Pylon Peak
Overview

I recently discovered on Google Earth that the peak which was once thought to be Warrior 2 is actually Pylon Peak. See the Google Earth section for related images.

Pylon Peak is one of the jagged mountains that make up the Cirque of the Towers in the Wind River Mountain Range of Wyoming. The east face is sheer granite cliff, while the west side is a sloped boulder field. Pylon Peak has no designated trails, other than backpacking trails around Donald's Lake that originate at the Big Sandy Trailhead. Climbers must forge their own trail. The west slopes from Donald's Lake are a Class 2 scramble, while the Northwest ridge is class 3. Rock climbers may want to attempt the huge vertical face from within the Cirque near Lonesome Lake.
**Routes**

Since there was no trail to the mountain or up the mountain, you will have to create your own using your best judgement on the trail to take. The best way is to hike above timberline to the tundra pass just before the boulder field begins. From there, navigate the boulder field, trying to stay on the "smaller" rocks as much as possible. It may occasionally be neccessary to back-track and re-route the climb. The top, just below the true summit, is fairly large and flat, allowing awesome views.

**Getting There**

The best way to the base of the west face is via the Big Sandy Trailhead. Go to Big Sandy Opening Trailhead, which starts about 54 miles south of Pinedale, Wyoming, and is commonly accessed through Farson from the south. From the Big Sandy Trailhead - which is very high traffic - hike past several very obvious lakes, including Mirror Lake. The destination is Donald's Lake (just east of Dad's Lake), which gives a perfect summit pitch from the southwest.

This information was contributed by Alan Ellis. Please visit his Cirque of the Towers page for more...

The Cirque is located in western Wyoming’s Rocky Mountains in the southern Wind River Range. There is no easy way to get to the trailhead and many consider the drive to the main trailhead to be the first crux of a Cirque of the Towers expedition. The drive can be a daunting task for the directionally impaired. The best map available which shows all the dirt roads is the Recreational Map of Wyoming published by GTR and is available here or in Rock Springs and Pinedale.

The most popular way into the Cirque is through the Big Sandy opening/trailhead. Although the road is a fairly well-maintained dirt road, there is 30-40miles of it (depending on the route), with sections of washboards which will rattle your teeth. In addition to personal experience, these directions and milage are taken directly from a combination of three guide books listed in the "Books" link on the left side of this page.
If coming from the north near Pinedale, Wyoming, drive 11 miles south on U.S. 191 to Boulder. From Boulder: Drive approximately 18.0 miles southeast on highway 353 on a paved road. Upon reaching a junction, shortly after the pavement ends, bear left (southeast) for 2.9 miles. At 2.9 miles bear right (still southeast). After approximately 6 miles, you will come to a signed intersection (A). Turn left (east), following the sign to Big Sandy. After 7.5 miles you will find another signed intersection (B) where you turn left (north) to Big Sandy. This winding road is steeper, and rockier but is still fairly good. Follow this road and signs for approximately 10.5 miles until reaching Big Sandy campground and trailhead (9080 ft).

If coming from the south near Rock Springs, Wyoming: Drive north on U.S. 191 to the town of Farson. Two miles east of Farson on highway 28, there is a sign to Big Sandy. Turn left (northeast) and drive approximately 40 miles of dirt road to intersection (A) as described above.

Follow the Big Sandy trail for 5.2 miles to Big Sandy Lake. Expect heavy traffic on this trail. There is only a 600 ft elevation gain on the trail to the lake. Upon arriving at the lake, follow the trail around the north side to the northeast corner. There, a sign will point to Jackass Pass. Switchback up a few hundred feet until reaching the entrance the pass. From here the trail sometimes fades while meandering up and down through slabs and boulders. Following this, the trail descends to North Lake and then circles around the north side of the lake. After a short climb, the trail descends again to the south side of Arrowhead Lake (which will not been seen). After the descent, the trail will head up and to the right towards Mitchell Peak. Here a faint trail branches to the left appearing to go nowhere. At this point, you will not be able to see Arrowhead Lake. If you want to avoid another climb and take a short cut, it is important to find this faint trail to the left. Once on the faint trail, circle around the south, then west side of Arrowhead Lake. A short climb then a squeeze behind a large boulder will avoid a moraine. Once on the north side of Arrowhead Lake, the Cirque will come into full view and you descend through the pass to the southwestern side of Lonesome Lake. If you miss the faint trail south of Arrowhead Lake, that’s OK....you will still get there. Climb up and to the east side of Arrowhead Lake. After a rocky climb and descent you will come to a trail junction on the northeast side and above Arrowhead Lake. The right fork takes you to the southeast of Lonesome Lake, away from most of the climbing areas. The left fork traverses a hill on the north side of Arrowhead and eventually get you to the pass leading to the descent into the western part of the Cirque where Pingora, Wolf's Head, and the majority of the climbing is.
An approach from the east from the Dickinson Park trailhead along the North Fork Trail offers another route to the Cirque. It is not as popular due to the 13 mile distance and four river crossings.

Red Tape

There are no fees or permits required to climb Pylon Peak. There are fees for camping in designated campgrounds, however. See the Camping section below for more information.

When To Climb

It is best to climb this mountain from July through September. Snow would make navigating the steep boulders very precarious. I would also highly recommend morning climbs. Every afternoon the mountains were pounded with intense thunderstorms, making afternoon ascents dangerous.

Camping

Camping is allowed, with no fees. This is a very popular destination for backpackers. The most beautiful camping is by Lonesome Lake inside the Cirque of the Towers, but Donald Lake makes a great, secluded spot to camp. Car camping is available at the Big Sandy trailhead campground for $8.00/night from June 20 to September 10. There is no fee before or after those dates. There are 12 sites with pit toilets, no water and no showers. Check here for other Forest Service campgrounds in the area. This information was copied from Alan Ellis' Cirque Of The Towers page.
This mountain was thought to be Warrior II, but Google Earth revealed its true identity: Pylon Peak. So that other SP members can view this area with Google Earth, I have uploaded the images.