



# Sport Martley Climbing Wall News

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## Summer Route Setting Now Completed

**As** you will see, the Route Setting Team have been very busy during the last weekend of June. More than half the wall has been stripped and at least two new routes added to each of these panels.

We have new routes ranging from F3 to F6C, so there should be something for every one. My special thanks goes out to the route setting Team: Steve, Rob, Pete and George who did an excellent job in very hot conditions.

### More new routes:

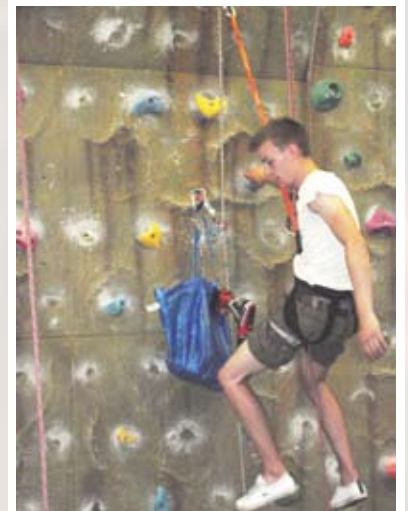
Its my intention to change at least 2 or 3 routes a month over the summer period, so there will always be something new for you to try.

### New holds:

Wychavon Leisure have continued to invest in the wall. You will see some exciting new holds have been added to our collection. Try the "slate" flakes on panel 1 or the boulders on panel 7a. We will also be introducing further new holds on new routes during July. Keep a look out for the "new crimps".



Pete



George

### Next Major Route setting:

The next full route setting will be in October, so no closures until then. Thanks for your understanding and co-operation during the recent Sunday closure.

### More Route setters:

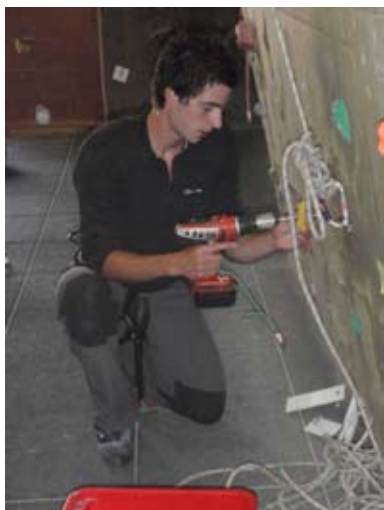
Since the opening last September of our sister wall at Evesham, we have had twice the numbers of routes to set. That's why Martley was a little overdue for a reset this time. Consequently I have already started the training and induction of more route setters. This isn't a 5 minute job, it takes quite a while to gain the experience to set a quality route. As I'm sure you agree; when it comes to route setting, quality is more important than quantity.

### What's involved in the route setting process?

When we remove the holds between settings, each hold is inspected for cracks, wear and sharp edges.

We wash the holds in a dish washer,

Rob



Steve



often several times before re-use to remove shoe rubber, chalk, dead skin and sweat.

A simple route of about F4 grade on the slab may take only an hour to reset.

A harder route of F6a+ on the overhang may take up to 3 hours and take several people to set.

Holds do wear out and break. We have some large holds which are nearly 10 years old, but around 50 holds each year break or just become too worn for use, these are replaced with the best we can buy.

We have holds from at least 4 different suppliers giving a variety of textures, grips and styles.

We tend to mostly use the holds in sets of the same style, colour and make, this tends to give a consistent theme to the route, but there are always exceptions.

The holds are screwed into metal inserts pressed into the back of the thick wooden wall panels. These occasionally fail by getting clogged with dirt or cross threading. Then we need to replace them with special inserts...my least favourite job!

Vacuuming the wall? This is perhaps one of the more bizarre jobs you will see us doing occasionally. Grit and shoe rubber deposits sit in the natural features of the wall. Every so often the only solution is to attach the vacuum cleaner to a rope and abseil down the wall with it.... don't laugh, we know it looks silly.

After the new routes have been up on the wall for a week, we know from experience we will need to re-tighten all the holds as they settle into the new positions, so watch out for spinners!

### **Do we plan route setting, or just put up what we fancy?**

We certainly do plan the route setting in advance. Steve (one of most experienced instructors and setters) and I will meet a couple of weeks before the event and make a detailed plan.

Initially we will consider taking down the oldest routes to ensure that we keep the wall fresh. 6 months would be the ideal life for a route, shorter and people complain they've not had enough time to master it. Sometimes popular panels will last a year.



Preparing for the route setting

We will consider the spread of grades required to be set. It's important that we are able to keep all of our customers happy, from the 5 year old coming to a birthday party, up to the experienced cragger looking for a serious leading problem. This is one of the reasons why unlike many walls we will set 3 routes on a panel. It is our objective to give you as much climbing for your entrance fee as possible.

Unlike some walls we don't have an elitist policy of only allowing the "serious" climbers on to the tough routes. We have top roping and leading on every panel.

We will take down early any unpopular routes and ensure that all parts of the wall are accessible to as many climbers as possible. For example every now and then we will put a lower grade route on the end crack panel 14, or a big juggy route on the overhang panels.

Once we have set the routes, we ensure that they are climbed by at least 3 of the route setters and then we agree upon the grade that we put on the white board. However we do look at these again after some customers have climbed them during the first week and modify the grade if we feel they need tweaking.

Happy Climbing,

**Neil Currie**  
**Senior Instructor,**

On Behalf of Sport Martley Climbing Wall.  
28/6/10