

and collective fulfillment of which such climbs are enduring inspirational symbols.

STEVE WUNSCH

Yosemite Climber compiled by George Meyers. Diadem Books (London)/Robbins Mountain Letters (Modesto, California), 1979. 96 pages, photos. Price \$14.95.

I am a camera. I've been in many haul bags and been handled by anxious chalky hands. I've snapped the Camp Four lifestyle in the Valley. I've glamorized and celebrated vertical granite, half-naked climbers pumping rock, plumes of multi-colored ropes dangling across great walls. Pictures like these are what make books like *Yosemite Climber*. Without cameras what would climbers have to take home and drool and fantasize over through the winter? Without cameras what non-climbers would believe the unbelievable Yosemite antics?

For a camera this is a great book. For a climber, I'm not so sure. Foremost it is a tone poem in Kodachrome: of wide screen, 9x11-inch plates of climbers in action; and even a half dozen, two-page, 18x11-inch spreads. (That's equal to *four* times the size of this page.) Altogether this is an awesome display of the photoengraver's art. Although some of the opening scenic shots of the Valley are ones many people will have seen before, the dozen best prints in *Yosemite Climber* tell more about *being* there than any prose.

But if you want more than a graphic photo buzz this book won't do. Linear, Gutenberg types will complain that information on routes, personalities, history, the current valley scene is to be found in fragmentary captions, or in five short, though hardly representative narratives by local climbers. Mercifully these are drowned out by the glossy panoramas.

Still, hard-core visual types will love *Yosemite Climber*. I find it on a par with Reese's Peanut Butter Cups or Velveeta spread. It tastes good without being good. It's junk food, expensive junk to be sure.

JOHN THACKRAY

Thath-aa-ai-atah A Rock Climber's & Scrambler's Guide to the Lumpy Ridge Area, by Chip Salaun and Scott Kimball. Published by the authors, 1980. 192 pages, 52 photographs, area maps. Price \$10.00.

When requested by *The American Alpine Journal* to review the Lumpy Ridge guidebook, I asked, "Is that the guidebook with the unpronounceable name?" Sure enough, it is.

I enjoy a guidebook that is fun to read. Art Gran's Shawangunk guide of 1964 is my favorite. To this day I enjoy reading descriptions in his classic. While *Thath-aa-ai-atah* does contain some witticisms, it is

not a book I would read for enjoyment. It does, however, have many redeeming qualities, and I therefore rate the book 5.8+ (or 5.9—).

It is more than just a rock-climbing guide. The flora and fauna sections help one appreciate the approaches to climbs. The book also contains ample descriptions of the features of Estes Park to assist a newcomer to the area. Since most of the rocks are on national park land, an important chapter "Rules & Regulations" is included. Pay special attention to the descriptions of descents, or you may get down much faster than you wanted.

Now for the important question: "How well does the guide help you find the climbs?" The composite photo in the back of the book is excellent, as it allows you to locate the numerous outcroppings in relation to each other. In addition, each area description contains large pictures with adequate route lines. The route ratings are, surprisingly, not included on this page. Unfortunately, the large pictures produce a guidebook (5" x 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ ") that barely fits into an oversized back pocket. Because of this, there is a high risk of losing or ripping the guide if carried on a climb. Concerning the durability of the book, the orange cover "bleeds" when wet, and the binding on my guide is already destroyed.

A format lacking in this book, which I think every guidebook should contain, is that used by Jim Erickson in *Rocky Heights*: the designation of quality routes with "****, **, *" and the protection quality ratings "R" and "X." *Thath-aa-ai-atah* (pronounce it anyway you like) doesn't have such fine distinctions—though it does use (s) for "serious" leads.

One unfortunate side effect of guidebooks is that they tend to bring an influx of climbers to the area. It is important that we appreciate and respect all climbing areas, for they can never be rebuilt. I like to believe that climbers are more sensitive to the ecological balance of areas as beautiful as Lumpy Ridge, but I have been shocked and angered to find litter, wads of tape and cigarette butts stuffed into cracks. I know damn well it wasn't "Joe Tourist." Let us preserve our playgrounds like Lumpy Ridge by paraphrasing the "wilderness ethic" for rock climbing: "Leave nothing but chalk, take nothing but hero shots."

GREGORY R. HAND

Shawangunk Rock Climbs, by Richard C. Williams. New York: The American Alpine Club, 1980. 463 pages, 102 photographs, appendices. Price \$14.50.

The new guidebook had a tough act to follow. Almost everyone agrees that the 1972 edition of *Shawangunk Rock Climbs* by Richard C. Williams was a well-laid-out, compact, sturdy and reasonably accurate guidebook. Unfortunately, the 1972 edition has been out of print and unavailable for three years. Any person wanting one had the choices of stealing it,