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# Climbs and Expeditions, 1997

Accounts from the various climbs and expeditions of the world are listed geographically from north to south and from west to east within the noted countries. We start with the Contiguous United States and then cover Alaska in order for the climbs in the Alaskan Wrangell-St. Elias Mountains to segue into St. Elias climbs in Canada.

With this volume we include unreported 1996-97 accounts in addition to full reports from the 1997-98 season. Climbers returning from the southern hemisphere can help us in future volumes by submitting accounts as soon as they return home. We encourage climbers to submit accounts of other notable activity from the various Greater Ranges to help us maintain complete records.

Appendices at the back of the book list addresses for expedition permits and regulations, conversions of meters to feet, and comparisons and explanations of the various ratings systems.

## NORTH AMERICA

### CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES

#### WASHINGTON

##### CASCADES

*Mt. Rainier, Fickle Finger of Success.* From July 21 through July 25, Alex Van Steen and Richard Alpert led a Rainier Mountaineering party of four (David Branton, Mark Kelly, Steve Northern, and Pete Laird) to a summit camp via the westernmost couloir of the Success Glacier Headwall. There is mention in Jeff Smoot's *Adventure Guide to Mount Rainier* (1991 edition) of a descent in 1946, but there are no recorded ascents. From Van Trump Park, traverse beneath the lower Kautz Glacier Icefall at 7,500 feet to the Success/Pyramid Divide at 8,400 feet, then ascend to an unobvious "balcony" camp at 9,800 feet (i.e., the base of the Success Glacier Headwall). This camp is somewhat protected from possible rock fall by the bergschrunds that separate the glacier from the snow couloirs above. We ascended the westernmost (left) couloir of the three parallel couloirs that lead up from the head of the Success Glacier. From ca.10,000 feet (at the bergschrund) to the confluence with the standard Success Cleaver Route at 11,700 feet (where Success Cleaver traverses east toward the Kautz Cleaver), the couloir remained consistently moderate (40°). Owing to the heavy snow year, the rock bands on the upper mountain, which normally are exposed at this time of the year, simply presented steep snow climbing (no steeper than 50°). Camp was made on the summit, and we descended via the standard Disappointment Cleaver Route.

ALEX VAN STEEN, *Rainier Mountaineering*

*Double Peak, East Face.* On June 29, Mark Ronca and I made the first ascent of this sheer face on the northeast summit of Double Peak (6,199') in Mt. Rainier National Park. The six-pitch climb followed an obvious crack system on the left side of the face, then finished on an exposed knife-edged ridge to the summit. The first pitch was the crux, consisting of a fun hand crack followed by a hard 5.10 roof. The second pitch started with a 5.9 fist crack followed by a 5.8 squeeze chimney. Two more pitches of mid-5th class and two pitches of easy 4th class climbing led to the summit. The quality of the rock was surprisingly excellent considering that all the other peaks in the area have extremely poor rock. Some cleaning of moss and vegetation was required on lead, though.

JOSEPH PURYEAR

## OREGON

*Second Spire, First Ascent.* On August 3, Rob Morgan and I made the first ascent of Second Spire in four pitches (5.7 R A1) from a base camp at Jefferson Lake in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness, Oregon. This is the second of several striking spires southeast of Jefferson Lake and is readily apparent from the trail. We ascended the east face, which involved 300 feet or so of technical climbing on sometimes loose volcanic rock. We followed a prominent gully from tree line, and then the line of least resistance and best rock. The approach is about six miles on the Jefferson Lake Trail, which starts near Camp Sherman. The first of these spires would be an excellent objective for those who enjoy airy, insecure aid climbing. Routes on the north or west faces of these spires would be considerably longer—probably more than 500 feet.

JEFF MCCARTHY, *Canada*

## CALIFORNIA

### YOSEMITE VALLEY

*The American Safe Climbing Association, Formation and Activity.* It's been a busy first six months for the American Safe Climbing Association. We have replaced about 500 old, unsafe bolts in Yosemite, half of the goal for this season. We've picked up support from a strong group of climbers ranging from John Middendorf to Jon Krakauer. We also are getting a boost from commercial sources such as Metolius, Patagonia and The North Face.

Though it now appears obvious that the ASCA's mission is something that needs to be accomplished, we were far from clear about it when the idea first presented itself. In late July, 1997, Jason Smith and I set out to clean up *Zenyatta Mondatta*, removing superfluous bolts, rivets and fixed copper heads. Our intention was to restore the route to a more natural state. In the end, however, we spent most of our time making the anchors bomber for subsequent ascents by removing rusting quarter-inchers and placing new stainless steel 3/8" bolts. After the climb, we decided that although returning routes to their natural condition sounded good in theory, it was a far greater (and more practical) service to the climbing community to focus energy on making the anchors safer.

With this as our goal, Jason, Erik Sloan and I continued to replace anchors for the rest of the summer on El Cap as well as on several free climbs. Although we were able to replace more than 200 bolts in three months, we had just scratched the surface of what needed to be replaced in Yosemite. Clearly more help was needed. With the goal of getting more climbers

involved, and the legal assistance of Armando Menocal, founder of The Access Fund, I moved to found the American Safe Climbing Association, a California non-profit organization. Our mission is simple: The ASCA wants to make America's rock climbs safer by educating climbers about how to maintain safe fixed anchors, as well as to advance wilderness causes generally. To date, the ASCA has replaced over 500 bolts in Yosemite Valley, Indian Creek and Zion National Park. For more information about which routes have been replaced as well as how you can help, check out the ASCA website at [www.safeclimbing.org](http://www.safeclimbing.org).

CHRIS McNAMARA, *American Safe Climbing Association*

*Yosemite Valley, Various Ascents.* For the third year in a row, action on the *Salathé Wall* led the headlines. This time, it was Yuji Hirayama (Japan) who stole the show with attempts to onsight the entire route. Training for weeks in Yosemite, Hirayama onsighted, among other serious crack leads, *Love Supreme*, a 5.13a crack in Tuolumne. His onsight hopes for the *Salathé* were dashed, however, on pitch 24, where he fell on the Skinner variation. He then pulled his rope and sent the Huber (5.13a) variation first try. After a bivy on the Block, Hirayama then flashed to the headwall. He fell on both headwall pitches, but, amazingly, after working the moves, did both pitches (5.13b) on his second try. Accompanied by Hans Florine and Hidetaka Suzuki, Hirayama finished the climb a mere 38 hours after starting. Previously, the *Salathé* had been climbed free only after months of effort. When asked how he felt about the climb, Hirayama replied "Yeah, I'm pretty happy." This was the fourth free ascent of the *Salathé*.

Many hard El Cap routes saw repeats this year. *The Reticent Wall* (VI 5.9 A5), known as possibly the hardest route on El Cap, saw four repeats. Chris Kalous, Mark Synnott, and Kevin Thaw made the second ascent over seven days in May, finding the climbing sustained and consistent. They also reported that the A2 climbing seemed harder than anything on *Zenyatta Mondatta*. The third ascent came at the hands of two Spaniards, Sylvia Vidal and Pep Masip (see Vidal's account below). In early October, Chris McNamara and Eric Sloan made the fourth ascent, with McNamara leading every pitch. The fifth ascent went to Warren Hollinger and Russel Mitrovitch later that season.

Eric Kohl's routes on El Capitan all saw repeats this year. *The Surgeon General* (VI 5.9 A5) was repeated, except for the last two pitches, by Brad Bond and John Rzczycki, who drilled five rivets past the "Crystal Chandelier," which had fallen off several years before. The pair bailed onto Zodiac two pitches from the top. *Get Whacked* (VI 5.10 A5) saw a second ascent by Gabor Berecz (Hungary) and Thomas Tivadar (Germany). The pair also established *Cool Pool* (VI 5.8 A5), a 14-pitch route on Glacier Point Apron's 9 O'Clock Wall. Hungarians Oskar Nadasdi and Enci Szentirmai made the second ascent of *High Plains Dripper* (VI 5.11 A5). Lastly, Chris Kalous and Kevin Thaw made the second ascent of *Plastic Surgery Disaster* (VI 5.8 A5). Thaw was especially entertained on the "Trust Your Mechanic" pitch, which sports a loose flake that must be hooked for progress. All four routes were established by Eric Kohl, two with partners, and two by himself.

