



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

Vol. II No. 6

## THE SNOW AND THE GLACIERS

Every winter the High Sierra and the middle forest region get snow in glorious abundance, and even the foothills are at times whitened. Then all the range looks like a vast beveled wall of purest marble. The rough places are then made smooth, the death and decay of the year is covered gently and kindly, and the ground seems as clean as the sky. And though silent in its flight from the clouds and when it is taking its place on rock, or tree, or grassy meadow, how soon the gentle snow finds a voice! Slipping from the heights, gathering in avalanches, it booms and roars like thunder, and makes a glorious show as it sweeps down the mountainside, arrayed in long, silken streamers and wreathing, swirling films of crystal dust...

John Muir

## FIRST ASCENT OF MT. MCKINLEY'S SOUTHEAST SPUR ... 1962

Why did we climb Mt. McKinley?

There was no practical reason for it. There was no practical reason, anymore than there is one for fishing in a fast stream or stopping to admire a beautiful view, or, indeed, falling in love.

It might have been a mountain's simple challenge in a world of complex problems. It might have been the companionship of friends who are able to prove their worth, or the thrill of seeing surrounding peaks turn to pink and gold in an alpine sunset. It might have been a conviction that life is best when it has its quota of adventure.

Actually, I suppose we climbed Mt. McKinley, and shall hope to climb other mountains, for one reason -- because we enjoy it.

-- Christopher Wren



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

APRIL MEETING - Tuesday April 9, 7:30 PM. MSU Lodge Conference Rooms.

PROGRAM: - Slides of the ski tours in this issue, also technical rock climbing planning of spring rock climbing and mountain rescue outings.

THIS WEEKEND SKI AND SNOWSHOE TRIP TO SQUAW PEAK - April 7. Meet at 6:30 AM this Sunday at the <sup>MSU</sup> Lodge. We will see how far up the Edith Peak Road we can get and then head for those alpine snows and far views. Contact T. Choate.

## RECENT EVENTS

March meeting. Extensive consideration of avalanches and their hazards highlighted this educational meeting, with our expert avalanche man Gardner Miller presenting the National Ski Patrol slides and lecture plus his own additional information. Everyone had a chance to see and order the fancy new club patch and sample the cider and cookies before more fine slides were shown. This second group depicted the recent winter ascent of the Grand Teton and were quite spectacular. Thanks to Bob Higham for getting them.

MISSION MOUNTAINS SKI TOUR - March 22-25, 1963 -- Tom Choate

Our original plan was to ski into either the Bob Marshall Wilderness by crossing the Swan mountains, or to go into the Glacier Lake - Panoramic Peak part of the Missions. However, many things change the nature of a trip. Originally, nine people had planned to go with us. Many changed their minds in typical independent Montanan style, deciding because of time to take a trip into the Sweeney-Lolo area of the Bitterroots. Two others were not in a position to leave early Friday, so a very select group of three headed out of town at 5:30 AM in a tired old volkswagen.

We found that winter logging had ceased and the only road open was the one going to Lindberg Lake. Beyond the head of this long lake lies some of the most beautiful of the Missions, so it was not hard to decide what to do. Some fine "high road" touring is to be found on the road above Elbow lookout and the valleys and ridges of Lindy and Daughter-of-the-sun peaks. Thus, on a hot spring day (we even had to carry our skis over a few short stretches of well-warmed southern exposure) we climbed away from Lindberg Lake into the snowy high country. About seven miles and 2500 feet higher we made camp in a snowfilled cirque, at the outlet of Eagle Lake where we could find water. The beautiful corniced summit of this mountain, 1500 feet above us, made the very best picture window for our camp.

The next day was stormy in the morning, so we sacked in until after nine, finally getting out as things calmed down about 11 AM. The higher we climbed the more it cleared, so we kept right on, going up a steep wall of a cirque which would have been rather dangerous avalanche terrain if everything hadn't either settled or slid from the hot sun the day before. We ate lunch about 500 feet below the summit, out of the wind, where we could admire the ugly view of the whole 40 miles of Swan Range stretched clear across the horizon in front of us. If we got tired of that we could strain our eyes a bit into the distance and see the Rattlesnake, Garnet, Flint Creek and even Anaconda-Pintlars gleaming white 100 miles to the south! Then we crossed the summit ridge to see the huge peaks of the Missions suddenly surround us. On the summit there was a welcoming party of mountain goats to greet us - or at least one stayed to look us over.

