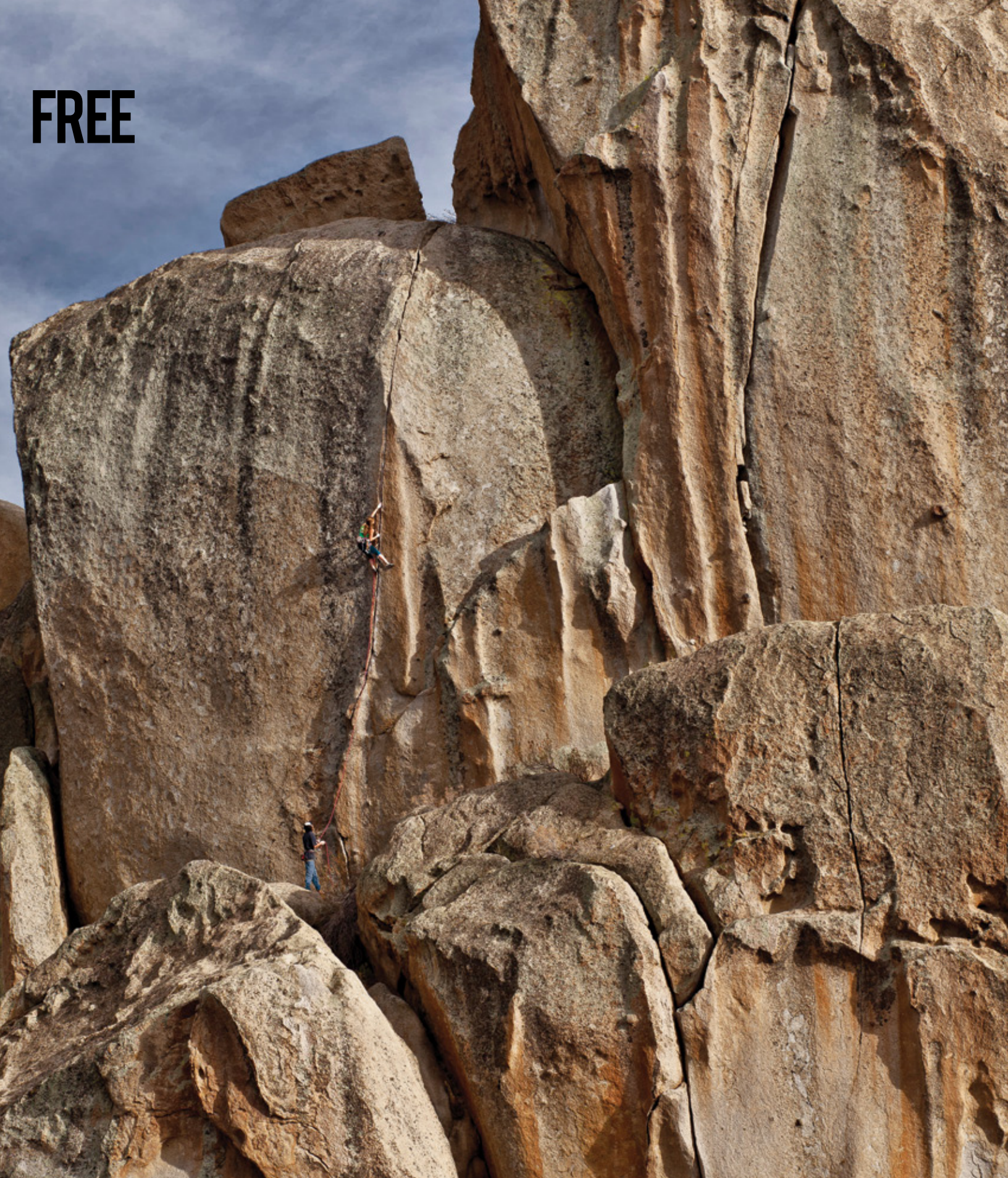


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CALIFORNIACLIMBER

SUMMER2013
N° 05

DESTINATIONS
30/LIZARD'S MOUTH
40/LITTLE EGYPT
52/SUGAR PINE



Designing
Testing
Climbing
Working
Playing
Living

In
CALIFORNIA



MadRockClimbing.com

© Dean Fleming. Climber: Nicole Zuelke on The Flake Traverse, Labyrinth Area, Columbia, CA.

A man in a green tank top and black pants is climbing a dark brown rock wall. He is using a green rope and a white carabiner. The wall is covered with various climbing gear, including colorful holds (red, blue, green, yellow) and metal carabiners. The background is a plain white wall.

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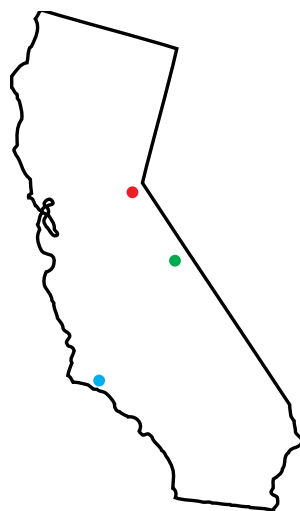
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ON THE COVER

Catrina Behling on
Espresso Crack (5.11c),
Little Egypt, Bishop.
IMAGE + DEAN FLEMING

THIS PAGE

Eric Sanchez on *Bad Larry*
(V6/7), Christmas Valley,
Meyers.
IMAGE + ALTON RICHARDSON

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dean Fleming

ART DIRECTOR

Alton Richardson

SENIOR CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jerry Dodrill, Jim Thornburg

SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Fitz Cahall, James Lucas

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Thornburg, Greg Epperson, Dave Hatchett, Grant Ordelheide, Christian Adam, Anthony Lapomardo, Michael Eadington, Marta Czajkowska, Charlie Barrett, Melissa Tomes, Gustavo Moser, Kelly Heslin, Alton Richardson, Melissa Tomes, Dean Fleming

CALIFORNIA CLIMBER

22502 Colorado River Drive

Sonora, CA 93570

Phone: (209) 768-0110

Email: climb108@yahoo.com

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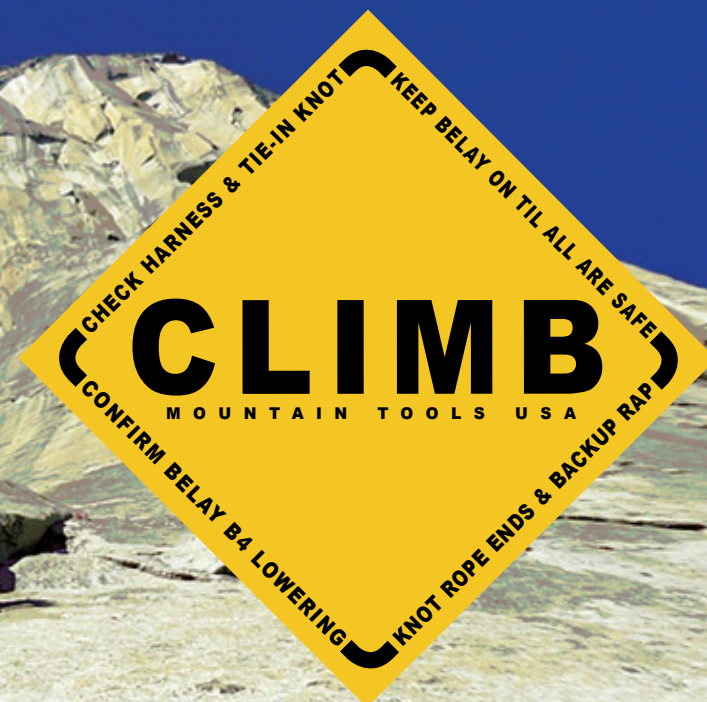
Neil Mahar on *Welcome to the Dark Side* (5.10c), Little Egypt, Bishop.



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"Gonzo" Chris Gonzalez contemplates the remaining free moves to Sickle Ledge, LARRY ARTHUR

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FOR YOUR MOUNTAIN

What's the Problem with Paul?

Hometown: Moorestown, NJ

Favorite Climbing Area: Fontainebleau

What's your favorite problem?

The best boulder I have ever repeated is Spectre in Bishop and the best boulder I have ever established is Meadowlark Lemon in Red Rocks! Both climbs I know I will never forget, not only sending but the journey it took to figure it all out.

How long have you been sending boulder problems?

I started climbing in New Jersey at age 13. My local crag was The Gunks, about 2.5 hours away, so I spent a lot of time bouldering trees as a kid.

What's the problem with roped climbing?

What's the problem with doing the dishes? Nothing, but it is always way more enjoyable to let someone else do them while you eat dessert!

Any problems currently on your mind?

I recently visited a new area in New Mexico that blew my mind. There are some projects there that I can't stop thinking about.

What's the future of boulder problems?

It's all about finding new zones. We should make an effort to find and establish new zones all over the planet. My goal is to find as many hard, 5-star lines as I possible.

If we give out your phone number, would that be a problem?

No idea, but let's not try!

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ETIQUETTE IS REQUISITE

IN MOST CIVILIZATIONS, people feel a certain level of detachment from the environment. The human race has invented words like “nature” and “wilderness” to describe places that differ from our modern habitat. The city is not the wilderness. A gas station is not natural. Unfortunately, most people will never venture into the world that is truly natural, and even the most dedicated climbers speed past vast stretches of forests and deserts in air-conditioned cars on the way to the crag. We are all Californians by birth or by choice, but we are still only visitors to the cliffs, canyons and boulderfields that make this state a rock climber’s sanctuary.

Over the last 10 years, the standard introduction to rock climbing has changed dramatically. Gyms and easy access to climbing media have increased training options and built a wealth of psych for the sport, but these resources cannot replace a thoughtful and diligent outdoor mentorship. Whether you’re transferring from the gym to climbing outside or you’re an old, crusty Trad Dad with 30 years and just as many El Cap routes under your belt, stewardship for California’s climbing areas is vital to protect access and ensure the lasting beauty of West Coast crags.

This summer issue marks the one-year anniversary of California Climber. The goal of this magazine has been—and always will be—to celebrate the beauty of California’s spectacular climbing areas. We want to publish photos that kids will hang on their bedroom walls. We want to tell stories that will inspire people to get outside and enjoy this state. But above all, when the next generation heads to the crags, we want them to experience these areas as they were meant to be: clean and natural.

In practice, respect is simple. Most people would agree that littering, chipping and cutting down trees are bad things. But awareness of these impacts, options for preventing them and solutions for restoring the damage should be widespread. If you are the younger generation, take it upon yourself to learn Leave No Trace ethics and proper wilderness etiquette. If you are the older generation, set an example by picking up trash, staying on trails and utilizing respectful first-ascent tactics. Remember, when you are in the presence of youth, you are the teacher. —DEAN FLEMING



JIM THORNBURG

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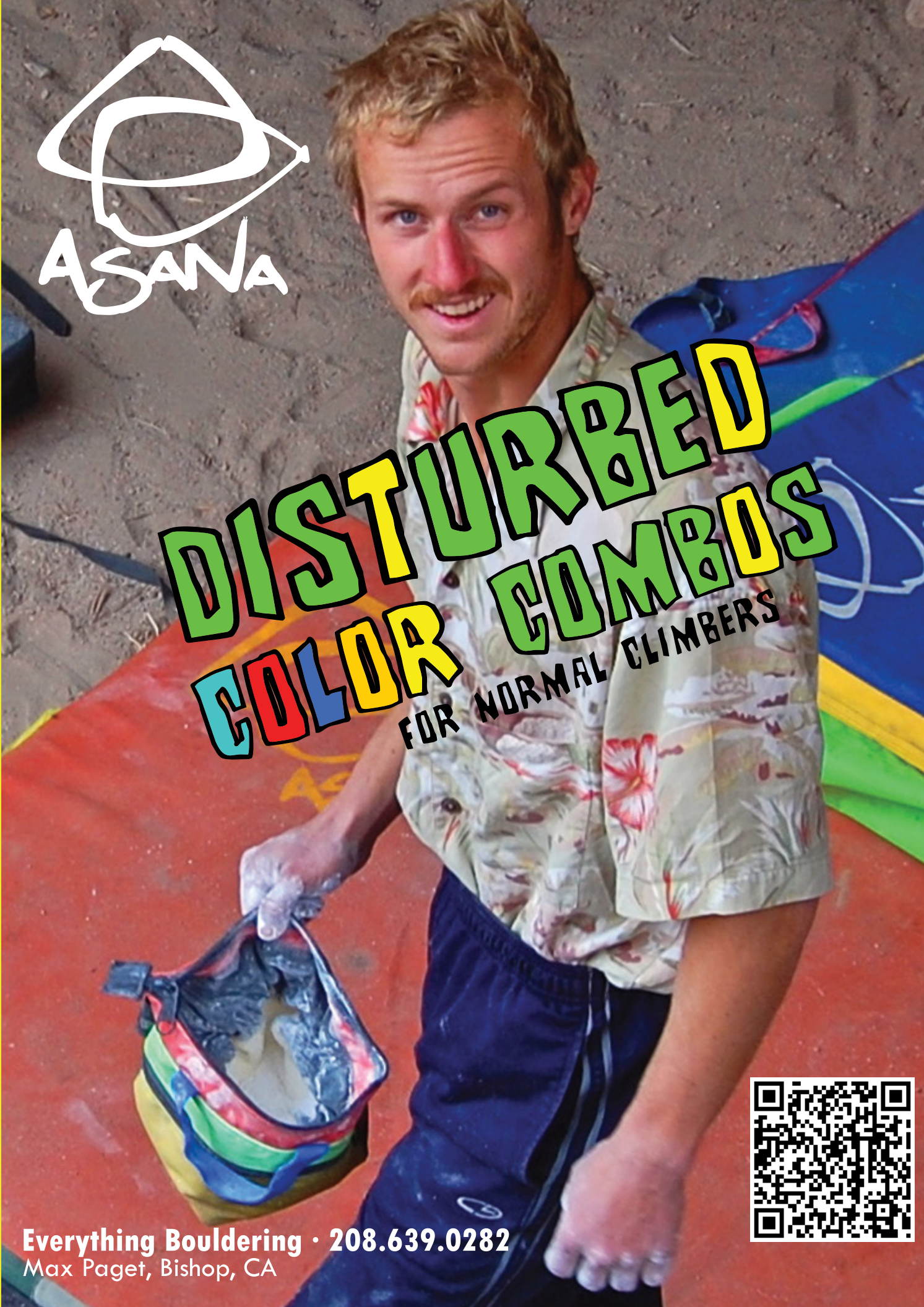


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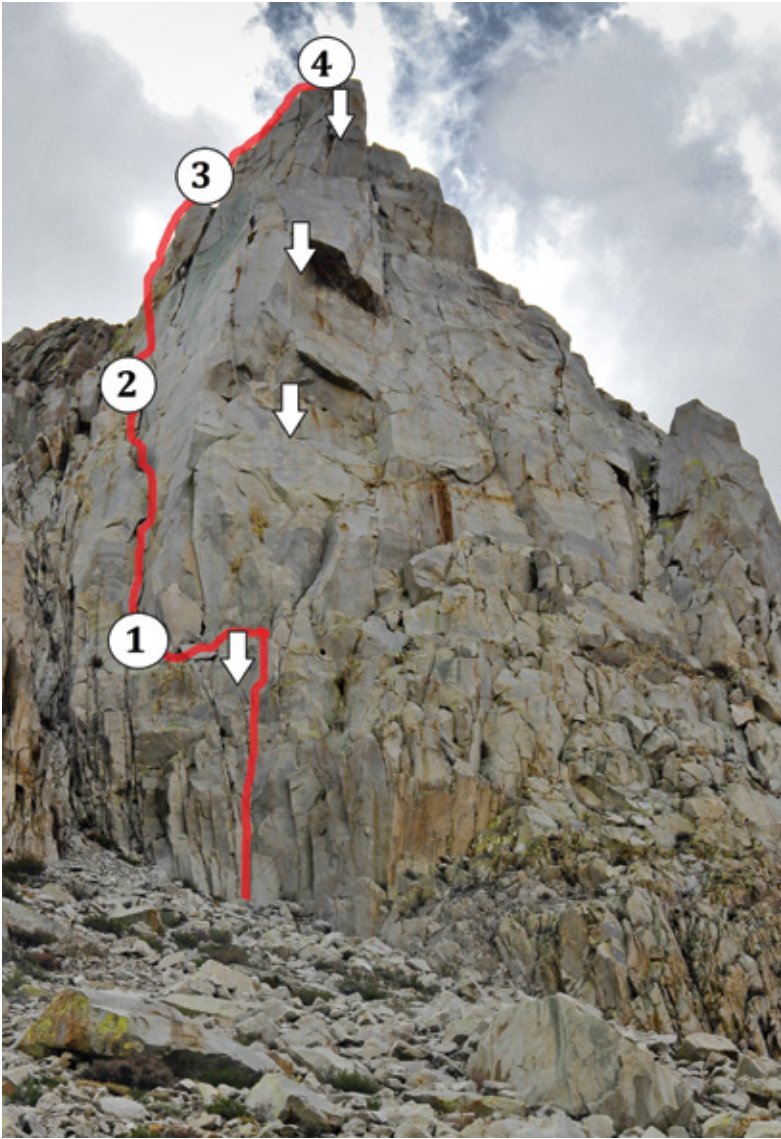
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CRACK KINGDOM (5.10c)

BETA			
ROUTE		GRADE	LENGTH
Crack Kingdom		5.10c	4 pitches, 500'
ROCK TYPE	STYLE	RACK	
Granite	Traditional protection	Gear to 4 inches, mostly finger and hand sizes	
LOCATION		APPROACH	DESCENT
Aspendale, CA		15-20 min, talus	4 rappels down <i>Prow</i> route, double 60m
SEASON	GUIDEBOOK		
Summer, fall	<i>Bishop Area Rock Climbs</i> by Marty Lewis and Peter Croft		



CRACK KINGDOM is a 5.10 crack climber's dream, with perfect tight-grained High Sierra granite and outstanding views. Just a 15-minute hike from Highway 168 outside Bishop, Cardinal Pinnacle is home to some the Eastside's best roadside cragging. Routes like the *West Face* (5.10a), *Prow* (5.12b) and *Cucumbers* (5.10b) all have stellar crack systems ranging from tips to offwidth. Most of *Crack Kingdom* is north-facing, but the route sees some evening sun, making it the perfect climb for the hottest summer days.

PITCH 1 (5.10A)
This line shares the same start as the *West Face* and *Prow* routes. Start by climbing most of the first pitch of the *West Face* to a ledge near the top of the pitch. From here, traverse left along a large ledge passing a gnarly-looking offwidth and a bolted anchor. Make an anchor at the bottom of the next short crack on a small stance.

PITCH 2 (5.10B)
From the belay, head up a right-leaning crack through some blocks aiming for a wide crack just below an ominous-looking flare. The next offwidth and flare sections are the most awkward parts of the climb and the crux of this pitch. From the top of the flare follow an easy, low-angle gully to a belay stance at the base of a left-facing corner.

PITCH 3 (5.10C)
This is the crux and the best pitch of the route. Head up a beautiful corner to a finger crack that trends right and out of the dihedral. Pass a tricky section to get over a lip and then follow a crack that heads up to the right. This will bring you to a nice little hand crack and finally to a big ledge; belay here near a thin right-facing flake.

PITCH 4 (5.10B)
Climb a thin flake and some 4th-class ledges to reach a large ledge below the actual summit. To descend, find the rap anchor that is placed on top of a giant block on the west side of the summit, which will take you down climber's right of the route.

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Adam Sanders b. by Brandon Groza, DNF of the Bastille, 11R. P: J. Clark

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BETH RODDEN

“IT WAS PRETTY GOOD. Actually, it was really good; it just takes a lot longer than you want. You’re like, okay, an hour and fifteen minutes later...still cooking.” Sitting in El Cap Meadow earlier this year, Beth Rodden excitedly recalled the chicken she roasted the night before in her Yosemite West home. “I cook pretty simple things but use really good ingredients.” Between her Berkeley home with husband Randy Puro and her home in Yosemite, Rodden stockpiles nuts, vegetables and other fresh produce from the farmers market and her CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) box. “I like really good food,” she says. “I like really good rock climbing, too.”

From big walls and foreign expeditions to technical cracks, competition climbing and bouldering, Rodden is well-known for a long list of hard ascents. In June 2009 at the height of her climbing career, she experienced one of the most significant changes in her life. While bouldering in Yosemite, she tore the labrum in her right shoulder. Following rehab from additional shoulder injuries, she damaged her fingers, tearing the collateral ligaments and flexor tendons.