*The Gulf Stream* (VI 5.10 A4), known for its extensive hooking sections, saw four repeats this year. Conrad Anker and Thomas Huber made the fourth ascent, with Brendon Thau and partner making the sixth. The route then received two solos, first from Wally Barker, and then from Chris Kalous.

Other notable repeats were the fifth ascent of *Kaos* (VI 5.10 A4) by Erik Erikson, Bill Leventhal, and Kevin Thaw. Nate Beckwith and partner also made a fifth ascent, this time on *Jolly Roger* (VI 5.10 A5). Another fifth ascent, on *Shortest Straw* (VI 5.10 A4), came solo at the hands of Cameron Lawson. *Scorched Earth* had a solo by Southern Californian "Eric."

Reportedly, he avoided the 5.11 offwidth with a new variation.

The season's only new route was *Continental Drift* (VI 5.10 A4), which was established by Anker, Gerberding, and Thaw. They spent 12 days on the wall, four of them storm-bound. Of its 15 long pitches, just two and a half were shared by other routes. The route takes a line near *New Jersey Turnpike* and *Heartland*.

Two El Cap routes received their first clean ascents. *Mescalito* (VI 5.9 A4) was climbed without hammer by Dave Dyess and A.C. Robertson, and the *North America Wall* (VI 5.8 A3) was climbed clean by Dougald MacDonald and Chris McNamara.

On Half Dome, Chris McNamara finished a new five-pitch line to the left of the Regular Northwest Face. The second pitch took "Mac" 15 hours to lead over two days, and at one point sports a string of 22 beaks in a row.

Elsewhere in the Valley, Kohl, partnered with Brian Law, made the first ascent of *Clusterfuck 2000* (VI 5.10 A3+) on the Yosemite Falls Wall. Eric Rasmussen and Mike Zawaski established *A Sad State of Affairs* (VI 5.? A3+) on Glacier Point's Firefall Wall. The route is mostly overhanging and finishes at the snack bar. [Rasmussen also climbed *Ashes to Ashes* (VI A4) on the Firefall Wall with the late Chris Purnell in 1995, *40 Ounces of Freedom* (VI 5.10 A3) on Mount Broderick, and *Ecstasy of Gold* (VI 5.10 A3+) in the Ribbon Falls Amphitheater.]

As usual, several Valley speed records were broken. *Lost in America* (VI 5.10 A5) was climbed on sight in 24:47 by McNamara, Synnott, and Thaw. Synnott broke his ankle part-way up, but still kept leading! Peter Coward, Hans Florine, and Steve Schneider flew up *Eagle's Way* in 14:27. Willie Benegas, Cameron Lawson, and Jared Ogden sailed the *Atlantic Ocean Wall* (VI 5.10 A5) in 50 hours. Dave Bengston, Steve Gerberding, and Scott Stowe drove *New Jersey Turnpike* (VI 5.10 A4+) in 24:48. Coward, Florine, and Schneider stayed dry on the *Waterfall Route* (VI 5.10 A4), turning in a time of 18:12, amidst a frenetic week for Florine and Schneider. The pair climbed seven walls (Grade V or more) in seven days. Day one was the West Face of Sentinel in five hours; day two was the *Waterfall Route*; day three was the Direct North Buttress in four hours; day four was *Skull Queen* in 5:21 (record, and also clean); day five was the *Rostrum*; day six was Half Dome for Florine and Abby Watkins, while Schneider did Leaning Tower with Greg Murphy; and day seven was the *Prow* for Florine and Murphy, and *Astroman* for Schneider and Sue McDevitt. McDevitt teamed up with Nancy Feagin for the fastest female ascent of the *Salathé*, turning in a time of just over 30 hours. Fatigued near the top, the women slept a few hours before continuing.

STEVE SCHNEIDER

*The Porcelain Wall, Sarganata.* From August 22 to 27, Pep Masip and I put up a new route on the Porcelain Wall. We took six days, with five bivouacs (no pre-fixing), to do 12 60-meter pitches. Initially, we wanted to repeat Pete Takeda and Erik Kohl's *When Hell Was In Session* (A5) which, along with Warren Harding's *Porcelain Wall*, were the only two routes on the wall. While hauling loads, we saw a line of cracks, more to the right of the two aforementioned routes. It was very obvious and logical, and we decided to climb it. *Sarganata* means lizard, as we waited for the sun like the lizards do.

The first six pitches are simple aid with a bit of free climbing. If it were repeated, it would result in more of a free route, because the crack had a lot of shrubbery. The last six pitches are very vertical and technical. I'd like to point out that there are no bolts on any pitch, nor in the six first belays. There are nine bolts in the last six belays.

Later, with Pep Masip, we did a third ascent of the *Reticent Wall* on El Cap. We were on



Sylvia Vidal on pitch eight, Sargantana, first ascent.  
PEP MESIP

flake systems characterized by some difficult free climbing and exciting direct aid. This route is sure to become as popular as *Same As It Never Was*, which I doubt has seen a second ascent. Bring plenty of beaks, hooks, RURPs and a 60-meter rope.

JAY SMITH, *unaffiliated*

*El Capitan, The Nose.* Single-day ascents of this 3,000-foot vertical granite wall have become rights of passage for top rock climbers in their prime. On September 23, Galen Rowell became the oldest climber to do so. Starting by headlamp with no fixed ropes at 4 a.m., the 57-year-old Rowell and Conrad Anker shared leads to reach the summit just before eight in the evening. They brought only a single rope, a two-quart water bottle each, plus enough PowerGel and chocolate-covered espresso beans to pass other teams from France, England, Norway, and the United States during the first half of the climb.

Thirty-one years earlier, in 1966, Rowell had made the fifth ascent of the *Nose* in five days. The 1958 first ascent led by Warren Harding required 18 months of siege climbing and

for 11 days (no pre-fixed ropes), including one day of bad weather. It is a very beautiful route, but it was very difficult to get information about it, because few people actually gave us any. In the end, we had to go with the topo from the poster of El Cap. It was a very laborious route on every pitch, without exception.

SYLVIA VIDAL, *Spain*

*Half Dome, Blue Shift.* On June 1, Karl McConachie and I completed a new route on Half Dome. *Blue Shift* (VI 5.11c A4) follows crack systems that lie between *Arcturas* and *Same As It Never Was*, a route that Karl, Randal Grandstaff and I put up in 1985. It then follows *Arcturas* for a pitch and a half before cutting out left on new ground again. The last few feet join the Regular Northwest Face route to the summit. We spent four nights on the wall after fixing and drilled a total of 46 holes, of which 20 were for belays. Seven of those were used to pass a stack of loose blocks on pitch 11. *Blue Shift* is a modern aid route up thin and expanding

a final 12-day push, which seems to prove that climbing advances much faster than aging.

GALEN ROWELL

#### SIERRA NEVADA

*Bubbs Creek Wall, Samurai Warrior.* Over three days in September, Dave Nettle and I established a new route on Bubbs Creek Wall in Kings Canyon. *Samurai Warriors* (V 5.11 A1) follows the first pitch and a half of *Crystal Bonzai* before taking an independent line to the right. All but two of the 14 pitches are 5.10 or harder, and a 60-meter rope is required. One short pendulum and 50 feet of bathooks are the extent of the aid. The first half of the route follows corners up to a prominent right-leaning straight-in crack. The route then goes through the brown headwall via a finger crack to a scenic hanging bivy. The rest of the climb is mostly bolt-protected face climbing with knobs, mantles and friction. It is a beautiful, varied, user-friendly backcountry route.