From the top of Lindy, Mt. McDonald is a skyscraper - I hadn't thought it would stand out so much above the others between. Of course, to the north and south of this rugged high country lie the twin towers of Harding and Grey Wolf respectively, like guard houses to an inner palace. Both of these peaks appeared startlingly black because little snow stays on their steep faces. We could find no register in the cairn, so left a note in a plastic bag which probably won't last till summer, when we could place one there. The people at the road's end say that they doubt if it has been climbed in winter before, despite its nearness and relative ease, since the area is so rarely visited. We are in agreement that people are out of their minds to miss such fine ski touring and climbing. Many more peaks could be done than have been to date. The Columbia Falls - Kalispell group of mountaineers made a sterling one-day try for Lindy Peak two weeks earlier than us, falling short by only the rough summit ridges. The latter provided our most ticklish skiing, as they are quite narrow, rocky, and steep for some distance below the wide summit block.

The third day was a snowy one, but showed signs of clearing, so we finally headed up toward the ridgetop about ten. This time we headed down the steep west side of the ridge into the Sleeping Elk basin, enjoying 1000 vertical feet of very good skiing in the four inches of new powder. It snowed all the rest of the day as we skied up this little valley toward the beautiful Daughter-of-the-Sun peak at its head. We climbed 1500 feet up the ridge of this peak without seeing the peak's father and finally got blown off about 600 vertical feet below the rugged summit.

The trip down was certainly worth the climb, because we had open slopes of 20-25 degrees with 12 inches of powder to ski. You could go nearly straight down, since the snow slowed your speed, but it was also very easy to turn in, having a hard base. Did that nice white stuff ever fly!

It dawned clear on our fourth day, and we knew it would heat up fast and spoil the new powder. So we broke camp and headed down the gradual slopes back toward Lindberg Lake shortly after nine. We were constantly amazed at how easy it was to turn in the new powder (six inches here) on the solid base, even with packs on. Charlu, with a little help from her pack, provided us with an interesting demonstration of release bindings at a place where our route took a sudden dip: she was leaning a bit forward when she hit the bottom, and her skis decided to go down, rather than up the other side, leaving us viewing an interesting object in the snow -- a pack with one stocking foot sticking up from it! It seems she hadn't tied her boot in the top two hooks and the forward force had not only released her boot from the ski, but also the foot from the boot.

After dusting her off, we continued to zoom down through the large, open burn area to the lake, the masterful ski talents of Pete Hall leading the way. We had a few doubts here and there about the thickness of ice on Lindberg Lake when we approached spots where small holes (an inch or two) occurred, but the well-distributed weight and high speed we attained in these areas made it safe. For some reason the ice is thinnest farther up this lake and we couldn't begin to poke a hole in it near the outlet. Both psychologically and physically the ice was fast travelling, and we made our trip out in a record  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours, with packs on (it took over 8 hours going up), and enjoyed it all the way.

#### TRUE LOCAL TIME BY POLARIS (North Star)

1. Record hour hand (line from Big Dipper pointing to polaris) in numbers to the nearest quarter hour.
2. Take the number of months, to the nearest quarter month, since March 7, and add to the reading above (#1).
3. Multiply the total (#2) times two.
4. 24 (or 48) minus grand total (#3) gives true local time (on 24 hour clock).

This derived time may differ from legal local time (not daylight savings) by as much as 30 minutes, due to your location with reference to the time zone boundaries.

Submitted by Gardner Miller

The stars glowing in the early morning sky promised a bright day for ski touring as we left Missoula for the Mormon Peak Road. We chose to go into the Lolo Peak area by the shortest route--the Mormon Ridge trail (which is described on pg. 5 of the March 1963 issue of MountainEar). Soon after daybreak Gary Hall, Lionel Hall, and I were pushing through the trees toward the snow mantled summit of North Lolo (or False Pk.).

By 2 o'clock in the afternoon we had established a camp on the north shore of Carlton Lake on top of five feet of snow. After enjoying a cup of tea and the warmth of the sun which occasionally broke through the clouds, we decided to climb to the saddle on the ridge leading down from Lolo Pk. We reached the saddle and saw the beautiful view of snow-covered Sweeney Peak and the cornice-crowned lee side of South Lolo Peak. In short time we cancelled our plan to climb Sweeney from this route since three things were evident: the route was longer than expected, it was exposed to many avalanche dangers, and it involved a great deal of tricky midwinter cliff climbing.

The snow on the slope was again frozen by the time we started skiing down; however, the trip down was quite enjoyable. Within a short time we were back at camp.

