



AAC Publications

Lone Pine Peak, Stonehouse Buttress, Cream of the Crop

California, Eastern Sierra

On May 4, Myles Moser and I started a new route on the sunny south face of the Stonehouse Buttress, to the right of the Chimney Route (IV 5.8, Faint-Rowell, 1974). This formation in the Tuttle Creek drainage has largely been ignored since early ascents that reported horrible rock quality. The fatal fall of a young woman here undoubtedly helped to seal its obscurity.

Amid the grainy choss, we found a clean section of good, varnished rock wandering up the central buttress. After breaking all of our drill bits and taking many big whippers from difficult hand-drilling stances on the first day, we retreated to the ground. We returned the next morning, armed with a beak that we used for aid while placing the free climbing protection bolts on the difficult second pitch—a long, left-leaning layback seam on a steep slab. A sustained 60m 5.10+ offwidth crack above guarded some easier terrain that led to the top of a tower. Another pitch around to the right landed us at the base of our primary objective—a straight-in 5.11a thin-hands splitter on a grainy, vertical headwall. Halfway through our seventh pitch, we believe we joined the 1987 route Rots of Rock (IV 5.9 A2). We finished the climb in nine long pitches.

Amy Ness and Brandon Thau completed the second ascent that same day, hot on our heels, and we all rappelled the route together. Although we freed all the moves on the difficult second pitch, neither team succeeded in redpointing it. We believe this pitch will check in around 5.12. Our route linked some of the best rock and features on the formation, and we called it Cream of the Crop (1,200', IV 5.11+ A0).

– Richard Shore

Images



The Stonehouse Buttress, a prominent lower-elevation crag on the broad south face of Lone Pine Peak, showing the line of Cream of the Crop (1,200', IV 5.11+ A0), completed by Myles Moser and Richard Shore in May 2017.



Amy Ness starting pitch three of Cream of the Crop (1,200', IV 5.11+ A0). Ness and Brandon Thau made the route's second ascent directly behind first ascensionists Myles Moser and Richard Shore. Though all the moves of the route's crux second pitch were freed, none of the four was able to link the entire pitch, which will likely check in at 5.12.



Myles Moser on pitch six of Cream of the Crop (1,200', IV 5.11+ A0) during the first ascent in May 2017. The route is on the Stonehouse Buttress, a prominent low-elevation crag along the broad south face of Lone Pine Peak.

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