



AAC Publications

King Wall, Big White Spot

California, Western Sierra

Every climber who has visited Kings Canyon has likely stared at the massive marble monolith, sometimes called King Wall, that's part of the Windy Cliffs on the north side of the river, less than a mile west of Boyden Cavern. The east ridge of this wall reportedly was climbed decades ago to a subsummit, but the south face remained untouched. Over the course of three years, an emergency room visit, nearly 100 bolts, shoe soles, river fords, blood, sweat, and a \$100 ticket for sleeping in the wrong spot, we eventually understood why it hadn't been done. But it was worth it.

On the first trip in October 2018, with Vitaliy Musiyenko and Adam Sheppard, we found a way down to and across the Kings River, then up a gully with a few 3rd/4th-class moves to the base of the wall. We started straight below the huge white spot visible from the highway. I decided to run it out on the second pitch, grabbed a loose hold, and took a fall that resulted in bilateral calcaneal fractures (two broken heels). After six hours of crawling, rappelling, getting carried, and ascending a steep gully with the aid of a deer antler, I made it back to the car and eventually spent 49 days in a wheelchair (ANAC 2019).

The following year I returned with Brian Prince for a rematch. Once we moved away from the grainy cracks of the first 1.5 pitches, bolting the face slowed us down quite a bit, but over two separate trips, we pushed the route into incredible face climbing on what we began to think of as the El Potrero Chico of the Sierra. On a final trip in May 2020, all four of us reunited to finish the route. Topping out our 10-pitch route, Big White Spot (1,500', 5.10+), with essentially a sport climbing rack, we realized we had found a one- of-a-kind experience for California climbers.

— Daniel Jeffcoach

Images



Vitaliy Musiyenko leading one of the lower pitches on Big White Spot in the Windy Cliffs.



Following one of the upper pitches on Big White Spot, Kings Canyon.



One of the upper pitches on Big White Spot, Kings Canyon.



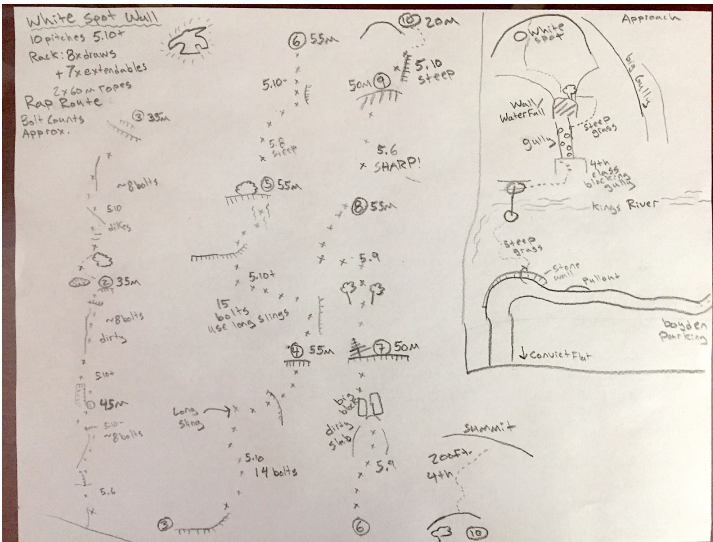
On top of the King Wall, looking at more marble cliffs above Boyden Cavern.



Crossing the Kings River.



The King Wall in the Windy Cliffs of Kings Canyon, showing Big White Spot (10 pitches, 5.10+).



Topo for Big White Spot in the Windy Cliffs, Kings Canyon.

Article Details

Author	Daniel Jeffcoach
Publication	AAJ
Volume	64
Issue	96
Page	130
Copyright Date	2022
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions