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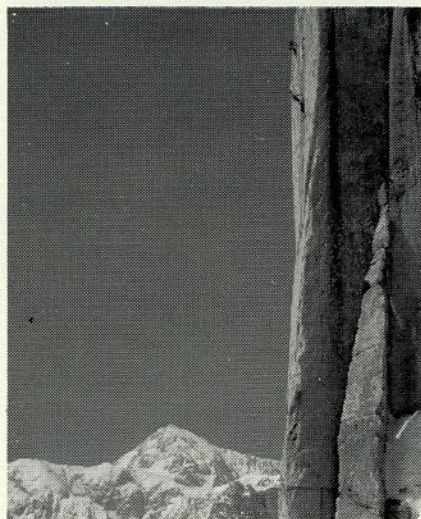
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Grand Prize and First Place, Mountaineering, in the Sixth Annual Climbing Photo Contest: Andrew Lainis and Rik Derrick on the Gargoyle, at the gateway of the Ruth Glacier, Alaska. Photo: Mary P. Howarth. See pages 35-39 for other winners.

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Publisher Emeritus:

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Publisher: Bil Dunaway

Editor: Michael Kennedy

Business Manager: Joye Cole

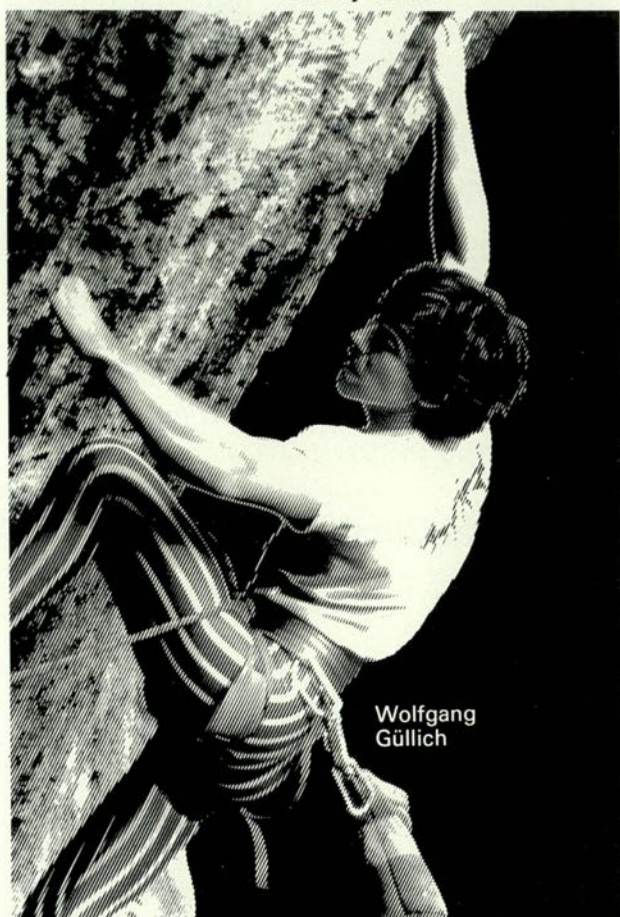
Subscriptions: Barbara Allen

Bulk Distribution: Joye Cole

Design/Production: Biege Jones,
Michael Kennedy

Climbing is published six times each year in February, April, June, August, October and December. Subscription rates are \$15.00 for one year and \$28.00 for two years. (U.S. funds only; outside North America add \$10.00 per year for surface postage.) Please allow up to eight weeks for the first issue, changes of address must reach us six to eight weeks in advance in order to assure continuous service. Forwarding fee forms may also be obtained from the post office in case of time limitations. Manuscripts, photographs and correspondence are welcome; please write to the Editor for further details. Unsolicited materials should be accompanied by return postage. Climbing, P.O. Box E, Aspen, Colorado 81612 U.S.A. Phone (303) 925-3414. Second class postage paid at Aspen, Colorado 81612 and an additional entry mailing office. Postmaster, please send Forms 3579 and address corrections to P.O. Box E, Aspen, Colorado 81612. Publications No. 919220. ISSN No. 0045-7159. Printed in the United States of America.

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BASECAMP

CORRECTIONS

In several recent issues, John Midden-dorf's name was misspelled in our California reports.

In *Climbing* #92, *Medicine For Mountaineering* was mis-priced at \$19.95 (*Reviews*, p.66); the real price is \$10.95. Also in that issue, a line was dropped between pages 13 and 14 in our Utah report; the paragraph should read:

On the East Temple, Stacy Austin and Dave Jones completed another line on the Southwest Face to the false rim, from which a traverse off to the Zion Arch trail was executed. The ten-pitch route went free at 5.10. The East Temple still awaits a second route to its summit since the first ascent which was led by Glen Dawson 48 years ago!!

There are a few corrections to the report of new route activity at Joshua Tree in *Climbing* #93. The route reported as *Poodle of High Rank* is actually called *White Bread Fever* (5.11b); *Earth Wind* is not really as serious as represented; and *Nihilistic Pillar* only looks like a perfect hand crack, however in actuality is flared, hard to protect and continuously difficult.

The Great Falls/Carderock article (*Climbing* #93) mentions a drowning rate of seven persons *per day* on the Potomac River (p. 48); the rate is actually an average of seven persons *per year*.

Some minor corrections to our report on the Everest *West Ridge Direct attempt* (*Climbing* #92) are also needed. The height of the final camp (8,200 m) was a bit lower than reported and the first summit bid was stopped at about 8,400 meters, just below the major difficulties barring the way to the summit. The second summit team was forced back due to problems with their oxygen equipment after having reached approximately 8,600 meters near the top of the Yellow Band. No ropes were fixed above the last camp, except during the descent by the second team, to facilitate retreat.

Finally (and most embarrassingly), the photo of Kim Carrigan on the Rostrum (p. 27, *Climbing* #93) was printed upside down, due to a printer's error compounded by the Editor's absence (on a climbing trip of his own). We offer our sincere apologies to both the subject and the photographer (Phil Bard) for the oversight.

ALABAMA

A desolate sandstone bluff, *Jamestown* manifests some of the finest climbs in the deep south. First found by Chick Holtkamp in 1978, many exceptional climbs were established in the late seventies by Rich Gottlieb, Eric Zschiesche, Jack Chislet

and others. Recent activity indicates that the spirit of adventure lives on and word of huge overhangs and sweeping faces has spread.

South of the Wonder Wall, Rob Robinson and Gene Smith climbed *The Gift* (5.9), a delicate face climb that follows water smoothed cracks to a ledge, jogs right and continues on small holds to the top. Just right of *The Gift*, the pair added another 5.9 face; *Glitter Girls* is a wild route named for the sparkles still visible on Robinson's face from an intimate contact at a Halloween Party.

Robinson, relying on his prodigious lunging ability, devised a way to brachiate over the low overhangs right of *Salamanca Eulogy*. *Fatal Vision* (5.11a) and *Altered States* (5.11b) are both committing and their names indicative of his frame of mind.

The distinct mineral-frosted seam right of *Wildlife* was finally led by Robinson followed by Smith. Desperate stemming and edging escalate in severity, on *The White Seam* (5.12a), to the last crux move, a dicey reach to a ledge. A second pitch was added at a later date called *Kong Country* (5.11b). Paul Craven, a visiting British climber, repeated *The White Seam* with only one fall and verified its quality by saying, "brilliant, one of the best routes I've ever done."

Later during his stay, Craven fired off a direct variation to *Steggosaurus Slab* (an already spooky enough route on the blank-looking slab right of *Wonder Wall* first done by Smith and Shannon Steggs). The new finish, *Craven's Cap* (5.10c), has not been repeated.

Lynn Hill, Russ Raffa and Smith spent two days on the same slab working on a hard-to-protect face above a prominent black hole. After many finger-wrecking attempts, the serpentine Hill pieced together a series of tango moves to a ledge. Unfortunately, Hill and Raffa had to return home, so Smith pushed the climb to the top the following weekend and named it *Hill Street Blues*. Featuring thin climbing on ripples, the lower section has halted all second ascensionists and could easily be graded 6b or even 6c.

To the left of *Hill Street Blues*, Smith and Mark Cole fixed lost arrows to develop *Union Carbide* (5.11a) and to the right Greg Collins and Robinson ran out *Critical Pro* (5.10c).

Neil and Susannah Sloan pioneered two moderate scrambles near the new down climb. The famous Bell Lab scientist was cogitating at a level that would have made Euclid proud when he named them *Alabama Ramp #1* and *#2* (both are 5.7).

In the center of the crag, two fine routes were found by John Vermont and Chislet. *Purple Haze* (5.9), named for the berries

sprouting from its lower section, and *Crosstown Traffic* (5.9) will undoubtedly become popular.

Smith and Raffa cracked *Pitbull*, a former aid route that required nailing up a dihedral and hook moves over an imposing bulge. Now rated 5.11d/12a, *Pitbull* is a superior free climb that has been repeated by a dozen parties who all attest to its three-star character.

Steggs, Smith and Greg Allen teamed up on *Apes of Wrath* (5.11a) on the Harvest Wall. It punches through the ceiling right of *Dust Bowl Blues* and was completed in a rare blizzard. To the right, Smith and Chislet followed a right-facing corner up an imposing headwall to establish *The Harvest* (5.10), and Smith with Cole fought over the black bulge right of that, calling it *Bulge Busters* (5.10).

On the same face as Gottlieb's classic *Autumn Sonata*, Smith, Vermont, and Lisa Rody put up the deceptive *A Sideways Glance* (5.10). Around the corner, Smith and Chislet lunged off a pinky jam to the jugs over the lip of the *Fantasy 2000* overhang. *Fantasy 2000* (5.11/12) was originally dubbed by Rob Robinson after a soul music club in a seedy section of Chattanooga.

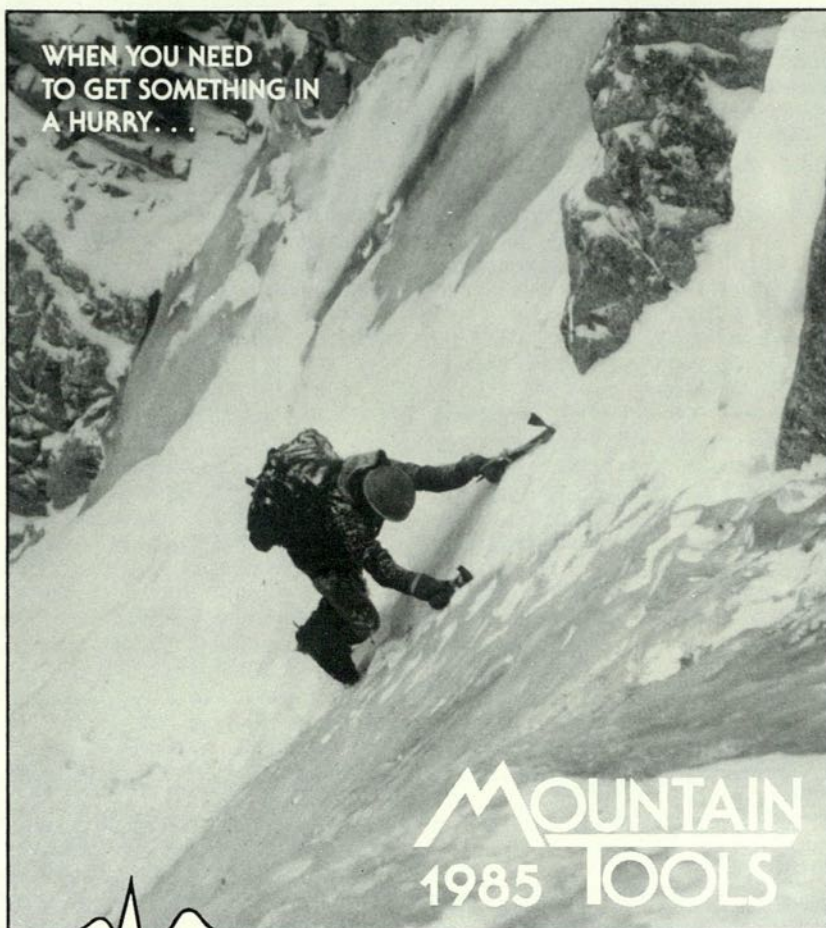
Hidden in the woods a mile north of the main crag, a tremendous white overhang is cleanly split by a crack that dwindles from hand to off-hand to finger. Referred to as *Bone Roof*, its twisted jams have tantalized and tortured climbers for seven years. On a rainy Sunday in October, Curt Merchant figured out a bizarre way to jam to the apex of the second tier. Using this sequence, Smith gained a steeple jam further out and pumped the finger crack to the top. At 5.12c, *Bone Roof* is, according to Merchant, "Bad, bad to the bone!"

Further south on *Lookout Mountain* at Yellow Creek, there has been surprisingly little new route action. Still, the irrepressible Robinson powered up *Projected Futures* (5.12a) with Robin Erbsfield following. This one pitch is totally overhanging and located to the left of the *Honey Comb Hangout*. Rich Romano, climbing in excellent style, completed the second ascent of *Grand Dragon* (5.12a) taking only one fall.

At *Sandrock*, a premier bouldering gymnasium, several significant lines and problems were added.

Russ Clune, Rosie Andrews, and Tony Herr topoped *Chinese Water Torture* (5.12a). This unusual problem ascends a water groove right of *Dial A Yield* and is best climbed by inserting one's big toe in a pocket. Smith, after spending a summer working up the gumption, bouldered it out. Forrest Gardner pushed higher on the Overhanging Chocolate Wall, pumping past the *Potato Hole* to the *Grapefruit* (B-2).

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

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On the Sunshine Wall, Steggs led *The First Black Man In Space* (5.10). Robinson and Smith, working in The Chambers, lassoed flakes to produce *Wall of Horns* (5.10).

The big news at Sandrock, however, is that *Champagne Jam* is now free. Collins with Robinson somehow thrashed over the lip of this 25-foot roof. Several climbers have repeated *Champagne*, including Jersey Jeff Gruenberg, and it is definitely 5.12c and, as they say down here, STRAINIOUS.

(Correspondent: Gene Smith.)

CALIFORNIA

On *Tahquitz*, between *Dave's Deviation* and *Devil's Delight*, Charles Cole and Bob Gaines added *Scarface* (5.11c), a high-angle pitch on tenuous, rounded holds. Dave Evans and Craig Fry plugged the gap between the *Wong Climb* and the *Illegitimate* with the two-pitch *Z Crack* (5.10c, 5.10a), producing a classic direct start to *Zeno's Paradox*. Cole and Fry found *Le Toilette* (5.11d), a technical face and crack pitch that skirts the right side of *Le Toit* roof.

At *Suicide Rock*, in the ultra-extreme face climbing arena, the high point of the

season was Darrel Hensel's first free ascent of *Ishi*, a 140 ft. masterpiece of thin, technical face moves. Minuscule edges (5.12) lead past a four-bolt aid ladder to fingertip liebacking (5.11) up a 40 ft. corner (formerly A3) to a good rest. From here Hensel freed a seven-bolt ladder at 5.11+ to produce the area's most sustained face pitch.

Several interesting one-pitch routes were also ferreted out. Just right of *Montezuma's Revenge*, Hensel, Evans, and Todd Gordon found *Baby Cobra* (5.11b). Left of *Sloppy Seconds*, Evans and Fry added *Road to Nowhere*, a 5.10b crack climb. Fry took on the overhangs left of *Eagle's Nest* to produce *Baby Eagle* (A3+), involving some thin nailing. Evans aided the wavy crack just right of *Flakes of Wrath: Rock Hudson* (A3-, all nuts).

In *Yosemite Valley*, Ellie Hawkins soloed a new route called *Dyslexia* (rating unknown) in the Ribbon Falls Amphitheater, beginning to the left of *Keel Haul*.

El Capitan yielded yet more lines of passage. Two new routes were done on the West Face. Bill Russell and Doug McDonald climbed *Mr. Midwest* (VI, 5.10b, A-3); beginning somewhat left of the *Regular West Face* start, the pair crossed that route at the "New World" (a prominent right-facing arch 500 feet up). The climb, which is 80% free, required 16 drilled holes as well as four days of effort. By continuing 100 feet further out on the "New World" arch, Steve Bosque and Dan McDevitt used five holes and four days to produce *Realm of the Flying Monkeys* (VI, 5.10, A-3).

On the Southeast Face, and previously unreported, is the *Atlantic Ocean* (VI, 5.10, A-5). John Middendorf and John Barbella began the route from the rock scar adjacent to the *Footstool* and what remains of *El Cap Tree Direct*. Fifteen new pitches of climbing were required, including one of A-5, mandatory 5.10 on loose flakes, and 58 drilled holes, after which the route joins The *New Jersey Turnpike* eight pitches from the top. The pair spent 10½ days on the route.

The wall left of and adjacent to Lower Yosemite Fall continued to receive attention, with two more routes completed. To the right of the recent *Ten Years After* and *Mist Fitz* is *Play Misty For Me* (5.11a) and 35 feet further right, *Power Slave* (5.11b), which climbs past a bolt and a 5.10d face to reach a ledge with two bolts; the second pitch continues up the crux crack to another two-bolt belay. 35 feet further right, *Power Slave* (5.11b) climbs a left-facing corner, then traverses left under a roof to join *Play Misty For Me*. The climbers involved were Kurt Smith, Dave Hatchett and Ken Ariza; Dave Griffith joined the team on *Play Misty For Me*.

A one-pitch offshoot of *Royal Arches Direct* was climbed by Don Reid and Alan Roberts, called *The Plank* (5.10b); from



Power Slave (5.11b) at Lower Yosemite Falls. Photo: Bill Serniuk.

the right side of the ledge at the start of the crux of *Royal Arches Direct*, lieback on a long narrow ramp to a two bolt belay/rapel anchor.

On the Southwest Face of Half Dome, Mark & Shirley Spencer and Dan & David Abbott put up *Eye In The Sky* (5.10b). The route starts a bit right of *Snake Dike* and shares that route's second pitch belay; where *Snake Dance* veers right, *Eye In The Sky* parallels *Snake Dike* to the top.

On the South Face of Half Dome, *Auto-*

bahn (5.11c) has seen a number of repeats (see *Climbing* #92); most parties have confirmed the quality of the climbing, which has been called "Brilliant, reasonably protected . . . a five-star route."

Half way up the *Right Side* of Monday Morning Slab, *Zoner* (5.11b) tackles the white polished face directly above with four bolts; the route was climbed by Mark and Shirley Spencer and Floyd Hayes.

Climbing at Elephant Rock, Tucker Tech and Lance Rowland found *Foaming At*

The Crotch (5.10a). After a traverse right from *Straight Error* on a ledge system, a hand crack is followed for a pitch; the crux, however, is in a flare.

In the *Serenity Crack* area, 50 yards uphill from that route, Eric Mayo and Brian Bennett climbed a one pitch thin face route, *Rupto Pac* (5.11c).

On the Middle Cathedral Apron, Bennett, Stu Ritchie and Norman Bolles climbed *Bottom Feeder* (5.10a) between *Freewheelin'* and *Cat Dancing*. Vince DePasque, Jack Wenzel and Bennett added *Stupid Pet Tricks* (5.10b), a one-pitch face climb in the vicinity of *Cat Dancing*. Bolles, Ritchie and Bennett also climbed *Spank Your Monkey* (5.10b), a tricky face route 150 feet left of *Black Rose*.

On Glacier Point Apron (west), Al Swanson, Brian Bailey and Bennett delivered *The Punch Line* (5.10d), a four-pitch route in the previously untapped area between the *Harding Route* and the *Punch Bowl*. The route follows the first pitch of the *Punch Bowl*, then heads straight up for four new pitches; the slightly unappealing first pitch gives way to beautiful, heavily polished rock with well-protected cruxes and stimulating runouts on moderate ground. Lower down, Bennett and Paul Christianson edged up *Thin White Duke* (5.10a), a face pitch located 50 yards uphill from *Green Dragon*. Still lower, Brian Knight et. al. did *Crunchy Frog* (5.9), a 5.9 face variation to *Apron Jam*.

On Glacier Point Apron (east), Knight et. al. connected *Synapse Collapse* and *Shuttle Madness* at mid-height to produce the thin crack *Boys Town Traverse* (5.10a).

On Sunnyside Bench; 100 yards downhill from *Lazy Bum*, George Watson, Bolles and Bennett conjured up *Sultan of Sling* (5.10c), a cruxy face and undercling pitch.

In the Leaning Tower area, Andy Burnham and Mike Forkash found *Norwegian Blue* (5.11a), a stemming pitch near *The Thief*. At Loggerhead Butte, 100 yards uphill from *Orange Juice Avenue*, Forkash and Bennett liebacked an open book in waning light to produce *Le Nocterne* (5.10a).

Unreported from spring 1985 were three other big free-soloing days for Peter Croft. Just after arriving in the Valley from Canada, Croft climbed the *Northeast Buttress* and *Braille Book* on Higher Cathedral, followed by the first five pitches of *Central Pillar off Frenzy* (climbed up and down). Later, he climbed the *North Buttress* of Middle Cathedral and the *Arrowhead Arete*, both on sight. Finally, Croft managed the *Steck/Salathe* on Sentinel, *Arrowhead Arete* and the *Northeast Buttress* on Higher Cathedral, again all in a day.

Antoine Savelli made some fast ascents during a fall trip to the Valley, free soloing the *Northeast Buttress* and *Braille Book* on higher Cathedral, then the *Kor/Beck* and the first two pitches of the *Birchfeff/*

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Williams, all in a total of four hours; of these, all but the *Northeast Buttress* were done on sight. Accompanied by Rick Derick, Savelli led the entire *Nose Route* on El Cap in 16 hours, with no pitches fixed, starting at 4:30 am and returning to the valley floor that night.

The **Southern Sierra** saw much activity in the 1984/85 seasons, with the following routes being reported.

On the Southeast Face of Charlotte Dome in King's Canyon National Park, Jack Wenzel and Elizabeth Ammon established *Neutron Dance*; the 10-pitch route starts in on an obvious orange dike, the crux at 5.10d, and continues on mostly moderate ground (5.8) with a 5.10a summit pitch.

On the South Face of North Dome, Craig Peer, Mike Stewart and Bruce Bourassa completed *Dolphin Dreams* (V, 5.11, A-3), starting the eight-pitch route in a crack just right of the huge "Roman arch".

At Courtright Reservoir, several routes were done on Power Dome, a 900-foot wall just below the dam. From north to south, these include *Vengeance of the Vermin* (5.11, or 5.10, A-1); this four-pitch route follows the arch at the far left side of the wall, and was completed by Greg Vernon and Herb Laeger. Vaino Kodas and Al Swanson climbed *Panic Attack* (5.11), a five-pitch route on the face to the right of *Vengeance* and left of the prominent water streak of *Helms Deep*. Laeger and Vernon added *Welcome to Courtright* (5.10-), a five-pitch route up the center of the wall; it begins between two dead pine trees on an obvious ledge.

Blaine Neely, Ken Rose and John Fry climbed *Zorro Zone* (5.10), beginning to the right of a roof that *Welcome* stays left of, traverses right under a roof, then back left again. *Aplodontia* (5.9+) follows a continuously difficult face to the left of a pine high on the face; the initial bolt is easily seen on the right side of the ledge where the previous two routes begin. This five-pitch route was climbed by Kodas and Herb & Eve Laeger. The trio also climbed *Esto Power* (5.10+), following a black water streak on the left side of a left-facing dihedral. Lastly, Vernon and Laeger climbed *Balance of Power* (5.10), a four-pitch route beginning on a crystal dike 40 feet right of a small pine.

On the left side of Humdinger Dome, Laeger and Vernon climbed a one-pitch thin crack, *Batman & Robin* (5.10+). On Leopold Dome, Kodas and Swanson climbed *The Grand Inquisitor* (5.11), a super classic four-pitch route on this isolated formation.

At Castle Rocks, Patrick Paul and the Laegers finished *Silver Lining* (5.9+), a nine-pitch climb described by some as "one of the finest climbs in the Sierra backcountry". It follows a line in the center of the Fin, a massive wall to the east of Castle Rock Spire.

Maggie's Farm is an area located on the West Slope of Maggie Mountain (10,000 ft.) on the Great Western Divide about six miles south of the Sequoia National Park boundary; it is approached by a long hike from Balch Park (Tulare County). On the northern-most dome, Paul and Dick Leversee climbed three routes, all two to three pitches in length and in the 5.9 to 5.10 range. On Disease Dome, a small formation in the middle of the area, Jim Murray and Vernon climbed *The Incurable Disease* (5.9+ or 5.10a), a classic two-pitch route featuring a finger crack continuous for 200 feet.

In the Needles, Herb Laeger and Ron Carson climbed *The Flight Recorder* (5.11), a face route to the left of *Imaginary Voyage*. On Sorcerer's Apprentice Needle, Patrick and Kelly Paul celebrated their first anniversary by climbing *Love Potion #9* (5.9+ or 5.10a), which follows the jugged face to the right of *Broomsticks* and joins that route at the second belay. At the same time, Vernon, Dan Dunkle and Shiela Szymanski did *Danse Macabre* (5.9), starting in a finger crack left of *Broomsticks* and avoiding that route's 5.10 crack by going left on the face. A difficult variation to the second pitch of *Broomsticks* was climbed by Mike Lechinski; *Jugheads* (5.1b or c) goes left from the first belay and follows steep knobs to the top.

On Charlatan Needle, *The Horoscope* (5.9, A-2) was free-climbed by Patrick Paul at 5.10c. On the southeast toe of Voodoo Dome, Vernon and Murray climbed *The Dark Side Of The Force* (5.10a), a classic three-pitch route featuring a roof, a perfect finger crack and a jugged face. Up and to the left, just right of the start of *Dr. Blood's Coffin*, Scott Loomis soloed *Ninja Crack* (5.9); it ends at the first belay of *Dark Side Of The Force*. Higher up the buttress, Vernon and Murray found *Return of the Jedi* (5.10), an 80-foot crack which ends at the bottom of the "meat slicer" pitch of *Dr. Blood's Coffin*.

Dan Dunkle climbed *Jedi Master*, a 5.10 variation to the arete pitch of *Snot*; the pitch traverses left, goes through a large roof, and ends at the *Dark Forest*. Dunkle also climbed a 5.8 crack to the right of *Return of the Jedi*.

On the Gremlin, Loomis and Vernon climbed *Lights Out* (5.9), which goes through a small roof and up a steep, pocketed face.

On the lower slabs, Vernon, Loomis and David Shung climbed *Mephisto Waltz* (5.9), a fine face route following knobs and thin cracks. To the right, next to the giant dihedral, Loomis and Vernon did *Invasion of the Polaroid People* (5.10), which features face climbing to an upward slanting crack.

On Dome Rock, Herb Laeger and Ron Carson completed *Welcome to Dome Rock* (5.10+), one of the most continuously difficult climbs on this formation;

it follows a water streak left of *Asteroid Belt*. Carson also climbed *The Incarcerator* (5.12), which goes up a face to the first belay of *Arch Enemy*. Laeger and Paul completed a traverse of Dome Rock (5.10), which used features of the other climbs and required no new protection; most of the traverse was a full rope length off the ground.

In the Lower Kern Valley, new routes were done on a number of formations. On Elephant Knob, Vernon and the Laegers climbed *Baby Elephant Walk* (5.8), a two-pitch route left of *Elephant Walk*. In April 1984, Jonny Woodward climbed three new routes with Maria Cranor. He led the old top-rope problem *Bwana* and re-named it *Wet Behind The Ears* (5.10b). To the left, Woodward climbed the striking overhanging slot to produce *A Niche In Time* with 5.11c off-width crux. The left-leaning corner crack right of *Dumbo* provided the first pitch of *Batar* (5.11a); the second pitch went across the face to the right, up past a fixed pin to a large knob, which distantly protects difficult face moves up and right. Darrow Kirkpatrick was on this ascent. Woodward returned in 1985 with Darrell Hensell and climbed a companion route right of *Batar*; *Celeste* has a 5.11a starting move and a 5.9 upper section with three bolts. The wall right of *Wild Kingdom* provided the same pair with *An Elephant Never Forgets* (5.10c), thin cracks connected by face climbing with two bolts.

Five new climbs were completed on Book Rock. From left to right, *Welcome To Book Rock* (5.11) was completed by Laeger, Carson and John Newman; the route follows a crack and arete on the far left of the formation. Herb & Eve Laeger, Newman and Vernon did *For All The Dreamers* (5.10a), a classic three-pitch climb following an obvious crack system. To the right of *Title Page*, the Laegers found *A Novel Approach* (5.9+ or 5.10a), a four-pitch route featuring hand and finger cracks and a belay in a manzanita bush.

To the right of the giant dihedral, Herb Laeger and Newman climbed *By The Book* (5.10), a classic one-pitch face, while Mike Fogarty, Eve Laeger and Vernon did *Footnote* (5.10), a fine two-pitch face/crack climb.

On Kern Slabs, Carson and Herb Laeger climbed the face right of *Cornflakes* to produce *Crater Factor* (5.11+). Up the river, on New Dimensions cliff, Loomis, Newman and Vernon climbed *Nowhere Man* (5.10a), a face just right of *Crack to Nowhere* (5.9), which Newman had done earlier.

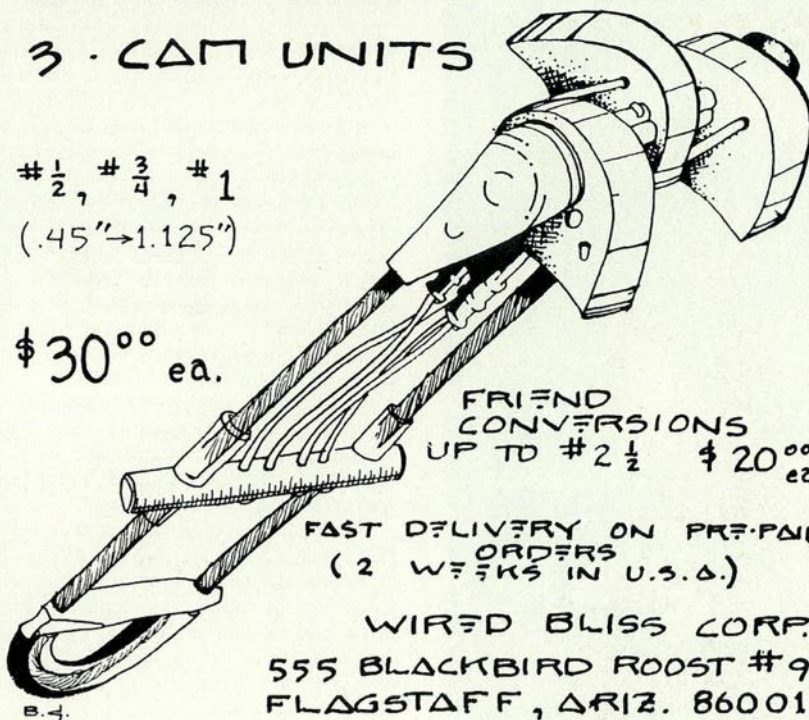
In the Domelands, on Jackass Dome, located near Fish Creek Camp on the Sherman Pass Road, Laeger and Loomis climbed *The Big Squeeze* (5.10), while Vernon and Murray did *Scott Free* (5.9, A-1), a two-pitch climb on the left side of the dome.

On Radiant Dome, Vernon and Virgil Shields did *Gamma Rays* (5.7), a crack

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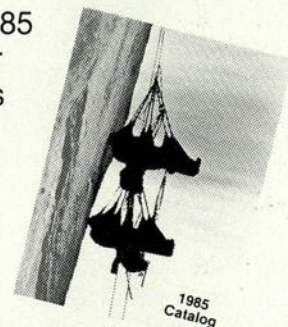
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climb on the right side of the east face. On Moon Dome, Vernon and Murray climbed *The Last Picture Show* (5.7), a crack on the left side of the west face between the two off-widths. Further right, Ron Delano, Loomis and Vernon did *Buzz Off* (5.9), a three-pitch route involving a traverse around a bee hive. To the right of this, Vernon and Shields did *Quantum Chromodynamics* (5.9, A-1), a three-pitch route using two points of aid in a blank area. Still further right, Loomis and Vernon climbed *Diagonal Dike* (5.7), a fun two pitch face.

On the east face of Moon Dome, Delano, Vernon and Loomis climbed *Walking On The Moon* and *Moonscape*, two 5.7 faces. Rick Smith, the Laegers and Vernon also climbed *Moonraker* (5.8), a face/crack on the right side of the rock.

On the Quark Wall, Vernon and Delano climbed *Strange Quarks* (5.8), a hand crack, and *Charmed Quarks* (5.9, A-1), up a curving dihedral and through a roof; both were one-pitch climbs.

On Knuckles, Vernon and Murray did *V* (5.8), a five-pitch line just left of *Bird of Paradise*. On the far southern rock of the Knuckles formation, Bob Lingren, Aloiz Smrz and Rodriguez climbed *Long Leg Pinnacle* (5.7), *Foreigner's Route* (5.7) and *Deserted Dihedral* (5.6); all were four pitches in length.

On Bart Dome, Vernona and David Chung did *Follow The Rainbow* (5.10-), a four-pitch route that follows the crack under the giant roof at the left of the rock, then continues in a groove for two pitches.

On the Dihedral Wall above Rockhouse Meadow, Laeger climbed the crack to the right of the classic *Spread Eagle*; the three-pitch route is un-named (5.10), but was said to be of as high a quality as *Spread Eagle*.

Across the river from Dihedral Wall on Flake Dome, Vernon and Ron Mastriani climbed *Cling Like A Moocher* (5.8), which features a committing undercling, and *The Scarfer* (5.9), which avoids the undercling and follows a dike straight up.

At Tuttle Creek, the two crack systems left of *Locksmith* were climbed by Murray, Vernon and Laeger. Both routes start at the same place. *Bush Master* (5.9) goes right via a long stretch to a bush, then up a squeeze chimney to a fine crack/face. *The Master Key* (5.8) goes straight up; vegetation in the crack detracts from an otherwise fine climb.

On Rock #2 at Owen's Ridge, *Stiff Little Fingers* was free climbed by Mike Fogarty at 5.10c; the route had previously been A-2. Loomis, Todd Erickson and Bob Schneider climbed *The Far Side* (5.8), a nice dihedral in the notch between Rock #2 and Rock #3. On Rock #3, Vernon and the Laegers put up *Acne* (5.10), a face covered with small black diorite knobs and finishing in a pocketed crack.

At upper Owen's Ridge, Herb Laeger and Bob Yoho completed *The Power And The Glory* (5.11) in four pitches of sustained, difficult climbing up a face and into a beautiful crack left of the Big Bird Roof. Laeger, Loomis and Vernon climbed *Brain Drain* (5.10+), a route going up difficult face right of *Welcome To Owen's Ridge* and underclimbing a difficult roof.

Vernon and Murray climbed *Whistlin' Dixie* (5.9), a face route left of *Zip A Dee Doo Dah*. At the roof on top of the *Zip A Dee Doo Dah* dihedral, they also climbed *Campdown Races* (A-1), a route which will certainly go free.

Loomis, Vernon, Dan Dunkle, Peter Brown and Jim DeGuy finished *Look Homeward, Angel* (5.10+, or 5.10, A-1), a fine climb involving a variety of problems, finishing with a 5.9+ roof.

Vernon and Shields put up *The Shroud* (5.10), a more difficult but less aesthetic variation to the first pitch of *Peter Cotton-tail* on the Easter Wall.

In November 1985, Mike Stewart, Craig Peer, and Glen Short journeyed to **Devil's Punchbowl County Park** near Pear Blossom, California.

Since they were unaware of a moratorium on new route activity allegedly imposed by the local rangers, the trio discovered *Taboo* (5.10b), a one pitch route that provides classic Punchbowl face climbing on a steep field of aggregate embedded in sandstone. As with most Punchbowl routes, protection on the route was provided by 3/8 in. bolts placed on lead.

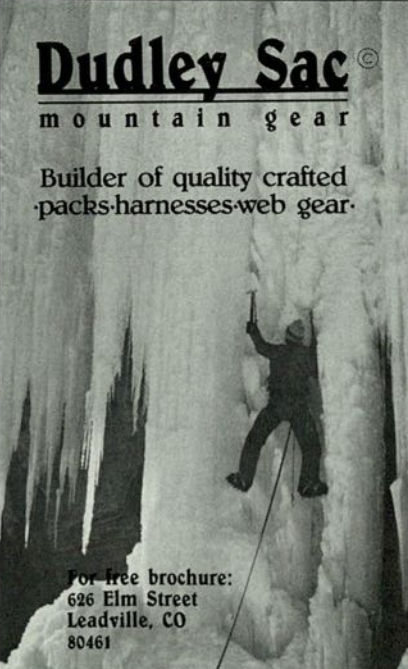
Devil's Punchbowl County Park is an hour's drive north of Los Angeles. Stewart feels it is "one of the best kept secrets in Southern California."

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the spring. Very few climbers frequent the area. Also, despite the ranger's moratorium, many lines remain unclimbed.

Local climber Dennis Clark, is in the process of printing a guide to the area, but until its publication, the only available route information comes from word of mouth or an outdated mimeographed copy that is passed from hand to hand. Existing routes of one to two pitches range from 5.5 to 5.11 and offer the added excitement of leading on sandstone.

(Correspondents: Bob Gaines, Don Reid, Brian Bennett, Tami Knight, Craig Peer, Greg Vernon, Jonny Woodward.)

COLORADO

Of particular note was Frenchman Patrick Edlinger's visit last summer to Colorado. The Frenchman climbed a number of the state's testpieces, including on-sight flash ascents of *Genesis* (5.12+) and *CinchCrack* (5.12-), as well as a repeat of *Rainbow Wall* (5.13-), all in Eldorado Canyon. Perhaps most impressive was his six-fall ascent of *Sphinx Crack* (5.13) in the South Platte.

