

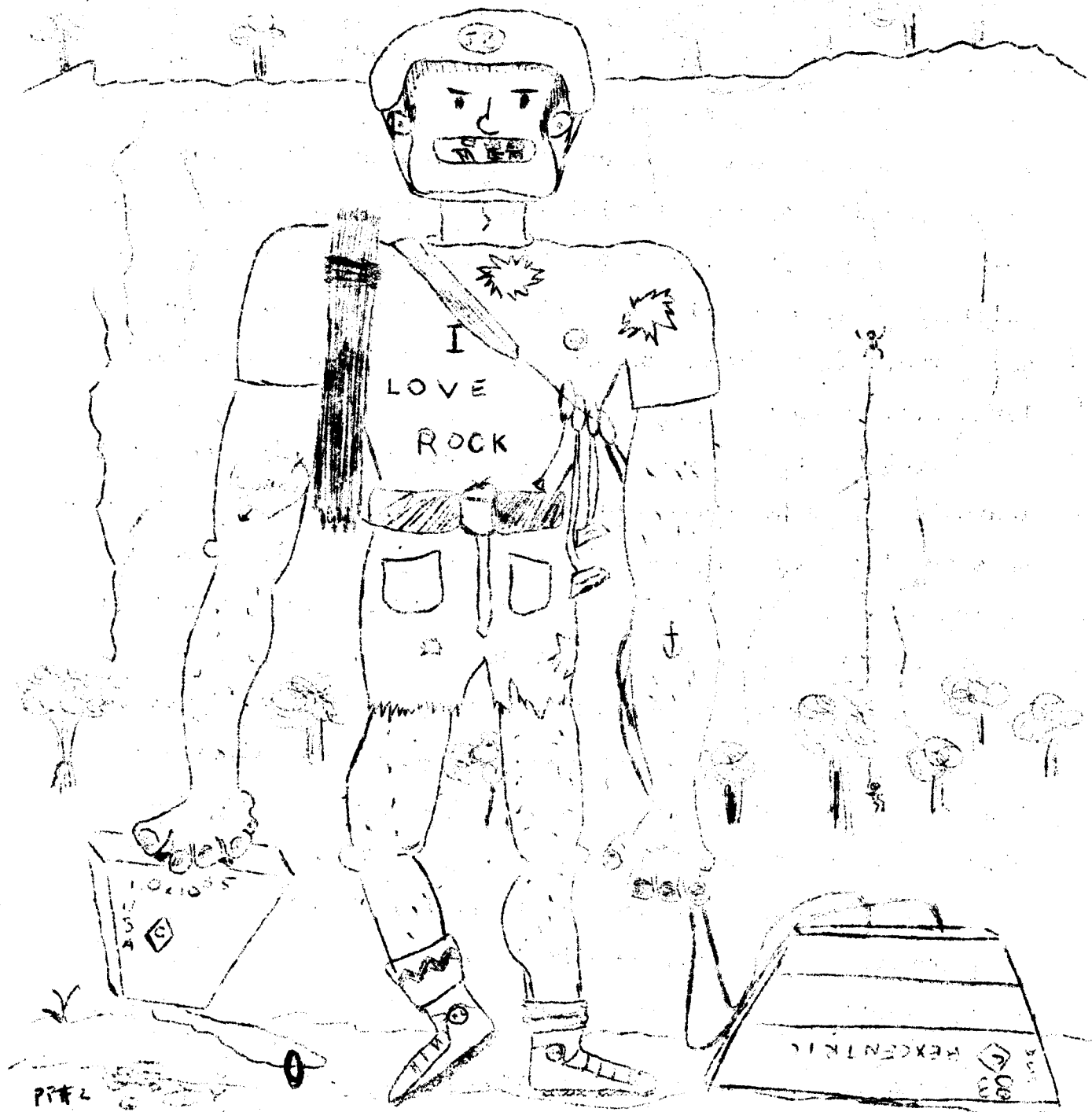
MAY, 1974



THE ROC CAIRN



— RENSSELAER OUTING CLUB, INC. — 15TH ST. LOUNGE, R. P. I., TROY, NEW YORK —



PT 2

Virgin Cave in N.Y.?

