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## ACP- Saddles

Posted by Treeman - 10/13/2005 09:42pm

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What exactly is a "Type II" saddle belt as described in ANSI A10.14? Is this a commercial saddle? I can't imagine recreational tree climbers going for clunky work harnesses. What should be a recreational standard?

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Posted by moss - 10/13/2005 11:25pm

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A rec saddle should meet defined strength requirements on all straps and closures. Should (minimally) close around the waist/trunk and legs. Should safely support a climber in all positions (vertical, horizontal, inverted). Should be designed to minimize the potential for harness hang syndrome (does not constrict blood flow to legs). Or at least the guidelines should say something about harness hang syndrome and how to avoid it.

Beyond the basic strength and safety issues the matter of comfort is up to the climber. If someone wants to climb on a saddle made from webbing that is their choice. What about rock climbing saddles, we know they are very uncomfortable for tree climbing. Are they considered structurally sound enough to climb trees on a regular basis?

I've seen a climber use an improvised saddle that had excellent strength and comfort (modified bow hunter's seat). What about homemade or improvised saddles? If they meet strength and safety standards for support and inversion they should be ok.

-moss

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## overnight harnesses

Posted by 3CLIMBR - 10/14/2005 12:22am

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I'm curious about harnesses for sleeping in the tree hammock. I had a climber come up last weekend and sleep in an Oak. He used a less-than-full harness for night time. What would people recommend for a practice?

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Posted by Jim W - 10/14/2005 01:02am

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Not infrequently, I see comments indicating that HHS is a result of constricted blood flow.

The several articles I have read about HHS say that no one is really sure of the root cause(s). It does seem certain, though, that blood pooling in the legs (thus severely lessening that available for the heart to pump) is a cause. Such pooling easily can occur with NO constriction.

\*\*\*I don't know any more than what I've read in 8 or 10 places--I want to be clear about that.\*\*\* Yet almost all the literature about HHS says the same thing.

The literature on the vaso-vagal response talks about how the heart can almost tie itself in knots in attempting to pump enough blood when the volume of blood available to it is low. I would think that there a connection here.

Be very clear that HHS occurs quickly and is deadly. If \*proper\* rescue is not performed, the rescue itself can cause death where it might not have happened.

We all owe it to ourselves (and our climbing partners) to be as educated as we can about this very real danger.

Question: What do "professional" aerial rescuers have to say about this subject? Robert--are you out there? Can you tell us?

Somebody, please.

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Posted by Tom Dunlap - 10/14/2005 10:50am

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Google "type II climbing harness" or some variation.

when I go up to sleep I wear my mountaineering harness under my tree saddle. When I get to my portaledge I safety-in and transfer to my in-tree system. "then I shed my tree saddle and get onto the ledge.

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Posted by NickfromWI - 10/17/2005 01:25am

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Originally posted by 3CLIMBR

I'm curious about harnesses for sleeping in the tree hammock. I had a climber come up last weekend and sleep in an Oak. He used a less-than-full harness for night time. What would people recommend for a practice?

That was me!!!! I call it a sleep harness. It was just a webbing sling that goes around the waist, through the crotch, and clipped in the front. Comfy to sleep in, and painful to hang in (I've done it on several occasions).

So for that- strength was there, but I'd sure hate to take a fall in it!

I've climbed with rock climbing harness underneath the tree harness, then get up there, clip to the rock harness and take off the tree harness. That wasn't bad at all and that harness is designed to fall into.

love  
nick

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**Double harness. Never thought of that!**

Posted by Treeman - 10/17/2005 05:44pm

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What a great idea, Tom and Nick! A harness under a harness. That's a new concept to me. Makes sense. Changing harness for night sleep has always made me nervous, especially on a PortaLedge center hung rig. It made for certain tight muscle groups to the sound of clanking carabiners.

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**COMPARTMENTALIZATION**

Posted by Icabod - 10/18/2005 11:14pm

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Important points brought up by Jim W, without comment... well here I go again.

Compartmentalization must be avoided at all cost. Climbers should be advised of the dangers of pooling blood, and the contribution that a poor harness (or even the best of harnesses in the worst of conditions) can have in this dangerous health condition. We should take this into consideration in writing our standards, but again, we should be cautious to not limit the use of improvised harnesses and lightweight harnesses (such as rock harnesses) when climbing will not involve long periods of suspension.

I too climb with a rock harness beneath my Ness saddle while in my hammock. Gymnastics ensue during the change out period, but the safety is there.

Again the following is suggested verbage

==START OF CLIP==

All climbing saddles must be constructed of materials that have a minimum breaking strenght of 5000#, or be tested to show compliance with ANSI A10.14-1991. --EDITORS NOTE-- this will allow folks to use swiss seats, or other improvised harnesses in appropriate situations (such as wilderness climbs with ladder climbing, and emergency rescue operations, as long as the solution is created using load rated rope or harness)--END NOTE--

Care should be exercised in selection of PPE, especially saddles or harnesses, to take into consideration the amount of time the climber may be suspended. Climbing operations that require periods of time that exceed 1/2 of one hour should

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indicate the use of a purpose designed harness/saddle to help prevent pooling of blood in the legs.

==END OF CLIP==

Climb Safe!  
Icabod

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Posted by Leon - 10/19/2005 02:51am

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Very good points there, Icabod. I know very little about suspension trauma. It may very well be something that we should mention.

I also agree that flexibility in harness materials should be discussed. We could recommend the use of an ANSI harness, but mention the acceptable use of alternative materials, like you did.

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