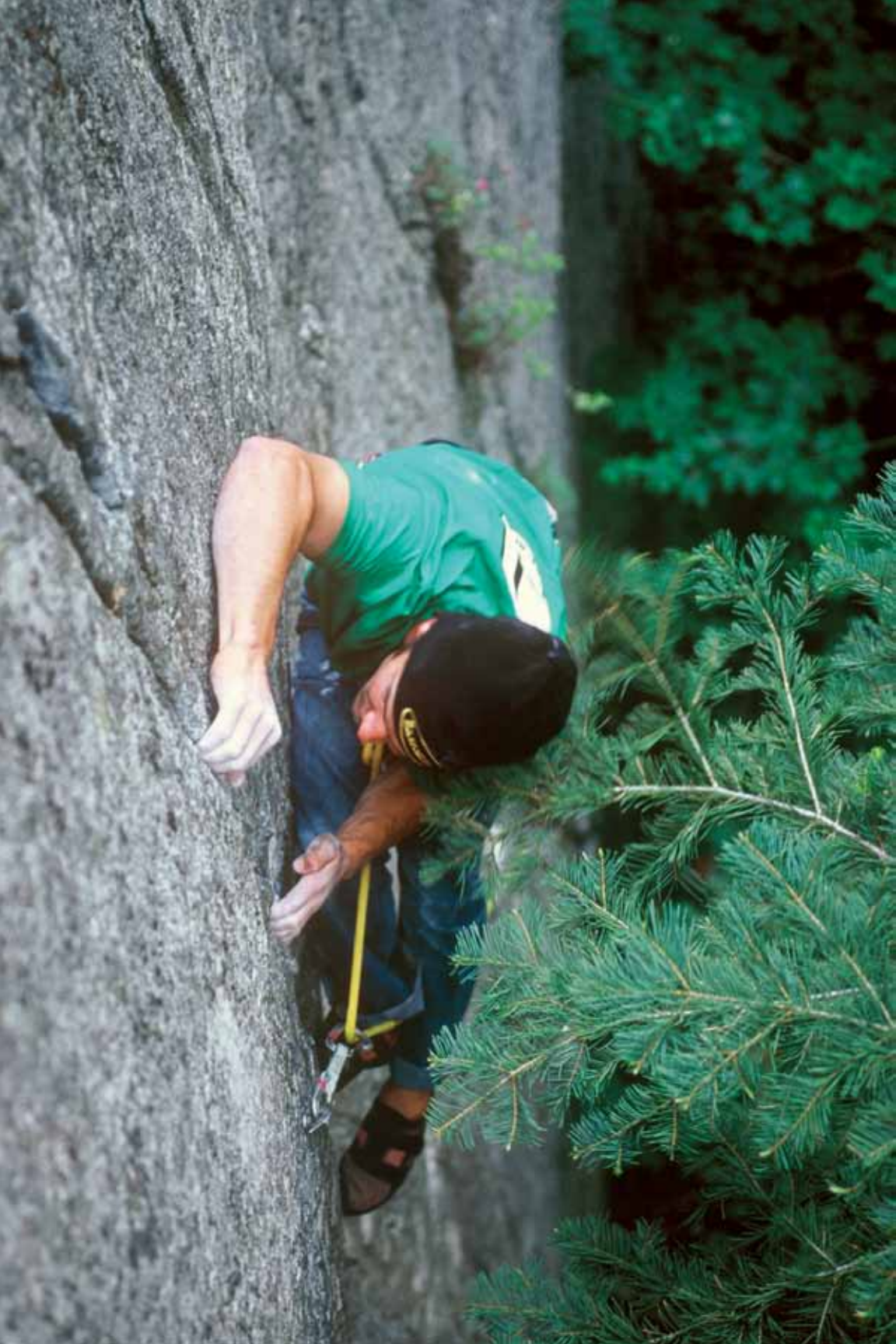
A photograph of a person with long blonde hair, wearing a blue tank top and shorts, climbing a dark, textured rock face. The climber is positioned on the right side of the frame, reaching up with their right hand. A rope is visible, attached to the rock and running down. The background is a blurred view of a forested area.

YOSEMITE SPORT CLIMBS AND TOP ROPES

Chris Van Leuven
Chris McNamara

Over 200
Climbs!





Yosemite Sport Climbs and Top Ropes

Chris Van Leuven
Chris McNamara



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Cover Photo: Heidi Wirtz and Chris Van Leuven climbing at sunset, The Great Escape (5.11c) 5 pitches, Chapel Wall. *Photo: Andrew McGarry*
Back Cover Photo: Scott Frye climbing Wicked Gravity (5.12c) Killer Pillar. *Photo: Jim Thornburg*
Opposite inside cover page: Chris Van Leuven climbs Double Dragon (5.12d) Chapel Wall. *Photo: Justin Lawrence*
Contents photo: Larmie Duncan and Ivo Ninov climbing at the Knobby Wall. *Photo: Andrew McGarry*

Van Leuven, Chris
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Warning!

Climbing and bouldering are inherently dangerous sports in which severe injuries or death may occur. Relying on the information in this book may increase the danger.

When climbing you can only rely on your skill, training, experience, and conditioning. **If you have any doubts as to your ability to safely climb any route in this guide, do not try it.**

This book is neither a professional climbing instructor nor a substitute for one. **It is not an instructional book. Do not use it as one.** It contains information that is nothing more than a compilation of opinions about climbing in Yosemite Valley. **These opinions are neither facts nor promises.** Treat the information as opinions and nothing more. Do not substitute these opinions for your own common sense and experience.

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Inspiration: Doodle Biscuit (aka Jake the Dog)



Foreward

By Conrad Anker

The granite of Yosemite is defined by its magnitude and the high quality of rock fractures. Climbers intentionally seek out cracks for the holds and protection they offer. Cragging is similarly orientated towards fissures. With names like Crack a Go Go and Crack of Doom is there any other type of climbing in the Valley? Yes there is.

Hidden between these classic cracks on blank faces is a world of excellent climbing. Face climbing developed within the strong framework of Yosemite's traditional heritage. The runout and insecure Hall of Mirrors pushed the standard. And when the rock was approached with a sport climbing mindset, the routes brought the protection. Fortunately there is a vast amount of rock that became accessible once quality of protection was emphasized. With beautiful rock, athletic moves and amazing location, Killer Pillar and Parkline Slab brought another facet to Yosemite's face climbing heritage and potential.

In this book, Chris Van Leuven charts the vertical world of face climbing in Yosemite and offers a tome of research on these hidden gems. California climbers with their need for efficiency, low impact itinerant lifers, and international visitors seeking the quintessential Yosemite experience on every variety of rock – all have new climbs to explore.

For the majority of climbers their very first climb and initial learning curve includes a fair amount of time top roping. But because of its novice connotations and low risk equations, top roping is not the wildest branch of the climbing tree. Yet jokes aside, there is a splendid art and purity of movement in top roping because there is less equipment between you

and the rock. Top ropes open up routes that would otherwise require a bunch of bolts. And while bolts can be good, their frequent use is not the favored sentiment in Yosemite. Chris shares pure top rope climbs so that all climbers – from Yosemite dirtbags to international visitors – can benefit and enjoy.

Preface

By Chris Van Leuven

When Chris McNamara approached me to write this book in the fall 2009, I couldn't say no. The goal was simple: return to my stomping grounds —Yosemite Valley— and revisit my favorite sport climbs and top ropes, plus explore new routes in the process. Climbing now became my job.

