-nail being the more obvious consequences) I asked Linton what happened. In response Linton held up a handful of small wires hanging from the rope at his waist - Linton's gear had pulled.

No criticism of Linton's technique in this instance is intended; having never done the climb, I cannot write of its difficulty or the availability of adequate protection.

However, a few salutary warnings (which I now plan to heed more than I have in the past) are presented by this potentially much more serious accident.

- It is vital that your first piece of protection above the belay is multi-directional. This is especially crucial when the belay is any horizontal distance away from the base of the pitch, but should be standard practice on all leads on natural gear.

By placing your first downward-pull piece in opposition to an upward-pull piece, you make it much more difficult for that crucial ground fall-stopping gear to lift out. It is also essential for avoiding the dreaded "zippering" of subsequent protection.

- Seat your pro well with a good tug - this applies to both wires and cams.
- Avoid placing cams in v-tapered slots (if you do, place a piece in opposition). If the slot widens above the cam it is much easier for the cam to tip up and out. Look for parallel or slightly downward-flaring cracks.
- Use long runners where rope drag may lift a piece of gear.
- Be aware of and avoid having the rope run over sharp rock edges that may cut the rope in a fall (Linton's rope was partially severed by a sharp edge on the belay ledge).
- Know when to retire your rope - any rope subjected to a factor 2 fall should be retired.
- Wear a helmet. I hate to think how the afternoon might have turned out if Linton had not been wearing one.

See the article "Techtips - Trad" in issue 213 of Climbing regarding first four points above.

Nigel Donnelly

Storm on Mt Boyce - two perspectives

Niall's take...

Saturday 3 August saw over a dozen club members assemble at Blackheath.

The first hitch was that the nominated meeting place, the Wattle Café, was closed for holidays. Using our uncanny powers of deduction, Eri Leong, Erin Barker and I surmised that the others would be in the café a few doors away. This proved to be the case.

There we met up with Tony Tang, Craig Motbey, Rod Marsh (no, not the cricketer), Peter Graycon and son Dan, David

This was soon surpassed by leading a greasy P2, then top-belaying Peter G, Eri and Erin in the driving horizontal rain and howling wind of the next weather system.

Eckstein, Tony Rood, Isabelle Baelde and of course intrepid co-organiser Pete Flegg. During the day new Blue Mountains landowner Craig Laurendet made a cameo appearance.

Soon everyone was at the base of the crag, paired up and ready to go. A few spots of rain were of no concern. The only person having a problem was yours truly, who, deciding that the pro was somewhat sparse on P2 of Olde English, decided to muscle in on P2 of Eri's route, Sweet Irish. The Irish are a much nicer class of person anyway.

A race to the top ensued, with me kindly leaving the bolts for Eri (not having bolt plates made that an easy decision).

The rest of the day was enjoyable and uneventful, until the first major shower mid-afternoon! Leading the moves below the

cave on P1 of The Eyrie in the rain was not the most comfortable experience.

This was soon surpassed by leading a greasy P2, then top-belaying Peter G, Eri and Erin in the driving horizontal rain and howling wind of the next weather system.

Three-way communication was established by having Pete F and Isabelle on the opposite cliff top, relaying messages back and forth to the three occupants of the cave by shouting at the tops of their voices.

All arrived safely at the top, and we now turned our attention to Dan, swinging and shivering in a t-shirt 10m underneath. Shivering only marginally less was Tony on top-belay.

Having decided that all this fancy self-rescue z-pulley stuff was far too technical, we got Dan up by the simple expedient of lowering a rope with a screw lock, having him attach it, and hauling him up. Muscles were supplied by Pete F, Peter G and myself, and the rope was provided by Erin. Dan's never been up a sheer face so quickly.

From that point we only had to await the ascent of a sodden Craig M, Tony T and Rod. Then it was off to the Gardiner's Hotel for a beer and a warm-up around the fire.

The day was enjoyably topped off for most of us by attending the John Ewbank slide show and talk in the evening.

Thanks to all who attended, and hopefully a few contacts were established to allow people to partner up in the future.

