



# BOLFA

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# BOLFA returns!!!

I'm delighted to welcome you to this long-awaited 2016 issue of BOLFA. Brought to you jointly by the Climbing Club of South Australia and the UniSA Rock Climbing Club, this bumper issue makes up for the long gap between BOLFAs. Behold the handiwork of Rob Brooks, sharing knowledge around belaying the heavy weights and clipping like a boss with his Essential tips for sport climbing. Also turn to 'Your health: Inflexible wrists' and 'Haunting of the claw hand' to take your forearms, wrists and hands to a new level of care.

Los presidentes check in with us: Matty Broadbent shares his passion and thoughtful advice about climbing at Kalymnos in Greece, and be reminded of your own Crag Dirtbag experiences as Caleb Steer tells his Arapilesian one.

All this and more to enjoy!

You are very welcome to contact us with feedback and/or future article submissions by emailing [bolfa@climbingclubsouthaustralia.asn.au](mailto:bolfa@climbingclubsouthaustralia.asn.au)

Happy climbing and bouldering!

Kylie Jarrett, Sophia Fantinel and Rob Brooks  
BOLFA editors  
:)



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## Kalymnos



### An Island Paradise for Climbing

In 2013 my climbing partner Mieka and I were looking for inspiration for our next climbing holiday. We are both limited to our four weeks of annual leave a year – and it'd be a miracle if I ever got more than 3 weeks in a row approved – so it's pretty important that we combine the “holiday” with the “climbing trip”. We'd been to Tonsai in 2011, and were looking for something to top that. Somewhere cheap but comfortable. Somewhere with a big cave. Mieka pulled up footage of the Petzl RocTrip 2006, and we decided that place was Kalymnos.

It had all the required attractions (lots of overhanging rock, Mediterranean climate, scooter transport and great food). So we booked our flights from Adelaide to Dubai, then on to Athens. From Athens we then flew into Kos (another island), shared a taxi to the port with some other climbers, and then caught a ferry to Kalymnos. All up probably just over a full day of travel however we broke it up by spending a night in Dubai and a night in Athens to fit in a bit of sightseeing (recommended).

As our ferry approached the port town of Pothia (the capital of Kalymnos) we were greeted by many houses painted in white and churches precariously perched on the tops of the hills. A crazy assortment of motorbikes and scooters were buzzing back and forth - doing the Greek

equivalent of a “mainy” - while old men sat drinking frappes all afternoon at their favourite waterfront cafe. Pothia is home to the vast majority of the island's population and has many shops

and cafes dotted through the narrow, winding streets. It just so happened to be Greek Easter when we arrived so there was a buzz of activity in the port.

We were picked up by our host once we got off the boat and transferred across the island to the small town of Massouri which is about 10 kilometres away on the other side of the island. We stayed at Vasilis Studios, located in Mirties, a few minutes' walk south of the Massouri. Our room was quaint, however comfortable (and of course painted white). Like almost every studio on the western side of Kalymnos, we had a private balcony complete with a perfect view of the small island of Telendos.

The next day was our first climbing day, and we were understandably a little jet lagged, so went to a crag that didn't require much of a walk in.





The rock is limestone and takes a little getting used to, however after a couple of days we were right in the swing of it. There are some 53 crags on Kalymnos and 11 on the adjacent island of Tenedos. The crags we found to be our favourites included Grande Grotta (a massive cave just above Massouri), Secret Garden (countless slightly overhanging mid-grade routes), Odyssey (one of the classics, starting to get a bit polished), Galantiani Cave (a bit of a trek, but a couple of outstanding endurance routes and a good way to escape the crowds) and Sikati Cave (the giant sinkhole that featured in the Petzl RocTrip) just to name a few.

We found that there were about four climbing stores available and they stocked all the brightest colours for you to fit right in (everyone wears very bright clothing in Kaly). I definitely stoked up on E9 while I was there...

Being that it was Greek Easter at the time, there were celebrations going on for most of the Easter week. In particular, a specialty of Kalymnos, it is tradition for some of the local men to head up to the top of the hill overlooking the port and throw off dynamite throughout the day. They continued to do this for three days while we were there, and even though it is on the opposite side of the island to the climbing, you can hear and feel the explosions through the rock. The celebrations continued late into the evening on Easter night with a parade of all of the churches on the island and a

ridiculous display of fireworks.

The food on the island is outstanding, with a fresh array of seafood always on the menu. As a person with coeliac disease, Mieka found it reasonably easy to stay gluten free. Generally the restaurants are family owned and you will find that most of the family is either working in the kitchen or standing around. A couple of places that are a must visit are Aegean Tavern, Miltos & Manifesto. The prices are outstanding if you are used to dining in Australia. There is only one place to get a proper cappuccino or latte in the morning and that is On Site coffee, at the northern end of Massouri.

We decided to go back in May 2015 because we loved the place so much. However this time we stayed in apartments owned by an Australian we met from our previous trip (Louis Studios) closer to the heart of town. To our delight many of the locals remembered us from 2 years earlier even though we had only stayed for 10 days.

It has to be an island paradise if you can just go and rent a scooter and literally ride from crag to crag, chasing the sun or shade (depending on the weather), before retiring to one of the bars. One scooter will be sufficient for two people however it is fun to race from crag to crag. On the last trip we were informed that you will now need a motorbike licence to rent a scooter as they have changed the laws in Greece – an international drivers licence will no longer

be enough. We still found someone that would rent us one but be warned you may not be so lucky.

On a rest day you might want to venture around the island to Vathy for a lazy lunch as it is one of the most beautiful bays in the world. The scoot there is just as scenic. There is also charter fishing available and diving/snorkelling tours. Otherwise you can hire a push bike and ride the distance around the island (as Mieka encouraged for our 'rest day'). The bikes are not quite Tour de France spec but you will get a really good workout and work up an appetite! We did, and it took about 3.5 hours (Mieka even managed to claim a QOM on Strava!). It will take approximately an hour to ride the scooter around the same distance. Many evenings after finishing climbing for the day, we'd take the scooter across to Pothia or visit some of the ruins dotted about the island.

You will see that when you arrive into Athens that unemployment is still a very big issue in Greece, however the island of Kalymnos is still going strong, supported by the influx of more and more climbers. You will also find there are a few Australians living on the island, some even running cafes and bars. Many have Australian relatives (especially in Darwin). One of the locals with Australian ties, who owns a bar to the south of Massouri, is Babbis (his wife is from Australia) and he is very friendly.

There is just one more thing that I found to be unforgettable about this island, and that is its honey. The thyme

honey that is produced on the island is like no other. So much so, Mieka brought quite a bit back. Please be aware that if you do bring it back you will need to declare it at customs. Mieka was told by customs officers that you should have no issues bringing the honey back to South Australia as long as it is in a clear container and has no signs of debris inside it. They won't allow honeycomb, however.


Kalymnos is a stunning island with friendly people and world class climbing. After two trips we have still only managed to visit a handful of its crags, and more are being developed every year. It is the absolute ultimate climbing destination and I can't wait to go back!

Matty Broadbent





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itive movements which put the wrists under strain.

There are a couple of simple exercises and stretches you can do to help keep those wrists flexible.

## 1) Forearm / Wrist Stretch

To the right are 2 different stretches which can help to keep the wrists flexible. Hold for 1 minute.



## 2) Push-ups

The standard push-up will help to build wrist strength and flexibility. Bringing your hands back level with your lower ribs for a few reps will also help to extend the range of motion of your wrists.

## 3) Tricep Dips

Find that nearby bench, ledge or step and start dipping.

## 4) The old weight on a rope on a stick trick

Find a piece of PVC pipe or some other tube / stick and tie a rope with a weight on 1 end to it. An ideal weight for starting off is 1-2kg. Roll the pipe / stick using your hands, winding the rope around the tube. Wind the weight up and then down again whilst maintaining control. Ensure you maximise the bend in your wrists as you roll. This will aid range of motion in the wrists and give you an intense forearm workout too. Couple this with climbing or bouldering some laps to really punish yourself.



# INFLEXIBLE WRISTS

Robert Brooks

Well the title pretty much sums up the following discussion, but on the topic of minor enlightenment, your wrists can get rather inflexible due to your climbing addiction. Most climbers probably haven't put much thought to this; hence we thought a little discussion was in order.

The first question to address is why worry about wrist flexibility? A lack of flexibility means that bending your wrist whilst pulling hard can result in something going ping, or more commonly, that twingey pain in your wrist that lasts for a few weeks and hurts every time you do something strenuous or clench your fist hard.

Inflexibility can occur because the tendons, ligaments and muscles in your wrist have become tightened (or shortened) over time due to the repetitive nature of certain climbing movements. Hangboard training and / or chin-ups are just a couple of examples of repet-



# BELAYING THE HEAVY WEIGHTS

**A**fter reading what could possibly be the worst article I've ever read on something climbing related, I decided something needed to be said. If the article titled, "Belaying a Sport Pitch When the Leader Outweighs the Belayer" is any indication of the current level of education within the climbing community, then something needs to be said before someone gets hurt. Naturally I encourage you to read for yourself via the link below.

<http://bit.ly/2bDtQFC>

Herein, I will attempt to translate what started off as a rather rant-like response to an article lacking in nearly every essential element, into something a little more comprehensive. In this article, a heavier climber represents a person who outweighs you by more than 10kg (22 pounds). Bigger falls create more force; consequently these principles also apply to belaying someone of equal weight. So here are some thought processes, skills and assessments that I consider vital to the scenario of sports climbing (on bolts) where the climber outweighs the belayer considerably.

## 1. Situational Awareness

The key to belaying a heavy climber is to analyse what will happen to you (the belayer) if they were to fall. You should be doing this every 5 seconds. Predicting what is going to happen allows you to react much faster when a fall does occur.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself whilst belaying:

- Is the climber going to swing? If so, where will they end up?
- Am I in the path of the fall? Do I need to move?

