

produced an exceptional guidebook that somehow gives grace to an area known for its malignant growth of arrogance and trite one-upmanship.

Boulder Climbs North is not new. It is the first part of a completely overhauled 5th edition of a series of smaller, less splendid guides and addendums known collectively as "*The Pictorial Guides*." Rossiter was the first to spearhead topographic route outlays in Boulder. No one else has dared compete, for the simple reason that Rossiter topos are widely accepted as the best in the business. Veteran topographer publisher George Meyers (of *Yosemite Climbs* fame) has wisely allowed Rossiter plenty of creative elbow room. There is true magic in a Rossiter pictorial. Unique blending of fine lines and space offer the viewer a genuine insight into the heart of each climb without jeopardizing its spirit. Merciless clarity, accuracy, and brevity are the general principles to which Rossiter tenaciously clings. Rossiter's well-known love affair with Eastern mysticism is featured throughout the book by his use of Chinese characters which give a pervasive but not obtrusive Oriental flavor to the volume.

The little text that Rossiter elects to keep is likewise succinct and wastes no time getting to the bottom line of his philosophies. For years Rossiter refused to publish the names of first ascent parties. The self-elected elite of Boulder's climbing society have complained about this omission, and here Rossiter has bowed to their demands.

Rossiter speaks authoritatively about two things: Safety and Respect for the Environment. Although this section could be easily bypassed, I recommend his introductory comments. Rossiter is a wise athlete, who has seen and contributed much to the Boulder area. He possesses masterful wit and knows how to use it.

At a retail investment of \$20.00, you get what you pay for. The book formally introduces an entire dimension of the Boulder area that has been largely neglected by Eldorado-addicted climbers. It contains not only vivid photographs that provide both information and inspiration, but also concise and up-to-date route and trail descriptions. Most pertinent, in my opinion, is the sense of artistry that is restored to the guidebook genre. Rossiter's artwork simultaneously calms and heightens the senses and exudes the author's appreciation of things transient and things delicate.

STEVE ILG

South Platte Rock Climbing and the Garden of the Gods. Peter Hubbel and Mark Rolofson. Chockstone Press, Denver, 1988. 292 pages, black and white photographs, route diagrams, maps. \$19.95 (paper).

Time was when most climbers would keep local crags secret—not just to hoard the first-ascent opportunities, but out of a genuine belief that they could preserve the mystery and adventure the early explorers enjoyed. The numerous crags southwest of Denver, Colorado, near the South Platte River once comprised one of these mystery areas, a wild place where the only access is dirt roads. For years one had to depend on lore or a knowledgeable local to reveal the intricacies of the approach and distinguish the climbing gems from the fool's gold.

It was inevitable that an area so good and so close to the Denver and Colorado Springs metropolitan areas would lose that sense of mystery and the fine new guide, *South Platte Rock Climbing and the Garden of the Gods* by Peter Hubbel and Mark Rolofson, removes any that remained. Like any good guide, it clearly describes the sometimes difficult approaches and lists the best routes. Still, among some locals, the feeling persists that these are unique crags, which should not be treated as another sport-climbing arena; consequently, some have chopped the hardware from retrobolted routes. Although these renegades may be viewed as quixotic in the face of the trend to rappel-bolted new routes, one can understand their feelings.

The Platte has a tradition of bold, ground-up first ascents and judicious circumspection before placing lead bolts, so retrobolting was an especially painful affront to the norm. Also, by anyone's standard, some routes have been excessively drilled: there are bolt ladders over 5.9 territory and routes where perhaps 75% of the bolts are unnecessary.

Nevertheless, most will be thankful for the guide because it will allow anyone to sample this excellent area. The Platte consists of pine-forested rolling hills, punctuated by granite crags up to 1000 feet high. There are awesome, skin-rending cracks on formations such as Cynical Pinnacle or Turkey Rock, Glacier Point-style friction, as well as high-angle faces.

The guide's one weakness is that first-ascent histories are a bit brief and dry. I enjoy a guide that gives a flavor for the personalities involved and anecdotal reminiscences. Also, I believe a guide should tell the reader the style of the first ascent, since it aids one's appreciation of a climb to know whether it was first soloed on sight or rehearsed and bolted from above.

As an added bonus, the pinnacles of the Garden of the Gods, near Colorado Springs, are included. The Garden of the Gods could not be more different from the Platte. It consists of soft, red sandstone that ranges in quality from as solid as Eldorado Canyon to somewhat crumbly. The location is a tourist-frequented state park and the approaches are such that you can lace up even the tightest rock shoes in the front seat of your car. Anyone passing through Colorado should make a stop here because of the natural beauty, easy access and unique rock.

The guide contains a plea for opposition to the proposed Two Forks Dam which, if built, will flood certain South Platte crags. The Army Corps of Engineers recently issued a permit for construction of the dam, although actual construction does not seem to be imminent. I join the authors in urging climbers to oppose this boondoggle by supporting opposition groups like the Sierra Club.

RICK ACCOMAZZO

Rock Climbs of the Sierra East Side. Alan Bartlett and Errett Allen. Chockstone Press, Denver, 1988. 170 pages. Photos, topos, maps. \$14.95

Until recently, information on rock climbing in the Eastern Sierra has been very sketchy. Unless you happened to walk into Rick Wheeler or James Wilson in Bishop and ask if there was any good climbing around or had an extended stay