



At the very beginning I cannot resist asking a rhetorical question. Do you know that we have a climber who is currently the eight in the world ranking, whose performances are more or less stable for about five years, who climbs the routes 8c+ and 8bs on sight, who was world champion twice and is leading in SP climbing for grades. Few years ago he was filling climbing websites and magazines. Underground (M3/2002), Dragon´s track at St. Leger (M3/2003), T. M. the world champion again!!! (M5/2005) and so on and so on... Do you remember? Nowadays he doesn´t climb any worse, but people maybe - say - got used to it and seek something new. Moreover, he himself does not feel need to present himself. This is

**Tomáš
Mrázek**

The following interview is actually a talk about everything new from last days. Just as if you came to visit someone. Those who are interested in more information can find it on www.tomasmrazek.cz. Today, you can find Tomáš together with Helča Lipenská in a house in the Brno suburb. „We were choosing the house for a long time, garrets in particular,“ they say. That´s where they built their climbing wall.

10, 20,... test of the microphone ... so, come on – talk...!

T: Yeah, but you have to ask me something.

Me? I´ve just an intention... you are among the world´s best climbers... and I´d like to write something about how you live.

T: That´s a kind of stereotype. We just go on. We climb, now we´re training at home because we built the wall here and made conditions in our house. Nobody was up to build a new wall in Brno, so what should we have done? It´s comfortable because I can climb whenever I want. Nobody is in the way... I think it helped me a lot with the competitions this year.

H: Sometimes the neighbours may think we´re dead. We buy supplies and then stop going out. (she laughs)

T: Maybe if we wanted to but of course it´s not like this. We often went to Kras and Chřiby for bouldering in winter. And then if we have time in the afternoon, we go to the wall for an hour. We don´t have to travel anywhere.

...and during the spared time you watch the masons ...

T: Last year it was very bad, indeed; I had basically no time for training. I happened to work here on the house from seven in the morning till the afternoon. I had to do plenty of things which the workers always refuse to do (to pull something down, to carry something away, to buy something, to bring something...).

Did that influence your climbing much?



Terribly! I had no time to go to rocks. Only an hour or two on the bouldering wall. I went to some competitions with „handache“ from the mallet and so on. There´s a big difference between working two weeks on a house and climbing just from time to time, and waking up, climbing and then going to climb somewhere again... You can do such physical work together with the training only for fun. Actually, I´m surprised that I had some results at all. It was the motivaton. Now it´s definitely much more better. We have time to deal with climbing. It was a good experience concerning the motivation...

You were looking forward to climbing more...

T: Yeah.

H: the next advantage of our climbing wall is that Tom can after long time climb the routes. He labelled the holds and nobody removes the labels. About fifty or a hundred steps. Nobody is in the way. But the truth is that people were perfectly helpful at University of Technology.

T: It's good for the future in articular. Maybe we won't have time, we'll have some work to do and then it's easier staying home than going somewhere, moreover if we have to follow the opening hours there.

And isn't it a little boring? After all, if you go somewhere, it's kind of more special...

T: Well, I'd say it's rather overtraining that threatens me... I've problem to keep the day off. It's the same as when I was beginning. I was going climbing everyday then, too. I was climbing for example three weeks en bloc and then I had to have a rest because I was bone tired.

(a little dull passage follows about that when someone rests his head on a wall while pissing, he „anchors himself“ and doesn't miss the bowl.. and about the Olympic games.)

What about the Olympic games, are you watching it?

T: Well, we do and get there some motivation. Czech republic is not bad in comparison with what a small country we are, but I hope there will be more good sportsmen here yet (the very following day Špotáková won the gold in javelin – T.R. 's comment)



And what about climbing as an Olympic discipline?

T: That's what I'm saying again and again: I take part in the competitions for money, I climb because I like it and I don't care about anything else. The things that are made up at IFSC are terrible, the quality of the competitions is declining concerning the resources, course, isolation and so on. I think the main problem is in their officers. They are there for twenty years, formerly as a part of ICC, but since then they just separated from it without any fresh idea about what to do with it. The only idea the president of Scolarise has is „Our dream is to be the olympic sport.“ He keeps talking about it but the real chance is negligible. At first we have to sell the SP to the sponsors, support the organizers and attract people. Unless the people in charge change, nothing will change. Former competitors who understand the thing should be in charge. That's why the only thing that goes ahead is the Masters competition. It stands outside the World cup, outside IFSC, from where they take a referee to control its justice and that's all. The organizers make it in their own way: for the competition to be interesting, just a route or two and final... to make it quick and absorbing. And that's it. I think climbing is popular but it isn't reflected on the competitions. Since 2000 it has been stagnating and now it even decreases, I'd say.

