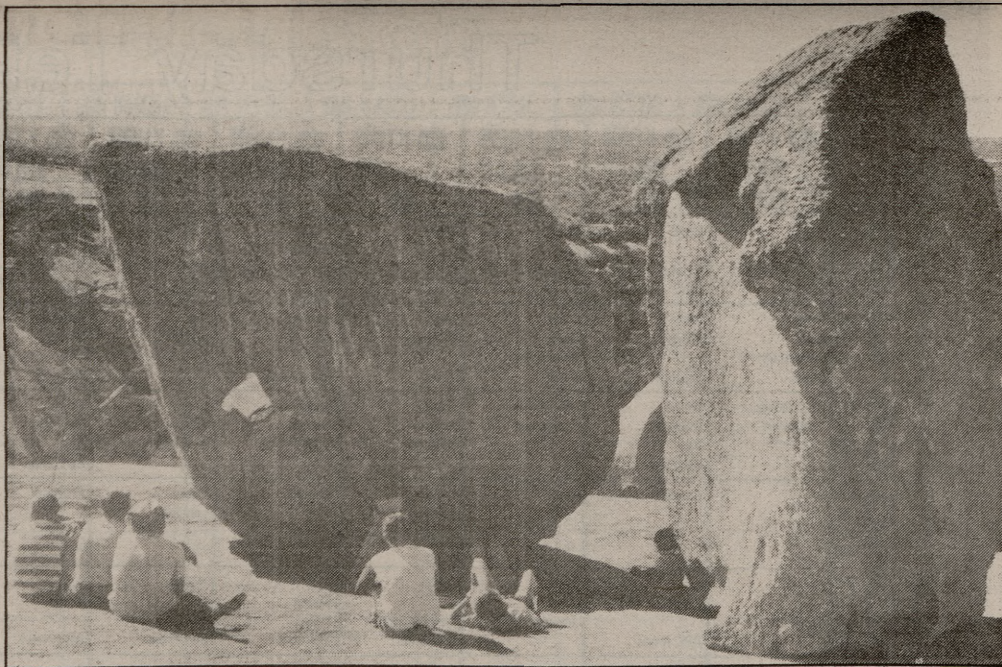




All ten Aggie climbers who made the trip to Enchanted Rock share a moment of triumph atop one of Randy's Rocks.



Free-University student Kirk Beckendorf begins the crawl up one of Randy's Rocks while other climbers watch from below.

## ...to the rock-top

Geckendorf. "But I guess it gets easier the more you do it."

With three hours of daylight and much rappelling to do, the Aggies depart from Randy's Rocks and talked of the difficulty ratings assigned to different climbs.

"Climbs are rated by difficulty on a logarithmic scale called the Yosemite Decimal System," David Hinz said. "Climbs are rated on a scale of one to ten... a number ten climb is now one hundred times as difficult as a number one rated climb."

"All the climbs we did today rate at least a five on the scale, although difficulty ratings are really very relative," Mark Hinz said. "Many climbs remain unrated until the first successful climbers assign them an arbitrary rating."

Upon ascending the northern granite slope opposite Enchanted Rock, the climbers discussed the ratings scale while some voiced reservations about walking backward down a granite cliff with only a rope to hold on to.

"As long as I don't look over the edge I'll be alright," climber Carol Burris said.

Mark Hinz bolstered his students' flagging confidence by assuring them that the majority of climbers killed in rock climbing meet their destiny while rappelling.

"Man, I don't even want to hear that right now," climber Bruce Johns said as he inched his way over the edge of the cliff.

Slowly, with an iron grip on the rope and an eye on every foothold, the climbers rappelled down the 35-to-40 foot granite cliff.

After eight hours of grueling climbing, few of the tired climbers refused the call for a beer. With shaky legs and high spirits the group beat a hasty retreat to camp on the level ground below.

In the morning it was apparent that stiff muscles and dizzying heights apparently had taken their toll. All of the Aggies voted to forego any Sunday climbing for a genuine, store-bought breakfast in Fredericksburg.

An hour and a half after breakfast, while skipping rocks and soaking in the cool water of the Pedernales River, the group relived the many moments of personal triumph in the preceding days' climb.

"Man, that Bloody Jam is quite a bruiser," climber Mike Tietener said. "I must have been really worked up to make that one twice."

Later, as their thoughts turned to the return trip to College Station, everyone agreed that Enchanted Rock is a perfect place to escape from the rigors of academic life.



Mark Westhafer works his way up the chimney climb on the northern slope of "Enchanted Rock."

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