A year or two ago members of the Stony Brook Outing Club discovered a large amount of virgin passage off of 'F' passage in Skull Cave. This newly found passage increased the total length of the cave by a considerable amount. Skull which is now the second longest cave in New York, (McFail's is the longest), has a little less than five miles of passage.

Skull begins with two entrance drops of about 30 and 20 feet, separated by about fifteen feet of horizontal passage. At the bottom of the second drop, one meanders along for about 500 ft. until you come to a crawlway which is rather full of water much of the time especially in the spring. This crawlway does not go for 50 ft. or even 100 ft., but for a quarter of a mile! That's some crawl!! At least the rest of the cave isn't the same size, but after the crawlway it opens up into some fairly large N.Y. passage.

At the end of the crawlway there are two passages that leave the entrance passage at right angles, these being 'B' passage and 'D' passage. The new cave found by the Stony Brook Outing Club is down 'D' passage and off 'F', (this new passage boasts some rather unique formations for N.Y. caves)

A year ago a group from the R.O.C. went into Skull and trucked down 'B' passage to a large room at the end, (Known as the Octopus Room, where we had some hot soup as we had brought along a stove and some canned soup). We also spent some time exploring the many fissures that ran off of the room and found many possible leads that we were too tired to try at the time (after you've been truck'in for seven hours in a cave you are dead!!) Thi

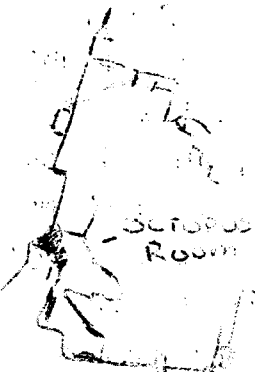
This summer a group of people from the R.O.C. are going to

Invade Skull and if were lucky, well you never know!!

SKULL CAVE ALBANY COUNTY, NY

0 200 400 600 800 1000
FEET

NORTHWEST SECTION



ENTRANCE

RESERVE POOL

A

CANYON

B

LENS ROOM

C

D

F

NEW VIRGIN SECTION IS
NOT SHOWN



The Normanskill Creek

Out toward cave country, just off Route 20, there is a small moving body of water known as the Normanskill. From the road it looks quite harmless, quite dull to be honest, but with JM's assurance that it had some fun, but safe whitish water, I got talked into trying it. It had rained the day before, so at least a mild current greeted us at the put in place.

I took the stern and proceeded to attempt to develop some coordination with JM, not to be confused with JM. Well, the creek is less than two canoe lengths in width, so I guess keeping us from hitting the banks was a good start. We soon came to the first of several portages, a dam, small and in need of repair. The river was a few feet above normal, and so we ran the dam; there was a chute with plenty of water, and calm water just beyond. I enjoyed the acceleration and the slight bit of spray; no one touched a rock.

Just around the bend was the white water! We judiciously landed and ran along the shore to check out the horrors that lie ahead. The left bank was a shale cliff, with plenty of rocks and foam. The center had but one monstrous boulder, the kind that eat battleships. The right was shallow, actually it was the bank with a little flooding, with trees and bushes and such. I opted for the right, BM and one JM took the left. Some rapid hard steering kept us safe, although we took on just a little H₂O. We regrouped before the next set of waves.

This stream makes a one-hundred-eighty degree turn around a National Guard rifle range. Tanks have been known to add some excitement to the canoeing. Today, luckily, it was not being used. Maintaining a safe distance from the outside bank, another cliff, proved to be a challenge. The old adrenaline started to flow and we survived it. JM and I were feeling pretty expert by now, so we began playing chicken with the remaining rocks. Of course, the current had slowed somewhat, and a collision would not have been more than a wet inconvenience. After a bit of relaxing, but yet interesting water, the trip went downhill, fast.

The lower parts of the Normanskill are shallower, clogged with logs and such. There is one portage around two logs, a portage that cannot be avoided by going over the logs. We avoided it in a unique style, henceforth to be known as the submarine stroke. Nuff said.

