

Climbing Instructor Program Update

By Ed Crothers, CIP Director

New Single Pitch Instructor Discipline Coordinator

I am pleased to announce that Ron Funderburke has been hired as the new SPI DC. Rather than me spray about him, I will let Ron speak for himself:

With utmost excitement, I am pleased to accept the post as Discipline Coordinator for the AMGA SPI Program. The program has enjoyed some unprecedented successes since its inception in 2008, and that is a credit to the excellent students, instructors, providers, and trainers. My fervent hope is that everyone out there is still as invested as I am. The front lines of American climbing instruction have always been the single pitch crags, and single pitch instruction is the face of our guides association. That was true in 2003, when I took the AMGA Top Rope Site Manager Course from Adam Fox and Jim Taylor. It was true in 2008, when SPI was born, and it is true today as SPI providers around the country offer education and credentials to new instructors every week of the year. Deploying providers and trainers, standardizing curriculum and certification standards, updating textbooks and manuals, collaborating with our Technical Committee, and a thousand other tasks and inquiries and contributions in between, have been the labor of the SPI Discipline Coordinator. I learned a lot from watching Adam Fox bend his back to the common task. I hope I can use his example, and the inspiration that emanates from all those associated with the SPI program, to work tirelessly, collaborate, and affirm a strong standard. With a new manual brewing, new providers training, old providers refreshing, and hundreds of new single pitch instructors per year, I'm gonna' hit the ground running, and I couldn't be any more psyched.

--Ron Funderburke

CIP Numbers

First quarter of 2013 is in the books. Here is a look at the numbers through April:

- There were a total of 366 participants who took part in at least 1 CIP course or assessment. That is a 29.3% increase over last year at this time.
- Of the 187 people (up 39.6% over 2012) who took a SPI course, 77.5% were new members to the AMGA and 22.5% were existing members or used the course to renew their membership. Of interest is the fact that 17 of the 42 participants (40.5%) were certified climbing wall instructors looking to continue their education.
- Participants on SPI assessments numbered 102. That is an 87.5% increase over last year at this time! 64.7% earned their first AMGA SPI certification and 25.5% renewed their SPI cert. Last year it was noted that the number of people taking an SPI assessment was noticeably lower than those taking the course. It seems reasonable to conclude the spike is a result of people taking more time between their course and assessment.

To the new members, welcome to the AMGA. To those who passed an assessment, nicely done!

There were two areas that experienced a bit of a slump:

- Although there were 14 CWI courses that have run so far this year and 15 in 2012, the number of participants declined by 20.4%.
- Last year for the entire year, 47.4% of the participants on the Rock Instructor Course were either certified SPI or had taken a SPI course. Over the past 3 years that number has never been below 40%. So far this year, only 35.0% of RIC participants had taken an SPI program. With 6 more RICs in 2013, it will be interesting to see how the trend develops.

Trainings

For qualified people interested in being able to offer either AMGA SPI or CWI programs, here are the dates for upcoming Provider trainings:

- SPI: October 21-22, 2013. The training is being held in conjunction with the annual meeting in Boulder, Colorado.
- CWI: November 10-11, 2013. This training is being held in conjunction with the AORE Conference in College Park, Maryland.

For current SPI Providers who need to meet continuing education requirements, a 1-day refresher will be held October 23 in Boulder, Colorado.

For more information about these trainings, contact Ed Crothers, AMGA Climbing Instructor Program Director.

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