



REPORT

Activity 6. Youth climbing camp – Introducing different types of climbing

Hosted by: Planinsko društvo Domžale

Date and location: 7. – 13.8.2022, Kotečnik, Slovenia

Aim: To share experiences, knowledge, and practices on how to practice safe climbing in various conditions and settings. The focus will be on introducing different types of climbing to participants, all while still emphasizing the importance of safety measures. The work will be partly based on the results of Activities 2-5 (three smaller transnational meetings and one transnational youth climbing camp).

Participants:

Planinsko društvo Domžale
Sportsko penjački klub Fothia
Horolezecký klub Atlas Opava, z.s.
Horolezecký klub Horec Liptovský Mikuláš
Magyar Hegy – és Sportmászó Szövetség

Used methods, as agreed upon in the project, were implemented. The youth climbing camp had 4 subparts: theoretical and practical lessons given by qualified climbing instructors, practical training - climbing, for learning new techniques and to get familiar with local conditions, additional physical training for the safe practice of physical activities and workshops for knowledge sharing and encouraging socializing between participants from different countries.

General information

Mountaineering Club Domžale organized an international youth climbing camp from the 7th to the 13th of August. The camp was organized with the cooperation of international partners from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia, and Hungary. The camp took place at the biggest sports climbing area in Slovenia, Kotečnik. We stayed at the Kmetija Tratnik, where we slept in tents and indoors.

Transnational youth climbing camp offered an introduction to the local climbing culture and allowed participants to experience local climbing under the supervision of certified climbing instructors and coaches.

The focus of the camp was introducing different types of climbing and emphasizing the importance of safety measures, no matter the conditions and settings. Since we were accommodated next to the sport climbing area, that was the main type of climbing that we focused on. Instructors gave lessons on climbing gear and safe communication between climbing partners, with an emphasis on English vocabulary. Participants learned and practiced the correct form of belaying, safe lead climbing, and pre-climbing checks, all under the supervision of instructors and coaches. Some groups learned extra rope maneuvers like rappelling and cleaning the anchor since local climbing culture doesn't always guarantee biners on the anchors.

We organized two presentations on traditional climbing and alpinism and how to participate in them safely. One focused on the young climber and his transfer from sport climbing to multi-pitch sport



climbing to serious alpine climbing and expeditions. The other focused on the group of alpinists that went on an expedition in an unknown area. We learned how to plan and safely execute such adventures. Both presentations focused on safety, assessment of conditions, and turning around if necessary.

We had a visit and a presentation from the Slovenian mountain rescue team, who also brought two dogs with them. They presented their work and their equipment, demonstrated the searching of the person with their dogs, and also gave us a few important tips on how to stay safe in the mountains and while climbing.

Leaders had daily meetings and through them evaluated the activities and adjusted the program. Project management also had a long meeting about the status of the project and plan for the remaining time of the project.

Participants

There were 34 participants from 5 project partners, ranging from 11 to 18 years old. There were 15 leaders from all 5 countries, which were accompanying participants all the time, being responsible for them and teaching them various climbing skills and rope maneuvers.

Participants were assembled into 4 nationally mixed climbing groups (except for the first climbing day), which were determined by their level of technical knowledge and their climbing level. Every group had a local climbing instructor and a few instructors from other countries, to make communication easier. Mixed climbing groups of different nations enhanced international friendships.

Program

7.8.2022 Sunday – Arrival to Kotečnik, building tents and getting set in the camp, giving general information and introduction, leader's meeting (a division of groups and instructors, discussion about the experiences of Activity 5 (last year's camp) and how to effectively implement the plan for the whole week).

8.8.2022 Monday – Morning and afternoon climbing in national groups, introduction games for participants, lecture about English climbing vocabulary (gear, knots, general vocabulary), presentation on communication with your climbing partner (emphasis on English), leader's meeting (report for the day, plan for the next day, assembling mixed climbing groups).

9.8.2022 Tuesday – Morning and afternoon climbing in mixed groups, practicing individual rope maneuvers in the groups according to the level of expertise of the group, lecture from Slovenian instructor and a member of the Slovenian National Youth Alpine Climbing Team (SMAR) about sport and alpine climbing, leader's meeting (report for the day, plan for the next day).

10.8.2022 Wednesday – Morning climbing in mixed groups, afternoon swimming in the lake, lecture from Hungarian instructor about alpine climbing and alpine expeditions, night climbing for a group of participants.

11.8.2022 Thursday – Morning and afternoon climbing in mixed groups, presentation of the Slovenian mountain rescue team and their rescue dogs (presenting their work and their equipment, demonstrating the search of the missing person with their dogs, sharing important tips on how to stay



safe in the mountains and while climbing), playing games and socializing, leader's meeting (report for the day, plan for the next day, the status of the project and plan for the remaining time of the project).

12.8.2022 Friday – Morning and afternoon climbing in mixed groups, rappelling presentation for some groups (climbing gear used, maneuvers), evening campfire, and socializing.

13.8.2012 Saturday – Packing, the conclusion of the camp, and departure.

Conclusion

The organization of the camp went smoothly and without major issues. We had to visit the emergency with one participant on the last day because he hit his head on the staircase. In comparison to the last year's camp, we had an easier job regarding the pandemic and following the rules issued in all of the participating countries.

We followed a similar system and program as last year's camp since the feedback from participants was so positive. We of course changed the main topics, to follow the goals of the project plan. As a part of last year's evaluation, we decided to have a person dedicated to preparing games and animation this year, to make it easier for other leaders. We realized at the end of the week, that even though we had prepared many games, a lot of them weren't presented, since we were really lucky with the weather and we spent most of the time climbing. Since the main focus of the camp is climbing and learning new techniques, we don't see that as a particular problem.

Participants enjoyed the camp, and their progress in climbing and English skills was evident. This showed us once again the importance of such events. They give children a chance to get familiar with different local climbing cultures, meet new people, and pick up new knowledge.

The goals set in the project plan were all fulfilled and topics were successfully implemented into the program. We successfully used methods and guidelines which were the results of Activities 2-5.

Annexes

1) photos





