

Whitney-Gillman

Whitney-Gillman 5.7 II+, 2007

I first climbed this route last year with IMCS guide, Freddy Wilkerson. We left promptly from the "trailhead" parking lot, hiked down the path about 10 minutes, through the woods, followed the rock cairns through the boulder field and started climbing by 930; He of course wearing only his approach shoes.

Nearly a year later, I had to return and climb this classic again, sans climbing guide. I googled Whitney-Gillman Ridge , studied 5-7 descriptive accounts of previous climbs and after all that I still managed to take the wrong approach path into the bushwack from effin hell. This is where this description begins.

The paved path offers an easy start to climbing WG, right from the parking lot. Follow this bike path after signing in at the climbers sign in box for about 10 minutes until you arrive at a picnic table area and the rock cairns to the trail for that side of the cannon cliffs and WG will be on the right a few more feet; you can miss this good sized cairn unless of course, for some moment of craziness since you have only studied these descriptions for a month of Sundays, you took the trail to the right, 500 feet before.

The trail follows a gently sloping path up until you break through the woods a short time later to see an immense bolder field for 180 degrees; the rock cairns marshall a path to the base of Whitney-Gillman ahead 40 minutes away, more or less.

There are 2 starts for this climb which can be seen as you approach. At the inside of WG, (north face base), you can see a general weakness that goes up called the gash. This starts just inside of the base from the bottom of the arête. The other start is just south of the arête at the base on the front face. Climb up about 5 feet or so, to an obvious rocky clearing that would be used for a belay area at the obvious crack corner system.

P1 We geared up right at the start of the front face and start on crack corner and place a small cam in the horizontal above. The section is well protected. As you progress upward you can go either to the left or to the right, they end up at the same beefy ledge. There are ample cracks to build anchors.

P2 Continue up starting at the crack system there with an inverted cam left there to die years ago. You can clip the pin there above it but **DO NOT CLIMB** the crack that it is in. I think this is the area that had a crack with 2-3 tri-cams left to die there many years ago. Move to the right onto blockier moves and continue to the next giant ledge.

P3 At this ledge you can go right and see the start of the 5.8 crack variation, and look up and to the left at the rough "V-groove", obvious when you are actually soaking in it. Looking straight up at the top of the smoothness of the steep 5.8 variation will be start of the pipe pitch and left left of that is where you will belay from; it is hard to describe here, but when you climb up and to the left, through the v-groove, this is where you will end up. From the belay, climb up a few feet and look up and to the left and you will see a rough v-groove going up and to the left.

At this ledge you will see a steeper section up the right with the short 5.8 crack variation on the lower section and the steeper more exposed section that hangs out in the black dike airspace, just below the pipe on the pipe pitch.

P4 The pipe pitch at this belay you'll see the double parallel leaning cracks that is the start. The pipe move is up to the right towards the chasm below. Climb up, keep your knee out of the crack and angle up to the right. Great places for pro, you'll want them in as you see the pipe and what's below-NOTHING. You won't be in position to finish this thing until you climbed over that rock fin and sorta standing over the pipe..Do not be obsessed with the pipe, the exposure or anything...look around for places for feet and hands...for feet on the right is a small fin. Above you are 3 pins, until most recently-now only 2,, I clipped them all with quick draws and between 2 of them I shoved a BALL NUT. The moves are all there. Go up and left on to the face again; do not go right, or right of the pipe. Continue up a short distance towards the arête and triangular ledge and rest. You could belay from here, but continue up to a really nice belay ledge and rest.

P5 Climb up through a short section of class 4th but don't get used to it. Oh, first of all, look up and see the pointyness of the end of this climb and see the little rooey features others describe as 5.7 cruxy moves, I climbed left of this section and avoided this face altogether...ok, I've never done these..As soon as you start talking cruxy moves, my bowels start rumbling. Anyway, climb up and angle left over a slabby area until you get to a left facing kinda area with an inside crack. Head up this thing and look for pins along the way. You can just start to see vegetation above which is where you are headed for. Look for pins but BEWARE, the rock in this area is very loose. Pound on every rock before pulling on it, even if it is a key hold...there is one last set of pins that are 2 close together then a single one on the edge...once you have cleared these, if you clear these, you are on easy street...…

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