

the center of the buttress and climbed three pitches ranging from 5.9 to 5.10c. The crux was a severely overhanging crack that gained a ledge leading north to a gully. We were so intimidated by this route that we backed off and decided to try our luck the next day. The following day, after regaining our high point via the gully, we encountered an extremely loose and overhanging quartz dihedral which led to the top of the buttress. We then followed the ridge with much 5.7 and 5.8 climbing. After a combined total of 16 pitches, we reached the summit pinnacle. (IV, 5.10c.)

STEPHEN PORCELLA

California—Yosemite

El Capitan, Reach for the Sky, 1989. This route, done in the fall of 1989, starts several hundred yards left of the West Face route and above the huge chockstones in the gully. I spent eight days and four nights on the wall on this eight-bolt solo effort. The route is 90% free and wanders up to the extreme right end of Salami Ledge and then follows that route to the rim. With long runouts, 5.8 to 5.10 face climbing is linked with hooking or the odd crack. The two hardest “free” pitches were first led on aid, worked on for hours and then “freed” on a top rope.

JAMES BEYER

El Capitan, Genesis, 1989. In May 1989, Doug Englekirk and I climbed a new route on El Capitan (*Genesis*, VI, 5.11b, A4+). It lies between Tribal Rite and the Wall of Early Morning Light or New Dawn. We began on Armageddon (5.10d) and via some new moves of 5.11 joined the right side of El Cap Towers (New Dawn). *Genesis* started off of El Cap Towers. I led the first two pitches during two attempts, the first in September 1988. Pitch 1 started off the Porter bolt ladder of New Dawn and was a mixture of vertical and overhanging hooks, copperheads and rivets. Pitch 2 went out left under a small roof (A3) to six rivets and then joined a 30-foot section of drilled hooks left by Dale Bard during the filming of *Star Trek V*. Doug then led the very serious “Blade” pitch, a thin expanding flake (A4) with a bad landing. The climb took a total of 14 days of which three were spent storm-bound in a portaledge bivouac. During day 3 of the storm, I started to lead the next pitch, which was our only rivet ladder (130 feet). While trying to squeeze in the last placement, I took a 25-foot upside-down fall. By the time I got back on the lead, a cold rain was falling that lasted for several hours until I regained my ledge. This was the “Great Flood” pitch (A2). The next pitch had Doug leading off the belay on Bird Beaks, one of the more obscure but useful pieces of equipment used for hard direct aid. Doug finished Pitch 5 with an interesting variety of techniques (A3+). The next pitch was a mixture of difficult free climbing (5.11) and aid. Pitch 6 would have been moderate free climbing, but more rain left the steep slab slippery and so it went at A3 with hooks, heads and rivets. Pitch 7 had Doug traversing off the belay on 5.11

moves to a steep and not too solid pillar (5.10), continuing on into the crux of the climb: crumbly aid placements, a couple of rivets and a string of tied-off knife-blades and Rurps through an overhang, to an uncertain landing (A4+). The “Golden Corner” pitch followed and was disappointingly crumbly at the bottom, requiring six rivets. Then it livened up with marginal copperheading and pitons, followed by two overhanging hook moves that led to nailing an expanding roof (A4). The rest was straightforward aid and joined the Wall of Early Morning Light just below the prominent ceiling above Pitch 24 on the New Dawn topo in the Yosemite guidebook.

ERIC M. BRAND

Half Dome, Northwest Face, 1989. A new and very difficult route is described in a full article by Jim Bridwell earlier in this volume.

Half Dome, Northwest Face, Kali-Yuga, 1989. In early October 1989, I arrived in Yosemite with no specific plans and met Walt Shipley, who had just finished carrying his gear down the Half Dome slabs after a solo attempt of a new route to the right of Tis-sa-ack. I convinced him that his fixed ropes, up to pitch 5, would be unsafe if left over the winter and we teamed up for the ascent. For the next three days we carried gear up the slabs to the base. After seven days and six nights on the wall, we topped out on a beautiful full-moon night. The last pitch exits through the steepest section of the final overhangs but required no bolts. The 17-pitch route is completely independent of all others, though it crosses Tis-sa-ack at two-thirds height. We had good climbing including a blind chimney, a wild pendulum, 5.10 climbing on a thin flake and much sporty A3+ nailing, copperheading and hooking. (VI, 5.10, A4.)

JOHN MIDDENDORF, *A5 Adventures, Flagstaff, Arizona*

Washington Column. In August, Stewart Irving and I climbed a new 8-pitch section on the east face of Washington Column between Mideast Crisis and the Great Slab routes, which we call *Saddam Hussein* (V, 5.9, A4). After a 5.5 pitch, we climbed steep but moderate aid (A3–) over a ledge leading to an intricate section (5.7, A2), involving some loose flakes. We then started out on a ramp to a rubble-covered ledge system and a blocky tower. This Irving climbed on a loose pile of “refrigerator doors.” The fourth pitch was the crux. We ascended from the ledge to an awkward overhanging A2 flared bomb-bay roof and then to 30 feet of hooks on loose flakes, drilled holds and poor rivets (A4). Here we joined the Great Slab route for less than a pitch (5.7). We then followed a prominent dihedral to the right of the Great Slab. The “Weed-eater” pitch was followed by the “Hanging Gardens of Babylon” (A3 and A4). We headed for the big, clean roof above the Great Slab, which we found was blank. We considered drilling up the wall after climbing the roof, but because this would take so much time, we rappelled off four-fifths of the way up the face. We did climb under the