

and Potter simulclimbing behind, we reached Sickle Ledge in less than 20 minutes. We switched leads for pitch six, above Sickle Ledge, and Potter swung into the Stoveleg Cracks. I lowered out with a 5-millimeter cord, and we simulclimbed through the Stovelegs. We had cut a 140-foot 10-mm rope specifically for the ascent. Potter rope-soloed the Boot, pitch 17, which marked the end of his block, as I simul climbed up the bolts below and waited until he pendulumed across the King Swing, snagging it first try. I then blasted toward Camp IV, short-fixing the rope at the end of the Lynn Hill traverse. Potter lowered out with the 5-mil, jumared the fixed line, popped the knots at the belay, and joined me as I wove my way through Camp IV to the Great Roof. As I jumped onto my trusty cam hooks at the apex of the arching roof, Potter slammed in a nest of camming units and hung tight till the rope was fixed and he could lower out. We simulclimbed through Camp V, using direct aid when necessary, and switched leads at the top of the Glowering Spot, pitch 26. Potter took us to the summit, short-fixing the majority of the upper pitches, with me jumaring maniacally behind. We simulaided out the headwall bolt ladder and tagged the top-out pine tree in 3:59:35. Haggard but grinning we had broken the greatest of the rad-dad, old-school speed records on El Capitan.

Two weeks later, on October 28, Hans Florine teamed with Jim Herson and took an additional two minutes off the record, coming in at 3:57:27. Potter and I answered back on November 2 by slashing off another 33 minutes, for the current record of 3:24:04.

TIM O'NEILL

*El Capitan, Tempest.* June 9, 1999: I am in a doubly overhanging dihedral, approaching The Eyrie. Lulled by the morning sun, I contemplate the sand running over my knee. Suddenly, the body-sized arrowhead flake I am hooking explodes out of the corner. The sharp edge of the block rolls over my stomach and in a haze of motion sails past Valerio Folco (CAI), who is oblivious, writing in his diary on the portaledge. I jumar past the tear in my lead line and tie in farther from the end. We camp at the Eyrie. To the east is a subtle buttress that is the most consistently steep feature we can see. We say nothing, the language barrier keeping talk to a minimum, but we each silently conclude that it will be our next adventure: a third ascent of Tempest. Information about Tempest was sketchy and hard to come-by. One person dismissed the route as a bolt ladder. Others claimed the route was one of great difficulty, having stymied many attempts, "the most sought-after route on the Captain." It turns out that the Tempest's first-ascent team (Jarrett, Hornibrook, and Lloyd, 1993) had previously done many big-wall FAs together. What impresses me about Tempest, in addition to the superb, audacious line, is the quality of the FA. The positioning of fixed belay anchors shows great skill and care. Where rivets exist, they are spaced at impressive distances, similar to Reticent Wall.

Val gave me the jobs of recruiting a third climber and finding a photographer. In October, as Bruce Bindner led the second pitch, Val remarked, "Bruce is the perfect wall climber." The three of us alternated leads. I wanted to lead the pitch called Tom, and Val wanted to lead Killer Whale. That made it easy to decide which pitches we would each lead. Jerry Dodrill and Marco Spataro filmed us on the initial pitches, and again at the top.

The route retains much of the character of a first ascent, with grassy cracks being commonplace. There is a lot of climbing up small (and very large!) detached features. Since there is as yet no published topo, I shouldn't say too much more. I think that Sea of Dreams will never be equaled when it comes to beauty of line and fun climbing, but Tempest stands out in that,

along with Reticent, it will probably be one of the last independent lines created on El Capitan.

THOMAS I. McMILLAN, AAC

*El Capitan, Slacker's Toil.* Slacker's Toil (VI 5.9 A5b) is a four-and-a-fourth-pitch variant to Surgeon General/Lunar Eclipse. My variation climbs an A5 pitch and an A4+ pitch on a super-loose feature, The Great Sword. I basically soloed the lower half of Surgeon General, including Eric Kohl's A5 crux pitch, then headed out right, then up into the Great Circle. After climbing Lunar Eclipse's Milky Way pitch, I climbed straight up to the Devil's Brow and off via Lunar Eclipse. My new A5 pitch and Kohl's old A5 pitch are both technically harder than the Reticent crux, but Reticent is longer and therefore harder.

JIM BEYER, AAC

*El Capitan, El Corazon.* On September 7 Max Reichel and I looked for a new free-climbable line on the southwest face of El Capitan. We found it and reached the top on September 14. We used aid on some sections during the first ascent but returned for a completely free ascent. We placed new bolts on belay stations but did no other bolting. Pitons and birdbeaks placed during the first ascent were left as protection for the free climb. I returned to the route three more times (six days, total) to work on free climbing certain pitches. On October 3 at 10 a.m. Max and I started, at the base of the Salathé, to redpoint the route in a single push. On the first day I climbed 17 pitches and bivied on the Gray Ledges. On the second day I climbed up to the Tower to the People. Then after an early start I reached the top on the third day at 9:45 a.m., having redpointed all 35 pitches in less than 48 hours.

The new line El Corazon combines the Salathé, Albatross, Son of Heart, and Heart routes, plus some established variations that link the freeable sections of the existing routes. The Heart is the most obvious feature on El Capitan, marking the center of the southwest face. Through the middle of the Heart goes the classic aid route Son of Heart, known for its frightening, claustrophobic chimneys. For 300 meters this corner-and-chimney system rips through the overhanging wall above the Heart, making it a natural line for free climbing. But the giant roof of the Heart itself seemed to be an insurmountable obstacle. The solution is Albatross, which passes the very right edge of the Heart to a traverse up and left leading back to Son of Heart, which you join 100 meters above the overhangs of the Heart.

ALEXANDER HUBER, *Germany*

*Super Nova Area, High Line.* On March 20, 2000, in the Super Nova Area near the Rostrum, Ammon McNeely, and Cedar Wright established High Line (VI 5.10R A4). The route is located between Crack the Whip and Dime Bag. The climbers report "This route has a little of everything. Do not attempt it unless you are a very experienced wall climber. The crux is on almost every pitch. Tons of beaking, including the Squeakin' by Beakin' pitch, which starts with a 20-foot roof in which it takes hours to get peckers tied off at the eye hole to stick, and if they don't, you get slammed into the wall. Don't forget to mention the death blocks that are lurking on the last three pitches. Overall, it's a classic."

AMMON MCNEELY AND WWW.ROCKANDICE.COM (NEW ROUTES PAGE)