My personal experiences with climbing sport, trad, and later big walls, dates back to my first trip to the Valley in 1992. A small crew of fellow Bay Area climbers (including Chris Mac), then age 14 and new to the climbing lifestyle, set out to explore. I soon found myself visiting the Valley as much as possible. My first few years of climbing in Yosemite, usually during weekend trips as I was still in high school, were generally spent bouldering or trying not to kill myself on trad lines. Sometimes we would find sport climbs like Drive By Shooting (5.12a) and take a stab at them, but alas, they were too hard.

We dreamed of finding well-bolted 5.10s and below, or wickedly steep sport routes to whip off, but back then there was no specific information available about these sorts of routes. Guidebooks of the era focused on long trad and big-wall routes, the likes of which we were not ready to take on.

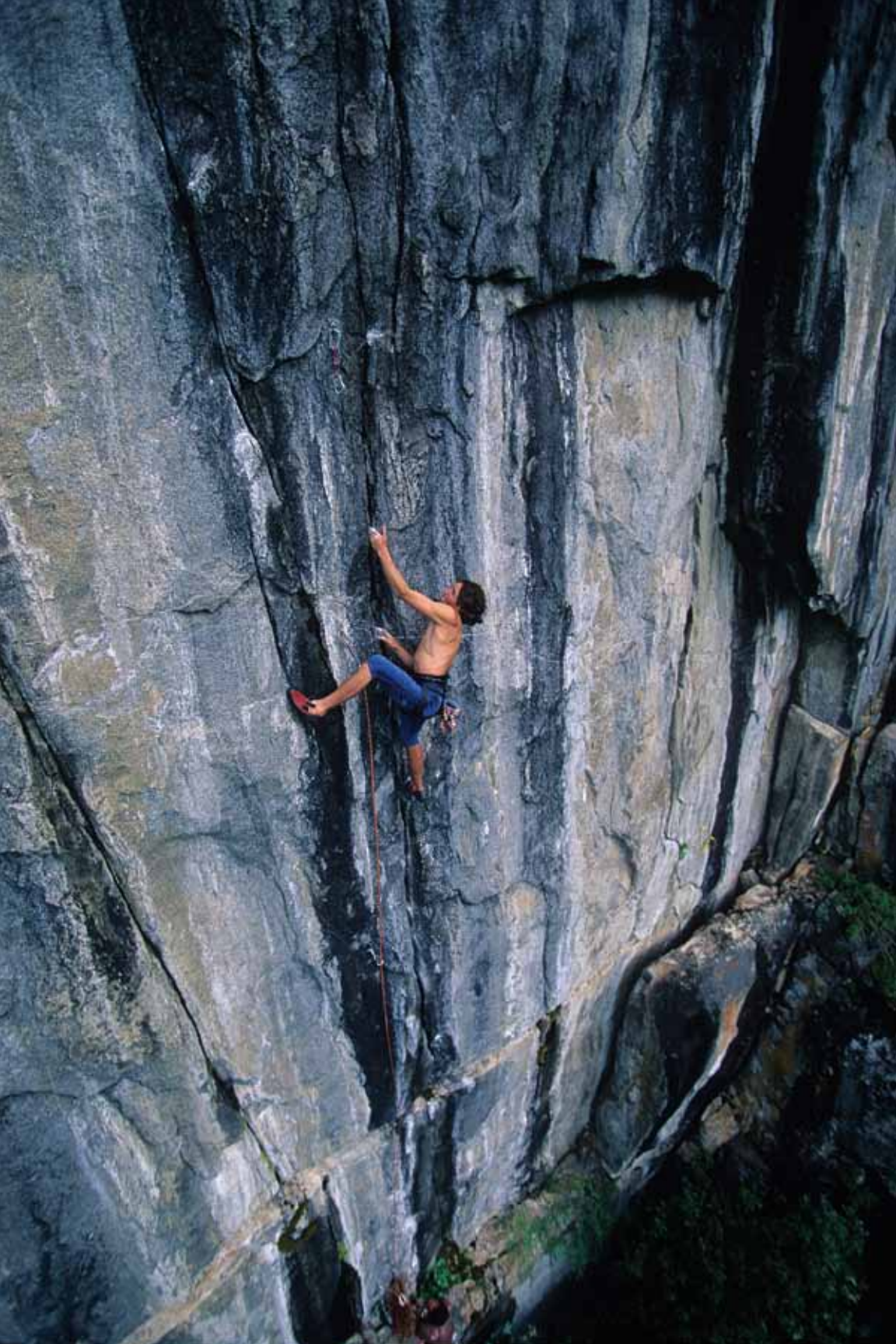
I moved to the Valley fresh out of high school in 1995 and stayed there for nearly a decade. Over these years – some of the most memorable of my life – I'd climb nearly every day with amazing partners. Many routes we found weren't worth digging the mud off of or trusting our lives to the rusty quarter-inch bolts that served as protection. I became obsessed with the Chapel Wall, its easy access, its fine quality and its challenging lines. We'd even go here on rainy days, tossing laps on the driest routes in the Valley: Heithenistic Pursuit (5.10b), Gold Dust (5.10d), and New Wave (5.11d).

In 2006 I reluctantly left Yosemite to explore career opportunities. I was over the odd jobs offered by the concession service and I wanted to be in Yosemite to climb, not to work. Four years later I'd finally had enough of "this real-world stuff." I longed to climb rocks everyday, all day—like any sane climber. Thus, when Chris Mac approached me about this book, naturally I was thrilled.

My daily duties now included calling up ex-locals and present locals for research and first-hand Beta from their FA experiences. I climbed, revisiting my old favorite crags and new crags alike, whenever possible. The goal: create this book so Yosemite climbers can spend more time on rock and less time aimlessly tromping through bushes, eroding the cliff bases and catching poison oak or waiting in line.

I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at just how many routes can be safely climbed without extensive trad knowledge, a huge rack, and off-width skills. Sport climbing and top roping in Yosemite is, unlike it's archetypal trad brethren, often a casual outing on the rock, dancing your way up granite faces. But it's worth noting that bolting on lead is de rigeur in the Valley, thus many of the sport routes have a "sporty" edge. You have to learn how to "hip check" before you slide down a slab after gripping out and taking the whip. You learn to "zen out" when climbing here, especially when finding yourself in a potentially dangerous situation. Just because it's bolted, it's not necessarily safe or "sport." After all, this is Yosemite Valley.

I hope you have as much fun using this book and exploring the fine sport climbs and top rope routes that Yosemite has to offer as I had researching and writing this book.



Introduction

By *Chris McNamara and Chris Van Leuven*

Yosemite Valley contains literally thousands of routes played out in a breathtaking granite landscape. Climbing here ranges from casual to extremely committing. The goal of this section is to make sure the logistics of traveling to and staying in Yosemite don't get in the way of your awesome adventure. Here you will find useful information that will make your visit even more enjoyable. However, for more updated and extensive information, visit the Yosemite Beta Page on the SuperTopo web site: www.supertopo.com/climbingareas/yosemite.html

Getting There

Air Travel

The closest major international airports are Oakland International (3.5-hour drive) and San Francisco International (4-hour drive). Of the two, Oakland is preferred because it's less chaotic and 30 minutes closer to Yosemite. Sacramento International is also a 4-hour drive from Yosemite but has fewer connecting flights. Fresno Yosemite International is only a 3-hour drive but offers the fewest flights. Since all of these airports are about the same distance from Yosemite, shop around for the best fares. Some climbers also fly into Los Angeles International, which is a 7-hour drive to Yosemite.

Train Travel

The train is not the fastest way to Yosemite but it's a cool way to travel. From Emeryville (a 20-minute bus ride from San Francisco) take Amtrak to Merced and board the Via Bus to Yosemite. There are three runs from Merced in the morning and one in the evening. The cost is \$20 round trip from Merced to Yosemite. From Los Angeles, Amtrak has a bus to Bakersfield that connects with a train to Merced. From there take the Via Bus to Yosemite.

