



AAC Publications

Summary of 2019 Activity

Utah, Zion National Park

This year in southwest Utah began with a wet winter and spring, swinging wildly to a record dry spell over the summer and autumn, allowing for more climbing in the monsoon season than the average year.

In March, Derrick Fassbender and Steffan Gregory completed a five-pitch variation to Gentleman's Agreement (IV 5.13b) on the Left Mary. Forced Enthusiasm (IV 5.10+ C1) starts with a pendulum right from the top of pitch three of Gentleman's Agreement to reach the obvious wide crack system that goes to the top of the Mary.

April brought a likely first free ascent of Force Boyle on Johnson Mountain. The route, established by Robbie Colbert, Bill Ohran, and Dan Snyder at 5.11 A0, has been awaiting a free ascent for many years; only two pitches were undone. Jake Jarzyniecki and Dion Obermeyer heeded the call, and the route now goes free at III/IV 5.12a.

In May, Brent Barghahn freed Moon Patrol (V 5.8 A3), an old line on the Leaning Wall, left of Spaceshot. First ascensionist Ron Olevsky had originally reported that both Spaceshot and Moon Patrol would become popular classics due to their roadside location, great ledges, and easy descent—while that became true for Spaceshot, the latter fell into obscurity. The route shares the first three pitches of Equinox, then continues up a less than vertical seam at IV 5.12- R.

Rob Pizem, with a slew of partners, established three long face routes in the Holy Amphitheater, a wall high in the North Fork of Taylor Creek. All three routes wind through the massive huecos that tend to form high up in Kolob. Pizem, along with Brent Barghahn, Mike Brumbaugh, and Darren Mabe, established Over Too Soon (5 pitches, II 5.11) at the far right end of the cirque. In the middle of the amphitheater, Pizem, Lane Mathis, and Ari Menitove added the Water Kelpie (5 pitches, II 5.13) in July, just right of a large black water streak. On the far left side, Mathis and Dakota Walz helped Pizem finish the Holy Amphitheater hat trick with the Way of the Hueco (5 pitches, II 5.10).

In the summer heat, Graham Blandy and Loren Copp followed a series of corners above the parking for the Kung Fu Theater to create Flying Kush (III 5.10+), which, with an additional 500' of scrambling leads, to the subpeak of Bridge Mountain. Matthew Blaszak, Dylan Cole, and Brooks Gunderson established Seppuku (450', 5.10+), a chimney and offwidth route on the back side of the Leaning Wall. Visible from the Temple of Sinewava bus stop, looking down canyon, the route follows a dihedral/chimney system on the left side of a cluster of three towers.

In October, Ethan Newman and Steffan Gregory freed the original start to the Silmaril on the Watchman. Dave Jones and Gary Grey established the route in 1983 at V 5.11 A2, and in 2007 Mike Anderson, supported by Brian Smoot, freed the route via a three-pitch variation at the beginning of the route. With permission from the first ascensionists, we added two protection bolts to the original first pitch and two more to the second pitch. The second pitch goes in the mid to upper 5.12 range. For those wanting to repeat the original route with aid, the second pitch also goes clean at C2+.

Over three trips throughout the course of the year, Dan Stih made the first ascents of three backcountry peaks: Big Red, the Point, and Triangle Peak. Stih accessed these peaks from the Birch

Creek drainage and climbed solo, encountering 1,500'–2,000' of roped climbing, with difficulties to 5.9 A2+. Later, Stih made a traverse of the Buck Pasture Amphitheater in Kolob Canyons, during which he established a six-pitch 5.7 on Death Point. The traverse took him four days, with the last reliable water being found at La Verkin Creek.

