



## AAC Publications

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### **Sundance Pinnacle, North Face, First Free Ascent**

Wyoming, Wind River Range

**In July I spent a total of 10 days (including hiking, rest days and resupplies) attempting to rope-solo the first free ascent of the north face of Sundance Pinnacle, just south of the Cirque of the Towers.**

Four days were spent top-down brushing lichen, working cruxes, and figuring out the small and funky protection before sending the route on lead, rope-solo, from the ground.

The route mostly follows a 2012 as-free-as-can-be line by Matt Hartman and Jake Tipton (5.11- C1 PG-13, see AAJ 2013), with a significant variation on pitch three (5.12-) up a technical, smeary slab corner over small but decent gear.

The pitch five crux (5.12+) is characterized by an overhanging, flaring corner with twin cracks to a body-length horizontal undercling/jam roof, before a no-hands rest and then some thin and powerful laybacking. On my send, I was unable to reach a crucial gear placement under the roof and went for it with my last piece back in the corner; jamming out the roof, I found myself incredibly pumped from the climbing and rope work below. Without the energy to set my feet properly, I dynoed for the rest ledge, shrieking like a demon as I caught it and manteled up, my chest pounding nearly hard enough to knock me off the six-inch ledge. I felt guilty for not sharing the experience with a friend.

While scrambling down the descent to my mosquito-infested swamp camp, I heard a rock rolling behind me. Turning to look, I saw not a rock but a bear's snout shooting out of a bush not five feet away. I jumped into the talus below and ran for my life, the bear keeping chase long enough for me to ponder my death. Upon reaching my bear spray in camp, I ripped the safety off while spinning around to face the very brown black bear. Thankfully, before I was forced to discharge the spray he lost interest and sauntered off, while I tripped on adrenaline.

The free line is Oso Scary (6 pitches, III 5.12+).

– Kevin Heinrich

## Images



The north/northeast face of Sundance Pinnacle showing the line of Oso Scary (6 pitches, III 5.12+). The route is a free version (with some variations) to a 2012 route, and was completed rope-solo in July 2020.

## Article Details

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