BRANDON THAU

*Moro Rock, El Niño.* Grant Gardner, Jody Pennycook and I completed a new route on the east face of Moro Rock in Sequoia National Park during an extended Veteran's Day weekend. Three and a half days were spent on *El Niño* (V 5.10 A3+). This nine-pitch climb starts up a crack system that connects near the top of and ends at the first pitch of *Full Metal Jacket*. Then it follows the ramp of *FMJ* for 30 feet and goes up a gray half-moon section to a shallow straight-in crack. The pitch ascends a hidden 5.6 chimney and belays at the base of the prominent headwall crack. Follow this crack up to a 70-foot straight-in micro-birdbeak crack. Belay under the roof. Traverse around the roof and follow right-slanting cracks to the summit. Aside from bolted anchors, only one rivet was used on the ascent. A full wall rack is required, with heads and extra birdbeaks. The highlight of the climb was when the first of the El Niño storms of 1998 hit us on the sixth pitch. The three of us shivered inside a double portaledge while 18 inches of snow fell. We abandoned all our gear in the morning for a dash to the summit during a break in the storm. This difficult, overlooked line has gorgeous views of Castle Rock Spire and Angel Wings.

BRANDON THAU

*Thor Peak, South Face, Lucifer's Hammer.* In September, Bruce Bindner, Em Holland and I climbed *Lucifer's Hammer* (III, 5.10a) which starts from *Odin's Wrath*, a route we climbed the previous year (AAJ 1997, p. 142). From the flake ledge on top of the first pitch above the Pink Perch, *Odin's Wrath* goes up and left. *Lucifer's Hammer* goes straight up for six more pitches. There are six bolts, three at belays and three for protection.

PAT BRENNAN, *unaffiliated*

*Nameless Pyramid, East Face, Direct Finish.* The East Face of Nameless Pyramid (5.8) is a popular backcountry route, often done car-to-car in a long day. In July, Eric Tipton and I climbed the route, doing two new final pitches. From the notch on the ridge where the regular route eases in difficulty, we moved out left and climbed up via mostly left-facing ramps and corners. Our variation, the *Direct Finish* (III, 5.10a), ended at the base of the final summit pinnacle.

PAT BRENNAN, *unaffiliated*

*Mt. Hoffman, North Face, Meteor Shower.* The north face of Mt. Hoffman is a wide face with many potential lines. In August, Sarah Schneider and I established what we believe to be the fourth technical route on the face, the farthest left one done to date. It follows the second continuous crack system from the left edge of the face (there are two lesser faces left of the "main" north face. Both of these have potential lines, but I don't believe any routes have been done here yet). A prominent overhanging offwidth was passed via a traverse right about 150 feet up. The climbing then went up and left on flakes to regain the crack above the offwidth. In general, the route, *Meteor Shower* (III, 5.10a), slants slightly right for much of its length. The route involved four pitches, with the crux—a fist crack through a small roof—on the last one. Poor rock, continuous climbing and dicey protection and anchors seemed to be the norm on this potentially dangerous route.

ALAN BARTLETT, *unaffiliated*

*Balch Camp Flake, Flicker of Time Arête and The Passionate Life.* On February 23, David Cotter and I climbed the east (right-hand) arête of the huge Balch Camp Flake, naming it the *Flicker of Time Arête* (5.9 AO). We started on the bolt ladder of the original 1954 route, then free climbed up the arête to the top. A day later, Jay Anderson and Ann Yeagle climbed the left-hand of the two very impressive and obvious wide cracks on the south side of Balch Camp Flake. This offwidth and squeeze chimney, which they named *The Passionate Life* (5.11c), had been attempted before, but never completed.

RICHARD LEVERSEE

*The Fin, North Arête Chimney.* In June, Dave Nettle, Kevin Daniels and I climbed an obvious crack system directly up the north face of The Fin starting on the spine of the ridge that joins the base of the north face. Based on the old rusty quarter-inch bolt and sling we found about halfway up the first pitch, we think the route, the *North Arête Chimney* (III 5.10+, five pitches) had been started a long time ago.

RICHARD LEVERSEE

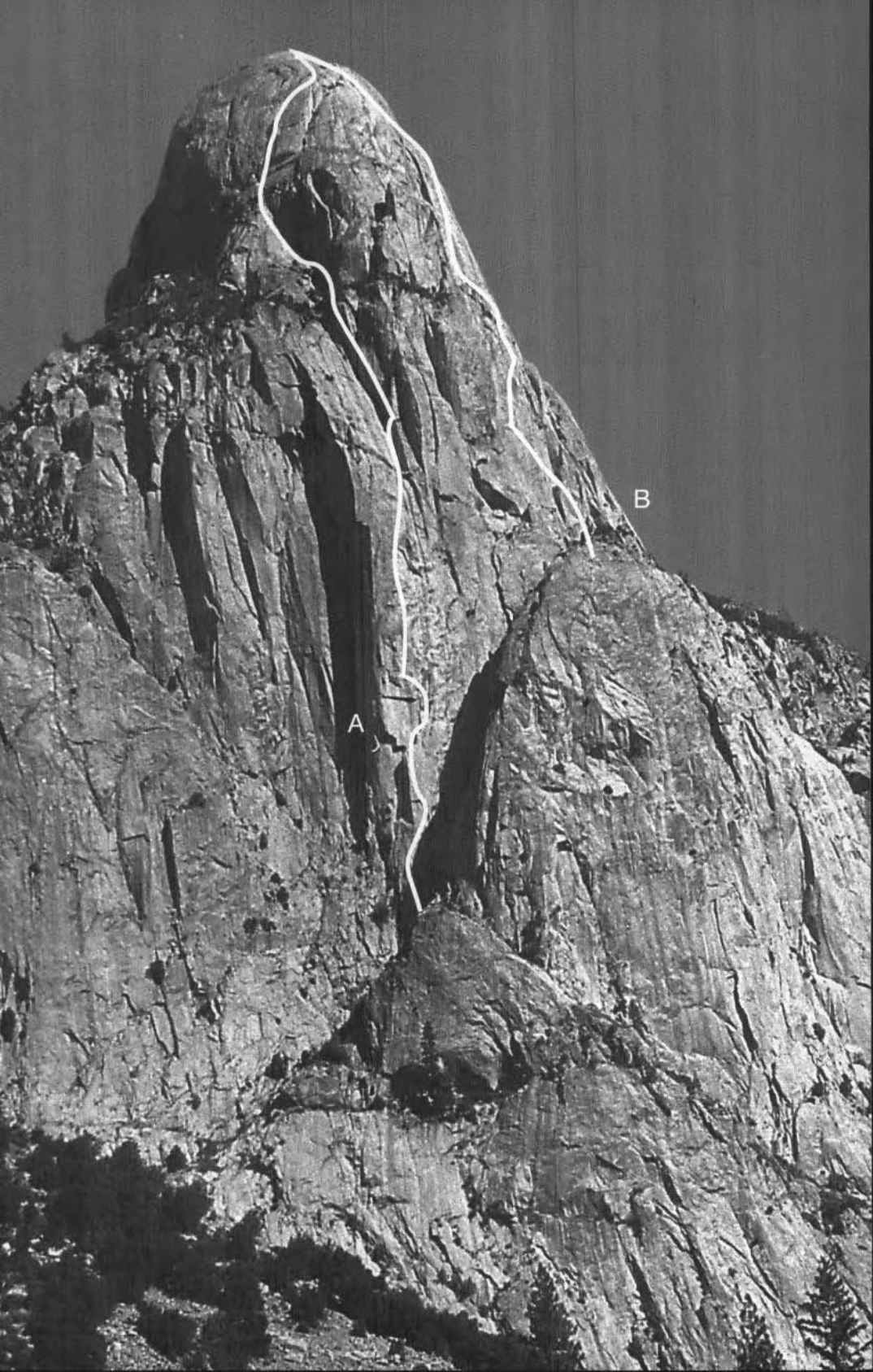
*Tehipite Dome, Too Hip.* In July, 1996, Ron Felton and I climbed a crack and face line, *Too Hip* (III 5.11, six pitches with 60-meter ropes) starting about 400 feet left and up from the point where the Kroger and Beckey routes intersect on the huge bush-covered "Halfway Ledge" high on the southwest face of the dome.

RICHARD LEVERSEE

*Tehipite Dome, Southwest Face, In the Niche of Time.* In October, spending 14 days out from the trailhead and six days climbing, Ron Felton, Guy 'Zelly' Zielsky and I succeeded in establishing the first completely independent and first big new route to be climbed on this immense wall in 27 years, *In the Niche of Time* (VI 5.10 A3+, 21 pitches with 60-meter ropes).

