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The BOLFA newsletter

A publication of the Climbing Club of South Australia

in association with Redpointer's Anonymous

AGS (Arapiles Gully Spanning) - the latest in out-of-home entertainment

by our raving mad correspondent - I. Klearditt

AGS - to the initiated these letters send shivers down the spine, and generally result in a change of undergarment. It must be noted that this is different from DBWs (Drive By Wettings) - see *The Last Word* for further detail...

No one really knows when the first AGS took place, but suffice to say that it was probably around the same time that the first route was put up way back in 1963.

As with its now famous cousin HAB (High Altitude Bouldering) – AGS shrugs off the use of heavy ropes, gear and other paraphernalia – in favour of 'alpine style' ascents (or descents) of rock crevasses. These crevasses range from the relatively safe hops and skips – to the more outrageous jumps (see *The AGS rating table*).

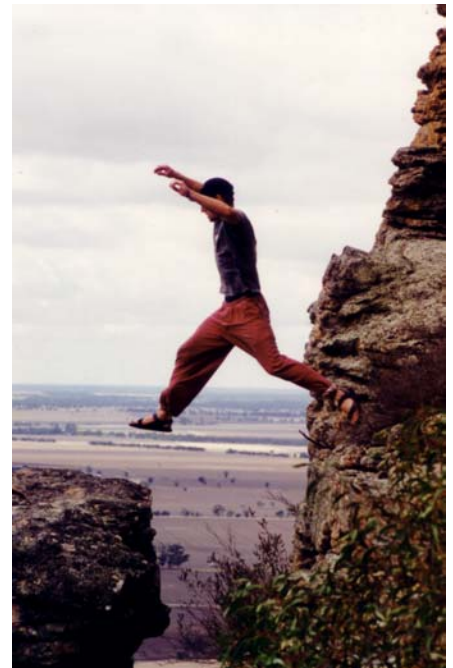
Prior to endeavouring to undertake this peculiar form of exercise, it is vital to understand and have at one's disposal the correct equipment & skills. These tools and skills are made up of the following items (in no particular order):

- 1) a good set of shoes (see *Teva* example on this page)
- 2) supreme ability to target and use in-situ vegetation where required
- 3) a chalk bag (for cases where vegetation is nowhere to be seen)
- 4) excellent leaping ability from a stationary stance (run-ups are preferable – however not always guaranteed).

AGS can be found in many different countries, under many different guises. Probably the most technically proficient of this radical sport are the former East Germans and their ESGS (Elbsandstein Gully Spanning). Here can be found some of the most health threatening examples – so much so that ropes are even regarded as a good idea.

In the UK, celebrated climber Nick Dixon undertook a technical jump that he graded English 7b (approx V12+). Apparently the leap to two opposing slopers on a vertical wall was the easy part – the crux was avoiding a face plant whilst running across a talus slope to make the distance!

To ease the beginner into AGS, or provide a point of reference for the seasoned veteran, the following system has been invented. Perhaps more importantly, this is offered up as preventative medicine, against what could be a sickness that has no cure...



Toby Cogley demonstrating the art of AGS to a crowd of small bushes

The AGS rating table

AGS rating	Level	Best described as...
AGS1	Learner	Your standard step or hop across. Can be done static or dynamic. Example: <i>Eskimo Nell</i> escarpment to <i>Ali's</i> summit escarpment (over 'Death Gully').
AGS2	P Plates	The definitive jump. No chance of 'sticking'. Example: Top of <i>Blyth Street Slab</i> to <i>Crystal Vision</i> summit ledge, or <i>Spasm in a Chasm chockstone</i> to <i>Great Escape</i> summit.
AGS3	Licensed	A technically difficult jump. Example: <i>Yesterday Gully</i> (over the top of Genug (27)). Note: A highly 'Advanced Driver's' jump exists if launching over the top of <i>Yesterday</i> itself – but this may be considered completely suicidal!
AGS4	Advanced Driver	An out-of-order full blown suicidal launch onto a suspect landing. Example: <i>Reaper Buttress</i> to <i>Skyline Walls</i> escarpment (over the top of 'Jilted' (23)). Other jumps in this category include <i>Boston's Climb</i> (summit of Bluff Minor to Bluff Major – which at last count has seen only 3 ascents, as well as <i>Boston's Reverse</i> – the same jump – but performed from the other side. Although the latter is not technically as difficult – the related 'lichen climbing' to get onto the launch pad increases the grade (see <i>Mind the Gap</i> column for further details!)