“I think for any athlete—or anyone who likes to be active—injuries are frustrating,” says Rodden. “But to have continual injuries for several years has been really devastating.” The injuries forced her away from a singular focus on climbing and toward a more well-rounded lifestyle. She began prioritizing local, sustainable food, due in part to dietary restrictions and a rural California upbringing. She adopted a frightened Rhodesian Ridgeback named Max and started to concentrate on rehabbing her body and finding more to life than just climbing.

Rodden’s love for climbing began as an adolescent while top roping during family camping trips in the Sierra. At 14, her father took her to Rocknasium, a climbing gym near her home in Davis, California. She climbed extensively indoors, winning national championships and going to world competitions where she climbed with a generation of super-kids: climbers like Katie Brown, Dave Hume, Chris Sharma and Tommy Caldwell.

When Rodden was old enough to get a driver’s license, she ventured beyond the Sierra and quickly fell in love with the climbing at Smith Rock, Oregon. During a break from college in 1998, Rodden became the youngest woman to climb 5.14 by sending the Smith Rock testpiece *To Bolt or Not to Be* (5.14a). While working on the benchmark route, she was invited by Lynn Hill on an expedition to Madagascar. After that trip, Rodden traveled a lot, with each trip becoming more exotic and exciting.

In August 2000, Rodden, Jason “Singer” Smith, John Dickey and Tommy Caldwell went on a climbing trip to Kyrgyzstan’s Kara Su Valley. “That’s when not very fun stuff happened,” she says of the experience. While on the wall, Islamic rebels shot at the climbers, and then took them hostage and marched them across the country. The group eventually escaped their captors and stumbled into a Kyrgyz army encampment. Rodden sought refuge in her beloved Sierra.

For her, the best climbing is in Yosemite. “You can climb El Cap one day, then go bouldering, then go cragging,” she says. From 2001 to 2008, Rodden made approximately twenty ascents of El Cap including the first free ascent of *Lurking Fear* as well as a free ascent of the *Nose*. “So many times [partner Tommy Caldwell and I] were rapping down the wall or spending a month on the summit,” she said of her El Cap years. “It’s manual labor.”

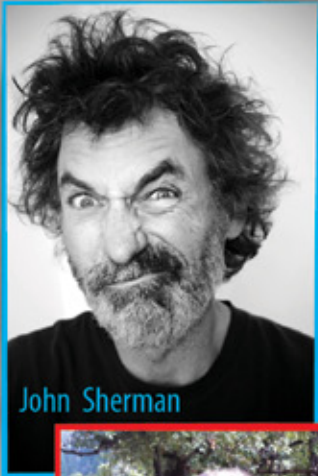
While working on a free ascent of the *West Buttress* of El Cap, the always-psyched 23-year-old climbed on the granite monolith during the hot summer months. After long and sweltering days on the cliff, she would head straight to the Yosemite Village store for a pint of Ben & Jerry’s Mint Chocolate Cookie ice cream. “My stomach said, ‘That’s not gonna fly any more.’ I couldn’t eat ice cream everyday—once a week, maybe. I needed to learn about not overdoing things.”

In the past decade, Rodden has applied that lesson more to her climbing. After dedicating plenty of time to El Cap, she shifted her focus to shorter routes. In 2004, she completed the first ascent of *The Optimist*, a 5.14b at Smith Rock’s obscure Marsupials area. In 2008, Rodden made the first ascent of the thin crack *Meltdown*, a 5.14c at Upper Cascade Falls in Yosemite.

“I’d say the majority of first ascents in climbing are usually done by men, so to be able to do one as a woman feels awesome,” Rodden says. “Sometimes we can get stuck in the rut of just following, but to be able to get out there and do it before the guys really opens the door.”

After a substantial rehab process following her stint of injuries in 2009, Rodden’s return to climbing began with cruising 5.8 routes at the gym. “I’ve just started climbing again, and I’m trying to go slow and listen to my body,” she said. “But it feels amazing, to just climb. I didn’t realize how much I missed climbing until I came back to it.”

A few months later, she coaxed a terrified Max to a Sonora sport crag and stuck to the 5.10c warm-up. Last fall, she climbed at Jailhouse and lapped the 5.11d warm-up. “Several times over the last few years I’ve wondered if it’s worth it to try and come back again. But climbing is such a positive thing in my life. I just want to be climbing—whatever that entails,” she says. “I think this whole process has taught me that I don’t have to climb the hardest thing possible to be happy. But I have to admit, I definitely think about some undone projects I’d like to do. I’m pouring everything I have into getting back to full strength.”



John Sherman



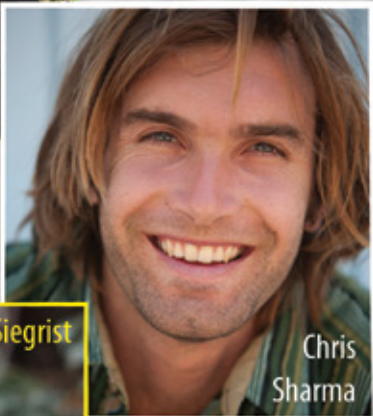
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Charlie Barrett rocking the Asana Flow Shorts in the High Sierra.



ASANA - FLOW SHORTS

(\$45)

Summer is a time for high-elevation cragging, swimming in backcountry lakes and hanging by rivers. During these outings, a super lightweight pair of shorts that easily doubles as a bathing suit can really enhance your experience. This year we tested the quick-drying Asana Flow Shorts, a nice polyester short that takes to the rivers as well as the boulders.

When it came time to take a quick dip to cool off, the fashionable and functional Flow Shorts stood out above the rest. Asana's airy polyester proved to dried out extremely quickly; it only took about five minutes of sunbathing. The elastic waistband and metal-button closure of the Flow Shorts fit all of our testers without the need for a belt.

After drying out, the Flow Shorts performed exceptionally well on the rock. We took these shorts bouldering in Tuolumne, cragging on the Eastern Sierra and deep water soloing in the Yosemite backcountry. Many testers remarked at the great fit and comfortable in-seam of the Flow Shorts for tying into the sharp end. A flat and stretchy waistband proved to fit nicely under a harness—another great reason to not include a belt—plus the in-seam allowed for a wide range of motion and unrestricted high-stepping. The shorts are very durable for their relative weight and quick-drying capabilities. Overall, we felt the Asana Flow Shorts would make a great addition to any climber's backcountry bag or summer bouldering kit.

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SPENCO - YUMI FLIP FLOP
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Our testers took these sandals everywhere for almost 12 months: We stuffed them into packs, clipped them to our harnesses on long routes and trampled trails (up to eight miles) in the Sierra back-country. Needless to say, our testers are flip-flop killers. No tester has met a pair of flip-flops he or she couldn't break. With almost a year of heavy abuse, a few of our testers broke the Spenco flips at the toe thong. That said, these sandals had a great lifespan for such a lightweight and comfy flip-flop.

"The raised portion just under the ball of the foot allowed for really precise control," one tester pointed out. "As crazy as this sounds, it actually seemed to give me edging power on 4th-class terrain." Another tester commented on the airy design: "They lasted a lot longer than I expected given their weight. Other flip-flops with equal durability usually weigh significantly more, which is a huge burden when you need to clip them to a harness."



GRAMICCI - ORGANIC DASH PERFORMANCE TEE
(\$44)

Last summer, one tester was searching for the perfect lightweight summer top, so she took a look at Gramicci's Organic Dash Tee. After a few months of testing, she realized it was an ideal mid-weight women's t-shirt for climbing, yoga and nights out on the town. Gramicci's Natural Performance Technology material (a special blend of organic cotton and hemp) allowed great range of motion and kept the shirt odor-free.

The Dash Tee offers UPF 20 protection just in case you forget your sunblock, and the organic hemp that is blended into the cotton is naturally anti-microbial, which means it produces little to no odor. Our tester didn't wash the Dash Tee for five days of continuous wear, and it stayed funk-free. So if you hate doing laundry, this is definitely a shirt for you. It fits like a second skin, so size up if you're ordering online and like a looser feel. This tee is a high-performance piece that isn't doused in chemicals.

—MELISSA TOMES



SOLO SUNGLASSES
(\$89.99)

When buying shades, there are very few options that fulfill both style and function requirements, particularly for climbers. Lightweight glasses that perform well usually make you look like the bad guy in *Terminator 2*, and stylish glasses usually work about as well as a dirty car windshield. For a long time, the only option that met the needs of many climbers were expensive vintage ski glasses. But with such a hefty price tag, it really sucked when your belayer stepped on them.

At just over 1 oz., SOLO glasses include polarized lenses that protect from 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays. Leave it to this San Diego-based company to create a line that performs well in harsh conditions but still keeps you looking decent at the lake. All of SOLO's glasses have hand-assembled spring-loaded hinges, durable acetate frames and recycled, resin-treated bamboo arms.

We tested a few pairs of SOLO sunglasses for about six months last year. All of our testers were psyched on the outstanding optical quality of the lenses, polarization properties and comfortable frames. Both male and female testers reported a snug and easy-to-wear fit. The arms of the glasses kept tension on small-skulled testers but were also long enough to fit dudes with caveman-sized craniums. Each pair costs about \$90, but part of that money pays for a pair of eyeglasses and a portion of eye surgery for two people in need.



HIPPYTREE - SUMMIT SHORTS
(\$64)

When we opened our box of HippyTree clothes, we were pleasantly surprised to find that the clothes from this Southern California-based company actually fit climbers. We realize that all climbers are not stick figures; however, HippyTree's ergonomic design seemed to fit all of our uniquely shaped testers without overly baggy waists or disproportionate sleeves.

For this review, our goal was to destroy the Summit Shorts, which are a durable, lightweight short with a bit of stretch for climbing comfort and ease. We aimed to wear through the seat and knee sections of these shorts, so we took to climbs with offwidths, squeeze chimneys and knee bars.

Over six months of heavy testing, there was some minor wear in the high-abrasion knee and seat areas, but none of our testers could wear completely through the material—a 97% cotton, 3% spandex blend. These bottoms suit the crag and the beach, look damn good and are burly as hell. "The best feature of these shorts is the material," said one tester. "They flex when you need to high-step, but they don't wear out when you have to stuff your thigh into a wide crack."

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GOLDEN STATE GALLERY



CLIMBER Andrew Taylor
ROUTE Eichorn's Pinnacle, Tuolumne Meadows
PHOTOGRAPHER Grant Ordelheide



CLIMBER Aaron Smith
ROUTE *Electric Africa* (5.12c), Pywiack Dome,
Tuolumne Meadows
PHOTOGRAPHER Greg Epperson

A full-page photograph of a rock climber, Mitch Underhill, on a large, reddish-brown granite rock face. The climber is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, dark pants, and a climbing harness with gear. He is positioned horizontally, with his arms extended to the rock and his legs spread wide. A rope is visible running down the rock face. In the background, a calm lake reflects the warm, orange and yellow light of a sunset. The surrounding landscape includes dense evergreen forests and rocky slopes. In the top left corner, there is a small yellow outline of the state of California with the text "GOLDEN STATE GALLERY" next to it.

GOLDEN STATE GALLERY

CLIMBER Mitch Underhill
ROUTE *Space Walk* (5.11d), Eagle Lake, Tahoe
PHOTOGRAPHER Jim Thornburg

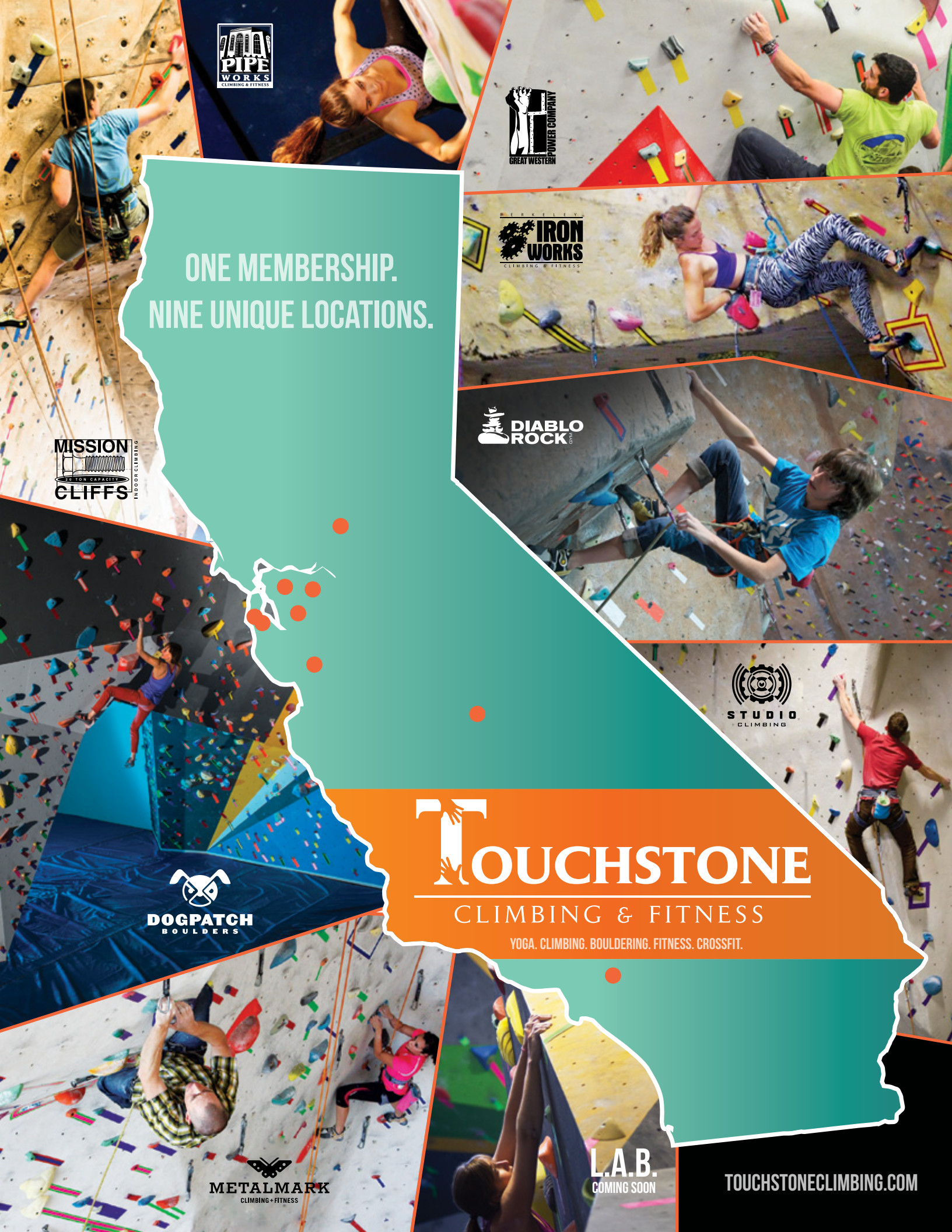
GOLDEN STATE GALLERY



CLIMBER Charlie Barrett
ROUTE *Boats and Hoes* (5.12b), onsight
FA, northern Yosemite Wilderness
PHOTOGRAPHER Dean Fleming



WALKER Unknown
LINE Grandma and Grandpa Peabody,
Buttermilks, Bishop
PHOTOGRAPHER Christian Adam



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Jim Thornburg climbing at Mt. St. Helena. Photo: Jerry Dodrill

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MOON SHADOWS

WORDS + DAVID B. YERIAN

WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER IN THE EARLY 1970S, rock climbing wasn't even close to being recognized as a mainstream sport. A climbing community barely existed in the small town of Sonora, California. Most kids growing up there only thought about working on a ranch, becoming a cowboy and riding the rodeo. The few of us that did climb spent most of our time commuting to and from our Mecca: Yosemite Valley. We were crack climbers, and it was the only place we knew to go. Places in the Mother Lode like Jailhouse and The Grotto were rich veins of climbing gold still waiting to be discovered.

When the 1980s arrived, few would have guessed that Sonora's climbing world was about to blow up. My friend Richard Leverage and I hit pay dirt at a place in Sonora called Donnell's Reservoir. In high school, several of us noticed the giant rock face across the water that reminded me of Yosemite's Washington Column. We had made a hasty attempt to climb it, only to be snowed off at the water's edge. Now—seven years later—it was time for another go.

I got the call from Richard in late fall 1982. We were always on the make for first ascents, and Richard had a plan to climb the wall at Donnell's, which we figured was about 10 pitches. Talk about gold mining: This was a very personal, deep and rich vein that Richard and I could actually put our hands on. The massive wall, now known as Atlantis, had seen only one first ascent, a route put up by Steve Weldon, Don Potter and Knic Seto in the early '70s.

"Sounds great," I said to Richard. "But how do we walk on water to get to the wall?" Donnell's holds more than 2.6 billion gallons of water, and we'd have to cross it to reach the wall.

Richard said he had a friend, Ben Schifrin, who owned an old canoe we could borrow. A couple days later we picked up the old red Coleman—equipped with paddles but no life jackets—and headed out. The road to the reservoir was long, bumpy and dusty, the kind that torques your teeth the entire way. When we finally arrived at road's end, we carried the canoe filled with all our gear through rugged, hilly terrain to reach the dam. The scarred rocks where we launched looked like a moonscape.

+++

When the canoe hit the water, I felt like Huckleberry Finn must have felt when he jumped on his raft looking for a grand adventure on the mighty Mississippi: all happy and shivery and raring to go.

As Richard and I paddled across the water, the rivets holding the canoe together made strange creaking noises. Richard was all muscle, weighing in at 200 pounds, and I a solid 160. Add that to the weight of our climbing gear, and I wondered whether the rivets would hold, or blow and dump us and all our equipment into the murky depths of the reservoir.

We made it across by 11 a.m. and pulled our canoe up onto the rocky shoreline, both of us feeling a little nervous about our late start. As we stood under the grand wall, my jaw dropped and my heart started pounding. This was as high quality as it gets, the cream of the crop, every bit as good as the Valley that I'd spent so much time driving back and forth to. But this was right in my own backyard.

Suddenly, we heard an engine and spied a fishing boat approaching quickly. Our first thoughts were of rangers coming to tell us to leave. As it turned out, it was two old timers with beers in their hands asking us what the hell we thought we were doing.

"Ain't it getting kinda late, guys? Do you know what you're doing?" they drawled. I thought to myself, *If this is our rescue crew, we better pull this off.*

"Oh, sure," I replied with what I hoped was a reassuring smile. I didn't want them going to the rangers. But in my head I was thinking we only had about six hours to complete the first ascent of a grade five—and we weren't sure just how hard it was going to be.

+++

There was no beach, so Richard and I started traversing sideways on chickenheads, packs on our backs and water beneath us. I was focused on what I was doing when suddenly I heard a big splash. As I looked to the right, there was Richard, looking like a big slimy newt, trying to climb back out of the water onto the rock with all his gear. I was hanging on a knob and could do nothing but laugh. Like wet clothes on a line, Richard hung out to dry.

When we reached the spot where we wanted to start our climb, I took off and began to lead while Richard dripped and belayed. Our new route began to take on its own shape and form. But because we couldn't see the bulges and headwalls that were above us as the wall steepened around the fourth pitch, we had no idea what we were in for.

Richard arrived at the belay on top of the fourth pitch, and we shared ideas of just where this line might go. I said left; Richard thought right. He was looking at a knobby diorite overhang which could lead to the headwall. We just couldn't tell due to the steepness. My idea was a less spectacular, left-leaning corner.

Suddenly it dawned on me that we were hanging on a two-piece anchor that consisted of a #4 Friend and a small brass nut. It hit home hard at that moment that we were isolated with no one around if we needed help. We finally decided to go right to the diorite headwall with Richard leading. Lots of moss started floating past me at the belay as I looked up and saw 200 pounds of shaking muscle. Next I heard, "Shit, this doesn't look good. Can't get any gear in. I'm scared."

My own heart erupted as my brain tried to come to grips with Richard falling on an anchor that most likely would not hold. He was finally able to get a piece in and then started placing a bolt. He was able to make it over the bulge onto a hanging belay where he sat in silence waiting for me, just below the headwall.

I followed the overhanging diorite pitch—maybe 5.10b—and arrived at the hanging stance where Richard had a pin-and-bolt belay. It was about 4 p.m., and we were barely halfway up the wall.

For the second time that day Richard took off on a suspicious-looking pitch. He left the belay and made it to a finger crack higher up in a corner, which looked to be 11a for about 50 feet. Then the real nightmare began. It was starting to get dark, and to finish this pitch required climbing past a series of big holes you had to step up and into to drill from. Leaving the relative safety of the crack behind, Richard started climbing, manteling and smearing from hole to hole.

Richard ended the pitch on a nice ledge, and I was starting to get cold in my cutoff jeans and sweater. I followed up in the twilight while Richard stood at the belay looking up in silence. By now we realized we were going to be benighted with no headlamps and no help. Richard took off on a 10a offwidth, anxious to summit but with four more pitches to the top. I looked down, but because of the overhanging diorite pitch, I couldn't see the lower wall at all. All I could see was air down to the water, and my heart fell.

I climbed in silence and darkness through the chimney, and Richard was quiet as I reached the belay. He cautioned me to be careful as he was hanging on a two-inch branch and a bad hex. Then we noticed the dark was receding as rays of light shone on us; it was the moon reflecting on the reservoir's water. We'd forgotten (or more likely never

Moon Shadows (IV 5.11a)



KELLY HESLIN

knew) that it was one of those huge and full autumn moons. The night was clear, and my spirit lifted as fast as a helium balloon. We quickly pushed on. A big pendulum to the right led to a nice ledge. We were both hoping and praying there were straight-in cracks to lead us to the summit.

I followed Richard's lead, and we arrived at a big ledge around 8 p.m. The fat man in the moon was smiling at our efforts. Lucky for us, it was splitters to the top, and Richard made short work of them. The second grade five on this wall was finished, and our dream of a first ascent had indeed come true.

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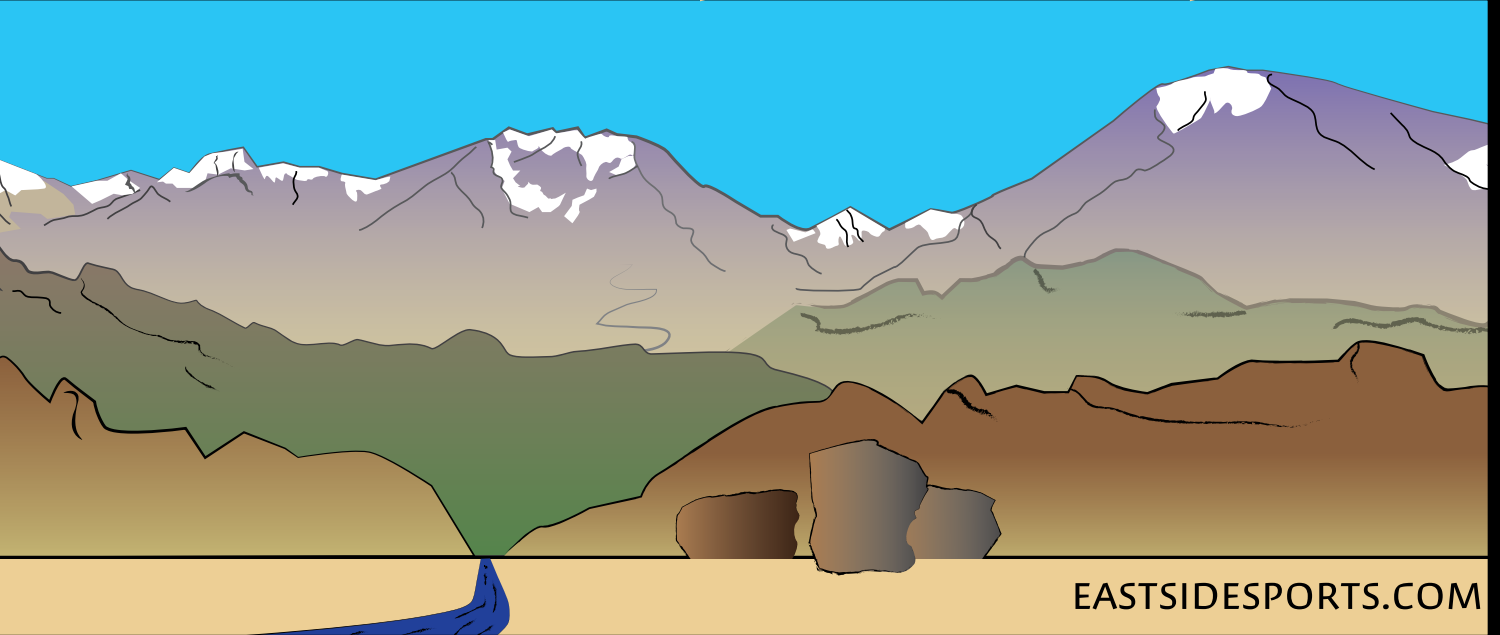
Though we were high on adrenaline and proud of our achievement, we still had the descent to think about: a crazy bushwhack off the top and down to the canoe, which we found still safely tucked in the rocks at about 11:30 p.m. Richard wanted to rest for a while, but I remembered the case of Miller waiting for us in the truck. So off we went across the glowing moonlit waters, following a golden path to finish off the day with some beers and all the stuff you talk about when you accomplish something like that.

We woke up to funny noises in the middle of the night; it was snow falling on the camper shell. We had no idea a storm was on the way, and a forced bivy on the wall was something we didn't even want to think about—a forced retreat with no headlamps even worse to contemplate.

We named the route *Moon Shadows* because the environment not only gave us a safe passage but also granted us a rich strike, a new vein for many to mine in the open country of Sonora Pass.

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LIZARD'S MOUTH THE SANDSTONE OF WEST CAMINO CIELO

WORDS + ANTHONY LAPOMARDO
IMAGES + ANTHONY LAPOMARDO & DEAN FLEMING

ANTHONY LAPOMARDO

Joel Ruscher fights for another lap on the area testpiece *King Dinosaur* (V7) as the sun gently sets over the Pacific and offers a fiery end to the day.

F

From a west-bound exit off Highway 154, the narrow one-lane West Camino Cielo road winds through dense brush, river canyons and ranchería homes towards a windy summit high above the city of Santa Barbara. Egg-shaped sandstone boulders surround West and East Camino Cielo roads, and the chaparral-covered hills beyond Highway 154 were once home to the thriving Chumash Native American tribe. The artwork at the famous Chumash Painted Cave State Historic Park remains one of the finest and most detailed examples of Native American rock art in California.

These hard sandstone boulders are littered across an open hillside with striking views of Santa Barbara and the Pacific. In the late 1960s, a pair of wandering local teenagers, including Steve Tucker, were credited for coining the area's unique name: the Lizard's Mouth. Today, the area is frequently visited by day hikers and college students looking to take in amazing sunsets over the Channel Islands. For climbers, the area surrounding the Mouth is one of the most easily accessible moderate sandstone bouldering locations in the state.

Although the entire hillside near Lizard's Mouth is covered with boulders that can easily be seen from the top of the Mouth, access to the most distant boulders often requires serious bush-whacking. However, a large concentration of problems can be accessed with a quick five-minute walk. Problems put up by Bob Banks, Steve Edwards and others are still chalked and waiting for visitors to paw at their textured slopers.

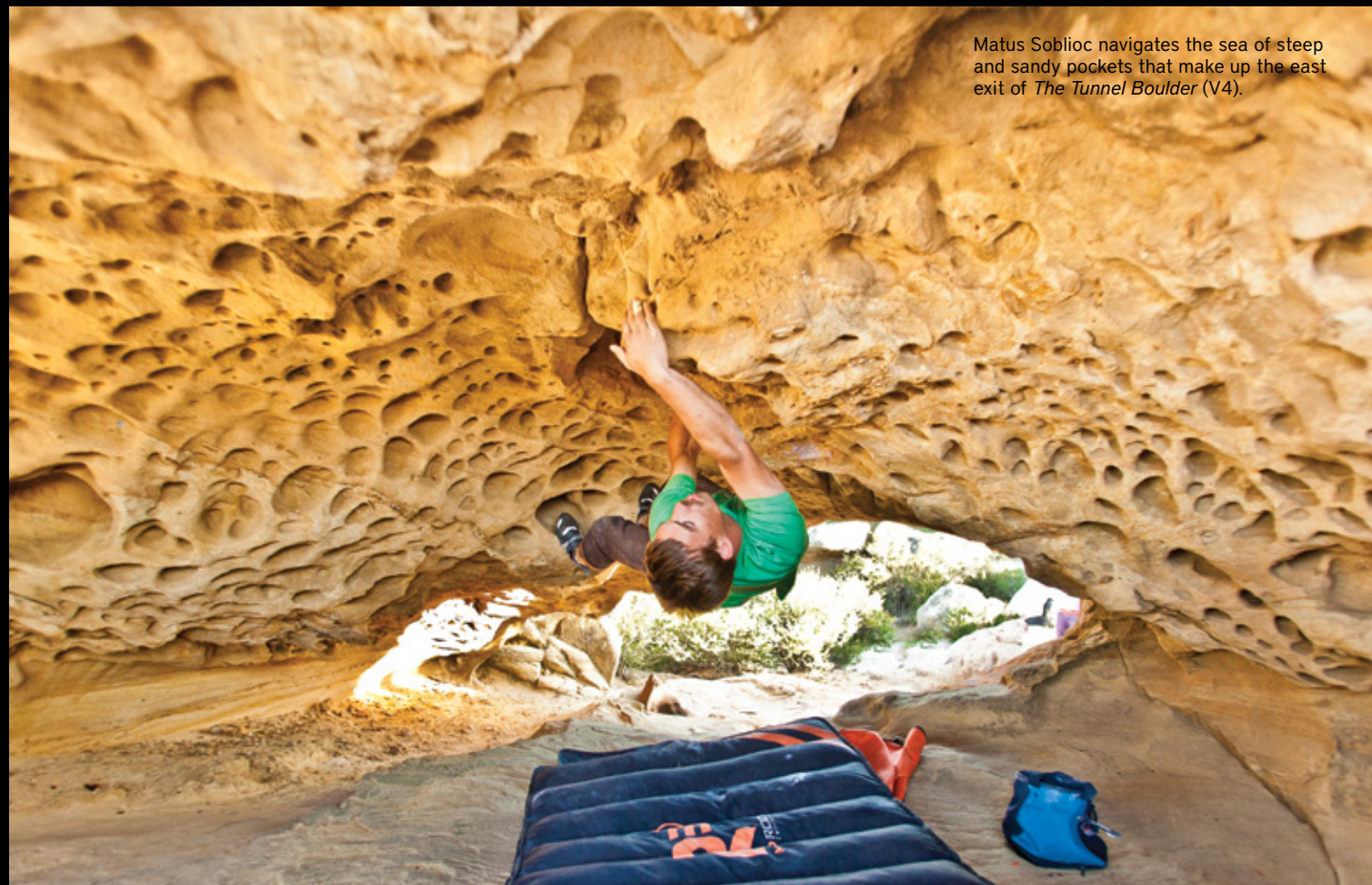
The dense clusters of boulders in the area offer just over 100 problems from V0 to V10. If you're looking for some excellent sandstone bouldering while traveling Highway 101 this summer, take a quick pit-stop and drive up to the Mouth; its outstanding sandstone bouldering and breathtaking sunset views are well worth the 15-minute detour.

ANTHONY LAPOMARDO




Joel Ruscher swings through one of the numerous variations at the Mouth as the sun sets behind the Channel Islands.

DEAN FLEMING



Matus Soblioc navigates the sea of steep and sandy pockets that make up the east exit of *The Tunnel Boulder* (V4).

A large, rugged sandstone boulder sits on a hillside covered in dense green shrubs. A person is climbing the boulder. In the background, a vast landscape unfolds, showing a body of water (the Pacific Ocean) and distant mountains under a clear sky. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

HARD SANDSTONE BOULDERS
ARE LITTERED ACROSS AN
OPEN HILLSIDE WITH STRIKING
VIEWS OF SANTA BARBARA
AND THE PACIFIC.

Jill Carpenter prepares to navigate the intricate sequence that guards the summit of the Lizard's Mouth highball *Lord of the Flies* (V0+). If you're not as bold as Jill, a single bolt on the summit makes for easy topropping.



Heidi Ruscher reels in the bald, sandy slopers of another unique Lizard's Mouth problem. Short and steep, the west exit to *The Tunnel Boulder* (V4) requires powerful contact strength.

ANTHONY LAPOMARDO



ABOVE Emily Fang finds an interesting warm-up on some unique huecos at the Sunset Boulevard Boulders. LEFT Eddie Ba attempts to move from sinker knee bars and killer huecos to the slabby, technical topout of *Fritz Bulge* (V6).



5-STAR ROUTES
Lizard's Mouth Traverse (V0+)
Lord of the Flies (V0+)
Call Me (V4)
Fritz Bulge (V6)
King Dinosaur (V7)

DEAN FLEMING (2)

THE BETA

GETTING THERE From the city of Santa Barbara, take Highway 101 north for five miles to the Highway 154 exit towards Cachuma Lake. After seven miles heading north on Highway 154, turn left (west) onto West Camino Cielo. After approximately seven twisty miles on West Camino Cielo, you will begin to see some obvious boulders on the east side of the road and some large pull-outs. Parking for Lizard's Mouth can be identified by several small pull-outs that are close to each other and a huge, obvious sandstone slab with a few boulders on the west side of the road. This is only a few hundred yards from a popular shooting range; if you reach the shooting range, you've gone too far. The boulders are on the west side of the road and mostly scattered along this slab and the bushy plateau just south of the slab.

WHERE TO STAY Camping can be found at many spots near Lizard's Mouth. Unfortunately, most of the campgrounds (including Live Oak and Cachuma Lake) are maintained by the County of Santa Barbara Parks Division and are very expensive—especially to reserve. A better option for camping is at Los Prietos Campground which offers sites for \$20 per night and only an extra \$5 fee to add a second or third car.

GUIDEBOOK PRINT *Southern California Bouldering* by Craig Fry and *Ocean's Eleven, Bouldering around Santa Barbara* by Bob Banks ONLINE/APP *Lizard's Mouth Bouldering Guide* by Russell Pyne (free on iTunes)

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The American Safe Climbing Association (ASCA) is a bare bones non-profit organization of dedicated climbers who replace unsafe anchors and reduce the visual and environmental impacts of climbing. To date, they have replaced over 11,000 bolts!

photo: Boone Speed. Chris Sharma on Tierra Negra, 9a+ Margalef, Spain

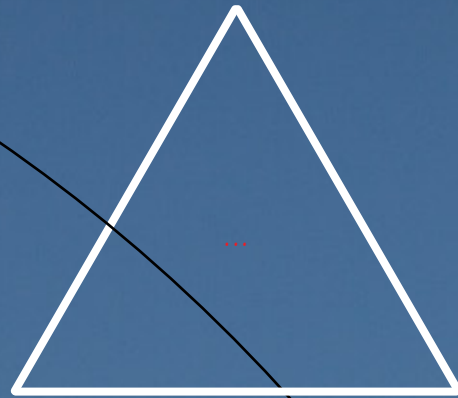
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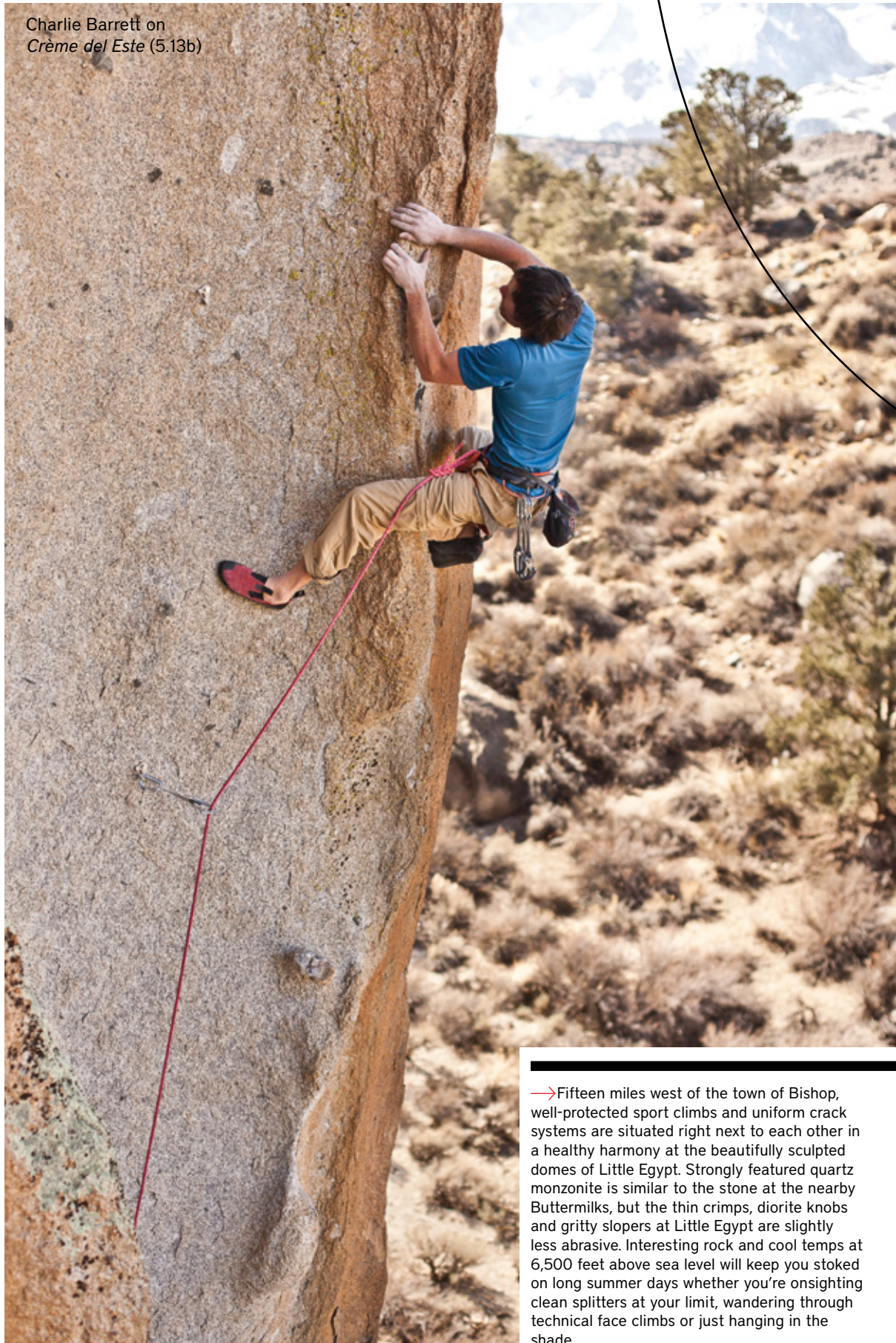
Little Egypt

WORDS + CHARLIE BARRETT
IMAGES + DEAN FLEMING & CHARLIE BARRETT

DEAN FLEMING

Charlie Barrett on *Welcome to the Dark Side* (5.10c)

Charlie Barrett on
Crème del Este (5.13b)



→ Fifteen miles west of the town of Bishop, well-protected sport climbs and uniform crack systems are situated right next to each other in a healthy harmony at the beautifully sculpted domes of Little Egypt. Strongly featured quartz monzonite is similar to the stone at the nearby Buttermilks, but the thin crimps, diorite knobs and gritty slopers at Little Egypt are slightly less abrasive. Interesting rock and cool temps at 6,500 feet above sea level will keep you stoked on long summer days whether you're onsighting clean splitters at your limit, wandering through technical face climbs or just hanging in the shade.

Dean Fleming on *Dog*
Day Afternoon (5.11d)



DEAN FLEMING

CHARLIE BARRETT



Jerry Dodrill on *For Those About to Rock* (5.10d)

DEAN FLEMING



5-Star Routes

Crème del Este (5.13b). Guarded by an awkward 5.10 flared crack at the bottom, this challenging line climbs up a granite tufa-like feature to a huge and heartbreaking last move that ends on an enormous chicken head.

Espresso Crack (5.11c). Reminiscent of the famed and amazing *Butterballs* of Yosemite, this slightly overhanging splitter finger crack was originally toproped by Kevin Leary and rated 5.12a. Eventually led by Vern Clevenger, *Espresso Crack* readily takes yellow and red Aliens and is one of the best pitches the Eastside has to offer.

For Those About to Rock (5.10d). This intimidating but safe pitch climbs an impressive undercling/roof past a secure piton

at the crux. Beyond the pin, excellent laybacking, underclimbing and jamming lead out a huge overhang to a two-bolt anchor.

