

Florine's recap of the duo's October 12 summit of the nose



1 HOUR 28 MIN: Camp 4 (previous best: 1:20). "We were still out of breath from the speed and getting a little rest."

46 MIN: Dolt Tower (July time: 56:00). This was the crucial section. "We made the transition swings from Sickle and climbed through the 400-foot Stoveleg Crack without mess-ups," says Florine.

18 MIN: Sickle Ledge (July time: 16:20). "I'd neglected to remove a protection piece on the third pitch, and had to down-climb eight feet to retrieve it."

5 MIN 55 SEC: Top of first pitch (previous best: 4:59). "The cold had us starting off cautiously," Florine says.

2 HOURS 37 MIN: Top-out Tree (previous best: 2:43). "My hands were freezing. I had a tough time untying knots," says Florine. "I wasted no time belaying Yuji for the final four pitches; he was going too fast for it to make a difference."

1 HOUR 4 MIN: Eagle Ledge (July time: 1:06). "We were out of breath from the sprint to Dolt Tower. I blew it on the first go of the King Swing and had to do it a second time."



RECORD BOOK

Nose Breakers

LAST WINTER, AFTER GERMANY'S HUBER brothers broke a Japanese-American team's record for speed-climbing the Nose of El Capitan in 2:45:45 (a sprint in big-wall terms), Yuji Hirayama called teammate Hans Florine and said, "Let's get that record back." Florine responded, "I'm already planning on it. I just wondered who would be on the other end of the rope."

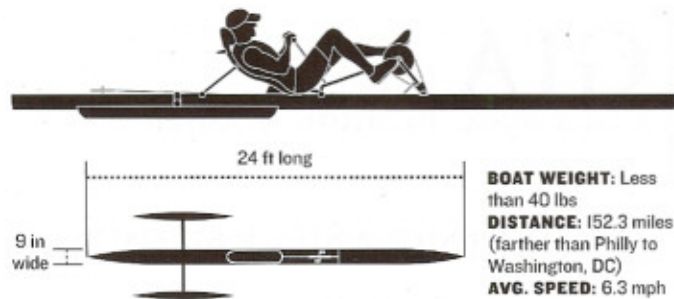
Florine, 44, has broken the Nose record seven times since 1990, slicing the mark on Yosemite Valley's 2,900-foot granite monolith (an ascent that usually requires three or four days) from eight hours to under three. On July 2, Hirayama scurried up the first pitch, with Florine racing behind to retrieve gear, linked by a 200-foot rope with only a few pieces of protection to guard against a fatal fall. Despite a stuck rope and a bobbed piece of equipment, the two clasped hands at the ponderosa pine in 2:43:33 — two minutes and 12 seconds faster than the Hubers.

On October 12 they hit the wall again, cutting their own record to 2:37:05. "I joke that for every minute we took off the record, it would buy us one more year holding it," says Florine. "You could look at that like eight more years." —DOUGALD MACDONALD

Kayak by the Foot



Canadian Greg Kolodziejzyk spent September 8 pedaling his computer-engineered carbon-fiber boat a whopping 152.3 miles in just 24 hours around Whitefish Lake, Montana. The circuit broke the world record for distance by a human-powered boat, set by kayaker Carter Johnson in 2006, by more than two miles. "Before the record, the kayak community was interested in what I was doing," says Kolodziejzyk, who also happens to hold the record for farthest distance traveled by a human-powered vehicle on land in 24 hours. "But afterward they were pretty quiet." Next goal for the 47-year-old: breaking the record for human-powered flight.



MT. EVEREST:
29,029 ft

JUMP HEIGHT:
29,500 ft



FREE-FALL SPEED:
140 mph



Skydiving Everest

After deplaning at 29,500 feet, Brit Holly Budge and 36 others landed at the highest drop zone ever achieved by a parachutist, a 12,350-foot Himalayan plain. "We were above the clouds, [but] you could see Everest and other mountains popping out," says Budge, who has about 2,500 jumps under her belt.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MICHAEL WALSH/RYAN FRANCISCO SPORTS/GETTY IMAGES; COLBY HICKMAN/REUTERS; JASON BRANTZ/REUTERS; ILM. ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRIS HAYES