



## AAC Publications

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### **North Peak, North Face, Two New Routes**

California, Sierra Nevada, Northern Sierra

The north face of North Peak (12,248') in the Sierra Nevada, showing: (left) North Couloir, the classic ice climb on the face; (center) White Noise (800', Steep snow, M4); and (right) Far Right Extremist (600', Steep snow, M2). Other routes are not shown. Photo: Trevor Shumaker

**At the base of the 1,000-foot north face of North Peak (12,248')** is the remnant of a small glacier that lends the mountain an alpine character uncommon in the sunny High Sierra. A classic ice climb, called simply North Couloir (a.k.a. Northeast Couloir, AI2), is on the left side of this face. I climbed two possible new routes on the right side last spring and summer.

The first, White Noise (800', steep snow, M4), which I climbed in a solo, 24-hour car-to-car push from Lundy Lake between April 16 and 17, climbs a deep, narrow defile that is hidden until you are right beneath it. [This slot is to the right of Northeast Chute (Keith-Lowery, 1987).]

Wary of crevasses covered by the winter's snow, I crossed the glacier with arms spread wide, clutching an ice tool in each hand. After making it over the bergschrund without incident, I got out my 30m rope and began rope-soloing.

To avoid a large, overhanging chockstone at the start of the couloir, I climbed two pitches of a rotten, snow-filled chimney (M3), which gave way to high-quality rock and an easy leftward traverse back to the main couloir. Several pitches of steep snow with occasional rock steps brought me to an overhang guarding the top of the couloir, which I pulled at M4. I then tiptoed up difficult-to-protect, snow-draped slabs (M4) to reach the final snow slope leading to the north ridge. From there, I scrambled up talus to the summit.

I descended the broad, snowy south face in an east-trending traverse, eventually crossing the east ridge and descending an easy couloir to the base of the north face.

I returned to North Peak with Micha Miller on June 6. We approached from Saddlebag Lake to climb a couloir approximately 400 feet right of White Noise, beginning from the very top of the glacier. The snow couloir tapered down to a pitch of M2, then a steep snowfield brought us over a cornice to the north ridge. We called our 600-foot route Far Right Extremist.

—Trevor Shumaker

## Images



Trevor Shumaker looking down on a pitch of steep snow during the first known ascent of a route he called White Noise (800', Steep snow, M4), on the north face of North Peak.



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## Article Details

Author	Trevor Shumaker
Publication	AAJ
Volume	67
Issue	100
Page	149
Copyright Date	2026
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions