

for what turned out to be easier climbing above. After a difficult move off the main ledge we soon reached the base of the blank section, which although as crackless as it had appeared from below, was knobby and relatively low angle. Surprisingly the climbing here never exceeded F6, although we placed a protection bolt fifty feet out on the exposed slab. Higher, we encountered a short F8 crack, but by sunset we were standing on the top of the rock only a short walk from our car which we had optimistically left above us on the Glacier Point Road. NCCS IV, F10.

GALEN ROWELL

Utah

Three Gossips, Arches National Monument. In the Park Avenue section of the monument are several impressive formations, few of which have been climbed. Many have blank, rotten sections at their bases. We chose the northern summit of the Three Gossips in October, since it appeared that good cracks existed. There were cracks, but they were not good. It was Allen Steck's first desert climb and so he got the first lead. He would yell down, "Do you think this one's OK?" "Hell, yes, Steck. Didn't you hear it ring?" Meanwhile I got ready for a fall. But Steck did beautifully and naively pranced up a 100-foot ladder of pins which was removed in minutes. A few hours later we reached the summit. The upper part was mostly free; a hidden four-foot-wide chimney splits the summit block. The route lies on the side opposite the road. NCCS II, F7, A3.

STEVEN ROPER

Gothic Nightmare. The Gothic Nightmare was the last of the three Mystery Towers to be climbed. It lies 34 miles east of the Fisher Towers and 20 miles east of Moab. Don Briggs, George Hurley, and I had teamed up in 1969 for first ascents of the Doric Column and the Citadel. The rotten rock techniques we learned on those ascents enabled Don and me to reach the summit of the Gothic Nightmare on April 20. On reconnaissance probes Hurley, Jon Hough and I had nailed the first pitches up a rotten crack on the north side. This reconnaissance indicated that the 300-foot crack could be climbed to the summit ridge. The major problem was traversing west along and around the many stone gargoyles that were perched along the knife-edged ridge. Briggs and I spent half a day completing the rotten crack to the summit ridge, and a day and a half