



## AAC Publications

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### Four Gables, New Routes

California, Eastern Sierra

**IN EARLY JUNE, Josie McKee and I climbed a new route on the east face of Four Gables (12,720'), just west of Bishop.** Inspired by an article by Dave Nettle (see AAJ 2014), we decided to check out the face for ourselves. [Editor's Note: In addition to the Nettle-Reed route, at least two other known routes exist on the eastern aspect of Four Gables—a low fifth-class route somewhere on the far left side, and the Neale-Rowell (III 5.8, see AAJ 1973) which follows an unknown line but possibly shares some terrain with the Nettle-Reed.]

We left Bishop around 4:30 a.m. and drove to the Horton Lakes Trailhead, from which a six-hour hike brought us to the base of the peak. We picked a line on the right side of the face (right of the other known routes), which looked like it would bring us to a beautiful golden dihedral toward the top. After a couple of hundred feet of moderate snow, we climbed two long pitches of crack and face up to 5.10- until a thin section in the dihedral forced us to traverse right along a series of face holds into another system. Two more 60m pitches led us to a final squeeze chimney and onto the summit plateau: Hashtag Training (1,000', IV 5.10-). [Editor's Note: In early September, Jack Cramer and McKenzie Long climbed a similar line believing they were on unclimbed terrain, and finished directly up the golden dihedral where Clark and McKee went right. They called their variation the Golden Section (5.9).]

Five days later, I returned with Tad McCrea and we established a classic line a few hundred feet left of Josie and my route (but still right of previous lines). Tad had just flown in from Alaska the night before and drove through the night to make it. The climb connected steep crack systems straight up the middle of the east face and ended in an open book dihedral. After a classic late start and a couple of hundred feet of steep snow, we began climbing at 4 p.m. The first pitch started with some sporty climbing through overlaps and into a beautiful finger crack through a roof. We then trended right to gain an obvious crack system halfway up the face, which led to an open book corner, the "Anti-Face-Book," leading directly to the summit. We climbed seven pitches in total, most of which were steep and sustained at 5.9 to 5.10, with some trickier 5.10+ here and there in the upper pitches.

We encountered good rock with amazing sections of black knobs and fins on the face—a joy to climb. We named the route Stevia Mama (1,000', IV 5.10+) because I got to lead all the pitches.

– Whitney Clark

## Images



Whitney Clark starting pitch one of Stevia Mama (1,000', IV 5.10+) on Four Gables, just west of Bishop.



Whitney Clark finishing the crux dihedral of Stevia Mama (1,000', IV 5.10+) in the dark.



The east face of Four Gables in the High Sierra west of Bishop. Whitney Clark, with Josie McKee and Tad McCrea, completed two new routes on the right side of the face in June 2018: Stevia Mama (1,000', IV 5.10+) on the left and Hashtag Training (1,000', IV 5.10-) on the right.

Article Details

Author	Whitney Clark
Publication	AAJ
Volume	61
Issue	93
Page	0
Copyright Date	2019
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions