



## New Speed Record on the Nose of El Capitan

### From Hans' Facebook page:

Alex Honnold and I climbed The Nose route in 2:23:46 on Sunday June 17th. I've written the following five sections below...

- the details of the climb
- statistics and numbers
- leading up to it
- after the event
- articles/links

### ----the details of the climb.

Here's the straight details of the evening before and morning that I can recall now that it's only four days ago.

My wife arrives with kids at 8:15 pm to my friends home. We have dinner with the kids and are in bed asleep around 10pm. Pasta and chicken for the meal.

Alarm goes off at 4:08 am at my friend's home, Tom and Theresa, in Yosemite West. I have to pack up my 9 year old son, 11 year daughter, wife, Tom Frost, and our bivy stuff. TnT offered to bring to the meadow anything including two coolers that we couldn't pack up in the morning hussle. Theresa got up and helped with a few shuttles of gear, sleeping bags, and children to the van. The goal to make a 26 minute drive and meet Alex Honnold in the meadow by 4:50 am. Rats we didn't turn the key until 4:34 am, no way we can make it! I text Alex to let him know.

It's light by the time we arrive in El Capitan meadow. we have all the gear set from the night before. a dozen people are already milling about the meadow and a dribble of cars are coming in. after some small talk we start walking into the woods headed to the base of El Capitan. Note: Alex was apprehensive about too many people being around so we had Tom Evans tell people we weren't starting from the meadow until 6 or 6:30.

We get to the base around 5:20 am and there are only 4 people with us. John Ricco, my daughter Marianna, among them. A few things are organized and Alex flakes the rope. It feels like 60 degrees out, - way to warm to be doing a hard climb.

With approach shoes on we solo up Pine Line to head over to the third class ledges where the route starts. At the base of the first pitch Chris Gonzales, Steve Fettke, and Tom Frost are waiting there with smart phones, big camera, and Frost with an old B&W film camera! (Frost did the second Ascent of The Nose in 1960) We slip out of our approach shoes and talk through a few places on the route that require logistical efforts beyond normal simul-climbing. We repeatedly spout out our mantra of

"Safety first, fun second, speed third." Alex interjects that he's good with moving speed up the list today. I roll my eyes.

I spoke with Alex about negative splits in track & field and the concept of pacing. "Start off slow, go, go, go. Start off fast, just won't last." He understood.

After some stretching and last minute gear fiddling I turn to my watch to get things going. It's 5:49 am. It feels like the temp is high 70s. I hit menu to Chrono and ask Alex if he's ready. In so many words he lets me know he has been ready for five or ten minutes already, and rolls his eyes at me.

I have 16 cams\*(see leading up to it), 22 quick draws, 3 long runners with biners, and 11 free biners. For my first 1600 ft lead to the top of The Boot Flake that works out to one piece of pro per 31 ft.

The clock is started, I switch it back to TIME and start up the route. By this time there is a crowd of some 20 or so people in the trees at the base of the cliff and a hearty cheer let's out as they see we've started the climbing.

It's going to get silly with specific detail here so hold on or skip through it.

After about 25 ft up the first pitch I put in a #1 Camalot, another 15 ft I place a .4 gray cam-alot, another 10 ft a .75 green camalot, 5 ft up I clip a draw to a bashy, 15 more ft a bolt hangar is clipped with a quick draw. Then it's 30 ft to the anchor where I clip in a long runner. 30 ft up the second pitch I put in a .3 blue camalot, 7 more feet and I put in the 00 purple TCU. This last one is the protection before I go into the flaring pin scars and funky climbing just prior to the pendulum point. 15 ft up I clip a fixed wire with a free biner, then 7 more ft I clip a single biner to the lower off bolt. Alex takes me tight, him now being at the bolt I clipped on the first pitch, he lowers me slowly 5 to 8 ft and I reach right into the crack and yell down "climbing again." Slack comes in the rope and I hit sequences in a pin scared crack until 30 ft later I am at the anchor for the top of the second pitch. I clip a draw in here and continue climbing into the third pitch. 30 ft up I clip a single biner to a cord fixed to a bong. 30 more ft I clip a draw to a bolt. pull through on a draw to a bolt, but back clean it, then pull on a tat on a knifeblade, clip a bolt with a draw, Hang on it because Alex needs to have tension to do the pendulum lower out on the second pitch, pull to another bolt, then a tat on a mashed hex, then 15 ft of climbing to the third anchor, clip that with a draw and continue. Climb 25 ft clip a fixed cam, 10 ft to a fixed pin, clip it with a biner, 5 ft to a bolt, stem up 10 ft and clip fixed tat/rope for lower out. Alex takes me tight and lowers me out as I tension my way to the right. I get to a draw someone left on a fixed pin and clip into it. Stem over to Sickle, clip a bolt at head height and yell to Alex to take me off belay.