- Am I standing directly underneath my climber where a collision could occur if they fall?
- Am I going to leave the ground? What will I hit if I do?
- Which way am I facing? Can I get my feet up to protect me if I fly towards the wall?
- What is behind, left, right and in front of me? Am I free to move in this space?
- Are there other climbers around?
- Is my climber about to clip? What happens if they fall now, or now, or now? What should I do?
- Am I spotting my climber (bouldering style) before the first bolt?

Although there are no set rules for what you should be doing, there are a number of factors to understand when making an informed decision regarding how to belay based on the situation and your surroundings. The belayer must endeavour to put themselves in the safest possible scenario, as an injury to the belayer can result in letting go of the rope and we all know how that ends. Keep in mind, if you are not comfortable belaying a climber in the situation they are requesting, you can simply choose not to belay them.

## 2. Ground Anchors

When a person who outweighs you considerably falls on the other end of the rope to which you are attached; basic physics predicts that you're going to get airborne. As you can imagine, getting airborne results in a bigger fall for your climber. Therefore, if a ground anchor is employed to secure your belayer to Planet Earth, they aren't going to go flying quite as far, thereby shortening the climber's fall.

A ground anchor can be fashioned by using a section of dynamic rope to secure the belayer to a range of natural features (A Dyneema or nylon sling can also be used for this purpose, but keep in mind they can have low stretch and thus provide a harsh stop). Natural features that could potentially be used as ground anchors include: solid trees, large boulders, another person (girth hitch a sling to the back of the harness) and even traditional climbing gear in the rock face. In the indoor climbing environment, a ground anchor might be a sling to the top rope ground anchors or another person (See photo).

It is important to understand that flying through the air gives the climber a 'softer', gentler fall. This softer fall results from the climber slowing down over a larger distance (aka bigger fall), which in turn puts less force on the gear (rope, bolts, quickdraws and belay devices). A bigger fall can also result in the climber hitting the ground, so be careful! A ground anchor may be useful to stop yourself from flying too high, causing your climber to deck. Adversely, by ground anchoring and reducing your airtime, you will inherently subject your gear to a larger force. This may not be desirable in situations where traditional gear is being used. Thus, there is a trade-off between putting more force on the gear and your climber hitting the ground.

Consider the attachment point of the ground anchor to your harness carefully. This decision should be related to a number of things. Where will you (the belayer) be standing? Where is the first bolt relative to where you and the climber are? Where is the ground anchor? In some circumstances it might be worth considering attaching the ground anchor to your belay loop rather than the back of your harness,



or even to the same carabiner you are using to belay with (i.e. the one your ATC is attached to, for example). If you opt to attach the ground anchor to the back of your harness (keeping in mind a gear loop is not suitable), you should make sure that this does not deform your harness when weighted to the point where if you invert (as can happen if you are lifted to the point of being stopped by your ground-anchor tether). Your harness should be over your hips when weighted. In addition, be very careful to avoid accidentally clipping your tether through a leg loop as that could end up in a very uncomfortable, and potentially dangerous situation.

## 3. Protect Yourself (And Your Climber)

**Wear a helmet** – it will protect you from falling rocks and bashing your head into the rock or climber if a fall occurs. Consider belay gloves if you are concerned about rope slippage during a fall or to protect yourself when flying into the rock. Enclosed shoes are not a bad idea either. Not only do they prevent the exposure of your smelly climber's feet, they will allow you to move around more effectively and prevent damage to your feet whilst belaying /catching falls.

Standing away from the wall whilst belaying often means getting yanked not only up, but directly towards the wall when you climber falls. Stand too far away from the wall and this may mean losing your footing and getting dragged along the ground (especially if the ground is a steep decent away from the base of the climb). A big fall can even smack you into the wall with a fair bit of force, be aware of this and try to balance the risks. Make sure you are standing with a posture that will generally allow you to fly 'feet-first' rather than 'head-first' as much as possible. Getting your legs up between you (the belayer) and the cliff could make all the difference. In some circumstances it may be better to allow the first bolt to stop you instead, in which case watch your fingers! Guard whichever hand is on the brake line at all



costs. Remember: don't to let go of that rope!

Don't stand directly underneath your climber, if they fall on your head, chances are you are both going down. If your climber moves above you during the course of the climb, guess what, move! Another hazard created when belaying far away from the wall is a rope pulling tight. When the rope pulls tight during a fall, a tight line of rope is created between you and the first bolt. If you are standing out from the wall this creates a nice



tight line for your belayer to fall legs either side, ripping their genitals to buggery (example to the left). Yes, I've seen that happen. No, it was not funny (for the climber anyway). To ensure you still have room to move, stand off to the side of the first bolt / piece of protection where practical.

I recently read an article that said: "Consider having the leader reach down and unclip the first bolt after clipping the second bolt; this will prevent the belayer from being yanked up into the first quickdraw".

