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By Misha Maruma

Mission Dyno Rock Climbing!

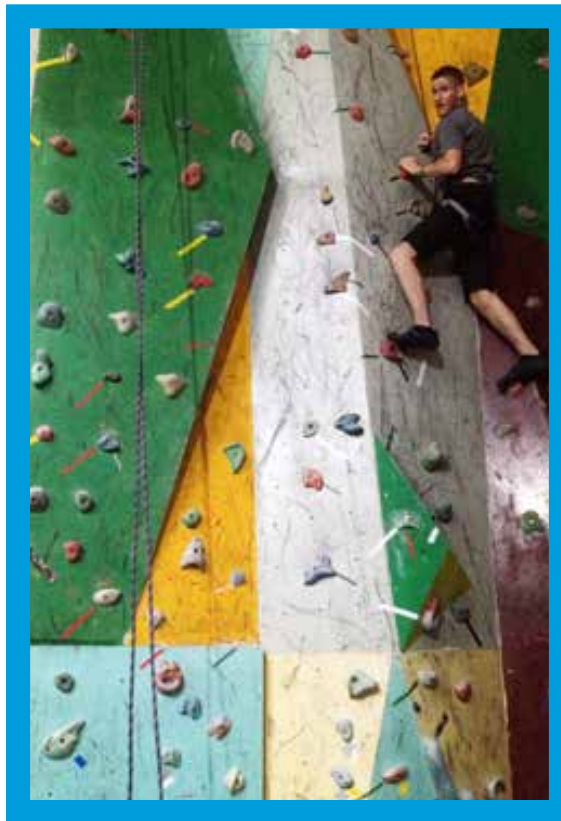
I believe rock-climbing sounds like a distinctly outdoor pursuit. Indeed it was a friend who inspired me to try rock climbing for the first time when I saw some pictures of him and his friends outdoor climbing on Purple Moutain.

In light of the winter months creeping into Nanjing and the short, but fluctuating Autumn set to take hold, I wanted to find something rather more convenient and indoors. This was when I stumbled upon Dyno Rock Climbing gym at Nanjing Normal University. After recruiting two friends, who have rather more climbing experience than me, we headed off to Nanshida on a Thursday afternoon.

If you have never played any sport at Nanjing Normal University it can be quite difficult to find the venue. Enter through the main gate next to McDonalds on NingHai Lu. Follow the paths until you reach the basketball courts and go up the

stairs at the back and into the sports centre. The indoor climbing gym is located exiting the back entrance of the sports centre on the lower ground floor.

The gym's boss is a very nice man who obviously has plenty of experience in climbing. He is very enthusiastic about the sport and made our experience infinitely more enjoyable.



To get me warmed up, my more experienced friends suggested bouldering on the lower walls to get a feel for climbing and to develop some technique. Bouldering means moving sideways along a cliff face rather than vertically. I have to admit this was extremely difficult. I wanted to pull myself along like Tom Cruise in the intro scene of Mission Impossible 2. Having to consider the need to cross your body and keep yourself centred all the while making sure you always have three points of contact on the wall made it terribly difficult to do the "Cruise". Not what I was expecting at all.

When it came to the vertical wall climb, I ignored my training and rather than use my legs to control

my ascent, I pulled myself up the 15 metre cliff face using my upper body. In the long run I made it to the top (never look down!) but had no energy left for any other climbs during the afternoon.

We took the boss' advice and warmed down by bouldering along the bottom of the wall. This prevents pain in your forearms however it does not save you from the pain in your finger joints for the next few days. I couldn't even use chopsticks.

The cost of one afternoon of climbing was ¥50 per person and ¥10 for the shoe hire. Specialist shoes are required but you can use your own. The opening times during the week are 1pm-10pm and 10am-10pm at weekends.

All in all a very worthwhile experience and I'll be going back again. This time I'll do as the boss says and try to get more than two climbs in one afternoon. **N**

Take a shot? Don't Hold your breath!

During the recent Asian Youth Games held in Nanjing different sports were held all over the city from Wutaishan in the city centre to Fangshan in Jiangning. I was intrigued as to what some of the facilities were like. With this in mind I ventured south on line 1 of the metro to go and see the home of the shooting events at the Fangshan shooting hall.

My brief is usually to find different sporting activities that people are able to participate in. Unfortunately the shooting facilities at Fangshan are not open to the general public. They are only available to professional members who participate in events.

The facilities are top quality and I can see why they were used for the 10m air rifle and the 50m shooting events. The day I went to visit the Fangshan shooting hall, though, I witnessed a rather different shooting event. To my surprise the 50m target area was full of movie cameras and was the set for a new film about the second Sino-Japanese War, titled *True Hero* (英雄本色). I even caught a glimpse of the star of the movie Lu Yi (陆毅) just as he was leaving.

The Youth Olympic Games in August 2014 will also hold the shooting events at Fangshan due

to the success of the Asian Youth Games earlier this year. Even though it's not possible to have a go yourself, I'd recommend going to see some professional shooting there. And with a little luck, like me, you may see some stars.

Off to location number two, the Zhong Shan International Shooting club. Upon arrival I found to my utter frustration that The Zhong Shan International Shooting club is closed for refurbishment.

The shooting club is set in a beautiful area against the city wall also housing a judo club, indoor tennis courts, outdoor football pitches and flats housing participants for the Asian Youth Games and the upcoming Youth Olympic Games. Being housed here during the games would be a wonderfully relaxing experience.

Towards the back of the complex is the shooting club. One side of it has been completely gutted out. With the main shooting competition taking place at Fangshan the refurbished club will be used for practise. The facilities were poor with debris everywhere and vegetation growing all over the dilapidated range. It is obvious why the club is having a refurb.

I was disappointed not to be able to fire a shot in anger, but happy in the knowledge that later next year there will be some public facilities to come to and fire a gun. So while this turned out to be a rather frustrating day, offset only by the excitement of seeing a movie star, I will make an appointment in my diary to watch some shooting at the Youth Olympics next year followed by a visit to Zhong Shan club to attempt my own Olympic performance. **N**

