



Aleš Holc (1975 – 2014) and Peter Mežnar (1972 – 2014)

... bilo tako lepo je

ob?util sem spokoj,

vseh belih snov sijo?ih,

omamil me je opoj ...

(Aleš Holc)

What makes a climber climb a sheer cliff, ascend a high and mighty mountain, seek trails where there are none, look for...something wild and magical, something which is not just glory and recognition but is primordial and fills one's heart and soul, a soul yearning for freedom? It was freedom and pristine nature that Aleš and Peter went to find among deep rivers, impenetrable gorges, and unknown mountains.

A social worker by profession, Aleš was also a mediator and facilitator, an improviser and an artist, creator of lyrics on guitar and on paper, and a serious man who liked to spice serious talk with humor. Peter on the other hand was a trained engineer, as well as an invisible yet omnipresent expert on Slovenian alpinism, a person with rich vocabulary and eager to learn, witty, tolerant, profound, and always honest.

In their professions as well as in their private lives, they were in constant search of an equilibrium between reality, obligations, and everyday life on the one hand, and dreams, challenges and wishes on the other. Sadly, their last venture was one dream too many. Buried in a cold grave, they each left behind a wife and three children. But knowing them as I did, I am sure that if given the chance to repeat their last adventure they would have done it again.

Ales Holc, head of Alpine Club Kamnik, and Peter Meznar, longtime president of Alpine Climbing Commission of the Alpine Association of Slovenia, were also mountain rescuers and alpine climbing instructors. Their list of new climbing routes in Slovenian mountains and abroad is impressive:

Holc–Marko Petek, The Kamnik Language (Kamniški jezik, IV+, 90°/IV, III, 50–80°, 980 m) on Razor (2602 m) and Crack of the Moon (Lunina špranjica, VI-/II-IV, 180 m) on Vrši?i; Holc–Mežnar, Arriving Late to Branka (K Branki pridem pozno, WI 4, M4, 50–80°, 400 m) on Brana (2253 m); Holc–Franci Brcar, Brittle Rock for Winter Stores (Krušljivka za ozimnico, IV+/III (4), 450 m) on Brana (2253 m); Holc–Primož Lavri?, Wild Rose (Divja roža, VII-/VI–V, IV, III, 430 m) on Brana (2253 m) and many more abroad: Holc–Jure Prezelj–Marko Petek, routes Problem-No Problem (Problem-nje problem, V, IV, II–III, 600 m), Kamnik Pilar (Kamniški steber, IV+/II–IV, 400 m), and Slovenian Beauty (Slovenka lepotica, VI/V–IV, 400 m) in Valbona Valley Mountains in Albania; Holc–Tadej Krišelj–Matej Smerkolj, Slovenian Birthday Party (Slovenska rojstnodnevna zabava, 90°, 80–50°, 1020 m) on Pik Parashutny (5360 m); Holc–Peter Juvan–Igor Kremser, Arête of Trust (Raz zaupanja, ED2, AI5, M5+, 2400 m) on previously unclimbed peak Xuelian North East (6249 m), which received the Piolet d'Or nomination for 2012; Mežnar–Matic Jošt, Strawberry Fields (Jagodna polja, TD, 85°) on the South Face of Nampa (6755 m); Mežnar–Grega La?en, a new route in Cayesh (5721 m), The Third World (Tretji svet, VI, 6,

5c, 900 m); Mežnar–Marko Prezelj–Marko ?ar–Andrej Štremfelj, the first ascent of Zero Peak (6700 m); Mežnar–Tomaž Jakof?i?, Slovenian Route (Slovenska smer, VI/4, 2000 m), a new route in Gyachung Kang (7952 m).

Aleš and Peter were climbers with years of experience which they gladly passed on to younger generations. They also knew how to enjoy pristine nature while singing songs and playing tunes on a guitar in the company of friends. A major part of their lives as alpine climbing instructors and mountain rescuers was dedicated to mountains and nature, and to the exploration of steep rock faces. They were dedicated to seeking, building and cultivating ties between people, to giving unconditional help when it was needed, and to passing on their knowledge to younger generations. They will be remembered by their friends in the Kamnik Alpine Club and in the Mountain Rescue Association, and by all those who have at some point shared the same rope with them in one way or another. The pain of their loss will take a long time to heal, and for their families it may never heal. Through eight pairs of eyes that now must face their futures without two beloved husbands and fathers, Aleš and Peter are looking down on us from the world of snowy peaks and eternal glaciers.

Irena Muši? Habjan, Alpine Club Kamnik

Images

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