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Rock climbing competitions inspire me to reach higher



Kidsday reporter Ellie Brown climbs at Island Rock in Plainview. Photo Credit: Brown family

By Ellie Brown

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Have you ever been rock climbing? I climb indoors on the rock climbing team.

In indoor climbing, rocks or holds are in different colors or taped with a certain color tape. I think outdoor climbing is harder because you can't see anything that you can grab onto.

I practice twice every week at Island Rock in Plainview. We boulder for competitions. Bouldering means you climb about 15 feet without a harness, but you have someone under you, ready to catch you in case you fall. When you boulder, there are different color routes that you try to climb using only that color. They are rated according to their difficulty. VB and V0 are the easiest climbs, while there can be V15 climbs, which are very hard. I climb mostly V2/V3 and V3s. If the rating has a slash, it means it's in between the two numbers. For the competitions, you get a score card that has all the climbs you can do and the number of points they are worth.

When you want to start climbing, you hand your card to the judges, and once it's your turn, they call you up and you tell them what number climb you want to do. If you finish the problem by putting both of your hands on that color tape at the end of the route, the judge says, "You are good," and you can climb down. They check off the climb, and you can go to another problem. After the four hours are over, you write down your top five scoring climbs. You give them to the people at the front desk, and they see where you placed in your age bracket. For my first competition, I placed sixth and got 5,300 points.

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