In October, 1991, John Vargas and I hiked the 20 miles to Tehipite Valley only to be overwhelmed by heavy backpacks and debilitating heat. In October, 1995, Ron Felton and I returned again and made the approach but retreated before beginning. In the autumn of 1997, we returned again, this time recruiting Guy Zielski to assist in the project. Ron and I led while Guy graciously helped with the moving of freight.

We spent a day and a half hiking in and, during the next two and a half days of welcome, cooling rain, we moved loads toward the base of the wall. After periodically hiding from the





rain in talus caves, we scrambled 500 feet to the start of our route just left of the 1970 Kroger Route and at the left side of a prominent pyramid formation.

We went left up some wet and slimy shelves to a small tree ledge to keep us out of the path of potential rockfall. On the second lead, Ron nailed up and right on a thin ramp in order to cross the prominent arête (which marked our line of ascent) to attain a crack that headed up to a huge pillar above. Ron led into the night, using all 12 of our beak pitons in the process. Upon arriving at the belay, I found him almost unresponsive and hypothermic. After warming him up and giving him a shell garment, we squeezed out a bivy back at the tree ledge. The next morning, I led a steep crack on aid to a difficult and partially loose wide section to get us to some mausoleum-like ledges behind the pillar. The climbing to the top of the pillar proved extremely difficult; Ron mixed free and aid, then traversed left to the arête, nailing a long, impressive horizontal roof.

I found spectacular climbing up steep thin cracks on the arête above, reminiscent of the headwall passage on the *Shield* of El Capitan. The illusions of steepness were confirmed each time Guy launched into space to ascend the rope to the belay. This was Guy's first wall. I was impressed by his 'go for it' attitude, especially since he had never used ascenders prior to this climb!

On the next lead, the features we had hoped were cracks turned out to be mere ripples in the sea of granite above. Ron boldly bat-hooked, riveted and beaked to just short of a good crack system. A mixed pitch followed, including some welcome hand cracks, nailing and nutting, ending in a scary mantle onto the belay stance.

Ron nailed a short section above, then climbed down and right to a diagonal ramp and a ledge at the base of a huge corner. In three long difficult free pitches, we made it to a ledge that divides the lower wall from the upper dome. That night, we split less than a quart of water and the food that remained between the three of us. The morning of our sixth day and tenth day out from the trailhead, we decided to escape, and worked our way across the ledge to water and our lives back home.

By mid-October Ron, Guy and I were able to return. Traversing back to our high point, we continued the route on the upper dome. Starting up the line of the corner which got us to the ledge from the lower wall, we moved left out onto an arête. Ron cruised up a classic, difficult steep face pitch to a blocky ledge below a steep headwall. Following straight thin cracks up through two major horizontal crack/bands allowed me to tension-traverse left to a diagonal ramp ending at a belay just below a prominent right-facing corner/chimney. Ron led up an awkward step left and then right, climbing some difficult moves up the chimney to a belay at the intersection of a wide crack from above and left. Following this crack system gave us a more direct line to the summit. Above this wide section, intricate free and aid moves headed up to a ledge just left of another, but a much easier wide crack. Belaying only about 80 feet out, we then headed right a few moves to an enjoyable left-facing corner.

In the autumn darkness, climbing toward a seemingly unreachable horizon, four more long pitches of easy but runout face climbing brought us to an unroping spot at blocky ledges well below the true summit.

E.C. JOE, *Southern Sierra Climber's Association*

*Mt. Hoffman, Southeast Face Central.* This route, the Southeast Face Central (5.8-5.9, three and a half pitches) in the Wishon Reservoir Area of the Sierra National Forest, starts to the right of the obvious 200-foot tower/buttness on the southeast face. In July, Mark Leffler and I climbed the obvious diagonal crack up and right for one and a half pitches to a good ledge

*Tehipite Dome, showing A: In the Niche of Time, and B: Beckey-Kroger Route. E.C. Joe*



*Peter Croft on the first traverse of the Evolution Peaks. GALEN ROWELL*

below a long right-facing corner/arch that heads toward the top. We followed this corner, then moved right to an obvious crack and belay. The last pitch followed this crack to the top. We walked off for the descent. The approach is made via the dirt road and trail cross-country from the Wishon Reservoir.

RICHARD LEVERSEE

*Finger Rock, Boldfinger.* A long time ago (1970s?), Fred Beckey and crew climbed a route on the south side of Finger Rock, which is a short drive/hike from the Wishon Reservoir. On the east face of Finger Rock are a couple distinct features. There is an obvious diagonal line of weakness going up from the lower left to upper right. This ends below an ominous, rust-colored overhanging headwall chock-full of wild huecos, chickenheads and plate flakes in the center of the east face. This featured section is directly above several gigantic boulders on the slope below the east face. Climb up the diagonal ramp for two pitches until directly below the wild central headwall above a short (30') chimney. Belay at a flake covered in bird droppings. The next pitch is steep and wild, heading up and right through the incredible featured headwall. It ends on a huge ledge 50 feet below the top. Descent is third class off the back (north) side. Mark Leffler and I did the route in July, calling it *Boldfinger* (5.10+, three pitches).

RICHARD LEVERSEE

*Evolution Peaks, Grand Traverse.* The Evolution Peaks were judged to be the scenic culmination of the High Sierra by the 19th century scrambler Theodore Solomons, who named them after the great evolutionary scientists and thinkers of the time. Located far from road-heads at the middle of the John Muir Trail, they have had very little technical rock climbing. Peter Croft and I followed this tradition by not using ropes or hardware on the first traverse of the Evolution range in mid-July.

At 4:30 a.m., we started by headlamp from our camp at 10,800 feet on Evolution Lake, climbing a 4th class route on Mount Mendel to reach the summit ridge at dawn. From there, a mile of knife-edged ridge (4th and 5th-class climbing) brought us to the summit pinnacle of Mount Darwin (13,831'). As we continued south, we came to the crux of the day, which involved exposed, unroped 5.9 climbing with some loose rock along a series of pinnacles just below Darwin.

We continued traversing several more 13,000-foot peaks with spots of 5.8 until we reached the easier classic Northwest Arête of Mount Haeckel. Having completed all the peaks on the main crest, and with hands that could barely touch the rock, I decided to descend. Peter continued alone, veering off the main crest to traverse over mounts Wallace, Fiske, Warlow, and Huxley to complete the entire arc of Evolution Peaks. He returned to camp at about 7 p.m., having traversed 35,000 feet of horizontal rock climbing with close to 10,000 feet of vertical gain, which he considered to be more than the equivalent of a one-day Grade VI wall climb.

GALEN ROWELL

*Mount Darwin, Southwest Arête.* While camped at Evolution Lake in July, I noticed a surprisingly clean and well-defined granite arête on the 13,831-foot Mt. Darwin's jumbled and broken southern wall. The arête rises continuously apart from the main wall for more than 2,000 feet from a bench above the inlet of the lake. I set out alone one morning with a 9mm rope and a few cams to self-belay if necessary. Third-class scrambling brought me to a steep

buttress of white granite laced with 5.8 cracks, which I managed to solo with a tail line to haul my pack with water and a camera. From there, an exposed, easy ridge angled higher to another headwall with more 5.8 climbing just below a prominent pinnacle a few hundred feet from the top. Getting past the 100-foot-deep notch separating the pinnacle from the mountain proved to be the highly exposed crux of the climb on perfect rock. (III 5.8)

GALEN ROWELL

*Mount Huxley, North Buttress, Left and Right Sides.* As seen from Evolution Lake, the north buttress of Mount Huxley (13,086') rises into a classic horn split by a deep cirque. In July, Dick Duane and I climbed a series of perfect finger cracks on the left side up to a long, fractured ridge of giant blocks that leads to the summit. A 5.9 pitch ascending a one-inch crack splitting perfect alpine granite offered some of the best rock climbing in the entire High Sierra, Tuolumne Meadows included. The rock looks as if it were quarried yesterday. While Dick and I were climbing this route (III 5.10a) on the left side of the north buttress, Hans Florine and Jerry Dodrill made a very similar new route (III 5.10a) up long clean dihedrals on the right side of the cirque. We met on the summit and descended south to Sapphire Lake.

On the same trip, Hans and I noticed a surprisingly featureless 250-foot cliff above Sapphire Lake. Late one afternoon, we headed up the only obvious cracks on the right side of the cliff. They begin beside a large block, traverse left on a ramp, then go up and left on a vertical wall to the top. The 5.11a face climbing crux came on the third and final pitch, where Hans traversed right onto the open face and back left again 30 feet higher to avoid an overhanging seam that we both had backed off from leading.

GALEN ROWELL

## UTAH

### ZION NATIONAL PARK

*Zion, Various Ascents.* During late winter, Dan Stih and I made the first ascent of the Altar of Sacrifice, as well as the remaining four Towers of the Virgin in Zion National Park. Over three days in early March, we climbed and fixed the grotesquely loose gully (on the southeast side of the formation just across from the Quinn route) that leads to a large plateau. Much credit needs to be given to Dan for leading the worst of the rotten chimneys, often totally unprotected and in excess of 5.10. Steve Burgess of Switzerland also helped out for the first two days on the lower section of the route.

Once on the plateau, we jumared food, water and a full aid rack, as well as winter gear, to the hanging valley at the base of the towers. On March 8, we climbed three long pitches (5.10+ AI) of chimneys on the south side of the Altar that led to the summit. The second of these pitches was choked with thick ice and Dan was forced to use his piton hammer and a long angle piton as ice tools for about ten meters. Three holes were drilled for belays and six protecting chimneys above the plateau were drilled below the plateau. On top we built a five-foot high cairn on the edge of the east face, commemorating my late friend Chris Clark, who was killed in November, 1995, climbing in the Sierra. A summit register is at the base of the cairn, which can be seen through the spotting scope at the visitors center.

The rest of the towers are approached from the plateau. The Rotten Tooth (4th class) and the Broken Tooth (5.10, four pitches) were climbed in one day. These are the two smaller tow-

ers left of the Altar, and are the names given by the rangers. The Witch Head (5.10, five pitches) was climbed via the west face. This is the huge formation just right of the Sundial.

The Sundial (5.10+, seven pitches) was the last of the towers we climbed. Originally traversing across the east face, we attempted a route on the south face. After two death pitches on the horrid Whitecap sandstone, we retreated and climbed a route on the northwest face to the summit, thus having made the first ascents of all of Towers of the Virgin. We believe that water possibly exists in two pools year-round, the first beneath the south face of the Altar Of Sacrifice, and the other (and more likely) in a deep slot beneath the north face of the Sundial in a previously unexplored valley.

RON RAIMONDE

*West Temple, Gettin' Western.* On April 30, Andrew Nichols and I made the third ascent of *Gettin' Western* on the east face of the West Temple, one of the biggest walls in Zion.

In 1990, Brad Quinn and Darren Cope made the first ascent of this proud line. Several efforts over eight days eventually brought them to the summit. (Darren's uncle made the first ascent of the West Temple in the 1930s.) In 1993, Doug Hall and Doug Byerly made the second and first free ascent, an outstanding effort that included a crux pitch of 5.11 thin hands crack with minimal protection behind a hollow flake. Doug and Doug spent two days ascending and descending the route.

Andrew and I set off at midnight. Slightly lost, we climbed three pitches through a rock band to gain the lower flanks of the east face. We arrived at the base of the wall at about 4 a.m. and started climbing. The first 1,500 feet offers hard climbing on steep cracks (many 5.10 pitches with the occasional point of aid). By 2 p.m., we were eating lunch under a huge pine tree that sits on a ledge at about mid-height. Climbing the upper half of the route was somewhat like gardening, for the steep walls were covered with various types of plants, grasses and trees. They all offer good handholds. By 8 p.m. we pulled onto the top of the route.

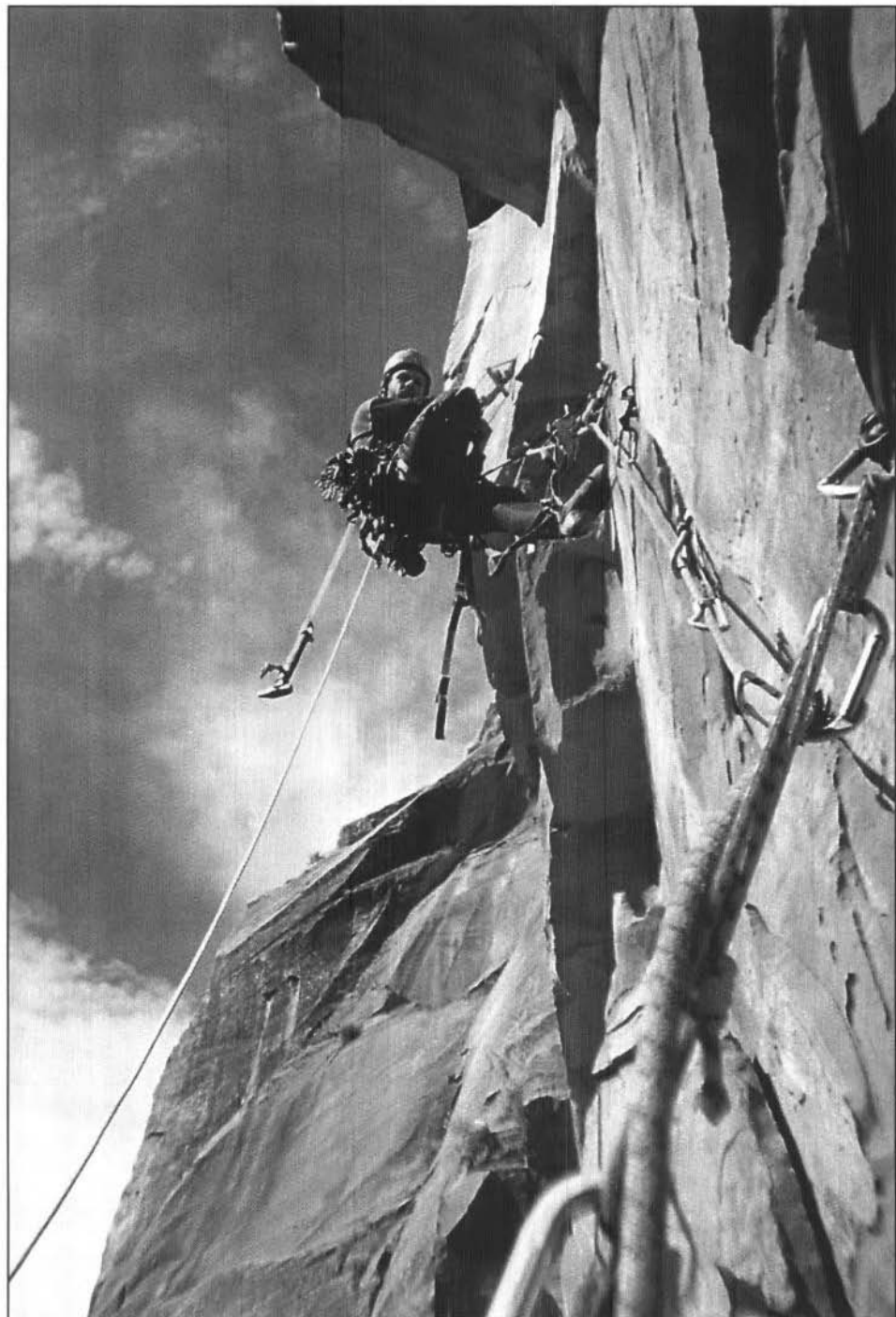
We spent the night on the shoulder of the West Temple. In the morning, we set off for the main summit. The descent proved to be devious and very dangerous. Many loose blocks abound on the upper flanks of this proud sandstone mountain.

