

Tahoe bursting with iconic rock climbing terrain



Lover's Leap is a popular destination for rock climbers.
Photo/LTN file

By Matthew Renda, Tahoe Quarterly

With Yosemite as its epicenter, the Sierra Nevada is unquestionably the mecca of rock climbing.

Some argue the sport was born in the Sierra when John Muir performed an on-sight free solo of Cathedral Peak in Tuolumne Meadows in 1869. Muir's climb, without the benefit of advanced planning or ropes, typifies the adventure, self-reliance, courage and hunger for glory inherent in the sport.

The Lake Tahoe area's role in the founding and development of modern rock climbing has traditionally been cast as a bit player—a practice facility for climbers looking to refine the

skills needed for the daunting big-wall climbs in Yosemite and the High Sierra.

This traditional and dismissive view of the cliffs stretching from Calaveras Dome to Donner Summit has come under recent reconsideration, however, with more and more asserting the area is replete with an array of compelling climbs that factored heavily into the sport's advancement.

In fact, ask any Tahoe climber and they will agree, perhaps with a hint of annoyance—there is no shortage of climbers testing their mettle on the various routes in the greater Tahoe area.

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