



AAC Publications

Roberts Mountain, Northeast Face, Crowheart

Wyoming, Wind River Range

The 1,300-foot line of Crowheart (IV 5.12) on Roberts Mountain. Photo: Heath Rowland

On August 23, Louis Aden and I wrapped up a multi-year effort to establish a new line on the seldom visited and remote northeast face of Roberts Mountain (12,774', 42.91855, -109.29165), a few miles north of Mt. Hooker and Musembeah Peak in the central Wind River Range. Roberts received its first technical ascent in 1978 by Fred Beckey, Mark Meng, and Doug Randall; their line climbed the center of the almost mile-wide face via the only obvious weakness (1,500', IV 5.9 A2/3). No other routes had been reported on the face.

In the summer of 2021, Mike Rowley and I hiked into Roberts on a recon mission. An impressive flying buttress extending from the mountain's northeast flank, to the right of the 1978 route, caught our eye. From certain perspectives, this buttress presents as a stand-alone tower—the type of feature any alpine climber would find irresistible. It became the siren that would call us back and bestow us with approach amnesia, luring us into making the arduous trek with soul-crushing loads each year.

After attempts with multiple partners, I returned with Louis Aden in August 2025. We worked, freed, and fixed the first six pitches, including the crux fourth pitch (5.12). On August 23, we took the route to the top, freeing the last four pitches, with each but pitch seven (5.12-) sent onsight. All pitches were climbed free, with the heavy lifting being done by Louis. Six of the ten pitches go at 5.11 or harder. (The pitch breakdown is 5.9+, 5.11+, 5.11+, 5.12, 5.10, 5.10, 5.11+, 5.11, 5.10 R, 5.12-.)

We chose to call the route Crowheart in reference to Chief Washakie and Chief Crowheart's one-on-one battle to end a war over disputed hunting land, not too far from the Wind River Range. Although it was Louis and I who freed the route, previous attempts included Bryan Miller, Mike Rowley, and Pat Goodman. We could not have completed Crowheart (1,300', IV 5.12) without their efforts.

—Heath Rowland

Images



Louis Aden on the 5.12 fourth pitch of Crowheart on the northeast face of Roberts Mountain.



The 1,300-foot line of Crowheart (IV 5.12) on the northeast face of Roberts Mountain.

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