JONNY ALLEN, *unaffiliated*

*Right Twin, Paca-Lolo Dreams.* From October 15-October 20, Brad Bond, Bryan Smith and I climbed a new route, *Paca-Lolo Dreams* (V 5.9 A3-, seven pitches) about 350 feet right of *Peyote Dreams*. The climb begins in a 5.9 hand crack that had been climbed previously. Another pitch of free climbing and a pitch of aid gain the base of a major corner with a hand crack. This corner pitch is shared with *Lost in Transit*, a route that begins to the right of *Paca-Lolo Dreams*. After the major corner, three quality sustained aid pitches climb some splitter thin cracks. We placed six anchor bolts and six aid bolts in addition to drilling two incomplete holes for aid. I would encourage subsequent parties to complete the drilling of the two holes on pitch 5 and fill them with half-inch angles. No bolts were placed at belays shared with other routes (i.e., the first pitch and the corner of *Lost in Transit*).

BOULOS AYAD, *unaffiliated*

*Temple of Sinawava, Soul Craft.* On December 12, Karen Hilton and I completed the first ascent of *Soul Craft* (VI 5.11 A4+) on the steep wall left of the *Monkeyfinger* route. In



*Paul Turecki on Soul Craft, Temple of Sinawava. KAREN HILTON*

ca.1,100 feet, only the first pitch and last 35 feet went free; the remainder of the route yielded to moderate and difficult aid. We gave the "+" rating for the potential ledge fall on pitch 5. In typical Zion fashion, the climbing was quality and fairly sustained. It was possibly the last wall to be done before the initiation of the park's backcountry permit fee. For the descent, we rappelled the *Monkeyfinger* route. Two anchors were added at the second and fourth (counting from top to bottom) *Monkeyfinger* stations on the way down.

PAUL TURECKI

*Streaked Wall, Latitudes, Second Ascent.* It was reported that in early November, John Varco and Bryan Gilmore made the second ascent of *Latitudes* (VI 5.9 A4+) on the Streaked Wall. Varco first teamed up with Greg Grasso to climb, fix and haul to Rubicon ledge. He then spent nine days with Gilmore on the upper eight pitches finishing the route. (*Climbing* 176)

*Twin Brothers, Levels of Doom, and Isaac, Middle Earth.* It was reported that Amanda Tarr and Eric Rasmussen put up a new 14-pitch line, *Levels of Doom* (VI 5.9 A3+), to the right of *Peyote Dreams* on the Twin Brothers, in late September. In late November, Rasmussen and Luke Miller climbed *Middle Earth* (VI 5.11c A4), a 19-pitch bottom-to-top crack climb to the right of *Tricks of the Tramp* on Isaac. (*Climbing* 174)

*Zion, Road Kill.* It was reported that, while filming a video about big wall climbing, Jeff Lowe and his "student," Scott Thompson, put up the route *Road Kill* (V 5.11 A4), a nine-pitch route on an 1,100-foot wall near the park's west entrance. (*Rock and Ice* 83)

#### SAN RAFAEL SWELL

*San Rafael Swell, La Piñata.* On November 9, Franziska Garrett and I were surprised to find the big hulk of a desert tower adjacent (west-northwest) to Mexican Mountain still unclimbed. After driving the Mexican Mountain Road and parking at its terminus, we waded across a shallow section of the San Rafael River. We then weaved our way up the northern flank of Mexican Mountain before traversing westward to the tower. Unsettled weather steered us toward the eastern side, where we climbed a short pitch (5.10 A0) to a prominent ledge on the south ridge. Then, a 60-meter pitch led over 5.8 slabs to a short, steep A1 bolt-hole-bolt section and some nailing and free climbing to the top (5.9 A1). We rappelled the route, *La Piñata* (II 5.10 A2), after savoring wide-angle views of the Swell.

JAMES GARRETT

#### FISHER TOWERS

*Fisher Towers, Various Ascents.* It was reported that Crusher Bartlett and Dave Levine climbed *Beaking in Tongues*, a seven-pitch route on the west face of the Oracle that was rated "somewhere between A2+ and A4" and used no bolts. On the south face of the Oracle, Kevin Chase and an Englishman known as Heavy Duty climbed *Nightmare on Onion Creek* (5.3 A4). Heavy Duty and Keith Reynolds put up a new route on the north side of the Citadel that used very few bolts. Tim Wagner made the second ascent of the Jim Beyer route *Deadman's Party* and soloed Beyer's *Intifada*. (*Rock and Ice* 80)

*King Fisher, The Hazing.* It was reported that Eric Kohl, Bryan Law (joined by Pete Takeda

on the final push) climbed *The Hazing* (5.8 A3) on the west face of the King Fisher. Also, Stevie Haston (U.K.) reportedly freed *Phantom Spirit* on the Echo Tower at 5.11-5.12. (*Rock and Ice* 81)

*The Titan, The Wasteland.* It was reported that Walt Shipley and Bill Lee nailed "what may be the Titan's last natural line," *The Wasteland* (A3+ 5.8), an 1,100-foot nine-pitch route that required roughly 35 bolts. It lies on the tower's west face, in the obvious chimney left of Scherezade, and generally follows the gargoye arête beside the Finger of Fate. (*Climbing* 176)

*Doric Column, The Big Nasty.* It was reported that Bill Lee and Walt Shipley put up a new 600-foot route via the "obvious" line on the Doric Column's southeast face. *The Big Nasty* (A4 5.9R) was climbed over three days in November; ten holes were drilled for progress. (*Climbing* 176)

*Fisher Towers, Various Ascents.* In 1997, I climbed four small, "new" towers in the Fisher Towers with various partners. In April, Jon Butler and I made the first ascents of two towers, Large Marge and The Projects, below the Titan Trail. In December, Jesse Harvey, Mike Baker and I climbed two "new" towers, Putterman's Pile and Rocky Top, which lie between Dock Rock and the King Fisher. Putterman's Pile lies 300 feet south of The Great Googly Moogley, which saw its first ascent in November, by Walt Shipley, solo. Shipley and Keith Reynolds later free climbed *The Great Googly Moogley* at 5.10+. The Great Googly Moogley lies just east of Dock Rock, and is obvious from the parking lot.

In May, Mike Baker and I made the first ascent of the western prow of River Tower via a four-pitch route called *The Flow* (III 5.8 A2). The 450-foot route climbs the tallest portion of River Tower and had been previously attempted by an unknown party.

CAMERON M. BURNS



*The River Towers.* CAMERON BURNS

#### CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK

*Factory Butte, Clarification.* I was a interpretive park ranger at Capitol Reef National Park from June, 1992, through October, 1994. During my time there, I set my sights on a prominent monolith called Factory Butte.

Rumors among the locals were that it had not been climbed, which I doubted because of its prominence and because of the famous climbers who got their start in the Torrey area. The approach and the base of Factory Butte are made of the clay/silt mudstone of the Mancos rock type, which erodes



into sharp rills, deep gullies and badland-type rock (fine-grained clay/mud). Mancos rock makes up 70 percent of the monolith. The crown of the Butte is Mesa Verde sandstone, which erodes into sheer vertical cliffs. The Butte is long and thin; the long sides face east and west, while the thin faces run north and south. On the west and north side, the erosion is at its worst. The east and south sides also are extremely steep, with angles increasing from 35 to 50° in the Mancos to vertical in the Mesa Verde. The Butte itself rises about 2,000 feet above its base; at the contact point between the Mancos and the Mesa Verde rock types, the Butte goes vertical for 200 to 350 feet.

I made four to five planning trips to the area from 1992 through 1994, first to find a route through the Mancos rills and gullies. To stabilize myself on the steep siltstone, I began using my old McKinley wood ice axe and my old crampons. I found one potential route in 1992 on the east face near a huge slab of fallen Mesa Verde rock that can be seen from a distance. The gully directly in front of the slab was passable and probably the easiest gully on the east side. Two small ledges allowed me to zig-zag up the Mesa Verde face into a crack, which led to within 50 to 75 feet of the tabletop summit. I was unable to finish the route due to time, heat (it was the middle of July) and lack of aid gear.

