



AAC Publications

Luoma Peak, Ducky's Wild Ride; Cyclorama Wall, Netherworld; new route potential

Canada, British Columbia, Coast Mountains

The year I was born (1979), Galen Rowell established the first and only line on the mythical Cyclorama Wall (Peak 12,860'). His write-up in the 1980 AAJ, where he called the wall "every bit as impressive as the Diamond on Longs Peak," inspired me to make the 20-mile slog to see if there was either more potential for new lines or potential to free his route—if I could find it. New to the deep Sierra, Jenny Luoma and I scouted Rowell's approach description online, with a guidebook in hand.

On June 30 we were following in his footsteps. As usual, the altitude devastated me, exacerbated by a solid cold. We moved slowly but surely through Southfork Pass and Mather Pass, then cut west through an unnamed pass, which was solid fourth class, to drop into the valley south of Amphitheater Lake. The next day, having spied a spectacular unnamed rock face on the southeast end of the Amphitheater Lake basin, we decided to gun for a first ascent as opposed to pushing through to the Cyclorama Wall. We managed to put up an approximately 1,000' new line on Peak 12,610', which I'm naming Luoma Peak.

Starting at the toe of the formation, we wrapped around to the right, finishing on the summit block. The first pitch climbed a corner; the second climbed a pitch of perfect splitter fingers and hands (both 5.10-). Three easier pitches followed obvious ledge systems up and right. From there, we chose a crack system leading directly toward the summit, containing two more 5.10 pitches, including one of overhanging hands (5.10d). Having brought the Pullharder mascot, a rubber ducky, we named our new route Ducky's Wild Ride (IV 5.10d).

The area north of Amphitheater Lake seems to have vast potential for first ascents, including a Cyclorama-looking wall with what appeared to be higher-quality rock. The rest of our trip involved scouting the Cyclorama Wall, which looked very difficult to free climb. We established a new climb on the east arête of the wall instead: Netherworld (III 5.10a R). We ended our excursion in an unnamed pass between the Amphitheater Lake basin and the Dumbbell Lakes basin, due west of Luoma Peak, where Jenny tried her first traditional lead up a very beautiful unclimbed arête. We named it Jenny's Training Day (II 5.6).

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Images



Ducky's Wild Ride on Luoma Peak. The approximately 1,000' line was climbed en route to the mythical Cyclorama Wall, climbed by Galen Rowell in 1979.



Looking down a steep crack on Ducky's Wild Ride.



Jenny's Training Day generally follows the skyline.



Netherworld climbs the east arête (left skyline pictured) of the Cyclorama Wall. The big-wall aspect of Cyclorama Wall lies out of view.

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