



AAC Publications

Fisher Towers, The Oracle, Beak to the Future

Utah, Castle Valley

In the fall of 2009, Jeremy Aslaksen and I climbed a new route on the south face of Kingfisher in the Fisher Towers. We called the route Weird Science [AAJ 2010] and made a pact to see if we could do new routes on all five of the main Fisher Towers. In the fall of 2010 we completed a new route on the Titan that we called Gimp Warfare, and then a few months later a new route on Echo Tower called Sidewinder [AAJ 2011]. Then, in the spring of 2011, we found a wild line on Cottontail Tower that we called Trick of the Tail [AAJ 2012]. All that was left was a route on the Oracle.

The Oracle had two routes: Fantasia, a wild free and aid route, and Beaking in Tongues, a cool, all-natural aid line. We had scoped both sides of the Oracle, and in the spring of 2012 settled on a route on the backside. Jeremy led the first pitch, which came together nicely. A few weeks later we were back at it, only to discover that the cracks we were hoping to use on the second pitch were nonexistent. Instead of drilling a long bolt ladder, we pulled our gear and bailed.

Fast-forward to November 2012: The Oracle was still on my mind, and I was convinced there was a way to connect to a system high on the face right of Beaking in Tongues. The first pitch started with a boulder problem off the ground, an exposed traverse, and a few Peckers in a seam before launching into a long traverse right to a few bolts, free climbing, and a short bolt ladder to a belay. The second pitch started with a short bolt ladder and then followed Pecker seams to another belay ledge. The third pitch, the Mud Shield, was the money pitch. After a few holes off the belay it followed a long, singular Pecker-sized crack up a sweeping, steep headwall. The final pitch on the headwall involved a "take-everything-off" squeeze-slot, and landed us just below a V-shaped notch on the ridge. From there, a pitch straight left and then up got us to another belay 20' below the start of Fantasia's last-pitch bolt ladder, which we followed to the top. The final two days on route had been frigid, with snow and wind. But it was worth it, as the summit culminated our goal of a new route on every major Fisher Tower: Beak to the Future (700', 5.10 A3+).

Paul Gagner, AAC

Images



Paul Gagner leading the Mud Shield pitch on Beak to the Future, The Oracle.

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