Niall Doherty

Storm on Mt Boyce, continued from previous page...

Craig's take...

A bunch of folks headed up to the Abseil Wall on Mt Boyce at Blackheath a few Saturdays ago. We were meeting at Blackheath at 9am; breakfast at the cafe, and then it was straight out to the crag which is down some only slightly dodgy dirt roads just west of town, followed by a 5-10 minute walk downhill before a quick rap to the bottom. There were about ten of us all up and plenty of ropes, so we could pair up and get climbing without any trouble; I partnered with Rod Marsh, and the pair of us pottered up Atlantis, a two pitch (60m) grade 13 trad climb. Nice and cruisy, with some lovely views on the way up. The other folks did "Set, Piece, Battle" (grade 14, 50m), "The Eyrie" (grade 12, 50m), "Sweet Irish" (grade 10, 49m), plus something else I can't remember. After pissing about for a while and munching a bit of food, we rapped down again and started figuring out what to do next.

We eventually decided to do another easy one ("Sweet Irish") before going and doing a grade 17 (I think it was "Another Man's Juliet") to finish up. Tony Tang (whom I'd ridden up to Blackheath with) had to bugger off soonish, so I was going to tow his rope up behind me and then he could follow us up Sweet Irish.

The weather had been lovely all morning, but the forecast had been for showers with the chance of a storm, and it started to gently rain shortly after Rod started up Sweet Irish. However, it wasn't raining too much, so Rod continued and I just huddled into the rockface as much as I could while belaying and Tony ducked off under an overhang. We'd planned on doing the climb in a single pitch, but about two thirds of the way up Rod declared that the rope drag was getting too bad and he was going to set up a belay where he was.

The rain had stopped by then, and although the rock was damp it was such an easy climb ("vertical bushwalk") that it didn't really matter. Once the top belay was set up I headed on up with

Tony's rope trailing behind me, cleaning the pitch as I went. I made it to the belay station and clipped in, and we prepared to toss back down the rope I'd just climbed, so we could haul up the gear bag on that one and let Tony climb up using his rope.

However, just after I got there, the wind started to pick up.

Sharply.

Very sharply.

'Hold onto the rock so you don't get blown off' sharply.

We couldn't toss down the rope (because it would've



Climber on Set Piece Battle - before the storm set in...

Photo by Craig Motbey

been blown straight sideways) and we couldn't communicate with Tony (we had to shout just to hear each other on the belay ledge), so we stood there waiting for the wind to drop off.

Then it started to rain.

Then it started to hail. *Horizontally.*

I was standing on the windward side with my back to the hail, and it felt like I was being shot-blasted.

Storm on Mt Boyce, continued from previous page...

Fortunately it was only pea-sized pellets, but I could see them flying past me horizontally and occasionally even going up when a gust hit. I had my nice thick army jumper on which soaked up a fair bit of the impact, but my ears were quite thoroughly numb.

It was wonderful.

Seeing, hearing and feeling the raw power of the storm rip across the valley into us was absolutely glorious, and although it was uncomfortable it wasn't ridiculously dangerous; if we'd had to, we could've gotten out before we froze to death. Eventually the hail stopped and the wind slackened off enough to try and toss the rope down to Tony (who'd spent the storm huddled under his little overhang) and, of course, the last of the wind caught the rope and tangled it up halfway down.

So, Tony strapped the gear bag onto his back and climbed up to us on his rope, freeing the other rope on his way past. Meanwhile, we could hear some of the others having something of an epic just around the corner from us; I'm not sure exactly what happened, but I think someone was stuck halfway up a pitch when the storm hit and was a bit too chilled to climb effectively once it passed over. They all sorted themselves out eventually, however.

Tony made it up to the ledge and then we continued on up the rest of the way to the top, which was now thoroughly soaked, dripping and slippery; I'm very glad we weren't trying to do the grade 17 right then.

By the time we got to the top the sun was out again...



View from Mt Boyce — what storm?!

Craig Motbey

GEAR AUCTION

September's meeting was followed by a gear auction with the entertaining auctioneer extraordinaire Dave Eckstein.