Are you serious?? This is absurd. Why on earth would you want to reach down and remove one of your pieces of protection?! Especially when your belayer has a number of other options to keep themselves safe [see point 5]. What if the second bolt was to fail? (Yes bolts do fail!) The first bolt would be all that is left between you and the ground. In addition, the first quickdraw is adding friction to the rope along with the second. If you remove this additional friction, the belayer could then fly up to the second bolt (particularly if the climber outweighs them) and the climber then almost definitely ends up on the deck. Don't reach back and take out your gear – that, is stupid.

## 4. Using Your Belay Space

Learn to use the space available. This means that whilst feeding out rope, you can also take a step forward as you do it. This grants the climber an extra length of rope with minimal effort on your behalf. This is a great strategy to avoid short-drawing (giving rope too slowly) your climber whilst they are clipping, particularly if they have a longer arm span than you. To return to your position after the climber has made the clip, feed out a section of rope whilst stepping backwards. Be careful not to pull your climber off the wall when you do this. The moral of the story is don't be a lazy belayer, do the work and keep your climber safe.

## 5. Friction and The First Bolt

As mentioned, there are far better options than the absurdity of reaching down and unclipping the first bolt after having clipped the second. Think ground anchor first, then consider stick clipping the second bolt from the ground.

Providing you trust the bolts you are climbing on, stick clipping the second bolt and creating a 'top-rope' scenario until you pass the second bolt can be a safer option for both climber and belayer.

Without a ground anchor the situation changes. Unlike fornication, you are going to want friction in the system. This friction between rope and quickdraw will help to slow

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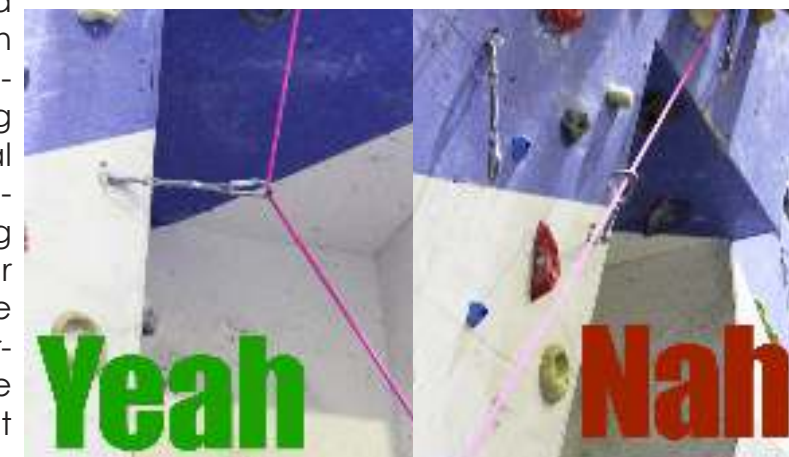
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your climber down during a fall. The more clips you have in, the more friction in the system. Bolts / clips staggered laterally (left and right of each other) will create more friction than bolts / clips in a straight line.

The most important situation to consider is one where the climber could hit the ground. In most cases we are talking about 1, 2 or 3 bolts clipped in when the climber takes a fall. Falling whilst clipping the 2nd, 3rd or 4th bolt may also result in a ground fall. Keeping in mind that some severely overhung (more than 45°) climbs may present the opportunity for a ground fall at every bolt.

Firstly, don't stand directly underneath the first bolt. Not only are you directly in the path of your climber's fall (most likely), but the rope runs straight through the first quickdraw with minimal angle (see photo below). Stand to the side and create an angle less than 180° to achieve friction (see photo below). This will help to slow the climber during the fall. It is rare that standing underneath the first bolt creates a safer scenario. This might be an option if there is loose rock involved in the climb or the climb is overhung, and your climber is going to swing if they fall after the first or second bolt.

So where should the belayer stand to create this angle / extra friction at the first bolt? You could stand directly out from the wall, but in doing so you may create an additional hazard as the rope pulls tight between you and the wall, creating a genital splitting funhouse for your climber. Standing on a 45° angle to the wall and not directly underneath your climber seems to be the best choice. Keeping in mind that





you'll need to move depending on where your climber is above you. This angle also allows you to protect yourself somewhat if you end up flying toward the rock / wall (get your feet up!).

## 6. Jumping

So far we know that getting airborne produces a soft catch. Therefore jumping produces a super soft catch. This tip refers to a non-ground anchored situation where the climber outweighs the belayer, as jumping whilst anchored to the ground isn't going to help you.

As the belayer, one option is to launch yourself backward and toward the ground just as the climber falls. This will take up to 1.5m out of what was a 6m fall, something I've shown in the gym whilst training 50-55kg climbers to catch falls by climbers weighing upward of



90kg.

The key to pulling this off is attentive belaying and timing. You need to jump back hard on a 45° angle just as the climber's weight comes onto the rope (practice it in the gym, see pictures above). This will feel unnatural and frankly scary as you're hurling yourself towards the ground just as you might if you were bottom dropping on a trampoline. Even if the belayer is pulled off the ground in this scenario, some of the speed has been taken out of the climber's fall. If the fall was a ground fall, the touch-down is relatively gentle with the weight offset of the belayer.



This strategy can also be used by the belayer if they don't fancy giving that first bolt a firm kiss. In a similar fashion to the ground anchor, jumping backwards does increase the shock load on your gear.

So should you jump backwards all of the time? The answer is no, you should only attempt this if the climber is facing a ground fall or all of the bolts are in straight line and you think you might hit the rock / wall if your climber falls.

## 7. Slack in the System

One of the essentials for light-weight belayers is to minimise the slack they have in the system at all times. Sure, have the rope slack enough not to inhibit the climber, but be quick on your feed out and take in, using your belay space wisely to do this. Less rope out means shorter falls and less rope stretch.

Make sure to watch that climber like a hawk! Predict when they are going to pull rope. You can do this by watching the climber's body language. A climber will set themselves aka lock up their body in some way, in order to take a hand off to pull rope and make a clip. If they have done the climb before, you should almost know which holds they are going to clip from, so be ready. When lead belaying, a general guide is to not let the rope loop below your waist in front of you. If the rope is on the ground or making a skipping-rope loop in front of you, this is too much slack. Not only is it unnecessary, you are creating the potential for the climber to fall further than they need too (and possibly have a ground fall!).

## 8. Communication

Use calls to reduce the element of surprise. A call like "Clipping" can be used by the climber just before they pull rope to alert the belayer. Another call the climber can use is "Watch me" This can be used when the climber is anticipating a fall. This may be during a difficult section of the route or when the climber is getting tired. Other calls like "Take", "Take in" and "Slack" can be used where appropriate to let the belayer know the correct action to perform. Frequently informing your climber that they are about to take a ground fall will help to toughen their mental resolve. Calls like "Toughen up," "Dyno," "Push harder you B\*#ch!" or other creative insults can also help to discourage your climber from falling.

## 9. Distractions

Seemingly trivial, but there is no shortage of distractions in the world of climbing. In short, don't chat whilst you are belaying. Don't take off your shoes, grab a drink, or check out that hot person next to you. Watch your climber; you are responsible for their life so treat it seriously. Keep people out of your belay space where possible. If someone comes up for a chat or just to hang out and watch, politely ask them to move – tell them you can chat later but you need to focus right now. Be careful how you say it, so you don't start a fight. If you do intend to start a fight, prepare yourself prior to the event with a carabiner on a long sling, which you can use as a weapon.





# Why Climb?

Kylie Jarrett

What the flippin' heck are we climbing for, when there's an obvious gully track to the saddle and then onto the summit? Or why don't we bring our yoga mats to the national park for mindfulness body moves in a beautiful natural setting? I don't have answers but after doing it for over half my life, climbing remains moreish. Perhaps it's being excitingly up in the air and that sense of accomplishment. Maybe it appeals to the child in us, who had playgrounds and high cubby houses, along with the stress release of being in nature — something deep in our DNA.

I'm very fortunate to have spent time on rock in 6 different countries with countless partners from all sorts of backgrounds. In my mid-twenties I camped at Arapiles for three weeks solid and climbed, chased men and partied like there was no tomorrow. Then for a time I didn't climb regularly, but when I returned to the crag routine I came to know my crew, the Adelaide climbing community and CCSA. These folks are more welcoming and fun than I could have ever imagined.

Bloody heights. I have learned a lot and am grateful for the mentorship of the 'wizards' among us. But I'm highly strung in a way that has made leading especially difficult to progress with, sticking to routes with little numbers. But I like the can-do feeling, and my rack is beautiful, so I continue.

Four Girl Power hot tips that anyone can apply:

## 1. Got the heebie-jeebies? Breathe. Eyes-looking. Position.

This is adapted from Arno Ilgner's BERP elements<sup>1</sup>. Observe your breath and breathe deeper. With eyes-looking all around including for footers of course, visualising the next moves. Feel your position: your body tension, posture and how your feet are planted on the rock. Drop your shoulders away from your ears and lower your heels.

## 2. Go

Probably obvious, but don't overthink the next moves you've just visualised. Get your groove on. Sometimes having done the moves but

not sure exactly how is kinda nice.

## 3. Top-roping is OK

And what fabulous top-rope-friendly crags we're graced with in Radelade.

## 4. Enjoy

Acknowledge your power and fitness. Have a laugh. As a UniSA Recreation Management graduate, I can say there are infinite pastimes people can choose, so enjoy your chosen thing. Set challenges agreeable on your own terms. Take in the



pretty scenery. Rock on!

This is nails! With Matt Harris at Araps — I was a UniSA undergrad and climbed with AUMC'ers in the 90s, where I made friends for life.

