



AAC Publications

Piedra Bolada, West Face, Arista Mexicana

Mexico, Chihuahua, Parque Nacional Cascada de Basaseachic

After a 20-hour trip in a pickup truck with nine people and three dogs, we made it into Basaseachic very late and rested. The next day, Tiny Almada, José Vega, Oscar Cisneros (our base camp support), and I (all from Mexico) reached Valentin Grijalva's house in Cajurichi, where we prepared gear and food before taking Valentin's truck into Candameña Canyon.

Once down in the canyon, we hiked upstream and set up camp below the line we intended to climb on Piedra Bolada. [Tiny Almada and Cecilia Buil made the first ascent of Piedra Bolada, located across from El Gigante, in April 2014. See AAJ 2015.] However, we soon found that our intended line consisted of overhanging loose rock, and we chose the very aesthetic ridge on the left side of the wall instead.

The next day, after carrying in more equipment, food, and water, José began our climb by heading up past loose rock, vegetation, and even a snake. After two days of climbing we had done three pitches, returning to the ground each night. From our high point we hoped to use portaledge the rest of the way up the wall.

The fourth pitch was maybe the hardest of the route. José began by placing a pair of pitons and then entered a face with no cracks but some pockets. He hooked his way up until the rock broke and he took an 8m fall, ripping his gear and falling onto the belay bolt. He was too beat up to keep climbing, so Tiny took the lead and finished the pitch. I took the lead on the fifth pitch, and from here on we began climbing on either side of the prominent ridge to make the hauling easier.

A traverse on the sixth pitch led to a nice offwidth crack on the seventh. The hauling here was terrible. Above the offwidth, pitch eight had slabby, loose, and sketchy climbing with big runouts. This deposited us on small needle along the ridge, and we had to rappel 12m. The next two leads ascended a loose corner and then a solid finger crack. The final pitch was difficult and confusing, up a dihedral and out a roof leading to the summit. Once on top, Oscar showed up to help us with our descent.

We call our route Arista Mexicana (470m, 5.11 R A2), and we established the climb from March 29 to April 7.

– Daniel Araiza, Mexico

Images



On the approach to Piedra Bolada with El Gigante in the background.



Looking up the left-most ridge line on Piedra Bolada. The team called their route up the ridge Arista Mexicana (470m, 5.11 R A2).



Looking up the left-most ridge line on Piedra Bolada. The team called their route up the ridge Arista Mexicana (470m, 5.11 R A2).



At camp atop pitch seven.



Daniel Araiza leading on the eighth pitch.



Atop a small needle on the eighth pitch.



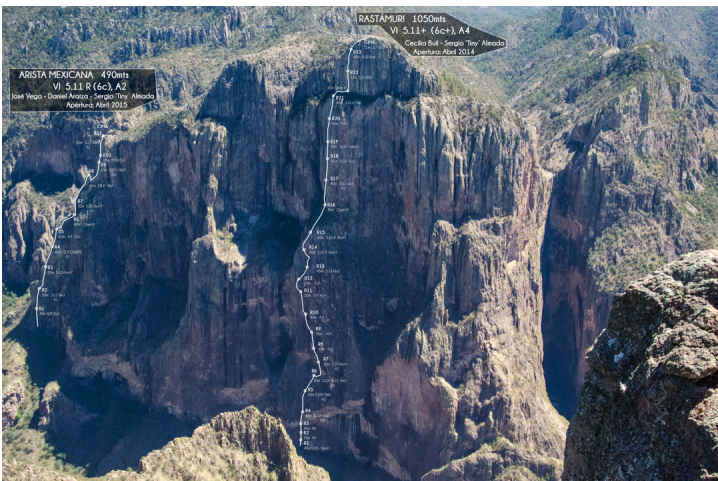
Sunrise hits the team on the morning of day nine, pitch nine.



Atop the summit of the ridgeline on Piedra Bolada.



The view of Candameña Canyon from the summit of Piedra Bolada.



: A photo topo of Arista Mexicana (470m, 5.11 R A2) and Rastamuri (Almada-Buil, 2014) on the west side of Piedra Bolada.

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