

granite wall to the left of the old Direct East-Face route. We ascended a pedestal for two pitches, then veered slightly right up vertical and overhanging cracks for four continuous pitches of 5.10 and 5.11 into a huge open book joined by an overhanging seam without a continuous crack. On the right wall is a full-pitch, five-to-seven-inch, off-width crack with parallel sides and rounded edges. Lack of protection stopped a 1990 attempt here with Kike Arnal of Venezuela. This time we brought #5 and #6 Friends plus a Big Bro for what turned out to be a 5.10d groaner at nearly 14,000 feet. Above, the difficulties eased into superb 5.8 and 5.9 plates and knobs on a rib that stayed left of the upper part of the standard east-face route. The route took a full day and is similar in length, rock and steepness to Keeler Needle, but with more continuous difficulty and fewer cracks.

GALEN A. ROWELL

*Keeler Needle, East Face, The Crimson Wall.* During the first week of August, Mike Carville, Kevin Brown and I added a new long, free route to Keeler Needle. Possibly the hardest free wall above 10,000 feet in California, the route strikes straight up the center of the east face of Keeler Needle, following an obvious line between the Harding route on the left and the Lowe route on the right. We named it the *Crimson Wall* (V, 5.12-) due to the incredible pre-dawn alpine glow that colored the face each morning. We ascended ten full pitches before connecting with the Harding route for the final four pitches. We originally intended to finish straight up the virgin headwall but, alas, cracks that appeared finger-width through binoculars turned out to be incipient when we arrived. Short on bolts that would have been necessary to protect the headwall pitches, we vowed to return to complete the direct route. (In fact, as you read this, it is likely that the headwall is virgin no more—we are returning in May, 1992.) The *Crimson Wall* is characterized by its diversity of pitches; corner systems, blank faces, cracks and dikes lead the eye upward from the base. Three pitches of superb climbing form the soul of the route. The 7th, 8th and 9th link an arching corner, a huge flake and a sustained and steep layback corner that go 5.11, 5.10 and 5.12 respectively. The rock is solid and a full rack is called for. A total of 20 bolts was needed to protect the first ten pitches. Pitch 1 begins at the very center of the base of the wall and ascends to a belay just under a three-foot roof. The line is straightforward from there.

KEVIN STEELE

*Day Needle.* On June 16, Cameron Burns and I climbed an all-free variation of the Beckey-Reese route on Day Needle. (IV, 5.10b). The crux came in the second to last pitch, which followed left-angling cracks up steep rock that offered knobby face-climbing. It bypassed the bottom of an enormous off-width that slants up and right in the center of the face. The off-width is clearly visible from the base of the needle. Although we climbed the route in 16 pitches, it could have been accomplished in less.

STEVE PORCELLA