

ALEX MEGOS

THIS GERMAN CLIMBER HAS MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF BY SENDING SOME OF THE HARDEST ROUTES AND BOULDER PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD—IN A HANDFUL OF TRIES.



Two years after the first ascent of the Frankenjura's *Action Directe*, Alex Megos was born on August 12, 1993, in Nürnberg, the second-largest city in Bavaria, Germany. It was one year after *Action Directe*'s first ascensionist, Wolfgang Güllich, a legendary German climber, died in a tragic car accident. Growing up in the forested mountains of Bavaria, Alex spent his childhood doing lots of outdoor sports and activities with his parents and younger sister. When he was six, Alex's father took him climbing for the first time in the Frankenjura. His father, Jorgos, started climbing in 1989 as a college student, when he took a course taught by Güllich and Kurt Albert, another famed Frankenjura pioneer. By age 10, Alex and his father would climb multipitch routes on holiday in France and Switzerland, and occasionally with a local kids' group. It was not until he was 12 that he started to really embrace climbing as his own passion, participating in local competitions. At 13, he started working with Dicki Korb and Patrick Matros, both highly respected climbing coaches, and training for bigger competitions. Between 2009 and 2011, he won two European Youth Championships (2009 and 2010) and climbed his first 8c/5.14b, 8c+/5.14c, and 9a/5.14d outside.

"I was always more of an outdoor climber, though, so from a young age I went out on rocks," Alex says. "Climbing was always more a lifestyle than only a sport, and being in nature was part of that lifestyle. I got more and more obsessed with climbing over the years, and by the age of 17 or 18, I was pretty much climbing as much as school would allow me." After graduating in 2012, he put all his focus into rock climbing. He took a trip to the Red River Gorge in Kentucky and cleaned up, climbing 11 routes in the 8c/5.14 range in three tries or fewer, including a flash of *Pure Imagination* (8c+/5.14c). Soon after, in March 2013, he onsighted *Estado Critico*, a 9a/5.14d in Siurana, Spain. Without any prior knowledge of the route, he climbed it on his first try; it was →