

about nine miles from the trail head. Our route climbs a steep crack system on the south buttress and traverses the improbable-looking upper west face, via an exhilarating layback, to the base of a hanging open-book on the west face. Pitches five and six, up this prominent book, involve some strenuous crack climbing. One pin of aid, the only one on the climb, was used in a dirt-filled, overhanging crack. Above the book the route continues north to the south summit. NCCS III, F8, A1.

HOOAN APRIN

Eagle Beaks, East Face of North Peak, Thunder Road. In May Conrad Van Bruggen, Mark Blanchard and I climbed this enjoyable, seven-pitch route which started at a small pine 100 feet uphill to the right (north) from the low point of the face. Three obvious pitches led up and left to a belay atop a prominent knobby flake. From here we worked up, then straight right (F8 and F9) to a small belay ledge below two narrow, converging arches. The next pitch was the crux—underclinging the left-hand arch, then making a F9 boulder-type move to a crack which was followed by some dicey face climbing to a belay stance. A very long pitch with F8 face-climbing led to the final pitch—an easy crack in the headwall. There was no evidence of a previous ascent. The route lies on the more massive of the three formations known as the Eagle Beaks. Beckey's 1972 route is on the southern most one. NCCS III, F9.

SIMON KING

Tranquility Dome, Visions. In May Mark Blanchard, Conrad Van Bruggen and I visited this attractive 700-foot face which rises above the west side of the San Joaquin River, below Mammoth Pool Reservoir. Our route started near the left side, below a right-leaning arch with an obvious square roof at its top. The first pitch involved climbing over this arch to the left (at an obvious chicken head) and up a face past a bolt to a two-bolt belay below a low-angle shelf. The next pitch is the crux: after a short traverse right, the headwall above was climbed directly with the security of two bolts and a nut behind a large flake. An easier pitch followed with a bolt to protect an F8 traverse to a tree-filled groove. From the top of this groove a finger-sized crack led up to a huge pine on a blocky ledge. A class-four traverse right, followed by two easy pitches, led to the unroping spot. Continue on class-two scrambling to the forest. The name "Tranquility Dome" is our own as it is unnamed on the map. NCCS III, F9.

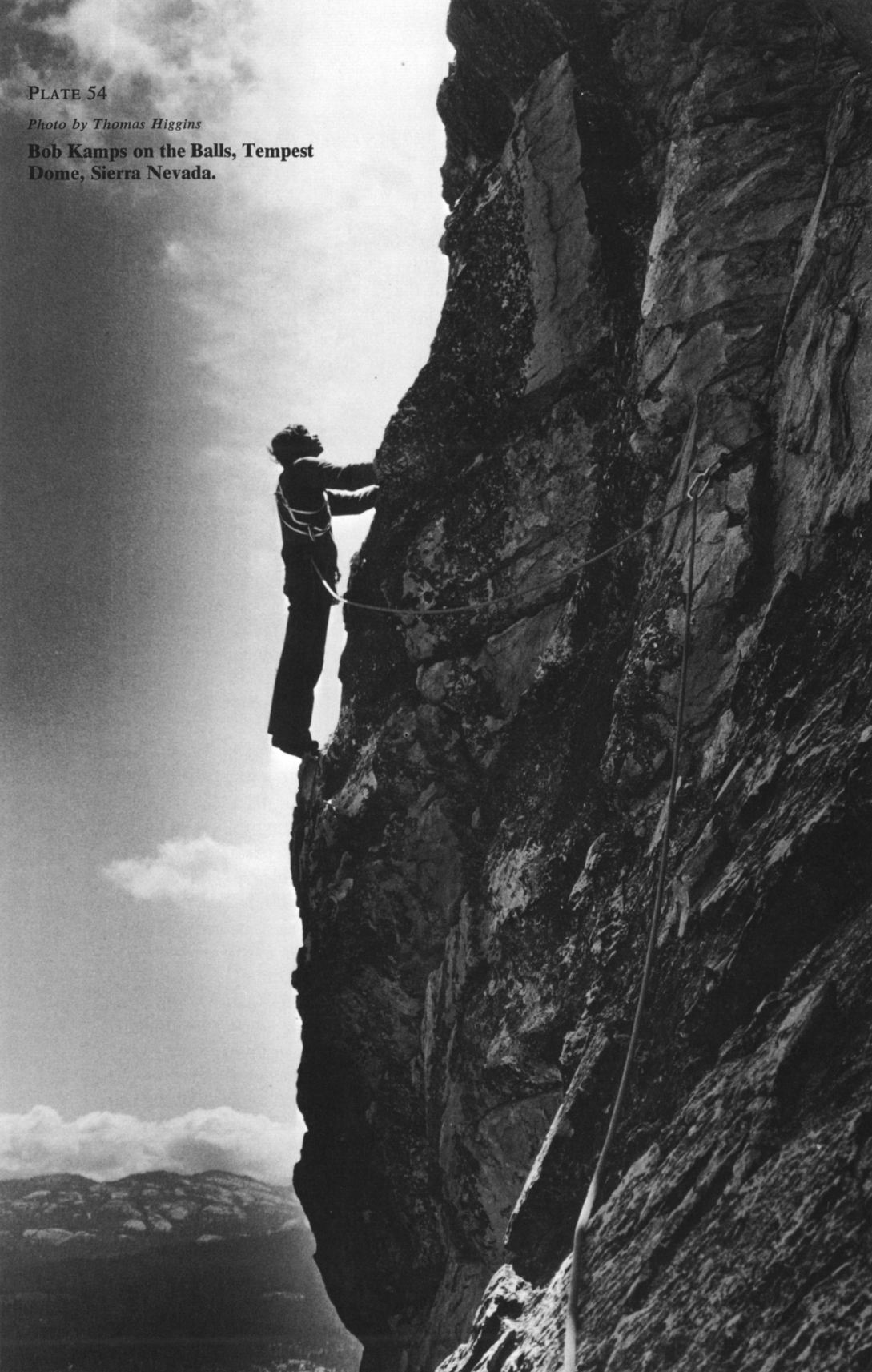
SIMON KING

The Incredible Hulk, Macedonian Route. In late July Dave Bircheff and I climbed a new route on the west face of the Incredible Hulk. The

PLATE 54

Photo by Thomas Higgins

**Bob Kamps on the Balls, Tempest
Dome, Sierra Nevada.**



route was eleven pitches of mixed free and aid. At the base of the west face a left-leaning crack (the right side of a 200-foot triangle) took us to the "left-leaning, overhanging slot" of the Donaldson route. We continued up this chimney to a good bivvy ledge. The second half of the route goes straight up the middle of the face above. A pitch of excellent free climbing ends at a hanging belay at the base of difficult aid cracks. Five pitches in these cracks lead to the "summit." On the third day it took five hours in abominable weather to descend the seven rappels of the east face. NCCS V, F9, A4.

RICK WHEELER

The Incredible Hulk, West Face, Polish Route. In August Bob Harrington and I climbed this excellent eight-pitch route. When viewing the west face from Little Slide Canyon, our route follows the continuous "stoveleg-like" cracks that split the narrow face near the left-hand (north) shoulder. We began 100 feet left of the Donaldson route, in a very difficult crack in a left-facing corner. Several pitches higher the crack opened considerably and there were three pitches of fist and off-width climbing with hanging belays. The "summit" was a large flat ledge on the north ridge. We traversed along this ledge onto the east face until reaching the Macedonian descent route. NCCS IV, F10.

RICK WHEELER

Mount Conness, Morning Thunder Route. In early September Bob Locke, Bob Harrington and I hiked in from Saddlebag Lakes to a lovely plateau south of Conness's summit where we spent the night. Leaving camp we descended a sandy gully to the base of a 1000-foot buttress just right of the "west" (south) face of Conness, and separated from it by an ugly-looking gully or chimney. After an improbable face-climbing start, we climbed five more pitches, and a final 200 feet of 4th class led to the summit. NCCS III, F9.

RICK WHEELER

The Needles, Southwest Face of Witch, The Witch Doctor. In June Mike Gabor, Rick Ridgeway and I climbed this improbable-looking route. The southwest face is distinguished by a prominent bomb-bay chimney on the upper-half. Our route, however, stayed well to the left of this chimney. Begin by climbing the right side of a 200-foot slab at the base of the face. From the top of the slab climb left and then up a flake system to a sloping belay ledge. Traverse left, then up over roofs, climbing on knobs and small cracks. A final difficult and unprotected pitch leads directly to the top. NCCS III, F9.

DAVE BLACK, *Buff Alpine club*