



AAC Publications

Mt. Emerson, North Face, Lost and Found

California, Sierra Nevada, Eastern Sierra

Lost and Found (1,500', 5.5 M4) on the north face of Mt. Emerson (13,210'). The route starts to the right of the classic North Couloir (Clyde, 1926), which the Lost and Found team descended. Photo by Mike McLaughlin

As with many great faces in the Sierra Nevada, the north face of Mt. Emerson (13,210') was first climbed by the illustrious outcast Norman Clyde, via the North Couloir (AI2 45° snow, 1926). To the right of the Clyde route is a quarter-mile-wide, 1,500-foot-tall face of granite ribs, snow ramps, and dead-end couloirs. Keenan Pope and I approached this face early on the morning of April 29.

We started up a right-leaning snow ramp a few hundred feet right of the North Couloir. We simul-soloed the slushy snow, then roped up for a couple of pitches of snow-covered slabs (M2). Next we simul-climbed a golden rock rib for several hundred feet (5.5). We continued to simul up a snow ramp heading back left, then I led an 80-foot, M4 pitch up diagonal cracks. As the sun fell behind the mountain and the temperature dropped, we simul-climbed more snow and easy mixed terrain, trending left.

My hands were wet and cold, so I dug spare gloves out of my pack, then fumbled and watched as a dry glove slid down the snow and out of view. I resigned myself to having one cold hand for the rest of the climb. Keenan led a poorly protected, awkward M3 pitch, from the top of which we simuled more snow to the west ridge of Emerson, about a quarter mile from the summit. Fourth-class climbing over and around towers brought us to the top shortly before sunset. We downclimbed the North Couloir, and I spotted my lost glove on the snow just a few yards from where we'd started that morning. I retrieved the glove and walked out by headlamp with two warm hands. We called our route Lost and Found (1,500', 5.5 M4).

—Trevor Shumaker

Images



Foreshortened view of Lost and Found on the north face of Mt. Emerson.



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