A terrific ground wind kept us inside Gary's logan tent until 10 o'clock the next morning. When the wind died down enough so that we could see for more than a few feet through the blowing snow, we decided to climb Lolo Peak since two of the party had never been on top before. The route along the ridge to the peak led over several large cornices and through areas which we realized contained a dangerous avalanche potential. While the avalanche danger may have been discomforting mentally, the icy blasts of wind from the canyon below were definitely physically discomforting. At times it took real effort for the climbers to keep from being blown off the ridge. We did not remain long on the summit since the wind was so strong that it created a snow plume several hundred feet long off the peak. The skiing down was again extremely enjoyable although it required a special form of skiing--a cross between powder and wet snow skiing.

The next day we took plenty of time to break camp and pack for the trip out. Gary and Lionel made full advantage of the fresh powder snow by skiing through the timber all the way down to the jeep while I made a safe descent using my climbers to insure against a collision with a tree.

-- Dan Harper

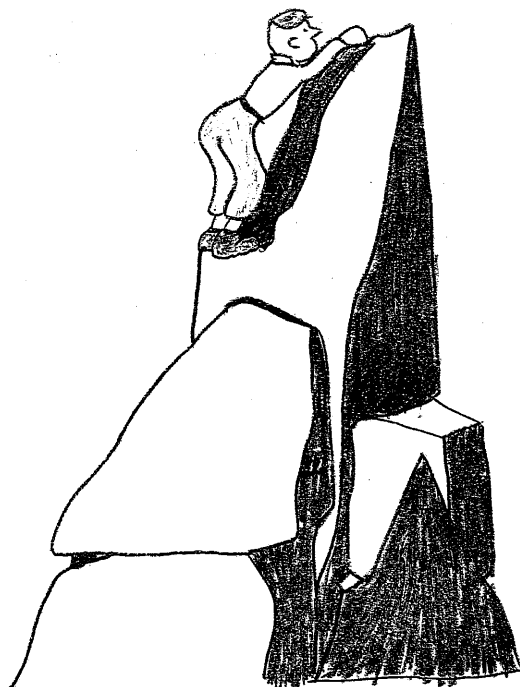
THE MOUNTAIN  
by Patten Beard

High on a summit of a mountain  
With the far world at my feet,  
Mine be the wide horizon  
Where earth and sky shall meet!

By day I shall have the sunlight  
And the vast blue dome of sky;  
By night I shall have the starlight  
And a white moon drifting by!

The free wild wind shall sing me  
The chant of the far away,  
That comes from beyond the daybreak  
With the first dim dawn of day.

And I, in the chant of the wind's song,  
Will find my dreams and be  
Free like the wind on the mountain  
That sings its dream to me.



June 24, 1962 SQUAW PEAK, Missoula Co., Mont.

Here is an easy, delightful hike culminating in a short scramble to the top. Squaw Peak, situated just northwest of Missoula, lies on the ridge between Arlee and Ninemile Cr. It is reached by taking the Edith Pk. road leading from the Ninemile Remount Station (this is important as there are other Edith Pk. roads). Follow signs to the Reservation Divide (atop the ridge) where there are signs for the trail to Squaw Pk. This trail is quite well defined and runs along the ridge in dense trees. However as it nears the peak it becomes obscure, but by then one can keep an eye on the rocky cone of Squaw Pk. The last rise, onto the summit, is a scramble over medium sized boulders. From the top there is a wide view north to the Flathead Valley and the majestic Mission Range, east to Missoula, south to the Bitterroot Range, and west to the Idaho peaks.

On June 24, 1962, Sam & Shirley Braxton and Virginia Vincent spent a bright and sunny day in this region. There was a fair amount of snow upon the ridge among the trees, and we lost the trail, so went along the north side of the ridge top in order to see better the lay of the land. This ridge and Squaw Pk. drop abruptly into the Valley Cr. drainage with good cliffs for rappelling. On the summit cone itself there were long snow drifts varying in steepness which afforded a smooth and firm route to the top. The south side of the mountain is an even grade, while the north side drops into a small cirque of about 500' depth. At the bottom is a gem of a green lake with a small stream dribbling into it causing an endless ripple of small waves. The three hikers glissaded down some rather steep snowbanks to the lake. Many flowers were blooming and salamanders were found in the water. This is not a common amphibian in western Montana so was of some interest.

After a short walk around this body of water (there is another pond nearby, probably from snow melt) we again climbed Squaw Pk. utilizing a steep snow bank which afforded practice in snow climbing, though most of the way could have been done on rock.

Since the trail from road to summit is but  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles with no very long climbs (if you could call the rises that) this is an excellent area to introduce young children and novices to the joys of hiking. This area should not be overlooked by more advanced rock and rope climbers as the proximity to Missoula makes Squaw Pk. an ideal place for short day work-outs.

Virginia Vincent

Ed. Note: Do not neglect this area as a source of spring ski-touring. When the April sun has sufficiently opened the road to permit reasonable access, there is still good skiing on the upper open slopes of the peak.

#### HOW TO ALTER THE ARMY ARCTIC PANTS - Summit Mag., July '59

With little reconstruction, the army surplus Arctic outer shell pants are excellent for skiing, hiking or climbing. Made of a lightweight, tough, water-repellent material, they have the handy cargo pockets. The lightness of the material makes them cool on hot days, yet, because of the tight weave, they are also warm on windy peaks.

The pants were made to be worn on the outside of an insulated liner so it is advisable to remove the excessive bagginess. Start by taking off the cords on the legs and waist and ripping those seams. Then cut straight up the inside seams on the legs and the seam in the back. Cut off the excess (we cut 3 inches from the small size pants for an average person) from the back section of each pants leg. Using a French seam, sew the legs together again. To make a better looking pants, rip the outside seams on the legs and remove the darts at the knees--there will be

plenty of room, even for the rock climber. Finally, sew up the cuffs, replace the cords on the legs, cut off all extra buttons and straps and you'll wind up with a pair of the most economical, durable, yet lightweight, climbing and hiking pants you've ever worn.

Try Recreational Equipment, Inc. or Army Surplus Stores for these pants.

#### CLIMBERS' ALPINE TABLE

Excerpts from "Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills" by the Mountaineers, Seattle, Wash.

The climber is no slave to the tradition of 3 meals a day. As soon as breakfast is completed he commences lunch and continues to eat lunch as long as he's awake, stopping briefly to eat supper. Like a squirrel, he has little knick-knacks stowed away in rucksack and pockets, food for a summit lunch, food to nibble at rest stops and sweets to suck while walking.

Few climbs are conducted as austere as track meets and one may with impunity eat for pleasure as well as physiological efficiency. The confirmed athlete may eat nothing but glucose tablets, but the average climber will eat nuts, kippers, cheese and whatever other delicacies he has been clever enough to carry. The climber eats light and often, never loading his stomach with a heavy meal.

**BREAKFAST:** There are two kinds of breakfast. For the climbing breakfast speed of preparation is essential and variety is beside the point. Many climbers prepackage cereal (grape nuts, crushed corn flakes), sugar, raisins and powdered skim milk into a "breakfast bag". With the stirring of water into a cup of mixture, breakfast is ready--cold water for a cold breakfast, hot water for a hot breakfast.

By contrast, the rainy day or rest day breakfast is a picnic with such menus as fruit, hotcakes, bacon, scrambled dried eggs and beverage.

On weekends when the climb begins in the middle of the night, breakfast is merely the first installment of lunch. A sweet roll, or doughnut with a swallow of milk or a tiny can of fruit cocktail are typical menus. Some climbers are convinced they cannot budge without hot food; their neurosis can be quickly pampered with instant cereal or cocoa cooked by chemical fire.

**SUPPER:** Speed and simplicity are so axiomatic that in every climbing area parallel evolution has produced the same magnificent meal, called in various dialects "One-Pot-Supper", "Hoosh", "Mulligan", or "Glop". By any name, its virtues are extraordinary. A large number of compatible ingredients are cooked in a single pot with an obvious saving of time, equipment and energy. The blended components have a flavor greater than the sum of the parts; the result is in itself a complete, satisfying and memorable meal.

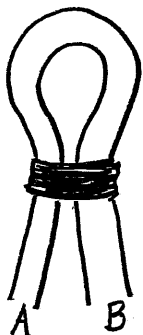
Every glop involves an act of unique creation and none is ever exactly the same as another; the master chef steers by dead reckoning and insight. The usual plan is to select a carbohydrate as base and add proteins, fats and such seasonings as are called for. A glop in its simple form might consist of warm water, instant potatoes and Goteborg sausage, ready to eat in minutes. In the complex form, spices and dehydrated vegetables and margarine are added and the mixture is allowed to simmer and blend.

An occasional imaginative dessert compensates for a great deal of spartan monotony. For instance, ice cream can be easily made at any camp where snow is available, plus several ounces of extra salt and an hour of extra time. A package of instant pudding is mixed in a pot which is nested within a large one, the intervening space filled with alternating layers of snow and salt. The resulting sundae in the wilderness provides more exquisite pleasure than any thousand banana splits in the city.

