



AAC Publications

Jabberwocky Tower, Song of the Summer

Washington, Cascades, Stuart Range

Sam Allen and Jenn Carter at the top of pitch two on Song of the Summer, Jabberwocky Tower. Photo by Wayne Wallace.

Jabberwocky Tower is a unique peak just east of Colchuck Lake in the Enchantments, visible from various spots nearby. Hundreds of people walk by Jabberwocky on a summer weekend without giving it a second look, but the formation was first climbed decades ago, by its short east side. In 2023, while climbing with my wife, Jenn Carter, I took a picture of Jabberwocky without knowing what it was, then did some research back home. In June of 2024, I asked 18-year-old Sam Allen—one of the students-turned-instructors in the Mountaineers' Youth Club—if he was interested in taking a look at the tower's southwest spur with 60-year-old me. He warmly obliged.

By the time we got there in July, another party, Erik Koch and David Wood, had been poking around on the southwest side. We later confirmed they climbed pitches one, four, and seven of our eventual line, but they decided not to share their full route, which wandered more than our line on the crest; they reported a three-pitch alternate start to the southwest spur called Sandpiper Start (5.7+). Sam and I established the first two pitches of our route, a 5.9 and a 5.10b with lovely hand and fist cracks in solid rock.

In early August, Jenn joined the project, and we pushed the climb up three more pitches. On August 16, Jenn, Sam, and I climbed two final pitches (5.10 and 5.10c) to finish. Song of the Summer (7 pitches, III 5.10c) required several 20-plus-hour days of hiking, climbing, clearing loose blocks, and drilling anchors for safer passage. The climb has three protection bolts, and the first two belays are bolted.

—Wayne Wallace

Images



Song of the Summer (700', 7 pitches, III 5.10c) on Jabberwocky Tower, Enchantments, Cascades, Washington.

Song of the Summer

P1: (5.9, 30m.) From the far left edge of the treed ledge, ascend a 5.8 step/handcrack to the top of a big block. DO NOT GO UP AND LEFT! Loose Blocks! Instead, Step right into the other crack system with a fin in its middle. Up this (5.9) and back and forth n zig-zag cracks, knobs to a bolted belay at the 30 meter mark. Generally stays: "on crest"

P2: (5.10b, 40m) From Belay bolts, up another zig-zag to the overhanging hand crack "The Bandersnatch " 5.10b.) After beaching the top of that, up and right to a short ridge with a single bolt (5.7, "Slithy Ridge"). Weird step left to bolted belay. Stays: left of crest, then right of crest, then left again.

P3: (5.8, 45m) From belay bolts up and right to visible bolt, ending on the crest, and steep, crunchy headwall. Up and right to a chossy mantel, stay right for one last chossy mantel to sloppy ledge with sliding box shaped bolts. Carefully go up and right on the ledge until its about to get exposed. Belay in a corner with gear. Stays Left, then On crest, the right side of crest.

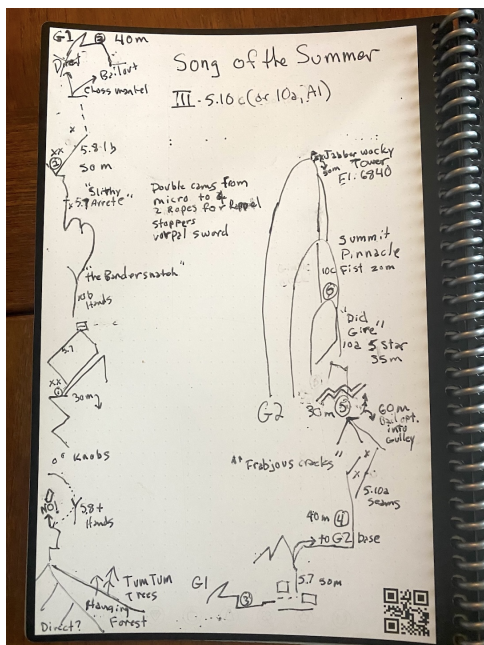
P4: (5.7, 50m) Make an exposed move right then up to sharp notch on crest. Go over ridge and stay just below it for a few steep moves, then drag the rope across the rest of the ridge to big block belay (long sling) below Gendarme #2. Stays: Right then left of crest.

P5: (5.10a, 45m) Above the belay block there are 2 visible bolts below and above a small tree. Climb these amazing cracks ("Frabjous Cracks" 5.10a) to the crest and drag the rope up easy ground a horizontal w-shaped chimney belay at the base of the summit pinnacle. Stays :Left of crest, then right.

P6: (5.10a, 40m, 5 stars) From gear belay mantel up and slightly right, on an insanely exposed arete. Hand cracks come and go in perfect rhythm, making this one of the best pitches on the planet ("Did Gyre"). Enjoy this all the way to a ledge at the base of another incredible hand crack. Belay on gear left of the base of last pitch. Stays: right then on crest!

P7: (5.10c, or 5.10, A1, 30m) Obvious orange hand crack soars up into the best reaches of the Enchantments making a strenuous wide climax. After again beaching that whale, a 5.6 final step puts you on the false summit. Stays: On crest.

Pitch-by-pitch description of Song of the Summer (700', 7 pitches, III 5.10c) on Jabberwocky Tower.



Topo for Song of the Summer (700', 7 pitches, III 5.10c) on Jabberwocky Tower.



Sam Allen near the beginning of the fourth pitch on Song of the Summer, Jabberwocky Tower.



Wayne Wallace on the final pitch, a 5.10c hand crack, on Song of the Summer.



Sam Allen and Jenn Carter at the top of pitch two on Song of the Summer, Jabberwocky Tower.

Article Details

Author	Wayne Wallace
Publication	AAJ
Volume	66
Issue	99
Page	136
Copyright Date	2025
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions