



AAC Publications

Mt. Bago, Tower of Delphina, Dee-Bees Rib Direct

California, Kings Canyon National Park

As research for the High Sierra guidebook I've been working on for the last several years, I was able to recruit my friend Sean Sullivan for an adventure with the aim of finding an obscure climb on Mt. Bago (11,870') called Dee-Bees Rib (5.7, Boyd-Hurd, see AAJ 1975), on a formation they named the Tower Of Delphina.

Because Mt. Bago is composed of multiple dome-like fins and pillars and a lack of specific information on which of these features is the Tower of Delphina, the exact line of this long-lost climb, described as a gem by the first ascensionists, was unclear at first. The previous AAJ report sounded quite specific as to the location, but once below Mt. Bago, many of the "towers" appear to fit the description.

After the long approach up Bubbs Creek, we got to the base feeling fairly worked in the heat of a warm October day. After a good rest and a day climbing on the Bubbs Creek Wall, I spied some steep looking cracks and face features that appeared more challenging and interesting, to the left of what we decided was the path of least resistance and likely the original route. The following day we found sustained 5.9-10 climbing for close to a 1,000' before we reached an obvious gap and found the piton mentioned by the FA, which they used to rap into a wide gully below. I clipped the pin for pro and was able to do a huge stem and wild dynamic move instead of doing a rappel to gain the other side. We continued for about 300' to an area where we unroped and continued over the top of the tower. The top of Tower of Delphina is about an hour of bushwhacking below the summit of Mount Bago proper, so we opted to take a loose gully on the west side in order to return down to Bubbs Creek. Plenty of loose class 4th and 5th was required to downclimb, but it still seems like a better option compared to climbing up and over Mount Bago, which would add several miles of cross-country walking to the day. Dee-Bees Rib Direct (1,300' climbing distance, 5.10c).

— Vitaliy Musiyenko

Images

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