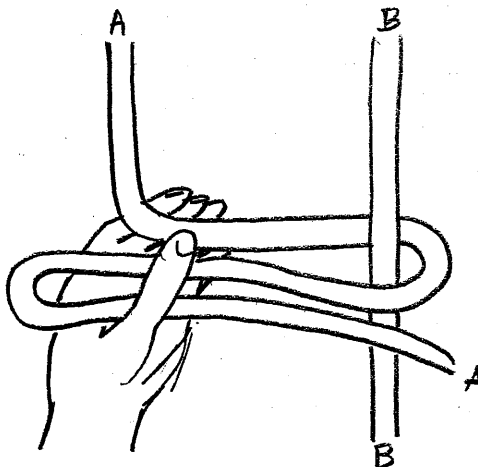
Notes on drinks: - Snow may be eaten safely as a source of water, provided it is eaten slowly; otherwise the stomach will be chilled. It is best to allow the snow to melt in the mouth before swallowing. Flavoring agents such as lemonade, Jello, or pudding will provide a quick and simple "sno-cone" when mixed with snow. Try a salt drink when you are tired in hot weather, a sweet drink when you are tired and cold.

This rope ladder is quite handy on many occasions, but its main use is rescue from crevasses. It is also useful in the place of stirrups in rock climbing where more rungs are needed. A 120 ft. rope (7/16") will make a 20 ft. ladder if steps are spaced right. The smaller the rope the more footage.

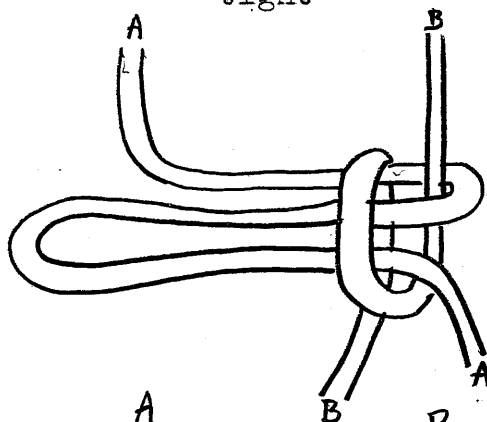
- 1.) Double rope to form eye and wrap.



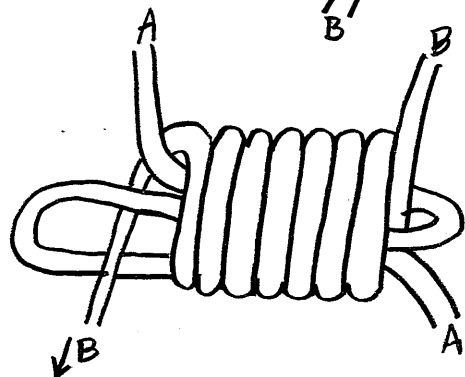
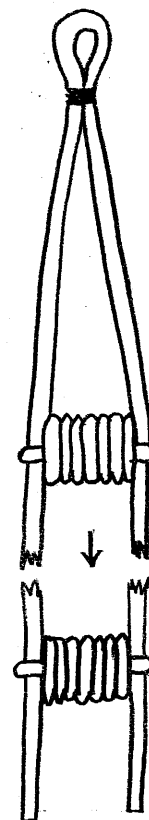
- 2.) Large enough for foot.  $\frac{1}{2}$ " rope gives 7 wraps



- 3.) Make first wrap, pull tight



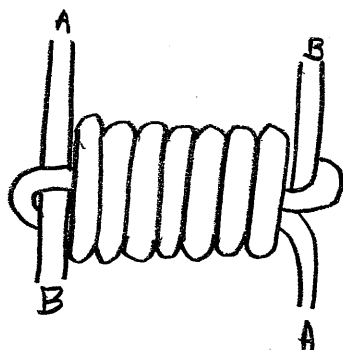
Carabiner to piton



- 4.) Wrap entire step keeping all coils tight. Slip end thru loop at left. Hold coil tight with left hand and pull "A" with right hand to close loop.

