



AAC Publications

Castle Dome, Southeast Arête

California, Kings Canyon National Park

Castle Dome (10,800'), in Kings Canyon, has been on my list of places to visit for quite a while, with good-looking rock, a high adventure factor, giant approach, and only one recorded climb: Silmarillion (IV 5.10), established by Mark Menge and Jack Roberts (AAJ 1979).

In mid-July, Caitlin Taylor and I made the beautiful, 13-mile one-way approach to the dome over a three-day weekend. After setting up a scenic camp in the meadow below the rock, we set our sights on the southeast arête, which forms the right-hand skyline of the dome.

The ensuing seven-pitch climb provided an aesthetic line in an incredible setting. The southeast arête (1,100', IV 5.10 PG13) offers good variety—fun face, big jugs, pulling over wild roofs, and a few cracks—all at moderate difficulties. Later in the summer the route saw its first repeat ascent, with the climbers noting its potential to become a new, moderate Sierra classic.

Vitaliy Musiyenko

Images



A pristine camp below Castle Dome. The southeast arête takes the right skyline of the formation.



Looking up the main dihedral system on Castle Dome, where the route Silmarillion takes one of the two corners.



The southeast arête of Castle Dome viewed from an adjacent peak.



Caitlin Taylor, high on the southeast arête of Castle Dome.



Heading up the second pitch of the southeast arête.



Heading up the third pitch of the southeast arête.



Vitaliy Musiyenko and Caitlin Taylor on the summit of Castle Dome.

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