Climbing activity in the Boulder region was heavy as always, although new routes have become more and more difficult to find. Top-roping was popular, due to a lack of protection and a high standard of difficulty; many of the following routes were led after being top-roped, and other tactics employed included rappel inspection of nut placements and pre-protecting on rappel, usually with bolts.

About a mile up **Boulder Canyon**, on the Little Crag, Mark Rolofson, Henry Lester and John Payne climbed *Cool Operator* (5.11c/d, R/X), a thin face with a few discontinuous seams for shaky wired nut placements. Weeks prior to the lead, Rolofson made a rappel inspection and top-rope ascent.

On Mental Rock, Eric Goukas, Scott Reynolds and Lester top-roped *Obsessive Compulsive* (5.12), a thin crack and roof left of *Manic Depressive*.

The Milk Dud (a.k.a. Canyon Block) is a small crag located north and uphill from Mental Rock. On the right side of the crag, Rolofson made the first free ascent of an old aid line, naming it *Tricks Are Fer Kids* (5.12a); prior to the lead, a top-rope ascent was made and the two old aid bolts were replaced with two new $\frac{3}{8}$ in. bolts. On the same crag, Skip Guerin top-roped *Damaged Goods* (5.12), involving an overhang and left-leaning crack just left of *Rude Boy*.

On Bitty Butress, Rolofson led *Razor Hein Stick* (5.12c), a high-angle smearing testpiece left of *Peapod*. In 1984, he made a few top-roped ascents, and the climb was pre-protected on rappel with three bolts and a #RP.

Uphill and left from this route, Eric Goukas and Henry Lester climbed *Leaping Lizards* (5.11d), a long pitch involving overhanging face climbing; the route was

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toproped and pre-protected with two bolts on rappel before the lead.

Both Dan Michael and Guerin repeated *Tourist's Extravagance* (5.12 + /5.13-) on Castle Rock, an extremely thin face to thin crack problem.

In **Eldorado Canyon**, on the Wind Tower, Bob Horan climbed *Wild Staring Eyes* (5.12b/c, R), a difficult slab and arching roof to the left of *King's X*. (The route is also known as *Muscle Up*). He had attempted the climb unsuccessfully on a top rope, then led it with two fixed pins placed while free climbing.

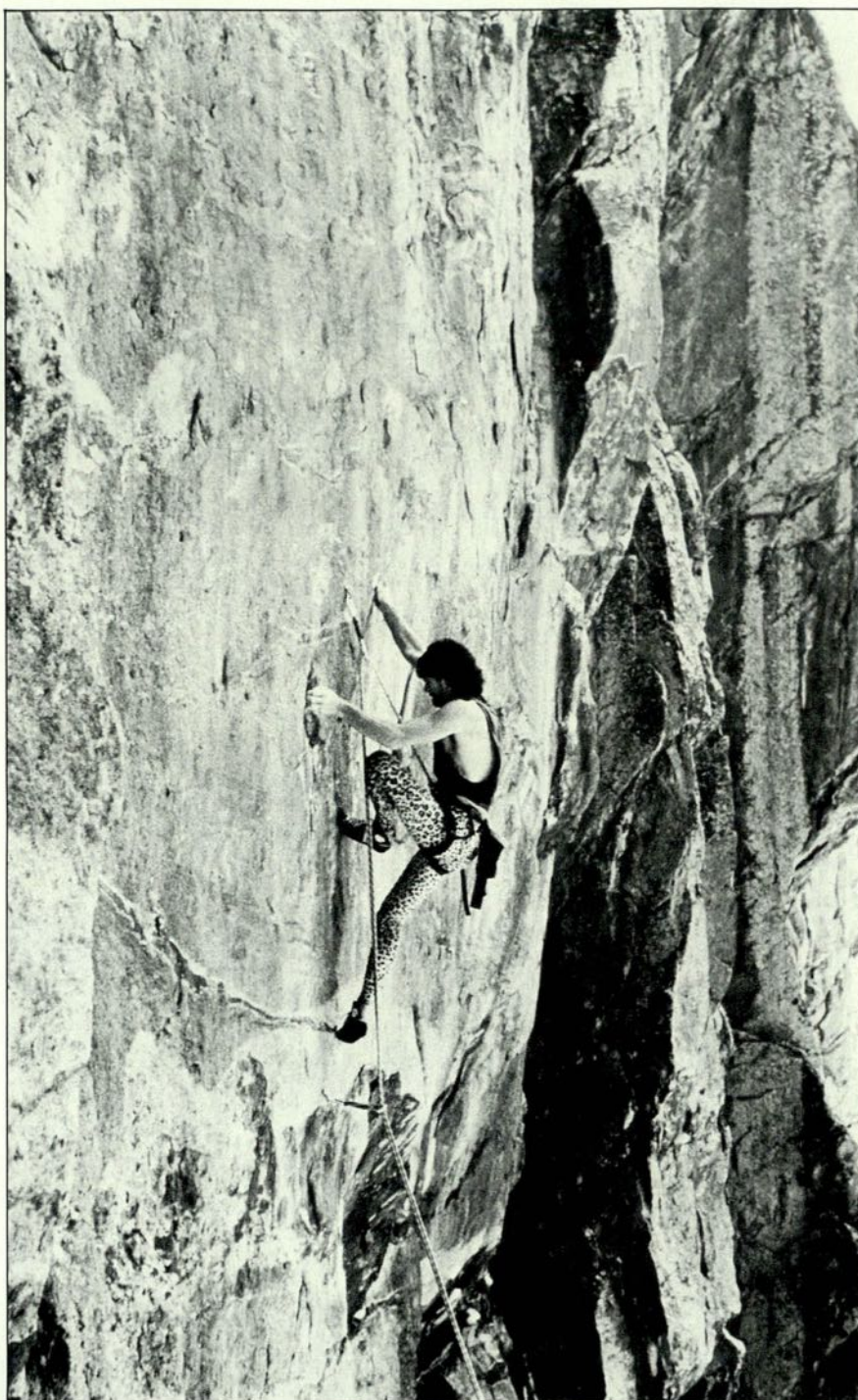
On Whale's Tail, Horan added *Urban Gorilla* (5.11d, R) to the right of *Horangutan*, again placing two pins while free climbing; however, both were very poor and were removed after the ascent.

On the West Ridge, Goukas and Payne climbed *The Achievers* (5.10d, X), an alternate finish to *Morning Thunder* that steps left at the chockstone. This was led after top roping. Right of *Morning Thunder*, Goukas, Lester, Reynolds and Payne climbed *The Exterminator* (5.11a, R), a thin left-facing corner, after top roping it first.

On the Bastille, Ed Boddy and Mike Brooks climbed *Coach's Demise* (5.9+, R), which parallels the upper half of the first pitch of *Werk Supp* on the left side. The pair also free-climbed the direct A-4 start to the *Rotwand Route* (5.10, R). Brooks and Dan McQuade climbed a new pitch on the Bastille, *Chance of Rain* (5.10); it starts between *Northwest Corner* and *Ran*, climbs over a short roof protected by two pins, then up a series of well-protected underclings to join *Rain* at the second roof.

A few short but excellent free climbs were established on the River Block in Eldorado Canyon. This 30-foot formation sits on the north side of Eldorado Creek, between the West Ridge and the Redgarden Wall Gully. On the south face of the block, Horan climbed *Eastern Priest* (5.11, R), following the overhanging scoop to the top. On the east face, Horan led *Kiss of Life* (5.12a/b, R,) up the desperate overhang. Both routes were later free-soloed by Horan.

One of the more significant new routes of 1985 was *Paris Girls* (5.12+), led by Christian Griffith. Located on the west face of Redgarden Wall, right of *Disappearing Act*, the route climbs a bulging, 120 foot wall devoid of cracks. Prior to the lead, Griffith top roped the climb and pre-protected it with seven $\frac{3}{8}$ in. bolts, setting the stage for a record amount of controversy. Reactions varied from supportive (Mark Rolofson: "... a monument to difficulty and excellent climbing for many to be challenged by ...") to condemning (Mark Wilford: "It remains to be seen why this face wasn't left as a top rope problem for future generations to attempt from the ground floor."). In any case, Charlie Fowler repeated the route in a morning, finding



Christian Griffith on *Paris Girls* (5.12+). Photo: Bob D'Antonio.

the climbing desperate, but not much more so than *Rainbow Wall*.

Unreported from last summer were two new routes done in the Boulder area by Ed Webster and Peter Athens. In Eldorado Canyon, the pair made the first lead of *Exodus* (5.10+), the left-slanting weakness just below the crux of *Genesis*. Two bolts were placed on aid to protect the pitch, which had been top-roped earlier (off the *Genesis* anchors) by Leonard Coyne and Bill Feiges, and had been known as

The Book of Genesis. Webster and Athens also added an independent 5.8 finish. On Castle Rock, they climbed a short, high-quality new pitch, *Another Roadside Attraction* (5.10) up the blank face and thin vertical crack about 20 feet left of Skunk Crack. A fixed pin protects the crux moves at the start.

Soloing in the Boulder area seems to be on the rise, and a number of routes have fallen victim to this trend. Derek Hersey, an English lad, has been a driving force in this

movement with a number of fine efforts to his credit. Among many others are solos of *Neon Lights* (5.11) and three ascents of the *Naked Edge* (5.11). John Arran, another British climber, added on-sight solos of *Jules Verne* (5.11), *Northwest Corner of the Bastille* (5.10+), *Super Slab* (5.10), *Nexus* (5.10) and *King's X* (5.10+); he also soloed the *Naked Edge*, *Psychosis*, *XM* and *The Serpent* after having made roped ascents. Eric Goukas joined the fray with unroped ascents of *The Sidewall* (5.11) and *Conan* (5.11), and Bob Horan soloed *Horangutan* on the Whale's Tale, possibly Colorado's first 5.12 free solo. On Flagstaff Mountain, Horan soloed the *Distant Dancer*, (5.12a/b); this intricate test piece ascends the south face of the pinnacle just north of Tree Slab.

On the Bucksnot Slab in the **South Platte**, Rolofson and Mike Lowe (no relation to the LAS Lowes) climbed *Hurricane Gloria* (5.12a/b) on the bulging face left of *The Good*, *The Bad & The Ugly*; the route is protected by ten bolts, most of which were placed on rappel (see also *Letters* this issue).

The granite around **Button Reservoir** near Lyons saw some activity last fall. On the rock below the first spillway, Steve Mammen and Mark Wilford climbed the thin crack of *Neurosurgeon* (5.12), and to the left, *Live Wire*, a 5.10+ face climb. Still further left, Paul Piana added the severely overhanging crack of *Pocket Hercules* (5.11+). About a mile up the road on the north side is a big rock, where Mammen and Wilford climbed the 5.10+ fist crack of *Where Eagles Die*; Piana did a thin crack, *Pretty Blue Gun* (5.12-). Near the entrance to the canyon on Pipeline Rock, Mammen and Wilford did a 5.12 seam, *The Pipeline*.

Several new routes were reported in the **San Luis Valley** from last summer. In the Rock Garden, Mark Hoffman and Bob D'Antonio did *Bee Line* (5.9+), a thin crack with poor protection. At Antenna Wall near South Fork, D'Antonio found the improbable *Demons In The Closet* (5.12-), offering sequential liebacking and finger jamming on a thin crack splitting an otherwise blank wall, and *Flying Buttress* (5.11), a thin two-pitch dihedral.

On the first tier at Big Meadows, D'Antonio, Karen Keep, and Mark and Lew Hoffman used two bolts to protect the steep face of *Rhyolite Rain* (5.10), and then added *White Jive* (5.10) with one bolt placed on rappel to protect the overhanging face start. Finally, Lew Hoffman and Jeff Smith put up the first route on Beaver Creek Wall; *Tunnel Vision* (5.8) offered three pitches on loose rock at the far right side of the wall.

(Correspondents: Mark Rolofson, Dan Hare, Mark Wilford, Lew Hoffman.)

IDAHO

The availability of a guidebook along with mild spring and summer temperatures resulted in an increase in the number of climbers visiting **City of Rocks** as well as the addition of over 60 new routes in the area. The following routes are the more notable ones done by one small group; neighboring tribes no doubt added still more.

In April, Dan Sperlock set the standard by bagging the first lead of the sparsely-protected *Scar Tissue* (5.11c) on the north end of the Creekside formation. On Bath Rock, Sperlock led *Wild Country* free at 5.11a. In the Circle Creek area, Stan Caldwell and Sperlock freed the horrific *Pigeon Crack* (5.11c), a severely overhanging off-width. Sperlock also led *Half Moon* (5.10+ or 5.11), another wide crack just right of *Pigeon Crack*.

Jay Goodwin and Dave Bingham teamed up for a number of routes, including a fine face climb on the Anteater, *Hold-ing Out For A Hero* (5.10), between *Swiss Cheese* and *Body Snatcher*, with one bolt. On Window Rock, the pair climbed the leaning crack right of *Harvest* to produce *The Reaper* (5.11+), joined *Harvest* for its 5.10d finish. On City Limits Rock, *Alamo Massacre* climbs the steep face just right of *City Limits*; two bolts protect this 5.10 edging climb. In the Twin Sisters area, "the best face route at the City" was put up just right of the *Eberhorn-Twin Cracks* route. *Straight Edge* (5.11a) follows a sustained water streak to a belay, then continues to a huge "cave" where it joins the *Eberhorn* route.

Tony Yaniro took a weekend off from mountain biking and snagged the probable first ascent of an overhanging thin crack next to the road on Kaiser's Helmet, naming it *Quaking Has-been* (5.11+ or 5.12). You know you're getting old when you can barely make 5.12!

On Parking Lot Rock, Bingham, Sperlock and Jan Sterret filled the slot between *Tow-Away Zone* and *Funky Bolt* with *Beauty and the Beast* (5.10-). *Traffic Jam* (5.11-), the thin crack to face left of *No Paring*, was top roped and awaits a lead. Between *Norma's Book* and *Batwings*, Bingham, Sterret and Allison Banks put up *Suburban Sprawl* (5.9+), a thought-provoking face climb with two bolts.

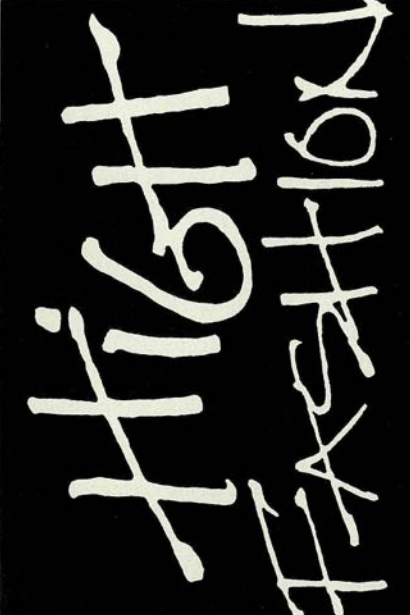
On the Buzzard Perch (east of Window Rock), two one-pitch, rap-off climbs were done on the north end. *Terror of Tiny Town* (5.11a), a superb dihedral, was engineered by Bingham (cleaned on rappel, one protection and one rappel bolt placed on rappel). A few yards to the left, similar tactics were used to establish *Wafer of Woe* (5.10+), which takes the thin crack on an outside corner (two pins).

On Rabbit Rock's east side, *Road Kill* (5.10) starts in a thinning crack behind the giant boulder, finishing with crux moves protected by two bolts. The fun thin crack problem in the Rabbit-Buzzard notch was




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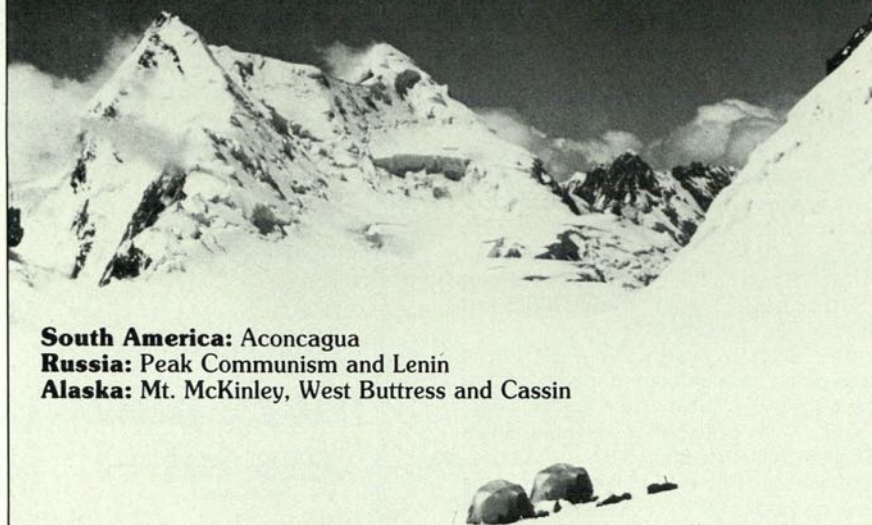


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climbed by Bingham and two students, who named it after their favorite Grateful Dead tune, *Dupree's Diamond Blues* (5.10+).

The thin, flared crack right of *Body Snatcher* on the Anteater was climbed by Sperlock and Caldwell to produce *Smurf Smasher* (5.10+ or 5.11). The pair also did a two-pitch climb on the formation up the road that leads from Elephant Rock to the west; *Nemetode* (5.11) takes a prominent diagonal line on the west side.

Reid Dowdle and Steve Tenney put up a fine face climb to the left of *Bloody Fingers*; *Double Vision* (5.10) follows parallel dikes past four bolts and a pin. On the west side of Yellow Wall rock, in the Sisters area, Pokey Amory and Bingham climbed the left of two obvious lines to produce *Pragmatic Decision* (5.11).

A revised version of the City of Rocks guide is in the works, and active climbers are encouraged to report their climbs for inclusion; send information to Dave Bingham, P.O. Box 1932, Ketchum ID 83340.

On the **Selkirk Crest**, a glaciated range with an abundance of crags, several outstanding routes were done. During the fall of 1984, Randy Green and Joe Bensen climbed *Sunset Dihedral* (5.9) on the overhanging west side of Harrison Peak. On the south face, a direct finish was free climbed by Green, Mark Kubiak and Karin Nystrom. Calling it the *Keystone Route*

(5.9), they believe it to be the first free ascent of the line.

Chimney Rock, the highlight of this area, received several new quality routes. Dane Burns and Dave Fulton worked out a line which is a direct start to *Free Friends, Illusions* (5.11a). It involves finger tip holds on polished steep rock. Green and Rod Gibbons climbed a one-pitch line called *Dirty Harry's Revenge* (5.9+), which ascends a flake system at the lower left side of the East Face. Martin McBirney and Vance Lemley climbed a short overhanging finger crack called *Lord Greystoke* (5.11b), left of *Magnum Force*. Tom Applegate and friend climbed a new line on the northwest corner called *Dirty Harry* (5.7). The route ends at the bolted rappel on the West Face.

Climbers access to Chimney Rock from the East side (Pack River) has been improved by a group of local climbers and hikers who adopted old trail #256 and re-routed a portion of it. Now from the trailhead, the hike into the east side has been done in less than one hour. The east access is easier on your car and your body than the Horton Ridge access.

Gunsight, yet another peak in the crest area with climbing possibilities, saw it's unclimbed East Face (500 ft.) yielded to a moderate route, *Winchester* (5.8) by Green and Gibbons.

Several new routes were climbed at the local crags in the Sandpoint area this sum-

mer, prompted by the forthcoming guide book.

Two obvious lines were climbed at the Laclede Rocks by Green and Terry Jensen. The first was 5.10c, a man-made crack left from the railroad blasting a right-of-way through a granite dome, named *Railyard Blues*. The other climb, done by the same pair and Bensen, was on the Utility Pole Buttress and is a obvious wide crack, called *New Sensations* (5.8). A more obscure, but fine line was done by Karl Birkenkamp, *About Face* (5.10a), on the northwest corner of the Upper Main Cliff.

Late in the fall of 1984, Green and his wife Theresa climbed two new lines at the Schweitzer Practice Rocks, *Ho-Di-Do* (5.9+) and *Exit Stage Right* (5.10a) (a variation finish).

Granite Point, a crag area on the eastern shore of Lake Pend Oreille was the center for activity during the hot summer. Green, Jensen, and Bensen climbed a very aesthetic, albeit gymnastic line on the Little Buttress called *Mainline* (5.10b-c). *110 Degrees* (5.10a) was done by the same group. Another route called *Waterline* (5.8) was done by Jensen and Marty Potucek. The *Ogre Offwidth* (5.9), a man-eating crack on Troll Tower, was climbed by Jensen and Green.

A guidebook for Sandpoint and the Selkirk Crest is being prepared, and information on new routes, route descriptions & histories, and other facts of interest would be appreciated; send information to Randall Green, P.O. Box 1023, Sandpoint, ID 83864, or stop by the Outdoor Connection in Sandpoint.

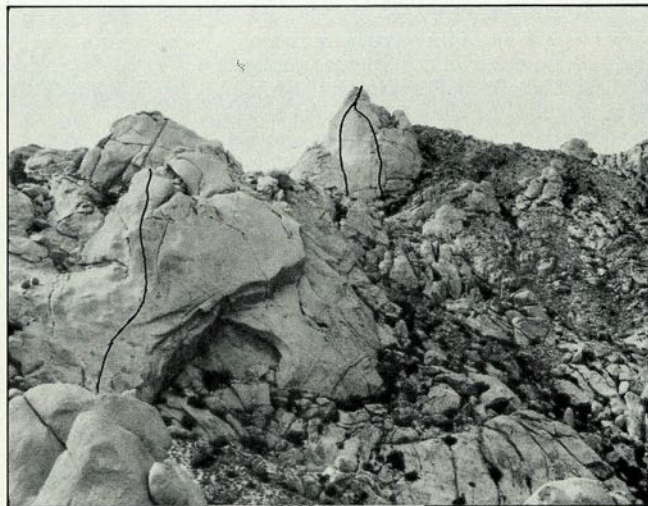
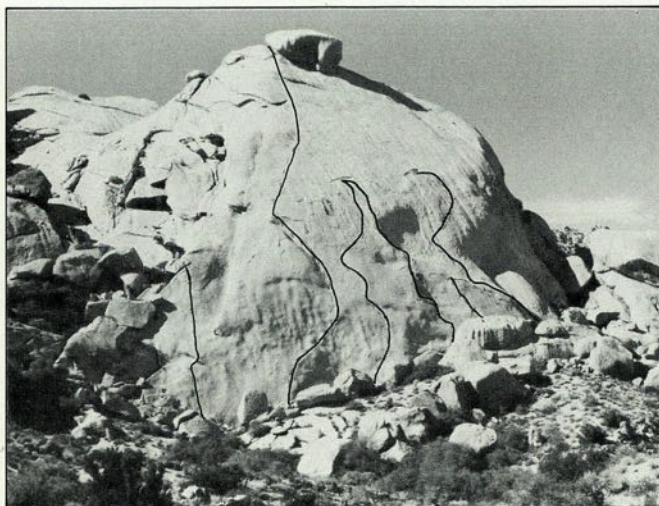
(Correspondents: Bingham, Green.)

MINNESOTA

After a harsh winter, new route activity flourished in the state, inspired partly by the north country's latest guidebook (*Superior Climbs*, by David Pagel). Although relatively flat and cratered with lakes, northern Minnesota offers scattered crags worthy of attention. The area suffers from hard winters, and fragile, broken and hard to protect are all apt adjectives in describing the quality of the rock. However, cool summers and gritty rock (basalt, rhyolite and anthrosite) offer many chalk-free ascents, although tape is generally used. The following are in the **Duluth** area, many within city limits.

On a huge boulder called Whope Wall, several short routes were squeezed in between existing lines. On the south face, *Glacier Slide* (5.9) is a short but enjoyable intermittent thin crack with a mantle to finish. 20 feet right is *Ice Age Offy* (5.9-), *Devotion* (5.8) and *Surrender* (5.9-). These 30 foot lines run side by side up a 90 degree face, with thin cracks and mantle finishes for all. All were done as on-sight free solos by James M. Stuber.

Across the road, on a dynamited face, *Da Rock's Broke* (5.8) follows a highly



fractured face for 45 feet, with only tiny RP's for protection. This and the steep *South Face* were climbed by Jim and Kelly Stuberg.

Heading into Duluth along I-35 is a series of small boulders called Nopeming Rocks. These west-facing rocks are 35 to 40 feet high and offer a variety of climbing. *Center Face Direct* (5.8) runs up the center of the largest boulder to the pine growing on top. Just right lies the aptly-named *Mud Crack* (5.6); *Right Face* and *Left Face* are two nice face climbs on good rock, although not very difficult. Further right are two good overhangs, *Bush* (5.6) and *Main Overhang* (5.8). Finally, *North-west Face* (5.7) offers nice face climbing, but ends all too quickly.

Many fine bouldering problems can be found along Skyline Drive above the city of Duluth. On a west-facing rock called Party 80-82 lay some good face routes. At the far left (north) is *North Arete* (5.4), 45 feet of fun climbing on steep rock which is very slippery due to much painting by serious party-goers. A few feet right, *Gray Face Streak* (5.9+) goes straight up an equally slippery gray band. Just right is the easier *5.8+ Face. Kathy* (5.9) runs up the vertical face above her painted name at the base of the rock.

Moving south, *Main Dihedral Left* (5.7+) is set in a large left-facing dihedral. Just right, and a bit easier, is *Main Dihedral Center* (5.7), followed by *Main Dihedral Right* (5.8), with fine liebacking and a thin finish. *Main Dihedral Arete* (5.7) follows the right edge of the dihedral. *Party 82 Left* (5.8) is a nice face route on tiny bumps and little edges, and has an easier sister line, *Party Line 82 Right* (5.7). *The Crack* (5.7+) follows a perfect thin crack from top to bottom, while at the far right side of the rock is *Baby Arete*, only 30 feet but fun nevertheless.

Ely Peaks, southwest of Duluth, is the town's main climbing area. Mostly west-facing, the rock is clean and fairly stable, and over 100 feet tall in places. *Railroad Route* (5.7+) starts from the west end of

the railroad tunnel, following blackened, vertical rock at the start and finishing in a right-facing dihedral. A few feet right, *Main Dihedral Right* (5.7+) follows the dihedral proper. 60 feet right, *Guillotine* (5.8) climbs a 50 foot face just left of a bright orange dihedral. Just left of this dihedral lies *Orange Arete* (5.6), and *Strawberry* (5.6), both using the same start. 25 feet farther right is *Purple Flowers* (5.9), following a vertical, right-facing dihedral. *Black Concrete* (5.7) has what appears to be a man-made, vertical wall of black concrete, complete with trowel marks.

The southwestern faces of Northwestern Bluffs are located several hundred yards north of the main area at Ely. These faces, like many in the area, are heavily lichenized except on the well-traveled routes. 50 feet right of *Coming Unhinged* lies *Lichen To You* (5.4). All routes were done as on-sight free-solos by Stuberg.

Stuberg and John R. Peer also climbed *Peerless* (5.8,R), just right of *Railroad Route*; with little brother Danny Peer, Stuberg and Peer also did *First Blood* (5.9+) between *Purple Flowers* and *Black Concrete*, which offers some nice overhanging climbing.

At Brewer Park, also off Skyline Drive, Stuberg and Jay Jackson climbed *LJ3* (5.7) and *RJ3* (5.6), two enjoyable routes on a south-facing wall. 20 feet right (east), the pair added *Claymore Mind Route* (5.11, A-1, X); broken, crumbly rock proved a protection nightmare, and Stuberg used a single aid point near the top, which was eliminated by Jackson while seconding.

(Correspondent: James M. Stuberg.)

NEVADA

Christmas Tree Pass in the Newberry Mountains of southern Nevada has seen sporadic route development since the mid-1970's; the area primarily features difficult face climbing on quartz monzonite, much like that at Joshua Tree, although some crack lines exist. Although a number of routes have been done (many of which

Christmas Tree Pass, Nevada. Left: Dali Dome, with MC-1 (5.8), Surreal Peal (5.10), Exhibition (5.10), #2 (5.8), Might As Well (5.9+) and #1 (5.10+) Right: H & R Block in the foreground, with Prime Interest (5.9), and Space Needle behind, with Grand Visser's Garden Party (5.10) and Dark Side of the Moon (5.10). Photos: Joe Hancock.

have gone unrecorded), the potential of the area appears to be vast. The following climbs (done in 1984 and 1985) are the first recorded since 1979.

Paul Van Betten made the first free ascent of an old aid route, *Separate Reality* (5.11d), and later, with Nick Nodblom, climbed *Jaws* (5.11a). George Smith, Gary Hall and Lynn Robison did the 100-foot jam crack of *Commitment Time* (5.9) on the north side of Frock Rock. Robison and Joe Hancock did a two-pitch crack in the Valley of the Gods above the Ambrosia Face, naming it *The Shadow and The Real* (5.7). The pair also added *MC-1* (5.8), a face climb on the south side of Dali Dome, with seven bolts. And *Might As Well* (5.9+), also on Dali Dome, with three bolts. On H & R Block, Robison and Hancock climbed *Prime Interest* (5.9), a four-pitch route with 18 bolts (eight for belays). (Correspondent: Lynn Robison.)



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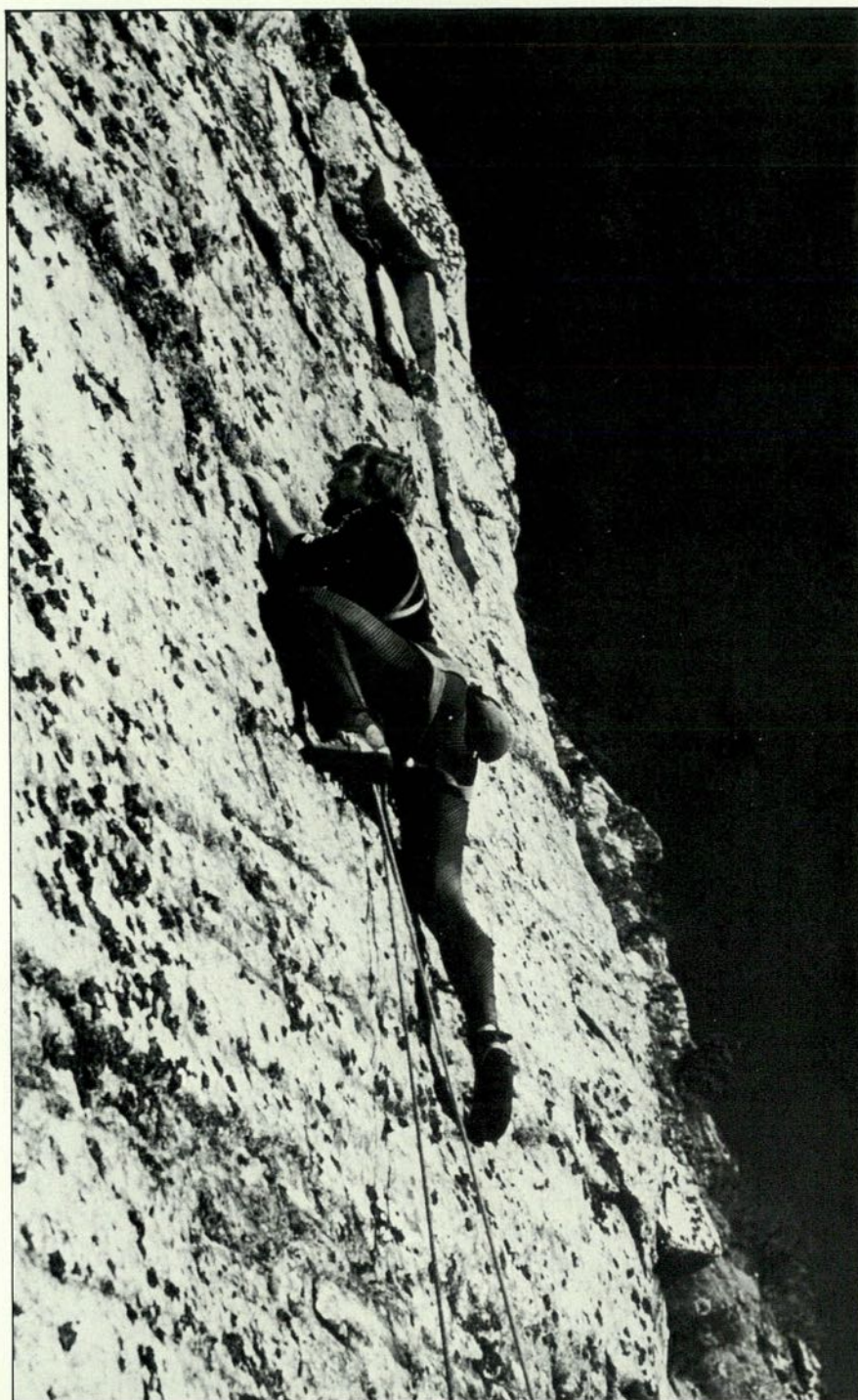
Without doubt, 1985 was a busy year on the outlying crags at the **Shawangunks**. At Lost City, Scott Franklin and Jordan Mills completed a new 5.13, *Survival of the Fittest* (5.13-); a number of quality 5.11's and 5.12's were found as well, including Russ Clune's *Thunderdome* (5.12+). Cope's Lookout saw the first ascent of the *RP Roof* (5.12+) by Kim Carri-gan, while Lynn Hill and Russ Raffa snatched *Artificial Intelligence* (5.12+) at Bonticou Right.

On the main cliffs, the routes tended to be easier. Starting at Sky Top Right, Ivan Rezucha and Chris Monz climbed the seam right of *Simple Pleasures* to create *Simple Minds* (5.10). Just left of *Zig Zag Man*, Dick Williams and Joe Bridges climbed a steep face and corner system to produce a quality 5.9+ route. Right of *Cretin Corner* is the previously unreported *Tor and Feathered* (5.9), done by Rich Ross and Chuck Boyd.

Moving to the Trapps, Rezucha and Annie O'Neill squeezed in *Patty Duke* (5.9+) just to the right of *Pas de Deux*. The scary face left of *Drunkard's Delight* was climbed by Todd Swain, Matt Jasinski and John Goobic, and fittingly titled *One Blunder, and It's Six Feet Under* (5.9). *Arc of a Diver* (5.9), by Ray Dobkin & Joe Ferguson, follows a straight line from a crack left of *Rock and Brew*, to connect with the old *Bloody Mary* third pitch variation. A directissima of the *Madame Grunnebaum's* buttress was completed by Tad Welch and Todd Swain *G Forces* (5.9); soon after Chuck Boyd and Terry Granger added a 5.10 variation up a corner on the second pitch. The arete problem right of V-3 was solved by Swain, Welch, Dae & Marie Saball, Dick Peterson, and Brad White to create *Galactic Hitchhikers* (5.9+), while Rezucha and O'Neill discovered *Journey's End* (5.10-), which offers exposed climbing out the huge roof and block above Snowpatch.

In the neighborhood of Red Pillar, *Steep Hikin'* (5.7) was climbed by Swain and Randy & Andy Schenkel. The route climbs the front of the pillar, then up a thin crack right of *Deep Lichen* on pitch two. Rezucha and O'Neill added yet another line to the Arrow wall, with *Quiver* (5.9), following the face and thin seam left of the crux on *Arrow*. *High Jinx* (5.9+) by Rezucha & O'Neill climbs the face right of *Ivan and the Swan*, while *Four Seasons* (5.10) by Rezucha and Josh Cowam climbs the face and arete left of the *Winter*. Further down the Trapps, Rezucha and Monz cracked *Yo Mama* (5.10), a wild route out the enormous roof right of *Independent Hangover*.

On the Near Trapps, the low roof left of *Scuttlebut* was done by Swain and Goobic to produce *Peyton Paltz* (5.9) while another roof, this on the front of White Pillar, was finished by Swain and the Schenkels' *Hang Ten* (5.10-). Just right of *Inter-*



Dave Saball on *Live & Let Die* (5.9+) at the near Trapps. Photo: Todd Swain.

lewd, the clean arete of *Interplanetary Ascents* (5.9+) had its first ascent by Swain and Iza Koponicka (5.9+). Just left, *Liv and Let Die* (5.10-), by Dave Saball and Swain, climbs the roof left of *Eowyn*, and then up the unprotected white face and arete to the top.

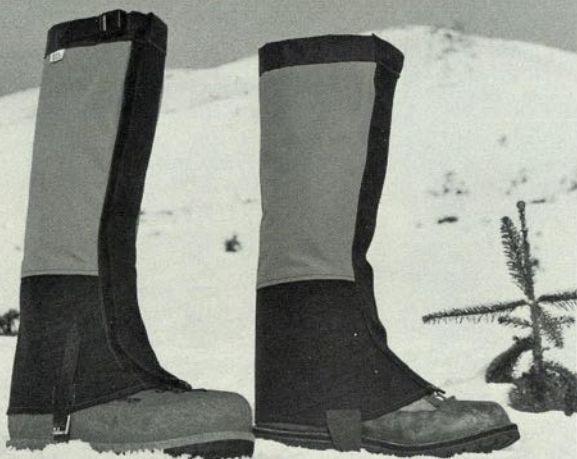
Finally, a comprehensive new guidebook to the Gunks is due out by late April, containing almost one thousand climbs. As with previous guides, only the four major cliffs will be included.

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(Correspondent: Todd Swain.)

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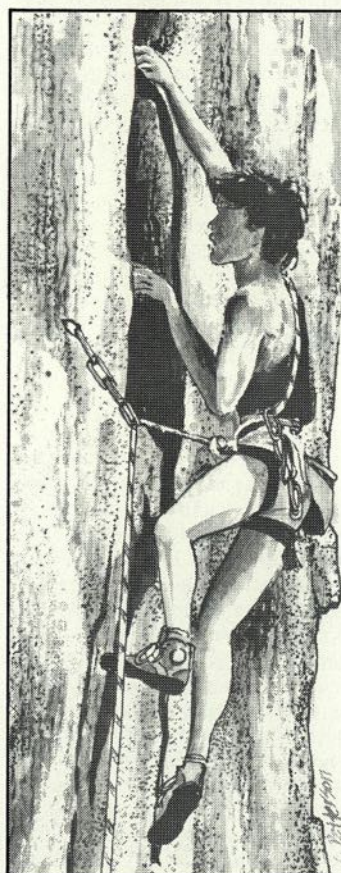
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PENNSYLVANIA

Recent activity at **Stoneyridge** has produced a large pool of difficult, high quality climbs. Most notably, Hugh Herr climbed *Maalox Power* (5.12a), a 13-foot roof problem whose weakness is a fingertips jamming exercise, which Herr negotiated via two consecutive one arm pull-ups. The route is located at the far east end of Stoneyridge.

On the King's Chair pinnacle, Kim Hams and Jim Nickoden added *Sickness Prevails* (A-4), following the obvious clean thin seam.

Todd Fosbenner and Daryl Roth climbed *Worm Surgeon* (5.10c), an exceptionally fine face climb right of *J. K.'s Finales*. Roth also led the aesthetic crack that goes straight up from the start of *My Dark Hour; Bright Size Life* (5.11b) is one of the many obvious lines which were long overdue for a first ascent. Roth, Fosbenner and Hams found a delicate 5.9 between *Stump Crack* and *Tempest*, naming it *Monkey Wrench Climb*.

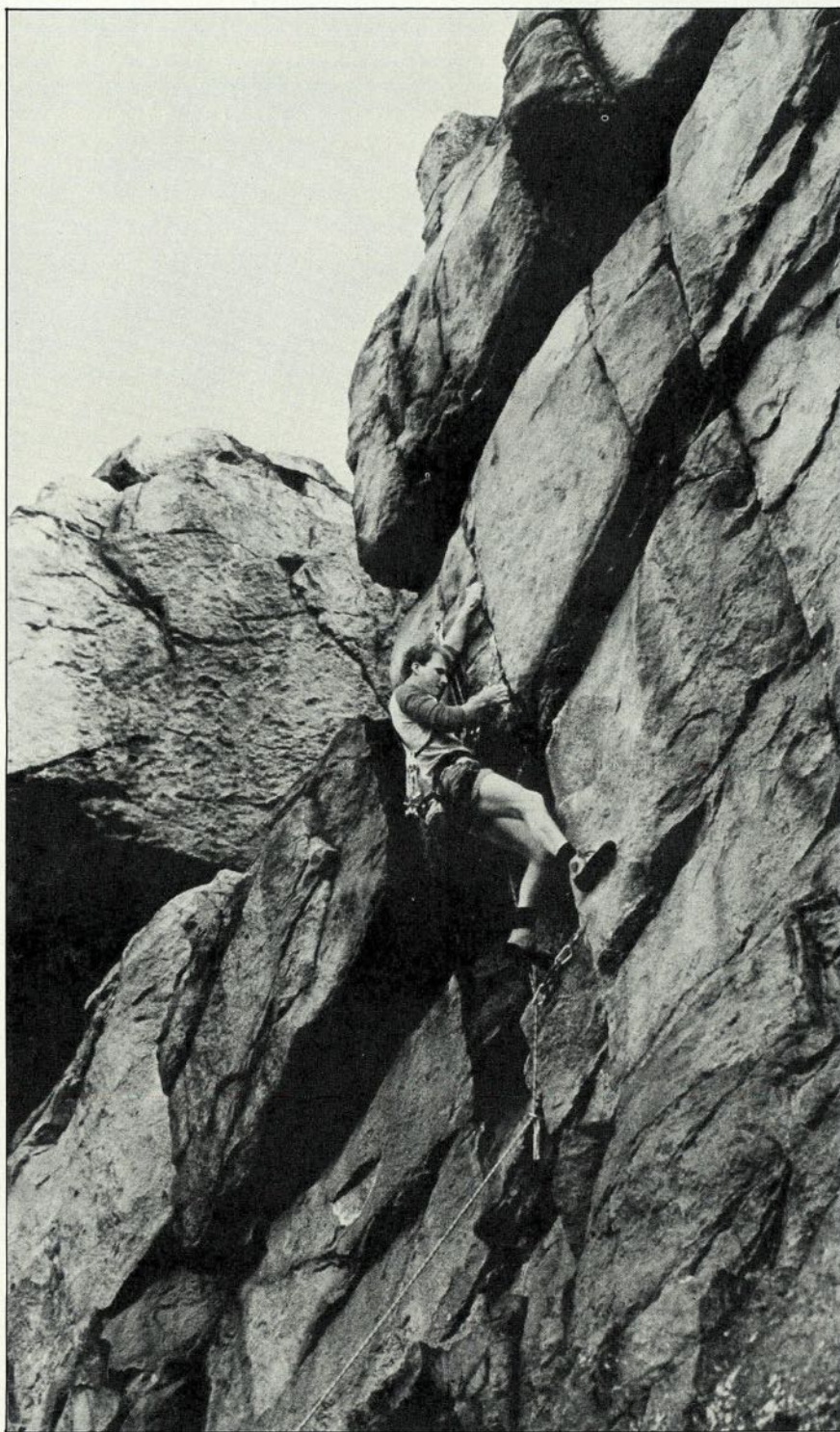
Rick Fairtrace and Scott Jones bagged *Higher Class*, a direct 5.11b start to *Middle Class*; Fairtrace found a hold which had eluded previous attempts on this excruciatingly thin line. Fosbenner and Roth found *Stines Roof Direct* (5.11a) relatively simple once the thin crack was amply protected with a Slider.

In the popular central section of the crag, most of the possible lines have been cleaned up. The most difficult of these is *The Activator* (5.11c/d), immediately right of *Lower Class*. Fosbenner led this with regularly spaced protection of dubious quality, the crux involving very strenuous liebacking to a one fingertip jam. Just left of *Sons of Samovar*, Rich Pleiss and Roth put up a thinly-protected line, *Wingspan* (5.10d).

In the realm of bad protection, *Slum-trimpet* (5.10d) managed to have the worst; traversing from *Sons of Samovar* to *Astra* on underclings and edges, the route finishes up a break in the roof left of *Astra*. Roth, followed by Fosbenner, whimpered up this route, the traverse protected by only a poor pin in a downward-sloping horizontal crack; after the ascent, Roth pulled the pin out with two fingers.

Roth and Kim Steiner were astounded to find that the impossible-looking thin crack in the roof left of *Trial and Terror* went free at only 5.9; a long reach gained a hidden finger lock, making *Stone Blind* much easier than expected. *Fantastic* (5.11a) is a classic of the area; strenuous, sustained liebacking and jamming lead to a 10-foot roof at the finish. Roth and Fosbenner made the first ascent of this instantly popular route between *Stone Ladder* and *Lithosphere*. They also made the first free ascent of *Guillotine Flake*; formerly 5.9, A-1, the route goes free at 5.11c, and is well-protected and strenuous.

In the cleanest section of Stoneyridge, where the wall overhangs at 113 degrees



Todd Fosbenner on The Activator (5.11c/d). Photo: Darryl Roth.

for a continuous 35 to 40 feet before a ledge is reached, Herr bagged a coveted thin line. Formerly an un-named 5.10, A-1 route located between *Birthday Boy* and *Pariah*, the route went free at 5.12a. Despite some scary protection at the crux, Herr considered the route to be of high quality throughout; in keeping with its former status, the route remains un-named, but is commonly known as the *Herr Route*.

About 25 feet left of *The Originator*, Roth and Hams climbed *Weirdness Prevails* (5.8), which is a bit run out near the top. Just a few feet left of *The Strider*. Ron Augustino and Pleiss climbed an exquisite 5.10d route; *Next Edition* is one of the finest, albeit uncompromisingly strenuous routes of its grade at Stonyridge.

(Correspondent: Darryl Roth.)

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UTAH

Despite numerous routes reported this season, several high quality routes have been done in the Salt Lake canyons and gone unreported. In **Little Cottonwood Canyon**, on The Fin, Brett Ruckman and Les Ellison climbed *The Finagle Variation* (5.11+). Linking steep face and flakes, this steep route meets the *Dorsal Fin* at its first belay. On The Thumb, *The S-crack* route (previously 5.11+, A-O) was totally freed by Drew Bedford and Doug Heinrich. Formerly requiring a pendulum, climbers can now reach the classic third pitch crack by a steep laybacking and face variation. The free climbing grade of the route (5.11+) remains the same, although a bit more serious. Just east of this in the Plumbline Gulley, Bedford freed the previously misnamed *Five Thirteen Crack* (5.12a). Consisting of a bulging fingertips crack, this route was climbed in weather so hot that the name *Pinching Crisco* was suggested as a possible sub-title.

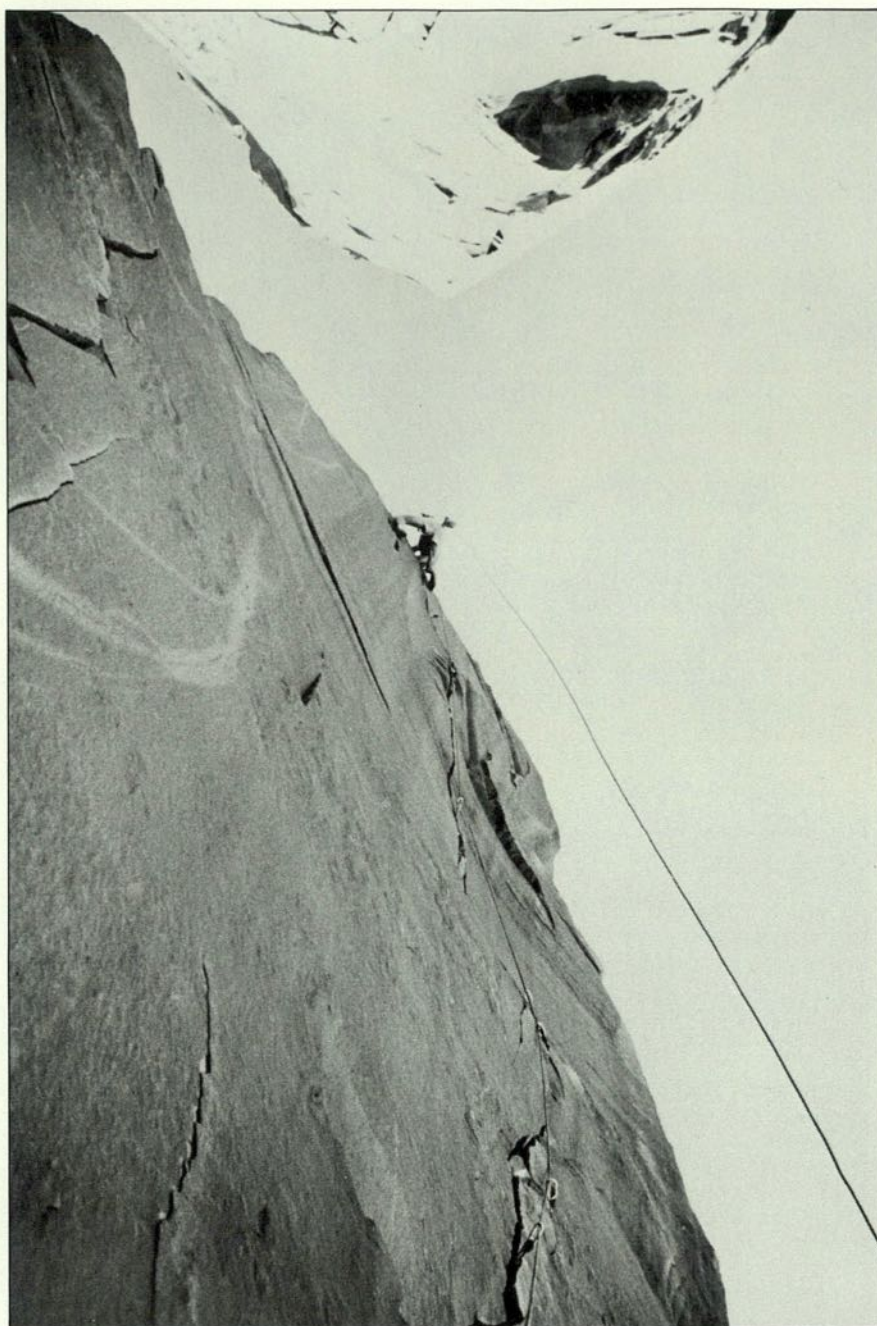
Two more aid routes to go free are the *Trinity Cracks* in the Green Adjective Gulley. *Right Trinity*, re-named *Catwalk* (5.12a), shares its first 30 feet with *Left Trinity*, then arches up and right to a semi-hanging belay. *Left Trinity* (5.12+) is one of the most unique and difficult routes in the canyon. Overhanging and awkward, this route has yet to see a complete second ascent. Both were led by Steve Hong with Steve Caruthers. In the same gulley, to the right, *Badlands* (5.12) was freed by Bedford and Seth Shaw. A variation second pitch to *Looney Tunes*, this strenuous layback is topped by a 6½ foot stem to a finger crack which passes through a roof.

In the Gate Buttress dihedrals, Bedford and Heinrich climbed *Fruit Loops* (5.10), an exhilarating vertical face route between *Hesitation* and *Becky's Wall* which required three bolts to be placed from hooks. Also on the Gate, Bedford and David Casey found a line uphill from *Purple Horizons*; *Speed of Life* (5.11+) climbs double finger cracks to a wild crux, followed by a runout to the belay.

In **Bells Canyon**, on the second ascent of the recently freed second pitch of *Arm and Hammer* (previously 5.10-, A-O), Bedford, Casey, Ron George and Karen Kelley made the first free ascent of the route at 5.11b/c. This was done by freeing the pendulum from the belay where *Arm and Hammer* and the *Butcher Knife* split; routes now go totally free, making Middle Bell Tower the home of some of the longest, highest quality free routes in the Wasatch.

In Gargoyle Gully, Kirsten Davis and Bill Robins climbed *Lizard Lips* (5.7) up a slab to a large tree, left of *Intensive Care*. Above, the pair added *A Question of Faith* (5.11-, R) up an off-width to a double roof and a slab to a ledge.

In **Provo Canyon**, Robins and Thomas Koch climbed *The Gates of Hell* (IV, 5.10,



Jeff Achey on Hoop Dancer (5.11), Canyonlands. Photo: Ed Webster/Mountain Imagery.

X), which climbs the major wall to the west of the ice climb *Stairway to Heaven*; this was the first known ascent of this 1800-foot face. The first six pitches were on limestone, the last six on sandstone, with rock quality ranging from excellent to amazingly poor.

In **Zion National Park**, Brian Smoot and Bill Robins climbed *Mythical Kings and Iguana* (III, 5.10) on the Watchman, following a crack system on the northwest corner of the buttress.

On Ralph Buttress near **Salina**, Bill Robins and Kirsten Davis climbed a chimney/gully to a vertical flake system to produce *Chitterbug* (5.10+).

In August, Eric Bjornstad and Tony Valdez made the first ascent of the Rhino Horn (II, 5.10), a 300-foot tower east of **Moab**. The route climbs the west buttress starting at the lowest possible approach; the tower is reached by traveling up the Sand Flats Road past the city dump and on toward the La Sal Mountain Loop road to Mile 108 (four wheel drive may be required). The tower, easily visible from the road, is then reached by hiking south one mile. An alternative route, passable by two-wheel vehicle, is to descend the Sand Flats road from the La Sal Mountain Loop Road. Because of its location at over 7,000 feet, the Rhino Horn is an ideal mid-

summer desert climb.

In **Arches National Park**, Jeff Widen and Dawn Burke added two new routes. *Zippy Zebra* (5.10a) lies in a left-facing, left-leaning dihedral on the wall above the main park road 1.7 miles from the entrance station; *Heart of the Desert* (5.10b/c) follows a beautiful, left-facing dihedral opposite Argon Tower in the Park Avenue area. Widen and Doug Cochran also climbed *Portable Thrash Unit* (5.9), a short, right-facing dihedral 1/10 mile past *Zippy Zebra* on the same wall.

In the **Canyonlands**, Anne Leibold and Taras Skibicky made the probable second ascent of *Rites of Passage* (5.11+), the Webster/Gallagher route on the King of Pain, confirming its difficulty and quality and calling it "a must if you like unrelenting thin-hands cracks and wild off-widths." The pair also added a new route to Bridger Jack, *Ponders of Persuasion* (5.11-) up a huge, clean dihedral; the crack in its corner starts at fist size and goes to thin hands in two long pitches, with many #2½ to #3 Friends recommended. No bolts were placed.

In the Canyonlands, Jeff Achey and Ed Webster did a couple of noteworthy routes in October. On *The Lighthouse*, they made two first ascents; *Lonely Vigil* (II 5.9) climbs the central crack system on the back side of the spire; *Iron Maiden* (III 5.11, A1) ascends the narrow dihedral system just to the right of *The Poisidon Adventure*. The cruxes are two hand traverses and a blank, technical corner, all on the second pitch. The Wingate was iron hard, black, and sharply cleaved; three points of aid (left fixed), led to the tiny summit. A register is in place.

On the same trip, Achey and Webster made the first free ascent of Hymmingbird Spire via a new route up the North Face. *Hoop Dancer* (II 5.11) climbs a severely overhanging, perfect hand crack — a great lead by Achey. In the same area, Jeff Achey and Karen Newman made the first ascent of *Easter Island* (I 5.9), a delicate Wingate face climb, and the last spire in the group to be climbed. A 130-foot free rappel — as exciting as the climb — gets you back to the ground.

(Correspondents: Drew Bedford, Bill Robins, Kirsten Davis, Eric Bjornstad, Jeff Widen, Taras Skibicky.)

WEST VIRGINIA

In mid-November, a huge rain storm engulfed the state, causing widespread floods and severe damage in the Potomac Highlands; in some cases, entire towns were washed away, bridges were washed out, and farms completely stripped of their topsoil. Of particular importance to climbers, the bridge to **Seneca Rocks** was destroyed, as were the visitor's center and camping area, making this popular area all but inaccessible for the time being. While the State of West Virginia is working to repair damage and aid flood victims,



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several other groups are also active in the relief effort. Readers of *Climbing* who wish to help are urged to contact the following:

Dennis Miller, Pendleton County Disaster Coordinator, Franklin, W VA 26807.
(304) 358-7911

Max Sites, Seneca Rocks Elementary School, Seneca Rocks, W VA 26884
(304) 567-2640

Rev. Ted Schultz, Grace Lutheran Church, Petersburg, W VA 26847
(304) 257-1265

Tax free donations can be channelled through the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Mountaineering Section at 1718 North St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036, as well. In addition, climbers interested in helping with the new bridge to the climbing area are urged to contact John Markwell at The Gendarme, Seneca Rocks, W VA 26884; (304) 567-2600.
(Correspondent: Stuart Pregnell.)

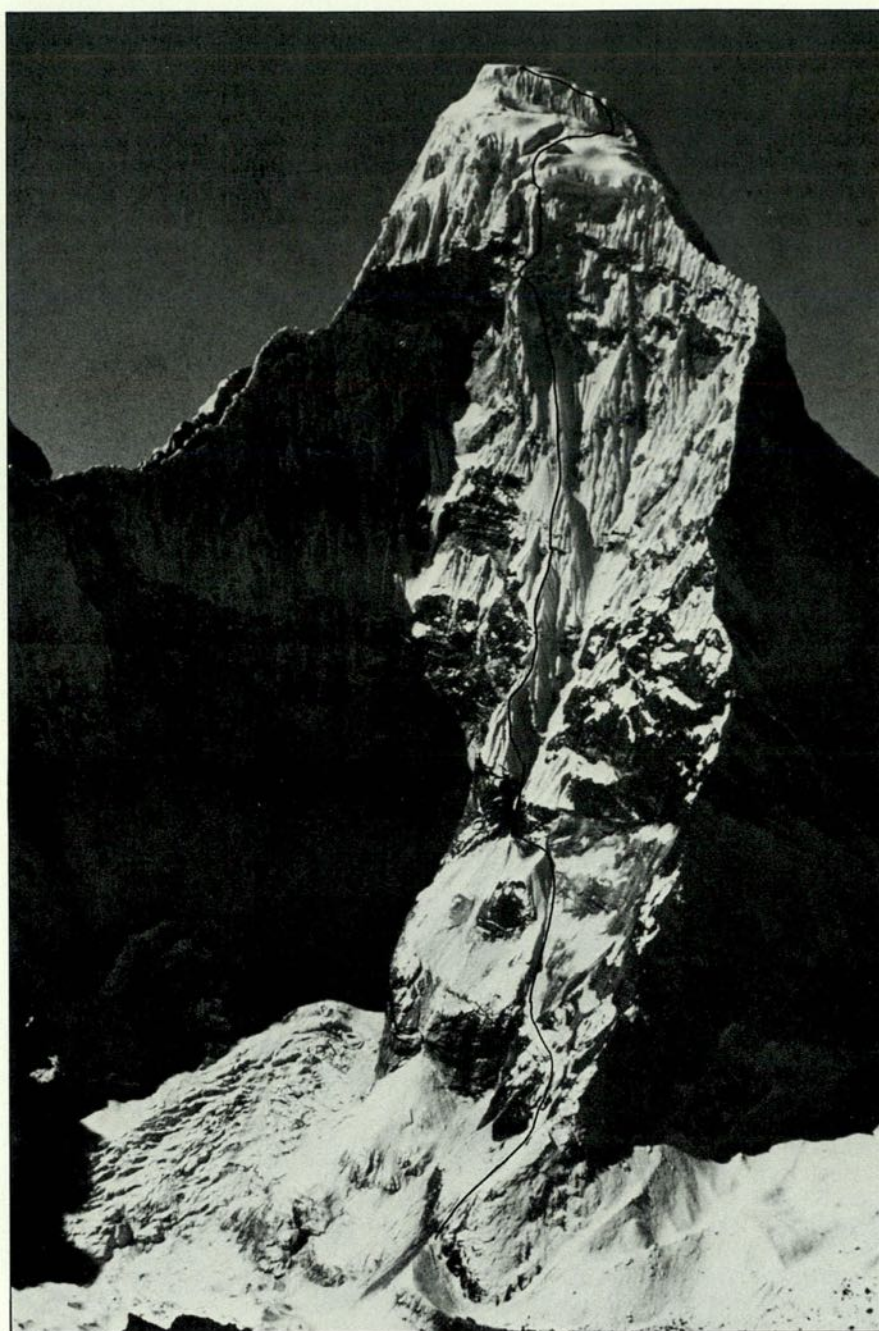
NEPAL HIMALAYA

A severe storm in mid-October brought record snowfall to the mountains of Nepal, stranding trekkers and climbers in high villages and base camps, and resulting in a number of deaths. However, once good weather returned and conditions stabilized, several parties managed good climbs. A full report on fall and winter climbing activity in Nepal will be published in the April issue of *Climbing*.

After working with an Italian team to fix ropes on the *Southwest Ridge* of **Ama Dablam** (6,856m), Roger Marshal and Peter Athens each made rapid (ca. 36 hours round trip from Pheriche) solo pushes up the mountain in late October. During the same period, Randy Harrington, Hoomin Aprin and Martin Zabaleta made the first ascent of the *South Ridge*, joining the *Southwest Ridge* near the top of the fixed ropes about 200 meters below the summit; the trio fixed ropes on the lower, mixed section of the route, then completed the upper section in an alpine-style push.

In early December, Carlos Buhler and Michael Kennedy made the first ascent of the *Northeast Face* of Ama Dablam. The face is hidden from view until one walks beyond Chukung, but is readily seen from Island Peak.

After the walk in from Jiri and a side trip to Kala Pattar (5,599m) to acclimatize, base camp was established at the small pasture ground of Shango (4,400m); due to heavy snowfall in the area in October, the normal base camp used for this side of the mountain was inaccessible to yaks, being buried in over a meter of snow. After establishing a small advanced camp at this latter site (5,000m), Buhler and Kennedy (accompanied by his wife Julie) made an ascent of Island Peak (6,189m) to further acclimatize.



Ama Dablam from Island Peak; the Northeast Face is marked, bounded by the East Ridge (left) and the North Ridge (right). Photo: Michael Kennedy.

Moving to the advanced camp on Nov. 28, Buhler and Kennedy reconnoitered and broke trail in the lower gullies, leaving a cache of food and equipment at the start of the route proper (5,400m) on Nov. 29. After a bivouac there Nov. 30, they climbed the face in a single push, reaching the summit at 10:02 on the morning of Dec. 7. They descended the normal route (*Southwest Ridge*) to 5,200m that day, utilizing fixed ropes left in place from the fall climbing season, as well as some fixed by a New Zealand team attempting a winter ascent of that route.

The new route follows a prominent steep

ice rib in the center of the *Northeast Face*, bounded by the *East* and *North Ridges*. The climbing was predominantly on snow and ice, with some difficult pitches of thin ice over rock; several waterfall pitches were encountered, as well as much steep, unconsolidated snow. Due to the soft snow conditions, the bivouacs were all good, only one requiring extensive chopping. Despite perfect weather, the face proved to be a cold one, as it got only five or six hours of sun a day; combined with the short winter days, this resulted in daytime temperatures as low as -20.C.

(Correspondent: Michael Kennedy.)

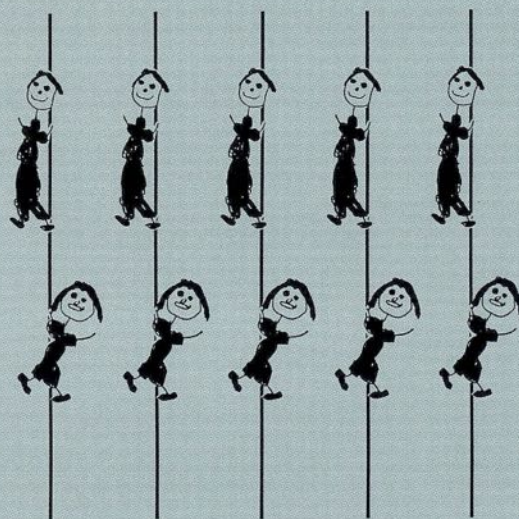


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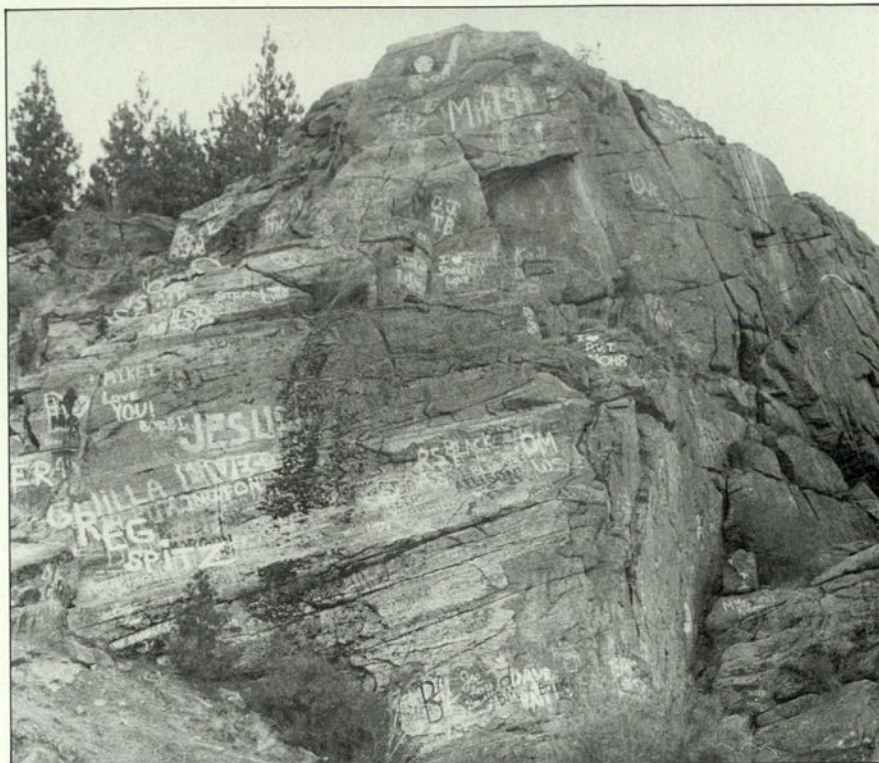
Spokane Rocks For Sale

Minnehaha, the popular crags located 10 minutes from downtown Spokane, Washington, are for sale. Most of the cliffs are on private property belonging to, as legend has it, "a rich old lady from back East." As it turns out, this woman resides in the Spokane Valley and has decided to sell the property to finance her forthcoming retirement. In the fall of 1984, she put her property — roughly 12 acres of mostly rock, marsh and steep hillside — up for sale for \$50,000. The realty signs that appeared in the parking area at Minnehaha prompted immediate concern among local climbers. Initial plans by area climbers to raise the purchase price fell through. Perhaps as an incentive for climbers to get the money raised, "no trespassing" signs were recently posted at the major access points to the bluffs. Although no known arrests have been made to date, police have reportedly kicked at least two parties of climbers off the property. Climbing activity at Minnehaha has significantly declined since the signs went up, but efforts to raise the money have stepped up.

Spokane climber and businessman Paul Fish, along with the Spokane Mountaineers, is largely responsible for the money raised thus far and for the plan to make Minnehaha into a county park. The county park system has agreed to put up \$30,000 if the Spokane Mountaineers can raise the balance. So far, \$7,000 has been raised. \$3,000 has come from individual contributions from about half of the 600 members of the Spokane Mountaineers. Fish, who owns Spokane Mountaingear, is largely responsible for soliciting the remaining \$4,000 through corporate donations, most of it coming from Spokane banks who donated the money as a public service. Ironically, Fish notes that the large climbing equipment companies that he has contacted have not been interested in helping out.

Fish and the Mountaineers are working toward an earnest money agreement with the realtor to prevent the property from being sold to another party while the balance is being raised. Without this formal agreement, the threat that Minnehaha will be turned into a gravel pit or an exotic housing development still remains. It is also unlikely that the "no trespassing" signs will come down until the deal is closed.

The idea of turning Minnehaha into a county park is only one of many that has been kicked around since the property was put on the market. At one time, Spokane



climbers Chris Kopczynski and Jim States considered buying the property in combination with other sources of funding. They intended to place the property in a corporate trust, making the rocks available for public use while not assuming tax or other liabilities. At least one other Spokane resident had considered placing a down payment and raising the balance by charging daily fees a la Gunks.

The current plan to turn Minnehaha into a county park is likely the best solution. According to Fish, part of the agreement with the county park board is for the Mountaineers to assist in maintenance of the area. Area climbers welcome the opportunity to clean up Minnehaha. The most popular and accessible areas are notorious for broken glass, trash dumps and graffiti. Most of the environmental impact to the area is caused by non-climbers in the form of partyers, ORV users and miscellaneous degenerates. Previous efforts by climbers to have an organized cleanup of the area were stymied by the owner, who refused to grant permission for such projects.

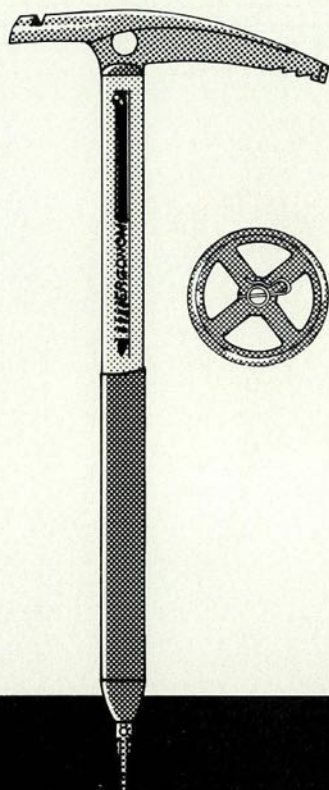
The granite outcroppings and faces at Minnehaha have a long and colorful history of climbing, dating back to the turn of the century and the subsequent founding of the Spokane Mountaineers in 1915. As Bob Loomis notes in his *Guide to Rock Climbing in the Spokane Area*, "They are the rocks on which some of the world's best climbers developed their expertise,

and continue today to provide quality challenges for Spokane's climbing community. They are also the source of good memories for many climbers." Contributions are needed to ensure that these traditions and the future of climbing at Minnehaha survive. Tax deductible donations can be made to the Spokane County Parks, Minnehaha Fund. These checks should be sent to Spokane Mountaingear, West 12 Sprague, Spokane, Washington, 99204.

Correspondent: Jim Tangen-Foster

Eldorado Quarry Threat

A major threat has been posed to the Eldorado Canyon area by the proposed expansion of an existing Wesley Conda Inc. mine of 9.9 acres to a quarry of 415 acres, 203 acres of which would be an open pit mine encompassing most of Eldorado Mountain. Much of the land targeted for the expansion would be leased from the State Board of Land Commissioners; the Mickey Mouse Wall would be among the rock formations destroyed, and one proposed mine area would come dangerously close to the Bastille. Local resistance to the proposal has been strong, but much work remains to be done, and readers are urged to contact People For Eldorado Mountain (P.O. Box 3025, Eldorado Springs, CO 80025; 303-499-7148 or 303-499-9697) for more information.



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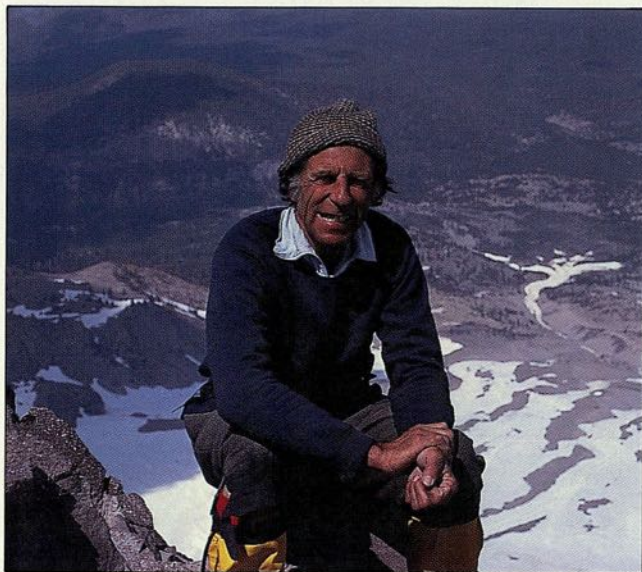
Box 53, Seneca Rocks, W. Va. 26884
304-567-2600

Profile
by Gary Speer

The Amazing Life and Climbs of

Fred Beckey





Fred Beckey on Mt Lassen in 1982. Photo: Jean Yurgalewicz. Opposite Page: Beckey and Eric Bjornstad with the infamous pink Thunderbird before the first ascent of the Southwest Buttress of Shiprock in 1965. Photo: Eric Bjornstad.

He likes glittery, flashy, good-looking girls. He dislikes talking about his age, and was often known by his pink '57 T-Bird convertible.

"Who's this?," you ask. Richard Gere? Prince? Maybe Tab Hunter? No, it's Fred Beckey — the world's most prolific climber. And regardless of his tastes in women or cars, Fred Beckey is one of the undisputed legends in American mountaineering.

If first ascents are a criteria, then Beckey is probably the greatest climber of all time. No one (including Beckey) has ever counted them all. But there is virtually no one who can argue with the quantity (or quality) of this man's astounding climbing record on the North American continent.

"I think that Fred saw clearly at a fairly young age that climbing was his thing," says Pat Callis, a 1960's climbing partner. "Seeing this so clearly as he did was a very valuable gift."

Says Beckey, "I think a person knows by a young age if they have instincts for adventure. There were things I did when I was very young that suggested an adventurous spirit."

"Climbing appealed to me right away. I seemed to do as well as the next guy, and it just seemed to turn me on. I had found an activity which to me was an art — something I could do that was both creative and enjoyable."

Adds Alex Bertulis, another long-time partner of Beckey's, "Unlike other things in life, he excelled in mountains and climbing — it was beyond choice. He always came back to it."

Coming back is, in fact, something of a Beckey trademark. Whether it was a new route on Devil's Tower or a first ascent of the Devil's Thumb, if he found the route

significant, Beckey would always return after unsuccessful attempts. If a man's wealth could be measured by his tenacious spirit, Beckey would be a very rich man.

"It's a great aspect of his character," says Eric Bjornstad. "His tenacity meant he would keep going back until he succeeded."

Born in Germany, Fred and his brother Helmy migrated with their parents to Seattle in the 1920's. His parents' professions were an intriguing mix of logic and aesthetics: his father was a doctor; his mother, an opera singer. At a young age Beckey discovered the unique attractions of northwest mountains, and eventually joined the Boy Scouts in order to more fully learn of the outdoors.

As he says in *Challenge of the North Cascades*: "When I first experienced the depths of the Cascade forest empire, the spectacle of the nearby peaks made a permanent impression on me. Mountains struck me as the ultimate manifestation of solitude and grandeur."

And it wasn't long after he first discovered that grandeur, that the young Beckey joined the Mountaineers of Seattle. In the same year that he joined (1939), he partook in a pioneering first ascent of Forbidden Peak in the North Cascades with his group leader, Lloyd Anderson, who was also the founder of the REI Co-op. Beckey's first "big" climb, Beckey's first "big" climb has since become a classic.

Then in 1940, he and his brother Helmy made bold forays alone into the North Cascades. At that time, the North Cascades were little more than an unexplored wilderness, and the Beckey brothers were very much on their own. In a 1973 interview in *Mountain*, Beckey recalled those days: "I tend to think that at the time we had an aura of braveness, or maybe we just lacked fear, but in any case we didn't think about it as much as we would now. I realized that had we been seriously hurt it was unlikely that anyone would get to us in time."

"But we became good at fending ourselves. If it stormed for three days, you got soaking wet, but you knew you could survive. You soon learn what you can do and what you can't."

The climb that really thrust the Beckey brothers into the spotlight was their audacious second ascent of Waddington in 1942. Much sought after for many years, it was finally climbed by Fritz Wiessner and William House in 1936. For the Beckeys, alone and hundreds of miles from civilization in the rugged Coast Range of British Columbia, it was remarkable.