On my next trip, I totally circumnavigated the Butte at the base of the Mesa Verde (again using ice axe and crampons, the only way to approach the steepest areas of the Mancos safely), working my way across the large arm that extends west from the south Butte area. After crossing the arm, I moved over a series of gullies, beyond an area of sheer Mancos in the southwestern corner, to the next series of gullies. I then climbed the Mancos to the base of the Mesa Verde. At the corner area, a series of angled, tilted ledges on the Mesa Verde allowed me to work my way up to a rock-filled gully, which took me south to the corner's interior. From there, I entered the crux area, an extended overhang, about 15 feet wide, with fun exposure. I topped the overhang by moving directly across the nose with some good hand holds and friction, but with little for my legs or feet. At the south side of the crux, I entered another rock-filled gully that led directly to the south tabletop area. At this point, there are many cracks that can be chimneyed to the summit on the southernmost point of the Butte.

This route was done solo and free of any aid except the ice tool and crampons. I climbed it twice (winter, 1993, and November, 1994). I found an arrow from one of the 1950 movies filmed in the area, plus a small cairn on the south summit. I placed a small note to my parents, who both had died just before this climb, underneath this cairn.

I later would show my route to a person whom I thought was my friend. This person would share my route information and the ice axe-crampon technique with a third party, who later would make a claim of a first ascent of Factory Butte almost a month after my last climb. This individual can claim a possible new route, but not a first ascent. Nor can I; but I will name my route *Flo and Al's*.

JOHN FLEMING

## ARIZONA

### OAK CREEK CANYON

*Fear and Loathing*. In early September, Dan Stih, Paul Reinshagen and I climbed a new 400-meter route in Oak Creek Canyon, just north of Sedona, Arizona. The wall is located just behind Christopher's Tower, high in Counterfeiter Canyon. The line, *Fear and Loathing* (V 5.10 A2+), runs for ten pitches, following a right-facing thin dihedral on excellent rock for

the first five. The last two pitches consist of a slightly overhanging three-inch splitter crack that runs for nearly 60 meters. All belays are equipped with good bolts and/or fixed pins. With four ropes fixed, we spent one night on the wall on a huge heavily foliated ledge at the top of pitch 8. The bottom half of the route is almost all aid, requiring much thin nailing; it consumed the better part of two days. We feel the grade (V) is a conservative rating, and the aid is of a high standard.

RON RAIMONDE

## COLORADO

### BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON

*Hallucinogen Wall, Solo Ascent.* It was reported that Amanda Tarr soloed the Hallucinogen Wall in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison over five days in June. This was the first female solo of the route. (*Climbing* 171)

*North Chasm View Wall, Link-up of Stoned Oven and Air Voyage.* It was reported that Jeff Hollenbaugh and Mike Pennings linked up *Stoned Oven* (5.11c) and *Air Voyage* (5.12a), both on North Chasm View Wall, in a day, freeing everything apart from the 5.12a offwidth on *Air Voyage*. The pair managed the 3,000 feet of climbing by beginning an hour before light and finishing an hour after dark. (*Climbing* 170)

### GORE RANGE

*Peak C, New Route.* On August 9, Benny Bach and I climbed an eight-pitch, 5.7+ route on the north face of Peak C in the Gore Range. The incessant rain of the summer of 1997, supposedly a side-effect of the El Niño weather phenomenon, left the face extremely wet. We know little of the history of this impressive face but suspect our route was mostly new.

CAMERON M. BURNS

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

*Long's Peak, The Diamond, Smash the State.* Between May 15-20, Ken Sauls and I made the second ascent of *Smash the State* (VI- 5.8 A5) on the Diamond of Long's Peak. Jim Beyer made the first ascent of this route in April of 1988, solo. Doug Hall and Ken had discussed doing the route, but Doug was killed in an avalanche in January, 1997. When Ken invited me to join him, it appealed to me as a memorial ascent for Mr. Hall, whose great spirit I will never forget.

We started hiking close to noon on Thursday, May 15. We carried all of our gear in one (large) load. We arrived at Chasm View at about 9 p.m., set up the ledge on a boulder and crawled in for a very windy night. At about 10 a.m., we made our way to the rappels for the descent to Broadway. We roped up for three pitches across Broadway to the base of the route, fixing lines and then ferrying our loads across.

The first pitch went quickly. We hauled up our bags, then Ken set off on the second pitch, leading about one-third of it, then rappelling back to help set up the ledge. A good night's rest and Ken finished up the second pitch through steep roofs and corners. The difficulty (A3) is

demanding due to the quality of the stone. In the afternoon, I set off on the third pitch (A4); some A1 gear led to a hook move, then I placed five heads to another hook, which led to some circuitous flakes (somewhat dubious), and to the S-shaped roof. After this lead we discussed style; it became clear to me that it is better to use pitons if possible, as they make cleaning easier and therefore have less impact.

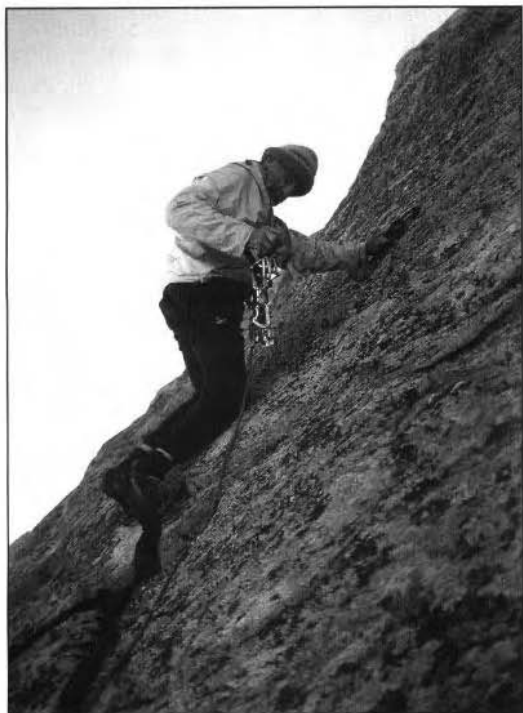
Ken led the fourth pitch (A5a). A sharp edge stands out from the lip of the S-roof. By using duct tape, Ken was able to lessen the sharpness of the edge. Up and away he went, a brilliant lead on hooks, nuts, copperheads, beaks, etc. Ken found an A1 stopper at about 40 feet height, calling into question the A5 rating. This pitch just ends in blankness and it is necessary to pendulum to the right to join the *King of Swords* route.

Late in the day, I headed up pitches familiar from a 1993 ascent, using a mix of free and aid on the 5.12/A1 climbing to make it to Table Edge, where we camped. On day 5, two more pitches of 5.10/A1 brought us to the top. Wild place.

JONNY ALLEN, *unaffiliated*

*The Ship's Prow, Bologna Pony.* It was reported that Jim Redo and Pat Adams put up a new 500-foot line on The Ship's Prow that follows the obvious overhanging arête on the formation. *The Bologna Pony* (5.12b/c) features thin crack climbing on the first pitch and face climbing above. Protection is a mix of bolts and traditional. All belays are bolted, but the top rappel requires back clipping to avoid hanging in space. (*Climbing* 173)

## WYOMING



### WIND RIVER RANGE

*Goat Flat, Bomber Lake Arête.* On September 5, Fred Beckey and I climbed a long, low-angled ridge south of Bomber Lake in the northern Wind River Range. The ridge leads to Goat Flat, an enormous, flat plateau south of the Bomber Creek drainage. The majority of the 1,500-foot ridge was 4th-class climbing with short sections of lower 5th class. We climbed unroped for all but the final 120 feet of the ridge, which Fred led via 5.6 slabs right on the very crest of the arête (II 5.6). In his mid-70s, Fred looked pretty old while walking along the trail. When he climbed, however, he had the grace and style of a 20-year old.

CAMERON M. BURNS

*Fred Beckey on the first ascent of Bomber Lake Arête.* CAMERON BURNS

*Watch Tower, South Buttress, First Free Ascent.* Last August, John Merriam and I did the first free ascent of the South Buttress (IV 5.11b R) of the Watch Tower in the Wind River Range.

