

BMC Leading Ladder 2010

By Rachel Carr

The Leading Ladder is a competition that is different from any other. You must compete in at least three rounds to get to the final. You would go to at least two climbing walls to try and get your highest score possible. If you compete in more than three they take your top three scores. Each round consists of climbs graded from 5+ to 8a, but you don't have to do them all. You can have as many attempts as you can but you lose more and more points every time. The final was the same set up but depending on what category you were in you only got graded on five routes.

My Time

For my first round I went to my local wall, Ratho. I completed the first six routes (5-6C+) on my first attempts and the seventh on my second. I failed on the rest.

For my second round I went to Glasgow. It was horrible, I only finished up to the sixth route all together (5-6C+) and failed on the 7a. The routes were all very big reach moves.

I returned to Ratho for my third round and did the same as my first round but I on-sighted them all.

I decided to go for a fourth round just trying to get a better score. So I returned to Glasgow and did the same again.

Since the fourth round didn't go well I decided to try another wall. I went to Newton Aitcliffe on the way back from Sheffield. I finished up to the sixth again. Then found the 7a too hard so moved onto the 7b+ and got it on my fourth go. I had amassed 403 points.

The Final

All of that must have been enough because I made it to the final with a ranking of 7th. The set up was trickier than ever because there were five routes and I was up against a 16 year old team member.

The first route was an easy 6B+, but I was still nervous throughout the whole climb.

The next route was a 6C+ just as easy but still quite nerve racking.

The 7A+ was worth being worried about, it had alright holds but big moves and hard sequences. I finished it but was anxious about the following route.

7B, the grade I'd been dreading from the start. I stuck in on all of the hard moves and took rests whenever I got the chance. I even had to stop for a neighbouring climber. I powered through for the last moves and finished on my first attempt.

The 7C was the decider between me and Charlotte Garden, the 16 year old. On my first attempt I was one move away from getting the bonus hold. I had to watch Charlotte attempt the route; I was expecting her to get to the bonus and was so nervous. She fell before me so I was joint first because you don't get a point unless you get to the bonus. So I went again aiming only for the bonus hold. I was so tired so I just went for it, I grabbed the hold, I was overwhelmed with the thought of getting the hold that I rushed and fell. But that was all I needed I had won the competition.

I went into the comp aiming for at least second but expecting third and I went home with first. I was the Female Leading Ladder under 16 recreational climbing champion of 2010.