THE PRUSSIC MINDING PULLEY

Recently I was privileged to attend the Basic Rigging for Rescue class, presented by Arnor Larson through the Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group of ASRC. The first concept I learned was: Prussics are not all that bad to work with and can be used with the same ease as the mechanical ascenders in rescue rigging systems. The perceived difficulties with using prussics in rigging systems could be a reason why mechanical ascenders continue to be used after they have been shown, even under minor fall conditions, to cut or severely damage the rope.

One method that Arnor demonstrated was the Prussic Minding Pulley, only two are presently in existence, to show how it would unlock prussics as rope was pulled into the pulley, allowing the line to be pulled through without the need to hold the prussics and pull on the line at the same time. Here are some of the way that the pulley can be used:

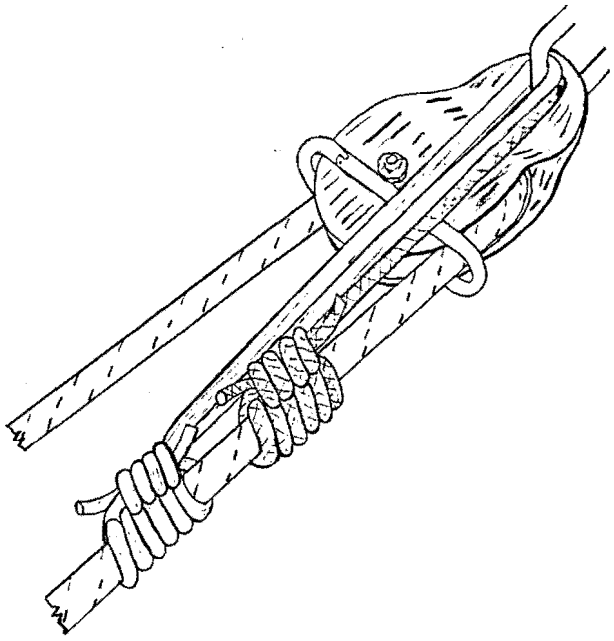
* Pulling in the belay line when prussics are used as the belay device.

* To lock off a haul system.

* Used as the belay on the English Reeves Highline system.

During the Demonstration, I noted that an oval carabineer placed over the ropes, between the prussics and the pulley would work in much the same way. The oval carabineer travels up over the pulley and is stopped by the bolt on the Russ Anderson and on the frame of the CMI 2" Rescue pulleys. The prussic is stopped by the carabineer and released. Arnor's pulley is much better, in that it permits a greater angle between the ropes. This concept works only if the ropes are 7/16", near parallel, on Russ Anderson and CMI 2" rescue pulleys, using 8 MM prussics loops.

CARABINEER/PULLEY PRUSSIC MINDER



During four sessions, using the carabineer/pulley, as a prussic minding pulley, another feature was noted: You are able to use this configuration as a friction device, by increasing the angle between the ropes, for letting out tag and belay lines. Here the prussic must be held unlocked, by hand, as it is now letting out rope in the direction of locking.

Arnor plans to produce the Prussic Minding Pulley, in the near future. This method may fill the void until then and help get mechanical ascenders out of rescue rigging.

Many thanks to Arnor for a great class.

Art Dodds, Jr.

CARABINEER/PULLEY PRUSSIC MINDER