I move quickly across Sickle ledge. At the anchor I clip in the rope with a long runner. I say good morning to Michael and McKenna who spent the night there. After well wishes to MnM I glance at my watch a few ft up the rock and 17 minutes have passed since I started at the base of the first pitch. (approximately) Moving quickly up the 3rd and 4th class I get about 120 ft from the anchor on Sickle and place a small blue Camalot so Alex can hang on the rope in order to swing over to Sickle in mid pitch 4. I continue up 40 ft and place a .4 camalot with a draw attached at "the pedestal point", (an obvious upward facing tooth) where I lower to for the pendulum swing. I continue up to the last steep 5.9 hand crack climbing before the anchor, throw in a #1 camalot for protection then continue up to the anchor. I clip a leaver biner on the anchor and yell to Alex to lower me. Alex gets a weighted ride up the 5th class as I head down, cleaning the #1 as I pass by. Arriving at the .4 I ask Alex to hold me tight and I swing over to the Dolt Hole Cracks. We hear a cheer from the forest. While I climb the cracks up to the next lower out, Alex is climbing up the 5th class to the .4 cam. When I arrive at the bolt for the free variation I clip in and yell to Alex that he is good to swing over. Once Alex is in the dihedral below me he yells off and I continue to self tension on the tat and climb to the right on the 5.10 face. I clip the bolt at the base of the Stove legs with a long runner to prevent drag and start climbing the crack. I clip a biner on the first anchor in the Stove Legs and then a fixed piece some 15 ft above. As I climb the next 120 ft to the next bolt along the Stove Legs, Alex is arriving at the bolt I clipped to for him to swing. He grabs the rope heading up to me and switches the Grigri over to me while untying and pulling the rope through the Sickle anchor we had pendulumed from, then re-ties to the end, and continues to simul-climb behind me. I clip the bolt at the end of the 120 ft, 2 to 3" section,

this is anchor #8 on my notated Super Topo. I then continue up another 30 ft to clip a biner to a fixed cam. Another 50 ft and I'm at the base of the awkward flare section. I pause here to catch my breath, it's an eternity I'm told by Alex. I place a small cam at the base and lay back the first 10 ft then work the thin seam out left along with a heel toe in the flare until I can reach a tat out left which I clip with a biner then continue up in 5.7 terrain, after clipping a fixed pin, I go 40 ft farther and arrive at the double bolt anchor. I clip a draw there and continue up the blocky section to to a small overhang where I clip a fixed cam. 25 more ft and a fixed pin gives me my last protection for the 100ft of 3 to 4" crack that takes me eventually to Dolt tower. For 90% of this wide section I use my left fist alternated with a #3 Cam in my right hand. I get in one fixed tat clip during the 160 ft and a draw on the anchor 30 ft below Dolt. Here I yell to Alex that I am off belay, upon his response I haul all the rope up and fix it for him to jug.

A glance at my watch, it says it's been 47 minutes since I started the first pitch.(approximately) While Alex is jugging I am headed to the right side of Dolt Tower, I clip the far right bolt and down climb over to the crack that heads to El Cap Tower. -Keeping the anchored rope in one hand as a "self belay." I reach the anchor above Dolt and clip a draw to it and continue to climb. (anchor 12 on my notated Super Topo) Alex arrives at Dolt to undo the fixed rope before I run out of the length I had hauled up. Once Alex is on the far right side of Dolt he yells up for me to anchor myself so he can swing over. I place the #3 camalot and hang on it briefly for Alex to swing. Alex yells off and we continue to climb. When I reach the easy terrain 20 ft short of the anchor # 13 I yell off belay to Alex. I clip to the anchor and continue up to El Cap tower, clipping a long fixed tat there then heading up to the Texas Flake. Once behind the flake I head to the far west end and chimney my way up. On top of the flake I clip the anchor and yell down to Alex that I'm at the bolt ladder and he summarily has me on belay seconds later. I alternate etrier and adjustable daisy on the diagonal bolt ladder leaving one clipped in half way. Once I reach the thin crack below the boot I inform Alex I'm at the scary part and he reassures me that he's being attentive. Four cam placements and a fixed nut get me to the 5.10 hand portion on the Achilles heel of the boot. From there I alternate hand jamming and #1 camalot leep frogging until I'm at the wide section that accepts the #3 cam which I place and leave for reassurance. Meanwhile Alex is making his way up the bolt ladder. I reach the top of the boot, clip a leaver biner and yell to Alex to take me. I get lowered and clean all the pieces I placed, hand them to Alex and get on with the King Swing. Again we hear a loud cheer from the meadow before I finish the swing. Once on Eagle ledge I clip the line into the bolt and yell off. Alex appears moments later. A short gear check and hand off of the Grigri to me, is the signal for Alex to take the sharp end. I untie and pull the rope off the top of The Boot while Alex puts some ground between us. I glance at my watch and see one hour and twelve minutes has elapsed since we started at the base of the first pitch.(approximately) Interestingly that is 16 of the 32 pitches and turns out to be exactly half the time it took to climb the route.

