



AAC Publications

Lone Pine Peak, Bastille Buttress, Bad Hombres

California, Eastern Sierra

On April 19, Myles Moser and I spotted an unclimbed snow and ice gully on the northeastern side of the Bastille Buttress, a 2,000' granite monolith that juts from the north ridge of Lone Pine Peak. With binoculars, we could see sections of thin ice connecting steep snow ramps in the deeply incised cleft. Increasing temperatures were forecasted, so we started from the trailhead at 3 a.m. the next morning.

We soloed the first few hundred feet of gradually steepening snow, which gave way to a section of WI2. Arriving at the base of a bomb-bay chimney at sunrise, we set a belay and roped up for the crux pitch as meltwater droplets began to trickle down from above. Myles gracefully led the physical, verglas-covered M4 chimney in crampons, scratching for holds with his ice tools. Above, easy snow ramps separated two pitches of thin and sun-rotted WI3. A final snow gully led to the end of the couloir, where two more pitches of mixed snow and decomposing fifth-class granite brought us to the summit. We took a long, technical descent down the lower portion of Lone Pine Peak's north ridge, and we were back at the trailhead by noon. The temperature gauge in my truck registered 73° F. We could see that most of the ice in the route had already fallen down.

Having climbed many of the classic High Sierra couloirs, I feel that this is one of the very best. We felt like criminals for plucking such an obvious gem and narrowly escaping its collapse, so we named it Bad Hombres (2,000', WI3 M4).

– Richard Shore

Images



The lower north ridge of Lone Pine Peak. Bad Hombres (2,000', WI3 M4) follows the obvious snowy cleft to the right of the Bastille Buttress, the prominent granite rib in the center. Richard Shore and Miles Moser began approaching the route at 3 a.m. to beat rising temperatures. By the time they returned to the trailhead at noon, much of the route's ice was gone.



Myles Moser reaching the base of the crux pitch during the first ascent of Bad Hombres (2,000', WI3 M4). The route follows a large cleft to looker's right of the classic rock route Bastille Buttress (5.10d A0, Beckey-Brown-Haas, 1969).



Myles Moser leading the crux pitch of Bad Hombres (2,000', WI3 M4), a verglas-covered M4 chimney. Moser and Richard Shore climbed this conditions-dependent route in late April after one of the biggest snow years on record in the Sierra.



Myles Moser racing the creeping sunlight up the final snow ramp during the first ascent of Bad Hombres (2,000', WI3 M4) on Lone Pine Peak. Moser and Richard Shore caught the route in climbable conditions on April 20 after an enormous snow year, but the ice quickly deteriorated in the sun.

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