H: And at the same time there are more people being interested among the climbers, more countries want to participate. They're putting money into it and sending people.

T: They're too focused on the profit from the competitions and the effort to become an Olympic discipline. It would bring the money, which would maybe spoil the sport, but, above all, I think it's not real yet. Before climbing here has a certain standard, such efforts are pointless. It's better to focus on the development of climbing as such – the same development that the other sports underwent.

H: For about next twenty years at least.



T: There are some problems here, too. We should make a division between mountain climbing and sport climbing. What does it have in common? It should stay under one federation but it should be divided in some way. Then the wars would stop and everyone would take care of their own business more. Maybe it's sad, but the truth is that people just go climbing to the wall and then maybe they go to rocks or the mountains.

H: Concerning sport climbing, there's no problem there. People in charge understand it and are able to make an agreement. There will always be little money in what we do, but at least we have something. We should rather focus on better communication, instead of trying to split. It would be useless.

And what do you think about the situation here in general?

T: People are too concerned with the tradition here. Those who were climbing fifty years ago are now those making the decisions.

H: That's perhaps everywhere the same.

T: No, it isn't everywhere. All the time we worry about magnesium or whether people aren't belayed too much ... "I climbed it with just one piton, so you can kill yourself there - it's just 4." How can you start climbing then? Yeah, I understand it from some point of view, but on the other hand, it's not important abroad. They send people and belay too much. It's another time. Quick. To come to rocks, scare the s..t out of yourself and go away is not the point. Traditions are important, but people should care about how to go ahead.

H: For example supporting children. They pay children instructor as well as the climbing wall abroad. How can there be some membership created if the smallest don't have support?

Well, anything else on climbing...

H: Well, Tomáš wants to win World Cup this year, that's his goal. Anyway, after Paris we want to have a holiday in rocks for two weeks.

T: And Spain in winter.

H: We could climb something there, perhaps.

T: There's the best climbing there. Lots of areas and different routes. Holes, stalactites, long routes, short routes. Maybe the best place in the world. And we *are* motivated.

So...Good luck!

Tomáš Roubal

Helena
Lipenská

You, Helča, don't appear much at the competitions nowadays. You don't present your performances and that's maybe why the majority of people know you only because of Tomáš. How do you see this, don't you regret it sometimes?

At first I was a bit sad that I was always the second, but I got used to it. It's clear that I'll never be as good in climbing as Tomáš is and I like supporting him. Of course I also realize that my function of the adult climbers' representation takes a lot from me.



If I'm not mistaken, you're a professional teacher. What could you teach? Does it help you in your climbing somehow? What about the future? Will our children meet you at school?

I studied mathematics and sports. And I could teach English, too. PE helps me with climbing of course, besides my own preparation and helping Tomáš I train a promising young boy. And the future? I'm more and more tempted by starting teaching again. Sometimes I'm fed up with all the travelling and would like just to stand up in front of my pupils.

Let's finally talk about your climbing. How about you? Your beginnings, important points. And what do you praise most in your climbing?

I started at eighteen and was climbing everywhere I could. When the weather was good, I climbed in rocks, otherwise I went to the climbing wall. I enjoyed training. I was thinking that I was very good and talented at that time. Then I went to my first CP competition for difficulty (I think it was in Lomnice) and of course I didn't climb anything. But I didn't get discouraged and I trained honestly and systematically, but climbing just needs its time. The most I praise that I still climb and during past few years my technique improved so much that my climbing maybe, maybe starts to look good.

What do you like most at climbing?

I enjoy the act of moving itself. When it's smooth. I like training and also being outdoors.

You climbed your most difficult on sight this year. How would you summarize the current climbing season?

It's my second 7c+ OS but this was really very hard. The plans were great, but my condition in spring wasn't ideal and just as it got better, I injured myself. Now it should be OK, so the season actually starts for me *now*. After finishing SP Tomáš and me want to go to Greece and Spain.

Miniprofile:

The most difficult OS 7c+

The most difficult PP 8a+

Sponsors: Rockpillars, ČHS

Ideal temperature for climbing: 18°C and more

Hobbies other than climbing: cooking, cleaning and washing „Maestro's“ underwear.

Favourite book: detective stories by J. Deavel

Favourite film: I don't have any yet, but it will be the one in which I'll be offered the major part and my partner will be nobody less important than Brad Pitt or so.

Favourite music: Kontrafakt and Black album by Gipsy.

Interesting incident: It was good when Maruška ate up a snail.

Petr Resch



www.montana.cz