



The Incredible Hulk via the Red Dihedral

Trip Notes

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The Red Dihedral is one of the classic great hard climbs of the Sierra Nevada. The peak is a huge cleaver of pure white granite split by numerous crack systems that resembles Yosemite Valley rather than the typical high Sierra. The cruxes are crack climbing rather than face and as such require technique rather than brute strength.

The first ascent of this route was by three 1970s Yosemite climbers: Dale Bard, Bob Locke and Mike Farrell. They originally named the route Ygdrasil after the mythic ash tree of Norse mythology. But it has since become best known as the Red Dihedral – probably because no one could spell or pronounce Ygdrasil.

We also combine this route along with The Third Pillar of Dana into our Third Hulk Linkup giving two of the best hard climbs in the Eastern Sierra in three days.

Itinerary

Day One: We meet in Bridgeport, do a thorough pack and equipment check and distribute group gear before packing up and heading for Twin Lakes. The approach starts off through the Twin Lakes campground, then takes the well-maintained Barney Lake Trail for about an hour or so. We then cross the stream and begin climbing more steeply. From here there is a climbers trail that comes and goes but gains the less than 2,000 feet to the base of the Hulk. The last bit of the approach involves some talus and brush. Camp is a beautifully flat sandy platform barely 20 minutes from the start of the climbing. Water can sometimes be an issue here so for late season falls we need to camp a little lower.

Day Two: This is going to be a big day so we start early. The first few pitches are always in the shade so we dress warmly. Things start easily with some 4th class with a few hard moves. But the angle steepens and the hard moves get closer together and we get into 5.9 terrain and small stances. The crux is pitch four – the Red Dihedral pitch. The first 100 feet are sustained 5.9 with nothing harder - and nothing easier. One foot jammed in the crack, the other smeared out on the face or searching for small face holds. The crux comes just before the belay and involves a long reach to a good hold. The hard part is getting the feet high enough to make the move. A reach to the right, pull up and suddenly it is 5.7 to the belay and you barely have time to get too pumped and worked up about it all.

Around now we will come into the sun and warm up. We encounter great cracks with good ledges and resting places as we continue up to the summit ridge. But we are not done yet: after an easy 3rd class traverse we have a grainy 5.8 pitch and then a tight chimney to squeeze through just below the summit. The summit itself is a perfect pointed block with barely enough room to sit. Open the summit register and there is even an "Incredible Hulk" superball.

The descent takes us down the south ridge via one long rappel and then we downclimb a gully and talus back to the base and our gear. You can expect to spend most of the day on the route and return back to camp. Once back, we'll rest a little and pack up, then hike back to our cars. If you would rather relax a little more and spend 3 days and 2 nights in the backcountry, talk with the office to make this a 3 day trip instead of 2.

Elevations and Distances

Trailhead to camp	4.0 miles	2570' of gain	138' of descent
Camp to summit to camp	1.0 miles	1870' of gain	1870' of descent
Camp to trailhead	4.0 miles	138' of gain	2570' of descent

Meeting place and time

We will meet at the Forest Service Visitors Center in Bridgeport at 10.00 a.m. This is located on Highway 395 just south of where town starts. We will do a gear check and distribute group equipment, then head to the trailhead.

Dates and Prices

Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site for dates and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or canceling. Price includes guiding, permits, all necessary group climbing gear, tents, kitchen gear and breakfast, lunch and dinner daily (you bring hot/cold drinks and snack items). Scheduled dates include USFS trail fees. Private programs do not.

Prerequisites

You should be in good physical condition, have some backpacking experience and have the ability to traverse broken uneven slopes with a moderate pack. Prior experience at altitudes above 10,000' is recommended. You need to be able to follow at the 5.10a level and have experience on multi pitch routes.

Ratios

This is a technical climb and we limit the ratio to two climbers to one guide. This enhances safety and ensures a timely arrival at the summit before potential weather changes.

Notes and other information

The best guidebooks are Supertopo's "High Sierra Climbing" by Chris McNamara and Peter Croft's "The Good, The Great, and the Awesome". Get them from Maximus Press.

If you are driving we have to pay the Mono Village an overnight parking fee of \$5.00 per night which is not included in the trip price.

Preparing for Success

If it has been a while since you have climbed outdoors or you are unsure of your current skill level relevant to the climb you wish to undertake, we strongly suggest a "warm-up" day of multi-pitch climbing, such as Crystal Crag. This allows you and your guide to work on systems and communication, increasing your efficiency on the overnight climb. You will do better on the main climb with this day.

Mountain climbing requires endurance. Your objective may be remote (miles in with substantial elevation gain) and you need the stamina to approach, climb, and descend all day (12hrs+). The day prior to the climb consists of an approach with overnight packs. The climbs are often long and sustained with a gully descent. This means long days requiring all day endurance so incorporating endurance training into your fitness regimen is essential.

Acclimatization

The higher in elevation you go, the less oxygen there is in the air. This, combined with very dry air, means you will work harder to do the same activities, get dehydrated faster and recover more slowly. It takes days for your body to adjust to these changes. We highly recommend that you spend at least one night at moderate altitude (higher than 8,000') just prior to the trip. Spending a night in Mammoth would do the trick or better yet, camped at an even higher trailhead, such as the Mosquito Flats trailhead. Please refer to our Planning for Success info sheet for more info.

Bears

Bears can be a problem at the trailhead. Do not leave food or other scented items (deodorant, soap etc.) in your vehicle. There is limited food locker storage at the trailhead so do not bring extra items with you to the trailhead. Clean up all trash prior to your trip. Failure to take precautions can cause the vehicle to be ripped apart by a bear and the added insult of a fine from the Forest Service.

