

Peruvian-type ridges was the norm. Overall, the three climbers felt conditions to be as consistently bad as they had experienced anywhere. However, the weather, remarkably settled and sunny for a good portion of the time, was much less cold and harsh than on the bigger mountains to the north. Temperatures only fell as low as  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  early in the month, but toward the end were considerably higher.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *United Kingdom*

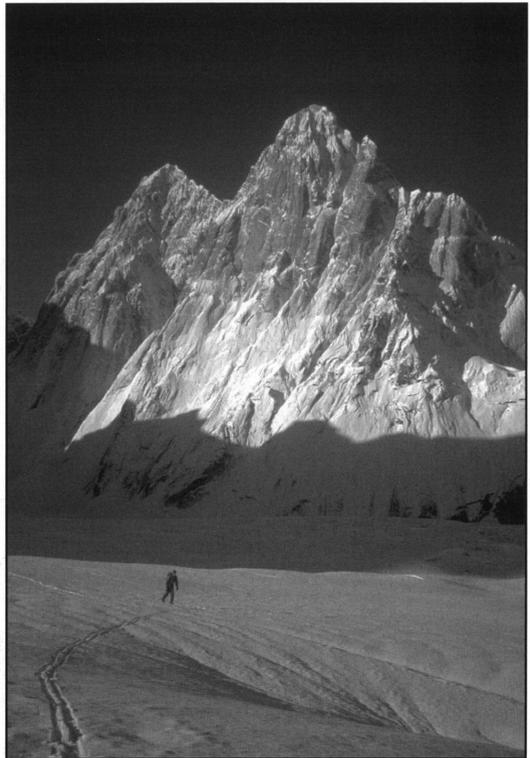
## Ruth Gorge

*Buckskin Glacier, Various Activity.* Ben Gilmore, Kevin Mahoney, Mike Wood, Scott DeCario and I flew to the Buckskin Glacier on September 20. On September 24, the five of us made the second ascent of Mooseskin Mountain (Peak 8,300') by skis. Sliding right from the summit, we confirmed it as the best ski peak any of us had been on, with awesome views of the north and east aspects of the Moose's Tooth and the Ruth Gorge (and great snow!).

On September 28, Gilmore, Mahoney, and I climbed a new route on the south face of Mooseskin Mountain, climbing the dominant gully right of a beautiful granite pillar for six pitches of ice up to WI6. We rappelled from the ridgecrest.

On September 30, Scott DeCario soloed the 3,160-foot south face of Peak 9,160' (square 15, Mt. McKinley A-2 quad map). This is believed to be the peak's first ascent. The peak rises from the last northern arm of the Buckskin Glacier's west end, about three miles north-northeast of the Moose's Tooth's summit. Climbing in early morning darkness on "miles of 50-degree snow, with lots of little ice steps and easy mixed up to about 70 or 80 degrees," DeCario needed about three hours for the ascent. He down-climbed for the descent and informally dubbed the peak "Canadian Rockies Peak," based on its similarity to Mt. Assiniboine, with its black sedimentary rock.

Gilmore, Mahoney, and I started up a new route on the Moose's Tooth early on September 30. Our route began by climbing the snow gully between the Moose's Tooth and Bear's Tooth for 1,600 feet. The gully steepened, and we climbed five ice pitches (grade WI2-4) farther up the gully, before we got to the water-ice system we'd spied from the glacier. This system followed a large right-



*Ben Gilmore skiing on the Buckskin Glacier. The east faces of the Bear's Tooth (left) and the Moose's Tooth (right) are visible. KEVIN MAHONEY*

facing corner and was fed by the summit snowfields. The wall here faces southeast, and catches a lot of radiation. It was in many ways similar to the system Carpenter, Twilight, and I climbed on Mt. Bradley in March, 1998, but this time we were there at the end of summer, right after the ice had formed. The guess about timing paid off in excellent ice conditions for nearly all of the climb. In fact, only one pitch required that we use our extensive rock rack; most of the time we relied on our six ice screws. The first day we climbed nine pitches to a bivouac underneath a "sub-formed" icicle, which the next morning I aided around via a blocky, discontinuous crack system (A3). Mahoney took over and led a couple of difficult, but excellent, ice pitches that took us to the top of the corner system we were following. At this juncture, I reassumed the lead for what I considered one of the cruxes: climbing on the route's only truly bad rock (5.8 R) for 40 feet to a tension traverse to gain the next ice system. To end the second day, we climbed two pitches off the line of ascent to a large snow ledge (dubbed the "Aurora Theater Bivy" for the spectacular display of northern lights) and the view of the lights of the village of Talkeetna out in the distance. The third day we rapped back to the route, left two packs and headed to the summit. The corner system we followed finished with two pitches of steep snow (meltwater feeder slopes) and topped out right on the main summit of the Moose's Tooth, which we gained at 1:45 p.m. We completed 16 200-foot rappels (mostly V-threads) to get back to the snow gully, which we downclimbed, reaching our skis five hours after leaving the summit.

As yet, the route has not named itself, so we are simply calling it the Southeast Face.

STEVE HOUSE\*

\*Recipient of an AAC Lyman Spitzer Climbing Grant

*The Eye Tooth, West Face, The Dream in the Spirit of Mugs, Second Ascent, Previously Unreported.* On June 25, 1998, Zack Smith and I made the second ascent of *The Dream in the Spirit of Mugs* on the Eye Tooth in the Ruth Gorge. Our first attempt ended about halfway up when a wet, then cold, storm forced us to bail. We had to chop our stuck ropes and make 80-foot raps. We returned three days later and climbed quickly to our high point, then continued and finished the route. We did stop a couple of hundred feet from the true summit due to snow slopes and ridges (we only had rock shoes), but all the technical climbing was finished. The route went all free, the crux going at 5.10c. The rock was some of the best that we had seen in the Ruth: lots of cracks and excellent pro. It went in 23 long pitches, not one under 55 meters and most at 60 meters. We rapped the route using Andi Orgler's rap anchors. The route took about 18 hours camp-to-camp.

AARON MARTIN

*Ruth Gorge, Various Ascents, and The Trailer Park, New Route.* Thanks to a Mugs Stump Award grant, Scott DeCapio and I were dropped by Talkeetna Air Taxi on May 10 at our new home below Mt. Dickey in the Ruth Gorge. Despite much base camp laziness, we made numerous attempts (as defined by at least carrying our gear to the base of nine different climbs and actually getting off the ground on many before cowering away) and managed three ascents (one new) during our four-week sojourn.

The first ascent was an easy, fun Bugaboosque rock route on Hut Tower, a relatively small peak on the lower east side of the lower gorge. A 1,000-foot easy snow couloir led to