



AAC Publications

Wall Tower: The White Tiger

Canada, British Columbia, Purcell Mountains, Leaning Towers

On June 25, Paul Bonnell, Vince Ryglis, Kale Semar, and I began the arduous approach to the Leaning Towers in the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, with the goal of finishing a line that Fred Beckey, Carl Dietrich, and Jim Rusch first attempted in late 1986. We carried supplies for 12 days and adequate gear for a big-wall first ascent.

After three days of hiking and exploration, Vince and I started up what we believed to be the Beckey-Dietrich-Rusch line on the east face of Wall Tower. We encountered rusty quarter-inch bolts and tattered webbing, confirming we were likely on Beckey and Dietrich's route. All signs of travel disappeared after three pitches, and we continued climbing dirty, poorly protected cracks until, after another two pitches, the rock quality improved, allowing free climbing and better protection.

It took us two days to fix the first four pitches. On the third day, Vince and I made the summit in a push, finishing the 10-pitch route at night. (Paul and Kale had decided to explore the area and support for our efforts, and it was reassuring to know they would be waiting with food and water as soon as we returned to the glacier.) After bivying near the summit ridge in an electrical storm, we rappelled the route. We named our route the White Tiger, due to the remarkable whiteness of the granite and the peculiar black stripes that cover the first third of the route. We drilled some bolts for anchors but did not place any protection bolts, and we propose a grade of VI 5.11 A3 (1,400'). This expedition was supported in part by an AAC Live Your Dream Grant.

– Aaron Hanson, USA

Images



Vince Ryglis following pitch five of White Tiger on the east face of Wall Tower.



Paul Bonnell crosses Dewar Creek on day one of the approach to the Leaning Towers.



The route line of the White Tiger (10 pitches, VI 5.11 A3) on Wall Tower's east face.



The sun sets on Block Tower (left) and Wall Tower on day six of the trip.

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