Porters

Want to do the trip but concerned about carrying the overnight pack through the rough terrain or want to save the knees from the steep descent back down? We can provide the services of a porter to carry the heavier and bulky items, leaving you with a lighter day pack for the trip. Porters can be used for just the up or the down as well. Contact the office for more information.

Equipment List for The Incredible Hulk via the Red Dihedral

The following list is a general guide and will assist you in packing for the program. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have specific questions regarding equipment or if you need assistance prior to making a purchase. The following list will vary according to the time of year, and your individual requirements. When packing **THINK LIGHTWEIGHT!** Items with a * can be rented from SMC.

Climbing equipment

- Boots*. Lightweight mountaineering or heavy duty hiking boots are required, but also a pair that is compact enough to fit in the climbing pack for the descent. Trail runners or tennies are not acceptable since there may be hard snow to cross. If you have any concerns as to the adequacy of your footwear contact us. We rent mountaineering boots.
- Ice axe.* A general purpose axe appropriate to your height. Required only in early season. We will inform you if this is needed.
- Crampons.* These must be compatible with your boots. Required only in early season. We will inform you if these are needed.
- Harness.* We recommend a comfortable rock climbing style harness.
- Helmet. Should be comfortable and lightweight. We provide these for the program if you do not have your own.
- Two locking carabiners and a couple of non-lockers.*
- A lightweight belay/rappel device, ATC style.*
- A 120cm nylon sling.
- Rock shoes*. Regardless of what anyone tells you they need to be comfortable! You'll be wearing them most of the day.

Other essentials

- Internal frame backpack of 50-60 L. This must fit all of your personal gear and group equipment. If your pack compresses down you do not need the following item.
- Small day pack for climbing. 20-25L with attachment points for ice axe and crampons.
- Sleeping bag. This should be rated to about 32°F.
- Sleeping pads. A Thermarest and foam pad. A 3/4 Thermarest on a foam pad makes a good combination. Bring a repair kit along with a Thermarest in case of holes.

Clothing

- 2 pair synthetic or wool socks.
- Long underwear top and bottom.
- Warm pants, to layer between base and waterproof layer, such as softshell fabric.
- Another fuzzy sweater top, such as fleece or Polartec.
- Pile/fleece/softshell fabric jacket.
- Light down jacket; synthetic fill is second choice. This is optional & can replace the previous item. For in camp or in cold weather.
- Good quality rain/wind pants and rain jacket. Must be water proof and jacket must have a hood. Don't skimp on your rain gear.
- Shorts for on the trail.
- Climbing pants. We like the softshell type fabrics.
- 1 long-sleeve sun shirt. We recommend a "hoody" style though anything that covers your arms and is synthetic is great.
- 1 short-sleeve T-shirt. Synthetic, not cotton, so it can dry quickly and wick sweat from your body on sweaty, but windy, days.
- 1 lightweight pair of polypropylene or similar gloves.
- 1 pair of heavier gloves.
- 1 warm hat/beanie. Synthetics are less itchy than wool.
- Sunhat. Better to cover up than just rely upon sunscreen.

Etc.

- Sun glasses. Good quality. If you wear corrective glasses you might want a second pair in case of breakage.
- Water carrying system with a capacity of 2-3 liters. We recommend a 2 liter bladder for daily trail use and an additional Klean Kanteen insulated bottle for drink flavoring, coffee, etc. This can be your thermos and additional water bottle.
- Headlamp. With a spare set of batteries.
- Eating and drinking equipment. An insulated mug with a lid. This can double for a bowl. Fork and spoon.
- Pocket knife. Small Swiss army style, not a large Leatherman.
- Personal toiletries. Toothbrush and toothpaste. TP & a ziplock bag to carry out the used.
- Sunscreen and lip screen. 30+ SPF. A 1oz. bottle will be enough. Make sure the lip stuff actually contains a sunscreen.
- Personal Medical Kit. The guide will carry a large kit so yours will predominately consist of foot repair items, mild pain killer such as Advil, and bandaids.
- Camera/phone camera. Small enough to fit in a pocket; please no giant cameras with multiple lenses.
- Plastic Trash Sac. Handy for keeping gear in outside the tent should it rain.
- Trekking poles*. These are not essential, but can be handy on the trail. It is your choice, but they do save the knees on long descents.
- Optional reading material, journal, Kindle, etc.

Food

- We include meals from lunch on Day 1 through lunch on Day 2. Bring your own snack items like cliff bars, power bars, or gorp concoctions for all days. Also bring your favorite hot drinks (tea, hot chocolate, cider etc.). A days worth for most people would be 2 bars, 3 ounces of gorp, and perhaps a candy bar. Don't over do it.

Shared Equipment Provided by SMC

- First aid kit
- Food
- Shelter. We will provide lightweight, storm worthy tents. If you have your favorite, by all means bring it, but we do want to pair people up where possible to reduce weight.
- Stove. We provide MSR Whisperlite stoves.
- Group climbing equipment.
- Water purification. A sad but true fact of life is that much Sierra water is contaminated. Iodine may be used individually or the group can carry a gravity style purifier.

You specifically don't need

- ⊗ Big first aid kits (we have a comprehensive one).
- ⊗ Deodorant or any toiletries beyond those listed above.
- ⊗ Items that are not on this list.

Additional Thoughts

- Some people, particularly women, tend to run colder than others. If this is the case add another layer or two, a warmer sleeping bag, warmer boots and extra handwarmers
- Women – see our "Women on the Trail" information sheet at the Women's Trips pages on the website.

200 South Main Street, P.O. Box 95, Bishop, CA 93515

office@sierramountaincenter.com

760.873.8526

www.sierramountaincenter.com