"We really didn't know if we had much chance of success," says Beckey. "Sure it was bold, but we had a strong desire to attempt Waddington. If it didn't work out, at least it would be a new adventure."

The 50's and 60's were the "Golden Age" of Cascade climbing. In the heyday of the Cascade's "Golden Age," Beckey was, without a doubt, the one finding the most gold. There was a period of time, in fact, when the Seattle newspapers were treating mountaineering as they would any other "real" sport.

"Back in the 60's, we used to turn in all our new routes to the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*," recalls Bjornstad. "Of

course, you'd see Fred's name in the paper every week."

Being published every week in the sports page of a major urban newspaper must have had some affect on egos in those days. Seeing your name next to Johnny Unitas or Mickey Mantle couldn't but help legitimize a climber's efforts. Imagine if new routes at Eldorado Canyon on Joshua Tree were published in the *Denver Post* or the *Los Angeles Times*.

Despite the importance (and obsession) with first ascents, Bjornstad claims that the aesthetics of a route was a very important factor in determining Beckey's attempts.

"Just to make it look better, Fred often spent days with a saw trying to clean up routes," says Bjornstad. "I remember burning a tree on Midnight Rock. Somehow the thing rolled off and tumbled down — it just missed hitting a car traveling on the highway below."

"To some extent, aesthetics was a major factor in choosing a route," says Beckey. "I'd see pictures of mountains or see it in person and then decide what I wanted. The stature of the peak, its appearance — those factors are important."

"But also remember that availability plays an important role here. The Cascades are easier to reach than Greenland, where there are still many new routes to be done."

Despite his incessant activity, Beckey couldn't always get his way nor all the big new routes that often topped his list. One that he badly wanted was the North Face of Robson.

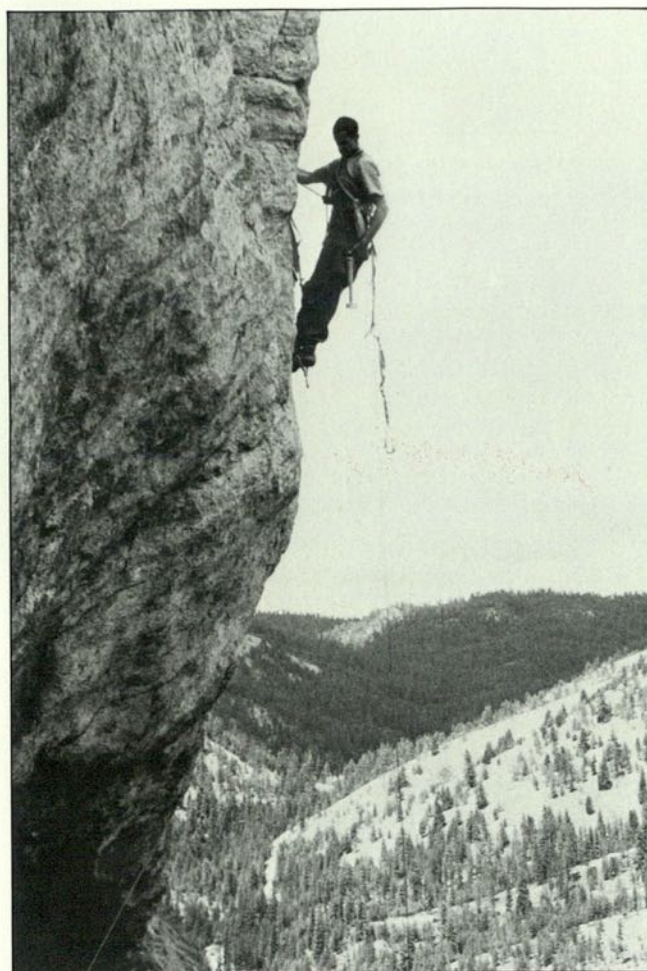
"Dan Davis and I went to Robson in early August of 1963," says Pat Callis. "I didn't have the slightest idea that we'd get to the top of the thing. Our intent was just to get up to the base of the face and have a good look at it. But the conditions looked pretty good and so we thought we'd have a go at it. Once we got up on the face we found it was really ideal — just perfect."

"It was all very innocent — it didn't seem like we were trying to ace Beckey out. When we got back to the trailhead there was a message from Beckey saying 'Come and see me — right away.' At first he was quite gracious, lots of congratulations, all that. But the next day he was saying stuff like 'Well, you guys could've waited.'"

Dan Davis, in fact, said Beckey didn't speak with him for nearly six months after his coup on Robson's North Face. In a sense, however, Beckey finally did get his first ascent of this great Canadian mountain. A few years later, he made the first winter ascent of Robson.

To many Northwest climbers he is well-known for his Cascade mountains guidebooks. For their encyclopedic tone, astounding details, and concise clarity, the "Beckey guides" (the original was often referred to as the "Beckey Bible") are incomparable. Even a few minutes' browsing through one of his guidebooks allows a glimpse into the man's prolific background. He has climbed roughly half the peaks in all three of his books, made first ascents of many of the significant routes and mountains, and has acquired intimate knowledge of every mountain mentioned in the books. In all three books, this involves many hundreds of mountains and geographically significant summits.

One criticism often leveled at Beckey (and many Northwest climbers of the 50's and early 60's) was for his uninhi-



On the second ascent of Stein's Pillar in eastern Oregon.
Photo: Eric Bjornstad.

bited use of bolts and fixed ropes where, some claim, it may not have been necessary. Keep in mind, however, that Beckey and his Northwest counterparts were mountaineers — unlike the rock climbers of California who evolved the standards, ethics and rules of the game. From Beckey's point of view, the goal was the summit. This was in an environment much different from Yosemite or Tahquitz, where easier "walk-up" routes might have been available. These were formidable mountains in harsh environments, whose line of least resistance often involved severe difficulties.

"This goes back to the old British tradition of the 1900's, when pitons were not justifiable," Beckey said in *Mountain*. "But what is justifiable? You can go on forever about this. Sometimes you all agree that on no account will any bolts be used on a climb; then, at the last moment, just below the summit on the 19th pitch, you find that the only thing that will get you to the top is a bolt — and you know that you secretly had it in your rucksack all the time. Is it justifiable to put that bolt in? I think it is. What's so terrible? You've got to make 19 rappels on lousy pitons, and you know it's all possible with one or two bolts."

In regards to the competitive style of today's rock climbers, Beckey has respect for the high standards — but with a few reservations: "I think the high standards of rock climbing today are great. We're seeing some amazing

stuff. But I don't necessarily think climbing should be competitive. People are often too concerned about ratings and how difficult something is — whether its 5.11 or 5.12. I can't say it's all bad. I think it would be better if there wasn't so much competition. But then, in mountaineering, of course, there's always been that competition between nationalities. I think some of the rock competition — hang-dogging, yo-yoing, that sort of thing seems awfully contrived to me. People working for a long time trying to do a short route and all that. It almost makes it a different sport."

And what, in the eyes of the world's most prolific climber, might the future of mountaineering be?

"Well, what's left to climb are the more dangerous routes — steeper faces, more objective danger under ice cliffs and all that. But I don't think that's necessarily the future of climbing. I've always sought new routes because of the adventure — not the danger.

"In fact, I think the direction of climbing is toward safer forms of protection — like Friends — that sort of thing. As long as we don't take the adventure out of the sport, this is a positive development."

One of Beckey's gifts to others has been to serve as an inspiration by his unceasing dedication to the natural environment. His most recent book, *The Mountains of North America*, is a monumental effort, filled with breathtaking photography, and is liberally spiced with personal anecdotes about his own experiences on every mountain covered. The text gives you some idea about the man's incredible drive and incessant motivation to find the great routes in the North American continent.

So how does one keep up with Fred Beckey? The answer, as I found out, is "with great difficulty." If he's not out making first ascents of new routes in the mountains, he's probably on the road doing slide shows. This writer, in an effort to track him down, waited nearly four months for a response to my query about an interview.

"He's a genius at getting by," claims Bertulis. "But I don't think anyone really knows how he survives. For years, he lived out of his car."

Has Beckey ever done any kind of training to stay in shape? Any special diets? According to Bjornstad, Beckey never trained. And, given his propensity for hanging out in McDonald's and coffee shops, it would be fair to say that health food is not a priority.

"He's always in shape because he's always climbing," noted Bjornstad. "Of course, he doesn't smoke or drink and I'm sure that helps."

According to some of his friends, his perpetual energy comes more from a hyperthyroid condition than it does from diet or exercise.

Talking to Beckey in person, one senses that energy. Not in a nervousness or hyperactivity, but rather a deep wellspring of animation and drive that seems to come from the marrow of his existence. This energy seems to contradict what is obviously the face of an older man. With his craggy, Clint Eastwood facial lines, Beckey has the face of a man who has seen countless days of mountain storms and searing, high-altitude sunshine. Two long vertical lines on his cheeks point up toward his eyes, accentuating the

maturity and wisdom that his glances already reveal.

A life-long bachelor, Beckey keeps an address in Walnut Creek, California and, according to many friends, keeps track of female acquaintances in towns and cities throughout the country. Beckey, it seems, has a remarkable sense for two kinds of beauty: female and alpine.

Beckey is always searching for partners, both new and old. He keeps in contact with many dozens of close friends and climbing buddies, all of whom receive word in the spring about a new "secret route" to be attempted later that summer.

Says Pat Callis, "There's an annual spring letter — sent on some hotel stationery — which each of his current and ex-climbing partners receive suggesting various times and places for new ascents in the coming summer. When details are given (to whet the appetite), they are often accompanied by admonitions to secrecy. Thus by reaping a small percentage of a large number of prospects, Beckey fills his summer's 'dance card'."

"People keep telling me I have a vast data base on potential new routes and peaks," adds Beckey. "Like a corporate raider, I'm rumored to be very secretive about my plans."

At his slide shows, he speaks modestly about his achievements. But underlying his modest narration is a vibrant enthusiasm. At his shows, it's easy to get the impression that the lecture you're hearing doesn't even scratch the surface of his phenomenal background. One wishes, for example, that rather than showing three or four slides of Waddington and mentioning only the bare bones of his association with the peak, that he could elaborate for an hour about the incredible second ascent by two teenage brothers in this remote area.

Perhaps it was admiration for Wiessner that led Beckey to Waddington. "I suppose, of all the American climbers, Fritz Wiessner had the most influence on me," he told me. "I think it was his adventurous spirit, his boldness. It gives you a certain amount of inspiration when somebody is doing all those things."

The greatest frustration during brief conversations with Beckey is a feeling akin to someone who is given only 30 minutes to read a great book. True, one feels fortunate at having the chance to thumb through its pages, to read the famous passages, and to admire the great craftsmanship that went into its creation. But to meet Beckey is not the same as knowing him. Knowing that he is both a legend and a historical figure, his responses never quite seemed adequate. The man is a veritable library of climbing literature, knowledge, and history.

It's hard to believe that Beckey can sustain a physical place that someone younger would find extremely strenuous. Yet just last fall, he and Bjornstad completed a difficult new route on a remote mountain in Canada. In fact, just before arriving at the University of Idaho for a slide show, Beckey had spent the weekend near Leavenworth in the Cascades climbing a 5-pitch 5.9 route on Snow Creek Wall, "... just to get in shape for the rock climbing season." One wonders how many other people Beckey's age get in shape the same way.



Many of his first ascents have long since become classics or much sought after peaks: Forbidden Peak, Mt. Hunter, Slesse's North Buttress, Devil's Thumb, Mt. Deborah, Mt. Waddington, the North Face of Edith Cavell. And this is only a very small sample.

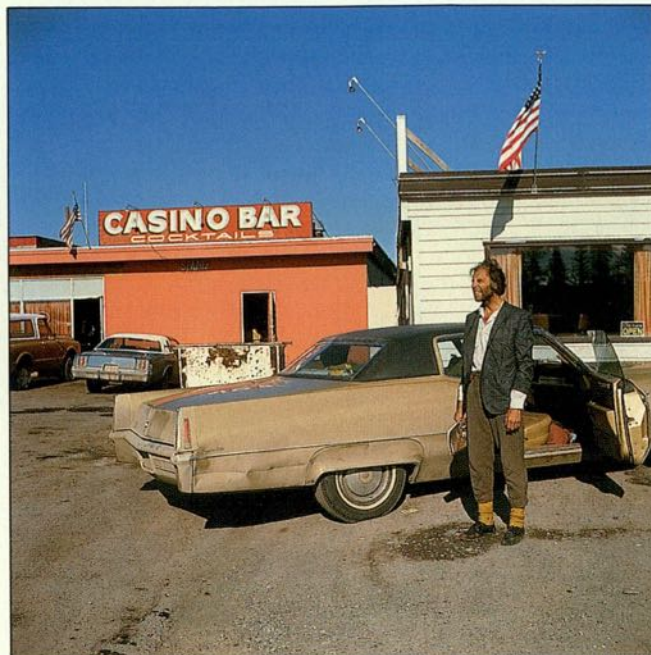
"In the Southwest desert Fred was equalled by very few," claims Bjornstad. "I've climbed with him on the desert sandstone almost every year since 1962. He has an incredible record of soft rock ascents.

"He was often in Alaska or Canada the week before meeting me in Moab — then returned to Alaska or Canada a few days after the desert climb. One of Fred's most unusual aspects is his incessant travel. He must log distances equal to over-the-road truckers year by year by year."

One item of curiosity is Beckey's lack of involvement with Himalayan climbing. He was on an unsuccessful expedition to Lhotse in 1954. But it was nearly 30 years before he returned. In 1982, he led a successful expedition to a 22,000 foot peak in China. Still, it's odd that one of America's strongest climbers didn't find the Himalaya more irresistible.

"There were several reasons why I didn't climb there more," explains Beckey. "I had little money for my own expeditions, I had no luck with sponsors, and unfortunately, I didn't get asked on any established expeditions that interested me. If I had the money, I certainly would have ventured to other continents more often. It would be great to have Henry Hall's money, and really do something with it, as did the Duke of Abruzzi. Then again, as they believe in Nepal and Tibet, maybe we have another chance!"

When compared with other sports, Beckey's phenomenal career becomes even more astounding in its singular uniqueness. In more traditional sports one might think of Sam Snead's longevity in golf, or of Jacques Costeau's



The quintessential Beckey: laying future plans in the ever-present phone booth (above left), after three days driving on the Al-Can from Seattle to Alaska (above), and with Canyonlands guide Lin Ottinger's dune buggy, scoping out Moses before the first ascent in 1973. Photos: Eric Bjornstad.

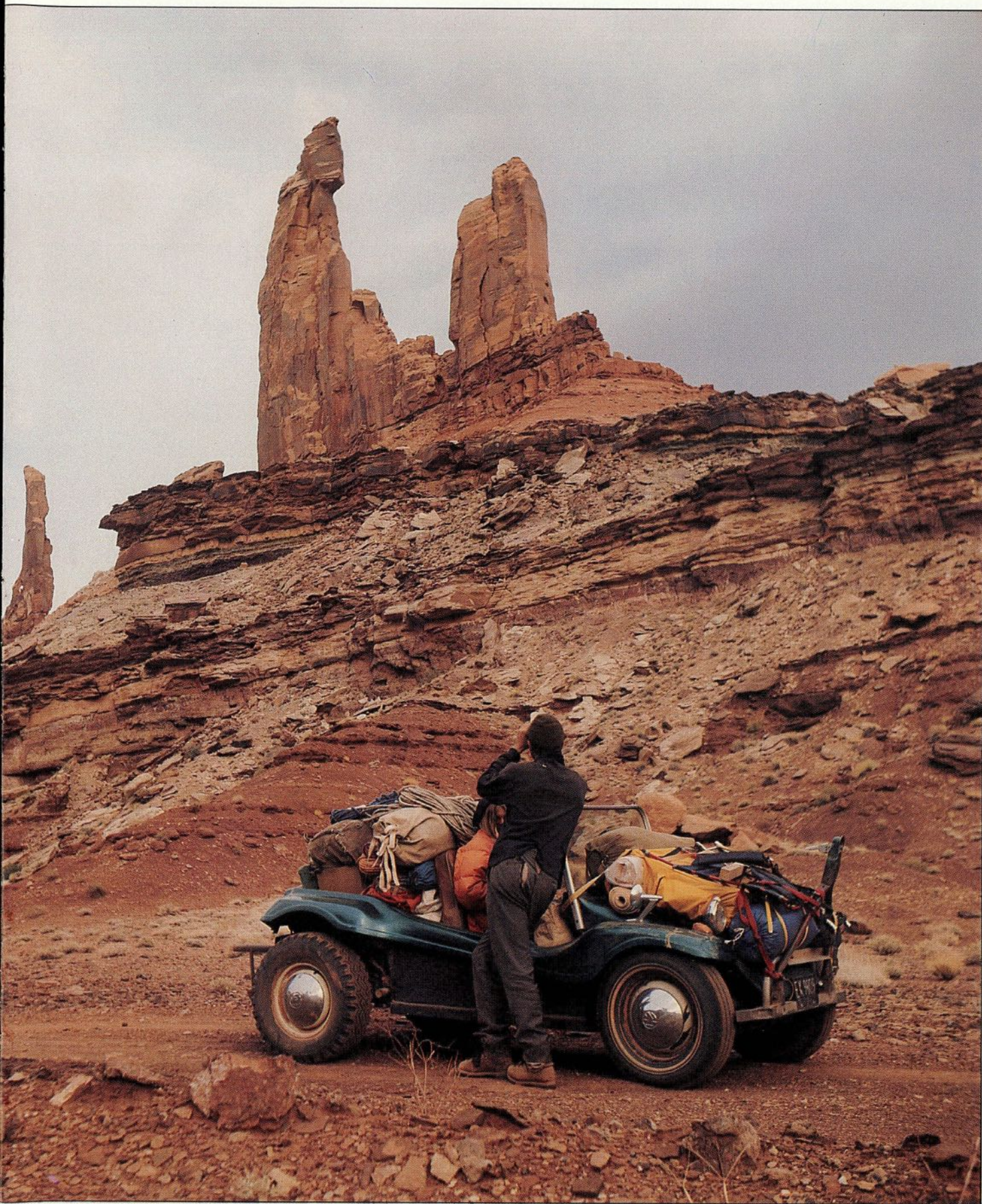
long-lasting contributions to oceanography and the sport of scuba diving. Maybe if Babe Ruth had lasted another 20 years as a real slugger, we might be able to compare Beckey with the Babe.

One must remember, of course, that none of these sports even come close to matching the physical demands of world-class mountaineering. Boxers and football players are, after all, often washed-up by their mid-thirties. A few baseball players last well into their forties and golfers last as long as they can swing it.

Throughout his long climbing career, there have, at times, been those who have been his equal in the mountains. Ed Cooper — who for a while was one of Beckey's fiercest competitors — comes to mind. During other times and various seasons there were those who matched him — Pete Schoening in the Cascades or maybe Jack Durrance in the Tetons. But for sheer staying power Beckey is untouchable.

In terms of involvement with the sport of climbing, it's tempting to compare Beckey with his Yosemite counterparts, Chouinard or Robbins. Both Chouinard and Robbins have been at the forefront of important advances in the sport, made many first ascents that have since become classics, continue to climb well into middle age, and have achieved the legendary status reserved for so few.

But in terms of numbers, of time spent in the mountains, of first ascents, of new routes, Beckey stands alone on the summit of his own achievements.



Ten Years After

North Face of North Twin

by Barry Blanchard & David Cheesmond

"The hike up to Woolley Shoulder is pleasant. Once across the river we find no trace of human trail. The going is good: the forest and stream friendly under an only slightly cloudy sky."

George Lowe, AAJ 1975

Cheesmond: More than ten years after the first route was put up on the North Face of North Twin, Barry and I are walking in on a hot July day to try and find another way up this mind-blowing wall. As we plod on up I question myself on whether things have changed much in the interim. Now there is a hut on the other side of the col, a slight trail makes its way along the creek, one can see some traces of the 20 or 30 parties that go into the northern Columbia Icefields each summer.

But really the experience is the same. This is still a remote mountain and possibly the most serious limestone face in North America. A decade ago the Jones/Lowe route on the face was the hardest climb in the Rockies — it still has not had a second ascent. When George and Chris walked in here they were looking for adventure. They found theirs — we are here to find ours.

"Were we ready for North Twin or were we kidding ourselves?"

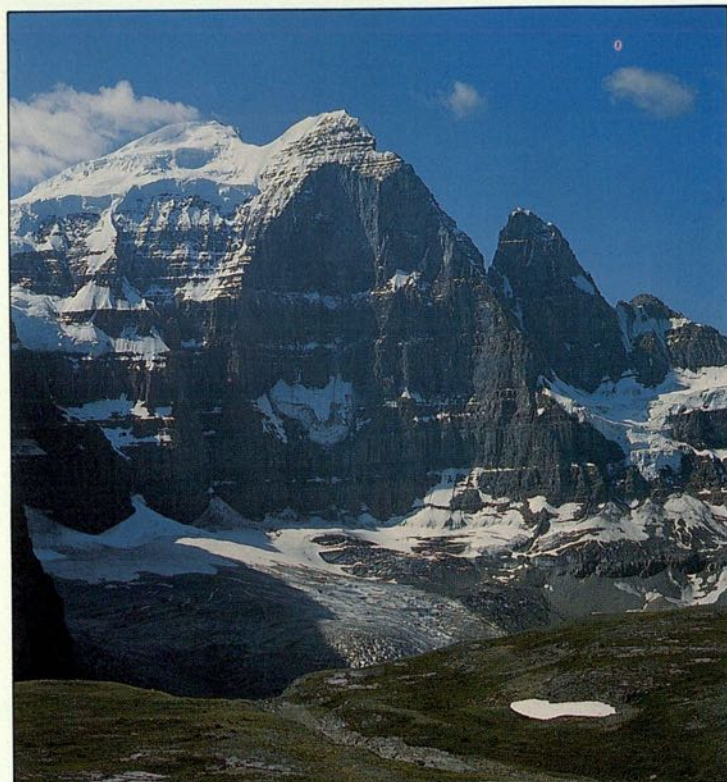
Chris Jones, Ascent 1975/76

Blanchard: Dave is ready. He wants to climb North Twin this year and he knows what he has to do to do it. Lots of long, hard, serious limestone routes all spring. He's in good shape!

I hope that I'm ready. Too much work guiding this summer and not enough time to climb for myself. But I am fit and my motivation is strong. Ever since I first saw North Twin in '82 the face has occupied my dreams for days at a time — running and thinking about The Twin, guiding and thinking about The Twin, belaying and thinking about The Twin! As Henry Abrons wrote once, North Twin acts like a drug on the mind of the observer.

July 30th, 1985: Today it starts. Dave and I enter that special alternate reality that is Alpinism. We leave our glacier camp at first light. The lower section of the face is mixed snow and rock climbing. We make good time moving together with heavy packs slowing us down on the steeper parts. Above us is the first rock band of vertical grey limestone, very compact with straight and clean crack systems. Which one to take? We finally decide on a corner crack that looks drier than most.

After donning his rock shoes, Dave starts up. He is wearing luminescent pink socks for the route — all he's lacking to make this look like a crag climb is candy striped



Above: The North Face of North Twin. Photo: Urs Kallen. Right: Barry Blanchard sheltering from rockfall on the central buttress. Photo: David Cheesmond.

tights and a chalk bag! As if the mountain can read my thoughts it releases a volley of rockfall to remind me that we are on a large Alpine face. The sun catches the upper face for several hours each day and the danger from falling rock is extreme. The steepness of the band we are on protects us from direct hits, but I am still scared shitless!

Dave takes a hanging belay when the rope runs out and starts hauling his pack. Due to the steepness the jugging is strenuous and I'm glad to finally get to the belay. "How was it?", I ask. "5.10, man," he replies. This would be the standard answer for the next four days whenever I question the rating of a pitch. Only the suffix of "a" to "d" would change sometimes!

Soon we are up the first band and I take over for the final section of rock that leads up to the lower snowfield. There is less protection from falling rock up here, so we waste no time moving up ever easier ground to eventually run across the snow to below the next steep rock. Fourth class traversing left leads to the base of the pillar that will be our



route for the next few thousand feet. Dave leads a pitch up the pillar, I run out the rope once more and it's time to bivi.

"We dig a nice platform for our bivi tent on the edge of the bergschrund. After a hot stew for dinner, sleep comes easily on flat ground. During the night only a few pebbles dribble onto the top of the tent to remind us that we are on a mountain wall."

George Lowe, AAJ 1975

Cheesmond: Our first night on the face is spent level with the hanging glacier in the center of the face to our left. Brewing up we discuss the incredible coincidence that has another party on the Lowe/Jones route at the same time as we are trying our new one. All day we have been able to shout across and hear answering calls. It makes a pleasant change from the constant hum and whirl of falling rocks.

During the night we are treated to a regular symphony of crashing ice as the seracs on Stutfield calve. Each time I wake in a sweat thinking the mountain is collapsing on top of us.

In the morning Barry exclaims at seeing a small tent on the glacier below. This is too much — a third party in here, when the face usually sees no one in years. Eventually we figure that it's our unknown friends from a few thousand feet away across the face. They must have found the rockfall too unnerving — hopefully they weren't hit. With sadness we watch them pick their way through the debris and crevasses on the glacier. It seems we knew them intimately after only a few long distance shouts.

"There are no continuous crack systems, almost no ledges, and it is very steep. We still feel confident about making the climb."

George Lowe, AAJ 1975

Blanchard: Today, July 31st, the weather is clear and warm. One lead up moderate cracks puts us onto a ledge cutting across the pillar. The ledges seem to be all composed of shale, and finding belays is difficult. Dave takes the next pitch to a better belay.

It's my turn to put on the rock shoes. I have no problem fitting my size eight feet into Dave's size ten boots. The climbing is steep. Thirty feet out I make a pull up onto small face holds. There's a loud snap and my left hand is off! Managing to grab the nearest sling I am able to find holds for my feet, but kick a baseball-size rock into space. The rock sails out and freefalls directly onto Dave's thigh, stretched out for balance while belaying. Damn. Dave curses with pain and rubs his leg vigorously. What happened? I look at my left hand and the ring finger is swollen and sprained. I must have cranked too hard on the small holds. After the climb, my wife Jill tells me it's just an excuse to get out of wearing my wedding ring. At the time I wonder if it's just an excuse to get out of leading!

After lowering me to the belay, and some more rubbing of his thigh, Dave puts on the shoes and finishes the lead. Above we continue up difficult steep pitches. Dave is going like a machine. The last lead up the middle band is a solid, steep-to-overhanging hand crack. Another one that was "5.10, man."

Above, I traverse left to an ice screw placed at the bottom of the second ice field. Already it's late, and after filling a stuff sac with ice we rap to a protected ledge. As everything



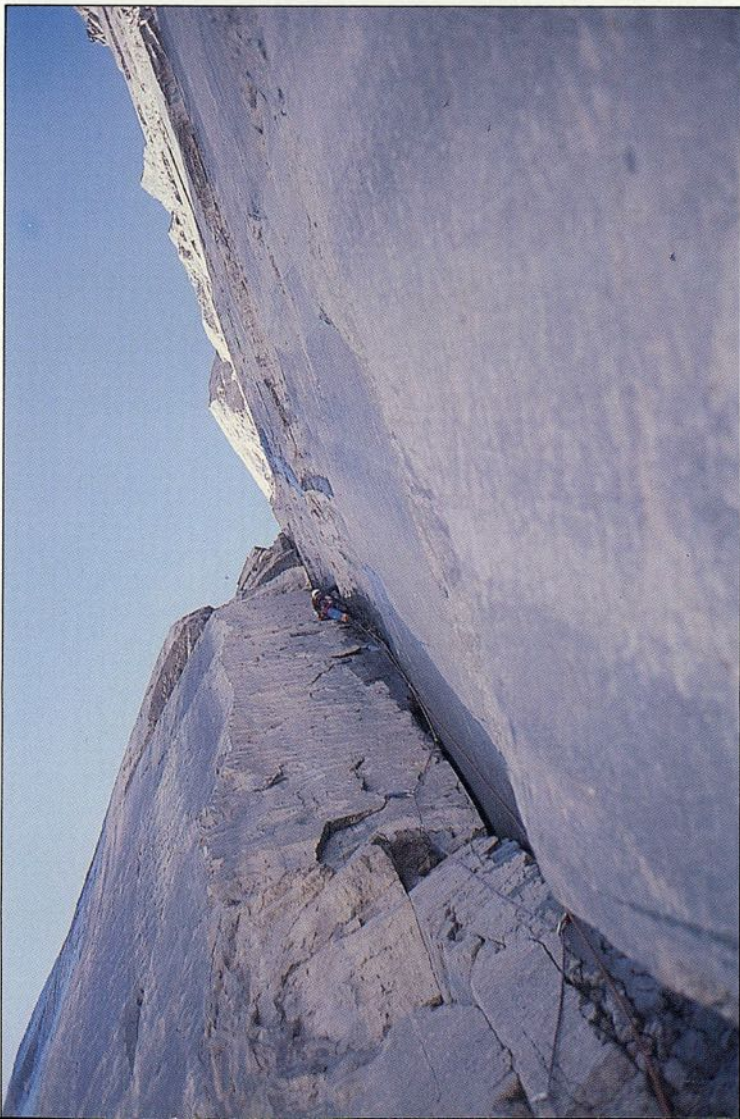
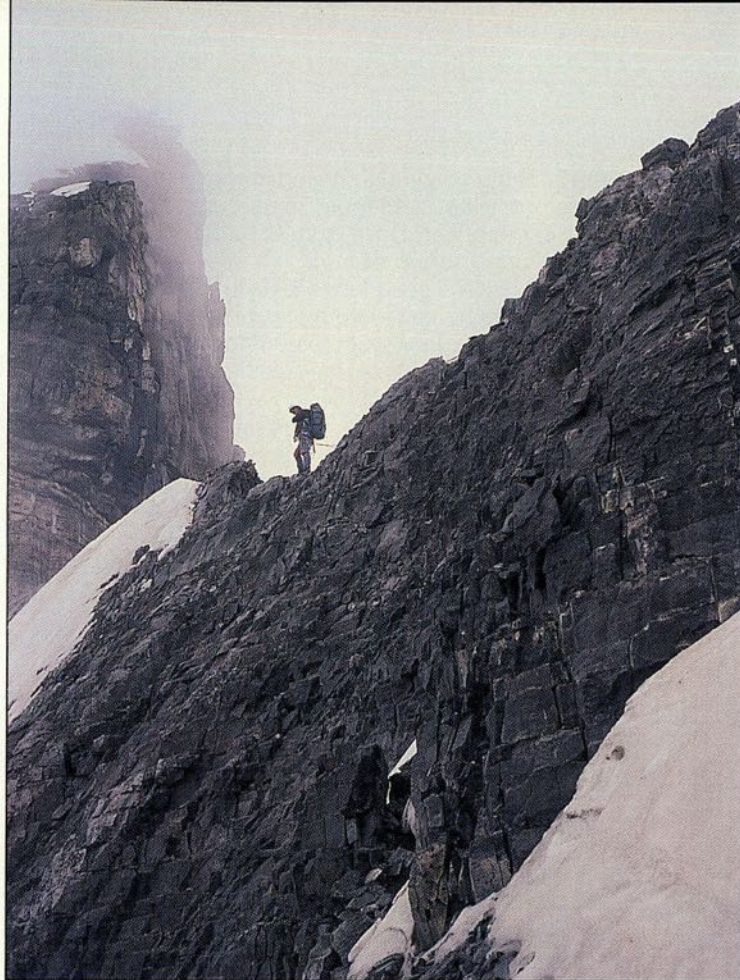
Blanchard starting off for the ridge from the top of the headwall (above) and on the ridge near the summit (right, top). Photos: David Cheesmond. Bottom right: Cheesmond leading the 5.10c corner through the first rock band. Photo: Barry Blanchard.

is sloping we spend the last of the daylight building platforms out of flat rocks, before starting the familiar brewing routine followed by sleep.

Cheesmond: We start our third day on the wall with crampons on and the headwall looming malevolently above. Barry is always impressive when climbing ice. Whether it's leading a Grade 6 waterfall, using French side-stepping high in the Karakorum, or climbing together on a 60-degree slope like now, he exudes confidence. Growing up in Canada where cold, snow, and ice are a way of life, he has become totally at one with his medium and a perfect master of his craft. I can think of no one person safer to have above when rushing up a potentially hazardous ice slope.

I appreciate all of this when he drags me safely up the ice and into the shelter of the buttress at the base of the headwall. Changing once again into rock shoes and discarding my pack, I start up. Initially there are inside corners with some of the best jam cracks I've yet seen on limestone, thereafter a key traverse pitch led by Barry in his big boots. This puts us at the base of the main crack system in the headwall. While jugging I can look ahead and see that the next 300 feet at least will go.

Soon I'm struggling up an off-width that would look terrifying even in Yosemite. Why didn't we bring the #4 Friend along? Thirty feet out from a poor pin I hang out and wonder what I'm up to doing this sort of thing here! After a lot of friggung around I finally manage to reach into the back and lasso a chockstone. Using this for tension, I am able to swing across to a finger crack in the right wall and thus get up the pitch. Two more pitches up the break land us on a tiny ledge in the middle of nowhere. When Bubba gets to



me he asks whether I have any ideas of how to chop a bivi ledge in solid rock. As it is starting to get dark I see his point!

Sometimes in the bleakest of situations, the mountain gods look down on our puny struggles and take pity. This was just such an occasion, as I look 50 feet diagonally up and notice a small hole in the face. Half an hour later we are chopping the ice off the floor of a perfect two-man bivi cave. With the stove hanging from a pin banged into the roof, we feel satisfied with ourselves and pleased of the break we have been given in the middle of this vast area of vertical rock. Dozing off that night we seem totally secure, and for the first time since starting on the face can untie from the rope. The absolutely best bivi cave in the world!

"Suddenly the rope jerked upward. 'God, he's off,' I thought as I grabbed for the belay rope. In a flash I saw the last piton pull, saw the tremendous wrench on the remaining belay anchor. Then all was quiet."

Chris Jones, Ascent 1976/76

Cheesmond: The fourth day on the face turns out to be eventful. First the feeling of impending doom on leaving the security of the cave, and then the continuous difficulty and seriousness of the climbing. About two rope lengths up from the cave I'm relaxing in my butt bag while Barry jumars. Suddenly I hear a crash and find myself three feet lower down with the jug line pulling on my waist. There's also an intense pain in my left shoulder. After what seems like a long time Barry transfers his weight to a point, and in between spasms of pain I can move back up to see what happened. Dangling uselessly from the crack is the nut that was the main belay; the chockstone that was backing it up is gone. The fracture in the side of the crack tells its own story, the slab that came away hitting me as it started down on the way to the glacier. Luckily the back-up pin and wire nut held to stop our following it for the big ride!

Somewhat shaken, I place all the gear I have and tie it all together for psychological reassurance. For the rest of the day we both are haunted by blocks that move and cracks that expand.

Blanchard: I'm belaying Dave on the pitch above our failing anchor fiasco. Over to the left, water is falling off the face in a fantastic display as sunlight explodes the drops into brilliant jewels. The drops start from the lip of the headwall and by the time they pass me they are two hundred feet out from the wall. As so often happens when I climb, songs are going through my head. I've done routes to Warren Zevon, Emmy Lou Harris, even The Clash. This time it's Stan Rodgers, and as I wail out the chorus of Northwest Passage I hope it gives Dave energy. I imagine ourselves as modern day explorers:

'Ah for just one time I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin reaching for the Beaufort sea
Tracing one warm line through a land so wide and
savage

And make a Northwest Passage to the sea.'

"Our pace is becoming worrisome. We spend the night locked into our own concerns on separated ledges."

George Lowe, AAJ 1975

Blanchard: August 3rd. Today is day five and we're out of food as of now. Things have been going according to plan, but we have to get off soon. It's not hard to leave our

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slim bivi. I've spent the entire night trying to wedge my left cheek into a crack, my feet suspended in a sling and a light drizzle making my bag wet. Dave admits he hasn't slept much either, for fear of falling off.

One pitch takes us to a good ledge beside a detached pinnacle. This flake is the last feature that we could make out when studying the face with binoculars from the meadows. The big question remains — is there a way out of here?

Dave disappears around a corner to the right. Slowly the rope goes out. I wait anxiously when he warns me he is about to come off, but finally the last few feet are paid out. A burst of yips, yaps and yahoos let me know he is off the headwall!!

As I jumar, a foray of rockfall scares me breathless. Ah, not now when we're so close! I reach the belay stern faced and nervous "How was it?", I ask. "Not too bad," he replies, but I sense we are both relieved to be at last onto relatively easy ground.

I lead two quick pitches up shallow and loose rock, Dave follows on towards the ridge. As he hacks ice off the rock, the mist makes a surrealistic scene of the surroundings. Dave's yellow jacket seems to glow, a sundog surrounds him, and every time his axe strikes the slope a shower of ice crystals fan out into the beams of sunlight breaking through the cloud. It looks like a starburst — the sight is incredible, it's wild. Dave is there, the apex of the ridge, the face is behind us! I scream out with joy!

Getting to the summit is an Alpine route in itself. Several pitches of 50-degree ice and some fourth classing take us to a step in the ridge. An intimidating corner provides our passage. Abrons and friends must have first climbed this section when they did the Northwest Ridge twenty years ago. I feel as if I know all these people who have come this way before.

Collecting drips from rocks near the summit, I have time to rest and appreciate this route and my friend who shared it. The climb has been totally awesome! And Dave has climbed with genius. I'm a lucky man to have both.

"As we reach the top of the band the storm, unnoticed in our concentration on getting up the band, breaks and it begins to snow heavily".


George Lowe, AAJ 1975

Cheesmond: Plodding across the icefield in a bitterly cold wind, I can look back on our climb and be grateful we had no mishaps. Rescue or any assistance would be virtually impossible on such a face, and in the event of bad weather there is no easy escape route. The consequences of an injury from a fall on the headwall would be serious to say the least. We still have another hungry, storm-bound bivouac ahead of us, the crevassed summit of Stutfield to cross, and a complex icefall to negotiate on our way back to safety. This is not the sort of route to attempt without being both physically and mentally prepared for one of the biggest and most serious of Alpine faces.

