



## AAC Publications

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### **El Capitan, Free Rider, One-Day Flash Ascent**

California, Sierra Nevada, Yosemite National Park

**Six months after Barbara “Babsi” Zangerl completed a first-try, no-falls ascent of Free Rider (VI 5.13a)—the first flash of any of El Cap’s main wall routes (see [AAJ 2025](#))—Will Moss flashed Free Rider in a single day. Moss, age 20 at the time, had hoped to attempt the flash in 2023, but conditions and partners didn’t align until 2025.**

Moss and his climbing partner, Stuart Grossman, pre-hauled three days of food and gear to Heart Ledge (where Moss stopped short to avoid standing on the route). On May 20, Moss and Grossman started up the Freeblast at 5 a.m., and when they reached Heart Ledge, Moss decided to go for the flash in a day. He continued to the top with no falls, finishing in a little over 22 hours, having led every pitch.

On November 1, Moss free climbed The Nose (VI 5.14a) in a day, on his third attempt, becoming the fourth person to complete this feat. Connor Herson freed The Nose in a day in October. [See the 2026 American Climbing Journal (ACJ) for other noteworthy ascents in Yosemite Valley, including a feature article about the first all-woman “Triple” of Mt. Watkins, El Capitan, and Half Dome in under 24 hours, by Kate Kelleghan and Laura Pineau.]

—Miles Fullman, AAJ

## Images

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