Bus Travel

Short of having a car, the bus is the best way to get from a major airport to Yosemite. From Oakland, San Francisco, or Los Angeles take the Greyhound Bus to Merced and then the Via Bus to Yosemite. Plan a full day of travel if riding the bus. From June to November you can only reach Yosemite from Mammoth by the YARTS bus. You can check the latest fares and departure times at via-adventures.com and yarts.com.

Car Travel

There are four state highways that access Yosemite: 120 from the west, 120 from the east, 140 from the west, and 41 from the southwest. The fastest access from the San Francisco Bay Area is 120. Highway 41 is the best option if coming from Los Angeles or Fresno. Highway 140 is the lowest elevation road and offers the best winter access if 120 and 41 have chain controls (chains are rarely required on 140). Highway 120 from the east (aka The Tioga Pass Road) offers the best summertime access from Bishop, Utah, Nevada, and eastern states. However, this road closes after the first major winter storm (usually in November) and doesn't open until the snow melts (usually late May). To access Yosemite from the east in winter, you must get to the west side access roads by driving north through Tahoe or south through Bakersfield.

Driving times and distances to Yosemite Valley

From	Time (hours)	Distance (miles)
Boulder, CO*	20:00	1,254
Fresno, CA	2:20	90
Truckee, CA	4:00	240
Los Angeles, CA	6:00	311
Bishop, CA*	3:20	95
Oakland, CA	4:00	172
Sacramento, CA	4:00	174
Salt Lake City, UT*	12:00	707
San Francisco, CA	4:00	192
Tuolumne Meadows	1:30	60

*Driving times are 2 to 4 hours longer when Tioga Pass is closed, usually from November through May.

Mike Lewis on Final Cut (5.12b) at Public Sanitation Wall. Photo: Jim Thornburg

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Getting There

You may rent a car at any airport or major city. International climbers who stay in the United States for more than a month often buy a used car in San Francisco or Los Angeles and sell it (or scrap it) at the end of their trip. To find a cheap car, look in the local papers or on www.craigslist.org.

Many people stay in Yosemite without a car. Renting a car is expensive and it's possible to reach most climbs by the free park shuttle bus. Also keep in mind that gas is not available in the Valley – try to arrive with a full tank.

When to Climb

Spring and fall have the best climbing weather. Summer climbing is usually uncomfortably hot. Winter can be perfect but can also have consecutive weeks of severe Sierra storms. A dry November is our favorite time in Yosemite – crisp temps and no crowds. For current road and weather conditions call 209-372-0200 AND check the many online forecasts.

Seasons

November–March The Valley empties of climbers and tourists. During this time there is usually an equal number of clear and stormy days. When bad weather rolls in, things get nasty very quickly. Pacific storms usually bring three days of heavy snow or rain but can last up to a week or longer. Most cliff faces dry fast but a few can take days or weeks to dry out. If a two-week storm system rolls in, it's time to hit the slopes at Badger Pass in Yosemite or head to Joshua Tree. Also, if camping in the Valley during the winter, prepare for long, cold nights.

April–May 15 The Valley is still uncrowded. It's warmer, but there is the same 50/50 chance of getting either good or miserable weather. If you are traveling from far away this is a risky time to visit, especially if you only have a week or less of vacation.

May 15–June Warm weather and big crowds of both tourists and climbers. Temps will start to get too warm for the hard projects. At some point in June the mosquitoes show up and can be nasty.

July–August The Valley is still crowded with tourists, but most climbers head to Tahoe or Tuolumne for cooler weather. Valley floor temperatures are often in the 90s and 100s.

September–October The Valley is crowded with tourists and climbers. The weather usually begins as warm and then cools sometime in October. Most days in October are great for bouldering. The first winter storm usually arrives in late October or early November.

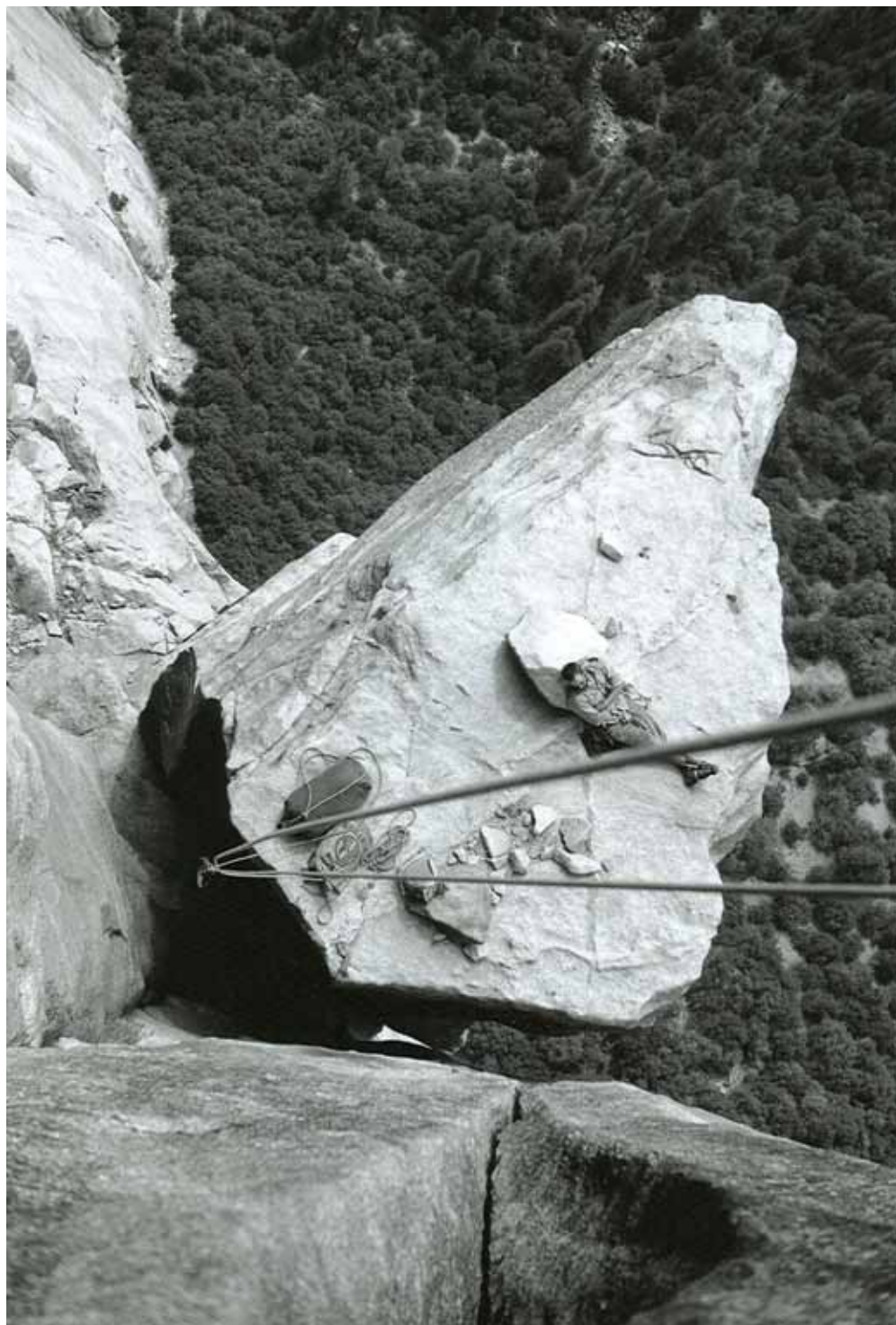
Month	Average rainfall	Max/min temp in degrees F
January	6.2"	49/26
February	6.1"	55/28
March	5.2"	59/31
April	3.0"	65/35
May	1.3"	73/42
June	0.7"	82/48
July	0.4"	90/54
August	0.3"	90/53
September	0.9"	87/47
October	2.1"	74/39
November	5.5"	58/31
December	5.6"	48/26

Staying in the Park

Yosemite Valley is a small tourist town filled with buildings, roads, cars, and people. The bad news is that the restaurants, stores, and motel-like rooms take away from the natural beauty of the park. The good news is that these same things make the Valley quite accommodating. You will find pizza, burgers, groceries, climbing gear, a medical clinic, motels, swimming pools, rafts, bike rentals, and if you're unlucky, The John Muir Hotel, aka, jail.

