

Knot



News

International Guild of Knot Tyers – Pacific Americas Branch

April 2014

Joseph Schmidbauer – Editor

ISSN 1554-1843

Issue # 93

Loop Links

Frank Brown

For a good part of the last century I was a member of the local State Emergency Service Unit. We were all volunteers and we handled a variety of emergencies. We were equipped with items supplied by the government and by the local council. As the chief rescue instructor I had responsibility for identifying what equipment was needed when budget time came around. For some reason rope was always near the top of the wish list. ☺

In our part of the State of Tasmania, strong winds occur regularly and our most common call-out was for wind damaged houses. All the situations were pretty well unique, but there was normally a need to cover at least part of a house where tiles, slates or sheet iron had done a Margaret Mitchell. We had a range of tarpaulins and a healthy quantity of rope. Our basic rope was a 10 meter length of 10 mm sisal identified as a lashing in the inventory and we had bags full of these. There were also longer lengths of heavier sisal and a selection of synthetics. Sometimes a couple of hundred meters of rope could be utilized as we cocooned a bald domicile. The tarps were equipped with tie lines, so the lashings and other ropes were used to provide anchor points where none were available and to pass over the spread tarps to minimize bellying in the wind.

One annoying thing was the amount of rope that was left over because we often only needed say 3 meters of a lashing. The remainder had to be tidied up as possible and left hanging or tucked under the tarp. There was no question of cutting off the excess. As we were fairly endowed the problem was only one of nuisance value. Our main preoccupation was with ensuring all knots were secure and the rope was protected from sharp edges.

A short time after I retired from the unit, I had a bright idea. (Nothing new about that, I get one nearly every year). Instead of the lashings, why not a handful of ropes about 2 or 3 meters long with a soft eye in each end?



The idea may have been triggered when I was making an intensive study of Bends, and saw ABOK 1493 and 1495. It is extraordinarily easy to join two ropes by mating the eyes as shown. Thread one and then the other. Blind fold stuff, great in stressful conditions.



BENDS

1488. To bend to a telephone or other wire. This will hold better if the wire is first shellacked. Take a short flexible cord or small rope that is slightly larger than the wire and, using this as a bridle, secure both ends to the wire with ROLLING HITCHES, then bend the hauling rope to the slack of the bridle between the hitches. The wire may be taped, but sometimes sticky tape will crawl.

1489. The STRAP KNOT is the common method of repairing a broken strap in harness. In form this is similar to the BECKET HITCH. Although more used on the farm than at sea, I have seen the lanyard of a binocular case repaired with it.

1490. The GRASS BEND provides the best method of joining any flat, semiflexible material, such as straps, chair cane, thongs, grass, and straw. It has an excellent lead and is quite secure. Although in formation it is the same as the WHATNOT #1406 and #1407, when the ends have been arranged as shown, due to the flatness of the material they cannot shift into an insecure position.

1491. STRAP KNOT. A bend that cannot untie may be formed by cutting a slit in each strap end and reeving as illustrated in the right-hand diagram. One of the ends may be fast to another object.

1492. A STRAP BEND of another sort. The circular piece of rope which passes around a block and provides the eye from which it is suspended is called a strap. Also a rope wreath, or a single rope with an eye in one or both ends, which is to be made fast in the rigging and to which a tackle is hooked, is termed a strap.

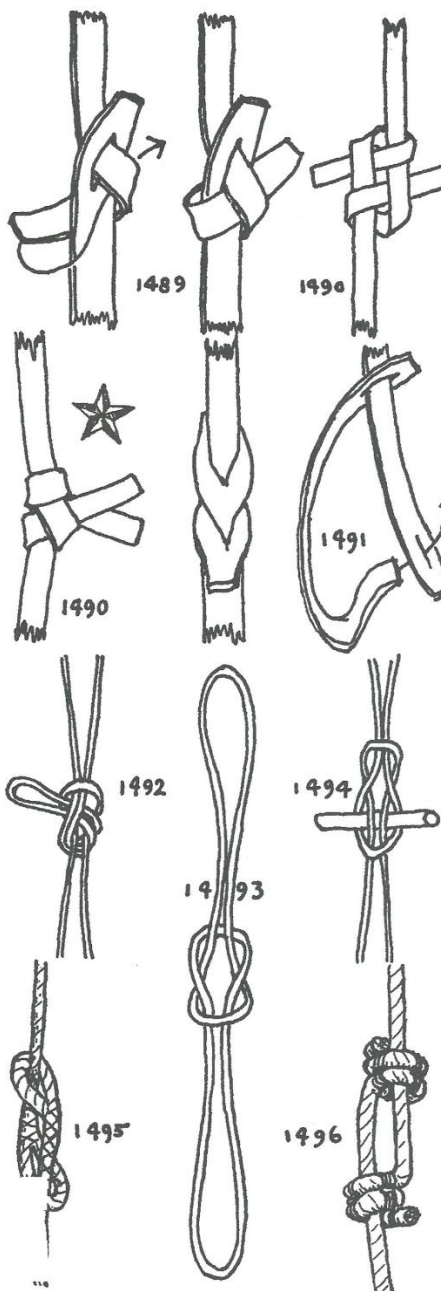
When the two ends of a cargo sling or a strap are to be bent together, reeve one doubled end through the other in the way a BECKET HITCH is tied.

1493. A bend for rubber bands. Two or more slings or straps may be bent together as illustrated. In formation this is the same knot depicted as #1491. It is the best way to bend elastic bands together. Drop the end of one band over the end of the other. Then reeve the outer one through the other.

1494. A SLING OR STRAP TOGGLE. If a third end is not available for tying #1493, or if it is desired to cast off quickly, arrange the ends as pictured and insert a toggle. Hold the toggle secure until the load has been added.

1495. EYE TO EYE. This may be tied with a somewhat different technique than is given for #1491. Reeve the upper end of the lower strap through the eye of the upper strap. Then reeve the lower eye of the lower strap through its *own* upper eye. This forms a SLING HITCH in one of the eyes which, with a little assistance, will capsize into a STRAP BEND.

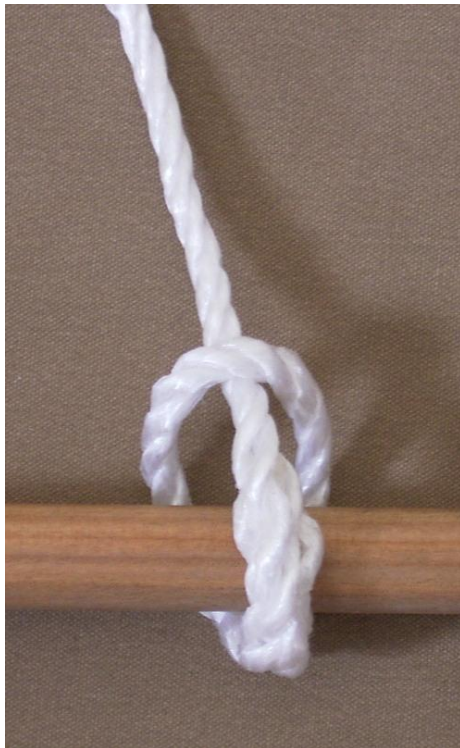
1496. Two clinches may be used to form a HAWSER or CABLE BEND. The illustration shows two OUTSIDE CLINCHES. The turns should be as small as possible. The INSIDE CLINCH is more secure than the OUTSIDE CLINCH but is not so easily cast off.



Hauling on the individual ropes, which I christened Loop Links, achieves a very secure join even in cheap, nasty, slippery, stiff synthetics. It is also very easy to check.



In addition a very secure anchor point was available.

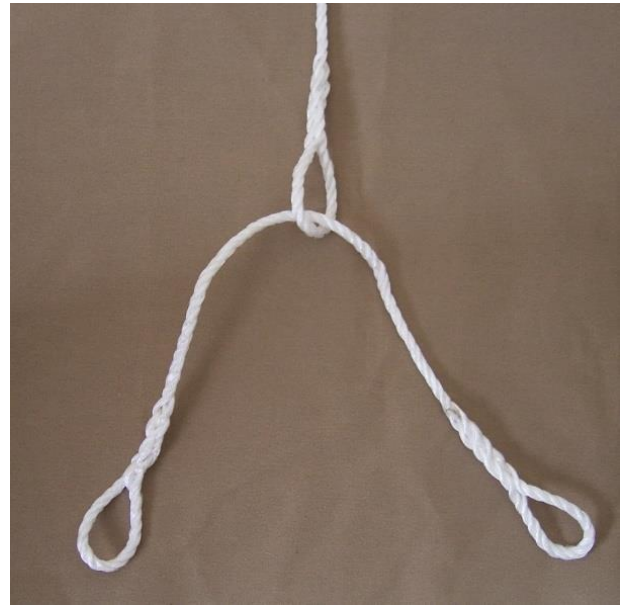


I passed on my idea to my old unit and even wrote a description for the region's newsletter. I never got any feedback, so I don't know if the idea was tested, if there were any problems, or if it was just considered too hard to make up the items.

Soon after the above episode, my son had a roof rack installed on his car. Again the problem of excess rope arose. Coiling and stowing the excess securely was necessary. Alternately you double up the lashing, which makes for a lengthy task (pun intended). So for Xmas, my son got a small bag filled with half a dozen 2 meter lengths with soft eyes. These links were made from a good quality synthetic with excellent knot-ability.