Welcome to the Dark Side (5.10c). If you're here to clip some bolts, don't miss this amazing and sporty route. The line starts with perfect in-cut crimps on golden rock, and then heads up an exposed arete on a granite rib.

Chick Dead...Dog Killed It (5.9). This 300-foot mixed route climbs some of the best stone in the area. The line gains some nice exposure on thought-provoking face and crack climbing.



ABOVE Catrina Behling on *Warrior Waitress* (5.10a)
RIGHT Charlie Barrett on *Crème del Este* (5.13b)

The striking 13,000-foot Sierra Nevada Mountains loom over Highway 168 and the surrounding Owens Valley—a quick 20-minute drive from the scorching summertime heat in the town of Bishop. Highway 168 quickly gains elevation about three miles past Buttermilk Road as it winds west to the town of Aspendale, a small vacation spot and gateway to the mountains. Right as the road hits the 6,500-foot mark and just before Aspendale, you can make out a diminutive but inviting cache of rock out the driver-side window.

The short and steep approach to Little Egypt gives you a sense of what it was like to walk around Buttermilk Country before the bouldering boom took place in the early 2000s. After crossing a wide, snow-fed stream, you'll find lush rolling hills covered in fragile sage, rabbit brush and pinyon pine trees as you walk the path to a pristine and quiet climbing haven. Surmount the final steep section of trail to reach the crag and take in the astounding backdrop of the snow-capped High Sierra to the west, the desolate Owens Valley to the north and the rugged and ominous White Mountains to the east.

+++

Frontier Wall is not only the first cliff you come to at Little Egypt, but it's also the best with interesting and diverse climbing styles. You'll find cracks, fins, edges and knobs on almost every route here, from the easiest to the hardest. If you're looking to climb perfect splitters or incredibly featured granite sport climbs with black diorite knobs and in-cut edges, Frontier Wall has plenty of each. Many of the routes here are short and steep with bolted anchors and are conducive to doing laps—as long as your skin keeps up with your psych. Once you've experienced some of the most interestingly featured rock on the Eastside, relax in the sand on the cool perch on the right side just below *Espresso Crack* (5.11c) and *Classic Crack* (5.9).

A five- to 10-minute walk past Frontier Wall takes you to Lambada Dome and the Mussypotamia Wall where you'll find excellent long routes up to three pitches. Routes at the center of Mussypotamia like *Chick Dead...Dog Killed It* (5.9) and *Tricky Goldie* (5.11b) climb perfect patina

and huecos up a stellar 300-foot face.

The back walls of Mussypotamia and Lambada Dome do not see as much traffic as Frontier Wall, so it would be extremely rare to see another person—let alone wait in line for a route. For those desiring first ascents, the hidden faces behind Little Egypt's Frontier Wall still hold plenty of potential for new routes. Even the tall boulders below the cliffs will provide a few new hard and highball boulder problems.

Although Little Egypt is much smaller, the landscape has a very similar feel to Joshua Tree. If you enjoy wandering around a secluded environment searching for new routes, lapping some pump cracks or simply enjoying the view from a cool spot packed with climbs, Little Egypt should be high on your eastern Sierra ticklist. One-of-a-kind rock and a high concentration of quality lines make the steep approach more than worth it, but the views from the crag combined with the chilly river below make this area an exceptional summertime destination.

DEAN FLEMING (2)





CHARLIE BARRETT

LEFT Dean Fleming on *Cannibal* (5.11b)
BELOW Catrina Behling on *Warrior Waitress* (5.10a)



THE BETA

GETTING THERE From the town of Bishop, drive west up Highway 168 for about 10 miles. Just beyond the first yellow left-turn sign, turn left onto an unnamed paved road that takes you to a gated reservoir. Park on the side of the road near the gate—please do not park in front of the gate. Walk down the road past the gate about 200 yards to a small trail that winds down and right to the river. Cross the small bridge (not for dogs who are faint of heart), then stay on the trail headed up and left until it wraps right around the hill and you're at the crag. All the walls at Little Egypt are northwest-facing, so if you're looking to climb in the shade, get there before 3 p.m.

WHERE TO STAY Bishop has all the amenities you need: hotels, bars, restaurants, etc. There are a handful of campgrounds a few miles west of the Little Egypt parking area on Highway 168. Many of these campgrounds are free in the winter months but collect a fee in the summer.

GUIDEBOOK *Bishop Area Rock Climbs* by Marty Lewis and Peter Croft

DEAN FLEMING

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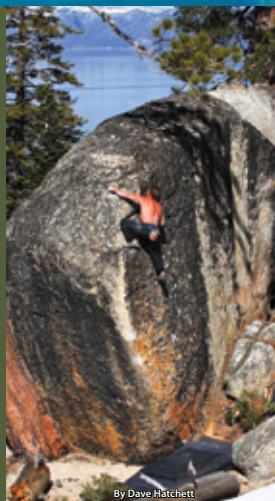
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Joel Zerr on Trojan Horse V7 Photo: Brian Sweeney



SUGAR FINE

WORDS + DAVE HATCHETT

MATTA CZAJKOWSKI



Dave Hatchett on *Chutes and Ladders* (V4)

On a Sierra winter day in 2001, Tom Anderson went on a ski tour up General Creek on the west shore of Lake Tahoe. After 30 minutes in a dense forest, he arrived in a beautiful open meadow freshly coated with snow. Looking to the south, he saw some inviting pillow lines waiting to be skied. As he approached the slope, he started to notice even larger lumps of snow everywhere, like cotton balls scattered in a field. Could these be boulders under the snow? They must be. He vowed to come back in the spring and have a look.

Luckily spring came early that year, and with a posse of friends and cleaning tools, Tom and his crew set out in hopes of finding a nice cache. They started across the meadow and soon came across massive amounts of standing water. Perhaps they had started their adventure just a few weeks too early. They debated coming back in drier conditions, but their curiosity was not quelled, so they found a semi-dry path through the meadow.

The first few boulders were small, but they were granite, featured and clean. The next cluster was dense and of proper height. To their amazement, almost every boulder had good-looking lines. By the time summer ended, the crew had established about 40 problems up to V6 on 12 boulders.

The word got out, and several climbers, including myself, sampled the goods. Then it sat virtually untouched for a long 10 years.

+++

In the spring of 2010, after climbing at Bliss State Park in South Lake Tahoe for the 20th time, our crew craved something new. I suggested Sugar Pine. I remembered it being really fun, and I had not returned since my original visit in 2000. As we walked across the meadow, the first thing I noticed was granite as far as I could see up General Creek Canyon. I saw rock for at least four miles past the lower boulderfield.

Our excitement grew as we came upon Tom's original discovery. Could they really have neglected something as simple as walking farther up the creek? We warmed up, and the problems were just how I remembered: perfect rock with perfect features.

I can still recall the next hour precisely, and what I saw will be forever burned into my retinas. We weren't 50 yards past Tom's high point, and I was already salivating like an adolescent teen on prom night. How could they not have seen all this other rock?! The farther we walked, the bigger and better the boulders looked. I stopped dead in my tracks under a beautiful granite egg with an incredible line jutting out its steep belly. I uttered the phrase "high priority," and the problem was named before it got sent. We pressed on for 200 yards and found another gigantic granite monolith; I called her the Beast, and the name stuck.

Over the next four months, it was full-on attack mode for anyone who wanted a piece, and the takers were not hard to find. By the end of summer we had cleaned close to 40 boulders and established more than 200 problems. Climbers were calling it Tahoe's Fontainebleau, and it definitely had the high concentration and quality to live up to that meaningful name.

We were in such a frenzy developing this initial cluster that most of us had forgotten about

all the rock that was up the canyon. On a rest day in late fall, I ventured up the single track. It didn't take long before I ran into more house-sized boulders. It was like I was reliving the day I first visited Sugar Pine, but I was astonished by the fact that the climbing looked even better!

The forest up there is more open, and the rock has formed in a different way. The boulders are incredible. First, I found Master-piece Theatre: a granite alcove with some of the most beautiful highball problems I have ever done—all side by side. I skirted the left side of the alcove and stared in awe at a clean, overhanging white wall covered in diorite knobs. It was later named The Dalmatian Wall, and it boasts plenty of rad lines with good landings and interesting movement.

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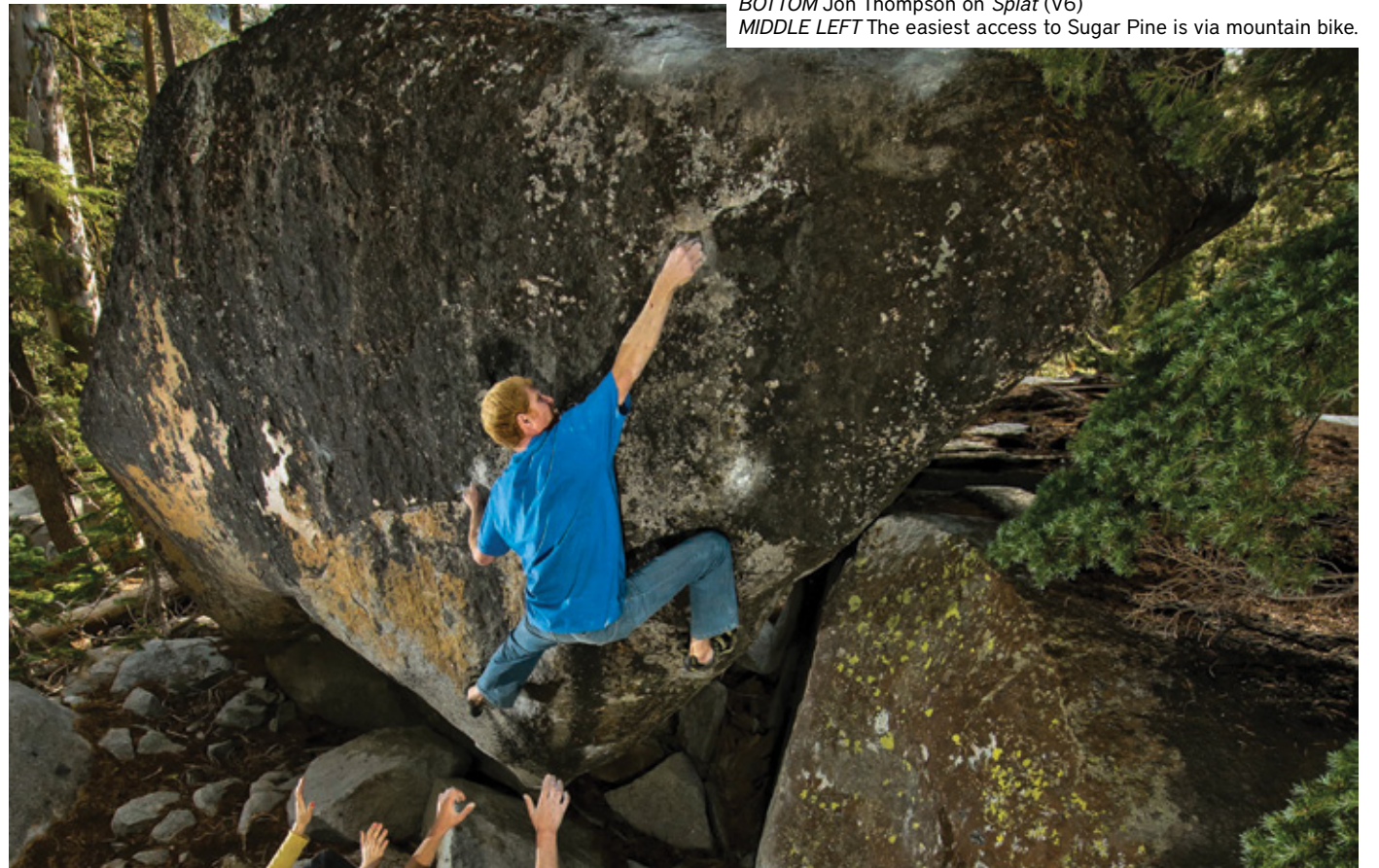
The story of the rest of Sugar Pine goes just the same: The farther up the canyon you walk, the more boulders you'll find. The rock is striking and covered with features. If you see a granite egg off in the distance and it looks like the right height, you can probably count on it being covered with incut edges and black knobs.