Will it also still be awaiting a second ascent ten years hence?

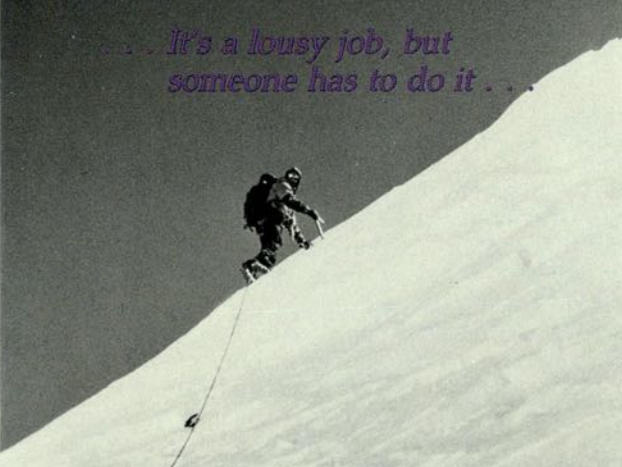
"There was a clear sense that it had some meaning for a future generation, but what it was I could not say."

Chris Jones, Ascent 1975/76




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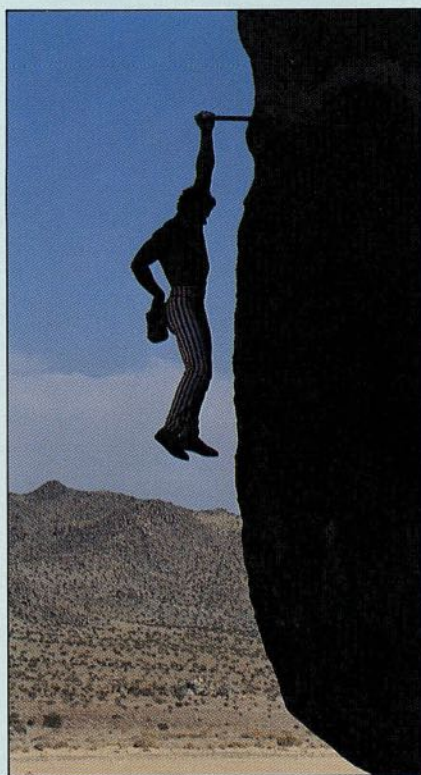
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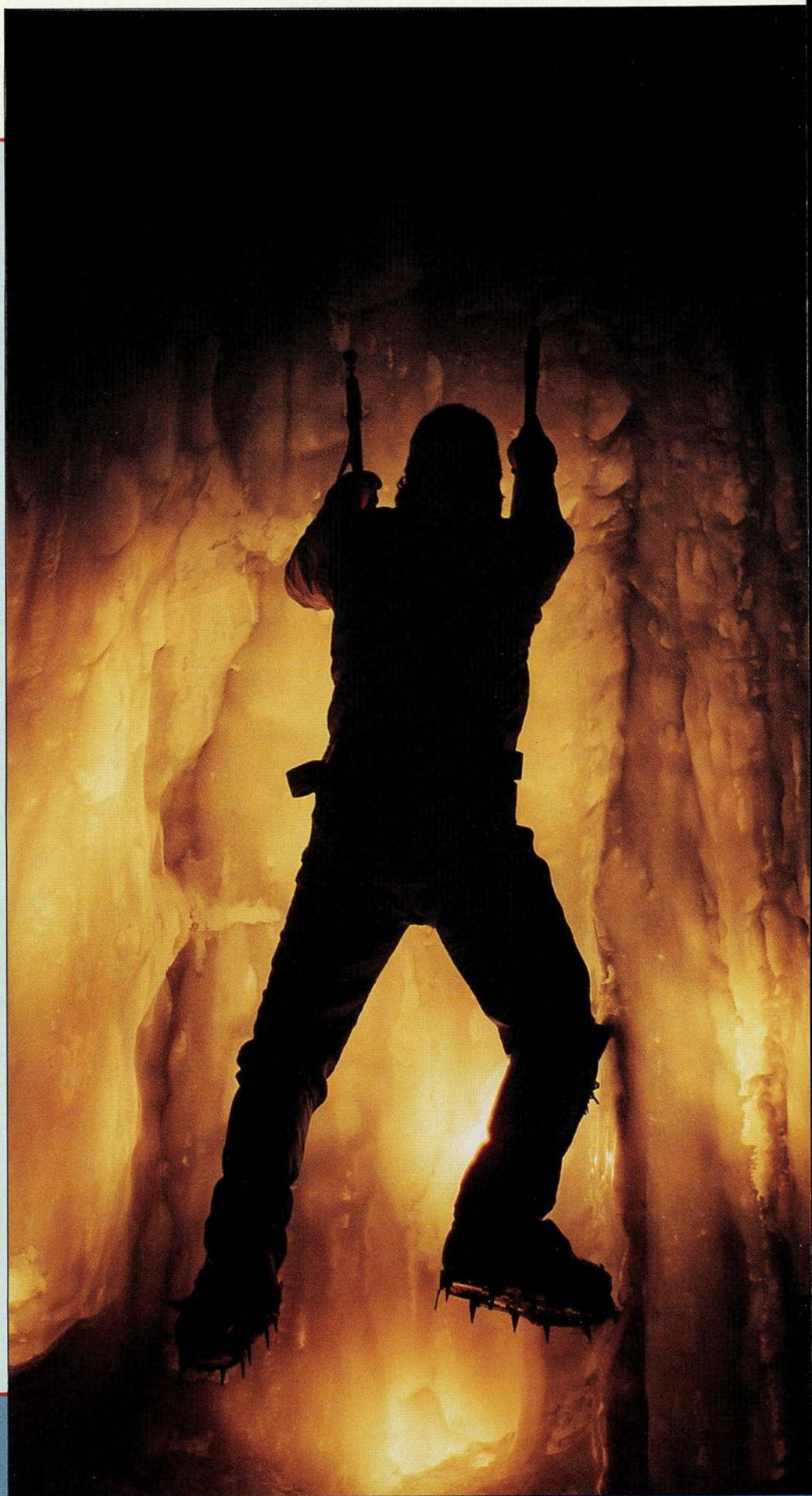
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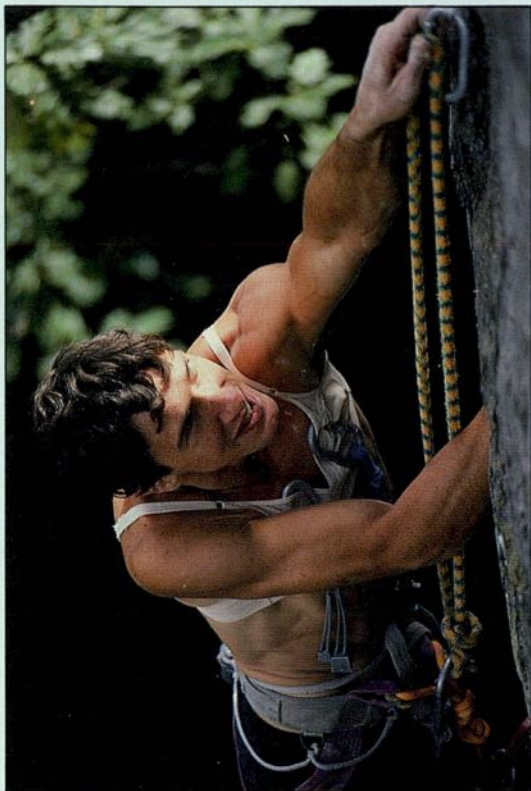
**Cover — Grand Prize and
First Place — Mountaineering**
Andrew Lainis and Rik Derrick
on the Gargoyle, at the gateway
of the Ruth Glacier, Alaska.
Photo: Mary P. Howarth.



Runner Up — Humor
John Long hanging around
on Giant Rock, California.
Photo: Bob Gaines.

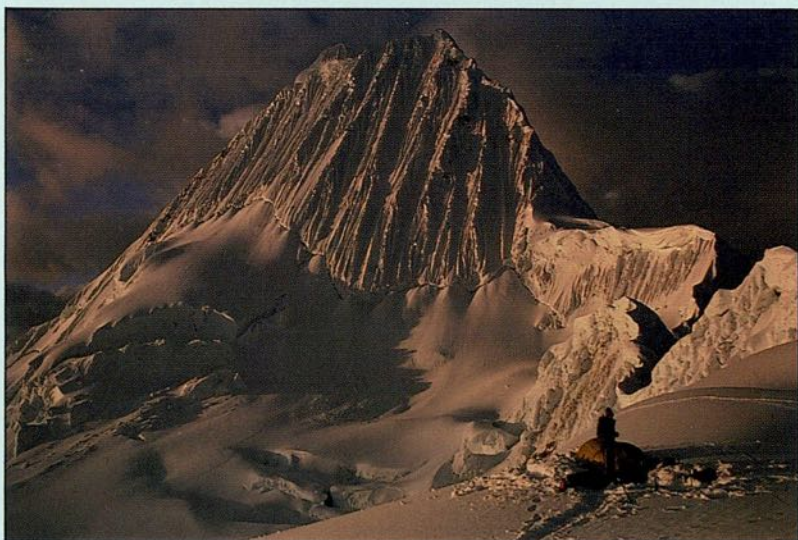
First Place — Ice Climbing
Kurt Winkler on Silver Cascade,
Crawford Notch, New Hampshire.
Photo: S. Peter Lewis/High Exposures





Second Place — Humor

Russ Clune with innovative new racking system.
Photo: S. Peter Lewis/High Exposures.



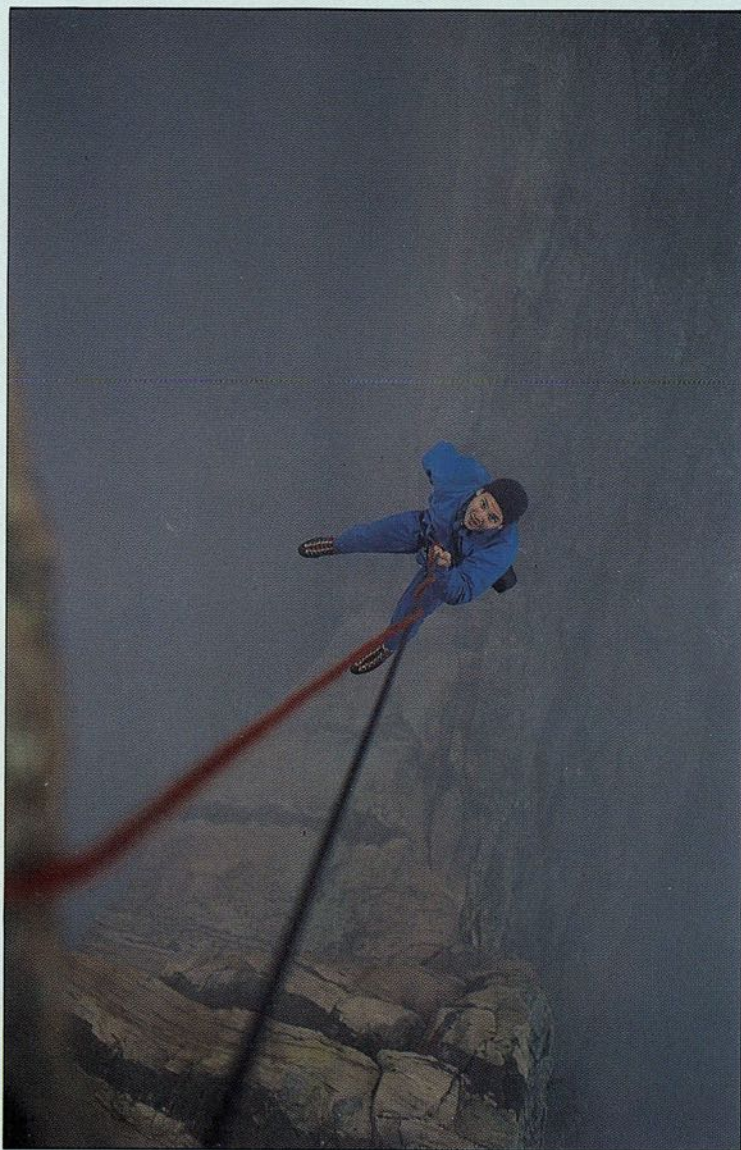
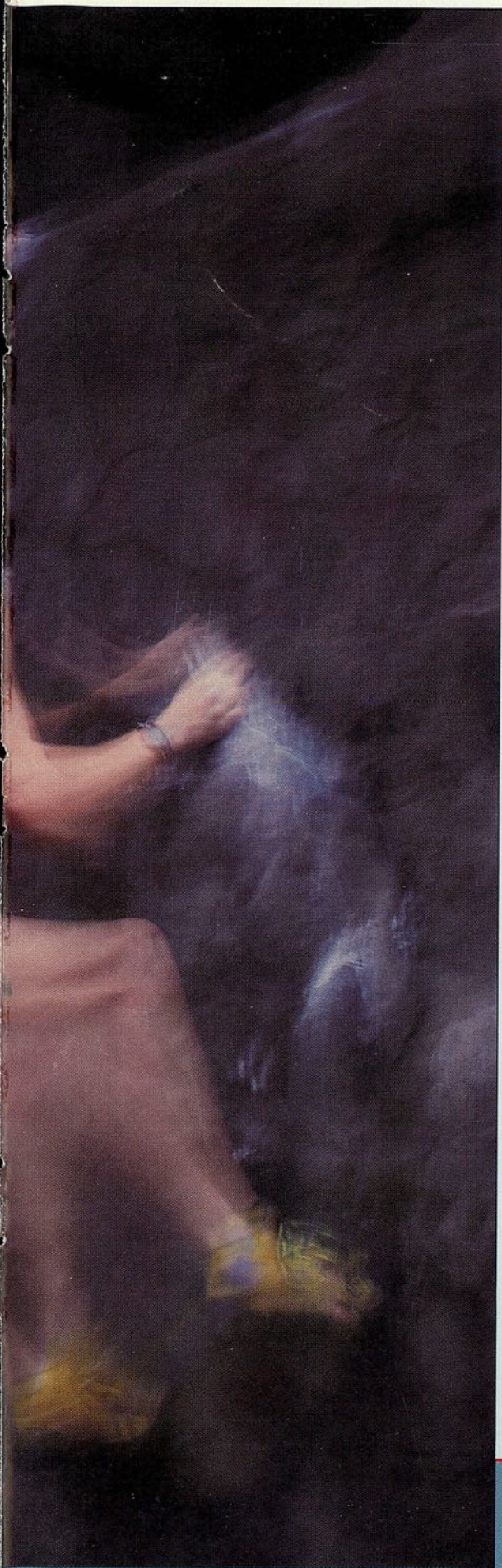
Second Place — Scenic

Alpamayo from high camp, Cordillera Blanca, Peru.
Photo: Neal Beidleman.

First Place — Rock Climbing

Jim Hall in motion, bouldering near Princeton, New Jersey.
Photo: Bob Palais.





First Place — Humor

Mike Bonafini, thrilled on the rappel off the Maiden, Colorado.

Photo: Larry Day.



Second Place — Rock Climbing

Jon Fredricks on the roof at Boomer's Beach, California.

Photo: Greg Epperson.



Second Place — Ice Climbing

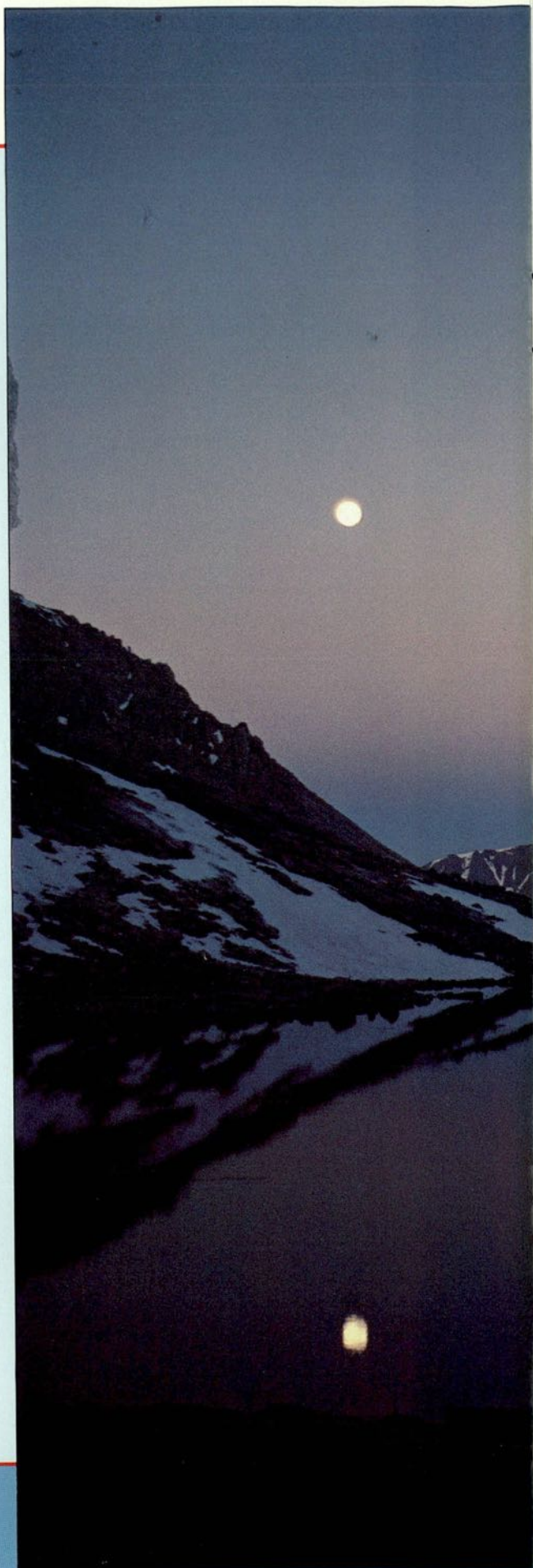
Jeff Bassett on Necrophilia, RMNP, Colorado.

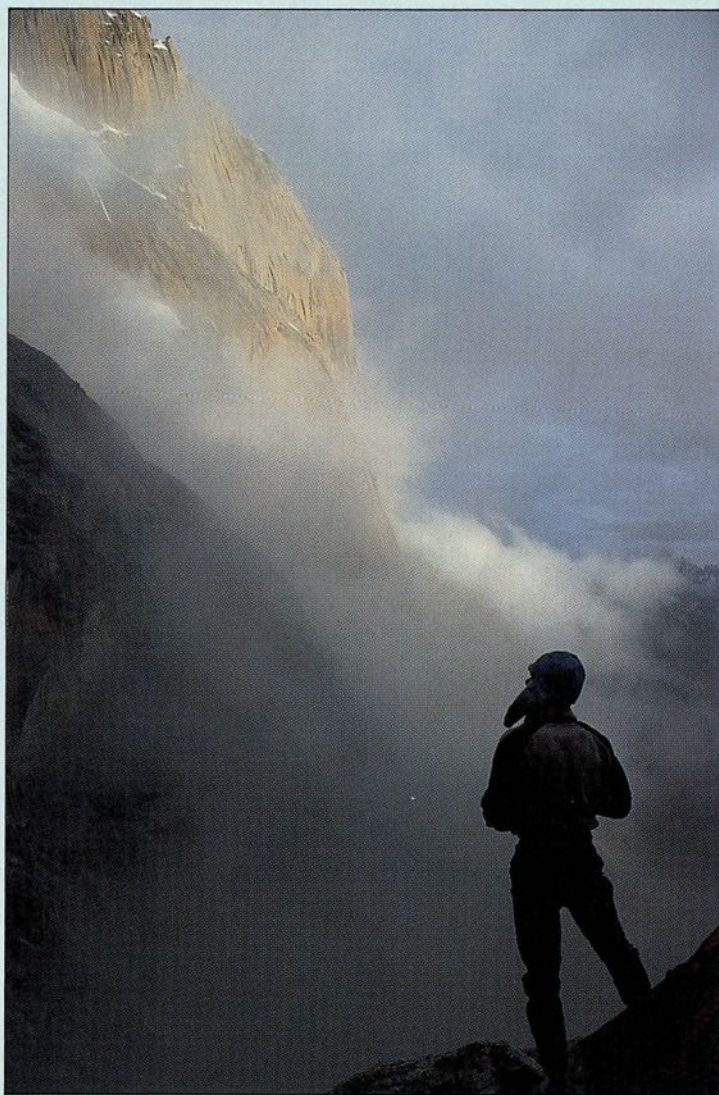
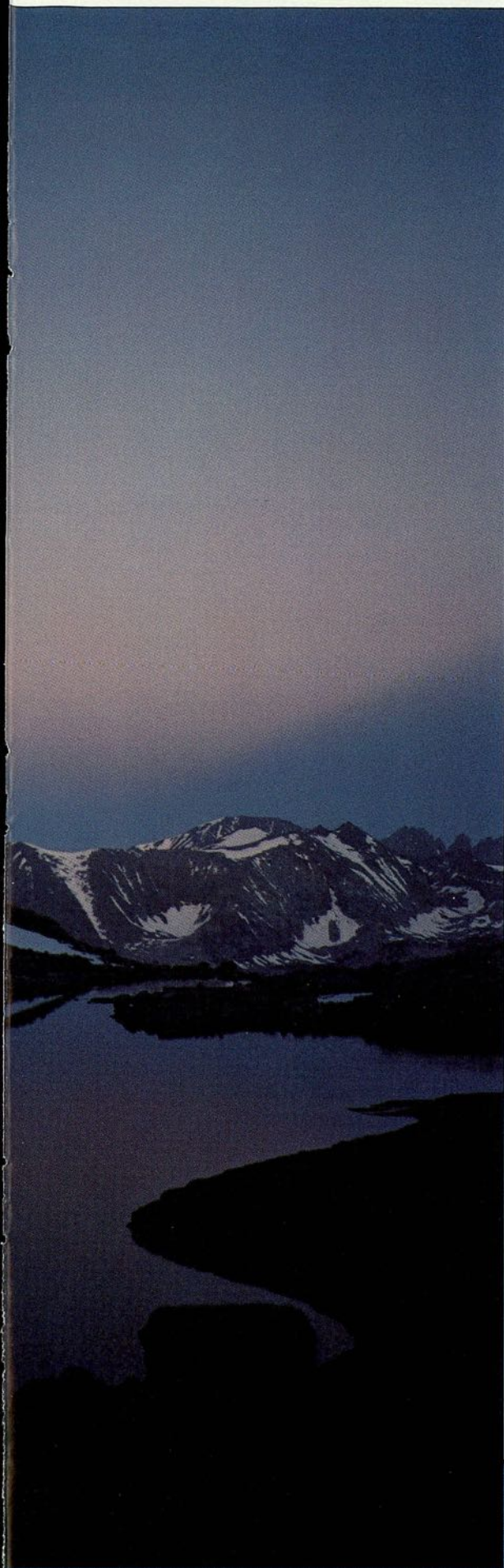
Photo: Larry Day.

First Place — Scenic

Sunset on a lake on the west side of Mt. Whitney, California.

Photo: Jeff Widen.





Second Place — Mountaineering
Scott Woolums under the Northwest Buttress,
Great Trango Tower, Pakistan.
Photo: Andy Selters.

BROAD PEAK NORTH RIDGE

BY VOYTEK KURTYKA

In summer 1984
I wandered with a friend
Over the desert wasteland
Which was barred by three great mountains
Here, we have just crossed them
The landscape changed
But the horizon remains equally distant.

The story of the first ascent of Broad Peak's North Ridge is simple and devoid of dramatic adventures. We were accompanied not exactly by unusual events, but rather by a particular atmosphere, part of which was that we have very great luck.

After all, once can hardly acknowledge as an event the monotonous and patient plodding towards the summit over thousands of meters of rough and beloved rocks and ominous streaks of blue ice. Here is the story of those days.

On Friday, July 13, just before daybreak, at the hour of the full moon, bang!, the heart of the Godwin Austin Glacier breaks. The piercing crash is followed by a dead groan.

I jump out of sleep and stare at the darkness, then draw the tent flap away. An icy stream of air rushes in, shimmering with the light of the dying stars. The tea pot is frozen, reflecting the rim of the moon. I touch the bristled and frosty stones with bare fingers. They bite like frightened animals.

Silence. Suddenly, the uneasiness I fell asleep with last evening wakes up. High in the darkness I sense the huge ridge. "Knuckle", I whisper. He slowly opens his eyes, vigilance lurking in his glance.

"Brrr . . .", I say, shivering, as the frost drops from the icy roof. The Knuckle smiles.

The blue gloom retreats into the glacier hollows. The far away ridges are towering over each other, their edges lit with the first sun. Too distant to think of them, to make the



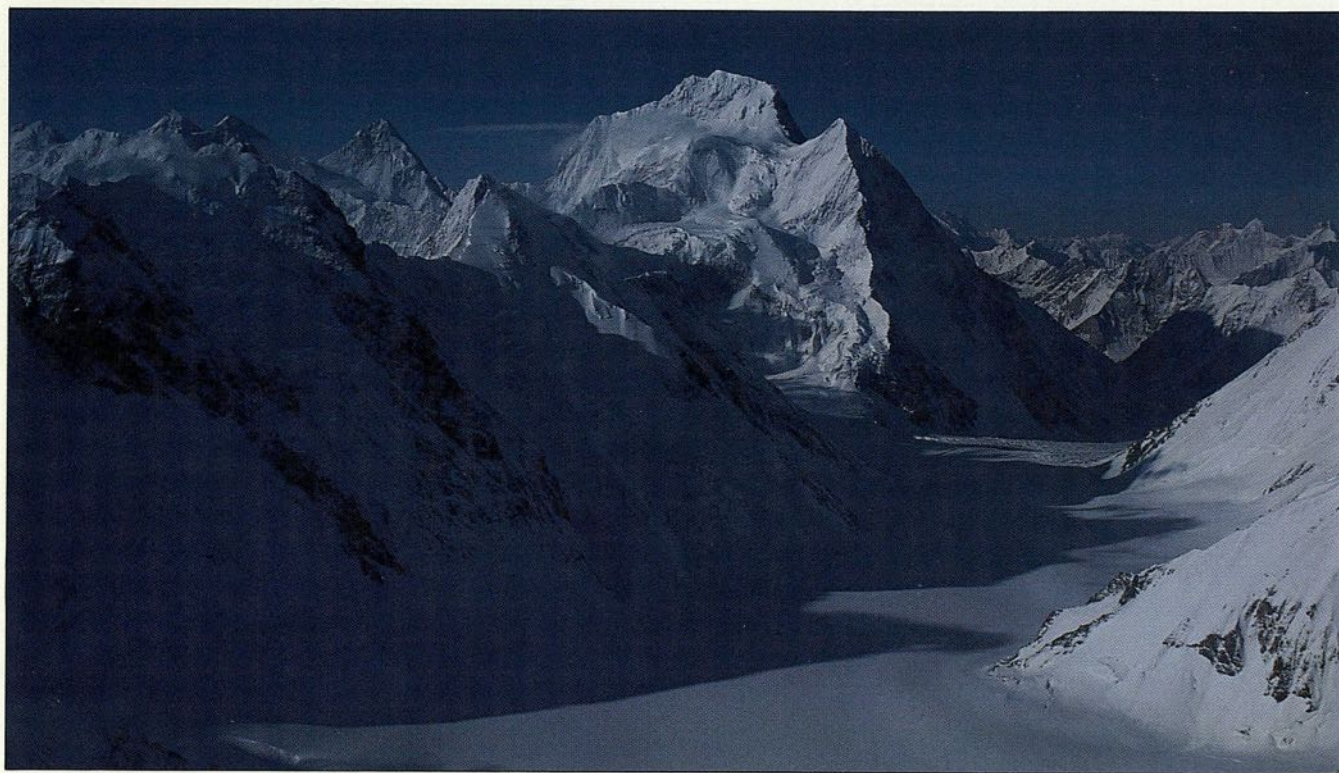
Jerzy Kukuczka acclimatizing on the south side of Broad Peak (top), and 150 meters below the summit of Broad Peak North, with the Godwin Austen Glacier 2500 meters below. Photos: Voytek Kurtyka.

first step. No single hint. The sky is pale. The silence here is too much.

The perverse whispers push us straight into the dirty gorge of the gully, topped with a barrier of hanging ice pinnacles. This is the easiest way, but the most dreadful. Slow steps, burdened with patience for many days, lead us carefully between black patches of ice. The fearful traces, the snowfield swept away, the ash grey spots of the stone blows, make the silence and the echo of the steps deeper. The sun emerges from over the ridge at about 10 am, and sharp shadows cut across the avalanche trail. Unexpectedly, a strange murmur grows from inside the gully.

Easy, easy! It's just the snow stream, it's the good snow that flows.

Suddenly, the ice pinnacles stir. Easy, you fool, easy! It's only the sky that moves.



At noon, hardly having grazed the hanging towers, we get over the barrier. Snowballs are rolling from underfoot, and the icicles are chirping on the rocks. Oh, Mountain!

When we reach the little col on the ridge, evening comes stealthily and quietly. All anxiety withdraws from these parts of the world. We put up our first bivouac in the shadow of a great rock, on the shining surface of a frozen lakelet reflecting the calm of the evening. It is at 6300 meters.

The next two days are the hardest trial. High over us loom the crags of the North Peak, further beyond there is the forbidding middle ridge. Each step up cuts us off from the world. The valleys are sinking, the far away and gentle glacier arcs express tranquility and safety.

Two kilometers of precipice glisten between crampon points. We do not touch the rope; the rope misguides you. Hooked on our own distress, we climb slowly, lonely, as though we are wandering two different ways. There are few scared and harsh words. The Knuckle has lost his voice. The Animal, that's me, is a bit more talkative.

"Fucking, fucking good snow . . ." I say in a trembling voice on July 14, while scrambling over a steep rock slab covered with snow, the grating of crampons vibrating in my throat. Gorgeous, with two kilometers beneath my feet.

On the same evening I whisper, "Devil, devil, devil", looking helplessly over the steep rocks. In a full day of climbing, we haven't seen a single bivouac site. The sun is touching the Hispar ridge, and frost is crawling in the long shadows. But as the blue gloom thickens in the valleys, we reach a tiny snow crest. Here we dig out our nest.

"Oh God, ooooooh", I'm moaning on July 15. We are standing on the North Summit at 7600 meters. The north col is at our feet at 7300 meters, and the middle ridge looks frightening. Hopeless!

Now we are right in the heart of the trap! There is no

The view from 7100 meters on the South Face of Skyang Kangri, with Broad Peak just right of center, the Gasherbrums on the left, and the bottom of the Abruzzi Ridge on K-2 visible at the far right. Photo: Michael Kennedy.

retreat from here. We are together, oh Mountain. But the good fear that led us many days over the rocks suddenly abandons us.

The col, glittering with the late sun, is a spell-bound place. We spend our third night here, forgetting the loneliness as we look quietly down to the valleys we've come from. The violet night creeps out from here onto the northern deserts. And pity that the long shadows do not say a word. I'm circling, circling over the pass, weary but peaceful and trustful.

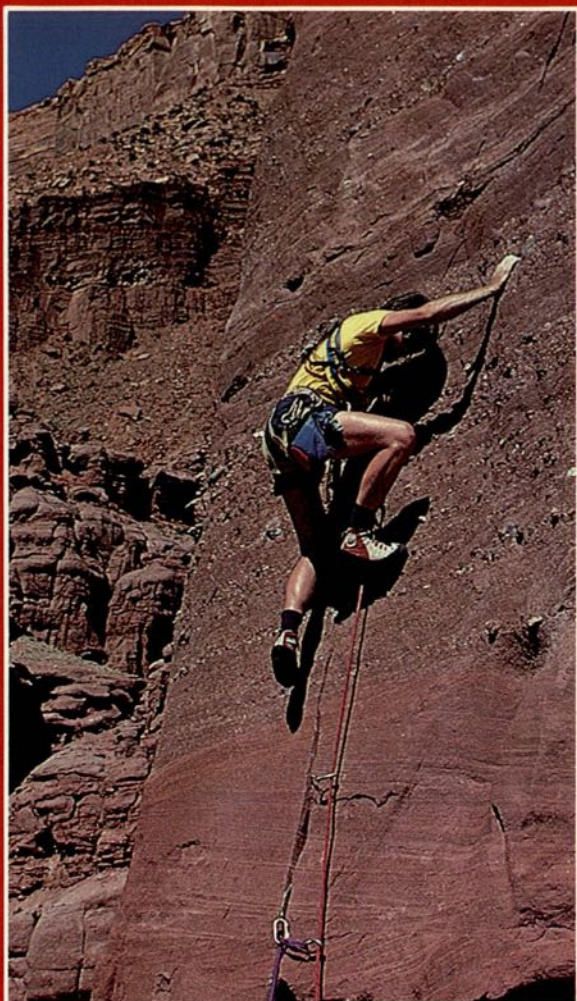
The next morning we touch the rock and steep ice of the middle ridge. Having climbed an easy snowfield we move into a very steep ice gully. The sun is sneaking between the rock spires; no flash on the glassy ice. At noon we reach the gentle but very long summit ridge.

It's easy, very easy but uneasiness and foreboding overcome us again. The wind is coming up; each step is hollow sounding. What, an echo? There must be a strange chasm inside this mountain. We take out the rope and put it on. The uneasiness grows, oh yes, it grows.

I dodge suspicious snow patches — why do they change their white? Strange are the snow characters drawn by the wind. Suddenly, a silver cloud shoots up over the black rim of the ridge, hits us angrily and disappears over the brown mountains of Xiniang, merging into the violet sky.

In the afternoon we start to sense the middle summit. The ups and downs of the ridge make us more and more disappointed. Shame, shame gnaws for the lack of patience. The white, soulless belly rises in front of us again. I

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Climber: Ed Webster, Fisher Towers

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know bitterly that it's not the summit. But the Knuckle . . . gone mad? He is waving his arms over his head. Chasing away the wind? No, he's taking possession of the vast world spread out underneath. He's on the summit!

The gale is tearing at our weariness, the cold gusts thrusting through the body like an icy knife. I feel it penetrating, deeper and deeper, the guts and blood freezing around it.

Without delay, we set out along the tiny and airy crest towards the vertical step which falls 200 meters to the summit col — the last one before the Main Summit. The col is a maze of eddying clouds. From under the feet, the flaky, good snow is wishing into the void. Tiny steps into the emptiness! Here is the yellow rock, it drops right down to the col. The ridge trembles in the hurricane. Terror, terror!

The east side opens into hell. It's wriggled into convulsive snow lines, stripped to purple ice. The icy devil is howling, carving painful and hating shapes with frost and wind.

"Heyeee . . .", the Knuckle roars, buried in snow up to his ears. "Hush you, Knuckle. Stop your roaring. Nothing's here, just hell."

I know we've got to abseil down to the saddle exactly along the border of hell. If we haven't gone mad, the col should be somewhere just a bit west of the edge. Here, nine years ago, only two of five Polish climbers survived a storm while returning from the first ascent of the Middle Summit.

Oh, my thoughts! The wind sweeps them away. I try to concentrate on simple tasks, which are escaping me with inconceivable obstinacy. With cold arms I embrace a loose rock spire, then a furious gust snatches it and throws it into hell.

Underneath, the whirling clouds. The first star has already glittered an hour in the sky. There is a plume over Pajju; a bad sign, an old porter once said, his features sharp like the smiling gorges of this country. At last, we are swinging in the air, fixed to loose stone. The wind presses like a living creature, the pink gloom at our backs. Then come really weak pitons, and more poor pieces of rock. The rope slithers around the oval edge. The saddle looms between the clouds.

There is a sudden shining in the murk, a steel blade, awkwardly stuck in the snow. From this ice axe, six years ago, the first climber fell onto the hellish side. A bit higher, beneath an overhang, the Knuckle discovers a piton with a carabiner, singing between the rocks, shining.

Soon it's dusk, the sky becoming quite violet as the clouds retreat to the valleys. As the fourth night sweeps over us, I'm happily hugging the snows of the col.

It's blowing, a howling gale; the bones are twittering. Then calm, great calm. Next morning, July 17, after two last hours of wearisome plodding, we stand on the Main Summit. Oh Mountain!

Now there is the frosty morning
The splendid past and the great deeds are over
I tread lightly the frozen earth
When I trip over a stone
The frightened eye chases the rime
Spread over the ground.

Dancing on diamonds • by Lance Leslie



Alaskan winter. The wind is raw and biting, grabbing the breath from aching lungs, stealing body heat so carefully hoarded like an old wino's last swallow. Cold so solid it bends the light casting long, purple shadows over the snow.

Outside the Cessna's plexiglass windows, the eye perceives a world composed solely of three colors — white, blue and black. Only the frail skin of aluminum and plastic separates us from the awful cold lurking outside.

It's a long flight from the glow and comfort of Talkeetna, but eventually, the barren tundra and ice-locked rivers crawling by far below tilt sharply skyward to become the peaks and glaciers of the eastern Alaska Range. The topography shifts to vertical, presenting the crenellated upthrust of Deborah, Hess, and further to the east, the recipient of our affections: Mt. Hayes and its unclimbed South Buttress.

We fly the winding course of the Susitna Glacier, life-

Mark Bloomfield traverses an unstable section of surgery snow over ice early on the second day. This and all photos with this article: Lance Leslie.

spring of that grand, unharnessed river flowing free through miles of empty country south toward the Gulf of Alaska. Like so many elements of power, her energy raises lust in the eyes of those intent on draining her of that last vital spirit — freedom. Robbing from our children, every one of them, in order to plug in one more microwave, VCR, Cuisinart, *ad technicum*. Better living through (under?) technological slavery, yes sir. *Deux ex machina*.

My bitter cynicism is softened, slowly dissolved by the reassuring presence of these mountains, standing silent and immovable upon the land, a formidable line of defense against greed and avarice.

It's late, for the short, transient days of March have not quite yielded winter's miserly grasp to the approach of

spring. The light has already withdrawn from the upper glacier, taking with it what little warmth we might hope for. Icy shadows rush in to occupy the vacated territory, settling down to await the next skirmish. Light and heat, shadow and cold fight the endless battle for high ground. It's a stalemate neither can win.

Blindly, the skis are groping for the gentle slope rising to meet us . . . smooth contact, the sound of our gunning engine reverberating off the stillness. Everything is an ethereal, crystalline blue.

We scurry out, interstellar pilgrims making landfall on an alien world. Boots sink softly into the deep, whispering surface. One small step for vain glory; a tentative probe into the somehow familiar mystery.

We off-load our meager supplies, pitiful when viewed in relation to the surroundings, and the mother ship departs, leaving us hunched into our nylon and feathers against a blast of fine snow. Marooned, a trio of castaways abandoned to our own devices. Survival, ideally with all facilities and extremities intact, is the name of the game here. It is a disquieting thought, considering that we have undertaken this self-inflicted punishment for fun, or perhaps it's some kind of symbolic flagellation to attain purity. I've always likened it to beating one's head against a brick wall, because it feels so good when you stop.

An illusory feeling of security is created as we pop up our rotund little dome tent at the foot of Hayes' South Buttress, now wearing the pale pastel of day's end; inviting for its promise, up there, of at least minor relief from this deep-freeze on the glacier. Soon the stove is going, and we all squeeze into the tent, jockeying for position, slyly easing away from that spot near the door with its commitment to fetch snow for the pot. Logically, the poor wretch in the middle is designated by a cruel twist of fate to be keeper of the flame, and sets himself stoically to the task as his two companions chortle in the comfort of their sleeping bags. We're already beginning to demonstrate strong teamwork.

First light finds us trundling up to the base of a wide couloir that we've picked to lead us onto the buttress. It bears a dirty hanging glacier on one side that looks like an unwanted growth in need of removal. We eye it skeptically from below, and climb around it as quickly as our overburdened bodies will allow. We arrive at a wide basin stretching completely across the triangular face of the buttress. The upper face is fringed by rocky mixed ground on our near side, and barred by an assemblage of seracs lining out over the middle of the face. As chance would have it, a



Brian McCullough just below the second bivouac, with the Susitna Glacier in the background and Mt. McKinley on the distant skyline.

system of gullies laces up through the mixed terrain directly above, yielding the safest option.

So who are these other two guys standing with me in the hard sunlight? Bearded, hairy rogues, desperados most certainly. Just look at the crazed gleam in their eyes, hidden behind those inscrutable mirror glasses. Such characters deserve the courtesy of an introduction.

Mark "The Doctor" Bloomfield and Brian "Mac" McCullough aren't really as felonious as they look. Good men, both, and loyal to the point of instinctive self-preservation. Having enjoyed many smashing epics in each other's company, they expect high and lofty achievements from this particular adventure. How often we've cast our lots together in this curious ritual, toeing the fine line between agony and ecstasy.

The next part proves to be slightly dull and repetitious, much closer to agony than ecstasy, heaving along with packs far too heavy for the prescribed lightning-fast ascent. In like a mongoose, out like a thief? The rhythm is slow coming, and we grumble through successive hours of steep, tiring labor. Still, it's a good grunt, giving us a chance to oil the vital machine. As a bonus, the weather warms

considerably and the view unfolds around us, an immense diorama of mountains, glaciers and dark, somber spruce forest, all of it infused with the wintry light.

About a third of the way up the face, now above the line of seracs, we bivouac on a comfortable platform, first shoveled out of the sugary, granular snow, then hacked into the underlying ice. It's a room with a view, and a protracted brewing session ensues as the moon rises over the snow-covered landscape like a plump jewel. It tracks purposefully across the sky all night long, and once, in the cold predawn, I awake to glimpse it slipping over the horizon somewhere in the vicinity of Nome without so much as a backward glance.

The morning follows at leisure, too nice to hurry, and we entertain it, frivolously burning daylight. Eventually achieving maximum hydration, we sign our autographs in the snow, strap ourselves to the sacs and step up into the second immaculate day.

Above, the face presents enjoyable mixed climbing, and we work to the right, traversing a steep ice step, then weave up around seracs on a series of ramps. We're moving well now, in sync with each other both physically and mentally; the mountain seems to purr under our steel-clad feet. Gliding on stilettos, dancing on diamonds. The snow is compact and filled with shimmering bursts of color.

Time slips away in our engrossing pursuit of transcendence, and all too soon the sun, now veiled behind a gossamer screen of cloud, begins its plunge toward the outer edge of this movie frame. The scene closes as Denali and Foraker float far away to the west, lost ships, their canvas turning pink in the light.

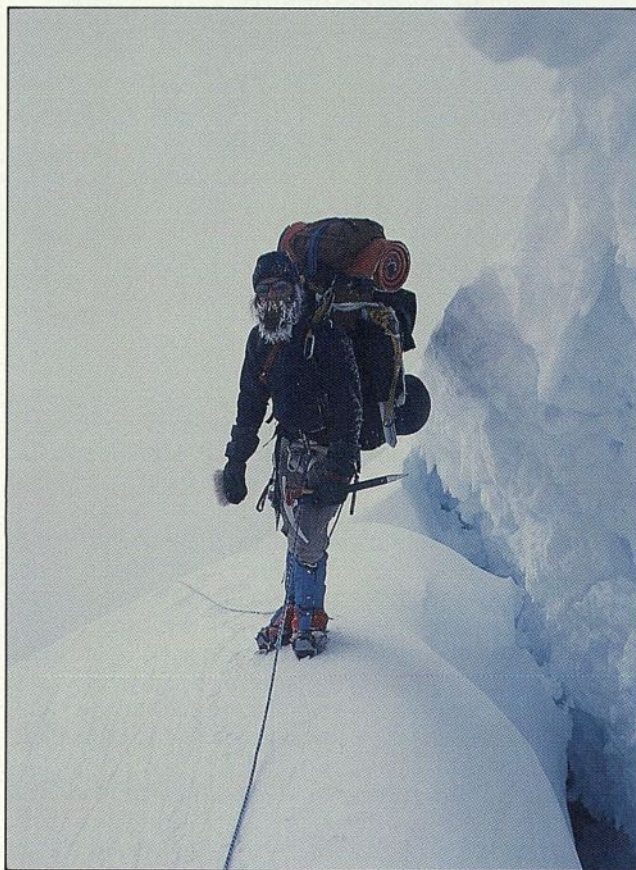
We pull up onto a homey-looking shelf under the protection of a serac, shrugging off our loads in unspoken agreement; each of us quiet and satisfied with this day lived to its fullest.

Another night on another mountain, albeit a singularly memorable one. I drift off thinking of home, wife, child, and children yet to come as our icy host groans contentedly in the darkness.

Mist swirls around our open bivi, and all around the peaks emerge then disappear into milky white. We play a waiting game with the sun, buried up to our noses in down, watching each exhaled breath take form and twist away into the morning.

Again, a leisurely beginning to the day — it's becoming an habitual vice — and we take the opportunity to dry gear in the gradually increasing warmth as the clouds begin to burn off. The winter cold that met our arrival two days ago seems to have mellowed, perhaps a prelude to spring weather, although "springtime" in the Alaska Range is a relative term at best. But the clouds break for only a couple of hours, and as we make our way up the steep slopes above, we're again wrapped in waves of mist that clings, frosty, to our beards and eyelashes.

Mark is bringing up the rear; every now and then the wind shifts, and I can hear him muttering to himself. Once he turns around, peering intently down the face into the murk as if something is there, making him uneasy. But the need for total concentration precludes any extraneous thought. We step-kick upward in a dim sphere of uniform gray with



"The Doctor" arrives at the crevasse bivouac with his surgical instruments.

indefinable shapes looming in the distance. It's difficult to gauge them in terms of scale or nearness. We stop and confer about continuing, and agree to keep moving with hope that it will clear later in the day, further encouraged by the fact that this is a local disturbance and not the advance of an actual front. We climb on, engrossed in the business of route finding.

Suddenly, I stop. Are those voices I'm hearing? They drift up from below, indistinct, rising and falling on the wind. Brian hears them too. Mark now confides that he has been hearing things for some time as well. We haven't heard any aircraft in the area, or seen any movement on the glacier during the time we've been on the route. A multiple aural hallucination? Perhaps a heavenly visitation heralding the approaching rapture, the ultimate ascent, joined by a multitude of angels coming for to carry you all the way up, son. All the way up. Should have at least brushed my teeth this morning.

Soon, the truth is revealed. Far from being angels, it turns out to be a group of climbers from Fairbanks following in our footsteps. Seems we had missed their arrival yesterday, strangely enough, by plane. They were quite surprised to discover anyone else on the South Buttress, especially this direct line, and confirm that it is previously untried.



Bloomfield climbing on the upper face, with Mounts Deborah and Hess in the background.

We accept this information, feeling shamefully pleased at having gotten a jump on this bunch from that dreaded village beyond the mountains. Fairbanks, a rude and primitive outpost squatting on the banks of the Chena River, a melting pot of anarchy and subversion. Climbers masquerading as legitimate college students, exiled Philistines living in sod huts, and other unspeakable things. Why, even the National Park Service dares not venture there. Don't blame them a bit.

These guys are good lads. We share some munchies, then, wishing them a successful trip, press on with a sense that our delicate shell of seclusion has developed a slight crack.

It's starting to clear a little; a relief, as the slope begins to reveal lots of crevasses. We keep moving right until the buttress drops abruptly off to the East Face — we've traversed clear over onto the South Ridge. Several hundred feet above, we find a sheltered crevasse with a natural shelf tucked into one side — perfect. Some excavation produces a home of almost royal proportions. Never once do we regret leaving the tent behind.

Our walls and ceiling are hung with dripping stalactites of hoarfrost, enclosing us in a surreal atmosphere of watery, blue light and silence secreted away from the outside world. I can almost imagine some scene from the mind of Jules Verne, drawing us into hidden caverns with fantastic adventures waiting to unfold . . .

Our plan for tomorrow is to blast off early over the lower South Summit, cross the intervening basin and up to the North Summit, returning here to the crevasse bivouac before dark. It's an optimistic plan given the uncertainty of the terrain and possible difficulties waiting above, although the route from here looks very straightforward. We sleep warm and peaceful cradled in the white womb, fetal forms curled up like blue, Gore-Tex embryos.

But early starts are only for alpine guides in tight knickers or the chronically disciplined. We lounge in our bags, silently daring one another to make the first move toward the stove. Gaston Rebuffat would not approve, surely. The pressure is finally too much; relenting, we muster for reveille.

Off by 7 am (7:45 at least), we emerge from our snug hole, blinking into the sun. We tie in and move up the slope, steep at first, then easing back to let us slip into some semblance of controlled pace. The snow is blinding white under a sky so blue it pushes off the scale into deepest indigo. Amazing video; a complete absence of audio. Nothing but my now-rhythmic breathing infiltrates the total silence of brilliant earth and dary sky. The sensation is just barely of this world, and only the rope slithering out ahead tethers me to the here and now, lest I float away with a big smile.

Huge mushrooms filigreed with wind-sculpted rime rear up boldly from the face above. The angle is steepening sharply as we traverse back onto a direct line up the middle of the face, climbing to a spot under a bulging formation that looks like a gigantic, frozen cauliflower. Below, the face drops away dramatically to the upper Susitna Glacier over 5,000 feet below. We belay over this obstacle and weave over and around many more like it stacked one on top of the other.

At least, we breach the final barrier onto the broad South Summit. The fang of the main North Summit rises out of the basin below and a quarter of a mile beyond. The view that now spreads around us is fantastic and cloudless, but we pause for only a brief rest and press on, plunging down the far slope several hundred feet to the lower basin. It's an easy plod, letting gravity do most of the work, and we walk out onto level ground sloping gradually upward to form the pyramid of the main peak.

Our packs are dumped here for the final dash. Brian and I are both feeling hyperfit and pace around anxiously like a couple of greyhounds ready to pursue the mechanical rabbit out of the starting gates. Mark, though, is quiet and subdued, admitting the fact that he feels too ill to continue. I can sense underneath his usual taciturn demeanor a barely suppressed cry of outrage. This man is one of the strongest and most tenacious individuals with whom I've ever risked life and suffered hardship, and yet, the implacable equalizer of altitude had dealt the final card.

Brian and I are reluctant to leave him behind, especially in such an exposed place without shelter. But our own undeniably selfish desire to make the top, feebly strengthened by Mark's insistence that we go for it, propels us up onto the swiftly rising summit cone.

The climbing is relatively steep but secure, and we move together, making rapid progress. The peak is composed of rime formations stacked in bunches like psychedelic fungi; a weirdly textured landscape of hallucination, yet solid under the thrust of our ice tools. We pull onto a low-angled shoulder that is the terminus of the East Ridge dropping to the Delta Creek Glacier. The lower peaks and ridges to the east and north, the interior side, are scoured clear of snow, exposing the bare, rocky skeleton underneath; a bleak, lonely place, home only to the wind and cold and perhaps a stray fox or wolverine searching vainly amidst the shattered talus.

Further along, the right skyline is defined by the heavily corniced North Ridge, Bradford Washburn's pioneering route of 1941 which yielded the first ascent of the mountain. Looking at this ridge, climbed over four decades ago, we have to marvel at the evolution of style Alaskan mountaineering — and alpinism in general — has undergone. And always, the next generation is banging insolently at the door, brash young upstarts flying in the face of convention.

Even the bold, new frontier will be passe tomorrow, next week, next year. Not being fooled for a minute by our proud feeling of having pushed the limits anywhere, Brian heads off on the last jag to the summit only a few hundred feet above. This distance is quickly covered, and finally, we stand together on the rime-encrusted point. There is nowhere else to go.

Standing here, I'm inclined toward one more rhapsodic description of the view on this calm, clear evening. Yet I could never do justice to the real thing; words seem so tawdry and even the photographic image will appear flat and one-dimensional, nothing more than a feeble reconstruction of a place in time. Suffice it to say that we loitered around for quite a while consuming it all — at least trying to commit something so fine to the inadequacies of memory.

We reluctantly cram in the last bit of sensory euphoria and hustle down to our waiting comrade, a tiny blue dot punctuating the empty plateau expanding beneath us. For now, the main thought is getting off this frozen beast. The sun has dipped over the edge of the world, and a cold breeze is imposing itself through the folds of our clothes. Feeling pleasantly depleted, we trudge across the plateau where Mark greets us with congratulations, tinged with just the slightest hint of sadness. It would have been so much better with three smiles up there.

We're soon warmed by the fatigued crawl back up to the South Peak. I attempt to merry the crew with a little comic relief, stepping into a ridiculous crevasse, 12 inches wide and so obvious that I choke with laughter while groveling out on my hands and knees.

A smoldering sunset forms the backdrop as we cross over the final stretch of "upness," heading down into an insistent wind that stings our faces with icy shrapnel. Darkness overtakes us somewhere in the labyrinth of cauliflower on the upper face, and we pick our way gently down, more by instinct than anything else. Eventually, we close the circle of our own tracks and soon zero in on our crevasse.

We stay up until the wee hours making endless brews, winding down, the experience still vibrant and pulsing with energy. Hearts and minds — not to mention the rest of the package — plead for sleep, but patiently wait us out until we nod in subjection. Through the crack in our ceiling, a trillion stars smile down knowingly on these recalcitrant children.

The remainder of the story is a tale of going down, of a descent from the mount, bearing within a vision recharged. Plummeting past the teetering seracs. Descending the ice, the rock, the snow, down to the tent on the glacier out of harm's way. Cruising the Susitna Glacier on skis, roped, with a comical "push me, pull you" through the crevasses to the junction of the Black Rapids Glacier; polished blue-green ice welling up in waves like a fossilized sea glinting under the hazy sunlight. Over the pass, a bit of up for old time's sake, now free of the rope, carving parallel tracks through dips and swells, ever down to the river and into the arms of spring — a promise fulfilled.

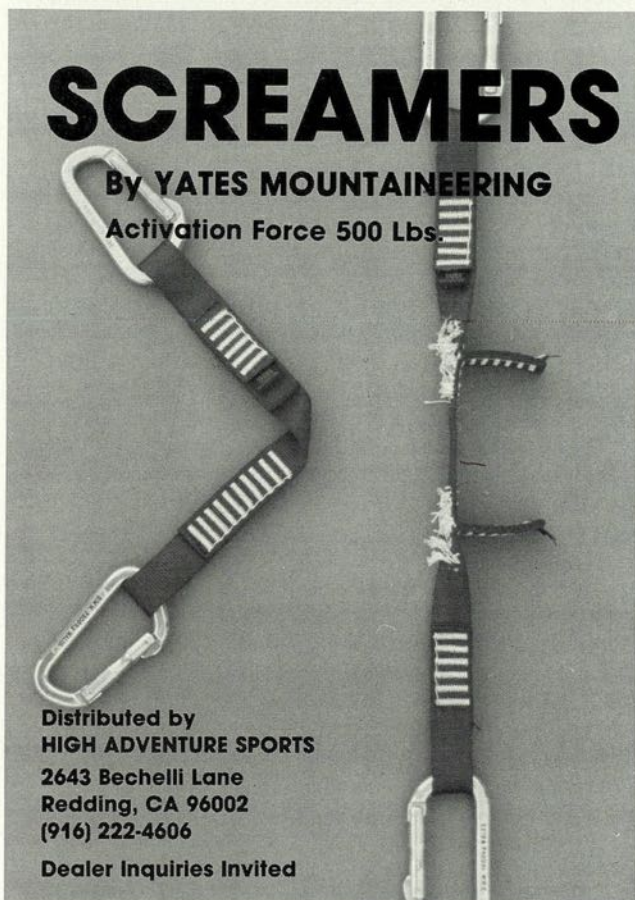
The final obstacle requires all our skill and endurance, tackling the 400-mile hitchhike back to Talkeetna and the home hearth. It's an ignoble end to so perfect an adventure. I would much rather end things back there on the glacier between friendly mountains, between friends. Gliding down, down . . . over the hills and far away.



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The Valley Syndrome

Commentary by Jeff Smoot

Yosemite has been under a barrage of bad press lately, and according to nearly everyone you talk to — outside of California — it has been long overdue. Even foreign visitors, such as Moffatt and Carrigan, with only a brief exposure to Yosemite, have had few kind comments. Don't be offended by what they've said about Yosemite, however. They weren't trying to get anyone upset. Their main motive was to get some reaction, to prompt American climbers to get out onto the crags and start climbing, to start pushing themselves, and not just sit around believing that the hardest routes in America, in Yosemite, are the ones already done. Maybe if we would put some effort into climbing, we would get more out of it; we could raise the standards and, quite possibly, improve. It's going to be tough, though. There's a problem gripping part of the American climbing scene; it's what's wrong with American climbing, plain and simple. It's called the "Valley Syndrome".

The Valley Syndrome is a kind of creeping lethargy, a sedentary stagnation that cloaks Yosemite Valley in a shroud of complacency.

There are pockets of resistance, of course, but according to a number of recent visitors to the so-called Mecca of world rock climbing, the Valley scene is dead. Admittedly, some of the best climbers in America are in Yosemite. But lately that isn't saying much, considering that most Valley climbers don't go anywhere outside of California and, especially, since the likes of Carrigan, Moffatt and Edlinger continue to make a mockery of the hardest routes in America. The "Best of America", it seems, are no longer among the best in the world. And, more often than not, the best climbers in America are foreigners.

If you don't believe it, just glance at the facts. In other countries — Australia, Germany, France, England — climbers such as Kim Carrigan, Jerry Moffatt, Patrick Edlinger and Wolfgang Gullich have established climbs which are harder than 5.13, routes that are far harder than anything in the States.

For years, the hardest route in America was *Grand Illusion*, a route done in 1979. Why is it that, despite a quick lead in the rock climbing game, American climbers have fallen behind? And why is Tony Yaniro the only American to have *Grand Illusion*? Carrigan made the fifth ascent in only two days of effort, after Gullich, (who made the second ascent in 1982), an unidentified German, and Hidetaka Suzuki had already climbed the route.

Grand Illusion is in California; everyone who has repeated it has traveled thousands of miles to do so, yet few Californians have even tried it. Moffatt flashed *The Phoenix*, yet few Valley climbers have tried it. Why are foreign climbers willing and able to do our hardest routes in excellent style when the "Best of America" won't go near them?

"STIGMA: A scar left by a hot iron; a mark of shame or discredit; a specific diagnostic sign of a disease . . ."

— Webster's Dictionary

Despite what Yosemite locals may tell you, the first pitch of *The Stigma*, an aid practice line of the Cookie Cliff, goes free at solid 5.13. Thus, it is by far the hardest free climb in the Valley. They might call it something else — a "hangdog" route, perhaps — but it is no more of a hangdog route than *Cosmic Debris*, *The Phoenix* or the *Rostrum Roof*. Every 5.13 in America has been sieged to some great extent, and most 5.12's as well, so why all this fuss about *The Stigma*? No one, so far, has been able to make an on-sight, flash ascent of a 5.13; at least, no American, and especially on the first ascent. But does this mean we should not try, by whatever means, to improve, so that someday we may be able to?

What is significant about *The Stigma* is that Todd Skinner, the self-proclaimed renegade climber who claimed the first free ascent of the pitch, knew very well what he was doing. He was going against the grain of Valley ideology by fixing pins in *The Stigma* and then sieging the hell out of it to free climb it. He was making a statement, perhaps inadvertently, trying to break the Valley Syndrome. He was not the first, certainly, but his ascent of *The Stigma* is one of the most controversial and, thus, one of the most important.

What Skinner did was try to snatch the hardest free climb out from under the noses of Valley climbers. It was an act which has already left a foul taste in the mouths of certain Californians who, in the name of preserving ethical purity, had not even tried to free *The Stigma*, convinced perhaps that it would be too hard, would take too much effort, would be a "hangdog" route, or perhaps that they might fail. It is safer to sit at a distance and call something "impossible" — to hide behind a mask of "good ethics" — than it is to have the courage to come forward and try something impossible like *The Stigma*, which is what Skinner did. It took even more courage to do it in Yosemite, knowing that everyone there was against him, and to keep on trying after being confronted and told that he was a "hangdog", that he was violating Valley ethics, and that he shouldn't even bother.

It seems that Valley climbers have already dismissed Skinner's ascent of *The Stigma* as a joke. But, then, they have done the same for others, such as Henry Barber, who "stole" *Butterballs*, Ray Jardine, who supposedly chipped holds on *The Nose* of El Cap, and even Warren Harding, who got more bad press over the *Dawn Wall* than anyone ever will for any climb.

"... You just live in this little world thinking the routes of five years ago are the hardest routes in the world. The Valley's a little world, a very little world, with little people."
— Kim Carrigan

The "little world" of Yosemite Valley is the strict ethics capital of American climbing. Nobody sieges, nobody pre-views, and nobody does anything in "bad" style. They usually just go bouldering instead. There have been significant advancements in that area, certainly. But the hardest route in the Valley prior to 1985 was either *Cosmic Debris* or *The Phoenix*, both overrated at 5.13. Why hadn't anything harder been done? Not because there was nothing left to do. *The Stigma* was blatantly obvious, and there are still other potential 5.13's. More than likely, it was the fact that no one was willing to go against the harsh "Valley Code of Ethics" and push themselves, to make an honest effort and press on despite repeated failure.

Skinner showed up, full of ambition, worked on *The Stigma* for weeks and did it, establishing what is without a doubt the hardest free climb in the Valley. After he claimed it as a free ascent, Valley climbers were irate, as if Skinner had no right to come into *their* area and steal *their* route, even though none of *them* was willing to even think of trying it. Even if the pitch had been done in perfectly legitimate style, it seems doubtful that Valley climbers would have accepted it.

What's wrong with sieging? Why shouldn't we try something that's way over our heads? Who cares if we aren't able to do something in perfect style? Valley climbers shouldn't be angry with Skinner for doing *The Stigma* in bad style; they should be mad at themselves for not having done the route first in whatever style. Why didn't *they* place pins on rappel and then try to free it? Bad style? Why didn't *they* top-rope it? Surely a top-rope ascent cannot be considered bad style; at least, not by California standards.

Skinner didn't breach any ethic by fixing pins and then trying to lead *The Stigma*. He didn't place bolts, or chop or improve holds. All he did was place pitons in an aid crack and chalk it up a little. Certainly he didn't, to use Carrigan's words, "detract from anyone else's efforts to do it in better style". On the contrary, he gave us something to aspire to, to train for, and to try to do in better style, while at the same time improving his own ability to do future routes in better style.

Another trickster who is greatly disliked in California is Tony Yaniro, who has been slandered heavily for his siege style of climbing — and possibly because he was a better climber than a lot of his critics. He had done the hardest route, in any case. So what if he fixed pins? So what if he left a rope hanging overnight? Pins can be removed from routes, and a hangdog or a rope left overnight doesn't take anything away from someone who wants to do a route in better style. It's not like a bolt, which affects everyone; these "taints" affect only the climber who uses them. Yaniro pushed the standards almost before the standards existed, establishing the hardest route in the country many years ahead of its time. What kind of reaction did he get? People hated him. Certainly his ascent of *Grand Illusion* was an accomplishment worthy of at least a little praise. Or was it merely the selfish act of self-admitted trickster, defiling the purity of American rock climbing?

"It's just so stagnated . . .
It's the most apathetic climbing area I've seen . . ."
— Jerry Moffatt

Is there really complacency in Yosemite? Next time you go there, take a look for yourself; the answer is a resounding yes. The attitude seems to be: "We have the hardest routes in the world, so why should we try something harder? Everyone still thinks we're the best, so why bother? All those other routes are hangdog routes; they're not really hard. Besides, if we hung all over routes, we could do them, too." The problem is that the hardest routes in Yosemite, the hangdog routes included, aren't even close to being the hardest in the world. Even *The Stigma* is not the hardest route in America.

Another problem is the way Valley climbers treat visiting climbers. Many locals act as if they own Yosemite in the same way a school bully thinks he owns the playground. If you don't play by his rules, however unfair, he will taunt you, threaten you, and bring his friends along to laugh at you and call you a "homo", then run away when the teacher comes.

Several episodes back up this comparison, such as the *Wings of Steel* incident, where outsiders establishing a new line on El Cap had their fixed ropes pulled down and, of all things, defecated on. Valley climbers — rescue climbers, in fact — allegedly admitted that they were not only responsible, but even proud of what they had done, but later denied any involvement when confronted by park authorities.

In another incident, a British climber who had just arrived in Yosemite was directed by a park ranger to "set (his) tent up anywhere" in Camp Four, which he promptly did, unwittingly choosing the hallowed rescue site. The hapless visitor will not soon forget the verbal lashing he received when a Valley climber discovered him erecting his tent there. In any other area, he more than likely would have been shown, politely, where he could camp; in Yosemite, he was treated like a trespasser, a memorable and novel way to welcome a foreign visitor.

Finally, when Alan Watts, a noted "hangdog" climber from Oregon, arrived in the Valley to try and repeat *The Renegade* (as Skinner had renamed the pitch in response to the Valley climbers' reaction to his ascent), he had barely started working on the line when a group of locals, the "Cookie Cliff Hooters", gathered on a large rock at a safe distance and began yelling at him. This same group was probably responsible for scribbling homosexual innuendo, with illustrations, on the dirty rear window of his truck.

Fortunately, not all Valley climbers can be grouped with the troublemakers. Many maintain a certain ambivalence towards visitors, and don't seem to mind so much what

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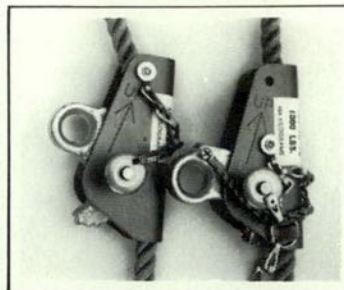
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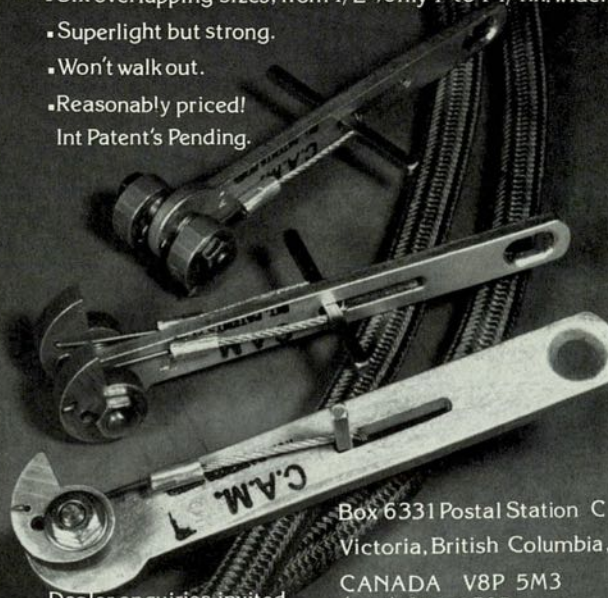
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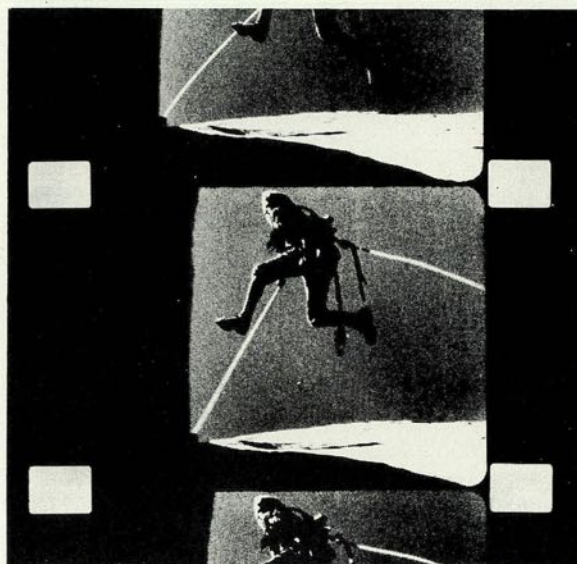
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other climbers do, short of drilling unnecessary bolts or chopping holds and otherwise changing the rock. Ron Kauk, for instance, showing Alan Watts how to make the final move on *Midnight Lightning*; and John Bachar, who talked with Todd Skinner even while he worked on *The Stigma*. And there are others, certainly. Many Valley climbers appear to have transcended the puerile attitudes of a few, but it takes only a few to ruin the Valley experience for many others.

The scar created by Skinner was reopened by Watts, who repeated *The Stigma* on only his fifth attempt from the ground, with very minimal hangdogging his first few efforts, and without fixed protection, since Todd's pins had been removed. The style of Watts' ascent left very little to be criticized, yet Valley climbers still wouldn't believe it.

No locals witnessed Watts' ascent, as had been the case with Skinner. They simply sat back at a distance, ripe with prejudice, and "knew" what Alan was up to. "Watts is a hangdog. Therefore, he couldn't possibly have climbed *The Stigma* in good style. He must have chopped holds or something . . ." Even when confronted with the facts, they chose to ignore them, insisting that no such thing had been done. They'd rather have burned both Watts and Skinner together at the stake for their joint heresy, than to have conceded that the standards had been raised by outsiders.

Watts, like Skinner, merely shrugged it off. "They just aren't willing to accept that someone might be better than they are," he said. "I'm not saying that I *am* better than they are, but that there are a lot of climbers who are better than anyone in the U.S. A lot better!"

Yosemite, like all National Parks, is set aside for the enjoyment of everyone, not just for a handful of narrow-minded rock climbers. It is truly one of the greatest rock climbing areas in the world, as is shown by the annual influx of climbers from all nations. Hopefully, in the future, all climbers can share and enjoy the Valley on equal terms, without having to feel like they are desecrating the altar of American rock climbing.

And maybe someday, after the smoke has settled, Yosemite climbers will emerge from the ashes to become the best climbers in the world once again.

Are You Really Hard Core?

by Joe Eyre

Several months ago *Climbing* asked its readers if it should abolish its *Basecamp* section. One reader responded that the only purpose of the section was to allow hard-cores some column space for bragging about their feats of strength, endurance, and courage. But what about the rest of us, the weekend warriors who never muscle ourselves up new routes or endure epics of mountaineering machismo? Must we write ourselves off as wimps?

Take heart and pull yourselves up by your Sportiva straps. Discover the real climber within you by filling out the following survey. It will reveal the climbing-related tendencies that trouble you despite the number of times your name does not appear in *Basecamp*. Score the survey yourself — the weighted answers were derived by polling a random sample of hikers hanging out below the Bastille Crack.