Items up for sale included hexes, ropes, shoes, Rock magazines and .. bike pedal clips !!!

With some items being full donations to the club, and others earning the club 10%, the SRC made about \$100.

Thanks to all involved, especially Dave of course, Pete the bookkeeper, & the lovely Doug the demonstration model.

Gossip and News

Justin McDonald

Justin McDonald's Parents in conjunction with the Old Cranbrookians, have been successful in raising the necessary funds to build a new Grandstand at Hordern Oval, Rose Bay. The Grandstand to be called the "Justin McDonald Memorial Grandstand". The Plans are being finalised and hopefully it will be finished by April 2003.

Justin's father Ian was happy for us to go ahead and place a memorial plaque to Justin at the King Memorial, Mt Cook . He also told us Justin's backpack is now on top of Everest, no doubt organised by Andrew Peacock.

There are rumours of a night out to see the IMAX Shackleton film - for details come to the October meeting!

New Books!

Barbara Darmanin has advised that there are **two new books** available from the SRC library.

They are:

- **Jolls Bridge Guide:** One hour drive north of Sydney, overlooking the Hawkesbury Rv.. Approx. 180 climbs ranging from grade 14-26, on cliffs 11- 40 m. Includes how- to -get- there maps + maps of the individual cliffs.
- **Petzl catalogue:** Information on how to use their gear. plus excellent diagrams on setting up belays, belaying, etc.. Worth a look just for the photos.

We're Invited!

Sydney University Rockclimbing and Mountaineering Club (SURMC), has invited SRC members and friends to their annual dinner for 2002.

The guest speaker for the night is a recipient of the Golden Ice Axe, Athol Whimp.

Athol will showing slides from his 2000 expedition to the north face of Jannu, Nepal (7710m). On this expedition Athol, together with Andrew Lindblade, made two attempts at making the first ascent of the north face direct, but after their porta-ledge was

destroyed by rock fall, opted for an alpine style ascent of the 1976 Japanese route on the north face.

The dinner will be on Wednesday the 25th of September, at the Rydges Hotel in Camperdown. Three course meal, jazz band, drink with dinner and full bar facilities.

The night is \$35 for SURMC members and \$40 for non-members.

For tickets, contact Bronwyn Waters at bronwaters@hotmail.com.



Barrenjoey

Following release of the Plan of Management for Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, the SRC wrote to the National Parks and Wildlife Service proposing a meeting to devise a cooperative approach to management of climbing at Barrenjoey.

The response from Chris Grudnoff (Senior Ranger, Sydney North Region) was positive:

"I suggest discussing the POM and its rationale initially, and then organising an on site meeting and including the Area Manager to look at the practicalities of how we make this situation work so we both achieve our desired outcomes in a mutually beneficial manner".



*Kevin Westren
SRC Access Officer*

New Regulations

The National Parks and Wildlife (Land Management) Regulation 1995 'officially' expired on 31 August and its replacement, the 2002 version, should be tabled in state parliament around the time this goes to press.

A year ago there was much consternation in the outdoor community when a document, purported to be a copy of the proposed new Regulation, 'became available' and was found to contain a draconian proposal in the form of Clause 21(3):

"A person must not in a park carry, possess or use any equipment that is required for abseiling, base jumping, bungy jumping, rock climbing, caving, parachuting, white water boating, paragliding, parasailing or hang gliding."

Following the outcry that resulted, the authorities hastened to advise that the document causing the controversy was an 'early draft' and promised that the final version would not contain such wording.

When at last we saw the finished draft in November 2001 it was distinctly more palatable, but nevertheless the SRC lodged a submission that commented on sections of the proposed Regulation and suggested a number of alterations.

On 25th June I visited the NPWS Head Office for a meeting with the Senior Legal Officer and a member of the Strategic Policy Division. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the Service's position on the Regulation and learn the extent to which the SRC's suggestions might be adopted.

Until the Regulation has actually passed through parliament we can not be absolutely certain as to its content, but I am quietly hopeful we will enjoy a satisfactory outcome – about as good as we might reasonably expect.

