



AAC Publications

Mt. Wilson, Dream of Wild Cheeseburgers and Head of State

Nevada, Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area

"You should try your hand at Mt. Wilson," touted a climbing partner. "I know a guy, he's always stoked." A quick phone call later, the plans were made. Before I knew it, Kyle Willis and I were on the summit of Mt. Wilson via the classic Inti Watana and upper Resolution Arête linkup—the first route either of us had done on Wilson, and our first route together.

Fast-forward to a year later, September 2016. After gaining some new-routing experience around Moab, I was back in Red Rock and looking for a bigger challenge. Kyle and I again turned our eyes to Mt. Wilson, this time to an unclimbed crack system to the right of Inti.

We were curious why such an obvious line had gone unclimbed, and when we got up to the base it seemed we had figured it out. I'm not sure if I'd ever seen that much moss on a climb, and I'm from the Northwest! We decided that, since we were there, we might as well climb a few pitches, and we were pleasantly surprised to find that the climbing wasn't as bad as it looked. We made it halfway up the fifth pitch before it started getting dark, and then fixed ropes back to the bivy ledge atop pitch two.

The next morning we climbed up and over the moss and ventured higher, discovering pitch after pitch of fun climbing and increasingly good rock. Before we knew it we had reached familiar terrain, and soon we were at the ledge system where Inti Watana links into the Resolution Arête. Having left our shoes at the base, we decided to rappel Inti from there, but the final pitches of Resolution would make for a great finish to the route. Dream of Wild Cheeseburgers (IV 5.9+) climbs around 1,500' of new terrain to join existing routes.

Psyched on our success, we scanned photos of Wilson for another unclimbed line and spied a series of discontinuous ridges and cracks between Lady Wilson's Cleavage and Dogma. We approached from the old Oak Creek campground, and about halfway between the highway and the mountain we cut left onto an obvious ridge that led straight to the base of the route.

On day one we climbed a big, slabby feature to reach the top of Willie's Couloir. Here, three options presented themselves—a steep hand crack, a steep ring-lock crack, and an overhanging number six crack. We chose the hand crack and continued up one of the best pitches I've ever done in Red Rock. Some scrambling then led to our planned bivy site. The next day we proceeded slowly up a wide crack system and over a series of small towers to the base of the final headwall. The climbing ahead looked difficult, and having to be in town the next morning, we stashed gear for our planned return and rappelled.

A few days later, after an aborted attempt to climb a new route on the Basin Wall, we hiked to the summit of Mt. Wilson via Oak Creek Canyon and rappelled into our high point below the headwall. The rappel inspection revealed just enough thin gear on the headwall, but also enough lichen to make a redpoint attempt feel unsafe. So we left a fixed line as we rappelled, intending to top-rope the crux pitch once or twice to clean it, then pull the rope and lead it. After completing the easy pitch below, we went to work, but cleaning and rope-work shenanigans ate up precious time. We each top-roped the pitch successfully, but it became clear we didn't have enough daylight to rap, pull the rope, and lead out. So, more concerned with getting off the mountain safely than with style, we ran up the last pitch to the summit.

We climbed the route in 20 long pitches, totaling about 2,800' of roped travel plus some scrambling. This is now, to my knowledge, the longest route in Red Rock: Head of State (3,000', V 5.11b R). The route has two 5.11 pitches (including the headwall and a splitter corner crack in the middle of route) and several 5.10 leads.

– Sam Boyce

Images



Sam Boyce coming up to the belay atop pitch seven during the first ascent of Dream of Wild Cheeseburgers (IV 5.9+) on Mt. Wilson.



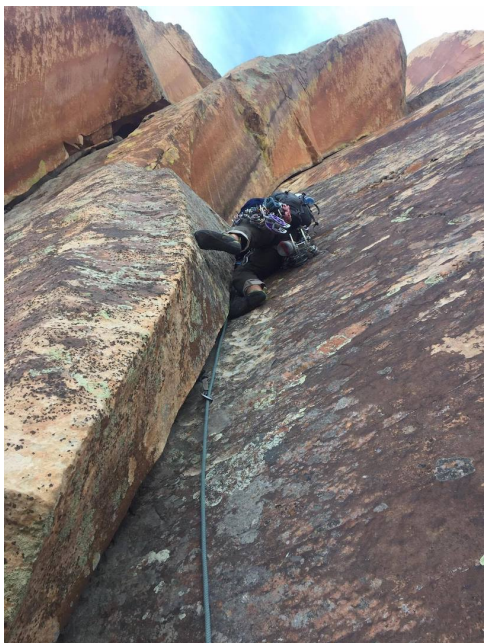
Sam Boyce beginning pitch four on the first ascent of Head of State (3,000', V 5.11b R).



Kyle Willis starting the first technical pitch on Head of State (3,000', V 5.11b R) on Mt. Wilson.



Sam Boyce traversing slabby terrain on pitch six during the first ascent of Head of State (3,000', V 5.11b R) on Mt. Wilson.



Sam Boyce starting up an aesthetic corner crack on the first ascent of Head of State (3,000', V 5.11b R) on Mt. Wilson.



The Aeolian Wall of Mt. Wilson, showing the line of Dream of Wild Cheeseburgers (IV 5.9+), which lies just to the right of the classic Inti Watana.



Mt. Wilson, showing the two new lines put up by Sam Boyce and Kyle Willis in September 2016.

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