1. My idea of an alpine start is:
 - As soon as the bars close. (1)
 - When an early morning revival show interrupts the hum of the test pattern. (2)
 - First light. (3)
 - After the Bugs Bunny and Road Runner reruns. (4)
 - After croissants, cafe au lait, and the funnies. (5)
2. Proper climbing attire includes:
 - Basketball sneakers, levis, and a wineskin. (5)
 - Mountain boots, wool knickers, and a felt Austrian yodeling cap topped with a pheasant feather. (4)
 - E.B.'s and cotton sweat pants. (3)
 - Bla Nortivas and matching plum-colored lycra stretch pants. (2)
 - Ratagonia baggies, a chalk bag, and thick callouses. (1)
3. My idea of prosperity is:
 - Living out of someone else's bear bag. (1)
 - Saving a little more money than I need for the next trip. (2)
 - Eating hot meals up to one time a day. (3)
 - Having a VW van that push starts most of the time. (4)
 - Hiring a guide to cook, carry, and entertain me. (5)
4. Comfortable living accommodations include:
 - A blanket under the boulder that's just outside of camp. (1)
 - A bivy sac that's pretty waterproof. (2)
 - An Olds Delta 88 with a long back seat. (3)
 - Sharing a dry floor in someone else's cabin with four other climbers and a hyperactive cocker spaniel. (4)
 - A room in the Ahwahnee with a view of the face. (5)
5. While I'm climbing I like to eat:
 - Steak (medium-rare and smothered in A-1), potatoes, and a pitcher of Budweiser. (5)
 - Brie cheese, Wasa *Light Rye* crackers, and a semi-fruitly, chilled white. (4)
 - Rich-moor instant fondue mix. (3)
 - Peanut butter and banana sandwiches chased with a quart of ERG. (2)
 - Some perfectly good rolls that someone left in the cafeteria. (1)
6. I think a good bivy is:
 - In the nearest Motel 6 (5)
 - In a tent parked in campsite B-7 of the local forest service campground. (4)
 - In a snow cave where the roof doesn't settle. (3)
 - Nestled among the boulders of a talus field. (2)
 - In a frameless hammock hanging on the wall (the rain wouldn't be so bad if the temperature was below 32). (1)
7. I work out:
 - Twice a day, seven days a week (except on climbing days; then I only work out once). (1)
 - After school and/or work most days of the week. (2)
 - A couple times a week. (3)
 - Before every trip. (4)
 - Every other February 29th. (5)
8. My idea of a good work-out is:
 - Watching the first free ascent of the Lost Arrow Spire on Wide World of Sports. (6)
 - Two dates in a row with the same girl (or guy). (5)
 - Pumping three sets of Dinkerbacker dark (I don't waste time on the light beers). (4)
 - A round of Nautilus during the after-school rush hour. (3)
 - An hour and a half of bouldering. (2)
 - Three sets of climbing-specific free weight exercises, 10 sets of 10 pull-ups, four traverses of the bouldering wall, and alternating one-arm door jam hangs. (1)
9. I always bring the following emergency equipment:
 - A first-aid kit, swiss army knife, and toilet paper. (1)
 - A parka, bivy gear, and a 90 cm ice axe. (2)
 - A six pack of Bud. (3)

- Vuarnets (with Croakies). (4)
- A porta-shower and change of clothes just in case the seventh pitch involves dinner. (5)
- Appropriate apparatus for the eighth pitch. (9)

10. The essential rack includes:

- A set of R.P.'s, ascending rocks, a set of Friends (with double 1's and 1½'s), and a couple of tube chocks that I use for pounding in tent stakes. (1)
- A complete set of chocks and my trusty 7 mil prussik cords. (2)
- All of the above plus jumars, fifi hooks, three Snargs, and a rescue pulley. (3)
- A couple of biners (to set up the top rope) and a nail file. (4)
- The keys to my Saab Turbo, a figure eight, and my address and appointment book. (5)

11. For softgear I always bring:

- A couple of peanut butter sandwiches and a pillow. (5)
- A wineskin and my significant other. (4)
- A pair of gym shorts and by Ear-rays. (3)
- Six, maybe seven quick draws. (2)
- Five singles, two doubles, and an Air Voyager. (1)

12. When it comes time for winter climbing, I:

- Think it's good training when my fingers feel like wood and I can permanently bend them into the shape of a cliff hanger. (1)
- Might throw in an extra jacket if the forecast predicts the snowstorm of the century. (2)
- Don't mind cool weather as long as I can still feel the rock. (3)
- Never touch the rock before the air temperature is above 70°. (4)
- Fly to the Yucatan peninsula. (5)

13. I involve my significant other by:

- Going halves with him/her on our new double sleeping bag. (5)
- Having him/her haul most of the pitches. (4)
- Giving him/her the opportunity to come along (to pack in gear and cook at basecamp). (3)
- Letting him/her wash my rope once a month. (2)
- Borrowing his/her car every time I go climbing. (1)

14. My significant other thinks climbing is:

- A way to become the company president. (5)
- A convenient way to get me out of the house. (4)
- A psychologically stimulating and rewarding experience that combines qualities such as determination and drive into a focused outlet that allows maximum relaxation while still maintaining a high level of peak stress that . . . (3)
- Something both of us can do on Sunday when I'm feeling a little stiff after a hard day yesterday. (2)
- A great way to experience 5.11 together. (1)

15. My idea of bad luck is:

- Being benighted on the Diamond in January without bivvy gear. (1)
- Never making it to the trailhead because my chains broke halfway up the pass. (2)
- Going climbing for a whole day without running into that

guy/girl I met last week on the second pitch of Shockleys. (3)

- Forgetting my chalk bag. (4)
- Being late for dinner. (5)

16. My idea of a bad accident is:

- Forgetting to set my alarm and having to sleep in on Sunday morning. (5)
- Realizing I forgot my little baggie full of toilet paper. (4)
- Falling off a bar stool in the Strawberry Inn. (3)
- Getting hit by a bottle launched from Glacier Point. (2)
- Breaking my leg while bouldering. (1)

17. To prepare for a big climb I:

- Abstain from visiting my significant other for six days prior to the climb. (1)
- Carbo load (with a few alternate light-meat dishes thrown in) for several days prior to the climb. (2)
- Order *Heineken Dark* instead of *Old Milwaukee*. (3)
- Splurge on some high-grade stuff and take time to clean, ream, and polish the bong. (4)
- Double check to make sure I've hired strong, dependable Sherpas. (5)

18. To me route finding is most difficult:

- During the fall sale at R.E.I. (5)
- Between the Fairview Inn and the Talkeetna International Airport after dark. (4)
- When the guide leaves me behind in the serac field. (3)
- Just outside Twenty Nine Palms, California. (2)
- When my tears smear the hand-drawn topo of this great new route that has just traversed into a blank wall. (1)

19. I think physical pain:

- Should be expected with climbing. (1)
- Is the necessary evil that goes along with Vedauwoo-grade hamburger hands. (2)
- Descriptions make *Basecamp* worth reading. (3)
- Can be minimized by wisely avoiding any climb that has more than a 300 yard approach. (4)
- Is watching the Redskins get beat one more time. (5)

20. Sometimes my hands suffer a cut or two. To prevent infections and aid the healing process I:

- Ask my masseuse to rub in a little lotion. (5)
- Apply Johnson and Johnson First Aid Cream and call it a day. (4)
- Refrain from climbing for at least two hours. (3)
- Dribble on a liberal amount of tincture of benzoin and dry the wounds with chalk. (2)
- Dab on some gasoline (only use unleaded). (1)

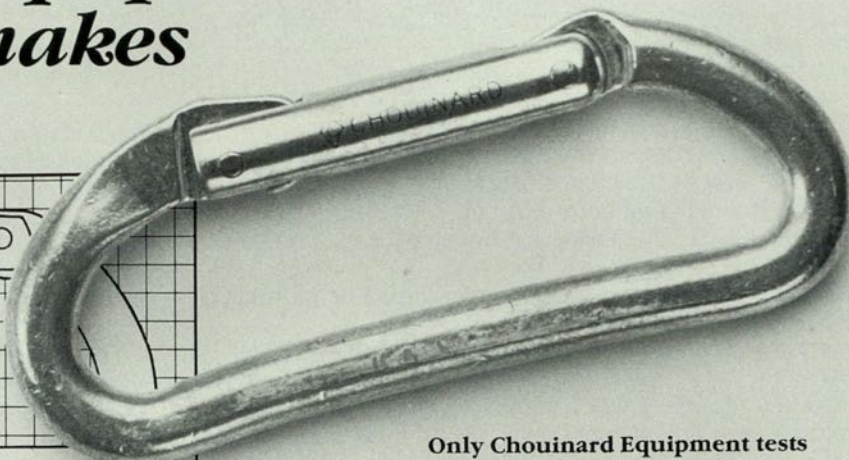
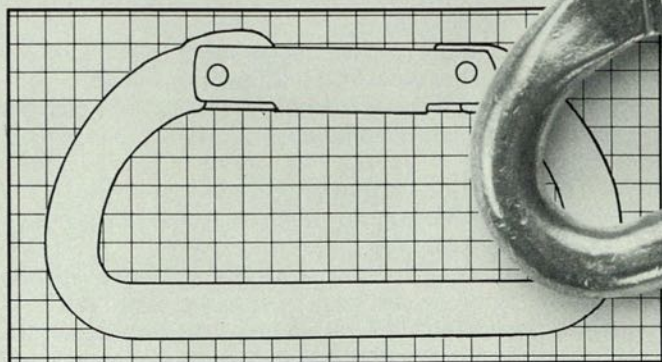
21. My idea of a long approach is:

- Mushing up the Muldrow Glacier. (1)
- A half-day bushwhack through poison ivy and/or devil's club. (2)
- An hour of scrambling up a loose talus field. (3)
- 100 yards on the Carriage road. (4)
- An hour gondolier ride. (5)

22. As a leader, my idea of a good belay anchor is:

- A Chrysler bumper. (5)
- Three bomb-proof Friends. (4)
- A half-inch epoxied bolt. (3)

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
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- Three tied-off rurs. (2)
- Who needs a belayer? I only solo. (1)

23. As a belayer, my idea of a good belay spot is:

- Nestled in the snow slope as I watch the third winter storm in two days move our way. (1)
- A hanging belay (without a butt bag) on the Leaning Tower. (2)
- A shady spot sans bugs. (3).
- A flat ledge where I can sit and dangle my legs. (4)
- The front seat of my car with Dire Straits in the deck. (5)

24. Psychologically, climbing:

- Scares me to death. (5)
- Enhances my split personality every time I have to talk myself out of freezing on the spot. (4)
- Takes my mind off whatever is eating me. (3)
- Lets me experience the beauty of the outdoors and know the camaraderie of close partners. (2)
- Elevates me from the dregs of daily living and cleanses my mind. (1)

25. My climbing code of ethics guides me to climb:

- Without that dusty white stuff that blemishes the rock. (1)
- Without previewing a route by top rope. (2)
- A route again from the start if I fall. (3)
- Without hanging onto vegetation or the pro. (4)
- Routes where no one can see my belayer hauling me up. (5)

26. Overall, I think the amount of effort I put into climbing:

- Is never enough — I'm going down to do some more fingertips right now. (1)
- Is about right as long as I stay in shape this winter. (2)
- Has led my significant other to resort to using my Ever-dri for a tow rope. (2)
- Is getting to be a little much. I think I'll spend more time at the beach. (4)
- Has worn out my bean bag chair although I've collected a great mountaineering library. (5)

Now take a minute to tally the scores and compare your results to the empirically-derived rankings below.

● **0 to 25** — If you haven't made *Basecamp* yet, you might as well hang up your shoes.

● **26 to 50** — Although you don't care whether or not you get your name in *Basecamp*, someone else might send in your epic story anyway.

● **51 to 75** — Don't worry about seeing your epics within the columns of *Basecamp* — but try to be careful and stay off the front page of your local paper.

● **76 to 100** — You don't read *Basecamp* anyway. Just try to stay in shape by mantling bar stools and cranking 5.7's.

● **101 to 135** — You'll never miss a meal or the fall sale at R.E.I. In fact, you probably wouldn't even miss climbing. Nevertheless, keep the spirit (and your *Climbing* subscription) alive.

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EXPEDITIONS

Climbing in Patagonia

by Alan Kearney

When the French began organizing an expedition to climb Fitz Roy in 1951, they encountered a lack of enthusiasm from potential sponsors. The first 8,000 meter peak had just been climbed the year before, and much attention was drawn to the Himalayan giants. Fitz Roy (11,073 ft) was less than one-third the height of Annapurna. Raising the money for the trip became a major obstacle.

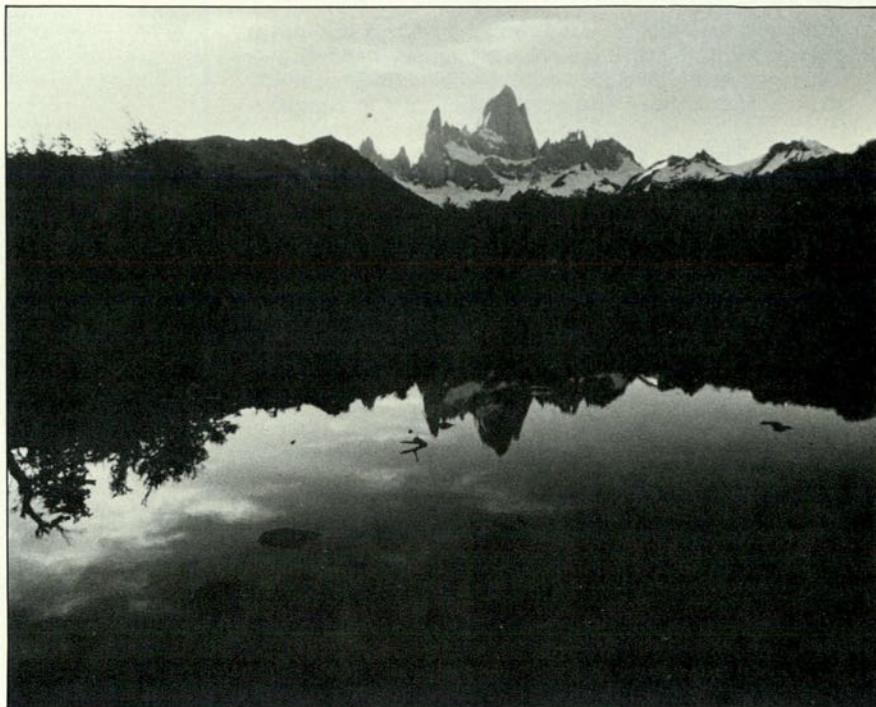
The French group claimed that a mountain of such technical difficulty and beauty had never before been attempted in a remote place, and that was the challenge they sought. With the generous help of Dr. M.A. Azema, the expedition became a reality. The epic story of the first ascent appears in Azema's book *The Conquest of Fitz Roy*, and the reader can easily identify those bits that compare the expedition to one of Himalayan scale.

But the short approach and scarcity of people inhabiting the mountains make Patagonia much different than the Himalaya, and an ideal place in which to climb — almost. In four expeditions between 1968 and 1985, Silvia Meztelin and Gino Buscaini have climbed a number of surrounding peaks and made eight attempts on Fitz Roy by three different routes. I asked Silvia why they kept returning to climb.

Patagonia is a good place for adventure. There are only mountaineers and nature. There is no culture in the mountains. Some people think this is poor, but we think it is rich.

So what's the problem here? There is a short approach, no need for porters, and fantastic spires of granite begging to be climbed. The setting seems perfect and yet very few climbers ever reach the summits of Patagonia's mountains. One hundred miles to the west lies the Pacific Ocean with its endless supply of cool moist air and in between, the 9,000 square miles of ice that make up the Hielo Continental. Add to this volatile mixture the vulnerable position of the mountains (located on a 350 mile wide strip of South America), and atrocious weather is guaranteed.

The rock walls are steep, the rime ice fragile and the wind more powerful and constant than the stories indicate. Telling tales is great when you're warm and safe, and a picnic table in Joshua Tree is just that. The subject of Patagonia popped up and a climber I had recently met said: "Isn't that where you sit in a snow cave for forty



Fitzroy and Cerro Torre from the east. All photos: Alan Kearney.

days and then climb for two? It doesn't seem worth it."

"Oh, I don't know," I replied. "Those two days are something special."

Which Mountain?

The striking beauty of Cerro Torre, the massive walls of Fitz Roy or the elegant lines on the Towers of Paine have been sufficient carrots to draw me south. These are two to three-day climbs depending on the route, but there are numerous peaks that can be climbed in a single day. St. Exupery, Torre Innominata, Guillaumet, North Tower of Paine and the Cuernos Horns fall into the latter category. The major peaks in the Paine and Fitz Roy area are accessible in one or two days. Trails lead up the valleys to where the beech forests end and talus slopes or glaciers complete the approach.

If you desire new routes and want to explore, consult the *Alpine Journal*, *The American Alpine Journal*, *Mountain* and *Climbing* for information. To probe for unclimbed summits, then venture out onto the Northern or Southern Patagonian Icecap (Hielo Continental). Very few expeditions have climbed on the icecap, and the writings of Shipton, Tilman and Agnew (in the above journals), can be helpful.

Permission

Obtaining permission to climb in Chilean or Argentine Patagonia is not difficult and costs nothing. In both countries, write to the addresses listed below and tell them exactly where you plan to climb and how

long you will spend in the country. Submit the names of the expedition members along with each one's address, age, occupation, marital status, passport number, nationality, club affiliation, climbing experience and doctor's certificate. For Chile, a letter is adequate and should be typed in Spanish. The Argentine parks department sends back an official form to fill out, but it requires the same information.

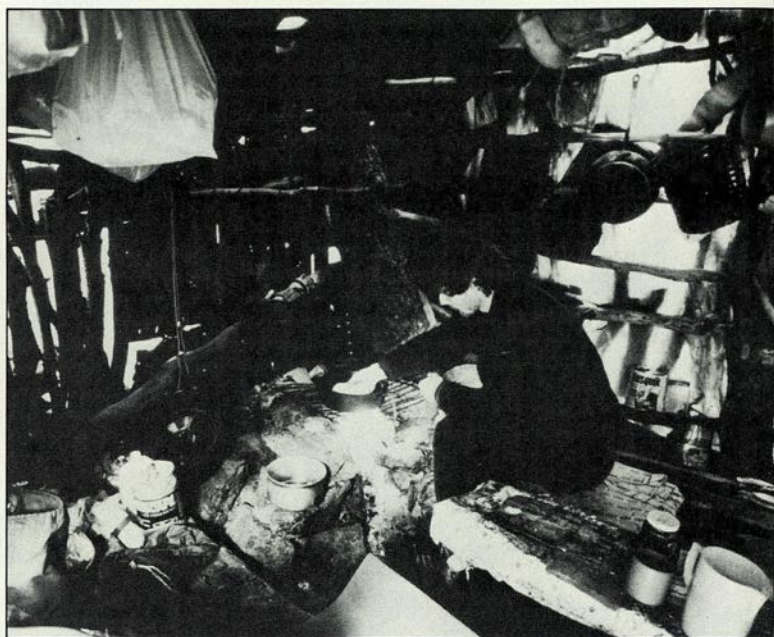
Climbers have shown up in the Fitz Roy Park without written permission and simply checked in with the Guardaparque (ranger), and done their climb. But South American countries are unpredictable, and in 1972 the parks department insisted that a British group obtain official permission before attempting a new route on Fitz Roy. They waited in dismay as nearly two weeks of perfect weather slipped by. (Keep in mind, however, that cloudless blue skies don't always indicate climbable conditions on the mountain. The wind might still be blowing with body-flattening ferocity up high). The addresses for both countries are as follows:

Servicio Nacional
Parques Nacional
Santa Fe 690
Buenos Aires, Argentina

El Director
Ministerio De Fronteras Y Limites Del
Estado
Santiago, Chile



Waiting out the famed Patagonia storms: in a snow cave below the Central Tower of Paine (above left), and baking bread in the Lago Torre Hut.



Season

The climbing season runs from late spring (November), through the end of the summer (February). November is colder, with more snow on the glaciers and mountains. As summer arrives the temperature increases and the glaciers melt down to bare ice, making travel easier. Skis or snowshoes are a wise addition to your gear when planning an early trip into the mountains.

Heavy snowfall and lower temperatures can occur any time during the summer season. Expect the unexpected and you won't be surprised. During the 1984-85 season, Bobby Knight and I anticipated only two to three days of climbing weather each month. Instead we were treated to sixteen days straight of nearly windless skies.

Our choice of routes on Fitz Roy (the North Pillar), turned out to be the only safe one, as the unusual heat wave was melting ice deep in cracks and behind blocks. House-sized chunks of granite came hurtling down the other routes, making climbing very hazardous. Any condition can be expected on your choice of routes — from bare dry rock to snow, verglas or rime ice.

Partners?

In my experience, finding a climbing partner for other mountain ranges of the world is not usually a problem. But Patagonia is different. If, after a long search your chosen companion does not share your enthusiasm upon arriving in the mountains and confronting the abominable weather, you may have just wasted a lot of money and time. It is far more important to go with someone you get along with well, rather

than choosing a partner according to his climbing ability. If there are only two of you, those forty-day stints in the snow cave can be pretty exasperating.

Language

Before leaving home I attempted to study Spanish, as there are very few English speaking people in Patagonia. Communicating your needs to the local people will reduce hassles and shorten the time required to reach the mountains.

A rudimentary way to communicate in Spanish is to make up your own small notebook of commonly used nouns, verbs and verb conjugations. This way you can put together a sentence that will convey your message. When organizing the notebook, look up Spanish equivalents of specific supplies you will need in Patagonia. If time permits, taking a Spanish course is always best.

Travel Tips

Check on the shots required and recommended for both countries, update your passport and apply for a visa well in advance of leaving. At this writing, a visa is required for Argentina but not Chile. It is also an excellent idea to xerox your passport, visa and list of valuables, in case the items are stolen or the parks or military people want to examine what you're bringing into the country.

Transportation

The most expensive cost is air fare, which runs between \$1100 and \$1500 depending on where you fly from. In Chile, flights are available down to Punta Arenas, and from there a bus (\$10 one way) gets you north to Puerto Natales. Once in Natales it's necessary to hire a taxi (\$70 one way), or hitchhike the 60 miles to the mountains during November. Later in December, cheap tourist buses are running. In Argentina, flights go down to Rio Gallegos and then a bus (\$10 one way) or a local

flight with LADE ends at Calafate. In 1984 LADE airlines was offering cut rate flights (\$12 one way) to Calafate and tickets could be bought in Rio Gallegos if there was space. From Calafate it's the same story as in Chile. Hire a taxi if you're early, or take a bus later in the season.

The price of everything in both countries is highly variable because of the rapidly fluctuating economy. During 1981-82 in Chile, prices were two and a half times higher than in the U.S., and in Argentina in 1984-85, the costs were about the same as in the U.S.

Fuel

Fuel can be a problem. In Chile, we burned regular car gas in my heavy Phoebe stove when staying in caves and for some basecamp cooking. There is deadwood available in the forest for cookfires and it's acceptable to have fires so long as people don't start chopping down green trees. Up on the mountain we used a Husch stove with propane-butane cartridges. Because of the hot flame, one small canister produces five liters of water from snow and ice.

In Argentina we again brought along the Phoebe. It happily burned "super" for cars, but after a couple of weeks the MSR 9 fuel stove was not digesting gas very well, and halfway up Fitz Roy it died. An abandoned Husch and cartridges borrowed from basecamp filled the role of the mighty MSR and joined me on Cerro Torre.

Food

Buying food is not a problem, but two factors determine whether you should bring it all with you or buy it in Patagonia. If the food in the country is expensive and baggage allowances are good, bring food down except for spoilables like cheese and margarine. During 1984 and 85 the opposite was true in Argentina. The baggage allowance consisted of only two fifty-



The Cuernos Peaks, Paine National Park.

pound bags per person and each excess piece cost \$75. With this in mind, and learning the economic situation beforehand, we bought nearly everything in Rio Gallegos.

Although we brought down freeze-dried food, most other items were available. But when we had ransacked the town of 25,000 for two days and no popcorn turned up, yours truly nearly called the trip off.

To Bobby I said, "How can we climb the North Pillar of Fitz Roy without popcorn?" Bobby's cheerful face clouded. "I guess we can't" he replied. (Our success on the Central Tower of Paine three years earlier was largely due to the 10 pounds of popcorn we brought along for basecamp.) I thought back to the rigorous journeys Eric Shipton made in Patagonia using only 10 basic ingredients for all his cooking needs. They were: sugar, Quaker oats, wholemeal biscuit, dehydrated meat, butter, cheese, milk powder, rum fudge, soup powder and potato powder, plus thyme, sage and bay leaves.

Shipton justified his menu with these words: "In my experience, which covers a very wide range of catering arrangements, I have always found that the more lavishly an expedition is victualled, the greater the variety of choice supplied, the more people complain about the food. I will not attempt to account for this curious psychological paradox."

Apparently he achieved many great things in Patagonia including a 52 day crossing of the icecap — and all without popcorn. What a guy! Despite these tales of heroism, I still winced at the prospect of an expedition without my puffy white kernels to nibble. In a fit of despair we purchased more Triple Sec, anise, wine and Old Smuggler's (Argentine whiskey) for the dreary days ahead.

I enjoy buying a lot of simple foods with which you can prepare many tasty en-

trees. With flour, baking powder and salt you can make tortillas, enchiladas, biscuits and cobbler. With yeast you can bake bread. And with sugar and eggs — pancakes, cookies and cake. The Calafate berries were ripe and made a juicy addition to many meals.

We purchased a good supply of fresh potatoes, eggs and onions in the last town and carried them the six miles into the Fitz Roy basecamp. It's hard to beat fried spuds and eggs for the first week or two, and when guests stop by you can tantalize them with a real meal instead of something from an aluminum package. Boiled potatoes and sweetbread completed the meal.

Routes and Approach

My preference has been to pick routes that can be mostly free-climbed and done quickly. Fixed rope is a nuisance, and I only bring 300 feet for the bergschrund at the mountain's base. Many expeditions still bring a lot of fixed rope and often the junk is not cleaned off the route. Alpine style attempts are blown off by the rapid onset of a storm and retreat is inevitable. Reclimbing the same pitches on subsequent attempts is tough, but I feel it beats carrying 100-200 pounds of rope and the additional hardware to anchor it. The fixed ropes also suffer from wind abrasion and rockfall, making them less secure.

Choosing where to hang out during stormy weather must be given some thought. A snow cave puts you close to the mountain and ready for rapid action if the wind stops blowing. Cave life can be awfully lethargic, and unless you move about, the idea of climbing *anything* after sitting and eating for a week or two is repugnant. At Col Superior on Fitz Roy there is a deep snowbank for locating a cave. Small crags rise above the col and one can boulder 50 feet from the cave door. Also, shoveling snow and using a hand gripper helps fight off the sluggish flow of blood that threatens to petrify you.

If the approach from the beech forest to

the base of the route is not too bad, it is wise to stay in the forest and then dash up to the mountain at the appropriate time. Down below you can hike, carry wood, photograph flowers, talk with other climbers and, of course, exercise your culinary skills. The mind and body remain more healthy when they are not confined within the damp wells of a snow cave. The snow hole also limits one to communicating with your partner all the time, and it's nice to have some freedom to wander alone.

For Cerro Torre I chose to stay in the forest. And even though the hike took six to seven hours over morainal debris, bare ice and snow to the base of the Southeast Ridge, I felt my spirit would fare better in the lush green environment of the beech trees near Lago Torre.

Final Thoughts

Patagonia is not the place to go if reaching the summit is the most important goal. Failure can be very frustrating. Instead, hike around the lakes, smell the flowers, go birdwatching, run up the hillside, boulder and enrich your experience by absorbing the surroundings. Should you succeed or even get in some good climbing, the trip has even greater potential for etching itself into your memory as a good experience. The satisfaction received from such a trip is directly correlated to the amount of drive and energy you can maintain toward the objective.

Being granted several days of fine weather is a big help, but you must be ready to transform your enthusiasm into instant action. A windless day in Patagonia *not* spent up on the mountain is lost forever. In 1952, the French climbers questioned a local about whether they could expect any calm, clear spells during their remaining stay below Fitz Roy. The response was accurate.

"Days of fine weather? Well, yes, there are some. Several every summer. You've already had a good many. More than other summers. You mustn't complain."

How Sweet It Is!

by Dr. Bruce Paton

Why should climbers, backpackers and trekkers have an interest in diabetes? The answer lies in statistics. There are 11 million diabetics in the United States; at least half are young, energetic and potential climbers. Your chances, therefore, of climbing with a diabetic companion are high. Exercise is strongly advocated as an important method for the control of blood sugar and the avoidance of long term complications such as cardiovascular disease. Diabetics have run in the Hawaiian Ironman triathlon, competed in championship tennis at Wimbledon and played at the highest levels in baseball, professional football and ice hockey.

Diabetes is caused by a lack of insulin, a hormone produced in the pancreas which regulates the level of sugar in the blood and facilitates the use of sugar by the muscles during exertion. In the absence of insulin the amount of sugar in the blood slowly increases and spills out into the urine without being utilized for energy by the muscles. This metabolic failure explains the early symptoms of diabetes — tiredness, drowsiness, and insatiable thirst combined with excessive output of urine.

Diabetes commonly starts in one of two phases of life. Either in youth (Type I) or in older age (Type II). Young, Type I, diabetics all require insulin injections once or twice a day to maintain blood sugar levels in the normal range. Many older, type II, diabetics can control their disease with careful diet and medication taken by mouth.

Blood is a staging area and transport system for glucose. The food we eat is broken down by digestion into many components, including glucose, which are absorbed into the blood and carried to the liver and muscles for storage. When a need arises for more glucose to fuel the energy requirements of active muscles, glucose is drawn from stores in the liver and transported to the muscles where it is first absorbed and then metabolized by individual muscle cells. Insulin is necessary for all these links in the metabolic chain.

In normal people insulin is produced by special cells in the pancreas at rates which vary in accordance with the needs of the body. In the diabetic the system is less flexible. There is little or no natural insulin, so the diabetic relies on injected medication. There are several types of injectable insulin which are absorbed at different rates. In the morning, for example, a diabetic may take an injection of two types of

insulin, a fast-acting insulin to get things started and a slower acting insulin to maintain constancy throughout the day. But if a diabetic plays racquet ball or runs five miles in the middle of the day without regulating either food intake or insulin dose, blood sugar may drop to symptomatic or even dangerous levels — hypoglycemia.

It is very important for diabetics to learn how their bodies react to different levels of exercise. Unexpected strong exercise or delays in obtaining meals can easily induce hypoglycemia. The key to avoiding this is to know what the blood sugar level is. Fortunately there are now relatively simple methods for measuring blood sugar which diabetics can use themselves. All insulin-dependent diabetics going on long climbs or on backpacking trips should measure their blood sugar levels at frequent intervals in order to avoid complications and maintain good control of blood sugar levels.

Blood sugar levels can get out of control in two directions. The commonest problem is hypoglycemia. Sweating, faintness, uncoordination, and the outward behavior of being drunk are the usual symptoms. They can come on quickly, over 10-15 minutes or less, and are usually readily reversed by eating sugar. At home the diabetic may take orange juice or a similar drink. But that is not convenient in the field and hard candy or plain sugar are equally effective and easier to carry.

Occasionally hypoglycemia starts without warning, and the person becomes confused and even combative without his friends having had time to realize that something is going wrong. It may then be impossible to give the person anything by mouth. Under these circumstances an injection of glucagon, a metabolic precursor of glucose may be life-saving. Diabetic climbers, especially those whose diabetes is difficult to control, should carry injectable glucagon with them and should show one member of the party the simple procedure for injecting it.

If a diabetic takes too little insulin the amount of sugar in the blood will rise — hyperglycemia — and failure to metabolize the excess sugar results in the accumulation of acidic byproducts in the blood; a condition called ketoacidosis. This takes longer to develop than hypoglycemia (at least several hours), but in many ways is more serious and more difficult to treat.

The symptoms of ketoacidosis are vomiting and abdominal pain, heavy breathing ("air hunger") in an attempt to rid the body of carbon dioxide, dehydration from excessive urine output, unusual thirst; low blood pressure. If a testing kit is available the urine will be found to be heavily loaded with sugar and ketones. Treatment, in prin-

ciple, is to give more insulin, increase fluid intake and correct the acidosis. This is not a five minute emergency treatment after which the person can continue to climb as though nothing has happened. This may well be an emergency requiring evacuation.

What should a diabetic do to have a safe enjoyable time in the mountains?

1. Find out with frequent blood sugar measurements the correct dose of insulin and the optimal food intake to avoid either hypo- or hyperglycemia.

2. Always carry a small kit with extra insulin, syringes and hard candy. In the past few years there have been several deaths of diabetics in mountain accidents in which a diabetic became stranded but not seriously injured and died from complications of diabetes which could have been avoided if insulin and food had been available.

3. Everyone in the group should know who is diabetic. Sitting on top of a knife-edge ridge with a faint, confused climbing companion is no time to find out that he is diabetic, and that his extra food is in the car.

It is natural that diabetics want to lead normal lives without advertising their problem. But there are some circumstances when letting others know the state of affairs may be life-saving. And climbing is one of them.

So, to the diabetic, don't ignore your problem, but control it. And to the non-diabetic, realize that diabetics can do anything you can do, but occasionally they may need a little help. Then you can both sit on top of that knife-edge ridge, admire the view and genuinely say, "How sweet it is!"

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Eat To Climb

Part I: Major Nutrient Metabolism

by Steve Ilg

Due to the major role that nutrition plays for climbers, this subject will be discussed in two parts. Part I: Major Nutrient Metabolism, is a discussion of nutrient values and their respective metabolic actions, with some reference to terminology and popular attitudes (both correct and incorrect). Part II: Nutrition for the Climber, (in the April issue), will discuss more practical aspects of the subject and offer guidelines for maintaining an optimal diet for climbing performance.

The contemporary climber's diet, in a word, sucks. It seems that climbers are instinctively drawn to nutritionally-deprived foods (perhaps as a result of their social and economic environment). Climbers generally don't have much money, and much of what they do have is spent on equipment and new shoes; the surplus is then reluctantly utilized for food, perhaps chips and salsa with a brew down at the pub. So, climbers' diets are cause for concern.

An intimate knowledge of the underlying biological, chemical and regulatory mechanisms of the body's complex internal combustion system is not essential for the general climber. However, a basic understanding of processes involved allows the active climber to appreciate nutrition in performance. Nutrition is a systematic, daily discipline that regulates the life process. I believe that climbers generally climb well in spite of their nutritional persuasions, and hope to encourage dietary changes that will result in improved performance on the rock. It is possible to follow advantageous nutritional guidelines on a slight income, and this will be one of the topics covered in Part II.

Nutrition begins with digestion, the details of which need not be elaborated on. The important thing is to realize that each nutrient that is broken down (digested) will be absorbed, in some form, in each cell of the body. These nutrients are distributed throughout the body by the circulatory system.

"Metabolism" is an often mis-used word, meaning simply "body chemistry". Metabolic processes occur in every cell of the body, and are regulated by variables such as vitamins, minerals and hormones. An important principle of metabolism is "state of cells". The body is in a constant state of building up cellular substances (anabolism) and the degeneration of cells

(catabolism). If anabolism is greater than catabolism, growth and increased strength result.

The body works holistically; no single food is perfect for maintaining and providing all the body's needs. Thus, we need the nutrients found in different foods. The digestive system recognizes six main classes of molecules: water, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, lipids (fats) and proteins.

Lipids

Chemically, lipid (fat) molecules are more complex than the two other macronutrients, carbohydrates and proteins. Lipids contain the smallest number of oxygen atoms per molecule of any nutrient, and thus it can be difficult for the body to metabolize. Lipids can be fats (solid at room temperature) or oils (liquid at room temperature).

The physiological significance of fats in the body is important. Structurally, fat is a component of cell membranes. It also is a highly-concentrated energy source, an efficient insulator, and protects soft tissue and organs.

The health-related disadvantages of fat are well-documented. Fats in the American diet supply about 45% of the total daily intake of nutrients; not surprisingly, in 1977, half of all deaths in the country were related to cardio-vascular diseases. Due to the lack of bound oxygen in the fat molecule, the body is reluctant to expend the energy necessary to metabolize fat. So, not unlike climbers in mainstream society, fat just "hangs out"; unfortunately, this loitering effect occurs in dangerously vital places, such as the arteries.

The performance-related disadvantages of fat are blatant. For an athlete in any weight-bearing sport, fat is detrimental to performance; stored body fat (adipose tissue) is dead weight. Fat oxidation and metabolism are not a major energy source for most climbing activity, with the exception of mountaineering. Here, the heat rate remains elevated more consistently than in rock climbing, and thus forces the body to rely on the reservoirs of adipose tissue for energy. In summary, if your climbing activity does not require a workload of 60-70% of maximum oxygen uptake for a period of 20 minutes or longer, fat oxidation is not assuming a significant role in energy metabolism. So, for most technical rock climbing, fat does not contribute to the body's energy needs and actually detracts from performance.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are named for their chemical composition of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen atoms. "Carbs" are classified by their molecular structure and the proportion of carbon to hydrogen atoms. Mono-

saccharides, or simple sugars, are the most easily digested and assimilated six-carbon sugars; glucose and fructose are well-known examples. Disaccharides are more complex, and are formed when two monosaccharides are chemically bound in what is called a "condensation reaction"; a good example is sucrose (table sugar), formed from glucose and fructose.

Polysaccharides (meaning "many sugars") are commonly known as complex carbohydrates. Condensation reactions result in dietary starches. The most plentiful polysaccharide is cellulose, which cannot be digested by humans.

Every other week a Boulder Italian restaurant features an all-you-can-eat pasta night for \$1.99. This virtual extravaganza is of nutritional significance for many Boulder athletes; their reasoning, "Well, I'm carbing-up."

This is logical. Carbohydrates found in foods such as pasta become available for metabolic use once they've been broken down into monosaccharides by the digestive system. As lipids must similarly be broken down to fatty acids before use, this process parallels carbohydrate metabolism. If glucose is not used as an immediate energy source (for nervous system maintenance and muscle energy), then it can be stored as glycogen in the liver and muscle tissue. Climbing activity necessitates the transfer of this stored sugar; the process by which the body metabolizes glycogen is known as "glycolysis". It should be noted that if the liver and muscle tissue storage sites for glycogen are filled, the body will recognize any excess amount of incoming carbohydrates as fat, and will store it as such.

A high carbohydrate diet is optimal for climbers. Carbs provide a long-term energy release, yet digestion is easy. Perhaps the most important function of carbs to the climber is that they are "protein sparing". This will be discussed shortly. Part II will suggest good sources and amounts of carbs for climbers.

Proteins

Of all training questions asked by athletes concerning training plateaus, motivation and performance stagnation, I can trace 90% to diet. Of this, another 90% can be attributed to inadequate protein manipulation.

Protein equals amino acids. Nearly 30% of our muscle tissue is composed of amino acids. In order to achieve, maintain, and enhance strength levels, one must make certain that a consistent amount of amino acids are delivered to the muscle tissue. This is accomplished via dietary protein foods.

"Essential" amino acids differ from "non-essential" in that they cannot be

sufficiently synthesized or manufactured by the body. "High-quality protein" refers to the concentration and profile of amino acids found within the food. It should be noted that virtually all high quality proteins are derived from animal sources, so a strict vegetarian diet is not necessarily best for athletic performance.

Amino acids perform thousands of metabolic functions throughout the body; they provide for cell and tissue growth, promote oxygen utilization, and accelerate recovery from work and exercise. Amino acids improve the body's immune systems and reduce body fat levels through fatty acid utilization. In order for the climber to gain strength and/or maintain it, two conditions must be met:

- the body must be in a "positive nitrogen balance" (the result of consistent amino acid intake).

- progressive overload of the muscular system must be consistently applied.

A daily intake of amino acids ensures that the first is met, while personal discipline must take care of the second.

A "negative nitrogen balance" occurs when amino acid intake is overwhelmed by activity output. When a person is in this state (which I believe many climbers are), then cellular deterioration may manifest itself in the form of training plateaus, aches and pains, lack of motivation, soft tissue injuries, joint irritation or inflammation, or any combination of the above. I strongly recommend an amino acid supplement for climbers, and will elaborate on such products in Part II.

Finally, carbohydrate intake is vital to amino acid utilization. Make sure that your carb intake is high, so that amino acids will be used only for building and maintaining lean body tissue, and *not for energy*. Your body will sacrifice aminos for energy if carbohydrate stores are not available; this is why carbs are given a "protein sparing" label.

Climber's Views on Nutrition

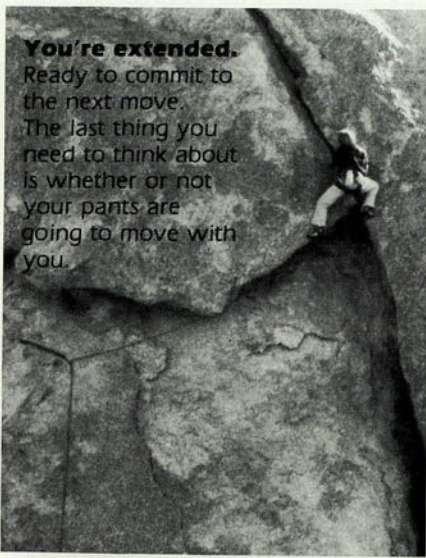
Climbers love to talk climbing, and as a trainer at Farentino's Gym in Boulder, I've often overheard various discussions and even arguments about nutrition around our climbing wall. A brief sampling and discussion of some of these views may help alleviate the congestion building up in the reader's mind about nutrition.

"Yeah, I used to do about three one-arms from a dead hang, but that was 10 pounds ago. This summer, I'm gonna fast so I'll be way stronger then."

Unfortunately, many climbers do not know how to cut fat without cutting muscle, and thus strength. Fasting forces the body to depend on lean body tissue for its recuperation and energy demands. An analogy may help: Imagine trying to light a log in your fireplace. The log, like fat, is a concentrated energy supply and will not ignite easily. You put some twigs under the log, and try again. The twigs, like carbohydrates, ignite easily, providing the impetus

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to light the log. Continued use of twigs (carbohydrates) is required to keep the log (fat) burning. In addition, consistent amino acid intake is mandatory to maintain muscle tissue.

"Well, I'm a vegetarian, but I get plenty of protein through nuts and stuff."

Strict vegetarians need to maintain a carefully monitored and repetitious diet in order to achieve optimal amino acid balance. Quite elaborate and scientifically-controlled quantities of legumes, grains, cereals, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds must be consumed. It is not impossible, just cumbersome and hard to adhere to. Most don't.

"Look how lean I am. I can eat anything and not get fat because of my metabolism"

This fellow may have a lot more fat than he thinks. Think from the inside out. Just because your general appearance suggests that you are not fat, that doesn't mean that your arterial and vascular systems are not slugged.

"When I was on El Cap, I just ate a can of tuna for my protein each day and it worked perfectly."

It didn't work perfectly. Although the protein content of tuna is high, its condition isn't. The "protein efficiency ratio" of tuna parallels that of a Big Mac ... not very good.

Reading Guidebook
The Nutrition Almanac by Nutrition

Search Inc. (McGraw-Hill) is invaluable for basic knowledge of the nutrients. The table of food composition alone makes this book worth the price (II, 5.5).

The Pritikin Promise by Nathan Pritikin (Simon & Schuster). This is the best of the "diet" books; Pritikin's philosophy is good, and his tactics well-protected (III, 5.6).

Any college textbook on physiology or nutrition. Let discretion guide you here; all material is footnoted and well-documented, so this route is recommended (II, 5.9 to VI, 5.12d, A-5).

The author is a sports trainer at Farentino's Gym in Boulder, Colorado, and further inquiries can be directed to him at 1431 Kendall Drive, Boulder, CO 80303; (303) 499-2008.



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REVIEWS

**Vertikal, Distributed by Chouinard Equipment;
High Exposure 1986, Distributed by North Star Press;
The Yosemite Climbing Calendar, Distributed by Sole Survivor.
Reviewed by Simon King**

Up until a couple of years ago there were no technically oriented calendars aimed at the rock climbing market. Golf, tennis, auto racing, even bowling had a calendar to commemorate those activities, but the committed rock jock had to make do with the nature oriented, albeit well-photographed and produced, Sierra Club calendars and datebooks. To be sure, these items are quite attractive and useful, but it is rare to see more than one climbing photo per year and that photo is usually centered around mountaineering rather than intense vertical gymnastics.

Luckily for the date-conscious hardman, that problem has been solved. Chouinard Equipment was the first to answer the call in 1985, when they produced a rock oriented calendar with the title of Vertikal. The format for that and the 1986 calendar is slender 9" wide by 19" tall. This is pleasing graphically but, because of the paper stock used and the sheer weight of the calendar, the pages tend to tear easily. However, the major flaw in the Vertikal calendar is with the photos. They are quite good as far as climbing photos go but the subject matter leaves a bit to be desired. All of the photos are of European climbs; and although this may not bother some climbers, it would be nice, considering the \$12.95 price tag, to see a few U.S. climbs represented as well.

In 1985 the first High Exposure Calendar was published. Printed in Utah, it features the work of numerous photographers. Both this and The Yosemite Climbing Calendar list several dates important to the history of climbing each month. The basis for how the particular events were chosen and why others were left out is perhaps a bit confusing, but this is a trifling matter. When opened to reveal both the photo and the month in question, High Exposure measures a manageable 9½" wide by 24" tall. The cost is a reasonable \$7.95.

Having spent the past 16 years climbing in Yosemite Valley, my opinions of The Yosemite Climbing Calendar may well be a bit biased. But all loyalty aside, this calendar is by far the best of the bunch. The photography is all by the same person — Pasadena Art Center College of Design student Phil Bard — and with one possible exception is quite outstanding. Unlike High Exposure, which features several mountaineering/ice climbing shots, this calendar is 100% rock, and the majority of these

photos are of high standard routes in the 5.10-5.12 range. There are a few shots taken on El Cap and Half Dome and one photo of the 5.6 route on the Southeast Buttress of Cathedral Peak in Tuolumne Meadows, but the rest of them feature routes like *Red Zinger*, *Rostrum Roof*, and *Black Angel of Death*. The width of The Yosemite Climbing Calendar is a touch bigger than High Exposure and the overall length is ½" longer, but the paper stock is much heavier which makes The Yosemite Climbing Calendar the "strongest" of the three. At \$8.95 this makes for an inexpensive investment for the starving climber who needs to know when his last meal was.

**Everest Grand Circle
by Ned Gillette and Jan Reynolds
Mountaineers Books, Seattle, 1985
\$22.50, cloth, 264 pp.**

Reviewed by Charles Hood

This tale opens at a post-Muztagata bash, when Gillette, sloshed, jokingly asked a Chinese official for a permit to ski in Tibet. As the saying goes, you don't get what you want in this world, you get what you deserve, and not much later he found himself with trip permission but no itinerary, partners, or sponsors. These embarrassing gaps were eventually filled, and December, 1982, saw him, Jan Reynolds, Jim Bridwell, and Steve McKinney trekking up the Khumbu. Their plan was to circumnavigate the Everest massif. Because of restrictions — politics and geometry don't mix — the circle was to be traveled in two independent halves: Pumori to Makalu (Nepal) and Everest North Face to Langma La (Tibet).

These traverses provide the framework for a terrific expedition book. Told in alternating his and hers passages, Grand Circle takes us up and down the Himalaya, both geographically and psychologically. While we expect climbing books to contain decent travel writing, here we have something special; the people and places each come alive in turn, and we learn about history, religion, bird life — a dozen things, yet in an easygoing, non-academic way. In looking out at the world around them, Gillette and Reynolds also manage to look inwards. Without preoccupying itself with "airing dirty laundry," the book presents the dynamics of a changing group (which included Craig Calonica and Rick Barker). As Reynolds puts it once, "Rick was sick, Ned was abrasive, Jim was restless and I was low."

The circle starts with a climb, the first winter ascent of Pumori, a 23,400' peak on the shoulder of Everest. It takes two tries but they do ultimately (forgive me for spoiling the surprise) make it. En route we enjoy

a fine mix of incidents: Jan Reynolds getting bonked on the head with a fat frisbee of ice, Steve McKinney wandering lost under Nuptse in the dark, Bridwell running it out on 600' of second hand polypropylene, and so on.

From Pumori they worked overland to Makalu. Reynolds wanted a wider, low altitude route; Gillette favored a mountaineering approach, cross-country, topping the passes at 20,000'. He won. That year's light winter put them on crampons, not skis, but even so, Reynolds reports, "our packs were the heaviest yet. Starting up again today made me feel like an unambitious kid being sent to summer camp by her parents against her own will. Even Ned, the strong man, said that he felt as if he was 'walking under water.' The engines were reluctant to turn over."

She continues, "I had neatly tucked away my wishes for an easier cruise around Everest. That wasn't what bothered me. What did was wrestling with the change in attitude since Jim had left us for his home in the States. His good humor had balanced Ned's frequent gloominess, and had added snap and color to our conversations. He had also shown a certain respect for my attitude and suggestions. Suddenly I felt as if I had been demoted to the class of draft horses and yaks."

This is honest writing. Gillette's matter-of-fact perspective balances the story. Near the Reynold entry, he says "The next day's excursion took us up seven miles to the end of the Mingbo Valley as we skirted the base of Ama Dablam. The narrow, precipitous gorge broadened as it rose, ending in a glacial amphitheater, where a dozen glaciers converged like spokes on a wheel. There was no trail. We each followed our own direction, clambering among boulders that once rode the backs of glaciers and now waited for the next flood of frozen tide. We pitched our tents on a prong of tiered granite separating two tongues of ice. Waiting for dinner, I poked around the beautiful rock."

Poking around he uncovers a mummy. This is a fitting detail . . . the crossing becomes an epic as they run out of food and can't find their Sherpas or their trails, and hike five days without food down the Arun Valley. This ends with a powerful but underplayed moment when their near escape contrasts against the self-defeating land use practices of the Nepalese villagers.

Tibet is dusty, expensive, and pillaged. The last section of the book has many fine moments, yet of most interest here, to readers of *Climbing*, will not be the skiing, which was unexceptional, nor the culture, which is well-described, but the encounters with Bonington's Everest expedition.

They meet up several times. At the end of both their trips, after Tasker and Boardman have died near the summit of Everest, the text looks at the risks and rewards of adventuring. Ned Gillette, talking to Charlie Clarke, reminds himself of "the exotic cultures and truly wild places we had visited; the camaraderie we had shared and the integration of mind and body we had experienced. I thought of the outlandish doors of opportunity that had opened and of the extraordinary people we would have met in no other way. We are very lucky to be doing things we love to do. It makes all the risk and hardship seem worthwhile."

Not a startling philosophy, this, but to my mind a true one, and one borne out by their route, their style, and their account. Good job, crew.

The Banff Festival of Mountain Films, November 1-3, 1985.

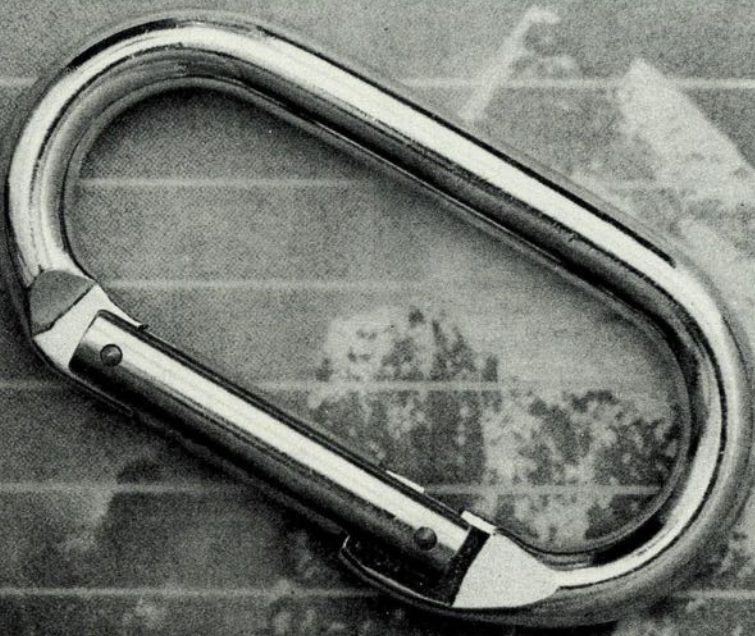
Reviewed by Colin Zacharias

A "come one — come all" attitude prevailed at this year's tenth anniversary of the Banff Festival of Mountain Films. Playing to a sellout crowd of mountain enthusiasts, the event was also a marketplace for film-makers and equipment retailers, as well as host to a wide variety of interesting guest speakers.

Opening night saw Dick Bass reveal his amazing determination with an anecdotal and down-home slide show of the Seven Summits adventure. With typically humorous Texas flamboyance, he answered those who would challenge his "no expense spared" approach to mountaineering: "If I die broke I will at least be able to say I have lived well off my creditors!" Bass was followed by Emmy Award winning cinematographer David Breashears, who accompanied him on Everest.

Highlights of this year's event included two panel discussions. "Extreme Sport — The Next Ten Years" featured John Bachar, Silvain Saudan, Phil Erschler and Stuart Stevens discussing motives and trends at the "cutting edge". For the film enthusiast, "Mountain Film Making — A Perspective" revealed a contrast of opinion. Most filmmakers voiced a cry for more originality. W. K. Emerson, a noted film historian, commented on the achievement orientation of most mountain films, while Robert Fulton stated unequivocally that "experience is undepictable!"


A broad spectrum was represented in the 34 films shown, which ranged from documentary and adventure portrayals to those films using the environment or climbing as a medium for art. The jury's task was magnified this year by an anniversary assignment: to choose the finest film from the last decade's Grand Prize winners. The judges felt that there were too many genres represented to distinguish one final winner, and in the end, two films shared the "Best of the Decade" award, with one other as runner-up.



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"Representing the finest in documentary filming of an actual mountain exploit" was Leo Dickinson's *Eiger*, while Bob Godfrey's *Sherpa* was called "the finest documentary on mountain life and the mountain environment." Both film makers shared the top honor.

Runner-up and seen as "a style of filming mountain action that is as much impressionistic as purely documentary" was Fred Padula's *El Capitan*.

The judging for this year's award winners proved equally difficult. Two films shared the 1985 Grand Prize: Mike Hoover's *Up* and Robert Fulton's *Wilderness: A Country In The Mind*. Both were a refreshing departure from the more traditional style of the mountain film genre, *Up* capturing man's fantasy of flight with breathtaking hang gliding action, and *Wilderness* challenging the audience with a modern visual symphony. *Up* also won the 1985 award for Best Film on Mountain Sports, while *Wilderness* won that for the Best Film on Environmental Issues in Mountain Areas.

Michael Tobias' *Cloudwalker* won Best Film on Mountaineering. While being a fine depiction of an attempt on the Moose's Tooth, this film also candidly explored the relationship between the two climbers and their obsession.

The jury was free to create its own criteria for judging the films, and the results show that they largely chose film making values over others. By doing so, they helped to expand the audience's concept of mountain film making, and maintained a certain integrity in the face of the often competing forces of popularity and creativity.

Smythe's Mountains — The Climbs of F.S. Smythe

London, Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1986. 4 sketch-maps, 20 black & white illustrations, 223pp. Cloth. \$29.95

Reviewed by Evelio Echevarria

The man who, alone, got closer than anybody before to the summit of Everest was Frank Smythe. He was a Briton, a contemporary of Shipton and Tilman, and led a rather short but extremely active life. He died in 1949, aged 48, when he was preparing a solo return to the Garwhal Himalaya. He opened two new routes on the Brenva side of Mont Blanc, made first ascents in the Canadian Rockies, Tibet and the Garwhal and left behind 25 mountaineering books.

He was also a philosopher in that he analyzed what mountains mean to mountaineers. Two of his books, *The Mountain Scene* (1937) and *The Mountain Vision* (1941), contain his thinking. He was also unique in other respects; "invalided out of the Royal Air Force and cautioned to climb stairs slowly for the rest of his life" (p.19), he nevertheless opened technical routes in the Alps and in 1931 led an expedition to the summit of Kamet (7760m), then the

highest summit yet reached. He made a living writing on mountaineering subjects, and this apparently was not easily pardoned in Britain at that time.

All these and other events and themes are recounted in Calvert's work. I cannot say that his biography of Frank S. Smythe is as efficient as others I have read, like *High Mountains and Cold Seas*, a biography of Tilman by J. R. Anderson, to mention the ideal work of this kind. Calvert's work was organized into 12 chapters, five of which cover Smythe's apprenticeship in Britain, Corsica and the Alps, two deal with great Alpine courses, four with his Himalayan expeditions, one with the Canadian Rockies and the twelfth, "A Mountain Visionary," analyzes Smythe's philosophy and writing.

One shortcoming in this book is the scarcity of quotations from Smythe's numerous works. Sketch-maps are good and the bibliography is adequate, but a complete list of Smythe's articles would have been a proper addition to his list of books. There is also the problem of photography. It must be kept in mind that Smythe was a professional mountain photographer and that six of his 25 books were picture works. The 20 black & white reproductions in this book do not do justice to the man who, more than any mountaineer of his time, strove to introduce color photography in mountaineering.

The collections of Tilman's and Shipton's books published recently by The Mountaineers no doubt prepared the ground for this biography of a contemporary and fellow climber of those two great figures of the 1930s. I can only hope that this biography will in turn create a renewed interest in Smythe's works, and that his more important books will be republished, hopefully integrated into a single volume. Until this happens, this is a biography that has to be read, but complemented with the reading of as many of Smythe's original books as one might manage to find.

Lakeland Rock: Classic climbs with Chris Bonington, by Adrian Bailey, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1985, 144 pp, 5.95 pounds.

Reviewed by Stuart Peggall

One of the British broadcasting stations, Border Television, recently presented a series of five climbing programs called "Lakeland Rock", featuring classic Lakes District climbs. A mix of first ascensionists and climbing personalities, usually in the voluble form of Chris Bonington, climbed the routes while chatting about what they were doing, the context of the route in local history, the weather, etc. The series was very enjoyable to watch, professionally accurate, and whetted my appetite for more climbing in the Lakes.

The book *Lakeland Rock* comes as a big surprise after the TV series. It follows the TV climbs for format, but each chapter contains much more than just route de-

scriptions and history. Bailey has gathered a delightful collection of anecdotes and character sketches that were not part of the TV series and presents them as fresh material. Thus one can read *Lakeland Rock* and never miss not having seen the series. (But if you ever get a chance, watch the programs — they're very good!)

Beginning with the late Bill Peascod's VS (5.7/5.8) *Eagle Front* in Buttermere and ending with Pete Whillans's E6 6B (5.12+/5.13-) *Incantations* in Wasdale, *Lake Rock* spans the development of modern climbing in the Lakes District. An appendix even catalogues the equipment used and clothing worn on the first ascents! The character sketches offer lots of insight into the British climbing scene, both past and present, and provide a baseline against which the routes can be measured. For example, Don Whillans says of his route *Dovedale Grooves*, climbed in 1953 and now graded EI (5.9+/5.10-), "people were generally unprepared to tackle such routes at that stage in the development of rock climbing — so the climb becomes a breakthrough." In a later chapter, Pete Whillans talks about what he views as the necessary impetus for hard climbing, "When you put these same people (hard climbers) in the position where if they try and do those moves they might fall off and get killed — then it is a totally different game; there are very few climbers who are prepared to commit themselves to the point where they put their lives at risk." Bailey enables us to see how the climbers who made the great advances view themselves and yet places them in a greater context at the same time.

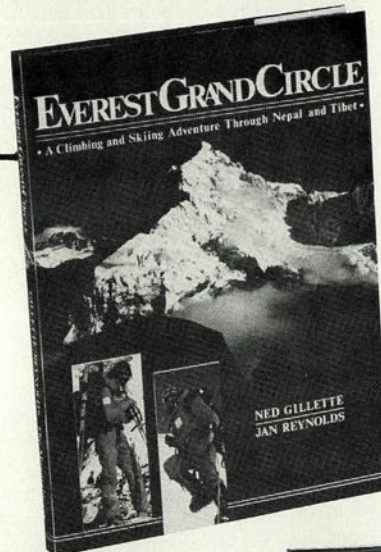
Although this book certainly was never intended to be a guide book, it is the sort of teaser that makes a climber want to go and see what all the fuss is about. Bailey has done a fine job of exposing to a great range of people some of the more subtle spots of climbing, some of its more endearing personalities, and certainly a few great routes. Any climber interested in climbing in Britain should try to get a copy of this book — it would make your trip all the more worthwhile.

WOMEN'S CLIMBING DIRECTORY

The American Women's Himalayan Expeditions (AWHE) is publishing its second Directory of Women Climbers to help women meet other women with whom to climb and plan expeditions. Any woman climber interested in being listed in the 1986 directory can obtain an application blank from AWHE, P.O. Box 5455, Berkeley, CA 94705. Applicants are asked to send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with requests for application blanks. The deadline for submitting a listing in the directory is April 1, 1986.

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LETTERS

Hooked on a Good, Bad & Ugly Feeling

Dear Editor,

In *Climbing* #92, Allen Pattie criticized our ascent of *The Good, The Bad & The Ugly* on Bucksnot Slab, which freed the first pitch of his aid route *Hooked On A Feeling*, and accused us of "murdering another man's expression on rock". While this is somewhat true, I feel 100% justified in chopping this aid route. The truth of the matter is that the aid line was never popular; the rivet hangers were made of thin plumber's tape and held barely more than body weight, yet were not more noticeable than any bolt hanger on the crag (which has several bolt-protected face routes).

Mr. Pattie also accuses me of "ruining good hooking". However, the pitch I freed had a 5.9 hand crack and a ladder of five closely-spaced rivets and one bolt (left in place); no hooking was apparent. The hand crack ended after 30 feet, and easy 5.10 face moves led to a no-hands stance left of the rivets, where I drilled a bolt from a free stance. After lowering off to give my cold partner a chance to climb and warm up, Scott Reynolds led above the bolt, and after making a high step onto a sloping hold, in desperation grabbed a rivet and hung. Before drilling the second bolt, he aided up on the rivet, a mistake as this put the bolt too high. So, he tied a sling to the bolt so it could be clipped from the sloping foothold below.

After several tries straight up, I moved left and up, then back right via a finger-aching traverse, falling off several times attempting the long sequence of moves. The holds were covered with lichen, so I resorted to aid and wire brushed them clean before lowering off and going home.

A week later, we were back. I finally managed the traverse right to a 1/2 in. hand hold, and with the bolt at my waist, cranked a long reach, pulled up and threw a high step near my hand. The upper hand hold snapped and I flew off; luckily, only the pointed top of the hold was gone, leaving an edge. Finally, after a long rest, I managed the entire 25-foot sequence of 5.11 and 5.12 moves, and clipped into the bolt placed on the aid ascent.

From here, the aid line takes a long traverse left along a horizontal crack, then hook moves and another trash rivet gain an easy dihedral. I wanted to climb a more direct finish, so moved right, mantled onto good holds and drilled a two bolt belay.

We rappled off, and on the way down, I pulled the five worthless rivets out with a crowbar. I placed a bombproof 3/8 in. bolt at the crux. The higher bolt (that Scott had placed) was still very useful, and in a good

place to clip quickly before finishing the hard moves. Although I feel that the pitch could be done without this third bolt, since it was already in it seemed best to leave it. I've found it impossible to avoid clipping on subsequent ascents.

Later, we returned to work on the second pitch. After trying a direct line up the 75 degree slab, with nowhere to stop and drill, I traversed 15 feet up and left at 5.10+ to an apparently large stance; but the expected bucket turned out to be a sloping shelf, and a thin, frightening move was required to gain the stance. After putting in a 1/4 in. bolt, 5.9 climbing led to the top.

Since the first ascent, I've climbed the crux lead several times. It's always challenging, and thankfully there are good bolts at such extremes. Have I ruined the climb for aid climbers? Most climbers today wouldn't want to aid the route, and if one did, a short cheater stick would allow clipping our first two bolts. Better yet, the aid climber can now bat-hook his way up the rivet holes if he's so "Hooked On A Feeling"!

The reason for choosing this line over unclimbed possibilities to the left, as Mr. Pattie suggests, was that most of *The Good, The Bad & The Ugly* could be drilled from free stances. Two bolts required aid for placement, and the rivet ladder proved convenient for one of those. If the ladder had not been there, some sort of aid would have been required to place the crux protection. Hanging on hooks might have snapped them off. Drill a ladder of bolts, or use intermediate bat-hook holes? Very bad style on a crag, in my opinion. I believe that if the rivets had not been there, rappelling down to pre-place good bolts would have been the cleanest approach. Now I'm sure I've raised some eyebrows!

Before reading Mr. Pattie's letter, I decided to try a possible new line to the left of *The Good, The Bad & The Ugly*. One attempt ended 50 feet up the face, with four bolts drilled on the lead (two on aid). The climbing above remained very steep, and I began to feel strongly that, if I continued to drill on the lead, the end result would be a line with more bolts than safety necessitated for ascent. A week later, I rappelled down to equip the first lead with bombproof 3/8 in. bolts; these insured greater safety than 1/4 in. bolts desperately placed on the lead, and would allow healthy runouts and multiple falls for many climbers for years to come.

After weeks of bad weather, I returned to the crag and completed the pitch. My partner Mike Lowe almost followed free, but then the best foothold snapped under his weight. We left that day with another pitch to climb, wondering if the first pitch would now be much harder.

A week later we returned, and I managed the first pitch after discovering a new sequence at the crux and taking four falls. On the second lead, I went up, placed a bolt, then traversed left to gain the obvious corner. 15 feet from the bolt, the face blanked out, but surprisingly I stuck and was soon on easy climbing to the top. This traverse was 10 feet above the *Hooked On A Feeling* traverse, and we had again intersected that aid line. I wondered what Mr. Pattie would say now?

I have heard a few traditionalists claim that if you rap down a route prior to ascent, there is no challenge in climbing it! I haven't found this to be true on many extreme routes. Face the facts: our finger strength, honed technique and sticky boots have long surpassed the abilities of our slow, primitive hand drills.

It seems that most of the criticism of extreme free routes comes from the bar stool or off the couch. Most critics have not climbed, attempted or even seen the routes they so harshly denounce. If you really want to find out what these routes are all about, save your final judgments until after you've succeeded in climbing them.

Hurricane Gloria was named with the spirit of rebellion in mind, and I won't be surprised if this letter generates more controversy. At the very least, it will give all those bored bar stool climbers and traditionalists a reason to get fired up.

Sincerely,
Mark Rolofson,
Boulder, Col.

J. Tree Bolts Chopped

Dear Editor,

Local Joshua Tree climbers have been long noted for their intolerance of unethical behavior and poor style. This has led to many clashes with exponents of a climbing environment free from restrictions. Those who chose to defy local ethics have often brought their complaints forward in various publications, most notably *Climbing*.

It has long been the local ethic that all bolts should be placed on the lead, without prior inspection or top-roping. Bolts placed on rappel are sure targets for removal. Nevertheless, a few climbers have continued to start (and protect) their climbs from the top of the rock rather than the bottom.

In response to the appearance of these routes, local climbers have recently "removed" these routes, and local consensus is supportive. Recent removals include:

1. *Power Fingers*. Long criticized for both "rap" bolts and at least a dozen chopped or modified holds.

2. *Apollo*. This recent route formerly

boasted a "rap" bolt and fixed pin placed on rappel. Now it is a top-rope problem awaiting a climber bold enough to lead it in good style. It has also been downrated to 5.12b/c.

3. *Out To Lunge*. Actually this route can be protected without the two "rap" bolts.

4. *Two Scoops Please*. Now a fun top-rope problem, which could have protection bolts placed on the lead.

Other routes destined for extinction include: *Rock Candy* (bolts could be easily drilled on the lead), *Riddles In The Dark*, *Sweat Band* (again could be bolted on the lead), and *Chicago Nipple Slump*.

Perhaps the motivation for putting up (down?) routes on rappel will diminish if they are promptly removed. Hopefully climbers will get the message, and take their cowardly and heavy-handed tactics to some other climbing area.

Jonny Woodward managed to complete a previously attempted line to the right of *British Airways*. The placement by Woodward of the protection bolts, on the lead, from extremely marginal stances, only highlights the poor style of resorting to the rappel line to protect climbs.

The new Joshua Tree climbers' guide can be expected in the stores by late February. This new guide contains over 1,300 routes of all grades and replaces the 1979 Wolfe book. Several new and exciting areas will be found in this guide, providing a multitude of new routes for climbers to explore. The book will be available from Chockstone Press in Denver, Colo. A supplement is already being planned, and all new routes should be sent to the address below.

Sincerely yours,
Randy Vogel,
P.O. Box 4554,
Laguna Beach, CA 92652

More Chiseling

Dear Editor,

Mark "The Chisel" Wilford's letter (*Climbing* #92) represents one extreme of the climbing ethics debate. Despite its angry tone, the letter seemed well-intentioned, and hopefully will stimulate some thought and discussion on the styles used on first ascents.

Wilford makes a good point that no "mortal" should decide who is, or will be, capable of climbing a route in good style, but goes too far with his threat of bolt chopping. Who gets to decide that? It sounds as though Wilford thinks he should be the ethics governor of the climbing world.

Placing bolts with any form of aid is generally considered poor practice, but chopping these bolts is destructive and self-righteous. Many climbers feel that once a bolt is placed, for better or worse, it should remain there. Why chop a bolt, leaving a useless stud in the rock, only to wait until someone eventually replaces it, either in good style or in bad?

Few would argue that some routes are impossible to protect free and on the lead; one answer to this is to leave these routes for soloists, or for the next generation. Both of these are highly unlikely. A common solution is to place bolts on the lead with the aid of a hook. This is certainly more challenging than drilling from rappel, but creates a major problem: protecting is dictated by the availability of hook placements rather than the need for protection. Hanging from a hook is just as much of an aid as hanging from a rope, so why not get the protection where it's needed?

If this sounds like I'm advocating the unrestricted use of such tactics, I'm not. Tainting on new routes should always be last resort. Who knows, future climbers may well regard the use of a rope as a hack tactic. Some climbers will undoubtedly push their tricks too far, and infringe on the rights of others, but the trend toward full reporting of first ascents should help curb this tendency. Those who feel that chopping bolts is the answer should remember what mommy said: "Two wrongs don't make a right."

Sincerely,
Dave Bingham,
Ketchum, Idaho.

South Side Commentary

Dear Editor,

I really had to chuckle while reading Greg Vernon's article, "South Side Story" (*Climbing* #92). While he made a good attempt to expose the Southern Sierra to your readers, he also tripped over his own boot laces by promoting wilderness, and in the same breath, speaking the "hype" that helps to create exactly the opposite of a wilderness experience.

There is much misinformation in the article, and parts that are misleading. For instance, one will not find the approach to the Domelands quite as simple as stated for the Rockhouse Basin and the northern section. The wilderness boundary has been moved, and a good portion of the road is now inaccessible by motor vehicle. White Dome in the Domelands (hardly opposite Dihedral Wall, but actually several miles downstream) has at least a half dozen routes to date. This dome is only covered with chickenheads on its western face, and to climb either of the two routes on the east face one must be prepared to crack climb. There are almost no chickenheads to tie off for protection on the east face.

The section on Sequoia National Park was a real laugh. It was so informative, that perhaps it would have been better used in Roper's *The Climber's Guide to the High Sierra*. Perhaps we could be told where "some Grade IV's" on Moro Rock are; I'm aware of only one. By the way, there are Grade IV's and Grade V's on the Watchtower; Greg might just visit some of these

Billy-Bob McTurtle

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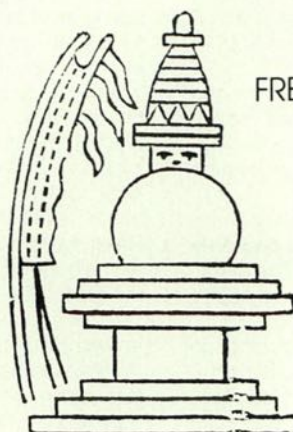
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places in the Park some time so he can tell us what's really happening! It was sad to see no mention of *Keeler Needle* (V, 5.10), since it is probably one of the finest long free climbs in the Sequoia/Lone Pine area.

How could Owen's Ridge rock be typical Southern Sierra granite? Thank God it's not! It would be better described overall as "crummy". The area at Owen's didn't get a reputation for poor rock for nothing.

The Southern Sierra is of natural design intended for high adventure, as was the *Stonemasher Rockclimbing Guide to the Kern River Canyon and Environs*, by E. C. Joe and Dick Leverssee (please note the correct title and spelling of my name). Regrettably, no guidebook is totally accurate. At the time of printing, probably fewer than 5% of the routes listed in the guidebook had been done "only once or twice", contrary to what Greg implies. Hopefully, if one has enough savvy he may find a way to, or on a route, regardless of a guidebook. Perhaps the one not satisfied with the guidebook was you, Greg.

Yours,
E. C. Joe,
Livermore, Cal.

Texas Climbing

Dear Editor,

In the recent article on Hueco Tanks and the review of the new guide book to that area (*Climbing* #92), the impression was given that this is the only climbing area in Texas. Most Texas climbers know that Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, 18 miles north of Fredericksburg in central Texas, provides many one to two-pitch climbs on good to very good granite. Moreover, Enchanted Rock is much closer to the major population centers of Texas. A guidebook, *Stranger Than Friction*, is available from the same source as the Hueco Tanks guide.

A problem common with climbing area survey articles in *Climbing* came up again with the Hueco Tanks article. The easiest climb mentioned was 5.10-. If there are no easier climbs, most readers would like to know that. Or does the author think that no climb under 5.10 is worth doing? Or perhaps that no climber under the 5.10 level is worth writing for? There are many classic and worthwhile climbs at all levels, and survey articles in *Climbing* should make an attempt to describe them.

Yours,
George N. Scott,
Boulder, Col.

North America is a fairly large land mass, and knowing about every climbing area on the continent area would be a formidable task, even if one weren't tied to a desk 40 hours a week. We stand corrected, and would welcome news and/or articles from our Texas brethren (or anyone else, for that matter). As for the emphasis on harder climbs, we encourage writers to cover a

broad spectrum of difficulty and attempt to publish material that will appeal to the great range of interests represented by the readership of Climbing. However, deadlines occasionally interfere and prevent the lengthy process of re-writing, as was the case with the Hueco Tanks article. By introducing lesser-known areas, we hope to create some excitement about new and different rock, and it is to this end that such survey articles are devoted.

— Michael Kennedy, editor.

Icicle Creek Canyon

Dear Editor,

After reading "Icicle Creek Canyon" (*Climbing* #92), I was sore with laughter after finding so many misconceptions, but mostly outraged to find an account of this magnificent canyon which calls for an all out attack: "... grab his trowel and wire brushes and head for the rocks". Charge!! Scrape all those rotten lichens away. This view of the Icicle, (originally "Ni-ci-kul", meaning Deep Gorge), that of "scrape and clean", is *not* the "tradition" of local climbers. The beliefs of most of the local climbing community is that we enjoy the thrill and adventure of the "possible first ascent", also the possibility of wandering the hillsides not finding climbing at all, but having one hell of a day. By not extensively cleaning cracks and faces while on rappel, we tend to clean only what is necessary, on the lead, leaving most intact and growing.

To even consider that the Icicle is climbed out would be ridiculous, but to make the assumption that the locals "... have hardly begun to explore them (cliffs)" is an even greater error. For years climbers have been ascending an untold number of routes on unnamed or multi-named cliffs and pinnacles throughout the canyon's rugged slopes, without needing a guide book or wanting one. The map was accurate enough for any competent climber to locate good climbing close to the road, although very inadequate in relation to what has been climbed on, say, the Bride Creek Wall massif, The Cobra, or Hide and Seek Tower. Even without a map, anyone who knows rock would be able to spend days climbing routes of varying degrees in an atmosphere of unquestioned beauty and mystique. Who cares, really, what a route is called — a classic line is exceptional with any name.

Mr. Smoot's attitude toward guide books, climber "explosion" in numbers, and cleaning are all contrary to the Icicle's environmental needs. The over-crowding of this scenic valley has already shown its toll in litter, erosion, and general negligence from the masses that visit the Icicle every year. It is hardly the secret valley that Mr. Smoot attests to. By not naming a route or grading it, the idea is to leave a bit of uncertainty and adventure for another party later, instead of move-by-move

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maps of climbs that call for systematic dissection of a route from the pub down the road. Does every square inch of our world have to be logged and filed for future reference? A choice ultimately must be made: Nature or exposure? Adventure and risk or repetition and stagnation? Obscurity and inaccessibility or ego-boosting guides and money? I also agree that "Time will tell." So let the Ni-ci-kul keep its life, its mysteriousness, its "secretive" existence a little longer, instead of destroying a truly magical gorge for the sake of a magazine article. Sincerely yours,
Paul Christensen
Leavenworth, Wash.

First Free Ascent?

Dear Editor,

Inspired by the efforts of Jack Roberts and John Allen at Tahquitz Rock (see Basecamp, *Climbing* #92), Jonny Woodward and Charles Cole succeeded in free ascents of some of the area's classic aid lines, including *The Vampire*, Dean Fidelman and Russell Walling's route of 1975. The grade is, of course, 5.11d. Yours,
Jonny Woodward,
Ventura, Cal.

Training & Injuries

Dear Editor,

I hope that not too many people are going to train using the methods outlined by Robert Loomis (A Strength & Skill Workout, *Climbing* #92). These exercises lead to injuries, and the author admits he was disabled for three months as the result of one of his exercises. I spent four fruitless years training on examples of most of the torture devices he describes, and got only aches and pains as a reward for my exertions.

I have seen quite a few climbing and training injuries, and because of my work as an orthopedic surgeon, I have a special interest in them. Quite a few can be traced to improper training. This is a huge subject, and I only want to address one point.

The major reason that the Bachar ladder, peg board and other training devices produce injuries is that they all are too stressful. Hard climbing places unusual and severe stresses on the tendons, muscles and especially joints. If inadequate time is allowed for adaptation to these stresses, small injuries can result which, combined with overuse, can result in disabling pain and loss of function. The exercises described in Loomis' article all involve *exactly the same* stresses that hard climbing does, so they further act to overwhelm the ability of the body to cope and adapt. The situation is analogous to a runner who gets stress fractures from excessive mileage in training.

People who climb rock by day and Bachar ladders by night are abusing their

elbows. There is no time for adaptation, rest, repair of microscopic tears, etc. The result is all too often chronic elbow pain (usually medial epicondylitis). Small hold climbing puts severe shear and angulatory stresses on the small joints of the fingers. This can result in digital arthritis, as it has in many climbers, especially if too much additional stress is added in the form of fingertip pull-ups.

There is nothing special about using body weight in climbing training. Body weight in climbing is usually distributed and it is unusual for the whole body to come wanging down on one muscle group. While it is nice to have the strength to get by even if this does happen (hence the interest in party tricks like one-finger pull-ups), it by no means follows that performing these extreme maneuvers is the best way to train. The weight used need only be enough to increase strength or endurance.

In any case, any training used should minimize stresses on the joints and allow for recovery and adaptation. The machines described are best for practicing technique rather than for strength training. Thank you,
Mark Robinson, MD,
Ventura, Cal.

Connecticut Grades

Dear Editor,

I am sure that by now you are tired of corrections for Connecticut *Basecamp* correspondence. I do, however, believe that grades should be given as accurately as possible, especially if the climbs are harder than the grade printed. *Jaguar*, *Scylla*, *Face Saver*, *Obsession*, and *Lost Horizons* are all solid at 5.10+, not 5.10. Conversely, *Chain Reaction* was rated 5.12- by the first ascensionists, not 5.12.

Sincerely,
Charles M. Hussey, Jr.,
Farmington, Conn.

Southeast Routes Sought

Dear Editor,

Information is being sought for a new climber's guide to the Southeast, primarily North Carolina and bordering states. In the past, major guides for this area were deficient due to incomplete knowledge of the authors. With this guide, the editor would like to find a separate author for each individual area.

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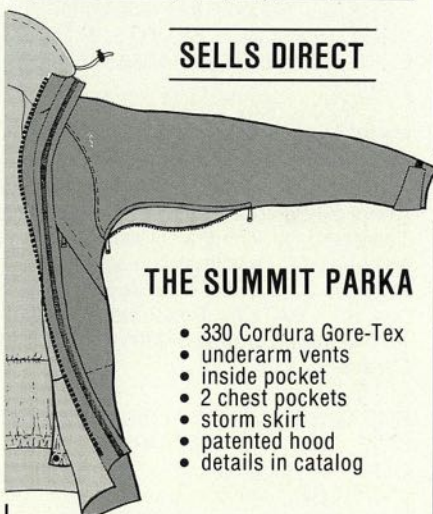
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Jean-Noël Roche on Dhaulagiri South Ridge.
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