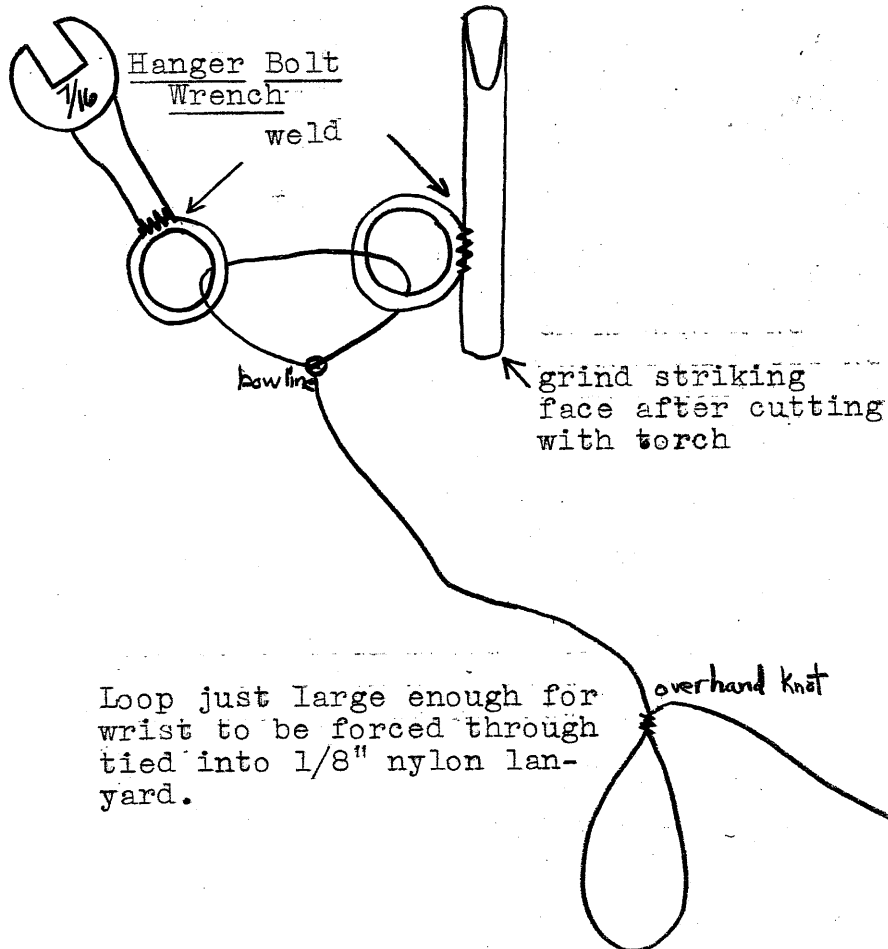
Tie knots on ends and fasten carabiner.

Should look like this.

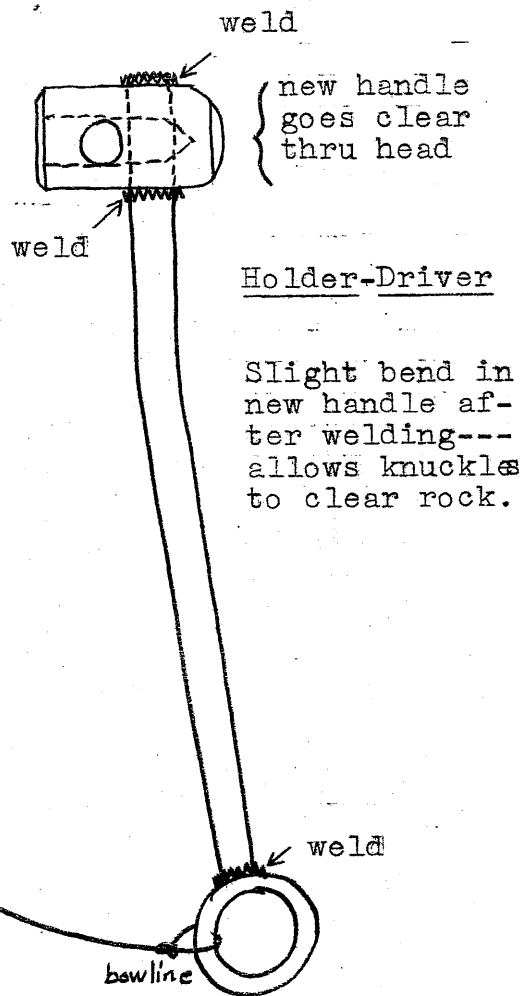


Notes: Even number steps will make end come out even. Wider rope, less wraps. Take care in using crampons. Allow for width of crampons or climbing boot.

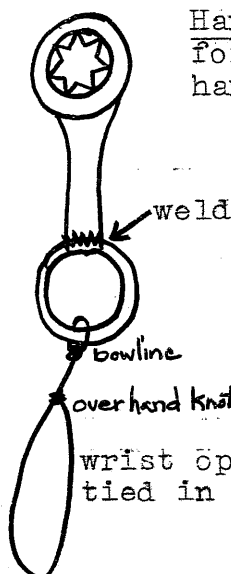
Collar Extractor  
Made from 3" piece  
cut off old handle,  
measure from tapered  
end.



