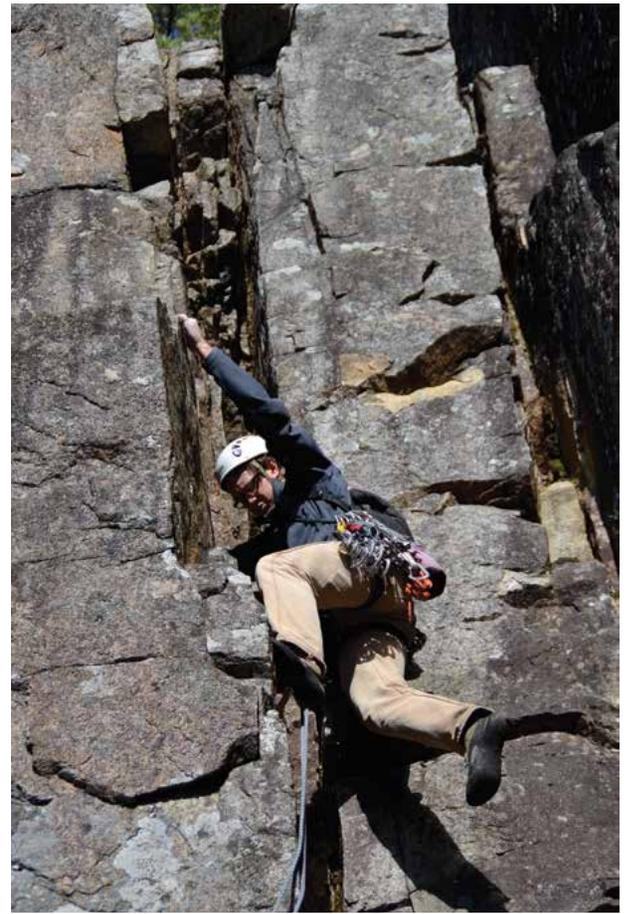




The Wiessner Route follows the Slanting Ledge on pitch three and then ascends a vertical corner.



Will Roth steps up into a wide crack on the final pitch.

•► a climbing gym near Buffalo and was hooked instantly. He soon got to know older climbers, who began taking him to real rock, first to the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario, later to the Adirondacks and to New River Gorge in West Virginia.

On one trip to the Adirondacks, the crew rolled into the state campground below Poke-o-Moonshine Mountain in darkness. When he awoke in the morning, Wiech was astounded by the giant cliff rising four hundred feet above them, much higher than the crags in Ontario and West Virginia that he cut his teeth on. One of the first climbs he did was Gamesmanship, a six-hundred-foot route with

five pitches, or stages.

“It was exciting to explore another aspect of climbing—long routes—and that continues to be a draw for me to this day,” he says.

After graduating high school, Wiech spent a year driving around the country in a van, visiting such iconic climbing destinations as Red River Gorge in Kentucky, Hueco Tanks in Texas, Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, Devil’s Tower and the Tetons in Wyoming, and Yosemite and Joshua Tree in California. In those days, climbing was all: “It was just like, ‘Well, we have enough gas money to make it there, then we’ll just see

what happens.’ Finding food in dumpsters, not enough gas money to go anywhere else—it really didn’t matter as long as we were in a place with good climbing and good weather. I felt like I had all the time in the world, and I suppose I actually did, looking back on things.”

Eventually, he moved to the Adirondacks to attend Paul Smith’s College, where he earned a degree in environmental studies. “Living here really opened my eyes to how special this place is, from a recreation standpoint as well as a conservation standpoint,” he says. “The natural world

Upper Washbowl, Page 55

Notes for climbers

CLOSURES: All of the climbing routes on Upper Washbowl are closed in early spring to give peregrine falcons a chance to nest. If the falcons do nest on the cliff, the routes usually remain closed until July 15, sometimes later. If they don’t, the routes are opened in early May. This year falcons didn’t nest on Upper Washbowl, so the routes were open in early May.

DIFFICULTY: *Adirondack Rock* rates the Wiessner Route 5.6 on the Yosemite Decimal System scale, but only because of the rectangular block that must be circumvented on the first pitch. The second and fourth pitches are rated 5.4 and 5.5, respectively. The third pitch is a fourth-class scramble over Slanting Ledge.

DIRECTIONS: Park at Chapel Pond, cross Route 73, and walk north along the road to the start of a guardrail. Look for a trail and follow it across a stream and uphill to the Creature Wall. At the Creature Wall, turn left and follow the trail to the talus at the base of Upper Washbowl. When you reach the cliff, turn left and go 150 feet to the start of the Wiessner Route, at a corner. The block on the first pitch is a landmark.

REFERENCES: Descriptions of the route can be found in *Adirondack Rock*, by Jim Lawyer and Jeremy Haas, and *Selected Climbs of the Northeast*, by S. Peter Lewis and Dave Horowitz.



Matt Wiech belays *Explorer* Editor Phil Brown at the top of the first pitch.