



AAC Publications

Milestones 2022

The climbs featured in the American Alpine Journal don't occur in a vacuum—they reflect the broader evolution of climbing styles and performance around the world. The following achievements in 2022 provide additional context for the longer rock and alpine ascents documented in this year's AAJ. —The Editors

5.15D IN FRANCE, 5.15C IN USA

In the spring of 2022, Sébastien Bouin (France) free climbed DNA at La Ramirole cliff in the Verdon Gorges, France, and rated it 9c (5.15d). Bouin spent parts of three years working on the route, making more than 250 attempts. The climb may be only the second 9c in the world, after Silence (Adam Ondra, 2017) at Flatanger, Norway. (Bibliography at Ceuse, France, freed by Alex Megos in 2020, originally was rated 9c but has been downgraded.) Bouin also repeated Ondra's Change (9b+/5.15c) at Flatanger and established a 130m link-up there called Nordic Marathon, graded 9b/+ or 5.15b/c.

In November, Bouin climbed the first 9b+ (5.15c) in North America, redpointing Supreme Jumbo Love at Clark Mountain, near the California-Nevada border. The climb added a 20-meter 5.14d direct start to Jumbo Love (5.15b, Chris Sharma, 2008), which Bouin had repeated, for its fourth ascent, a week earlier.

V17 BOULDERS

Shawn Raboutou (USA) made the first ascents of two boulder problems that were given 9A/V17: Alphane in Chironico, Switzerland, and Megatron in Eldorado Canyon, Colorado. Alphane was subsequently repeated several times. Only one other V17 problem had been repeated as of press time: Burden of Dreams in Lappnor, Finland, established by Nalle Hukkataival in 2016. Scottish climber Will Bosi made the second ascent in April 2023.

5.14D/15A WITH TRAD GEAR

Connor Herson (USA) redpointed Empath near Lake Tahoe, California, placing traditional gear on the lead. The granite pitch was established as a sport climb and rated 5.15a by a number of climbers (though at least one suggested 5.14d). Herson free climbed The Nose on El Capitan in 2018 at age 15.

ALL-WOMEN 5.14B WALL

Sasha DiGiulian and Brette Harrington (both USA) and Matilda Soderlund (Sweden) made a free ascent of Rayu (600m, 8c/5.14b) on the south face of Peña Santa de Castilla in the Picos de Europa of northern Spain. The route was free climbed in 2020 by brothers Eneko and Iker Pou and Kico Cerdá, and it has a mix of traditional and bolt protection.

The trio of women worked the route together, and during their final push, in mid-September, they swung leads. DiGiulian and Soderlund each freed all the pitches, and both led the crux 11th pitch; Harrington freed all but the 8c crux. This is likely the most difficult big-wall free climb by an all-

woman team.

Images



Sasha DiGiulian climbing Rayu (600m, 8c) in Spain.

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