



AAC Publications

Table Mountain, Two Routes

Arizona, Santa Catalina Mountains

The first time I saw the north face of Table Mountain (6,265'), I got pulled over for driving too slowly. Nearly 1,000' tall, it was the largest continuous rock face I had seen in the Tucson area. Viewed from the city, from the south, Table Mountain appears to be a large sloping mesa. But when viewed from Oro Valley, from the north, a massive summit buttress and neighboring wall—separated by a gully, but which together form the north face—reveal themselves.

A handful of five- to seven-pitch routes climb the main buttress, but I could only find two established routes up the broader wall to the right. The Day the Lovin' Stopped (6 pitches, 5.9, Pey-Rickson, 1981) follows slabs on the left side, and Modern Day Warrior (700', 5 pitches, 5.10, Benedon-Gilbreath-Minehart-Tucker, 1997) climbs the S-shaped corner and crack system on the right side. To my knowledge, no full-length lines had gone up since 1997.

I first did the rugged two-hour approach in November 2019. The whole area has a backcountry feel and features striking, discordant views of the Sonoran desert and suburban sprawl. From the base, a prominent C-shaped crack system at the center of the wall seemed an obvious line. Six months later, I rappelled in and found a beautiful corner system. I came back with more rope and tools, and over four days cleared as much dangerous rock as I could.

In late December 2020, I returned with Amelia Whalen and attempted to free the line. The first half went smoothly, but I hit a wall on the fourth pitch, where the route is steepest, and resorted to ascending a fixed line. On the final two pitches, I used a few points of aid. Not the cleanest ascent, but still a grand adventure! I named the six-pitch route Everybody, Just Be Cool, a phrase my wife and I repeated throughout 2020, as we navigated COVID and other challenges. A year later, in December 2021, the full route was freed ground-up at 5.11- by Byron Hempel and Jon Reeves, who reported similar conditions and quality. They noted that, for them, the second pitch was the overall crux, the fourth was the most sustained, and the sixth was the money pitch and would be a popular climb if roadside.

Another new route was put up on Table Mountain's main buttress in late 2020: Table for the Boas (7 pitches, 5.10d), established ground-up over two weekends by Winslow Fruits, David Tellechea, and Nathan Wikstrom.

The north face offers significant untapped potential for those excited to embrace the backcountry nature of the area. Access is restricted from January 1 to April 30 for bighorn sheep lambing.

— Ben Hoste

Images



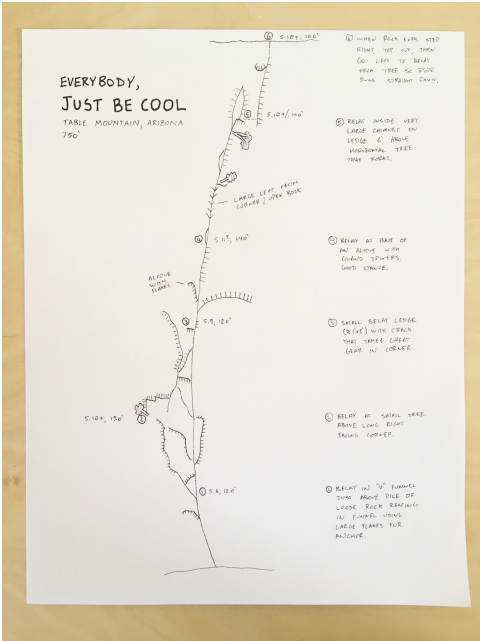
The north face of Table Mountain, showing (left to right): The Day the Lovin' Stopped (6 pitches, 5.9, Pey-Rickson, 1981); Everybody, Just Be Cool (750', 6 pitches, 5.11-); and Modern Day Warrior (700', 5 pitches, 5.10, Benedon-Gilbreath-Minehart-Tucker, 1997).



Everybody, Just Be Cool (750', 6 pitches, 5.11-) on the north face of Table Mountain, Santa Catalina Mountains, Arizona. After finding and cleaning the route in 2020, Ben Hoste freed all but the second half of pitch four and several moves on pitches five and six. Byron Hempel and Jon Reeves completed the first free ascent in December 2021.



View from the base of Everybody, Just Be Cool (750', 6 pitches, 5.11-) on the north face of Table Mountain, Santa Catalina Mountains, Arizona.



Topo for Everybody, Just Be Cool (750', 6 pitches, 5.11-) on the north face of Table Mountain, Santa Catalina Mountains, Arizona. The topo was completed before the first free ascent in December 2021.

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