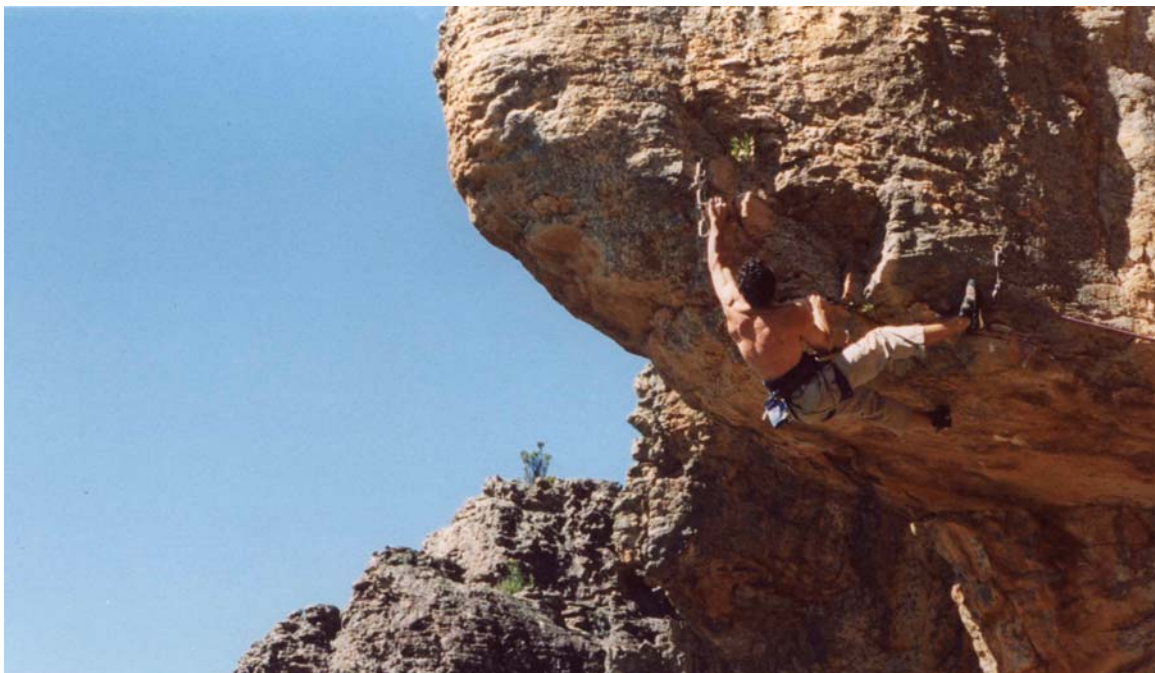
Snapshot!



Dave 'brutally strong' Bowen: "Check out the hold that I just pulled off my latest project!"

Picture Perfect

Submit your photo's to ggrolton@senet.com.au...



Darren Williams on 'The Flashing Blade' (25)



Looking for a set of lost car keys at Moonarie base camp

The Club Report

Recent developments...

CCSA website

The CCSA Website in its draft format is now all but complete. All that is left is for a service provider to be identified, and a URL registered. The site will then be administered by James Falconer and Rob Absalom.

Any contributions either written or in JPEG form should be sent to the following address:

james.falconer@student.adelaide.edu.au

To preview the site in its current state, refer to:

<http://www.geocities.com/roba.rm/rock2/index.html>

Trackwork at the Bachelor Pad

A 'low impact' amount of trackwork is yet to be completed at the Bachelor Pad. Any Club members who have access to the tools necessary for the job, please contact Tony Barker, and a date will be established in which to undertake the work.

Trackwork at Moonarie

Some great work was completed at Moonarie on the long weekend in October by Dave Bowen, the 'Frank Sinatra' boy, Limmo and others.

Despite the captions underneath some of the photo's – see 'Picture Perfect' for further details.

Access at Waitpinga & Buckaringa climbing areas

Access to these crags is currently being discussed. Waitpinga is closed until further notice. Expect an update to this situation at the December club meet (01/12/03).

Mind the Gap

A column dedicated to emphasising the importance of safety within our sport...

By Steve Kelly

This issue's 'Mind the Gap' column is particularly pertinent as it centres on the art of the title story - namely AGS.

Thinking that a quick trip up through the Keyhole and a solo of Bluff Minor would provide some entertainment – a certain Mr Kelly quickly found himself staring at the possibility of repeating the infamous *Boston's Climb*.

However, realising that this particular AGS necessitated an upwards jump onto a slopy ledge – with no vegetation to which to 'anchor' oneself to (apart from a small tuft of lichen that a small ant had taken a mortgage out on) – he declined the offer.

Thus instead (and because he was in the area) he chose to ascend the lichenous face to the summit of Bluff Major – by 'AGS-ing' and grabbing a large pocket. This deposited him within easy reach of the ledge of *Boston's*, which he reversed (and to quote Mallory's famous quip) 'because it was there'.

That should have been the end of the days adventures, for all that was left was a quick return trip down through the squeeze known as The Keyhole – and back to camp.

Unfortunately, he chose otherwise - in favour of submitting Bluff Major - and repeated the AGS to the (now familiar) pocket.

At first this seemed to be a good idea.

Shortly thereafter it became apparent that it was not.

Having spanned the gap between the two pinnacles, he was presented with

a rock face that was in serious need of some Don Bourke.

Lacking the much needed aforementioned personnel, he spent the better part of 30 hazardous minutes clinging to the vertical face, dusting off various forms of 'grey beard', soil and other native flora – before populating the summit.

And the morale of the story?

When you're on a roll – stop before you start going downhill – otherwise you might find yourself having a nasty accident!

The Joker

Reader submitted joke of the month...

A nurse walks into a bank, preparing to endorse a cheque. She reaches in her pocket and pulls out a rectal thermometer and tries to write with it. She looks up at the teller, pauses for a moment, then realising her mistake, she says...

"Well that's great..... just great.....

Some asshole's got my pen."

The Half Brick Award

This issues thumbs down goes to...

This issues 'Half Brick' goes to Mr Luke Geleen who has been lured into the corporate world of big business in Berri – thereby joining the ranks of those climbers that put money, lifestyle and future career prospects before training.

When next he is in town (in his red convertible MG), please feel free to present him with this award.

Please remember that the usual course of action (that of passing it at high speed) has now become standard.

In the meantime we look forward to hearing of numerous 'super-cliffs' on the banks of the Murray, and some unique bouldering exploits...

Hot Fun Closing

Latest (and some not so latest) news & views from around the world...

Overseas news

Bold just keeps getting bolder in the UK...

James Pearson made the third ascent of *The Zone* at Curbar. First established by John Arran and given the big grade of E9, this vertical wall has been described as a grade 29, but with skyhooks for protection.

After 6 days working the route, and taking one big fall onto the skyhooks, (just missing the ground from the crux), Pearson pulled off the repeat.

In Yorkshire the incredible arete of The New Statesman (E8 6c) saw only its 4th and 5th ascents to date. The route was originally established in 1988 by John Dunne, and entails a V8 (crux) start – with no protection until half height – all above a nasty landing. Overall grade is 28.

Little known Tom Briggs has established what is being touted as 'a route containing the biggest dyno on Grit'. The line, called *The Devil is in the Details* goes at E7 7a, and features a 7-foot jump to a pocket a 'fair way' above any gear.

