



MONTICELLO BUTTE - MOAB



Rating: 5.7

Length: 1 hour

Gear: I used #3 Big Brother and a #4 C4 Camalot in the same spot. A single #5 C4 would work well. Aside from the crux, a #2 and #3 Camalot are useful for setting up a belay. 1-60 m (197 ft.) Rope will get you up and down if you rap off the east side.(see below)

Maps: Gold Bar Canyon, UT

Season: Spring, Fall

Waypoints:

Base of Route

12S 616710mE 4272786mN
N38° 35' 45" W109° 39' 35"

Hype

Thumbing through Desert Rock 4 toward the end of a climbing weekend in Moab, I spied Monticello Butte. A surprisingly moderate route at 5.7, it had a 4-star rating and seemed perfect for ending the weekend. The climbing didn't seem 4-star to either Jim or I, but the views are pretty incredible.

Tags: *climb, access: 4x4*

Trailhead

Getting to Monticello Butte requires a high clearance vehicle. The last mile or so is very rough 4x4 road. We parked within sight of the butte, but didn't make the last 1/2 mile or so drive due to the roughness of the road.

Head North on the highway out of Moab toward I-70. From the Colorado River bridge, reset your odometer.

- About 7 miles from the bridge, turn left (west) onto the signed Gemini Bridges road. (12S 615118mE 4279456mN / N38° 39' 22" W109° 40' 37")
- Stay on the main Gemini Bridges road for 4.7 miles to the signed Gold Bar Rim junction. Right goes up a steep hill and to Gemini Bridges. You go left here instead, following a wash, then exiting up a steep hill. (12S 615501mE 4273230mN / N38° 36' 00" W109° 40' 25")
- Monticello Butte is visible at the top of this hill, and is less than a mile or so from the Gold Bar Rim / Gemini Bridges junction. This stretch of road is very rough, and may need to be walked unless you have a real 4x4 or disregard for your vehicle. (12S 616477mE 4273000mN / N38° 35' 52" W109° 39' 45")

Route

September 16, 2007

Climbers: Ryan Cornia and Jim Schnepal

Written By: Ryan Cornia

Pitch 1:

The climb starts on the west side. It is easily identified as a slot with a bush about half way up. The slot is low angled and easy until you reach a bulge about 3/4 of the way up. This is where I placed gear, chimneyed over the bulge, and then it is easier ground to a crack up high where you can get gear in for a belay.

After this pitch, it is an easy scramble to the west summit. The summit has some amazing views. Reaching the east summit requires a bit of easy, but unprotected lower 5th class climbing (and down climbing).

Getting Down:

The guide book described a long, 2-rope overhanging rappel to get off. While this is an option off the south /west side, we found slings on a tree on the north/east side of the formation. This provides an easy rappel and only requires one rope. The rap is 25 m (83 ft.) or so.

Although I found the climbing uninspiring, the views are well worth it, and it is a truly moderate summit to get on top of in the desert. Enjoy!

