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## First real climb - for my wife.

Posted by Baker - 03/29/2008 08:18pm

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Since my wife is always looking for something interesting to do, I suggested that we go climbing. I really didn't expect her to go. We have done a wee bit of rock together, but never trees. She has never even seen me climb a tree. To my surprise, she asked when I wanted to leave!

Prior to the climb we watched the TCI Tree Climbing Basics video. (Peter is "cute" by the way) After discussing the gear, different techniques, and safety (The effects of helmets on freshly washed hair etc.)- off we went. The tree was a medium sized maple, with a nice horizontal spread. It's just off the hiking trail at the park where I work. I chose this tree because it needed a bit of pruning and will be the site of a few new nest boxes this year. Nothing like playing while you're working, right?

I have to tell you, the misses did well. I set her up with a DRT system while I went SRT on a second rope nearby. She is left handed, so I showed her how to tie knots backward - YIKES! The climb was almost a reenactment of the TCI video - Except when she informed me that she couldn't reach the top of her friction knot to come down the first time. She figured it out on her own, and the rest of the climb was textbook.

Not having a harness of her own, she first tried my Tengu saddle and I wore my rescue harness, then we switched - she liked my full bod rescue harness better because it made her feel safer. Under my breath I was going "Phew!". I was afraid I was going to loose my Tengu if she liked it TOO much!

We climbed for a few hours with breaks in between. On one break, over tea, she suggested that we "Pack a lunch next time".

I think I have a new climbing buddy. Life is good.

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## Re:First real climb - for my wife.

Posted by moss - 03/31/2008 10:07am

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Good stuff Baker. I wouldn't worry too much about reversing the knots for a lefty. I'm a lefty and I don't reverse tie anything except for once in a while when I want my down rope on one side or the other because of the direction of the rope over the limb. An experienced climber will eventually learn to tie it either way. It's a brain-teaser the first few times you do it. I facilitated a first climb for a lefty yesterday and she had no issues climbing on a "right-handed" Blakes.

I'm thinking it will be easier for both of you to tie the Blake's one way to reduce confusion and to make it easier for you to swap systems.

-moss

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## Re:First real climb - for my wife.

Posted by Baker - 03/31/2008 10:44am

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Thanks for the response, Moss. Moss huh? Do you only climb on the south side of the tree? ;)

Your absolutely right about the whole knot thing. I think we are going to just tie the friction hitch the one way - I assume it's right-handed. My concern is old rescue stuff coming out. When using a rescue 8 to rappel, the rope HAS to be on the correct side for your control hand or it gets all twisted and funny. Not quite so important while coming down on a DRT system.

FYI, The weather is going to be warm and dry tomorrow, so I'm taking the day off to climb that tree again. Don't tell my wife!

Baker

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## Re:First real climb - for my wife.

Posted by michaeljspraggon - 04/02/2008 06:34am

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Good for you Baker (and good for your missus too!) It's amazing how people's view of tree climbing changes once they've actually done it. I'm trying to convince my neighbour, who has been a mountaineer for 20 years, to try it. When I first told her that I climb trees she just said "why?" :unsure:

Michael

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