

Kintnersville: Top Roping Ice

The 3-hour drive to Kintnersville has taken on a pleasant routine to an area about 45 minutes or so north of Philadelphia, PA, but you gotta do it while it lasts. Escape velocity occurred soon after meeting Bilal Zia at the Northeast Beltway rally point in College Park, MD's Starbucks on Cherry Hill Rd. around 6am. By the time we finish our coffees and breakfasts we are skirting the Philadelphia suburbs through Doylestown, in famous Bucks county.

It was a beautiful morning with the temperature at 27 degrees for a high and I saw one party starting at DDG as we made the final approach into the parking lot. My plan was to climb the main gully and lead something we could TR and lap out. The word was out that the ice was in, here at the Narrows, which changed our plans for the day. The parking area seemed to be filling up fast with a party of about 8 headed for main gully and another car of the same numbers donning gear. I bailed out of the car and headed straight away for DDG to secure a spot in the opposite direction leaving Bilal with a look of bewilderment, as I vanished up the road.

We quickly flaked out the double ropes and racked my screws and I was ready to climb. Bilal had his new Petzl Quarks and we talked earlier about the "L" word and a question about how does one rest without leashes? Eyeing another party, I started up the first pitch without another word. The leashless light must have come on in side his helmet CAM as he belayed me up the first pitch, because as I belayed him to my position above he was climbing sans leashes; my second convert in 6 days.

I hooked up with Christopher Parenteau and his friend Mike from the Baltimore area, who are on the Mountaineering Section's list serve. We watched them cruise up the left corner and then migrate over to the headwall for a TR sesh. We followed behind them a little while later.

The ice was much thicker and much drier than just 6 days before. I belayed Bilal up to the top of the left corner to a tree; I could have continued a little higher on VW sized steps to the absolute top. I have been here a couple of times and every time I forget to bring webbing and a rap ring to leave for the next party.

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We decided to Top Rope the headwall and he belayed me across the traverse. I made it a point to drag the rope uphill of any particular tree in case to took the fall as I traversed to a small rock gully that hides the bolted anchor and the tree with sling and rap ring located above (#3 and #4) the bolted top anchors at three sheets. We TR'd (#3)Three Sheets WI3+ and (#4)Right Headwall WI3+. Until we had our fill. Kevin and his crew appeared and TR'd (#1)All Mixed Up WI3+ M3 and (#2)Left Headwall WI3+, which was a delicate ice curtain seen in the picture.

This headwall at the top of Dead Deer Gully is worth while ice for steeper stuff to play on after these easy pitches. The

anchors to my recollection at DDG are as follows:

At the top of the reliable ice on the first section there are chains about 50ft., Great place for newbies and newby leaders. The next set of chains are located another 75ft up on the right, easily missed. Another 50ft or so at the place where it flattens out before you can either head to the left to do the corner or continue up to the headwall, there is a beefy tree with slings and a rap ring. From this point, a double 60m rope will get you home.

It was a beautiful day, with blue sky and a little windy at times made it deceivingly cold. I make it a point to leave the ground, unless I am ice climbing in Bermuda shorts and a straw hat with all my shit; I've dialed it in and it works for me; when I futz and second guess my setup on the launch pad, do I believe in stupidity. Otherwise, what happened today will happen again. I left my safety goggles, warm hat, puffy and shell at ground zero; wore my soft shell instead; I wasn't cold but I wasn't warm. Bilal, thought he was returning to ground zero and had no food, no runners, no liquids and no warm gear for the entire day. This was my fault for not describing the day and the gear requirements; he never whined like I would have.

It was a great day and we rapped down drove to JIMS STEAK in Philadelphia, 400 South Street, for a steak whiz with onions and mushrooms and a Dr. Brown's cream soda. We were home in no time. 190 miles the tolls RT were \$18.25 and it takes 3 hours to the rally point!

The TR's will eventually become part of the club's beta for our climbing areas for the DC METRO!

Vincent Penoso