

Chauvin Guides International- North End Route Descriptions

The North End of Cathedral Ledge has a number of classic climbs that can easily be led or top roped. There are several excellent crack climbs all of which take easy gear that are rated 5.9 and 5.10. Both They Died Laughing and Bird's Nest, rated 5.9, are among the best of their grade for the area and The Slot, rated 5.10b, is a great finger crack which takes good protection. At the easier end of the scale, Child's Play at 5.6 and Kiddy Crack at 5.7 are also good climbs both of which have their cruxes at the bottom. All these climbs can be done with a basic rack. Bring extra small pieces for The Slot. Henry Barber did the first free ascents of all the classic 5.9 and 5.10 crack climbs here in the early '70s.

The North End is located just before the gate at the start of the steep road leading up to the top of Cathedral. Park somewhere before the gate and walk up the climber's trail to the base of the steep slabs. If your plan is to top rope one of the more difficult climbs you have two options. First, you can lead one of the easier climbs and then scramble up and left to the fixed anchors on top of They Died Laughing or Bird's Nest. It's also possible to walk to the right (north) a fair distance until you get to the first obvious break in the cliff where you can scramble up and back to the left. This spot is the location of the North End ice slab in the winter. Scramble up through a small trough and follow the trail up and left. No climbing is required but be careful crossing a very narrow spot just before the tree at the top of Kiddy Crack.

The Slot, 5.10b, 85 ft.-The finger crack which is the leftmost crack on the North End slabs. Bring a bunch of small gear. This route traverses right at the top into They Died Laughing. It can also be easily top roped from the two bolts at the top of They Died Laughing as long as you rappel down and place a directional at the top of the crack before it traverses right.

They Died Laughing, 5.9, 80 ft.-Definitely one of the most popular 5.9 climbs on the cliff. Climbs the crack just to the right of The Slot. Sustained climbing with several difficult sections and great gear all the way to the double bolt rap anchor at the top. Easily top roped.

Bird's Nest, 5.9, 90 ft.-This is the next crack to the right of They Died Laughing, starting with a thin finger crack at the bottom. Excellent gear all the way. Climb up the finger crack and move right to finish on another crack to the top. This route is also easily top roped from a double bolt anchor at the top.

Recluse, 5.10d, 90 ft.-The crack to the right of Bird's Nest with the very steep, bouldery, finger crack start. After the start the climb eases considerably giving pleasant crack climbing to the top.

Child's Play, 5.6, 70 ft.-The second crack system from the right. This is the easiest climb on this section of the cliff. The most difficult and awkward move is right off the ground. Takes good gear. The tree at the top which was used for years to top rope or descend from is now gone. Descend from the They Died Laughing anchor, the tree at the top of Kiddy Crack, or walk off to the right.

Kiddy Crack, 5.7, 60 ft.-The first crack on the right edge of the slabs ending at a good tree which provides an easy rappel or top rope anchor. Again, the most difficult moves are right near the bottom. Super climb.