Ebor Falls

Armidale is about 7 hours drive north from Sydney on the New England highway—not the sort of place you would normally go for one day's climbing. But I was passing though on my way north for a weeks climbing at Frog Buttress in Queensland.

Staying with ex-SRC member Dave Abbott and family was a good break from the driving. I only planned on staying the night and driving on the next morning but Dave was keen to show me a local crag and drove me out the 70km east to Ebor Falls.

It gets cold there in the winter—it was -5 °C at night when I was there in July—we got out of the car at 11am and needed all our clothes on to keep warm but once we dropped over the edge and out of the wind we soon warmed up.

Dave Abbot on the second pitch of Breakaway - Ebor Falls

Photo by Pete Flegg



There are ten small crags at Ebor mainly called 'breakaways'. I only saw the first and second breakaways - the second looks like a smaller version of Frog Buttress. In general the older climbs are mid-range cracks and the newer stuff are bolted sports routes.

Grading seemed to be up and down (much like Frog) and for a non-crack climber like me the grades seemed hard. I did three routes in 4 hours.

The Removalist (15) was my favourite—hand jams and wide bridging up a corner for several meters to a small sloping ledge where the crack narrowed and veered diagonally upwards to the right. I struggled to get in a good piece of pro as I had no idea how I was going to get up beyond this point. But the solution turned out to be easy for the grade—I'll leave you to find it should you get up that way.

The Joker (17) looked like it was going to be easy from the ground—wide crack at the bottom of a corner getting narrower and overhanging as it neared the top and there looked like plenty of foot positions near the top. Wrong—after struggling to place gear standing on small slopers with one hand jammed in the crack, I finally managed to get my feet bridged out in the corner and could carefully reach out to a decent hold at the top of the crack, I was sweating after that one.

I now have copies of the Ebor Falls Guide (which lists about 140 climbs between grades 3 and 26) and The Waterfalls Guide (covers other crags in the same area) so give me a call if you are heading that way and want to take a look at them. It was so good that headed back for more last weekend!

Peter Flegg



Club Updates



Meetings and Gym Sessions

Club Meetings

Club meetings are held at 7.30 pm, Petersham RSL on the first Wednesday of the month.

- **Wednesday, 2nd October 2002**
Club slide night. Bring 5 slides each!
Presented by Doug Cross.

Usual RSL Club dress regulations apply. Identification must be carried.

New Faces!

- Stuart McElroy (Been climbing 17 years)
- Vivienne Fisher (On & off experience)
- Carolyn Storey (Been climbing about 4 years)

Regular Gym Sessions!

Come and play on:

- **Wednesday mornings** — Climb Fit, St Leonards. 9–11am
Contact Barbara & David Darmanin (9869 8834)
- **Wednesday evenings** — Summer Hill.
Contact Peter Flegg (9560 0475) or Mike Patterson (9319 6207)
- **Wednesday evenings** — Penrith Climbing Centre from 6pm.
Contact Stuart Gallagher (0407 735 631)

Guide Books For Sale

Title	RRP*	SRC Members' Price**
<i>Rockclimbs in the Upper Blue Mountains</i>	\$35.00	\$20.00
<i>Rockclimbs in the Grose Valley</i>	\$29.95	\$18.00
<i>Wolgan Valley - Selected Climbing Areas New Stock</i>	\$35.00	\$20.00
<i>A Boulders Guide to Lindfield Rocks</i>	\$9.95	\$6.00
<i>Point Perpendicular (only 2 copies left)</i>	\$35	\$20.00
<i>Nowra Guide</i>	\$35	\$17.00 (out of stock)
<i>Sydney Bouldering Guide</i>	\$40	\$22.00

*Some stores charge substantially more! **Postage (if required) is extra, from \$2.00 to \$5.00 depending on the postcode and weight of book. To place an order, mail: Barbara Darmanin, Business Manager, 7 Plympton Road, Carlingford, NSW 2118

Reordering for Nowra and Point Perpendicular Guides: Orders can only be placed for 10 or more at a time. Contact Barbara if you are interested in buying either of these guides so that she can gauge the need to reorder.