



## AAC Publications

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### Ivins Mountain, West Face

Utah, Zion National Park

**Over four days at the beginning of April, Matthew Mower and I completed the first ascent of Ivins Mountain (7,049') by its west face.** This peak is located on the west side of the park, in the Zion "backcountry," and it is considered one of the most remote mountains in Zion. To reach the base of the route, we had to navigate miles of slot canyons and difficult 5th class climbing with very heavy loads.

I had first attempted to solo the peak, in April 2014. On that attempt I started down Wildcat Canyon near Lava Point, thinking I could then scramble up to the base of Ivins' northwest side. However, Wildcat Canyon turned out to be quite difficult to navigate, and I retreated out via Phantom Valley and Cougar Mountain.

My next attempt was with Mower in October 2014. From Phantom Valley we descended a gully on the north side of the Inclined Temple, which, from looking at a map, seemed like a good approach to Ivins. When we got to the bottom of the canyon it was not easy to climb out. Leaving our heavy bags at the bottom, we climbed out and then fixed 500' of rope to retrieve them. We finally reached the base of our intended route on Ivins, but I had developed an infected blister and we had to retreat.

On Mower and my second trip, we took a different approach, scrambling around the back of Inclined Temple (Michael Schash and I made the first ascent of this peak by its south face in November 2013). There is a semi-technical shelf that runs along the west side of the Inclined Temple, which provides more reasonable access to Ivins if carrying heavy loads.

Our route on Ivins required moderately difficult nailing. The first pitch required a combination of 16 tied-off knifeblades and beaks in addition to other pins and cams. From the top of the first pitch, a pendulum and some slippery, sandy free climbing reached an obvious ledge with a tree. From there we found enjoyable free climbing up a prominent crack and corner system. Typical for these kinds of routes in Zion, we made use of tied-off bushes. Toward the top we traversed right onto the main face before climbing straight up to the summit.

We left no trace except for a two-piton rappel anchor, and when we used trees or bushes to rappel we left no slings. We did not drill. We climbed a total of 12 pitches (5.9+ A2+). Six of these pitches climbed a steep slab (5.9+) from the bottom of the canyon to the base of the peak, and the next six climb from the base of the wall to the summit.

– Dan Stih

## Images



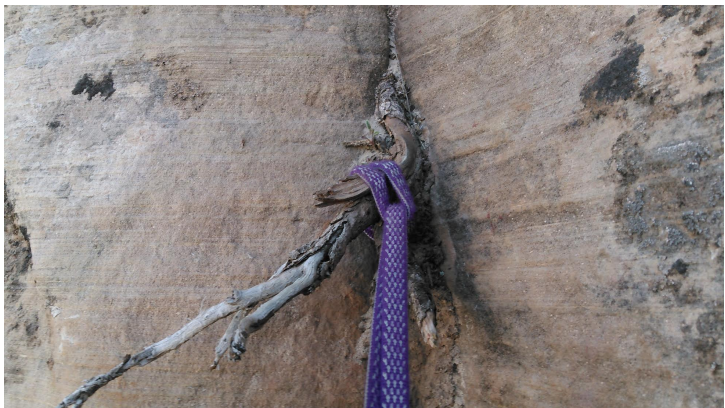
The south and east faces of Inclined Temple. The Schash-Stih route (2013) up the south side climbs the first crack right of the skyline. Dan Stih notes that cruxes are at the bottom and top of the route; the middle isn't too bad.



The west sides of Inclined Temple (left) and Ivins Mountain (right), as seen from the West Rim Trail looking south. The new route on Ivins climbs the steep slab below the peak to a vegetated ledge and then up the prominent corner system in the center of the wall. Approximately two-thirds way up the corner system the climbers traversed right and climbed the face right of the corner system to the summit. The 2013 route on Inclined Temple climbs the unseen south side. Comparing Inclined Temple to Ivins Mountain, Dan Stih notes that, "Ivins is much, much harder."



Climbing the prominent corner system on the west face of Ivins Mountain.



A tied-off bush for protection on the west face of Ivins Mountain.

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