Recently in a conversation with redoubtable Richard Hopkins, I described the Loop Links. Quick as ever, Richard suggested an extra way of using the loops, particularly when securing loads on trailers or ute trays. I

am still kicking myself for not thinking of it. ("Ute" is Australian for "Pick-up".)



There is one problem with this particular arrangement. If the final network of ropes is in motion, there will be a sawing action of rope on rope. This is undesirable to say the least. It can be overcome by securing the junction with a suitable knot. The Becket Hitch is the first to be considered, but I am not sure how secure it would be when loaded on both sides. A Reef Knot / Square Knot should work. I am inclined to favor the Simple Simon.



Becket Hitch



Reef / Square Knot



Simple Simon

The only drawback I can envisage with the devices is the slight difficulty in tying a conventional hitch with the extra bulk of the soft eye. Not a big problem I think.

It is of course possible to miss tie a knot, you get something very unstable – the Becket version of the Grief

Knot that makes itself apparent very quickly. Miss-tying the Simple Simon gives what appears to be a Weavers Knot, ABOK #1419. When I tied this particular knot, I thought at first I had developed something new, hence the appellation. ☺



"Stupid Simon"

I regularly make up shorter versions of Loop Links for hanging up garden hoses, electrical cable and even coils of rope. They make nice giveaways and are good for displaying your splicing skills at boats shows, craft shows, and similar gatherings. Maybe you could even sell them.

From the Mail Bag

In issue #91 of *Knot News* the article "Going Down and

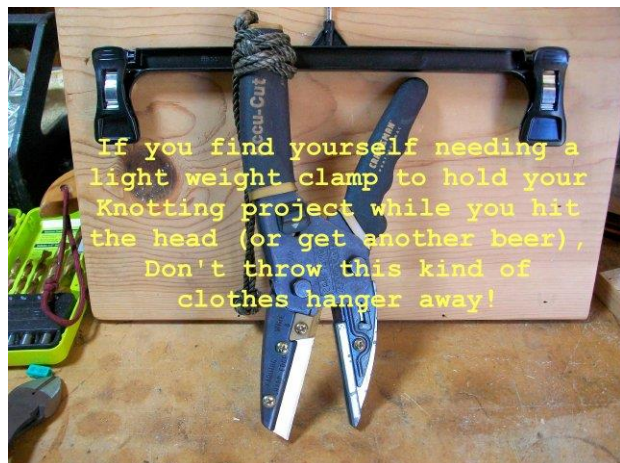
Getting Back Up" had a mistake that the author, Frank Brown of Tasmania has corrected, in that the technique of abseiling or rappelling was said to be "the fastest way down". It should have been "the second fastest way down"...

Tig Dupre from Washington also sent in these comments: "Great issue, Joe! Ya done good! As a soldier, I used several of the mountaineering techniques, just not in caves. Caving never appealed to me – don't like being closed in."

US Army Rangers use a technique for running DOWN walls or steep inclines, fully armed and ready called "Australian Rappel". There is a YouTube video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yp38DGBH134>

"In this fashion, soldiers can attack from a cliff face while firing their weapons. The field craft and assault techniques are deliberately designed to get troops as quietly as possible, execute the mission as violently as possible, and get away as quickly as possible"

Jimmy Ray Williams, our esteemed PAB Secretary and Treasurer sent in this clever idea...



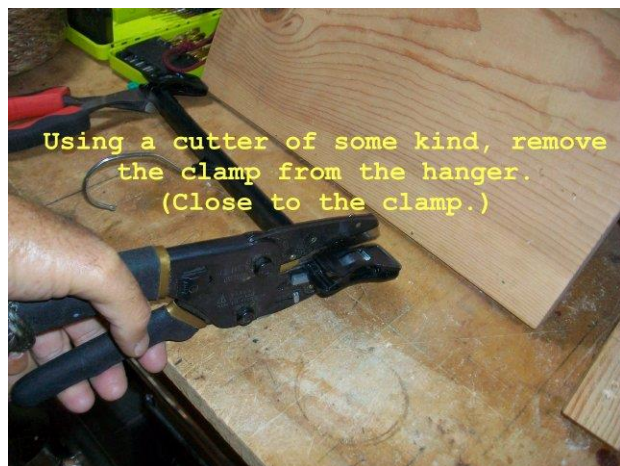
If you find yourself needing a light weight clamp to hold your Knotting project while you hit the head (or get another beer), Don't throw this kind of clothes hanger away!



(Optional)
Clean up the ragged edges
(I use a bench grinder.)

