

of massive quartz crystals. The high quartz content of the rock made the composite very brittle, and early attempts in placing bolts proved fruitless. The rock, being covered with lichen, might provide excellent friction climbing but without protection and only after considerable gardening. We were able to salvage the trip by finding a miniature "Lost Arrow" at the west end of the buttress which was relatively clean and produced several pitches of good climbing at 5.7, A2. On the south side of Knutson Bay, we climbed an enjoyable outcropping which provided short free climbs in the 5.4 to 5.9 range.

STEVE DAVIS

Mount Gerdine. Two previous ascents of Gerdine were made from the east, by Paul Crews, Sr. and Jr., Rod Wilson, George Wichman and Lowell Thomas, Jr. in 1963 and by Japanese in 1967. On April 19 Lowell Thomas, Jr. landed Mike Frank, Jim Sprott, Tom Meacham and me on the Hayes Glacier at 6000 feet. We set up camp at 7000 feet on the irregular ridge southwest of Gerdine. The next day we scrambled up this ridge to P 10,270 where the steepening ridge with blue ice and dwindling afternoon convinced us that we did not like this route. We retreated uneventfully to spend the next two days in camp while cold winds blew through the area. On April 23 we set out at 7:30 to traverse the bowl south of Gerdine to the south ridge proper just north of P 10,510. From there we climbed the south ridge over several icy pitches and then traversed along the east side of P 10,700 into the bowl east of the summit. Our route from there duplicated the original summit climb and we reached the summit (3432 meters, 11,258 feet) just after four P.M.

GREGG HIGGINS, *Mountaineering Club of Alaska*

Valley of the Pillars, Wrangellia. After nearly a decade on Valdez waterfalls, Carl Tobin and I stepped up to the big ice of Wrangellia. Carl had known of the ice for years, but after an October traverse through Wrangellia I substantiated the rumors with photos. The most beautiful waterfall in the world I told slide show audiences, flashing a shot of an eight-tiered marvel plunging down a forested escarpment. Excited by the photos, the Alaskan Alpine Club put together a six-man expedition. Club president Jeff Keener, secretary Carl Tobin, and members Eric Breitenberger, Chuck Comstock, Keith Echelmeyer, and I made up the team. In early January Keith flew all of us in with his Cessna 185. After tying down the plane, the six of us skied three miles to the Valley of the Pillars and established Base Camp. The following day Carl, Chuck, and I started up *Broken Dreams*, the beautiful eight tiered waterfall. The climb was 1500 feet long with each tier ranging in length from 75 to 200 feet. Carl said the climb was reminiscent of *Polar Circus*. The eighth and final tier was a free-hanging pillar for at least 60 feet with a big crack and some obvious stress deformation. Moments after Chuck backed off the noisy ice the pillar collapsed! A bit shaken we finished the route on rock to the right. The climb had one bivy on the ascent, complete with wood fire. We rated *Broken Dreams* a water-ice

VI. Meanwhile Eric led *Full Bore* (WI V, 165 feet) across the valley. This single pitch of very big ice is especially impressive. Eric claimed it more difficult than *Rigid Designator*, yet easier than *The Fang* in Colorado. Eric, Jeff and Keith also climbed *Lone Wolf* (WI III, 1500 feet) just upstream from *Broken Dreams*. On January 7 and 8 Carl, Chuck, Eric and I climbed *Star Babies* (WI V +, 1000 feet) which offered four tiers ranging in length from 165 to 300 feet. Carl's lead on the second step was particularly spectacular with huge cauliflower ice bulges reminiscent of Colorado's Bridal Veil Falls. *Star Babies* also yielded one splendid campfire bivy. On January 7 Jeff and Keith climbed *Boys of Summer* (WI IV, 1000 feet) to the right of *Star Babies*. The day before flying out, Carl, Eric and I made the second ascent of *Full Bore* while Keith and Jeff climbed *Asian Lady* (WI II, 165 feet). In total the Alaskan Alpine Club Expedition to the Valley of the Pillars made six first ascents.

ROMAN DIAL

Polar Bear Peak, Northwest Face, Chugach Mountains. During beautiful weather and surprisingly mild temperatures, Charlie Sassara and I climbed Polar Bear Peak (6619 feet) during February 15 to 17. Believed to be only the third ascent of the mountain, this climb produced the first one in winter and the first ascent of its spectacular northwest face. Leaving the Eagle River Visitor Center at dawn, we hiked up the historic Iditarod Trail for six miles before crossing the open river to begin our bushwhack. We followed the drainage into a beautiful cirque where we were surrounded by impressive peaks and pocket glaciers. A nine-hour day left us on top of a steep snow slope below the rock shoulder of the northwest face with 3500 feet to go. We found an ideal bivouac site in a hollow formed by the wind. The following morning we climbed unroped with a full compliment of rock-and-ice hardware up the shoulder, following a series of snow ramps connected by verglased rock. This shoulder proved to be the key to the hanging glacier on the upper face. Once on the glacier, we climbed up to 55° snow to the summit pyramid. A pitch of verglas followed by a challenging chimney led us to the sharp summit four hours after starting. The view from the top was unbelievable with not a cloud seen over all of Alaska. We were able to see the long snow gully on the south side that led to the two prior ascents. After a rappel of the chimney, we down-climbed the rest of the pyramid and enjoyed a quick glissade down the glacier. Down-climbing the shoulder was no problem in our euphoric state. Following a second bivouac we descended the drainage following Heritage Creek to the river. We reached the visitor center in six hours.

STEVE DAVIS

Thompson Ridge Area, Chugach Mountains. On June 12 Jim Miller flew Bob Jacobs, Ole Kanestrom and me to the Thompson Ridge area. We landed on a sandy gravel bar near Ross Green Lake, where a Polish expedition had set up Base Camp. We joined them for a week of climbing in this spectacular wilderness. A Pole, Paweł Kubalski, climbed with us. Later that same day, the four of