



## AAC Publications

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### **Mt. Wilson, Aeolian Wall, Salami Wand Kenobi**

Nevada, Red Rock National Conservation Area

**Having climbed with Sam Boyce on several occasions, including a handful of first ascents, I'm well aware that he is into the kind of weird, ungraded terrain that most strive to avoid.** I also knew—despite never having climbed with him—that Kyle Willis has an appetite for wide cracks in obscure areas of Red Rock. So, when they invited me to attempt an intimidating unclimbed line on the Aeolian Wall, I knew it'd be a grand adventure.

On December 9, we shouldered heavy backpacks filled with a huge rack, from ball nuts to the gigantic number 7 Black Diamond cam. We also brought a big assortment of pitons and beaks, as a large roof 1,000' up—the unmissable feature that had attracted us to this line—looked like it would require some good ol' nailing. The plan was to bivy once and then climb to the summit the following day. We packed two gallons of water, a gallon of coffee, and enough salami to feed the Swiss army for a week.

Sam took off on the first pitch, a classic chimney with the area's signature varnish, which allowed him to climb toward the outside without having to squeeze in. A pitch of bush wrangling up and left led to the base of some creamy-colored flaring cracks. These served up some spicy face climbing that led to the top of a triangular tower. From there, we climbed three pitches of Woman of Mountain Dreams (17 pitches, V 5.11), after which we veered right into another chimney system. Woman of Mountain Dreams was first climbed in 1997 by my parents, Joanne and Jorge Urioste, along with Dave Krulesky and Mike Morea, and then freed by my mother and Aitor Uson in 1998.

We stopped to bivy on a nice ledge at the end of our sixth pitch, on a nice ledge with an epic view of Vegas. The next morning, after jugging a pitch that we'd climbed and fixed the night before, we headed up a bomber fist crack with silky black desert varnish. Next came an obtuse corner with great jamming. This was followed by a treacherous, low-angle slope covered in fine sand and several death blocks, which we avoided like the interest rates at the Dollar Loan Center. We were now below the 120-foot roof (yes, 120' horizontal), chilling at an epic belay stance that we dubbed the "Womb with a View Belay."

Like a bat emerging from the depths of hell, Sam aided through the enormous roof on micro-cams, back-cleaning to make his followers' lives more pleasant. Awkward C2 led to a squeeze chimney (protected by the number 7), which ended at a nice stance. Sam belayed us up, and we then quested up several pitches of fun, crispy crack.

It was getting dark, so we rigged a rappel into a gully that led to the top of the Wind God Tower; we bivouacked on top of this tower for an unplanned second night out. (Since no other climb ascends Wind God Tower, and dangerous scrambling would be required to reach it otherwise, we're fairly certain we were the first people on it.) Thankfully, we had enough cell service that I could call into work and request a substitute teacher to cover my class the next day. As I roasted salami for dinner using a "wand" that Kyle fabricated from a nearby bush, he looked over at me and said, "Salami Wand Kenobi." Our savage laughter filled the canyons to the brim.

The following morning, to put the finishing touches on Salami Wand Kenobi (2,000', 14 pitches, V 5.11- R C2), we climbed two 200' pitches up the Aeolian headwall. We high-fived on the majestic crown of Mt. Wilson and hiked down Oak Creek with smiles on our faces and leftover salami in our

packs.

– **Danny Urioste**

## Images



Salami Wand Kenobi (2,000', 14 pitches, V 5.11- R C2) on the Aeolian Wall of Mt. Wilson. Other routes are not shown.



Sam Boyce aid climbing through the long roof on pitch nine of Salami Wand Kenobi.



Sam Boyce transitioning into the squeeze chimney of the enormous pitch-nine roof on Salami Wand Kenobi.



Danny Urioste Leading the 14th and final pitch, a 5.9, directly to the summit of Mt. Wilson.



View of the Aeolian Wall in Red Rock National Conservation Area.

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