Camping

Camp 4 is the historic center of American climbing. It is also Yosemite's only walk-in campground and the cheapest place to stay. No reservations are required, but during peak season (May–October) expect a long wait to secure a campsite.



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Zach Milligan on Bucket Brigade (5.11d) Killer Pillar. Photo: Chris Van Leuven

The cost is \$5 per person per night. Each six-person site is a 20-foot-square patch of dirt with fire pit and picnic table. If there are fewer than six people in your group you will share the site with others. There is a bathroom and a sink in the middle of Camp 4, but no hot water or showers. A bulletin board next to the Ranger Kiosk offers the chance to find climbing partners, friends, and (used) climbing gear. All other Yosemite campgrounds require reservations during peak season. Call 800-436-PARK to make reservations or go online to: <http://reservations.nps.gov>

There are a variety of places to camp outside the park boundary on Forest Service land. Check out the Forest Service web site for more info: www.r5.fs.fed.us

Lodges and Cabins

For the big bucks, you can stay at the Ahwahnee Hotel, or for a more modest price you can crash in a motel-like room at the Yosemite Lodge or a canvas-topped cabin in Curry Village. Also, vacation homes are located just minutes out of the Valley

in Foresta (with views of the summits of El Capitan and Half Dome). Check out the awesome cabins at www.4yosemite.com or call 800-723-4112 and ask about the climbers' specials. In the summertime your best bet is to make reservations well in advance of your visit. Spaces fill up early for lodges and cabins in the tourist season of June to September.

Poison Oak

Poison oak grows sporadically throughout the Valley, especially in the Lower Merced Canyon west of the 120/140 junction. Have someone show you what it looks like and be especially careful in the winter when poison oak loses its leaves and is difficult to see.

Internet

I don't know how I survived in Yosemite without an iPhone, laptop, and strong WiFi connection. But I did, for ten years. These days open WiFi is available at several locations throughout the Valley, including the Pizza Loft/Village area (this area also has a strongest cell connection), and the

Internet and Rules

Yosemite Lodge (but you must be a paying guest registered with the Lodge to get the password).

The Ahwahnee – THE swanky hang for dirt bags – no longer offers password-free Internet. The only place officially free Internet is offered in the Library/Girls Club which is near the Visitor's Center in Yosemite Village. Like many free things in life, time is limited and long waits are expected. If you really, really need Internet – like now – and are willing to pay out the tukhus for it, you can pay at the Lodge lobby or Village Deli, for \$0.25/minute.

Rules to Keep in Mind

Yosemite is a great place to stay but if you don't know about the important park rules, a shadow can be cast over your trip. Here are a few guidelines that are useful to know:

- Rules and laws are in place to protect the park from the people, the people from the park, and the people from the people.
- If you come in contact with a Law Enforcement Ranger (LER), be courteous and polite.
- At Camp 4 each person can stay a maximum of seven days between April 30 and September 30 and a total of 14 days throughout the whole year. The rangers keep track of your name in Camp 4 and require an ID when you register.
- Camping out-of-bounds is illegal and is subject to a fine. Violations range from \$75 to \$150. Camping at the base or top of cliffs is considered out-of-bounds.
- Camping illegally in Camp 4 is the surest way to get you busted (and quickly drain the contents of your wallet) in the Valley. Don't even think about it.
- Parking in Camp 4 without a pass is not permitted. The rangers often check this lot and the fine can be quite pricey (around



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Rules and Food

\$95). The same applies to the Yosemite Lodge parking lot and other lots that are not designated as day-use. Parking in the Curry Apple Orchard is unregulated, as are many other locations throughout the Valley. Also, do not sleep in your car; you'll regret it and will pay a hefty fine.

- Keep yourself and vehicle clean. For your vehicle, this means all trash and food is thrown away or properly stored in a bear box. Do not leave food or smelly items in your vehicle, i.e. mints, toothpaste, deodorant, Pez dispensers, etc. If a bear breaks into your car (often by ripping your door down) not only will you be out the food now in Yogi and Booboo's belly, you will likely have your car impounded, receive a fine, and be responsible for damages to your vehicle. Plus, leaving food in your vehicle endangers the wildlife (also an additional fine). FYI: Bears love beer. As for keeping yourself clean, that's just for everyone's general pleasure.
- Bear boxes in Camp 4 are for registered campers only. The rangers will occasionally confiscate food from bear lockers if they think it belongs to someone not staying in the site.



Todd Bartlow following Scrubby Corner (5.11a) Mecca.
Photo: Chris Van Leuven

- Do not leave trash in bear boxes. This is a good way to get the boxes removed.
- Slack lines are only permitted inside Camp 4. If you decide to set one up, all trees must be adequately padded to avoid damage. Other lines set up elsewhere will be confiscated if not broken down within 24 hours (they will be considered abandoned after that point).
- Any gear left unattended for more than 24 hours can (and usually will) be confiscated.
- Drinking in public in Yosemite is legal. However it is not okay to drink and drive or be publicly under the influence. These are arrestable offenses.
- Yosemite is federal land and so all federal laws apply and any violation of the law is a federal offense.
- A complete park management compendium is available here: <http://www.nps.gov/yose/parkmgmt/upload/compendium.pdf>

Food

Groceries are available in the Valley at the Village Store, Curry Village Store, or Lodge Store, but it is much cheaper to buy groceries in Oakdale, Merced or Oakhurst on the drive to Yosemite.

There are a variety of restaurants in the Valley that serve everything from pizza and deli sandwiches to the saltier stuff at the Ahwahnee Hotel. Here is a quick listing of some of the Valley restaurants by location:

Yosemite Lodge: "The Caf" (cafeteria), Mountain Room Bar and Grill.

Yosemite Village: Degnan's Deli, The Loft (pizza and pasta), The Village Grill.

Curry Village: Pizza Deck (with bar), buffet, Taqueria.

Showers and Laundry

Showers cost \$3 (towel included) and are available at Housekeeping Camp and Curry Village. Laundry is available at Housekeeping Camp.

Climbing Gear and Climbing Guides

The Mountain Shop (209-372-8396), located in Curry Village, is one of the premiere climbing shops in The West. From bouldering pads to haulbags to the latest route Beta, they have it all.



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Looking out over Half Dome and Mt. Starr King from Glacier Point in winter. Photo: Joe Link

You can get climbing instruction, arrange for a guide, and also rent gear from the Yosemite Mountaineering School and Guide Service. There are also a variety of climbing shops in the San Francisco Bay Area where you can purchase gear. In San Francisco: Mission Cliffs and The North Face. In Berkeley: REI, Wilderness Exchange, Berkeley Ironworks, and Marmot Mountain Works.

If you are coming from the east side of the Sierra, then visit Wilson's Eastside Sports in Bishop or Mammoth Mountaineering Supply in Mammoth – both have an extensive selection of rock climbing and mountaineering gear.

Bears

Bears have damaged cars for as little as a stick of gum or an empty soda can. If you want what's yours to remain yours, remember three things about bears: they are hungry, smart, and strong. Bears are responsible for close to a thousand car break-ins every year in Yosemite, as all the shattered glass in the parking lots will tell you.

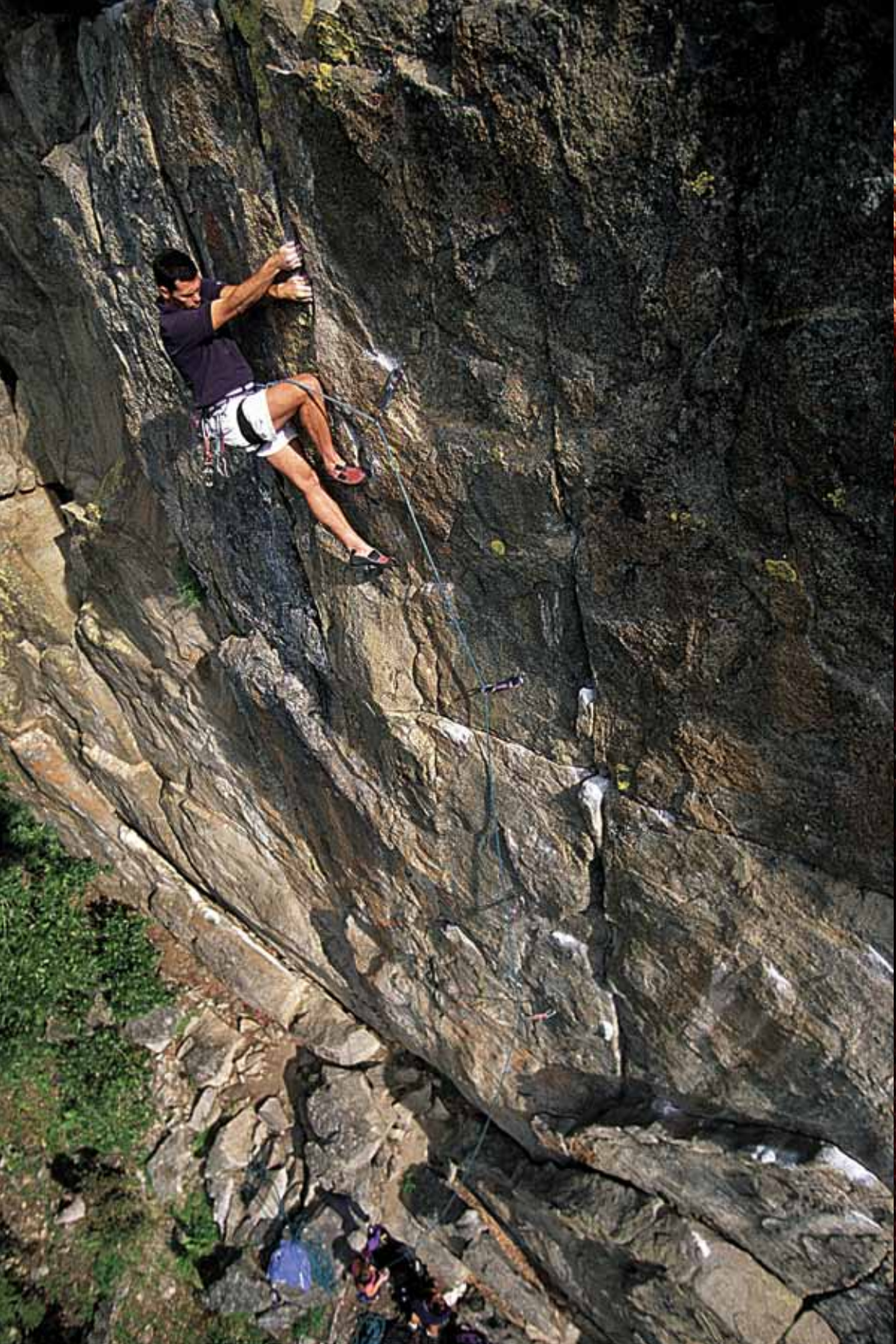
When bears smell food, even if it's locked in your trunk or glove compartment, they shift into high gear. They get turned on by odors of containers that used to contain

food, and for toothpaste and sunscreen.

Bears don't even need to smell food; they see something like a grocery bag or an ice chest, and associate it with food. In fact, they don't need to see that much. If a bear notices clutter inside a car, he'll think, "I wonder what's under all that stuff?" And go to work.

Breaking into a car is a trivial exercise for a bear. He inserts his claws into the slot at the top of the door frame and pulls down, no sweat. Then he climbs in and trashes the car. You can't outsmart or out-muscle a bear. Stash your food in one of the bear-proof storage lockers provided by the Park Service at all campgrounds and throughout the Valley. Proper food storage is essential to protecting your property and, more importantly, the life of the bear. When a bear starts to endanger people it may be killed by the Park Service. Visit www.nps.gov/yose/bears.htm for more info.

Next Page: Steve Edwards sending Afterburner (5.11c)
Public Sanitation Wall. Photo: Jim Thornburg





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Valley Sport Climbing: The Chapel Wall

By Pete Takeda

“I never knew there was any sport climbing in Yosemite.”

– Ben Alexandra, 2010

By the mid-to-late 80s, climbing in Yosemite was passing through an era of grade advancement and breathtaking new route development. From a cragging perspective, the majority of obvious, easily accessible crack climbs had been freed, 70s testpieces had been free-soloed, and new routing was saddled with now-irrelevant concerns about “hang-dogging” and lycra, and the ethical distinction between placing a bolt from a stance or a hook. The approved, then-contemporary hardman style featured tube socks, and stiff, high-top boots. It focused on ascending incipient, discontinuous cracks and often-crusty faces whose relatively low angle lent a fussy/techy difficulty – rather than the athletic/pumpy style we equate with today’s steep, bolted testpieces. Looking back now, it seems so quaint.

This era was also a gray zone in the timetable of the bigger climbing tides. It was the cusp of the sport climbing “revolution,” the gray zone between widespread acceptance of rappel bolting. One of the first rap-bolted, semi-sport climbs is the “airy” Wheat Thin (5.10c) by Peter Haan and Jim Bridwell in 1971. Over the next several decades steep sport areas were established like Killer Pillar, (5.11d-5.12c), The Knobby Wall (5.10b-5.13b), The Chapel Wall (5.11d-5.13b), Public Sanitation (5.10d-5.13b), Mecca (5.10c-5.14), and more. They were put up in a myriad of styles, putting Yosemite on the sport climbing map.

The development of sport-climbing routes in the Valley was non-linear and more of a general trend rather than a “movement.” Its proponents were diverse

and too numerous to name. The general trend had its origin with on-lead stance drilling of slabby face climbs. As climbers sought steeper and steeper routes, which often required judicious cleaning, hooks, aiders, pins, and other forms of aid became the norm for first ascensionists. A good example of development using such tactics is the Chapel Wall, with first ascensionists logging countless seasons of wire-brushing, on-lead hand drilling of 5/16” button-head bolts, and the transformations of old top rope routes.

Though these tactics adhered to the letter of the traditional “ground-up” approach to establishing new routes, this tactic became a loophole for first ascensionists that sometimes left much to be desired. For example, some climbs wandered in seemingly drunken lines of bolts that ended at arbitrary two-bolt belays. Others routes resembled bolt ladders – which sometimes they were – while others were noteworthy for the amount of scrubbing time and the number of broken wire brushes required to force a line through an otherwise unremarkable swell of lichen-crusting granite.