JONATHAN COPP

## GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

*Middle Teton, No Cumbre, No Ruta.* On July 14, Alex Lowe and I climbed *No Cumbre, No Ruta* (WI5 M7 A0, 240 m) on the north face of the Middle Teton. From the Lower Saddle, approach the north face as you would for the Goodrich Chimney and/or the Jackson-Woodmency Dihedral. The route is the obvious chimney to the right of the Goodrich route. The route was named in response and protest to bogus debates circling the climbing community that new routes must top out on true summits of a claimed peak or they do not and should not exist. Hence, we did not go to the summit of the Middle. One hell of a good route, though.

TRAVIS SPITZER

## MONTANA

*Crazy Peak, North Face.* On June 13, Paul Richer and I hiked into Big Timber Canyon to climb the north face of Crazy Peak. Access is through Half Moon campground (24 miles northeast of Big Timber). Two and a quarter miles of easy hiking brings one to a second bridge. Do not cross the bridge; instead, head left into the trees and uphill to the right. Eventually, the north face of Crazy Peak will come into view above treeline.

Our north face route takes a direct line up the face, slightly left of a main wide chute and a rockband at mid-height. Below the rockband the snow angle is 40 to 45°. The second third of the route involves low angle snow (less than 50°) and 5th-class rock through chimneys and slabs (5.6). Up to that point the climbing was enjoyable and fun. The last third of the face was the crux: loose and unconsolidated 65° snow.

The route tops out on a knife-edged ridge (4th to 5th class rock). Downclimbing is necessary to reach the final chute, which leads to the summit of Crazy Peak (11,214'). The Richer-Gallagher route (a.k.a. *Stoker-Goo*, 5.6 A14) was about 2,500 feet long and technically committing. Gear was sparse in the upper third of the route. Fall/winter would produce excellent snow conditions and better protection. I would highly recommend this range for further possibilities.

JOHN GALLAGHER

*Glacier National Park, Various Ascents.* Beginning in the winter of 1995-96, new ice routes have been discovered and climbed in Glacier National Park. The first area to be explored was the southwest face on Mt. Cannon. Kirby Spangler and Marc Venery climbed *Cannon Fodder*, which featured 2,000 feet of moderate ice and steep snow, ending in two pitches of WI4. January, 1997, brought good weather and stable snow, allowing the insatiable Spangler and Venery to climb *Looking Up a Loaded Barrel* (WI4, 800') and *Lost in a Crowd* (WI4, 1,200'), both on Cannon. Spangler also soloed *Goat Chaser* (IV WI3, 500') on the south shoulder of Cannon in March.

The Snyder Lakes Basin also was found to have excellent potential for new routes. *Brain Stem* (WI5, 200') on the south slopes of Mt. Brown is the farthest climb left in a series of three

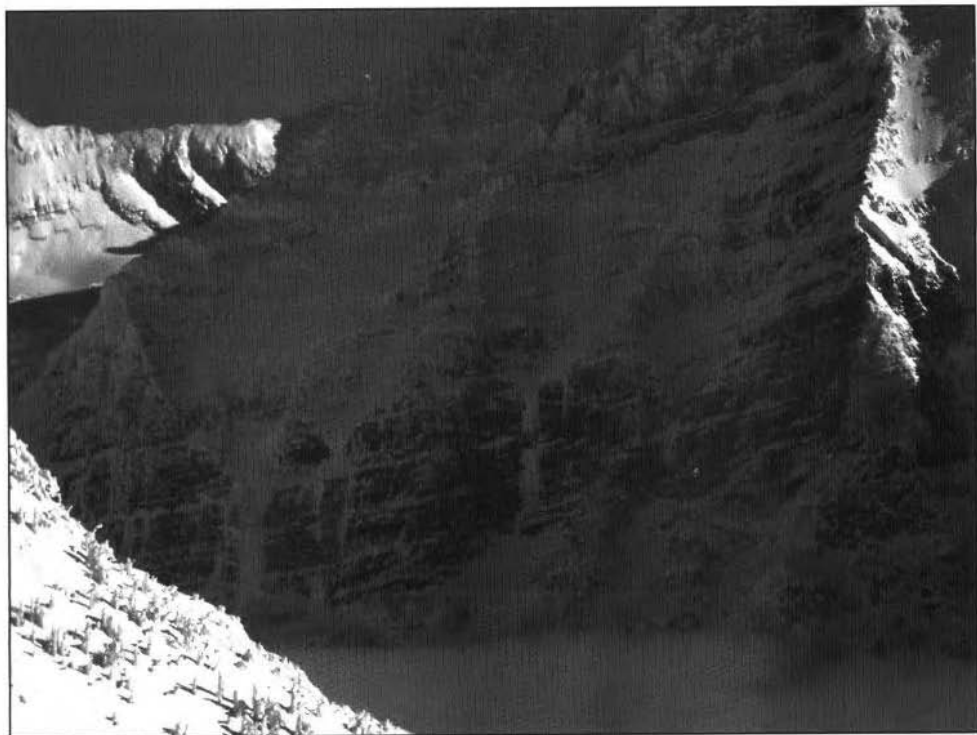
*The north face of Mt. Edwards.* RYAN HOKANSON

lines. The middle line, *Controlled Burn* (WI4, 200'), was first climbed by Lane Johnson and John Runge sometime in the early '90s. The right line (WI3+, 200') also was climbed; very old slings were found at the top. On the north face of Edwards, Lane Johnson and John Runge climbed *A Six Pack and Nothing To Do* (WI3) in the massive 1,400-foot gully that splits the face. Soon after, Jim Earl and Chris Trimble climbed *Baby Semmler* (WI4+, 450'), just left of the main gully. Then in March, Johnson and Spangler climbed two difficult lines, producing *Spinal Tap* (5.7 WI5, 800') and *The Missing Tooth* (WI5 A2+, 450').

RYAN HOKANSON, *unaffiliated*

*Glacier National Park, Various Ascents.* El Niño gave northwest Montana the unusual mix of cold weather and little snow in November and December. As a result, most of the park roads were kept open, giving climbers easier access to several remote basins. The new route action began in the Avalanche Lake area. On November 15, I soloed a route called *Claire De Lune* (IV WI3, 300'). This climb is situated to the right of *The Pig*, and is approached via a tight ice-filled cleft which in itself sports about 300 feet of WI2-3. Soon afterward, Missoula climbers Jim Earl, Chris Trimble, and Rafael Graña climbed a route on the spectacular headwall to the left of *The Pig* and *Claire De Lune*: *Slog and Flog* (IV WI5, 150') is approached by the same ice-filled cleft. Trimble then teamed up with Kelly Cordes, also of Missoula, to produce another classic, *Staggering Corps* (IV WI5, 300'). This line is just left of *Slog and Flog*. The headwall that contains these two routes was named "Bubba's Moonshine Wall."

Still psyched for early season ice, Cordes and Graña returned to Avalanche Lake for another round. Setting their sights on one of the massive gullies on the west face of Bearhat Mountain, the two climbed about 1,000 feet of steep snow with intermittent ice. Their excit-





Ryan Hokanson skiing out after the first ascent of Brain Stem (farthest left) on Mt. Brown. MARK VENERY

ing finale included intermittent avalanches produced by a sudden storm that nearly ripped Graña off the last pitch while Cordes belayed from the shelter of some trees. *Wanda's Wicked Sister* (IV W14, 1,000') is a steep slot with no obvious exits for its entire length. It fills with snow as the season progresses, and is not recommended.

MARK VENERY, *unaffiliated*

## ALASKA

### BROOKS RANGE

*Arrigetch Peaks, Parabola Peak, Northeast Buttress.* On August 4, Lara Karna Bitenieks and I flew into Circle Lake to commence a three-week rock climbing trip in the Arrigetch peaks of the Brooks Range. After a two-day approach, we established a base camp at the head of the south fork of Arrigetch Creek at the foot of the Maidens. We chose a line on Parabola Peak (one mile due west of Point 6320' on Survey Pass (B3) Quadrangle), as it was consistently drier than the shaded north-facing Maidens. Over the next 12 days, we had just one climbing day, due to incessant fog and drizzle. Tent time was interrupted by wanderings, during which we explored the magical valleys and rock formations around us and discovered many beautiful boulder problems. Finally, on August 18, it was clear and cold. We departed camp either