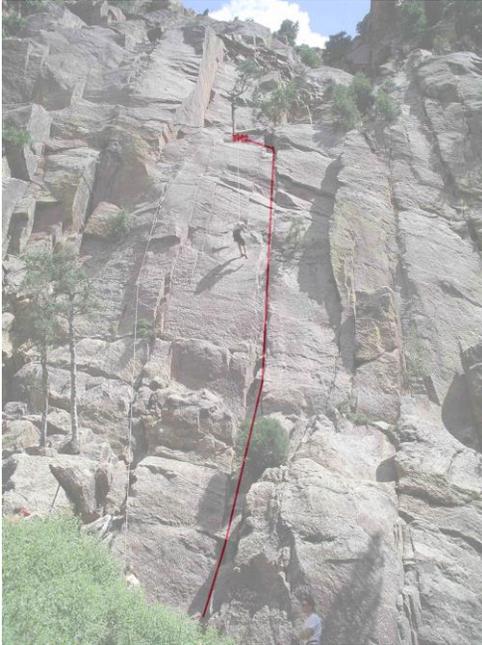


Climb of the Month – Mescaline5.8- by Dave Cooper

Mescaline – 5.7+ / 5.8 One pitch (80 feet)



Approach:

From CO 93, just south of Boulder, take CO 170 to Eldorado Springs. Continue on to the entrance to Eldorado Canyon State Park. (There is a \$6 per day fee for cars).

From the parking area just past the entrance station, walk up to and across the bridge. Follow the trail along the north side of the creek to a sign marking the end of the trail. A climber's trail continues over a slippery, polished ramp and short downclimb. The trail starts uphill just after this point and is marked by another sign, indicating the West ridge climber's access trail. From here it is about a 20 minute, strenuous hike up the hill to the base of the climb, passing the Verschneidung area, the Unsaid Wall and Long John Tower. The area is known as the Pony Express area. This is just below the short rock containing Positively Fourth Street and Doctor Michael Solar.

Note: Alternate approaches are to take the Rincon Trail to the upper end of the West Ridge, or, if the creek is low enough, cross at the large boulder known as the Milton Boulder.

History, Gear etc:

First ascent: Jim Erickson and Jim Hofman.

Originally graded 5.8 by Erickson (Rocky Heights – A guide to Boulder Free Climbs), it has more recently been given a 5.7 rating in Richard Rossiter's guide (Rock Climbing - Eldorado Canyon). To me, it's hard for a 5.7 – you decide.

A standard rack should suffice, up to a #3.5 Camalot. There is a two bolt anchor at the top of the pitch.

What better place to start this column than in Colorado's rock climbing mecca, Eldorado Canyon.

Mescaline

Mescaline has been described as “the best climb of its grade” on the West Ridge. I tend to agree. It offers a variety of terrain, from hands to fingers, liebacking and even a small roof to pull. It protects well and is on solid rock. I like to climb this route in the morning, before the sun reaches it. It also makes a good, short “after-work” climb on long summer evenings.

Start easily up a wide, broken area. After the first ledge the climbing becomes “interesting”. Follow the crack straight up to the left side of a small roof.

Depending on your climbing strengths, the crux is either just before you reach the roof, or the somewhat strenuous moves around the left side of the roof. A #3 or #3.5 Camalot under the flake protects this move – extend the sling to avoid rope drag. After ten more feet, exit left on a ledge to the two bolt anchor.

