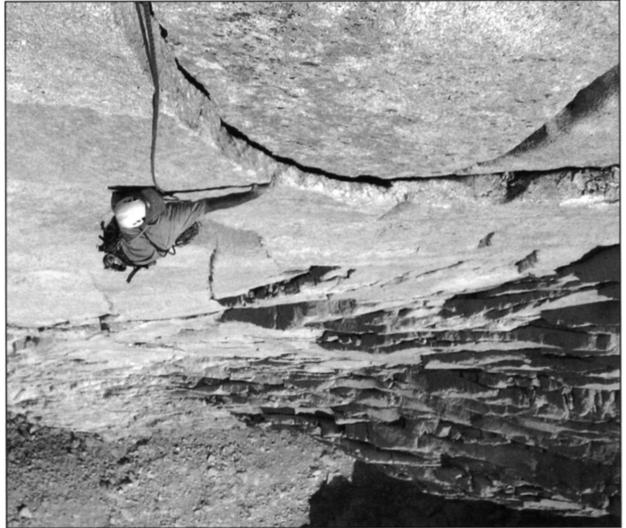


get lost, as the system is all alone in the middle of the broad west face, rising and gently traversing right to finish on the ridge approximately 80' left of the Red Dihedral.

Our route, Eye of the Storm (12 pitches, V 5.12) takes the longest line on the west face of the Hulk, and has quality, sustained climbing from bottom to top. True to the Hulk, this route climbs more like Yosemite Valley than the High Sierra. It has a great variety of corner and splitter climbing, with technical faces connecting features.

NILS DAVIS



Brent Obinger finishes the crux 8th pitch of Eye of the Storm. The pitch climbs the paralleling seam and dihedral below until joining the arching corner (which then dies out and requires a committing throw to finish). *Nils Davis*

*Incredible Hulk, Solar Flare.* I spotted the line from Blowhard, which takes the left edge of the west face. Just when the sun came 'round and kissed the face I saw a line of featured but very shallow corners, between the Polish Route and Sunspot, leading two-thirds of the way up the cliff. After that, a big question mark: maybe a bit of blankness into a corner that led left into Escape from Poland or, if I was lucky, the stunning orange arête that takes the left edge of Sunspot. This big reddish square is an anomaly on this vast white wall, like a creepy birthmark, and is the distinguishing feature of the Sunspot route, which takes the prominent dihedral up the birthmark's right side.

I started this route with Eli Stein, climbing a couple of pitches on a semi-rest day. I came back with Kevin Calder and again with Nils Davis, exploring higher. It really came together when Conrad Anker came out to play in late August. Jimmy Chin and Jimmy Surette also came as cameramen to make us feel important, or just self-conscious. Fresh from Everest, Conrad immediately showed that wallowing up snow hummocks is excellent training for fingery granite. After a couple of days of exploratory flailing Conrad and I climbed Solar Flare (V 5.12+) with storm clouds moving in, cameras rolling, and me climbing embarrassed in skin-tight long johns (the warmest pants I had).

Although this route follows disconnected corners, it consists mostly of face climbing, the first of its kind on the Hulk. About 60 feet up the first pitch of Sunspot—where that route cuts right—we climbed straight up on a crack and then a face for a couple of 5.10 pitches that turned to 5.11 as the wall steepened. Conrad led the fifth pitch, the first of the 5.12s, pitching off a few times on the delicate stemming corner, while I shivered in my puffy jacket at the belay. Higher, spicily runout stemming led to a bouldery traverse that brought us to a belay under the orange arête. This is the coolest pitch on the route: pimping and high-stepping up the edge—white granite on the left wall of the arête and orange on the right. After that, Conrad led one

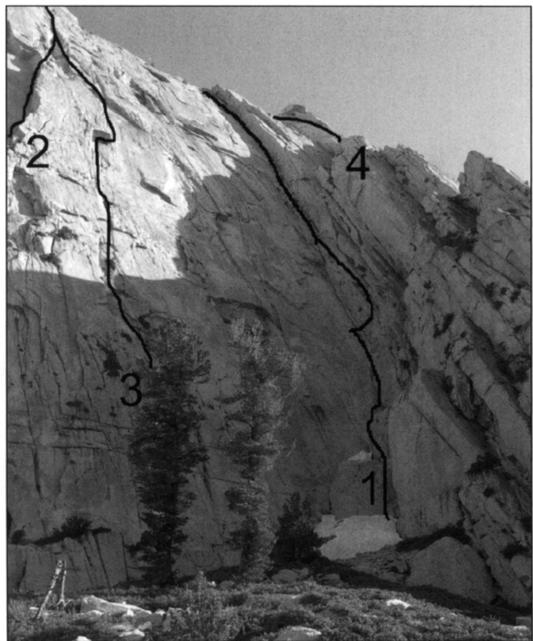
more 5.12 stemming pitch, just as the first rain fell, and we scooted up the 10th and last pitch to the ridgecrest. Rain mixed with sleet induced us to rationalize about how we'd done all the new climbing and that the remaining ridge climbing was easy (although we didn't become so delusional as to say that summits don't count), and we decided to rap. So, depending on how high your horse is, we succeeded on a great new route or wimped out when push came to shove. Either way, we cut it close. If we had taken the time for one more bowl of cereal at camp, we wouldn't have gotten that far. Next morning dawned beautiful, however, and all four of us succumbed to summit fever and chased each other up the classic Positive Vibes, putting whipped topping on top of an already great trip.

PETER CROFT, AAC

*Lone Pine Peak, South Corner.* On May 26–27 Miguel Carmona and I established the South Corner (V 5.9 C1) on Lone Pine Peak. Our route takes the most direct line to the area where all of the routes on this part of the south face (Direct South Face, Winter Route, Land of Little Rain, Summer Ridge, Windhorse, Pathways Through To Space) intersect, climbing 12 pitches before joining the Direct South Face (Beckey Route) for its last six pitches to the summit plateau. It is the obvious huge left-facing corner just left of the start of the gully of the Beckey Route and right of Pathways Through to Space. Our climb follows the corner to its top, joining the Beckey Route at a prominent pine tree below the Eye of the Needle.

Miguel and I made four trips in 2006 to see if the route would go, pushing up to pitch 9, where climbing difficulty and a lack of wide gear stopped us. Then in 2007 we made it to our high point, and spent the rest of the day aiding through the crux. The wall was near vertical there with a 6" wide, slightly overhanging corner crack. Aid gear was 2"x3" pieces of wood, cut on lead. We then retreated to a cave at the start of pitch 8, which provided a cramped bivy spot. The next morning, we climbed to pitch 12, where we joined the Beckey Route just below the Eye of the Needle and the Sandy Ledges. We rappelled from there, as we'd previously climbed the easier remaining six pitches of the Beckey Route that continue to the summit plateau.

The route starts on 3rd-class ledges that lead into the corner. Climb the corner to a sloping platform, and after a ropelength, traverse right into a big open chimney. Continue up on



A foreshortened view of the south face of Lone Pine Peak: (1) South Corner (Carmona-LeMay, 2007). (2) Windhorse (Bindner-Holland, 1999). (3) Pathways Through to Space (Nelson-Quale, 2004). (4) Direct South Face (Beckey-Bjornstadt, 1970). Joe LeMay