

# **BC FAMILY FRENCH CAMP 2010 ROCK CLIMBING PROGRAM PARENTAL INFORMATION PACKAGE**

**ACTIVITY:** Top-Rope Climbing & Rappelling

**LOCATION:** Outdoor Session: Skaha Bluffs, Penticton

**DURATION:** 8 1/2 Hours (8:00 AM – 4:30 PM)

**DATE:** July 13 / 20, 2010

## **SKAHA ROCK ADVENTURES LTD.:**

Skaha Rock Adventures Ltd. has been providing programs since 1993, having grown to become western Canada's largest rock climbing school. We specialize in teen rock climbing programs, providing contract courses to public schools, private schools, the Vernon Army Cadet Camp and teen adventure tour operators from all over North America.

Russ Turner, Director, has 31 years of experience guiding, instructing and developing outdoor programs. The enthusiastic response by return clients speaks highly of the quality of service that has made his company so successful.

## **GUIDES/STAFF:**

All of our professional staff are Association of Canadian Mountain Guides, with years of experience and trained to internationally recognized standards.

## **EDUCATIONAL GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Safety is our priority and our goal is to provide students with an enjoyable, educational experience. Through years of climbing instruction, I'm constantly impressed by the benefits students receive. Rock climbing and rappelling activities will challenge students both mentally and physically. These activities increase their self-confidence, self-esteem, courage and trust while having fun at the same time! Without exception, every one of our students discovers this to be a very positive, life experience.

Note – this is an experiential course and it does not attempt to train students with enough skills to begin climbing outdoors on their own. In order to begin safely top-rope climbing outdoors, they must take further training and be supervised by an experienced adult climber. If your son or daughter take to this sport, we encourage parents to get the training required to safely begin climbing as a family, as climbing has become a great family sport, as it has been in Europe for many decades.

**STUDENT/GUIDE RATIOS:** 6:1

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

We have safely introduced thousands of climbers to this sport without incident. However in order to safely conduct these programs, we need each students' full cooperation. We expect all students to behave in a mature, responsible manner, listening closely and following all of their Guide's instructions. If students misbehave, they will stop participating and be asked to quietly sit, watch and wait until the end of the day. If they should refuse to cooperate, they will be sent back to the parking lot with their supervisor and from there they will either be sent back to their camp for the remainder of the day.

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:**

Students will learn the basic fundamentals to enjoy a day of rock climbing and rappelling together with their schoolmates. Topics include;

- Safety protocol
- Proper use and care of equipment
- Knots
- Belays
- Communication
- Rock climbing movement skills
- Rappelling

*1) Equipment Issue*

Students will first be issued their equipment to use for their course to include a helmet, harness and a pair of rock shoes. They will be asked to help carry group equipment into the field including ropes, anchors, chalk bags, tarps, etc., therefore they will need to bring a medium to large 30+ liter sized pack in order to carry these items.

*2) Hiking into the Skaha Bluffs*

Students will hike for approximately 25 minutes, with an elevation gain of approximately 300'. They will travel on a well-used trail to include a set of steps and possibly a short section of rocky scree, therefore they must have a good pair of running shoes for this approach (no sandals).

*3) Top-Rope Rock Climbing*

All students must first complete our ground school training before they begin to rock climb. This is usually 1-1 1/2 hours in duration. Once students understand and responsibly demonstrate the proper techniques to safely double-check, belay and communicate with one another, they must be triple-checked by their Guide before they can begin to climb. Climbs can range anywhere from 30' – 80' in height. Climbers are protected by a top-rope belay system at all times and may choose to be lowered back to the ground by their two belayers at anytime. We employ two student belayers for each

climber for maximum safety, with each Guide managing no more than three climber/belay groups at any given time.

#### *4) Rappelling*

Students will have the opportunity to try rappelling, which is a means to descend a rock face using a rope and friction device attached to their harness. At all times, students are on a Guide's belay before they approach the rappel station, while they are on rappel and until they safely reach the ground. One Guide will usually work with no more than 6 students at a time for this exercise.

By the end of this program, students may have the skills to successfully pass an indoor climbing gym's belay exam.