I pop a few Power Bar Gel Blasts and swig some Cytomax. We each took a little less than a liter of liquid with us. Alex yells down that he has enough pieces in that I am OK to simul-climb. I notice that I forgot to take the ascenders off Alex so I yell up at him to leave them at the next piece. I start climbing with about a 5 ft loop of slack between my Grigri and Alex. My aim to make that the minimum loop size so that if he hits easy ground when I'm in a slow climbing spot I won't hose him. Most of the time I have 10 ft or more dangling. Alex and I simul-climb through the Gray Bands to the base of the Great roof. Alex leaves a cam for me to pull through on in the 5.11c spot. We pass by a NIAD team at the beginning of the Great Roof that let Alex and I go by as they patiently hung out at the anchor. I made it to the anchor as Alex was going across the horizontal part of the roof. I readied my ascenders and Alex yelled down that he was off at the base of the Pancake Flake. Alex quickly pulled up all the slack and fixed the rope, I began jugging, while Alex led up the Pancake on a big loop. Alex back cleaned the horizontal section of the great roof so I did a big lower out from the left side of the roof to the anchor at the base of the Pancake. I made it to the anchor only seconds before Alex had led up to the point he needed more rope. Alex arrived at the 23rd anchor seconds later and was pulling rope up to fix the line. I clipped my jugs to my side and climbed the Pancake as it's a little easier then jugging it. Once I hit the 5.11 section I slapped on the ascenders and jugged the remaining 40 ft of the pitch. Alex meanwhile was climbing the next pitch and leaving no gear but a green camalot half way up. Once Alex hit the first tier of Camp 5 he pulled up the rope, fixed it and continued up the ledges to the 12.C pitch. I jugged up and put Alex on belay as soon as I hit Camp 5. While he finished that lead I made my way to the very top of the Camp 5 ledges.

I peeked at my watch to see that one hour and 58 minutes had passed since we started at the base of the first pitch. (approximately) I informed Alex of our split time being about 10 minutes faster than our Thursday run.(3:39) When Alex hit the glowering spot he pulled up the line and fixed it. Alex climbed the 5.10 above while I juggled the 12c below. Alex made quick work of the pitch and was ready to pull up the slack for fixing to the lower ledges of Camp 6, as I un tied the fixed rope at the Glowering spot. While I juggled the 5.10 Alex climbed to Camp 6 and on into the changing corners pitch.I arrived at the bolt at the lower ledges, un tied it and climbed to camp 6 and 40 ft up into the Changing Corners pitch before Alex had reached the anchor and yelled off belay. A party of three whom we had passed at Sickle three days prior was there at Camp 6 with GoPro camera running. They were more than accomadating in letting us go by as they were in mid pitch juggling off the ledge. After Alex fixed the line I climbed up another 20 ft and then juggled the last 50 ft of the pitch. When I arrived Alex had already finished the next pitch above and was ready to pull up the rope to fix for the last time. I juggled this last pitch to the loose block anchor, anchor #28. I clipped in my ascenders to my side and started simul-climbing to the top. As I reached the horizontal roof in the alcove before the Wild Stance anchor, the rope came tight on me,- signaling me that Alex had arrived at easy ground on the summit and was putting me on the "magic belay." -Basically meaning the rope goes up, but never comes down. So I could simul climb with abandon and/or jug if needed. Although I was exhausted I climbed as fast as I could. Despite Alex's wishes I did bust out the etrier for two moves through the bolt ladder. I alternated with a quick draw in one hand and my wrist around the etrier in the other. Just before the angle went to slab I exchanged smiles and hellos to my friend Paul Hara who was hanging there with camera shooting away. Once on lower angle ground I was bear crawling as fast as I could toward the tree and Alex was reeling in the rope to keep it from getting hung up. After I tagged the tree I dug around my waist for the stop watch, switched it from "time mode" to "chrono" and hit stop at 2:23:53.

