



AAC Publications

Sound of Silence and Other Ascents

Jordan, Wadi Rum

In November, Steffen Krug and I spent three weeks in this very special sandstone area. After enjoying some classic big lines, we repeated a few of the modern routes, including La Guerre Sainte (7b, AAJ 2001), a 12-pitch bolted route on Jebel Nasrani. We found the grading for this stunning route—and generally for modern routes here—to be very soft compared to the classic trad climbs. We then went for what's considered to be the hardest route in Wadi Rum: Rock Empire (15 pitches, 8a, AAJ 2006), which is completely bolt protected. Coming from the traditional sandstone climbing area of Pfalz, we know that it is not a great idea to put expansion bolts in such soft sandstone, and we bailed after the fourth pitch. Unfortunately, many of the modern routes are equipped in such an inappropriate way, when glue-in bolts would last much longer.

Wadi Rum is still a paradise for exploration, and we opened a new route in Barraah Canyon, right next to the famous crack of Merlin's Wand. Sound of Silence has seven pitches up to 7a. From the end of the last pitch, 1.5 hours of easy scrambling leads to the summit, where the view is breathtaking. Descent is by rappelling the route with double ropes.

Jens Richter, Germany

Editor's note: In November, a Catalan group did two new routes on the west face of Jebel Rum: Ivictus (Alema'n-Coll-Sort, 250m, 6b) and Deliri (Bonsom-Gibert-Mas-Vale's, 260m, 6c). Both routes were climbed without protection bolts. (More info: Desnivel.com.)

A Slovenian group established several very difficult sport climbs. In Wadi Rum, Klemen Becan put up Wadirumela (8b+), a 45m slab route. At a new crag called Araq Damaj in the Alijoun area, Becan climbed Same Same But Different (8c), likely the hardest rock pitch in Jordan (More info: PlanetMountain.com.)

Images



Steffen Krug on the third pitch of Sound of Silence.



Sound of Silence (235m, 7a) in Barrah Canyon. The arrow marks the classic crack line of Merlin's Wand (6a+).



View of Wadi Rum from the summit of Jebel Nasrani.

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