1 Ilgner, A 2009, Espresso lessons: from the rock warrior's way, Desiderata Institute, La Vergne, Tennessee

Accross: Mieka Webb and Mintzhu Min on Eddie Misses the Point (25) at Norton Summit. Photos: Simon Wilson.  
Above: Canadian Vicki Weldon on Chain Reaction (5.12c) at Smith Rock, United States. Photo: Simon Wilson.





# Tricks & Tips for Sport Climbing

## Teach Yourself to Clip

Rob Brooks

Picture yourself in the climbing gym.... now there's your first mistake. The gym is not the real world. Jive ass gym monkeys taking their gym-learnt 'skills' outdoors is just plain old frightening. Driving straight to the point, lead climbing in the gym tends to gloss over some important issues. Scariest of all is a new lead climber trying to get that second or third clip in and having a good old fumble with the quickdraw rope-in-hand style.

Now there are many ways of clipping a rope into a quickdraw and different ways work for different people. In short, just practice clipping the damn rope in on the ground before you put yourself in a break-your-leg position. Aside from reckless criticism, here is one way to teach yourself. Keep in mind there are many ways of clipping and learning them all is your best bet.

Tie into your harness with a figure 8. Each clip must be initiated with the rope hanging from your waist (aka not in your hand already). If you fumble a clip at any stage; drop the rope immediately and start again. Only teach yourself good habits.

Common mistakes include wrist too low and trying to make the clip all at the same speed. Remember rope fast, pause on the gate, clip. Another common mistake is not finishing with your hand off to the side or perpendicular to the gate of the draw. Finishing with your hand below the draw or right next to the draw often makes a sloppy clip.

For all of the following methods of clipping pick up the rope the same way; from low down using only your index finger. The more fingers you introduce, the more likely you are to stuff up the clip (in these methods).



### 1. Repeat steps A – H, 10 times each against a flat wall and with a free swinging clip.

#### A. Right Handed Clip, Clip facing left

Pick up the rope from low down just using your index finger. Let the rope run over that finger until it is above your waist, then use your thumb to keep it in position.

In this method these are the only 2 fingers that contact the rope. Lift the rope to the height of the bolt (so above the gate you are clipping), then lower the rope to the



gate. Place your middle finger into the gate and apply downward pressure. Simultaneously place the rope onto the gate using your thumb and index finger.

Keep your wrist up; the angle of your wrist is quite important, drop your wrist and the rope can roll over your thumb making it hard to clip. Then drive your hand across the quickdraw; down and right.

Confidence and speed is the key to making this work really well. Lift the rope as fast as you like, but make sure that when you are placing the rope on the gate, you pause for a second (always) to ensure the rope is placed correctly. Then quickly flick that rope into the draw.



### B. Right Handed Unclip, Clip facing left

Pick up the rope between you and the quickdraw. Lift the rope above the bottom biner and wrap it around the gate by pushing the gate with your thumb (wrap the rope over the gate). Squeeze the rope onto the gate with your index finger then pull down on the rope.



### C. Right Handed Clip, Clip facing right

Pick up the rope as before with just your index finger. Let the rope run over that finger until it is above your waist, then use your thumb to keep it in position. Bring the rope level with the gate this time. Place the rope onto the gate using your index finger as



the guide. Simultaneously wrap your thumb around the gate to hold it in position. Keep your wrist up to ensure the rope doesn't roll away from the gate. This is the slow step so take your time and maintain control of the gate. Then quickly roll your wrist to the left and move your hand down and left across the gate. If you get your finger stuck you need to roll your wrist faster. Again, confidence and speed are important.



### D. Right Handed Unclip, Clip facing right

METHOD 1: Pick up the rope with thumb and index finger, lift it above the bottom gate and wrap it around the gate by pushing with your thumb (wrap the rope over itself). Squeeze the rope onto the gate with your thumb and it should fall out with relative ease.





METHOD 2: Pick up the rope between the quickdraw and the belayer. Wrap it over the gate and whip it through. Personally I love this method – if you can get it working for you it is smooth as.



#### E. Repeat the steps using your left hand

Step A will be for Left handed, clip facing right. Step B will be the same. Step C will be for Left handed, clip facing left. Step D will be the same.

### 2. Repeat steps A – E, 10 times each with your eyes closed.

### 3. Repeat steps A – E, 10 times each with your eyes closed and swing the clip violently before clipping.

In this scenario bring the rope up to the draw in the way described in either step A or C. With rope in hand, tap the draw using your hand on the side that the bottom of the gate is facing. Once you have stopped the quickdraw from swinging then make the clip.



## Tricks for Clipping

Sometimes a sport route calls for a bit of clipping wizardry. Usually this comes into play when the bolts are difficult to clip, or you really want to get that clip on fast for safety or simply to keep moving. This scenario occurs most commonly when considering how to clip the first bolt. The simplest solution is to stick clip the bolt (particularly if it's a half mile off the deck). If your die hard traditionalist morals don't allow you to sink that low then these methods might sit better with your ego.

#### 1. Pre-clipped Quick Draw

Whilst the quickdraw is attached to your gear loop, put the rope through the bottom gate ready to go. Make sure you have visually sequenced the route beforehand, know which hand you plan to clip with, where your belayer will be standing and exactly how you will grab the quickdraw from your gear loop (mime it out if you have to). Make sure you don't back clip. This trick ensures you don't waste time and therefore energy, picking up the rope and clipping it into the draw whilst you are on the climb.



#### 2. Double pre-clipped quick draw

Similar to the first tip, clip the rope into the bottom gate of the quickdraws when you are on the ground, then clip the top gate to your shirt. This way you can clip consecutive bolts quickly and efficiently. Ensure the bottom gates don't pull on the rope too much when you are clipping them to your shirt otherwise you might tragically tear your much loved climbing shirt if you were to fall. Again, watch you don't back clip.





# CRAG CARE

**Liz Milner**

Morialta Crag Care is a project run by climbers for climbers, to enhance the area around the main Morialta climbing cliffs both from a natural resource perspective and from the view of climbers. It helps improve climber safety, access and trails. The area begins at the gate 17 entrance to Morialta Conservation Park on Norton Summit Road, extends down from there to the creek line, taking in the Billiard Table crag and all the way uphill to the eastern end of Far Crag, again extending from the access road in down to the creek line.

Morialta Crag Care started as a partnership between the Climbing Club of South Australia and the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta in May 2014. In 2015 the UniSA Rock Climbing Club also joined the Friends group to become regular crag carers. Today everyone is welcome to come along and be involved and members of the Adelaide Uni Mountain Club and the Scouts SA Rock Climbing Group are also regular helpers.

Our work started by tackling the olives along the base of Billiard Table which get in everyone's way all the time. It takes up to 7 years to kill a mature olive after treatment; they

can look dead for 6 and then still recover. Have you noticed the sick olives down there? We are here for the long haul and there are a bunch more to kill.

Our work has continued with removing all the blackberry from above the cliffs. With the department sending in contractors to supplement our work earlier this year we should have removed most of the outlying patches of blackberry above the cliffs and be able to start working on the stuff in the descent routes next year. There is no point killing the plants at the bottom until the seed source at the top has been removed. Blackberry needs to be removed slowly as it provides habitat for the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot and we need to give them the chance to find alternative shelter from cats & foxes. So you will see the large patch in the gully you walk past on the way to Far Crag has only been partially sprayed this year.

We have made a huge impact at the entrance to the climbing area, removing or drilling much of the olive, broom & dog rose between the cleaning station and the pathway down to Boulder Bridge etc. You can pretty much see the line of where we have managed to work to if you know how to spot an olive.



We have also helped the department close off some of the pathways which were causing erosion down the slope and depositing detritus at the top of the crag. A great example of this is the works the department put in last year to reduce the soil washed down over Muesli wall. That erosion used to commence way up at the entrance to the park near the gate and rain would wash rocks & soil all the way down Muesli wall. The new track switches back a couple of times but makes climbers' lives much better in the long run!

What are the other benefits of helping out at Crag Care? All financial members of the Climbing Club of South Australia, the UniSA Rock Climbing Club and the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta who are registered, regular volunteers at Friends of Black Hill and Morialta events (including Crag Care) obtain the following benefits:

- free training courses
- invitation to other Natural Resource Management events
- free 12 month Multi Parks Pass with the Camping option included for many of South Australia's Parks.

More details here: [parks.sa.gov.au](http://parks.sa.gov.au)

Everyone else is welcome to join in, why not come along and check it out?

Crag Care volunteers usually meet once every two months on the second Sunday of odd months at 9:30am at Gate 17, working until 12:00. We usually have a fun climbing session in the afternoon. The next Crag Care will be held Sunday 11th September 2016. Check the CCSA website for other upcoming dates. If you have any questions you can ask our Crag Care coordinator Liz Milner: [crag-care@climbingclubsouthaustralia.asn.au](mailto:crag-care@climbingclubsouthaustralia.asn.au)





# CRAG DIRTBAGS

Caleb Steer - President of  
UniSA Rock Climbing Club

**I**n April, we pulled off a 4 day club trip to Arapiles. To summarize the trip in one word... epic! Over 35 of our club members came, saw and conquered one of Australia's best climbing areas!

From the moment we arrived at The Pines campsite, we were greeted with open arms. You can meet some amazing people at crag campsites. We met a small group of guys who were cruising up Wagalak (29) and were living every climber's dream, travelling around the world climbing and just living off thank yous, and I'm sure other currencies. How do they do it?!

Over the next few days we were drinking and swapping climbing stories with a tonne of different climbers, and we became very trusting of the people and our surroundings.



You hear people say "weird stuff happens at The Pines" pfft, not with us there! But little to our knowledge, hidden away, lurking in the dark and musky corners of the campsite, lies the common Crag Dirtbags. They scope out their prey and wait patiently - they've got time, what else have they got to do...?