I was too out of breath to tell Alex the time, or even a yes or no. I just set the watch down for him to read for himself.

Friends: Gina, Brian, Christina, and Paul were on top to meet us and take photos.

Alex said that it took me at least 6 seconds to fumble and find my watch before I hit the stop button. I knew that I started the watch 1 or 2 seconds early at the base. So, although not up to Olympic track standards, we estimate that our actual time was 2:23:46 and we are sticking with that.

#### ----statistics and numbers

2.9 seconds per foot

one piece of gear per 32 ft on the first 1600 ft.

4 mins 28 seconds per pitch

Both of us on Sickle in 19 minutes, Huber Brothers made it in 16 minutes

Both of us on Dolt Tower in 49 minutes, Yuji and I made it in 52 minutes

Both of us at Eagle Ledge in one hour and 12 minutes,

Both of us at Camp Five in one hour and 58 minutes,

Both of us at the top in 2:23:46

#### ----leading up to it

Two years ago I called Alex to give him ideas/strategies for getting the record on The Nose with Ueli Steck. After their attempts last summer Alex tried to connect up with me for some climbing but we couldn't match schedules. Last fall I climbed with Alex for the first time. We climbed The Nose on Three separate occasions from October 13th, 20th, and November 1st, 2011. our times were: 4:37, 3:16 and 2:37:30 respectively. After Ueli and Alex's attempts, and one year prior to me and Alex tying together, in November 2010 Sean Leary and Dean Potter had set the record at 2:36:45.

Over the winter it was apparent to me, (and I suspect Alex), that if we could just come back to The Nose the following season, a little work on tactics and fitness would yield us the record. Of course

busy schedules and the possibility of someone lowering the time to beat were looming.

I didn't care so much as to when, or even if, I would get the record. I knew that training for the record would be rewarding, so I did. I did everything from road biking, to numerous odd challenges at Diablo Rock Gym. see: <http://www.touchstoneclimbing.com/diablrock/classes/322-2012challenge> Yes! I also got outdoors and climbed at Lovers Leap and even Yosemite in the months leading up to June.

It was foremost the incredible support of my wife Jacqueline that gave me the flexibility to train and the motivation to pull it off. The community around me at Diablo Rock Gym, and even our bedroom community in the suburbs, were both supportive, and inspirational, to me. They made it possible for me being able to get the proper training in.

On the mornings of June 13th and 14th 2012 Alex and I climbed The Nose in 2:53 and 2:39 respectively. During these two runs we refined the gear we would take. Alex incredibly impressed with how fast I could place gear, but embarrassed that I had to bring so much. On the 13th we climbed the route in four pitches, me leading the first two, Alex the last two. - That is if you count a pitch as when we get gear back to the leader. On Thursday we brought a little more gear and did the ascent in two pitches. Alex was Embarrassed that I had to bring the big #3 Camalot. I also was bringing a gold Omega Link Cam which was awesome for the Stove Legs, and Boot Flake.- In the end he got me to not use the Link Cam as I never left it for protection, but only used it as a crutch if I needed a placement. Generally Alex would say: "Hans you've never fallen there, why do you need to protect it?" I'd come back with "feeling/being safe helps me go faster." Alex would get me to take three pieces off the rack and I'd negotiate two other pieces back on. In the end it was one #3 camalot, two of every cam size #1 and below. no nuts, 22 quick draws, 3 long runners with biners, 11 free biners, one etrier, ascenders, speedy stirrups, Grigri, 5 locking carabiners, less than a liter of water each. Friends had descent shoes for us on top, - so the style/ethics folks can say we took assistance if they like.

We rested nearly 3 days. Alex went back packing and slept at 10,000 ft on Friday night, I went to the East Bay and played with kids, managed the gym, and slept at 550 ft. We met Saturday afternoon in El Cap meadow and went over our strategy one last time and decided to meet the following morning at 4:50 am in the meadow. Temps were forecast to be HOT.