Currently there are more than 1,200 problems along General Creek; this makes up the Sugar Pine bouldering circuit. With some effort by eager developers, that number could easily grow to 2,000 or more in the coming years. It's hard to say for sure, but by the time everything is said and done, there could be more than 3,000 problems in this seven-mile stretch of the creek. If you want to climb some fantastic Sierra granite—and put up some new problems while you're at it—Sugar Pine is your place.

MARTA CZAJKOWSKA



UPPER LEFT Bear cub at Sugar Pine MARTA CZAJKOWSKA
UPPER RIGHT Jimmy Hayden on *Westside Slasher* (V4)
BOTTOM Jon Thompson on *Splat* (V6)
MIDDLE LEFT The easiest access to Sugar Pine is via mountain bike.



CLOCK WISE L-R MARTA CZAJKOWSKA, DAVE HATCHETT, GUSTAVO MOSER, MARTA CZAJKOWSKA

SUGAR PINE

Sugar Pine is best separated into seven distinct bouldering areas: Anderson Alley and Sugar Pine 1 through 6. Here are quick descriptions of each area and some basic approach information.

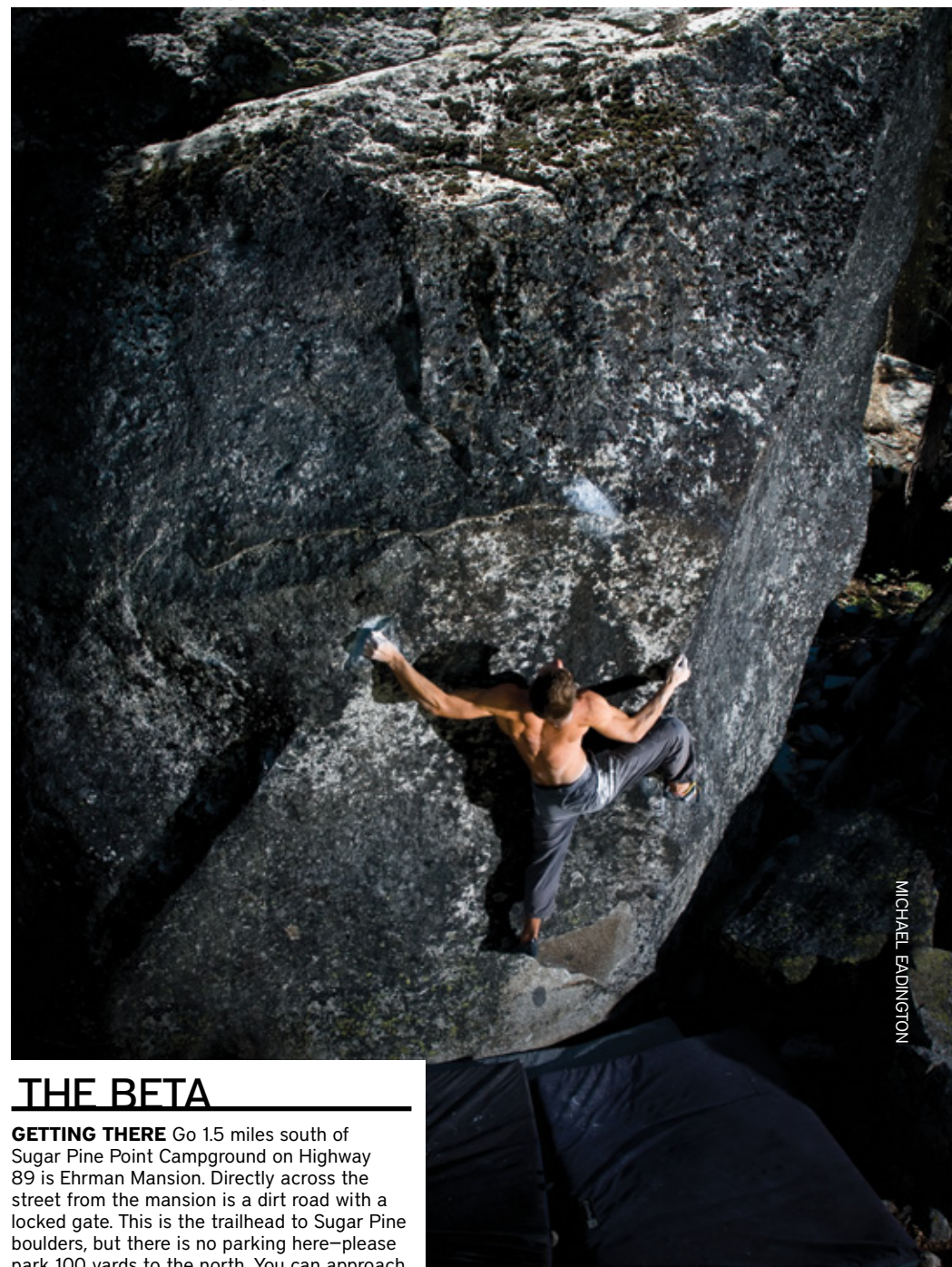
Anderson Alley (86 problems, VB to V9)
Tom Anderson discovered this first, as it's the first to melt out in spring—sometime around June 1 in an average-snowfall year. The problems are good, but the rock gets better at the upper areas. There are a lot of fun, moderate routes and one hard line named *Sneak Attack* (V9), which is a definite must-do. The Alley is the gateway to Sugar Pine 1, and it's your best bet if you don't have four-wheel drive. A mountain bike is recommended but not mandatory. The approach time is 30 minutes by bike or 45 to 60 minutes walking.

Sugar Pine 1 (257 problems, VB to V11)
With a lot more to offer, the boulders here are bigger and host harder problems. High Priority, The Pepsi Challenge, the Conspiracy Boulder and the Beast boulder are a few of the gems. The approach time is 30 minutes by bike or 45 to 60 minutes walking.

Sugar Pine 2 (204 problems, VB to V11)
The forest opens up a bit, and the boulders get even more highball; however, there are plenty of smaller problems to be done. The approach time is a solid one hour with a mountain bike, probably 1.5 hours without—but the world-class climbing, serenity and scenic beauty will make you forget about the long slog.

Sugar Pine 3, 4, 5 & 6 (500+ problems, VB to V11)
To access the following four areas, a 4x4 truck is needed for the McKinney Rubicon Trail. Once done with the driving, it is a casual 30-minute walk through an aesthetic forest to the first boulders. Sugar Pine 3 has a bit of a Yosemite/Tuolumne Meadows feel with boulders perched on granite slabs. They have a great variety of patina edges, diorite knobs, arêtes and cracks. Once at Sugar Pine 3, General Creek turns from an east-west orientation to north-south. To approach Sugar Pine 4, 5 and 6, simply walk on General Creek Trail, which parallels the water. The approach time for these upper areas is 30 to 90 minutes.

Paul Ottis on *Focal Point* (V10)



MICHAEL EADINGTON

THE BETA

GETTING THERE Go 1.5 miles south of Sugar Pine Point Campground on Highway 89 is Ehrman Mansion. Directly across the street from the mansion is a dirt road with a locked gate. This is the trailhead to Sugar Pine boulders, but there is no parking here—please park 100 yards to the north. You can approach Anderson Alley and Sugar Pine 1 & 2 by foot, but a mountain bike will make your day much easier. The trail is mainly flat, so the ride is easy and will save you time and energy. Sugar Pine 3, 4, 5 & 6 are all up the canyon so the best approach is by driving on a rugged 4X4 trail called McKinney Rubicon. You can cut off the trail before the terrain gets really bad, but you do need a solid 4X4 truck like a Toyota Tacoma to make it. Subaru wagons need not apply.

WHERE TO STAY Sugar Pine Point State Park offers tent camping and RV sites. The park is located off Highway 89 in Tahoe.

GUIDEBOOK *Bouldering Lake Tahoe, NW Edition* by Dave Hatchett

5-STAR ROUTES
Showtime (V4)
Event Horizon (V6)
High Priority (V8)
Shampoo Squeeze Sit (V9)
Focal Point (V10)

Andrew Burr

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terrex fast x

jess roskelley looking for adventure down south

Outside 2013 Gear of the Year Award hiking boot winner the Terrex Fast X GTX features a TRAXION™ outsole with a CONTINENTAL® rubber compound for superior grip. Available in three versions: a mid-height model with GORE-TEX® and a low-cut version with or without GORE-TEX®. Add in the Icefeather Gore-Tex® jacket for ultimate comfort and protection.



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