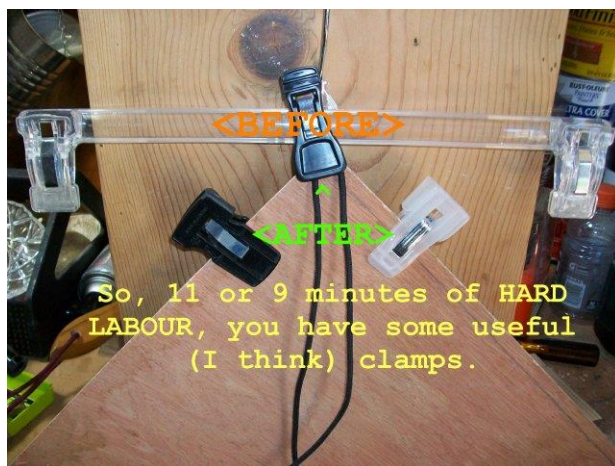
Clean up the ragged edges (I use a bench grinder)

If you find yourself needing a light weight clamp to hold your Knotting Project while you hit the head (or get another beer) Don't throw this kind of clothes hanger away!



Using a cutter of some kind, remove the clamp from the hanger.
(Close to the clamp.)

Using a cutter of some kind, remove the clamp from the hanger
(Close to the clamp)



So, 11 or 9 minutes of HARD LABOUR, you have some useful (I think) clamps.

So, 11 or 9 minutes of HARD LABOUR,
you will have some useful (I think) clamps



Like this . . .

Like this...



A Fast, One Cord Fob

Jim Long

It uses one cord, ties as easy as a Half-Knot (over – and – over – and – over) and eats very little time. My pictured “Pet Rope” is 3/16 diamond-braid nylon, but this would be awesome in that Dacron “Blind Cord”.



As with Solomon and Bannister Bars, the ends' exits determine the direction of the kinks around the foundation. The hardest part is keeping track of which end comes out which way: erupting toward you or away from you. Traditional methods allow the kinks to parallel each other, but I wanted a counter-helix look with one cord.

To Tie

Start with a pre-cut piece of cord. Middle it and out in a Noose (ABOK #43) but see it as a Half Knot (ABOK #47) around the standing part. Make the loop as long as you want the whole fob to be. See which kink of the Half Knot has the working end erupting from it? Call that “The First End”.



If you want your kinks to helix, make sure that the Half Knots always go the same way. Alternate them (L R L R...) to make straight line(s) of kinks (Solomon Bar).

Now take your standing (slipping) part, think of it as “The Second End” and lead it over the first Half Knot to put the next Half Knot around the loop which now becomes the foundation of your bar. Its end will erupt from the Half Knot pointing in the same direction (toward you or away from you, not the same direction around the foundation) as the first end's Half Knot, unless you're making a different fob.



If the second end's knots face the opposite direction of the first end's knots, meaning they go the same direction around the foundation, the two lines of kinks will helix in parallel as they go, just like a normal Bannister Bar; but I want the intertwined “DNA look”, not another screw pattern.



Going back to the first end, make another Half Knot around the foundation so that the first end comes out the same way it did the first time.

Take the second end and repeat its Half Knot around the foundation, going the same direction as the first second-end Half Knot. Repeat until your brains fall out...

The kinks will get closer together until they cross, then diverge to later cross on the other “face” of the fob, etc. should you choose to continue far enough. You could arrange to stop at a certain point to make a “Jesus Fish” fob. When the two lines of kinks meet, it is very easy to mix up in which direction each end is going! I would tie a knot in the end of one just to keep track.

(It just occurred to me that you could make all the first end’s Half Knots go in the same direction for a helix and have the second end’s Half Knots go in alternate directions and make a straight line, all in one cord on the same fob.)

Haul away on each end as each Half Knot is done, and pull all the slack out where each one’s standing part crosses over the previous hitch. Once the Half Knot closes up around the foundation loop, you can hang the loop on a nail or finger and pull the current end against the loop to make that Half Knot tight. The next-previous Half Knot can be hauled on this way as well, if needed.



If you keep both kinks in opposition, a nice counter-helix appears. The beginning tiers in the picture show this.



End it with a Wall & Crown or any other 2-strand knob around the foundation.

For shackle fobs in blind cord, these almost fall out of your hands unbidden, as you get going. Flip this end this way, tuck the loop – haul away. Flip that end that way, tuck the loop – haul away. Repeat ad nauseam. As long as you get all the slack out, and don’t change direction (unless you want to), the pattern of kinks will take care of itself.



I wasn’t sure I could do this, but I did it anyway – seems useful to me...



Parts and tools of the trade



Stitching the bag



Bag and lanyard



Brummel splice

Roy Chapman of Washington has been busy and tries to keep the customer satisfied.

Left is an order for a Heaving Line with 12 ounces of lead in a leather pouch with a 40 foot lanyard.

Below are directions on how to make a Turk's Head bracelet to a certain size and how to seize them correctly.



Turk's Head bracelet and seizing



Correct placement and working of seizing



Sizing the Turk's Head bracelet