



AAC Publications

Summary: new routes, major linkups, and speed ascents

California, Yosemite National Park

In addition to the routes described in more detail in this section, as well as Mikey Schaefer's Father Time route on Middle Cathedral [see feature article in this AAJ], there are a few other significant new routes to report from Yosemite Valley in 2012.

Luis "Lucho" Rivera and Dan McDevitt free-climbed Romulan Freebird (10 pitches, V 5.12b/c) on Fifi Buttress, across from the Leaning Tower. McDevitt first established the route as an aid climb in 1999. The free version is described as a harder version of the Rostrum, with thin and sustained 5.12 cracks.

Additionally, Alex Honnold set out to free the 1,550' west face of the Leaning Tower, freeing the lower portion of the wall directly via a hard slab he called A Gift From Wyoming (550', 3 pitches, 5.13c), in honor of the late Todd Skinner, who originally projected the upper west face. The upper portion, a potential free version of the aid route Jesus Built My Hotrod, is estimated at hard 5.14 or even 5.15 and awaits a successful redpoint.

Video #2: BD athlete Alex Honnold making the first ascent of A Gift From Wyoming (5.13) on Yosemite's Leaning Tower from Black Diamond Equipment on Vimeo.

Alex Honnold and Tommy Caldwell completed the first free one-day ascent of the "Yosemite Triple," which linked the south face of Mt. Watkins, Freerider on El Capitan, and the Regular Northwest Face on Half Dome—about 7,000' vertical—in a combined time of 21:15 from the base of Mt. Watkins to the summit of Half Dome. Subsequently, Honnold repeated the one-day linkup solo, employing minimal aid, substituting the Nose for Free Rider on El Capitan. [See feature story in this AAJ.] The elapsed time was approximately 18 hours 55 minutes.

Honnold and Hans Florine also set a new speed record on the Nose of El Capitan at 2:23:46, breaking the previous record of 2:36:45 set by Dean Potter and Sean Leary in 2010. [See feature story in this AAJ.] Honnold remarked, "I think it could go sub-two hours someday with a lot of cardio [training] and a little less safety."

Erik Rieger, from information provided by James Lucas and various sources

Images

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