Amazingly, some routes still shined despite their less-than-mega-classic appearance, and attracted enough repeat traffic to evolve. Generally speaking, Chapel Wall seemed to avoid the worst transgressions of chipping, bondo reinforcement, heavy-handed retrobolting and the odd bolt-on hold found on other Yosemite sport era cliffs such as Taft Point. But then again, Knobby Wall was chipped and it is about as pedestrian as any wall gets.

By the late 80s to early 90s, climbing standards for Yosemite sport routes were approaching mid-5.13. The quality range was sweetest in the 5.11 to mid-5.12 range, as exemplified by Drive by Shooting (5.12a), The Great Escape (5.11c, five pitches), and Ninety Six Degrees in the Shade (5.12c). It was during this stage of Yosemite’s sport-climbing evolution – immediately before Ken Yager first bolted chunks of sanded hardwood onto the crude wooden lattice in his El Portal garage, thus creating Yosemite’s first indoor-climbing wall – that

the development of steeper terrain became imperative to keep pace with emerging trends toward steep sport climbing. During this time, my friends and I would drive to Yager's garage – past El Cap, The Rostrum, The Cookie Cliffs, and Arch Rock – to instead climb on the plywood and pallet framework in order to build up to steeper, harder sport climbs.

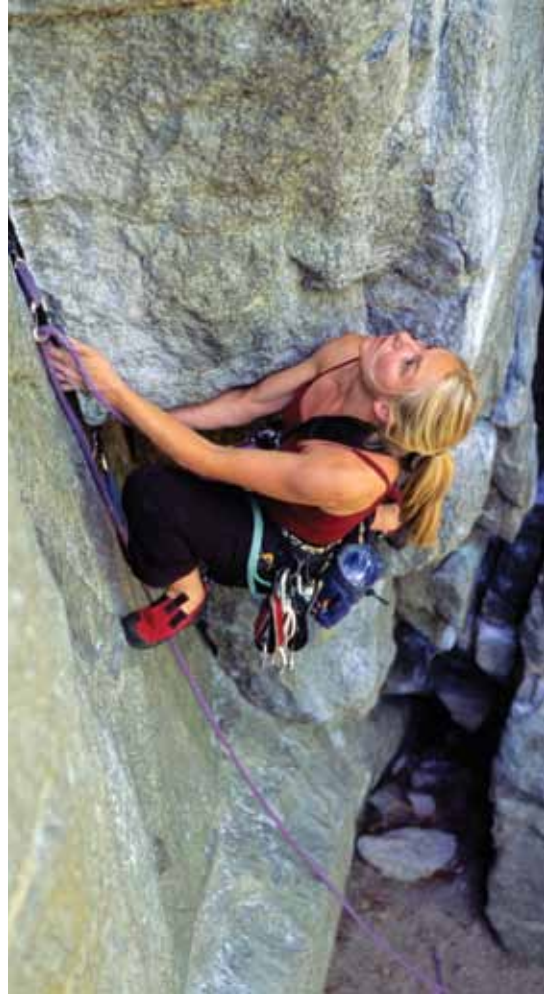
While we would eventually discover Jailhouse Rock, located two hours from the Valley near the town of Sonora, back then we'd take turns belaying each other, scrubbing, hooking, drilling, and scrubbing, alternating this sequence with the odd free-climbing move. After a few all-day belay sessions, "the privilege" of helping to establish new lines lost its luster for Valley hardmen. Would-be first ascensionists were forced to recruit belay slaves from the ranks of marginally experienced climbers, soon-to-be-ex-girlfriends and Curry Company busboys.

These shenanigans adhered to the ground-up ethic of the day, but it soon became apparent that the new, steeper terrain could be more efficiently developed by cleaning and bolting new lines while on rappel, with no sacrifice of the risk ethic.

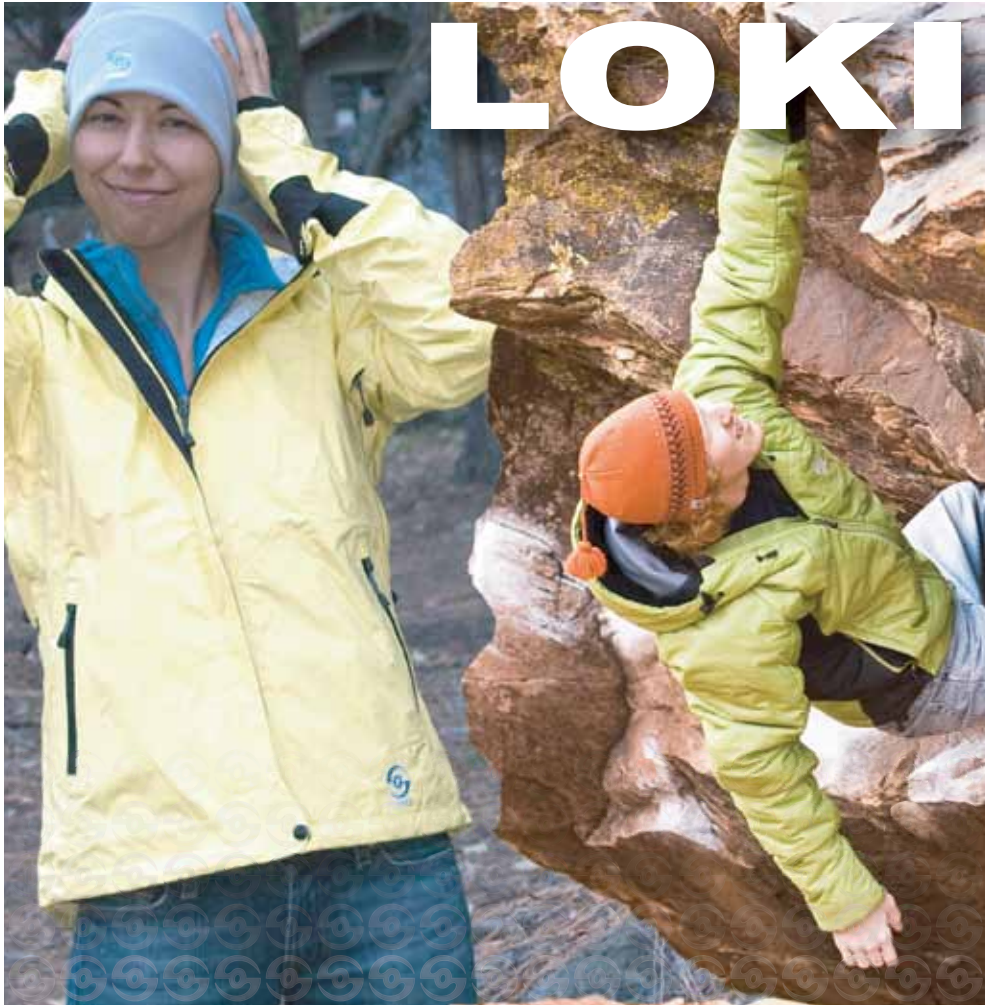
The relevance of areas like the Chapel Wall was perhaps a stepping stone, or consolidation of grades, and as training for the best Yosemite has to offer. Ironically, the far more contemporary efforts to free Grade VI's – formerly the province of hooks and aiders – in their entirety (starting with Lynn Hill's free climb of The Nose in 1994), have produced more hard pitches than one would find at the Valley's accessible sport crags.

When considering these routes from a macro perspective – and considering today's big wall free climb testpieces – the sum total of Yosemite's sport routes might be perceived as a mere sideshow. At best, they helped to set the stage for the main event, namely the proliferation of hard, free El Cap routes. Indeed, Yuji Hirayama used the Chapel Wall to warm up for his onsite attempt on the lower pitches of El Nino (VI 5.13b, AO).

