

boulderer's library and any climber's trip to climb in Colorado should reserve some time to visit these areas.

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Boulder Climbs South. Richard Rossiter. Chockstone Press, Denver, 1989. 411 pages, numerous maps, diagrams and black and white illustrations. \$25.00.

Two new guidebooks to Boulder, Colorado by Richard Rossiter have recorded the new route bonanza caused by the fall of traditional ethics under the assault of retrobolting. *Boulder Climbs North* covers the granite crags of Boulder Canyon and one half of the Flatirons, the tilted sandstone slabs that form the backdrop for the city of Boulder. The other half of the Flatirons and Eldorado Canyon are the subject of *Boulder Climbs South*.

Whatever your feelings on current climbing style (or the lack of it), it must be admitted that the new bolted routes make accessible some marvelous areas of rock and thousands of feet of great climbing that otherwise would be available only to top-roping. The holds are rough sandstone and generally very sound. Most of the new routes are well protected at a difficulty of 5.11 and harder, but the guide is conscientious in pointing out the exceptions where the bolts have been more widely spaced and the lead is "sporting" in the current argot, that is, scary. An incidental benefit of the flurry of new routes is that some of the pressure on El Dorado has been eased as climbers have flocked to the Flatirons, where there are vertical acres of crackless, but featured, sandstone faces and the setting, overlooking Boulder, is gorgeous.

Unfortunately, there is trouble in this paradise. The land managers have recently announced bans on bolts in both El Dorado (a state park) and the Flatirons (a Boulder city park). You may recall that one of the arguments against retrobolting was that it would make new routes too easy: anyone with a power drill and a vacant stretch of rock could achieve the status of route pioneer and get his or her name in print. This prediction has now come true and the sheer numbers of routes have caused the rangers to take notice. They do not like what they see. The bolting ban in the Flatirons arose after climbers bolted faces right next to a popular trail and hikers complained about the drilling and the little metal things left in the rock. Had a little discretion been shown and climbers stayed away from trails, the issue might have lain dormant for years.

The outcome of the controversy is still in doubt. The Flatirons Rangers state simply that bolting is defacement of the park resources and refuse to consider any compromise, such as zoning areas of permitted bolting, requiring a set distance between routes, or trying to camouflage the bolts to minimize the visual impact. The El Dorado Rangers have at least formed an advisory committee of climbers and are listening to suggestions, but the days of new sport climbs may be over in Boulder.

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