CLIMBING DEVIL'S TOWER

If you're out in the vicinity of Eastern Wyoming this summer, plan a stop at Devil's tower. It's just north of I-90. But I'll let you in on a few park rules!

1. Only one party is allowed on a climb.
2. All climbers must climb the Durrance route before doing any other climbs on the tower.
3. The sum of rules 1 and 2 means you better make reservations for the route the day you plan to be there. It's first come, first served.
4. Be prepared to list your climbing experience and show off your gear. It will be inspected to see if you are a knowledgeable climber.
5. Helmets are required. Period. No exceptions.
6. Plan to arrive the night before. They won't let you climb if you've been marathon driving all night.

The climbing is clean and enjoyable. You should have confidence on Gunk's 5.7's for the crux pitch. It is rated 5.6-5.7. Belay anchors are installed (double eyebolts) and only a standard selection of nuts is required. There's a fixed pin on the jump-traverse.

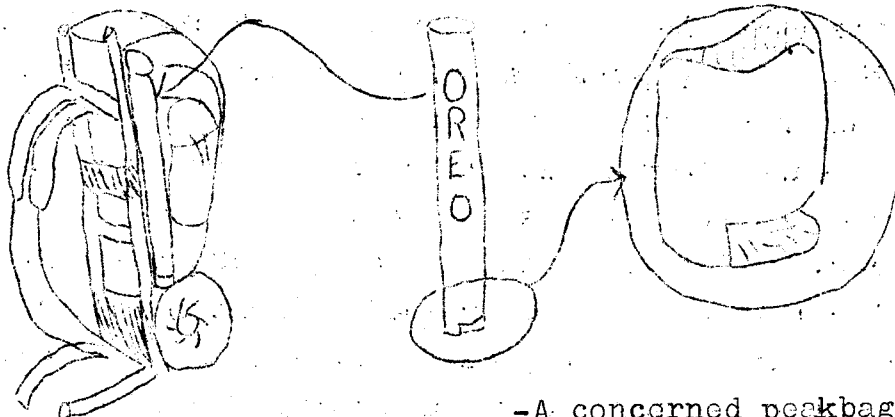
Even if you aren't climbing, it's a nice place to stop, as long as the tourists ain't too thick. We were there in late May and were the only climbers.

Re-climb 'em Rog

THE OREO CARRIER

It has occurred to me that a traditional piece of ROC mountaineering gear has become extinct. The last Oreo carrier graduated with Greg Parris in 1970. In hopes that it will regain popularity, I will briefly describe its use.

The OREO carrier is made of sheet metal (aluminum) riveted into a cylinder with a diameter slightly larger than an average OREO and a length about equal to the height of your packbag. A shelf at the bottom of the tube and a slot allow access to one OREO at a time. A piece of foam is glued to the bottom of the shelf to keep the OREOs from sliding out while the hiker crosses rugged terrain. The carrier is lashed to the packframe, so that a snack is available to anyone on the hike who can catch up to the ~~hike~~ person packing the carrier. A rain cover is necessary for inclement weather.



-A concerned peakbagger and OREO muncher.

At last, something to keep the frosh moving, ed.

4

A Last Attempt at Winter Mountaineering

Rich and I (that's sometimes Greg and I) it all depends on who is writing at the time, decided we should do something over spring vacation. Since it seemed that half the club was going to do warm weather things i.e. rock climbing, canoeing, then obviously the weather was going to turn cold. We decided to head north and do some last winter climbing.