Onto harder yet safer things, the Scottish climber Malcolm Smith has finally completed a problem in Northumberland, which he has been working on and off for no less than 10 years.

Given that he has onsighted V11 and climbed V13 in a single day, one would think that *The Monk Life* (graded V14) is somewhat tricky.

Shortly after this ascent, he went on to repeat Jerry Moffatt's *The Ace* – a much tried but until now unrepeated 4 move V13 at Stanage.

Back in his homeland up north, 37 year old Si O'Connor has put up what might be the hardest problem in Britain (perhaps even harder than Smith's aforementioned effort).

Extradition is given V15, and climbs a 70 degree overhung face on razor sharp edges.

Over in the US of A, Chris Sharma has stunned the scene in New Hampshire by making the 4th ascent of *The Fly* – a 2 bolt 20 foot overhanging face graded 5.14d (35).

The fact that it was the 4th ascent is not newsworthy, but the fact that he flashed it to the last move – then did it 4th shot in the same afternoon - is.

Not long after this, Jason Kehl – known for his bold style of highball bouldering – made the 5th ascent of the same route – upping the ante by choosing not to tie in.

He soloed the route after working it on a self belay device over a couple of weeks. Several crashpads were used, however the significance and level of boldness of this feat cannot be underestimated.

Staying with New Hampshire and local Joe Kinder has added yet another desperate to this cliff by ascending *Astroglide* (likely 5.14d/35). The route climbs nearly all of the established *Livin Astro* (itself 5.14c/34) – then finishes via a hard boulder problem estimated at V10.

Local news

Rob Absalom (CCSA website developer) and fiancée Ursula Beaumont took the financial plunge and bought a leading rack. Thankfully he didn't take the plunge on what was subsequently his first lead – that of *Asgard* (16) at Far Crag.

Users of Far Crag should now note that this climb is virtually now a sport route – having as it does an in-situ solid piece of gear at half height (a fixed wire). Beers to anyone who can get it out!

Meanwhile a rather strange phenomenon has occurred to the usual Adelaide 'posse'.

Messrs Luke Geelen, Stevie Pollard and Steve Kelly all currently harbour shoulder injuries, whilst the likes of Sharik Walker and Justin Taylor have finger injuries.

Rumour has it that they were all playing a game of drunken 'Strip Twister', but these are totally unfounded reports – and should be ignored as such.

Despite these injuries, some climbing did get done. Steve 'it's way too endurancy' Kelly made a second shot ascent of *The Flashing Blade* (25) in an effort to clear up his rotator cuff injury. He was last seen having trouble retrieving toast out of a toaster...

Vaughn Thomas also jumped in with a quick ascent of the said route, as did Stevie 'The Destroyer' Pollard.

Also at Arapiles Luke Geelen fired what he regards as his biggest day of soloing in his life. He was heavily influenced by his tour guide for the day – who attempted to indoctrinate him into the art of onsight High Altitude Bouldering (no names mentioned for fear of reprisals).

Routes that were ascended in this manner include the majority of the *Charity Buttress* climbs, as well as *Happy Ending* (17) and *Eskimo Nell* (10). He would thus officially like his nickname of 'Bold Luke' to be dropped permanently!

Luke's girlfriend has reputedly hired a hitman to deal with the anonymous person who led her dearest astray. Perhaps this won't be a 'happy ending' afterall...

Back on home ground and Lea Williams has returned to climbing after a lengthy hibernation period. She immediately identified where her

past climbing life was led astray – and got back on the straight and narrow with the help of the now famous Foodland Woodies.

As usual, please send any Local News/Trip Reports or other BOLFA material to Greg Rolton at the following address:

ggrolton@senet.com.au

The Last Word

“I hope he’s not doing the gardening out front – otherwise I’ll have to go home and change my pants”

- Anonymous contributor, about to drive past a particularly bumpy-physiqued climbers residence.