### ***EQUIPMENT:***

All technical equipment is UIAA approved and provided, therefore you need only arrive with your packsack, water, lunch, appropriate clothing and a whole bunch of enthusiasm!

- 1 – 30 liter sized pack per person
- Light weight hiking boots or sturdy running shoes (no sandals)
- Lunch
- Water 1 liter each
- Camera
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, lip balm
- Toilet paper (there are two back country toilets in the Bluffs, but they may not always have toilet paper)
- Comfortable lightweight active wear (jogging/cycling wear)
- T-shirt and shorts (summer)
- Warm layers (pile/down jacket, vest, toque early spring/late fall)
- Wind and rain gear, hat (all seasons)
- One thin pair of socks to wear inside your rock climbing shoes

### ***HELPFUL TIPS:***

- Clip your finger and toe nails short before you arrive for rock climbing programs
- Leave jewelry at home (rings, necklaces)
- Longer hair styles should be braided or kept out of the way

### ***EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT:***

All Skaha Rock Adventures Ltd. staff have either current 40 hour Wilderness or 80 hour Advanced Wilderness First Aid Certification. Each Guide carries their own rescue kit, first aid kit, cell phone, (walkie-talkie – if applicable), emergency contact information and a list of student medical conditions. Skaha Rock Adventures Ltd. has an emergency plan in place and has a good working relationship with Penticton's Ambulance and Search & Rescue Services. There is a stretcher/litter available to use on site in the Skaha Bluffs in case of emergencies.

### ***HAZARD & ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS:***

Upon students' arrival, we discuss safety and environmental issues with them at that time. They include;

- Walk single-file on all trails to avoid erosion and contact with any poison ivy patches alongside
- Watch out for loose rock on trail and be sure to tie your shoelaces up tight
- Pay attention as you walk – some portions of the trail will parallel cliffs below (10' distance)
- No horseplay
- No throwing, kicking or rolling rocks – there could be climbers below
- No fires allowed (no smoking)
- Watch for Wood Ticks in the spring and be sure to check yourself thoroughly at home
- Watch for Rattlesnakes in the summer and let your Guide's know if you should see one
- Wasps can be frequent in the summer months, depending on the year
- Wildlife sightings can include; Big Horn Sheep and Black Bears
- Helmets must be worn within 20' of the wall at our climbing site at all times
- Yell 'Rock' if anything falls from above in order to warn others
- All garbage must be packed out, including apple cores, orange peels, etc.
- No fires allowed in the Skaha Bluffs
- No camping allowed in Skaha Bluffs

### **WAIVERS:**

All participants and their parents must read, understand and sign our waiver form before participating in the program. Minors under the age of 19 years must also have their waiver form co-signed by a parent or legal guardian. These forms will be sent home with students well in advance in order for parents to read, understand and co-sign this document. This waiver form must be collected by the school well in advance of the course date and delivered to us before the day of their course. Without a properly signed document, students cannot participate and will be sent back to school upon their arrival.

You will notice the waiver form we currently use includes hazards such as ice-fall, avalanches, crevasses, frostbite and pulmonary edema. This document is used for a wide number of mountain-based programs and the specific hazards mentioned above do not apply to our rock climbing programs.

### ***MEDICAL CONDITIONS: Note to BCFFC Parents from BCFFC***

The Moniteurs for each group will be supplied with and carry at all times, an Emergency Form that includes: names, MSP#, health concerns/allergies noted on your application, parent/guardian names, campsite # and contact information.

As such, BCFFC has been informed by the Skaha director that an additional Medical Form specific to Skaha Rock Adventurers will not be required, however, **parents MUST**

**still fill out the Skaha Rock Adventures Waiver Form** available for download on the BCFFC website.

Please contact the BCFFC Registrar if you have additional medical/health information to add to your child's record. The BCFFC Health Form and BCFFC Informed Consent Forms for all campers is still required in addition to the Skaha Rock Adventures Waiver so please be sure to download all forms from our website and bring them to camp. If your family is bringing a guest child, you must have the parent(s) of your guest fill out all necessary forms and bring them with you to camp.

### ***TRANSPORTATION:***

All transportation to and from the Skaha Bluffs is the responsibility of BCFFC.

### ***QUESTIONS/CONCERNS/EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:***

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