



AAC Publications

Mt. Watkins: Teabag Wisdom

California, Yosemite National Park

After running into Bruce Morris, who did two new routes on the east face of Mt. Watkins, in a local climbing gym and hearing all his praise for this infrequently visited corner of Yosemite Valley, I decided to check the east face for myself. Chris Kolpp and I first repeated Golden Dawn (IV 5.10d), which Bruce and Urmias Franosch had put up in the 1980s, and then attempted a new route starting a few hundred feet below and to the east.

From the base the line seemed intimidating, as multiple overhangs guarded the summit and between these was plenty of blank slab, yet we could see dikes, intermittent cracks, and other features that inspired hope. We started before dawn and ran out of light halfway up the wall. Determined to go back, we added a few hand-drilled bolts on the way down, by headlamp, before climbing out via the gully that we had rappelled to reach the base. Returning to our cars after 4 a.m., we were dehydrated and delirious, yet excited about a fine adventure. While making hot drinks, we had a good laugh at the messages we discovered on our teabags: "Patience is the companion of wisdom" and "Wisdom doesn't necessarily come with age. Sometimes age just shows up all by itself."

We had to return three times in order to drill rappel anchors, complete the first ascent, and make an in-a-day free ascent. Teabag Wisdom (1,350', IV 5.11a) features perfect granite and varied climbing that will put a smile on your face. Many claim to be enlightened while climbing—Chris and I get our wisdom from teabags. "One day you'll just be a memory for some people, do your best to be a good one."

– Vitaliy Musiyenko

Images



Chris Kolpp during the first ascent of Teabag Wisdom on the east face of Mt. Watkins.



Mt. Watkins from the southeast. The ca 2,400-foot south face is far left. (1) Teabag Wisdom (IV 5.11a) . (2) New Life (IV 5.10) on “Harding Tower.” (Both climbs established in 2016.) Yasoo Dome is on the far right.

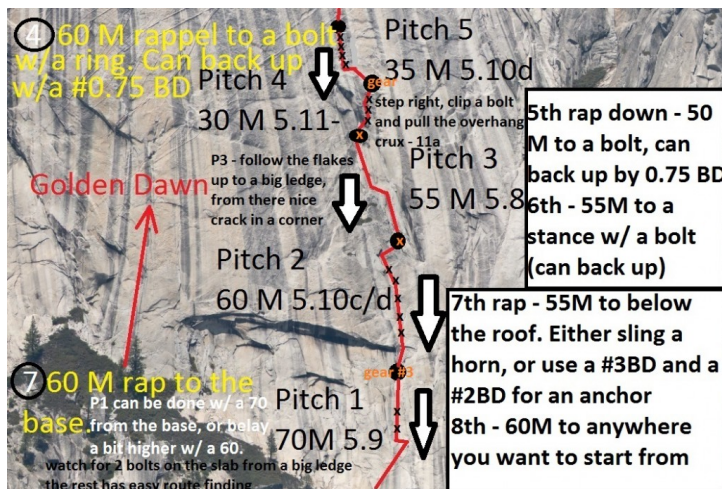


Photo topo of the first part of Teabag Wisdom, Mt. Watkins.

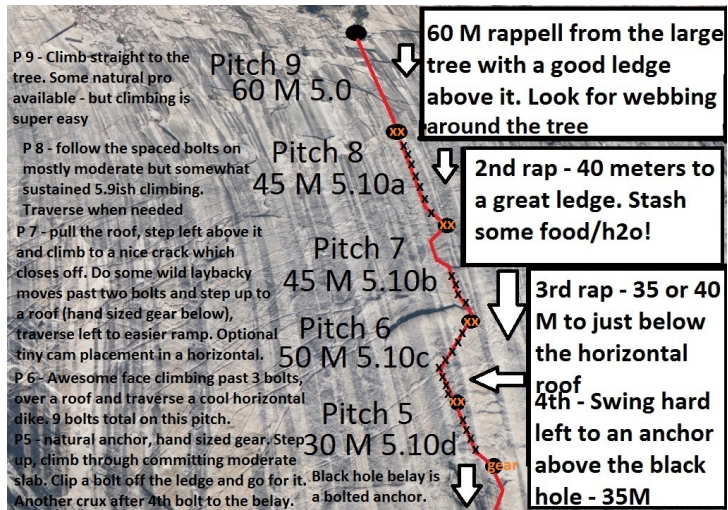


Photo topo of the upper part of Teabag Wisdom, Mt. Watkins.

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