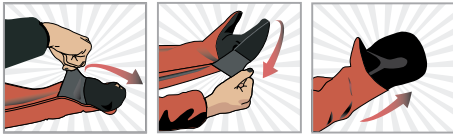
Yet despite Chapel Wall's seemingly blip-on-the-radar status, there is something satisfying about its ease of access, its peaceful ambience and the cool shelter it offers from the summer sun. And it's one of the few Valley crags where one can enjoy a bolted, stacked crag, conveniently situated near to the parking lot.



Laramie Duncan leading Heithenistic Pursuit (5.10b) Chapel Wall. This excellent line can easily be top roped and stays dry during moderate rain. Photo: Andrew McGarry



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Gear for Top Roping

Basic Gear for Top Roping

At www.SuperTopo.com/gear we have provided free reviews and recommendations for our favorite top roping gear. At a minimum you will need the following for top roping with someone who has the anchor gear and rope:

Shoes

Harness

Chalkbag (optional)

At first you can probably borrow some of these from a friend. But fairly quickly you will want to buy your own stuff. Many gyms and stores offer complete packages where you can get about everything you need for just over \$100.

Before you purchase gear, check out our extensive comparison gear reviews at www.SuperTopo.com/gear

We choose the top products, put them through intense comparison tests, tell you what is the best, and what is the best value.

Basic Gear for Top Rope Anchors

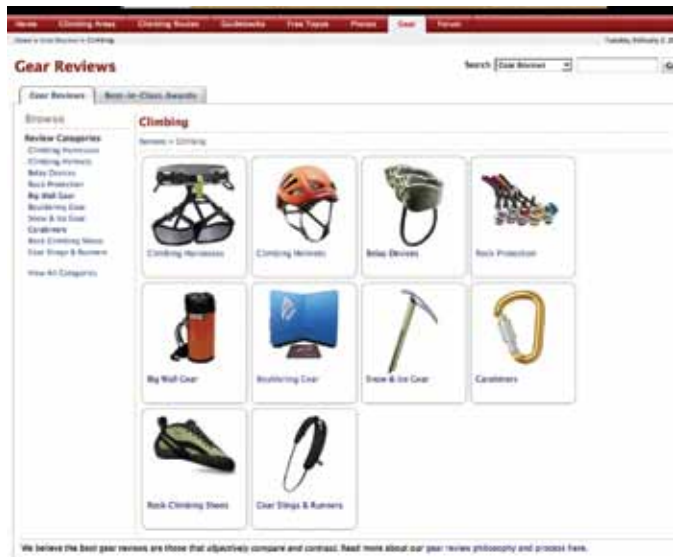
Checklist for bolt, tree, and boulder anchors

- 1 rope
- 1 ropebag (optional but recommended)
- 2 locking carabiners
- 4 to 10 non-locking carabiners
- 4 to 8 24-inch slings
- 1 cordalette
- 2 20-foot sections of 1-inch webbing
- Blanket or pack to protect edges

Gear anchors

- All of the above plus
- 1 or 2 sets of stoppers/nuts
- 1 or 2 sets of cams from 0.5-4 inches

The best way to stagger your gear purchases is to start by only buying the exact gear that is needed for your favorite local climbs. As you expand the climbing areas you visit, expand your rack.



Topo Symbols

Right-facing corner		Roof		Bolt	
Left-facing corner		Ledge		Rappel anchor	
Straight-in crack		Slab		Face climbing	
Groove		Belay station		Pine tree	
Arête		Pitch length		Oak-like tree	
Flake		Optional belay		Bush	
Chimney		False belay		Knob	
				Hole	

Notes on Rack

- “nuts” refers to any nut, stopper, or chock. “micro” = #1, 2; “sml” = #3-5; “med” = #6-8; “lrg” = #9-13 (BD Stopper number)
- for cams, “2 ea .75-1.5” means bring two sets of all sizes between .75” and 1.5”. Check the cam size chart to see which cam corresponds to which crack size.

Notes on Topo

- “belay takes .6-1” means while leading the pitch save enough .6-1” cams and nuts to build a natural anchor.
- a number next to a tree is its height.

Topo abbreviations

- ow = offwidth
- lb = lieback
- p = fixed piton
- R- = somewhat runout
- R = runout (dangerous fall)

Metric system conversions

- 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters
- 1 foot = 0.305 meters
- 100 feet = 30.5 meters

Overview graphics

Low-clearance dirt road	
High-clearance dirt road	
Road or State Route	
Federal Highway	
Hikers' trail	
Climbers' trail	
Cross-country travel	

Star Ratings

- ★★★★★ - undisputed classic
- ★★★★ - excellent climb
- ★★★ - good climb
- ★★ - okay climb
- ★ - barely included in this book

Yosemite's Best Sport Climbs and Top Ropes

Here are the top not-to-be-missed routes in Yosemite for three different grade ranges. Page numbers in parentheses.

5.6–5.8

- Pot Belly, 5.8, Knob Hill (30)
- Mockery, 5.8, Five and Dime (32)
- West Slabs, 5.6-5.8, Swan Slab (41)
- Oak Tree Flake, 5.6, Swan Slab (42)
- Church Bowl Lieback, 5.8, Church Bowl (47)
- Makayla's Climb (P1) , 5.8, Pat and Jack Pinnacle (82)
- More Mental than Mantel (P1), 5.7+, Pat and Jack Pinnacle (82)
- Dark Side, 5.7, Cookie Sheet (88)
- Slipstream, 5.8, Cookie Sheet (88)
- Secret Agent Dward, 5.7, Parkline Slab (97)