Loop just large enough for  
wrist to be forced through  
tied into 1/8" nylon lanyard.



Slight bend in  
new handle af-  
ter welding---  
allows knuckles  
to clear rock.



Hanger Bolt Wrench  
for climber removing  
hangers.

Materials Required  
6 or 7" X 3/8" diam. cold-rolled  
rod for new handle  
4 each 1" steel harness rings

Suggested modifications of HC-4  
Phillips' Holder-Driver Tool for  
1/4" shields, by John M. Clark, Summit  
Magazine, June '60 and Sam Braxton.

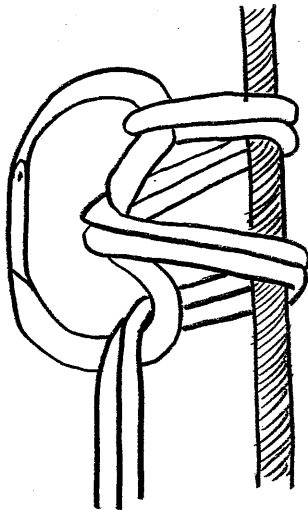


IS THE PRUSSIK KNOT GOOD ENOUGH? From Summit, Apr. '59.

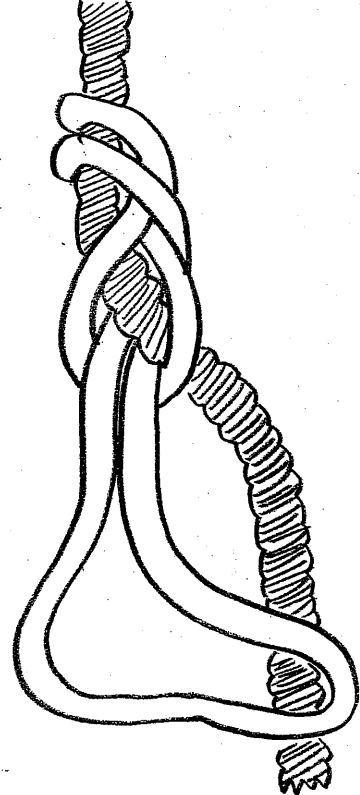
According to a report in the spring issue of Mountain Craft (Eng.) the prussik knot is not good enough. Recent experiences have shown that when using Prussik loops made of nylon or perlon rope the prussik knot refuses to grip, especially when wet, and the loops slide without taking a firm hold on the active rope. The Austrian Alpine Club is recommending a new grip-knot which is more effective for nylon and perlon rope even when wet. It is a karabiner knot devised by Franz Bachmann of Feldkirch, Austria.

As the sketch shows, the Bachmann knot is not difficult to make; hang the loop in the karabiner, wrap it round the rope, then through the karabiner, once more round the rope and clip through the karabiner.

BACHMANN'S KARABINER KNOT



HEDDEN'S NEW CLIMBING KNOT



Abstract of A NEW CLIMBING KNOT by  
Chet Hedden, Summit Mag., Apr. '60

By now most of us are aware that the Prusik is not the only knot which can be used for climbing a rope. The Franz Bachman karabiner knot has been introduced in recent months, acclaimed by the Austrian Alpine Club as superior to the Prusik. I tried the Bachman knot while caving, finding it mostly satisfactory, until it failed me completely, leaving me stranded thirty feet off the ground, hanging by one foot.

In experimenting with friction knots, I have come up with one that is superior to others both in holding power and speed, and will not lose its shape and is positively jam-proof. The new design shifts the horizontal sling direction, common to both of the old knots, to a more desirable vertical direction of pull, eliminating the possibility of a jammed knot and thereby considerably increasing the speed of the climb. Due to the lateral nature of the coils in the Prusik and Bachman knots, the natural direction of pull should be to the side. My new diagonally constructed knot is designed so that the natural direction of pull coincides with the actual direction of pull.

The knot may be tied two ways. Using the method shown in the drawing will usually result in a climb which is both rapid and sure. However, due to the tendency of the climbing rope to kink, if the slings are of a certain type, the knot may jam. The knot is designed so that the slings are of a certain type, the knot may jam. The knot is designed so that the slings are of a certain type, the knot may jam.

stiff material, the lower foot sling still may not work smoothly. By clipping a karabiner into the knot at the point where the four strands cross, one can remedy this situation. The karabiner must be clipped horizontally between the climbing rope and all four strands at the point where the climbing rope bends in the drawing. By this method the karabiner serves as a handle to loosen and draw the knot. If one prefers, both the top and bottom knots may be tied this way, though it is unnecessary in the top knot. In either case, the knot will slide freely; yet full weight may be immediately applied without worry of the knot jamming, slipping or requiring adjustment.

