



Figure 14.16 Methods of giving slack to second/s when belaying in guide mode **(A)** Climber hasn't weighted rope. Hold brake rope firmly, lift braking karabiner upwards while pulling slack through with other hand **(B)** Climber has weighted rope. Pump/wiggle braking karabiner up/down but keep tight grip on brake rope **(C)** Two climbers - one needs slack. Add back-up knot to brake rope of other climber and instruct to stay still. Use method shown in A or B to give slack



Figure 14.17 A well-managed belay for two seconds

Libby Peter

14.7.4 Belaying two seconds in parallel – alternative methods

If a pitch or the belay is not suitable for using a direct belay, the best option will be to belay in traditional indirect mode and for the seconds to climb one at a time. Traditional indirect belaying is not normally appropriate for belaying two seconds climbing at the same time; if one weights the rope it will be difficult to safeguard

the other. An exception might be made for two competent seconds on a straightforward, easy-angled pitch where a fall is very unlikely. For routes that ease off in grade and angle towards the top, an alternative is to attach both seconds to one rope, scrambling style, as explained in *Chapter 17* on page 304.

20 Teaching lead climbing at multi-pitch venues

Progressions

There are many ways to maximise the learning on the journey towards leading. With one client/second some ideas include:

- Gradually increase the number and complexity of runners to remove
- Insist on getting comfortable before removing runner
- Insist on racking removed runners neatly on harness
- Rate and discuss the rationale behind and quality of each placement – why the instructor has chosen that place and what makes it a good/mediocre/poor runner
- One handed runner removal
- Runners in strenuous positions
- Remove runners then-replace, reseat, check and remove again
- Build separate belay alongside

With two clients/second climbing in series all of the above apply plus:

- Clients belay each other from above and below
- First client places additional runners for second client to rate and remove
- Slack top-rope to first client while they place additional runners – a type of simulated leading
- Switch order of clients every pitch so they get the feel for swinging leads. This is made easier if the first client attaches to the anchors with their trailing rope. The rope from the instructor can then be removed and transferred to the other client when they arrive. As an added bonus this makes the organisation of ropes at stances much easier.

Logistics

Getting a fixed rope in place without interrupting the flow of the day can be problematic. Options include:

- Abseil down route from the top putting in re-belay – this can be effective on small multi-pitch venues but consideration must be given to other climbers (who might start off up the climb) and the safety of clients while you're out of sight
- Lead the whole route in one long pitch but remove runners and add re-belay at stances on way down
- Lead a pitch at a time – this can be done with one of the clients belaying the instructor while the other re-racks the gear ready to lead. Although it can be tempting for the instructor to climb quickly and place few runners this must be balanced against safe role-modelling
- At all times the instructor should manage the fixed rope carefully to avoid it dropping, on other teams, snagging in trees or knocking off loose debris from ledges etc.