

PAWTUCKET • CENTRAL FALLS • CUMBERLAND • LINCOLN • EAST PROVIDENCE • SEEKONK • ATTLEBOROUGH

SRA boys,
Tolman
girls win
city titles

SPORTS



THE TIMES

Pawtucket's First Source for News and Sports
Since 1885

www.pawtuckettimes.com

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2000

Vol. 116 No. 250



Two make Hall of
SP

*Eighth-graders
in Lincoln have*
Nowhere



to go



At left, Ali Plamondon gets strapped into a safety harness Monday by climbing wall owner Rob Catalozzi in front of Lincoln High School.

but up



Center, Amanda Albanese grabs a handhold as she attempts to scale the 23-foot rock. Above, Catalozzi hangs on to the safety rope as Albanese makes her way up. Catalozzi's company is called Rock Island; all the climbers are eighth-graders at Lincoln Middle School.

Students reach for natural high during rock-climbing session

By **TIM GRACE**

Times staff reporter

LINCOLN — Ken Martone clung to the top of the 23-foot simulated stone pillar, flushed and exhilarated from his climb.

He looked around for a moment before realizing that the truly challenging part of the exercise was still to come. He had to

get back down.

Martone was one of the eighth-graders taking part in a rock climbing demonstration in front of the high school Monday morning.

The entire eighth-grade class at the town middle school, more than 300 young people in total, were offered the opportunity to scale a four-sided, realistic-looking pil-

lar.

The obstacle was furnished by Rock Island, a portable climbing-wall provider based in Narragansett.

The company typically charges \$1,500 for a full day's use of the rock, but owner and operator Rob Catalozzi felt that it would be a good long-term investment to

See CLIMB, page A10

CLIMB: Students up wall

donate his time and resources to the school.

Catalozzi was there to give the climbers basic instruction before letting them try their hands, and feet, at the wall.

"It's an exposure program," Catalozzi said. He describes the sport as "a real confidence builder."

Catalozzi hopes that kids will get hooked on climbing, hanging around long enough to develop a grasp of the basics.

He said he's seen many balk at the idea of letting go of the wall and rappelling back down to earth: "Once they get to the top

they feel great. It just takes a little coaxing, sometimes, to get them to let go."

Deb Reddy, a physical education and health teacher at the middle school, organized the event for her students.

"We try to expose the kids to different things, show them an alternate type of exercise," she said.

She and her colleagues are always looking for alternate doors to open for their pupils, hoping to strike a chord, Reddy said. "You never know, this could become a lifetime sport for some of these kids," she said.

The young climbers were enthusiastic about the challenge, cheering their friends on as they picked their hand and foot holds on the way to the top.

Most of the students scaled the 23-foot wall after a few tries, but they all turned a little pale when the instructors told them to let go, grasp the line with both hands and lean back, allowing the automatic belaying units to help slow their descent.

After bouncing back down the wall, Martone excitedly said, "That was cool. You think you're falling when you lean back, you know."