



AAC Publications

Organ Saint Skyline Traverse

New Mexico, Organ Mountains

From May 3–5, Kevin Boyko and I made a continuous, 38-hour, unsupported push expanding a previous traverse (see AAJ 2015), climbing all of the major and minor technical summits with prominence in the ridge of the Organ Mountains, between Fillmore Canyon and Baylor Pass.

The goals going into this attempt were to revise the previous traverse of the 22 major peaks, summit 24 peaks within 24 hours of the first summit, and continue climbing additional minor peaks as encountered on the ridge based on motivation, fitness, and (most importantly) excellent weather. We successfully accomplished each of the goals, and the revised route added 8 minor peaks totaling 30 summits.

We are naming the revised route the Organ Saint Skyline Traverse (VI 5.10 C0 R/X). The traverse features 29 pitches of technical climbing with 26 rappels and around 20,000' of elevation gain and loss. We aided a few moves on two of the pitches, both of which would likely go free at 5.12. We are grateful to Heather Tylka and Lauren Flynn for encouragement and transportation.

– Jon Tylka

Images



Kevin Boyko takes in the sunrise from Razorback during he and Jon Tylka's Organ Saint Skyline Traverse in early May 2019. Their traverse expands on a previous traverse of the range from 2014, climbing 30 distinct summits. The full traverse is visible in the shadow on the valley floor, and Las Cruces is in the valley beyond.



Sunrise behind the Organ Mountains skyline from the west.

#	Peak Name	Ascent Aspect, Pitches, Grade, "Route Name"	Decent Aspect, Rappels or Grade
1	Retaining Wall	North, Low 5 th Class	North, Low 5 th Class
2	Organ Needle	South, 4 th Class	North, 1 R
3	Square top Massive	West, 1 P, 5.8 via "Sickle Cell Anemia"	West Face, 1 R
4	Little Square Top	East, 4 th Class	North/West, 1 R
5	Square top	South/East, 1 P, 5.6 "South East Arete"	South/East, 1 R
6	S1 Spur*	North, 1 P, 5.5, "North Arete"	North, 2 R
7	S2 Spur*	South, 2 P, 5.7 FA "South East Face"	North, 1 R
Note*: To move between S2 and the Slice, traverse on 4 th Class knife ridge to 3 rd Class slabs.			
8	Slice*	North, 4 th Class	North, 4 th Class
9	Wedge	East, 1 P, 4 th Class, "Normal Route"	East, 1 R
10	Lost Peak	South, 2 P, 5.6 "South Face"	North, 1 R
11	Third Peak	South, 1 P, 5.0 "South Ridge"	South, 1 R
12	Dingle berry	South, High 4 th	North, 2 R
13	Wildcat	South, 3 rd Class	North, 3 rd Class "Normal Route"
14	Razorback	South, 4 th Class, "South East Ramp"	North, 3R
15	Spire	South, 2 P, 5.8, "South Face"	North, 1 R & 4 th Class
16	Spike*	South, 1 P, 5.12/5.10 C0, "Sound of Gravity"	South, 1 R
17	Low Horn 6^	South, 3 P, 5.12/5.9 r, FA "Thread the Needles"	North, 4 th Class
18	Low Horn 5^	South, 3 P, 5.9, "South Face"	North, 4 th Class
19	Low Horn 4	South, 4 th Class, "Grunt Move"	North, 4 th Class
20	Low Horn 3	South, 2 P, 5.7, "South Face"	North, 4 th Class
21	Low Horn 2	South, 4 th Class	North, 1 R
22	Low Horn 1^	South East, 2 P, 5.8, FA "South East Face"	North, 4 th Class
Note: To move between Low Horn 1 and Rabbit Ear Massive endure heinous vegetated bush whack across Big Windy Gap to saddle between Rabbit Ear Massive and South Rabbit Ear.			
23	Rabbit Ear Massive	North, 2 nd Class	North, 2 nd Class
24	South Rabbit Ear	North West, 4 th Class "North West Face"	North, 4 th Class
25	Middle Rabbit Ear	South/East, 4 P, 5.7 "Normal Route (South Corner)"	South/East, 3 R
26	North Rabbit Ear	South/West, 4 P, 5.7 "The Davis Route"	North, 4 R & 4 th Class
27	CWM*	South, High 4 th Class	South, High 4 th Class
28	Last Peak*	West, Low 5 th Class	North/West, 1 R
29	Nord Spitz*	South, 3 rd Class	North, 3 rd Class
30	Heartbreak Hill*	South, 2 nd Class	North, 2 nd Class

Note: P is pitch, R is rappel, FA is first known ascent, r is danger rating. Pitches and Rappel lengths are based off twin 40m ropes. The rack was a single set of Black Diamond (BD) Camelot's, 4-3, three BD offset cams, three Metolius offsets, nuts, and ten runners.

*Additional Peak from 2014 Traverse
^Modified Route from 2014 Traverse

A chart showing the peaks climbed on the Organ Saint Skyline Traverse in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico, with details on ascent and descent for each summit.

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