



AAC Publications

Peak 6,925'–Peak 6,991' Traverse; Peak 6,760', Northeast Arête

Utah, Zion National Park

In April, Owen Lutz and I made a five-day journey through the Great West Canyon region of Zion National Park—what you might call ultralight backpacking with a big-wall rack. Along the way we made the first ascents of three technical summits surrounding Stevenson Canyon, a prominent tributary of the Right Fork of North Creek.

After a day's travel to access the high country on April 17, we spent April 18 making a north-to-south traverse of Peak 6,925' and Peak 6,991' (these have been nicknamed Stevenson Peak and Great White Dome by local peak baggers). This was classic Zion chossaneering, with lots of 4th class travel on loose terrain and the occasional 5th class step (up to 5.7).

The following day, April 19, we made the probable second descent of Stevenson Canyon to reach the aesthetic northeast buttress of a large and beautiful sandstone dome: Peak 6,760'. Striated in red and white bands and surrounded by deep faults, the dome looks like a Jovian planet erupting through the crust of the earth.

The dome's northeast arête provided a surprisingly enjoyable and moderate route, with solid rock and fun climbing up slabs and cracks. After six pitches of climbing to 5.9, we climbed 1,000' of easier but exposed terrain to the summit rim. The descent was adventurous. We first traversed rotten rock (4th class) to a neighboring 6,840' peak. We then rappelled to the northeast and traversed beautiful slickrock terrain before descending the canyon wall due north of the start of our route. We dubbed the peak Iron Lion and our route The Kingdom (III/IV 5.9). We left nine drilled angles in situ.

On April 20 we exited Stevenson Canyon, listening to a chorus of frogs, and managed to bypass deep potholes by staying high on the canyoneer's left side. We made one rappel near the mouth and spent a final night in the Grand Alcove before a glorious trek out the Right Fork.

Future climbers should note that some of the flat-topped summits in this area of North Creek and the Great West Canyons (including Great White Dome, Mt. Ivins, and Inclined Temple) are technically "off limits," as they are designated Research Nature Areas (RNA) by the park; however, climbing their walls to the summit rim is not prohibited. We only became aware of this after our climb of Great White Dome.

– Darin Berdinka

Images



GWD-Stephenson.jpg: Peak 6,991' (Great White Dome) on left and Peak 6,925' (Stevenson Peak) on right. The climbers traversed the skyline at 5.7.



Peak 6,760' (Iron Lion). The right skyline forms the northeast arête, where the climbers established The Kingdom (III/IV 5.9).



An overhanging rappel while descending Iron Lion into Stevenson Canyon.



Owen Lunz on The Kingdom on the dome the climbers named Iron Lion. Mt. Ivins can be seen in the background.



Approaching Peak 6,925' (Stevenson Peak).



Descending through rugged Stevenson Canyon.

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