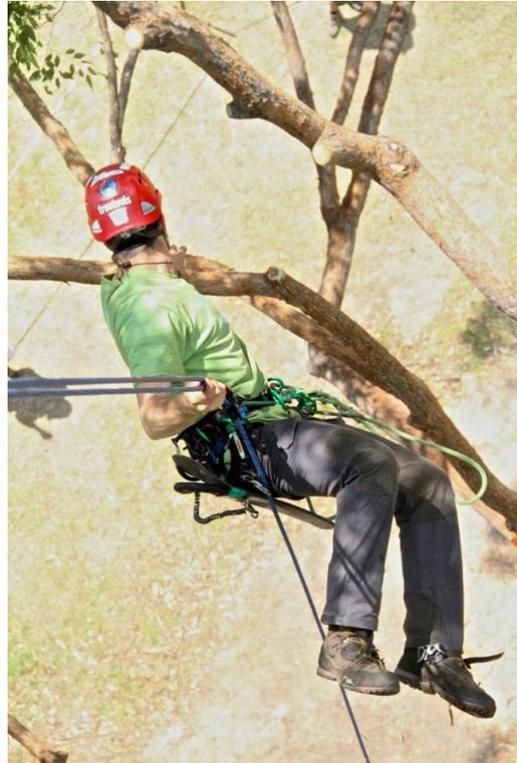




What Tree Climbing Competitions Bring and Expect from Us?

Written by Tiago Miranda

I was fortunate enough to win the previous New Zealand National Tree Climbing Competition. Some would say is 'luck', others might say 'deserved' or even those more competitive say 'see you next year'. Tree climbing competition is a branch of tree climbing less explored by many considered as a divergence from what tree work is – which they believe is nothing to do what we do daily. I might disagree but also depends on how you see and do things at your regular job.



Climber: T. Miranda 2015

As a climber, I see advantages of the **throw-line** where accuracy plays a toll in readiness and tiredness and also define timeframe. **Aerial rescue** can be a show of skills and a gear-freak-bustle thus it exemplifies scenarios that eventually could happen in real life with a certain artificial timeframe, pushing you to finish at a firm degree that could define the victim's life or death.

Speed climb I guess is a headway to muscle up and fitness, which above all is essential to our daily life that a tree climber wouldn't ask for more of importance than to be fit and ready for work every day. **Work climb** defines itself pretty clear as the ability to move around the canopy and reaching the bells smoothly that not just demonstrate balance, energy, proficiency and focus but also work position and keenness to get out on the limb.

Ascent event in other ways is a moment of technique and ascent demonstration, which it might be essential in some scenarios at tree



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work, either to embody how quick you can get to the top or how prepare you are to commit to the job ahead.

And finally, **Masters climb** – an end of the pole event where everything is on the dole and all the skills are ready to shine at once.

I do think tree climbing competitions have a purpose of improvement and a school of thought on the hands of those ardent to expand their skills on the daily work as a climber.

Although some rules can be faulty and unnecessary, a competitive environment can provide a foundation of diversified mentality and individual assuredness, whereas not just for the sake of winning but to show that investment on fitness, dedication, focus and skills can lead you to a better career and/or daily life confidence.

The point here is not just about winning – losing is winning because you tried. Considering tree climbing evolution and how it changed from the first introduction into Western society by scientists in 1920s', defining nature's beauty and the commercially driven formal gardens until today as a sport – we are doing pretty good.



Source: R. Tregoweth 2018

The question is: **what tree climbing has to offer and how can you deal with the psychology behind it?**



A perfectionist like me work on improvement almost daily – from breakfast to dinner. No, I don't sleep with a carabiner under my pillow or dream about climbing every night. I meant about daily life attitudes and eager in how to get better and also what it can be achieved, even after 10 years of training to conquest something that I've never thought could be possible among of an amazing bunch.

Psychologists define a certain level of awareness as *selective attention*, which is the ability to focus on something disregard of a competitive stimulus, and according to sports psychologists, professional athletes – like us – would never get anything done without it. Several techniques differ within individuals though.

Getting geeky about it, specialists call *meta-attention* a kind of awareness of the factors that influence one's attention. Apart from *imagery*, *motivation* and *attentional focus*, professionals depart from a specific principle of creating sentience to improve optimal performance, well-being and social aspects of sport participation.

Understanding how to compete and what to achieve at a certain moment may define the future ahead and your motivation to try harder each time. According to **Scott Forrest**, current World Champion, "*visualisation is big for me, working through a plan in the mind, repeating the steps, over and over*".

In this case, *imagery* as a technique plays a role in Scott's mantra towards a better understanding of what to expect and it makes you ready for the consequences. Moreover, Scott throws a classic but flawless martial art's saying "*...repetition makes you good, I think we all start here. Doing the basics over and over again. The 10,000-hour rule is something I've referenced in the past. But...having the experience and the confidence to make a move and complete it well can make you great*".



Source: R. Tregoweth 2018



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Ultimately, tree climbing can be your tunnel vision, your pleasant moment, your social environment and you know there's always space for improvement and innovation by anyone keen enough to participate and share – because, beyond any deep explanation, I wouldn't be able to achieve anything, neither Scott, if there were no inclusion, partnership, empathy, compassion and motivation from others also involved.

However, one thing is for sure, a champion can be jealous in the eyes of some but he/she has the credit to be so. *“And you've got to be able to make sacrifices”*, says Scott that nevertheless confirms that dedication may be watchful and self-demanding to result in the success of the one.



Source: T. Miranda 2016