



Y220CIVL10K

Lines: The CWA Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 9

December 21, 2009

Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

The big news since the last newsletter was the announcement that MSA was pulling its products from the climbing market.

Needless to say this news has had a big impact, financial and otherwise, on recreational climbing facilities. We have received many calls about this issue. Rest assured, we are passing along information as soon as we get it -- the same day in all cases so far.

We do not have any information about the scope or terms of the assumed product recall from MSA as yet. As soon as this information is available, we will get it to you quickly. In the meantime, we have prepared an article on alternatives to MSA's products. Check with your designer/builder and read below...

It could also be a good time to re-visit that article we wrote on ClimbFind.com last issue.

Happy Holidays,

Bill Zimmermann,
Executive Director

MSA Update

On December 4, 2009, MSA officials announced their plans to discontinue the Redpoint Descender auto-belay device. Gyms across the country and world have been affected by this recall and the CWA is working with other auto-belay manufacturers to get information to you to ensure the matter is resolved as quickly as possible.

MSA first issued a Stop-Use Notice after the company became aware of two incidents where climbers using Redpoint Descenders experienced "rapid rates of descent" resulting in injuries. As of the publication of this newsletter, MSA has not released the exact cause of the failure nor have they announced the expected recall.

MSA is currently working on a reimbursement program for eligible Redpoint and Auto-belay Descenders. MSA is coordinating the recall with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The CWA will forward information to all of our members when information is provided to us.

Auto-Belay Alternatives

For gyms seeking alternative auto-belay systems, there are a number of options. First check with your wall builder to see if they can recommend a replacement system, pneumatic/hydraulic auto belays are available now and are distributed by wall builders, for example, Nicros. Two CWA members manufacture these hydraulic units: Extreme Engineering and Spectrum Sports. Extreme Engineering offers Belay in the Box™, a fully redundant auto-belay system. Spectrum Sports also offers fully redundant auto-belay systems including the new Auto-Belay Zip. Both companies are making special offers to those replacing MSA units.

Rockwerx has identified an alternative mechanical auto belay solution and has an exclusive distribution agreement for the US. The new unit has redundant brakes. The company is offering retail, volume and distributor pricing. The retail cost per unit will be \$2,595.00 plus shipping. Rockwerx is accepting pre-orders for the auto belay unit now, and will be servicing the units in their Massachusetts facility. Rockwerx is now offering wholesale discounts on holds and 5% off all gear for CWA members, including the new auto belay. Ask for your CWA Member discount; just provide your member number and expiration date. More information is here.

CWA is also aware of some alternative next generation technologies unlike anything currently available for the climbing market. The TRUEBLUE "auto response belay" uses magnetic "eddy current" braking. Eddy currents or electromagnetic braking systems are used in trains and to stop power tool blades. Typically, metallic plates are moved between pairs of very strong permanent magnets. Electrical resistance within the plates causes a dragging effect analogous to friction, which dissipates the kinetic

energy and converts it to heat. See this wikipedia article for a discussion of the principles of eddy currents and how the phenomenon can be used.

The new technology is the result of a two year research and development initiative between Sheer Adventures and Holmes Solutions. The product is promised in the coming year, but is not yet available for sale. The TRUBLUE Auto Response Belay (ARB) was designed to significantly reduce servicing issues associated with some existing automatic belay systems. Its arrival in the US should be later this year. You can get updates about this technology by signing up [here](#).

2010 Climbing Wall Summit Pre-conference Offerings

The CWA is very excited to offer eight pre-conference workshops for 2010 Climbing Wall Summit attendees. These workshops offer in-depth and hands-on approaches to topics ranging from marketing to youth programming.

Chris Danielson, Heather Reynolds and Cort Gariepy will all be returning to deliver workshops on routesetting, community building and climbing gym start-up. Dan Hague will again offer his "Climbing Movement" workshop and Rich Klajnscek will lead a hands-on structural inspection workshop. All of these workshops have received rave reviews from attendees last year and are guaranteed to be crowd pleasers again.

We are pleased to offer new content this year too. CWA board members Bob Richard and Rich Johnston will both be presenting a pre-conference marketing workshop to give the topic the time it deserves.

Justen Sjong of Movement will be offering a workshop on youth programming and how to track success to retain youth membership.

Finally, Reb Gregg will be offering an in-depth workshop about climbing releases and other legal issues. Gregg is a practicing attorney in Houston, Texas and has led similar workshops on behalf of the CWA for the past three years. This workshop will be free to conference attendees this year.

For more information on these pre-conference workshops, [click here](#). To register for a pre-conference workshop and the conference, [click here](#).

Getting connected: what social media can do for your business

Last week Facebook surpassed 350 million active users worldwide. According to the social networking site, more than 700,000 businesses have pages of which users can be fans. Facebook estimates that 5.3 billion users are fans of various businesses, non-profit organizations and products.

According to an article in The New York Times, Facebook Web pages are about creating a community, not only about selling a product. By interacting and engaging with fans, companies can gain valuable insight about their customers and cater to their needs. According to the article, "Facebook enables small businesses to engage in targeted marketing that they only could have dreamed about a few years ago."

Garrick Mercer, of SportRock Climbing Centers in Washington, DC created a fan page for SportRock months ago and already has 2,400 fans.

For Mercer, the key is interacting with fans with status updates, event announcements and photos. Fans can comment on statuses, upload their own photographs, and start discussion forums on a company's Facebook page.

Companies can also advertise on Facebook through targeted marketing campaigns. For instance, if Joe Climberdude lists "climbing" among his activities or interests, Facebook will direct a company's ad towards him through keywords and phrases.

It may take time to cultivate your fan base and realize the full potential Facebook and other social networking sites can offer, but it is worth the time invested.

Member Profile: Rock and Ice Magazine

For over 25 years climbers of every background and skill level have come to know and trust Rock and Ice magazine. Founded in 1984 and independently owned, R&I has published over 180 issues and has become a staple for climbers every month.

Owners Duane Raleigh, Quent Williams, Alison Osius and Michael Bengel have over 100 years of collective climbing experience and still find time to squeeze in a burn before deadlines.

One of the many challenges specialized magazines face is appealing to wide audiences of various skill levels. R&I strives to provide content for all climbers, novice to expert, ice to indoor. "Serving the entire market is a constant juggling act and getting more difficult," Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Duane Raleigh said in an email. "Climbers today tend to specialize more than they did 20 years ago when everyone just went climbing."

To help meet the different needs of their readers, R&I recruits some of the industry's top writers including Senior Contributing Editors John Long, Geoff Childs, Doug Robinson and Niall "The Grimer" Grimes.

Check out the latest issue of R&I for several mountaineering tales including a "near repeat" of the "Touching the Void" epic but with a role reversal for Simon Yates.

Rock and Ice
Big Stone Publishing
417 Main St. Unit "N"
Carbondale, CO 81623

970-704-1442 (phone)
www.rockandice.com

About the Climbing Wall Association, Inc. (CWA). The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, trade association incorporated in May of 2003 for manufacturers of climbing wall equipment, builders of climbing walls, operators of climbing walls, and others involved in the climbing industry.

The CWA is the only trade association addressing the needs and interests of the climbing wall industry and climbing wall operators. The mission of the Climbing Wall Association is to support the growth, health and independence of the climbing wall industry, and to promote the sport of climbing.