As the beginning of vacation approached we began to get psyched and by Friday night at dinner when we heard that the canoe trip had been canned because of all the snow we knew we were set. Saturday morning we were up early to run down to Albany to catch the bus to Keene Valley. Four hours and ten bus stops later we arrived there. By now it was four P.M. so we hiked up to the garden, past JBL and finally made Bushnell Falls by 7:30. First night out on the trail and everything is going fine, even the weather is cold enough and all the equipment is in good condition. Next morning the alarm clock went off at 5 A.M. much to our dismay it was still dark and cold. But we put on our trusty down parkas and headlamps to cook the good old breakfast of Jello and oatmeal. On the trail by 6:30 with a long day ahead of us. Snowed about 4 inches overnight. Greg and I take turns breaking the trail to Slant Rock. Made it there by 7:30 and found five feet of snow on the ground. Started the climb up toward Marcy and Haystack with the weather getting much warmer. We finally reach little Haystack and stow our snow shoes. If Bob Mack could only see us now walking right over Little Haystack with not even a trace of wind. Got Haystack and back to climbing Marcy with those fifty pound packs. On top of Marcy at 2 P.M.. Meet first and only people on trip three guys from Paul Smiths. As we drop off Marcy toward Lake Tear we lose the trail a quarter of a mile from the pass so we decide to bushwack down. What a mistake! fall into powder up to my neck with that damn pack on. Finally reach Lake Tear and the Leanto is more than half buried. Spend the night, Greg makes the mistake of feeding the resident weasel a triscuit so we have a continual visitor that night. Finally I throw my headlamp battery and a snowball at him and he was gone for the rest of the night.

Monday morning we finally see ⁵ the sun, looks great on the snow. Leave our packs and go off to get Cliff. Begin the bushwack and come across a snowshoe trail, but it ends after ten minutes. Time to find our own route. As we stand atop the highest point we could find plotting our next move Greg spots a plastic bag hung on four nails right next to us. The summit? we assume so and are off. "Let's head up to Lake Arnold," I say to Greg and we lay in the sun. Arrive at Lake, not a cloud in the sky so we put our bags out to dry. Set up the tent for the first time. About midnight it begins to rain and we begin to worry about getting Tabletop the next day. Up at 5 A.M. in the pouring rain. Decide to go for Tabletop. Break the trail to Indian Falls, but find a packed trail up Tabletop, what could it be. As we open the summit can we find that 18 ADK'S had been there two days before us. Still raining and we are soaked to the bone.

Time to start the hike back to Keene Valley. Hike all day in pouring rain and reach Bushnell Falls. Clothes soaking wet, but other gear not too bad. Next day sun is out and 40 degrees, but we decide to head for home, and leave the Adirondacks behind us until next winter.

Rich Tocher

Greg Thomas

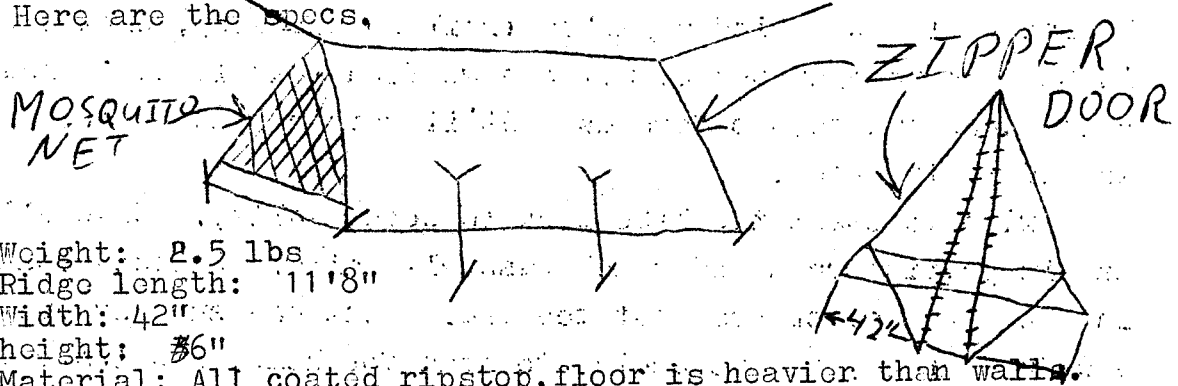
ON ROCKCLIMBING:

We do not deceive ourselves that we are engaged in an activity that is anything but debilitating, dangerous, euphoric, kinesthetic, expensive, frivolously essential, economically useless and totally without redeeming social significance. One should not probe for deeper meanings.