#### HOW TO SET UP A PRACTICE BELAY

Use a car, if needed to pull log up, a retired climbing rope, and some expendable pitons. Pick a tall, slightly leaning tree with no low branches to interfere. Use 2 six inch hardwood pulley sheaves and 100' of 3/8 inch manila rope. Place pulleys in home-made wood blocks at 35' and 50' up tree. Dummy is a log about 3' long and a foot and a half thick. It should weigh 160 to 180 lbs. (varies if left in rain). Groove underside so rope is set into wood and won't wear on impact.

The 100' manila is a hoist rope. To prevent twisting, unwind manila rope and then braid strands, or use a ready-braided rope. Hoist rope runs from car to upper (50') pulley, then back to dummy and attachment to tripping mechanism. Trip mechanism is a tapered pin of smoothly sanded wood. It connects two loops in the dummy's harness to one loop in the hoist rope. Trip rope (50') is tied to an eye screw in the large end of pin. Other end of trip rope is attached by a carabiner to a 100 lb. rock on the ground. Place 6 different loops along trip rope to allow for different length falls. Adjustment is done by snapping proper loop into the carabiner.

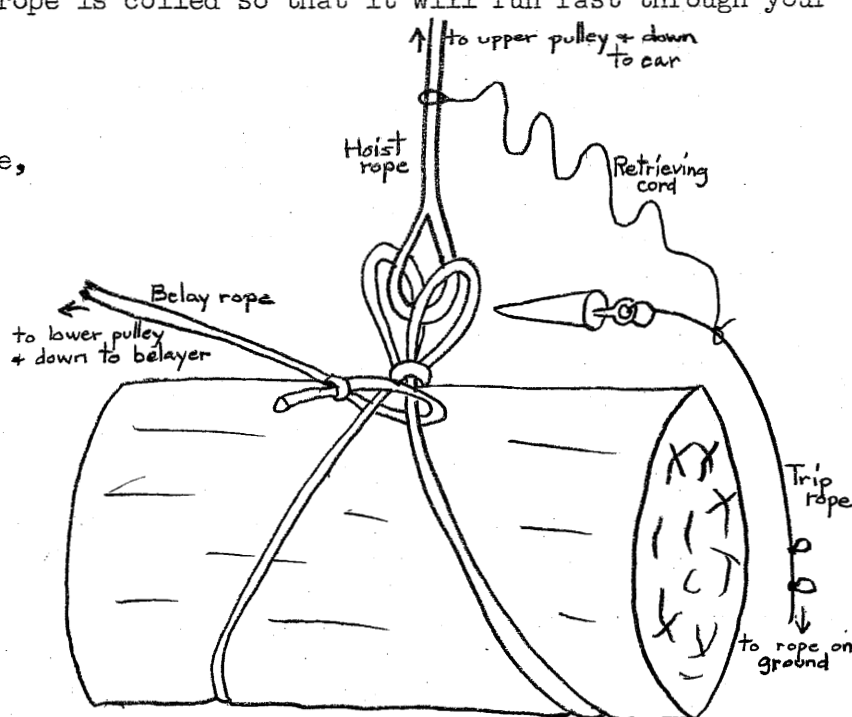
As dummy is raised the trip rope pulls taut at the predetermined height. The wooden pin pulls out of the loops and dummy falls. BEWARE! Trip mechanism is not foolproof so don't get underneath.

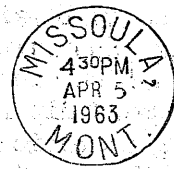
A belay rope of retired nylon climbing rope is tied securely to dummy. It runs over the lower (35') pulley and then down to belayer who sits on ground safely out of way, feet braced, with a waist rope tied to a tree behind him. One quickly learns, in this business, the importance of a good tie-in! Belayer will want gloves and padding against belay rope.

Be sure slack end of belay rope is coiled so that it will run fast through your hands without snarling. The idea is to apply force gradually to belay rope as it is yanked thru your hands. Pulley should give little friction to the belay rope, thus putting maximum stress on the belayer. He should try to stop dummy from a high fall before it reaches the ground. It may be well, too, to practice holding falls and to stop falls slowly as in reality.

Rock is heavy enough to trip mechanism, but will lift off ground instead of breaking rope if car goes too far back.

It is best to pull down ropes even if pulleys are left in tree. Use 40 lb. test nylon fish line, one over each pulley to return climbing ropes to hoist and belay position.





Dave Line  
Whitaker RO  
Rt #3  
Missoula, Mont.

