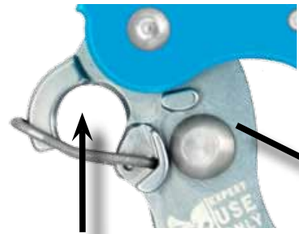
ON THE COVER

AKIMBO is HERE

UPPER LOCK ARM.
Allows the friction adjustment bolt to be lifted, rotated and relocated in the appropriate hole. Once the arm is pushed back it stops the adjustment pin from moving.

UPPER FRICTION ADJUSTMENT.
Lift and rotate to the required hole setting that allows your rope to fit then add another 'notch' for good measure. 'A' is minimum friction, 'G' is maximum.



SRS CHEST ATTACHMENT POINT
For more efficient ascending this non-load bearing captive gate hook helps drag the Akimbo with you.

MAIN ATTACHMENT EYE
The eye-cam assembly pushes the rope against the lower bollard which, unlike the top friction post, rotates.

LOWER FRICTION ADJUSTMENT
Holes from 1 to 7 where 1 is minimum friction and 7 is max. With the Lower lock arm disengaged, lift and rotate the bolt to the required hole.

SIDE-VIEW
Roughly life-sized

Akimbo is primarily an SRT/SRS device but can easily transition to DdRT/MRS thanks to the adjustable friction options and is a true hybrid for descending and ascending. We normally see the Akimbo with its parrot-like beak (we'll call them 'jaws') almost closed as in the picture far left but this is with no load. Once you apply bodyweight, the 'jaws' separate as they have in our front-cover shot. To install the rope, Akimbo needs to be opened as you see above. Once the two 'jaws' have been swivelled apart the side plates magically part like a concertina trellis fence. You may find it difficult to load your rope initially because it's very important to spend a bit of time making the necessary friction adjustments to suit your specific rope both in terms of actually being able to load the rope into the top cam and in being able to move easily once it's fully loaded. RE suggest you use the highest friction setting that will allow you to get your rope in and decrease friction settings from there.

To descend you simply close the jaws but how you achieve this is subjective. We get greater control by pressing down on the top jaw while the thumb levers against the frame just above the cam but whatever works for you is fine. Do this while still on the ground, or a few inches above it and make sure you maintain tension on the trail rope so that you don't inadvertently overcook it and initiate a free-fall start as can occur if your first action is to squeeze the jaws together with gusto.

We have already had a pre-review from Jim Fairfield in issue 10 of an early prototype as you can see in the picture with orange rope on the left, but we will revisit the Akimbo in an instructional article later this year after we've tried it on several ropes that are NOT on Rock Exotica's current approved ropes list of ten which range in diameter from Teufelbergers 11.1mm Fly to Sterling's 12.5mm Scion and HTP with Samson Yoyager, Yale Scandere/Poison Ivy/Blue Moon, Cousin Atrax and Teufelberger Xstatic/ Drenaline in between.