



## AAC Publications

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### **Mt. Langley, New Army Buttress, Better Red Than Dead**

California, Sierra Nevada

Each time I awoke during the night, I'd turn my head toward the towering black void outlined by the tail of the Milky Way. My partner, Jan Roestel, and I had just finished a recon on the first pitch of an unclimbed feature in the southernmost cirque of Mt. Langley (36°29' N, 118°14' W). Loose blocks, vegetation-filled cracks, and popping crystal knobs led to a ledge system and the start of what looked to be some serious climbing. The closer we got to the main corner, the more the wall seemed to crest over our heads like an angular, Escheresque wave. The dizzying corners gave way to serious doubts: Cache the gear and rap so we could get a quick start in the morning, or come back another day with aiders, hammers, and pins? No, we're here, and it's only about 800 feet. We'll cache and rap.

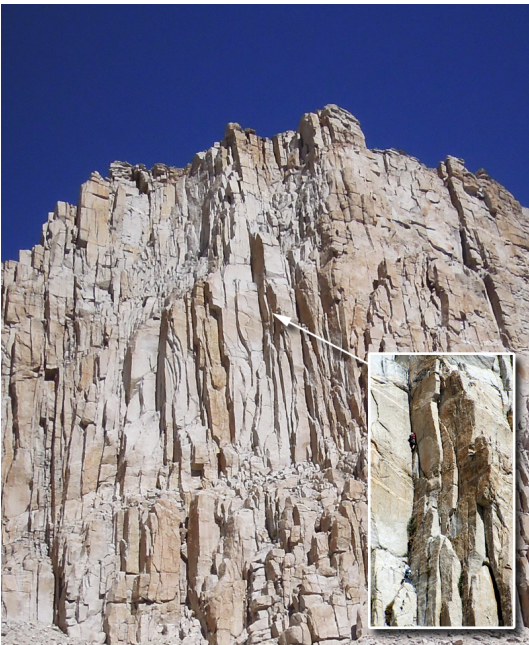
The morning of August 16 was bright, warm, and silent over High Lake, reflecting a pure Sierra morning when summer makes way for fall. During the short trudge up to our dangling rope, I looked up; the light was different. The wall almost seemed welcoming. The vertigo was gone, and only the hard work remained. Still focused on our line, I yelled over my shoulder, "We got this one!" We called the route Better Red Than Dead (800', III 5.11- R), and it took us six hours to complete.

Jeff Mahoney, AAC

## Images



Ascending a corner on Better Red Than Dead.



Better Red Than Dead overview and close up.



New Army Buttress topo.

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