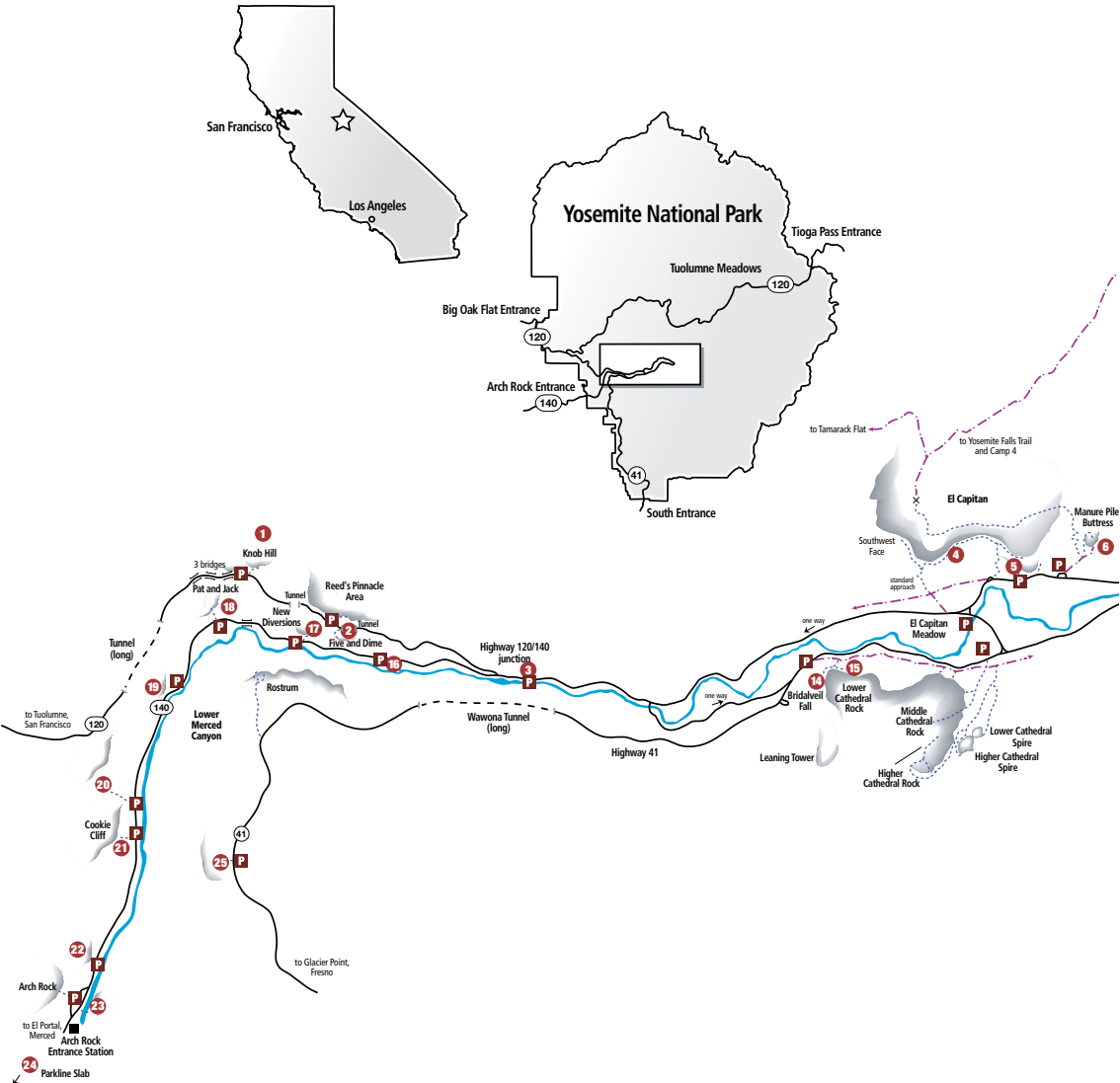
5.9–5.10

- Highway Star, 5.10a, Highway Star (31)
- Five and Dime, 5.10d, Five and Dime (32)
- Simulkrime, 5.9, El Cap Base (34)
- Just Do Me, 5.10d, Dan and Jerry's Playground (36)
- Crystalline Passage, 5.10b, Endless Summer Wall (38)
- Gidget Goes to Yosemite, 5.9, Endless Summer Wall (38)
- Hayley's Comet, 5.10a, Manure Pile (39)
- Grant's Crack, 5.9, Swan Slab (42)
- Cold Fusion (P1), 5.10c, Glacier Point Apron (52)
- Sanitary Engineer, 5.10d, Public Sanitation Wall (55)
- Gold Dust and Heithenistic Pursuit, 5.10, Chapel Wall (58)
- 76° in the Shade, 5.10c, Lower Cathedral Rock, North Buttress (64)
- Mecca Lite, 5.10c, Mecca (71)
- Generator Crack, 5.10c, Generator Station (76)
- Boneheads, 5.10b, Pat and Jack Pinnacle (82)
- The Flake, 5.10b, Knobby Wall (85)
- The Unchaste, 5.10b, Parkline Slab (100)

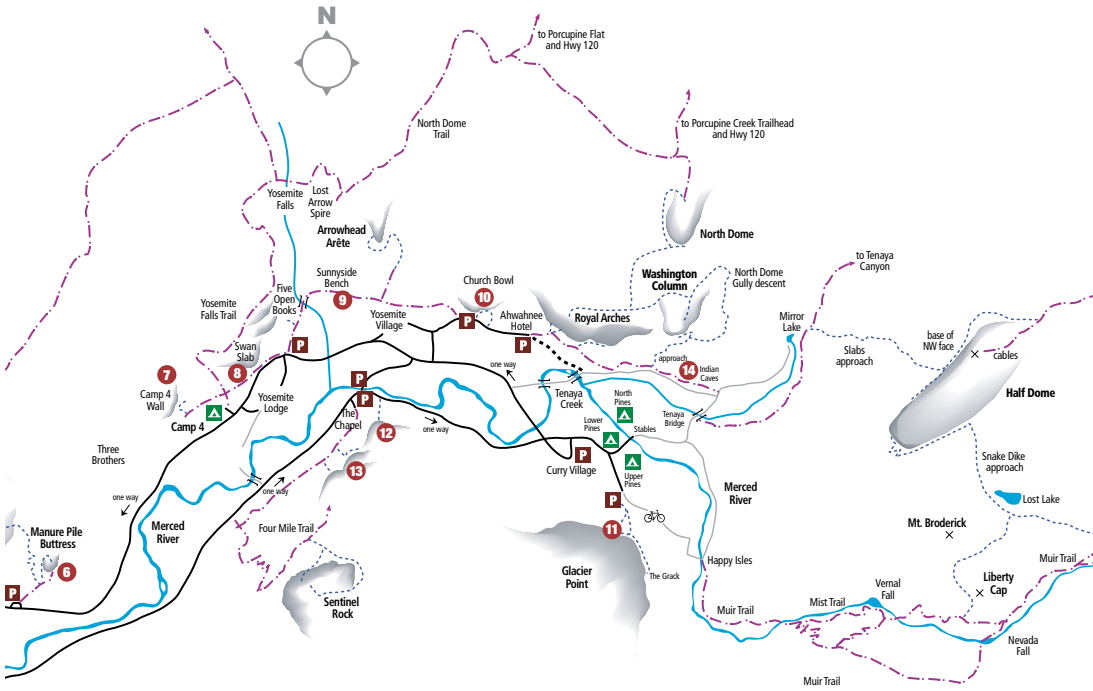
5.11–5.12

- Dreams of Thailand, 5.11d, Dan and Jerry's Playground (36)
- Energizer, 5.11b, Church Bowl (47)
- Bitches' Terror, 5.11a, Church Bowl (49)
- Zoner, 11b, Glacier Point Apron (52)
- Afterburner, 5.11c, Public Sanitation Wall (55)
- Tucker's Proud Rock Climb, 5.12b, Public Sanitation Wall (55)
- Drive By Shooting, 5.12a, Chapel Wall (58)
- Berlin Wall, 5.12b, Chapel Wall (58)
- Mr. Pinkeyes, 5.11d, Chapel Wall Left (60)
- 96° in the Shade, 5.12c, Chapel Wall Left (60)
- The Great Escape, 5.11c, Chapel Wall (62)
- Mac Daddy, 5.11a, Lower Cathedral Rock, North Buttress (64)
- King for a Day, 5.12a, Mecca (70)
- Mechanical Advantage, 5.12a, Mecca (71)
- Scrubby Corner, 5.11a, Mecca (72)
- Unnamed, 5.11a, Pat and Jack Pinnacle (82)
- Meltdown, 5.12c, Knobby Wall (85)
- Shaft of the Penetrator, 5.12a, Knobby Wall (85)
- Roadside Attraction, 5.12a, Roadside Attraction (95)
- Short Circuit, 5.11+, Short Circuit (97)
- Dangling Chad's Direct, 5.11a, Parkline Slab (106)
- Symon the Dog, 5.12a, Parkline Slab (108)
- The Hundredth Monkey, 5.11b, Killer Pillar (110)
- Fun Terminal, 5.12a, Killer Pillar (110)

Yosemite Sport Climbs and Top Ropes Overview Map



Yosemite Sport Climbs and Top Ropes Overview Map



Yosemite Valley TR and Sport Areas

1. Knob Hill	30	14. Lower Cathedral Rock	64
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8. Swan Slab	41	21. Cookie Cliff	91
9. Sunnyside Bench	44	22. Roadside Attraction	94
10. Church Bowl	46	23. Short Circuit	96
11. Glacier Point Apron	50	24. Parkline Slab	98
12. Public Sanitation Wall	54	25. Killer Pillar	109
13. Chapel Wall	56		