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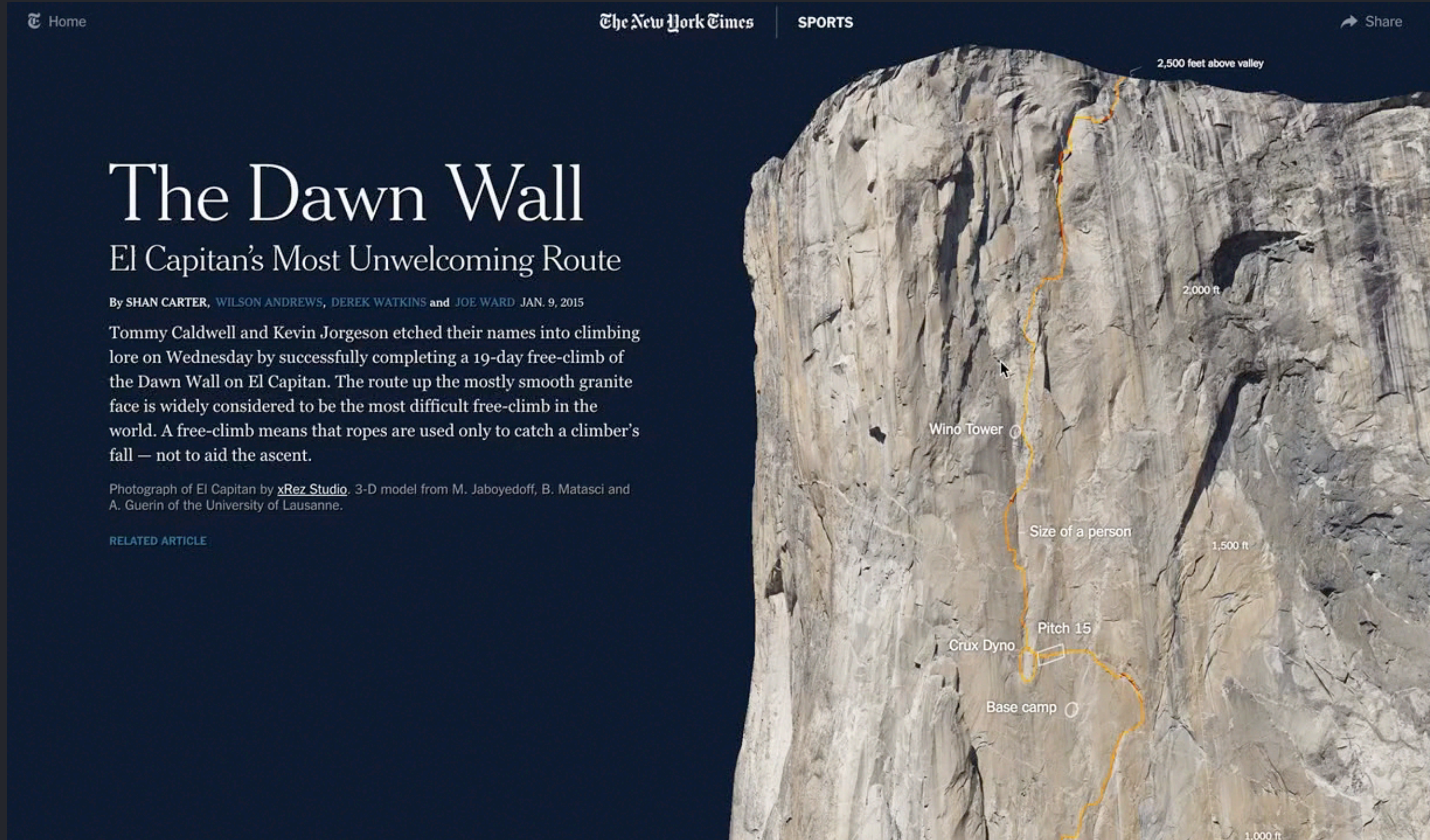
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The Dawn Wall

El Capitan's Most Unwelcoming Route

By SHAN CARTER, WILSON ANDREWS, DEREK WATKINS and JOE WARD JAN. 9, 2015

Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson etched their names into climbing lore on Wednesday by successfully completing a 19-day free-climb of the Dawn Wall on El Capitan. The route up the mostly smooth granite face is widely considered to be the most difficult free-climb in the world. A free-climb means that ropes are used only to catch a climber's fall — not to aid the ascent.

Photograph of El Capitan by [xRez Studio](#). 3-D model from M. Jaboyedoff, B. Matasci and A. Guerin of the University of Lausanne.

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nytimes.com/interactive/2015/01/09/sports/the-dawn-wall-el-capitan