



AAC Publications

Longs Peak, The Diamond, Notable Female Ascents

United States, Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park

On August 10, Colorado-based climber Madaleine Sorkin became the first woman, and fifth person overall, to free climb the massive 5.14b crux of the Dunn-Westbay Direct (Caldwell-Mills, 2013), the hardest route up the Diamond, the storied wall high on Longs Peak (14,259'). Sorkin took zero falls during her redpoint, spending 75 minutes on the 80m crux pitch and then continuing free on the remaining pitches, up to 5.13-, to the top. She had projected the route over two summers, with three top-rope solo days in 2021 and another 11 days of work in 2022.

Sorkin reported an asterisk to her ascent, noting that she skipped the comparatively easy (5.10+) first 300' of the route, allowing her to bypass the traditional approaches to the Diamond, the loose North Chimney and the Chasm View rappels. She deemed both too risky, given recent rockfall events, and instead rappelled in from the top of the Dunn-Westbay. She thus began her redpoint ascent from atop the Green Pillar, where the crux pitch begins.

In 2016, Sorkin scored the first female ascent of the Honeymoon is Over (IV 5.13c, Caldwell, 2001), the Diamond's second-hardest line. This year, two more women followed suit: Amity Warme sent Honeymoon on August 28, and Lynn Anderson continued the send train on August 31.

For Warme, this was just one of several big achievements in the Chasm Lake cirque, below the Diamond, last summer. She free climbed the single-pitch Sarchasm (5.14a), a razor-edged are te, and also teamed up with Josh Wharton to establish Barnacle Scars (280', 3 pitches, III 5.13). Both are on the Ship's Prow formation.

— Michael Levy, AAJ

Images



Madaleine Sorkin on the crux 5.14b pitch of the Dunn-Westbay Direct, the hardest free climb on the Diamond on Longs Peak.

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