– Steffan Gregory and Ethan Newman

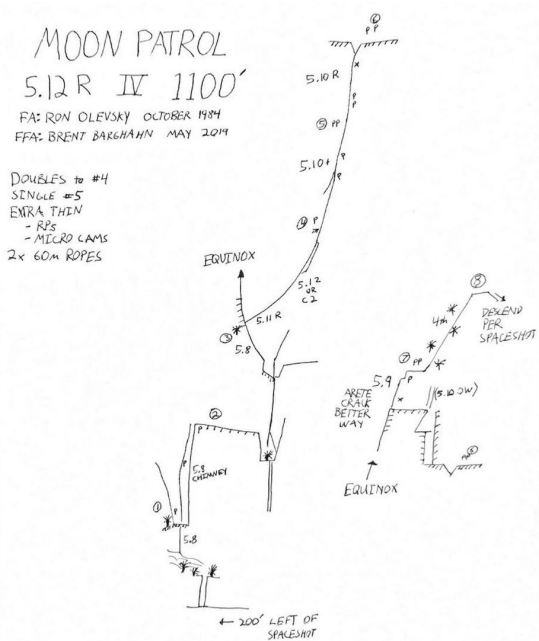
Images



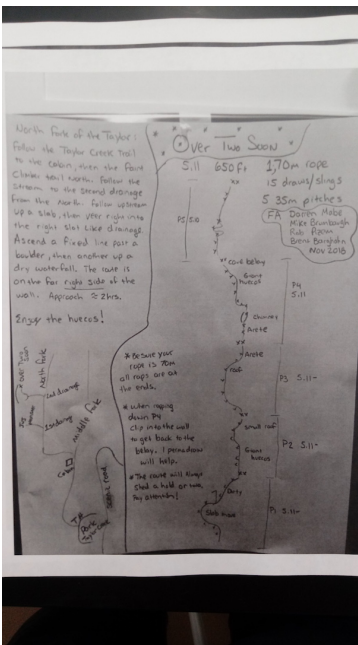
The Leaning Wall in Zion National Park, showing the line of Moon Patrol, first climbed by Ron Olevsky in 1984. Brent Barghahn made the first free ascent of the route in May 2019. The classic Spaceshot climbs the clean wall to the right.



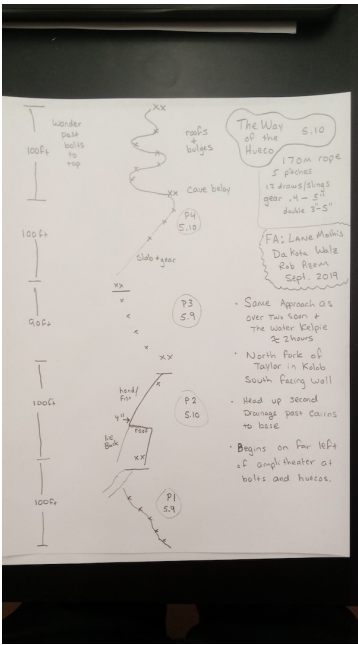
The clean upper seam of Moon Patrol (IV 5.12- R) on the Leaning Wall left of Spaceshot. Brent Barghahn made the first free ascent of the route in May 2019.



Topo for the free ascent of Moon Patrol (IV 5.12- R) on the Leaning Wall left of Spaceshot, in Zion National Park.



Topo for Over Too Soon (5 pitches, II 5.11) in the Kolob Canyons of Zion National Park, put up by Rob Pizem, Darren Mabe, Mike Brumbaugh, and Brent Barghahn in 2019.



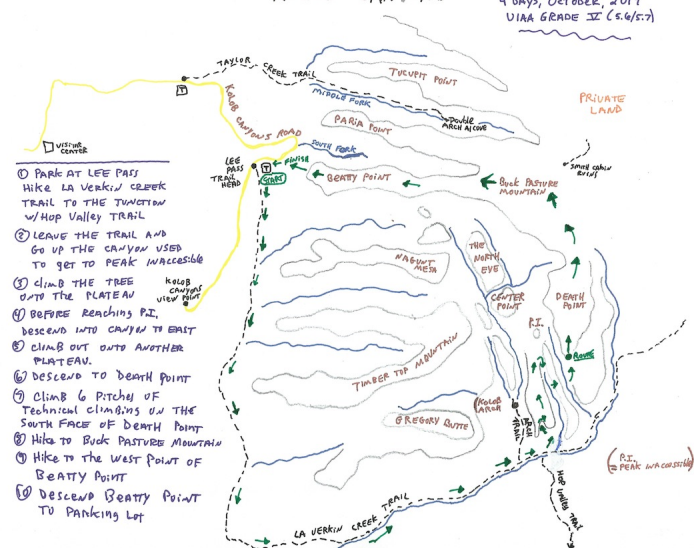
Topo for Way of the Hueco (5 pitches, II 5.10) in the Kolob Canyons of Zion National Park, put up by Rob Pizem, Lane Mathis, and Dakota Walz.



Dakota Walz on Way of the Hueco (5 pitches, II 5.10) in the Kolob Canyons of Zion National Park.

THE TRAVERSE KOLOB CANYONS

Roped Solo
DANGEROUS DAN
4 DAYS, OCTOBER 2019
VIAA GRADE III (5.6/5.7)



Topo for a four-day traverse of the Buck Pasture Amphitheater in Kolob Canyons made by Dan Stih, which involved a new six-pitch route on Death Point (5.7).

Watchman Northwest Face

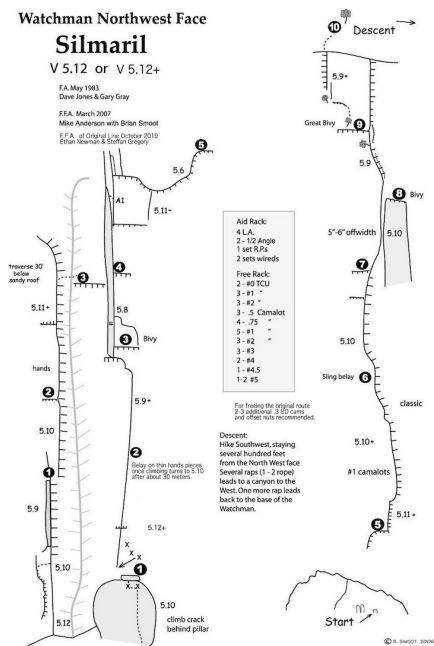
Silmaril

V 5.12 or V 5.12+

F.A. May 1983
Dave Jones & Gary Gray

F.F.A. March 2007
Mike Anderson with Brian Smeat

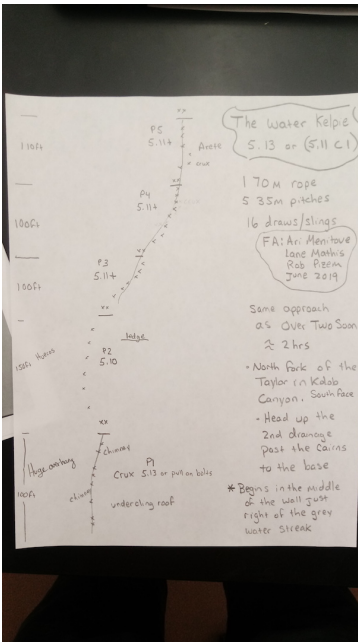
F.F.A. of Original Line October 2019
Ethan Newman & Steffan Gregory



Topo for Silmaril (IV 5.12 or 5.12+) on the Watchman in Zion National Park. Steffan Gregory and Ethan Newman freed the original start to the route, which had previously been bypassed by a free variation left, in fall 2019.



The Watchman in Zion National Park, showing the line of Silmaril (IV 5.12 or 5.12+).



Topo for Water Kelpie (5 pitches, II 5.13), in Kolob Canyons in Zion National Park, put up by Rob Pizem, Lane Mathis, and Ari Menitove in July 2019.



Derrick Fassbender on the quality wide cracks of the sixth pitch of Forced Enthusiasm (IV 5.10+ C1) on Left Mary in Zion National Park.

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