-Allen Streck, 1967

FOR SALE

Need a summer tent? How would you like a nylon tube tent? Here are the specs.



Note, this is a tube tent. It must be well ventilated or condensation will be a problem.

asking \$2.00 ~~10.00~~

call Roger 271-8729

YOU KNOW YOUR'E AN ADIRONDACK WINTER MOUNTAINEER WHEN...

- You have hot jello for dessert in the FDH.
- you sit around the campfire at the ROC banquet and remark wisely "It's just not the same as a 111B."
- You wake up in the middle of the night, look at the thermometer, and tell yourself it'll wait till morning.
- You hike along at 0°F with just a fishnet on.
- You walk into MacDonal'd's in Glens Falls with your fly open or just a pair of longjohns.
- You try to use your ice axe as a razor and slip.
- *You try to use your razor as an ice axe and slip.
- You try to go rockclimbing in snowshoes.
- You eat three pounds of M&M's in a weekend and live to tell about it.
- Your roommate dies laughing when you walk in 50% frozen and 50% dead after a weekend of fun.

Frosh mountaineers

How do you explain about your roommate to the R.A.? (ed)

ROC CAIRN !!!!!!!!!!!!!

BELAYING

"Falling"!

The hand Hold dissapeared in a flash and the leader swung back and forth at the end of his rope. Psyched Out!

"Lower me!"

A typical leader fall. A quick slip or a slow grunting surrendur. There's really no time to act. The belayer must be ready, not 99% of the time, But 100%. Ready from before the word "On belay" to the command of "off belay".


The leader should take reasonable safety steps. He should anticipate possible awkward situations, place protection accordingly, and balance ethics, safety, x and ego. A helmet and harness are to his asvantage and assist his belayer in ~~retrieval~~ retrieval of the body.

But the belayer has the more inportant job. He is the center of the safety device system. Here are several of the things to check before saying "Belay on".

1. Belayers protection must be bombproof in all possible directions.
2. Protection should be backed up in case of unforeseen failure of the primary system.
3. Tie-in to protection should be short and tight in direction of any fall.
4. Check to see if location of belay is the best possible note consequences of falls: will climber fall on belayer? Will climber knock down rocks on belayer? Can he hear climbers commands from where he is?
5. Is helmet on and tight? Climber can fall off, swing and kick you in the head, believe me.
6. If the belay is under a roof, will the upward pull smash the belayer into the roof? (That's almost as bad as ~~get~~ getting hit by the climber..)
7. Have a jumar or prussik sling handy for tie-offs after the fall.
8. Make sure rope is uncoiled and will run freely.
9. Especially with sticht devices, wear gloves.
10. Get comfortable- dress warmly if needed- the climber may be sweating while the belayer is freezing and uncomfortable.
11. If a belay plate(sticht) is used, make sure it is within easy reach of the belayer, before and after a fall, so he can have full control of the deveice.
12. Pretend, as you belay, that you are holding your companion's life in your hands.

As Royal Robbins puts it
"the belay is the court
of last resort" (ed.)

Boudarhead Harris



Falling can be
FUN

SUMMER EQUIPMENT POLICY

1. YOU MUST BE A R.O.C. MEMBER TO CHECK OUT EQUIPMENT.
2. R.O.C. members (patch) get first preference.
3. Open trips have preference over closed trips.
4. A 100% deposit is required for all equipment checked out for the summer. This deposit will NOT be placed in the R.O.C. accounts until the person who left the deposit speaks to the equipment chairman upon return from the trip.
5. The following policies still apply as written in "Equipment Policy 74-75": 1,3,6,7. (posted on the bulliten board outside the pit).
6. To contact the summer equipment chairman call; 518-458-1189 (not a toll call from Troy) Call between 7am and 11pm, any other calls will be disconnected instantaneously. Or write

John Muscatell
96 Marie Parkway
Loudonville New York
12211

7. I would appreciate a week notice, read the bulliten board for any times I might be coming up. If you wish to come to my house get off at exit 4 of the Northway (I-87).

