



AAC Publications

Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne, New Routes

California, Yosemite National Park

This July, I had the honor of fulfilling the mission of the Mountain Fellowship Award by establishing new routes on unnamed features near Waterwheel Falls in the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne, Yosemite National Park. Over the course of two weeks Alan Holzkopf, Scott Rysdahl, Maura LaRiviere, and I established four new routes. The most notable route, the Fortress Wall (700?, 8 pitches, IV 5.11-A2+), took us three days. To find the formation, walk down river from Glen Aulin (roughly one hour), past the prominent dome known as Wild Cat Point, until you see a striking wall on the north side of the canyon. Our route links a series of fantastic crack systems, with some exciting face climbing and tenuous glacially polished traverses, on the east end of the south face. The free climbing is high quality, with only one pitch of aid. The route is best descended by rappel.

We also established three other shorter lines. Two are splitter crack systems on a detached boulder east of the main wall. The third is a four-pitch climb that summits a smaller feature that is also east of the main wall.

Furthermore, we found evidence of previously unreported routes that likely date back to the original Yosemite hardmen. The climbing here, of which I could find no information or documentation, is extremely clean and aesthetic in a breathtaking wilderness setting. The opportunity to work on new lines with great climbing partners, while looking over Waterwheel Falls and the Tuolumne River, was an experience I will remember for years to come.

Images

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