



AAC Publications

Kettle Dome, Southwest Face

California, High Sierra

After spending five days in the backcountry, my brother Jon Schutz, my girlfriend Julie Tran, and I succeeded in putting up a new line on the southwest side of Kettle Dome (9,451') in Kings Canyon. As far as we could tell nobody had climbed this wall since the mid 1970s—the west face (II 5.7, Beckey-Vennum-Warrender, AAJ 1976).

We started just right of the southwest corner of the dome under a huge pine tree. The climb started out steep and challenging, going through two roofs at the start, followed by a sustained section of thin face climbing and funky bottoming cracks to the first ledge (5.10). After that we moved a few feet right of the belay and up knobs, where a thin ramp led up and right to a spectacular headwall covered in more knobs (5.10). After belaying in a chimney we moved right around a corner on easy knobs and then up three more relaxed pitches to the summit.

The views were spectacular as we were able to see all of Tombstone Ridge, much of the Gorge of Despair, and the top of Tehipite Dome. After over 20 years climbing together this was Jon's and my first, first ascent together, so we were totally stoked. We rappelled off the south face via two double-rope rappels. We named the route Two Bucks in the Truck (approx. 1,000', 5.10) after a great opening day of deer hunting this season in Wyoming.

– Matthew Schutz

Images

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