Day 3. We're pretty settled in, we had a leisurely breakfast, packed our lunch, filled up our chalk bags and took off for the day. Climbed the all-time favourite Bard (12) and a few other classics, it was fantastic. We walked back to the

campsite just before dusk, everyone still filled with euphoria, viewing the beautiful colours of the sun setting. Could this day get any more perfect?! Arrived at our shelter, grabbed a beer, and had a look for any snacks that could be on our table.

That's when I saw something... odd... Tired from the day, and slow to react, I stood there in disbelief. I could only point at what I was seeing to try and get the attention of someone else. Other people realizing and gasping. At the centre of our table was a sad and sorry, pillaged big ol' bucket of chalk. We had been robbed!!! After a few seconds, we started noticing other oddities on the table - we were surprised to see that the thieves had left behind the more valuable items. Like the bottles of alcohol, a \$90 Leatherman, a \$180 JetBoil, and a \$500 Samsung phone. We quickly identified what type of thief we were dealing with... Shock turned to laughter, yelling and screaming with hilarity. We were robbed by a Crag Dirtbag (Rob Has kindly given us a visual aid to the right)! You see, these guys don't steal and sell, they steal and climb.

It just goes to show when



you're at The Pines, keep your camping gear close, and your climbing gear closer.



# CLAW HAND

Robert Brooks

**F**inger strength is something that most serious climbers endeavour to improve. Arguably, climbing is the best way to improve your finger strength in a uniform and comprehensive way. However, finger strength can be trained. Hang boards, campus boards and designated hand strength devices all spring to mind. But what are you actually strengthening here?

Hold your hand out in front of you completely relaxed. If you call yourself a climber what you are probably looking at is all four fingers curving significantly towards your palm. This is most likely because your tendons, ligaments and muscles are stronger on the inside of your hand pulling it into a claw formation.

If you continue to train finger strength in a biased way this condition can worsen, especially later in life, leaving you with a malicious claw hand. In any case, back to the point of this article, awareness. I believe it is important to train everything in balance. So how do I train my fingers in the opposite fashion to the conventional and widely publicised methods?



The opposite movement to grabbing onto something i.e. finger extensions is the answer, but training that requires resistance. Luckily there are options! The simplest and what I have found to be the best, is a hand held device by Metolius; the Gripsaver Plus™ (shown below). The Gripsaver Plus™ comes in a range of difficulties; soft, medium and hard for under \$20. Recently I purchased the hard version, which offers the most resistance. In a really basic description stick your fingers in the holes and go for it. Simply extend your fingers and open your hand as far as possible.



On my first attempt, somewhere between 10 and 20 reps I was definitely feeling the fatigue. The other exercise recommended with the Gripsaver Plus™ is to open your fingers and bend your wrist back as far as possible, let it come back to neutral, close your fingers and repeat. Approximately 5 reps later I was feeling the fatigue in my wrist. WOW. This thing actually works, particularly at making me feel really pathetic. Fortunately I had gone into this exercise knowing that since I had never trained my finger strength in this way it was probably going to quite difficult. In any case the results after a few weeks of using it nearly every day are great.

Overall, my hands and fingers feel much stronger. More importantly, I've found that now I can achieve tension through my fingers that I could not previously generate. Holding slopers and anything where I have to keep my fingers completely stationary is much easier. Evidently, like core strength, it helps to be strong in all of the muscle groups. I've also found that I can release holds slowly, with much more control. This is awesome for those tension-y overhung climbs or boulder problems that we all love (or hate).

If you can't afford to fork out \$20 or simply don't want to, find some fat rubber bands, link them together in a similar formation to the Gripsaver Plus™, and train using that.

# Random Helpful Hints!

Remember to **tie a stopper knot in the end of your rope**. This will stop the rope pulling through the belay device if you ever miscalculate the length of a climb.

When leaving a ledge on a multi-pitch climb, remember to **clip into one of the pieces of gear that makes up your anchor using a quickdraw**. This prevents a factor 2 fall if you fall before you place your first piece.

A common mistake when attaching the rope to your harness is tying into just your leg loop (usually the bottom loop). If you fall on lead with just the bottom loop in you will invert when you fall. **Always check each other's knots and belay devices before each climb** – you could save someone's life one day.

When climbing on trad gear, **plan what gear will go where from the ground**. Plan as far as you can see and remember it.

If you have taken lots of falls on your rope, **check for flat spots**, this could indicate damage to the core of the rope. Consider trimming a few metres

off the end or getting a new rope.

**Always check your rope for cuts and abrasions prior to climbing**. If the core (thick white fibres) is exposed it's time to get a new rope or cut off the damaged section.

A 60 metre rope cut in half makes 2 awesome 30 metre ropes. Consider splitting the cost with a buddy if you want a new gym rope!

Dynamic rope has lots of stretch, so it's great for absorbing the impact of a climbing fall. Static rope has low stretch but is more resistant to abrasion; it makes for an ideal setup or abseil rope.





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