### **---after the event**

I hung out in the meadow with friends, jumped in the river with my kids. Then drove back to the suburbs of the East Bay. I went to Water World with my kids, we've got season passes! I've answered a ton of interview questions via email, facebook, in person, and over the phone. Alex did a poster signing in Fresno the Tuesday afterwards and was delighted to have a large crowd come by to meet him. Alex and I are doing a show of pictures and video on Thursday the 28th evening 7:30 pm at Pipeworks gym in Sacramento. I'll be doing something similar on Monday July 2nd in the evening at Great Western Power Company in Oakland. I will do some shows in the North East in September. Thomas Huber sent me an email saying congratulations, and he'll buy me a beer next time I'm in his neighborhood. I am staying fit and not sure what the next climbing adventure will be. It may be a biking or other adventure. They'll be something. Am I feeling post event depressed? - No, I've got plenty of things to look forward to.

fall 2012 I climbed The Nose for my 94th time. The record go in June was my 90th ascent of The Nose.

### **----articles/links**

<http://www.rockandice.com/news/2047-honnold-and-florine-set-new-nose-speed-record>

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2012/06/18/2878165/climbers-set-record-on-el-capitans.html#storylink=misearch>

[http://www.climbing.com/news/hotflashes/florine\\_honnold\\_set\\_new\\_nose\\_speed\\_record/](http://www.climbing.com/news/hotflashes/florine_honnold_set_new_nose_speed_record/)

<http://lamorinda.patch.com/articles/lafayette-s-hans-florine-scorches-el-cap-again#photo-1000238>

<http://sierraclub.typepad.com/explore/2012/06/speed-record-broken-on-el-caps-nose.html>

It was announced in the NYT the day before our attempt:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/16/sports/rock-climber-alex-honnold-tackles-yosemites-biggest-rock-faces.html?pagewanted=all>

Great photos: <http://www.elcapreport.com/content/elcap-report-61712>

History: <http://www.speedclimb.com/yosemite/thenose.htm#98>

more links to video and comments from others: <https://www.facebook.com/HansFlorineclimbs>

If you are motivated to take on a challenge come visit the Diablo Rock Gym and pick up our challenge list for 2012.

all the best. Speed be with you.

# Images

## NEW SPEED RECORD ON THE NOSE of EL CAPITAN

**ALEX HONNOLD & HANS FLORINE**  
**2:23:46**  
 \* established in the world gear  
 Hans took...

**FIRE MY ROCKET, ALEX!**

**KIMKIE HISTORY**  
 1st DAY ASCENT: 1995, Jim BRIDWELL, John LONG, Billy WESTBAY  
 FAST: 1990: 8 hr 6 min Steve SCHNEIDER/HANS FLORINE  
 PASTER: 1996: 4 hr 1 min Andrew DANIEL / HANS FLORINE  
 PASTER: 1996: 4 hr 12 min Peter COPE / HANS FLORINE  
 Body doodle! 2002: 2:40:00 Jim BRIDWELL / HANS FLORINE

**SAFETY First! FUN Second! SPEED Third!**

**BE A CLIMBER!**  
 Dem! Get! hairs in wind! sterni Grimace nipple rings muscled

**After about 15 feet up** I place a 0.4 grey camalot. Another 10 feet a .15 grey camalot. I clip a draw to a boulder, 15 feet more a bait hangs clipped with quickdraw. Then it's 30 feet to the anchor where I clip a long runner.

**Arriving at the OT-I** I ask Alex to hold me tight & I swing over to the bolt hole. Check and the crowd in the Forest Go NUTS!

Nose Speed Record 2012, Spread 1

TEXT **HANS FLORINE**  
 Adapted from Hans' Facebook page with permission

**MISCHIEF**  
 Jami Knight

A fixed pin is my last pro for the 100 of 3-4" crack taking me to Dolt Tower. For 90% of this wide section I use my left fist alternated with a #3 cam in my right hand

**Feel the POWER!!**

**SPLITTING DOLT TOWER 47 min**

**HUBER A**  
 HUBER'S

**START CLIMBING** with about a 5 foot loop of slack between my GriGri & Alex. My aim is to make that the minimum loop size so that if he hits easy ground when I'm in a slow climbing spot I won't hose him. Most of the time I have 10ft or more dangling. Alex and I simul-climb through the Gray Bands to the base of the Great Roof.

**2 hrs 23 min 46 sec**

This was HANS FLORINE'S 90th ascent of the NOSE ROUTE. EIGHT of those ascents set speed records, starting in 1991! THEY're NOT EVEN STOPPIN' TO PEE!

Nose Speed Record 2012, Spread 2

## Article Details

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