

of Texas Tower (IV, 5.11c, 8 pitches) was done by Derek Horsey and party. The second free ascent was accomplished by Bret Ruckman and Tim Coats. The remote spire is south of Canyonlands National Park near Arch Canyon and Natural Bridges National Monument. Closer to Moab, in Bluff, Utah, six short but exacting routes were climbed near the Navajo Twins landform by Mike Friedrichs, Jay Anderson, Manuel Rangel and Jean Rousch. They were all of 5.10 to 5.11 difficulty.

ERIC BJØRNSTAD

New Mexico

Sandstone Towers near Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu. There are numerous sandstone towers near my home in northern New Mexico and until February they were all unclimbed. When I set out to ascend them, little did I know that I'd be pushing the limits of "soft rock." Mount Ethan Putterman and Ghost Tower, above Ghost Ranch, were ground-breaking because of the consistency of the rock. On lead I used more three-foot gardening stakes than anything else. This rock makes the Arches and the Fisher Towers in Utah look like concrete! *Mount Ethan Putterman*, which Mike Baker and I climbed over four days (March 13, 17, 18 and 28), offers some of the softest sandstone in the Southwest. The upper half of this tower is a bizarre conglomerate of loose, brittle calcite, black shale and gypsum. Three bolts were used for a rappel anchor, three for a belay station and five for a bolt ladder. (III, 5.9 R, A4+, 2 pitches.) *Ghost Tower* appeared in the March, 1991 issue of *New Mexico Magazine* and on the cover of the book, *Ansel Adams in the Southwest*. It has the same soft rock. The capping layer is part limestone, part sandstone, part mud. Mike Baker and I made its first ascent on February 14. It overhangs on all sides. The crux was an overhanging off-width crack on the first pitch, belayed in the eye that pierces the entire tower. This pitch was very soft and, in retrospect, crazy. The second pitch moves through the west face and up the north side of the west face. We placed several knifeblades and small angles there. (III, 5.10 X, 2 pitches.) *Animas Spire* is located just 50 feet downhill from Ghost Tower. Baker and I climbed it on February 15. Baker led the single pitch by first threading the lead rope through the middle of the spire, tying it off and then jumaring the fixed "sling" around to a stance on the northern side of the tower. An awkward off-width followed. Descent was made by using simul-rappel techniques. (I, 5.7+, A3.) *Crackerjack Tower* is a tiny tower located up a canyon directly north of a rest area on NM Route 84, a few miles south of Ghost Ranch. Baker and I made its first ascent on February 25. He led, placing several pitons and drilled angles. (I, 5.9, A2.) *Coyote Pinnacle* was climbed in June, 1990 by Mike Baker and Leslie Henderson. It lies in a canyon west of Crackerjack Tower and is almost invisible to passers-by as it blends into the cliffs beyond. (I, 5.9, A2.)

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