



AAC Publications

The Grandstand, The Rainbow Bridge

Wyoming, Teton Range

Leah Scott following the pitch two dihedral on The Rainbow Bridge. Photo by Zack Little

In summer 2025, Noah Ronczkowski and I climbed a route on the northwest face of Mt. Owen established in 2020 by our dear friends Michael Hutchins and the late Michael Gardner (AAJ 2021). Feeling connected to companions both living and gone, I gazed across the landscape, finding my eye drawn to a prominent dihedral on the northwest face of the Grandstand, the steep-sided ridge connecting Mt. Owen to the Grand Teton. Later, when friend and hero Renny Jackson told us he was not aware of any rock climbing on that face, my ears pricked up. Succumbing to curiosity, I lined up a partner.

At 3:30 a.m. on August 11, Leah Scott and I cast off from the South Jenny Lake trailhead. Once in upper Valhalla Canyon, we made our way to a comfortable ledge a few hundred feet below the dihedral in mind. Five pitches of engaging free climbing over small crimps and up cracks on excellent rock brought us through the dihedral as well as the large roof at its terminus. A few hundred feet of 3rd- and 4th-class terrain led to the base of the north ridge of the Grand, which we followed until we could escape to the Upper Saddle. We made it back to the Lupine Meadows trailhead around 17 hours after starting our day.

In Norse mythology, the Bifröst or Rainbow Bridge is the connection between Midgard, the realm of mortals, and Asgard, the realm of the gods. The Rainbow Bridge (700', IV 5.11) serves as a reminder to me that what's most important is not the firsts or fastest—it's the people we share our days with, and the places that bring us together.

—Zack Little

Images



The Rainbow Bridge on the Grandstand, with the Grand Teton above and the flanks of Mt. Owen to the left.



Zack Little moves up to the roof on pitch four of The Rainbow Bridge on the Grandstand.



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