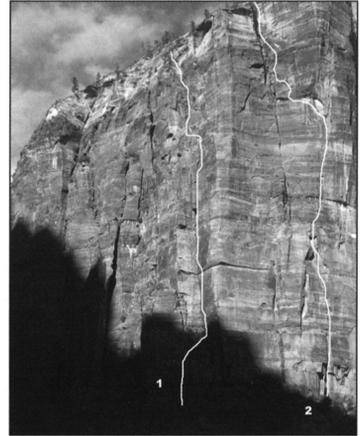


Mt. Majestic, Cracking the Emerald. In November Ryan Frost and I climbed *Cracking the Emerald* (IV/V 5.10 C1), a steep new six-pitch route on the southwest face of Mt. Majestic, in the Emerald Pools area. We ascended a striking corner near the center of the face, with dark rock on the right, lighter rock on the left. Part way up the corner is a roof, split by a one-inch crack. The climbing was mostly hand-and-finger cracks, with clean aid climbing and ledges at every belay.

Shortly after our ascent, Ben Williams free-climbed the route, leading every pitch. Three pitches were 5.11, and the fifth was 5.12-. We were surprised this route hadn't been done before, because of the quality of the climbing and the close proximity to the pools. The setting is spectacular.

BRIAN SMOOT



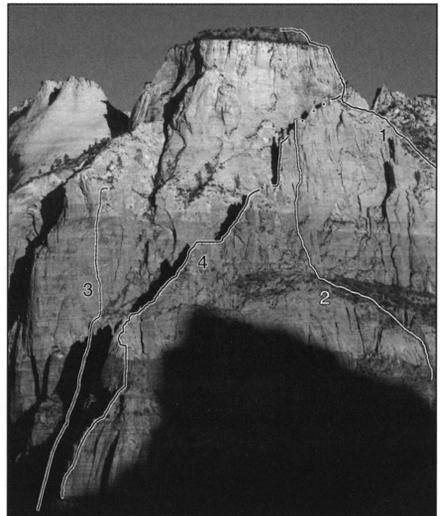
The southwest face of Mt. Majestic: (1) *Cracking the Emerald* (Frost-Smoot, 2009). (2) *Leaving Llamaland* (Tarr, solo, 1998). *Brian Smoot*

Sentinel, Red Chamonix Ridge. This incredibly bad idea originated years ago on spring break, when some friends and I got in way over our heads on *Rodeo Queen*. While freezing our butts off, we noticed this amazing gendarmed ridge on the Sentinel, with *Birdbeak Spire* being the ridge's most prominent tower.

It took a few years for memories of choss to fade, but on April 5, 2008, Joe French, Zack Lee, and I cast off with two packs, a big rack of birdbeaks, down coats, and not enough water. We left the car at 5 a.m., and Joe led the first block. Around pitch five or six Zack and I heard the dreaded rumble of *big* rockfall. Down the fall line came a 5'x5'x5' boulder, but no yelling. And the rope kept going up. WTF? We got to Joe, who nonchalantly explained that he'd mantled onto the thing and had to jump off when it started to go.

We moved along at a good clip for 15 pitches, snaking through broken towers, where the climbing stayed around 5.9, with some big runouts, loads of choss, and vertical talus.

After pitch 17 we plopped onto a comfortable ledge on the south side of *Birdbeak Spire* and screeched to a near halt: 70' of beaks, followed by a 10-hole ladder, followed by another 60' of beaks. We then scampered around to the gully, skipping the last 60' to the top of *Birdbeak*. Another three loose pitches brought us near the summit cap of the Sentinel. Totally dark.



The Sentinel: (1) *Mountaineers' Route*. (2) *Birdbeak Spire* (climbs to a detached spire along ridge) (Middendorf-Oxx, 1993). (3) *Belly of the Buddha* (Draper-Littman, 1998). (4) *Red Chamonix Ridge* (Brown-French-Lee, 2008). Rumors exist of a 1966 route on the Sentinel, but we were unable to uncover details. *Nathan Brown*

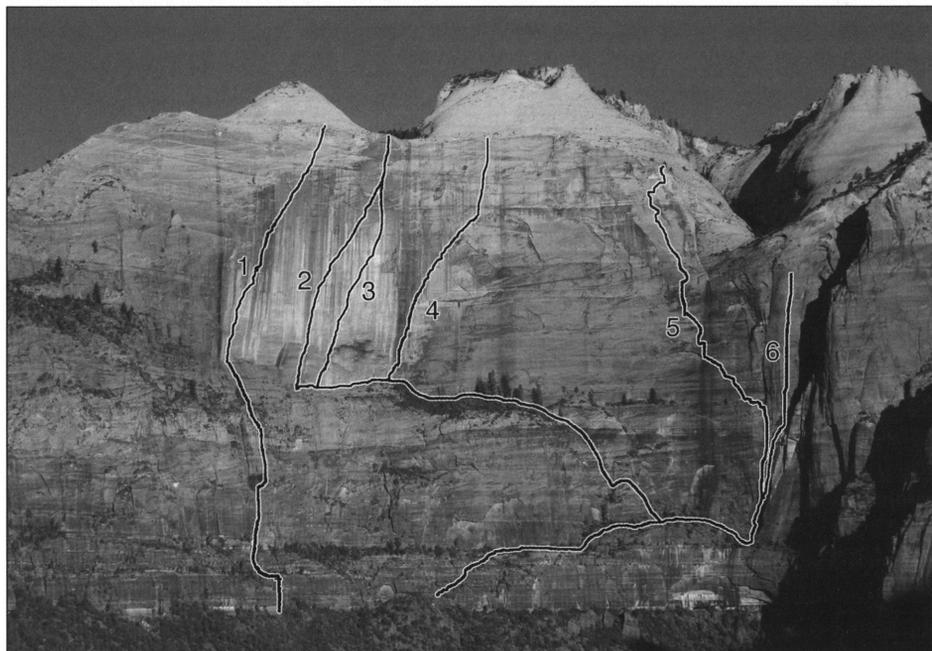
Zack rope-gunned 200' of white sandcakes, and we untied for the final 400' of 4th-class, which included step-kicking up a snowfield. Joe brought a summit register, which we signed at 11 p.m. And then the real danger began: a sleep-deprived descent of the Mountaineer's Route, where we endured a forced bivouac. Red Chamonix Ridge (V 5.9 A4).

NATHAN BROWN

Streaked Wall, Lord Helmet. According to www.alpinist.com and confirmed by Brian McCray, he and Chad Umbel established Lord Helmet (9 pitches, VI 5.9 A4) over 11 days in May, spread over two trips. They drilled about 60 holes (including belay anchors), mostly on the final two pitches.

Streaked Wall, Wet Stone Wall. This high-adventure route climbs through the site of the seasonal flash waterfall on the right side of the wall. Ryan Frost, Joe French, and I stole a few precious days (October 9–13) from our busy schedules to race up the wall. The climbing was generally hard (1,700', VI 5.10 A4), with lots of difficult nailing, technical hooking, run-out free climbing, and serious vertical bushwhacking. The bivy ledge atop the arch is one of the finest I have laid bags on. We placed 45 bolts, 30 for anchors. Future parties should bring a bolt kit, as we left about 20 or so holes unfilled, for hooking. Most of the holes are on the ladder pitch. The route is equipped for rappel descent.

NATHAN BROWN



The Streaked Wall: (1) Rodeo Queen. (2) Tale of the Scorpion. (3) Latitudes. (4) Lord Helmet. (5) Wet Stone Wall. (6) Farmer Brown. Nathan Brown