

On May 19, the 300-meter section of snow slogging to gain the headwall was done, and we were ready to start climbing on the headwall. May 20-25 was spent climbing to a point two pitches from the summit ridge. The climbing in this upper part was quite a bit easier than in the lower section. At 8 a.m. on May 26, all four summited after climbing the last three pitches from the top of the fixed lines. The same day we were back at the highest portaledge camp (Camp IV), having cleared all ropes on the way. After a night of bad weather, we continued the descent all the way to the fjord, having climbed the Norwegian Route (VII 5.10 A4, 30 roped pitches).

Bo quickly got bored with base camp life, so just a few days after coming off Polar Sun he free soloed the South Ridge of the Beak. This route had climbing up to 5.8. It's not known if it had been climbed before.

After this, Bo and Roisli went on a ski tour into Stewart Valley, while Hagen and I climbed a ten-pitch new route to the south summit of the Turret (which we believe was unclimbed). *Insomnia* (IV 5.10+ A1, 1,500') climbs the south face of the south summit. Most of the route was free climbed, but we wore plastic boots due to the conditions, and all will go free in warmer conditions with rock climbing shoes. The route was climbed in about nine and a half hours. Descent was by rappel just west of the route. This is probably the fourth route on the Turret massif.

Some days later, Bo and Roisli started a new line on Great Cross Pillar in very warm conditions. They climbed 18 pitches, mostly free up to 5.11 in rock boots, with some very good climbing. They called the route *Helluland Revisited* (V 5.11 A1). The pair relaxed for a few hours during the night, but finished the roundtrip in about 36 hours.

At the same time, Hagen and I went to do Broad Peak from the south. This ended up being mostly skiing in quite bad snow conditions due to the warm temperatures. I gave up after skiing to Broad Peak's south col, while Hagen pressed on to the very summit. The route was scree slopes from the south col to the obvious summit snowfield 100 meters below the summit, then hard snow for the final 100 meters. This is probably the easiest way to the summit and was probably first done in the 1970s.

After this, Hagen and I went to find a line on the Walker Citadel. Hoping for a possible free line, we ended up doing a snow gully on the south face. This gully was about 1000 meters long, and was climbed in the night for the best possible snow conditions. On the highest summit we found a cairn, one that wasn't made by any of the big wall expeditions that have been on this complex mountain. Therefore, either the gully line has been done before or there is some other "easy" route to the summit. This route was soloed both up and down. For lines, etc., check out the Baffin section of [www.headwall.com](http://www.headwall.com).

ODD-ROAR WIIK, *Norway*

*The Fin, Earth, Wind, and Choss, New Route.* On May 7, Russel Mitrovich, Mike Libecki, and I, plus expedition camera crew Peter Mallamo and John Middendorf, departed from Clyde River on a 120-mile dogsled journey over the frozen Baffin Bay. We hired two native Inuit dogsled guides with Qullikkut Outfitters for team transportation, and we sent a gear cache ahead by skidoo. The original plan was to explore the mountains, valleys, and passes inland from the northeast coast of Baffin Island in hopes of finding an unclimbed big wall jewel, but an unusually cold, dry, and windy winter had swept the earth clean of snow, making conditions poor for land travel with dogs and sleds. Continuing north for five days on the wind-scoured sea ice allowed the team to explore the coast line of Sam Ford Fjord and the



John Middendorf approaching the 2,500-foot Fin. *Earth, Wind, and Choss* (Helling-Libecki-Middendorf-Mitrovich, 2000) is shown. JOSH HELLING

Walker Arm until we found a wall that inspired a new route. On May 13, we established a base camp at the base of The Fin. This three-mile-wide, 2,500-foot wall was one of the steepest formations in the area, with its only previous ascent coming from a Spanish team in 1998.

The next ten days were spent scoping a line of ascent, hiking gear loads up the loose 800-foot talus slope to the base, fixing 400 feet of rope, trundling loose rock from the hauling path, and hauling way too much stuff up to Wall Camp I. On May 23, Russel Mitrovich, Mike Libecki, John Middendorf, and I committed to a capsule-style climb, and we began living on the wall. Cameraman Peter Mallamo stayed on the ground to film landscape, wildlife, and cultural footage. From CI we began fixing pitches up what we hoped would lead us to one of the only consistently featured crack systems on the entire wall. Our goal was to climb a steep clean line with as little drilling as possible, but as Mike led pitch five, the loose corner he was climbing brought him directly into loose blocks the size of doors that were miraculously sitting on top of many other detached flakes that all rested on a single chockstone the size of a soft ball. With no way around it, and certain death to attempt to climb through it, Mike lowered down to the belay, and we rappelled back to our portaledges, pulling our ropes as we went.

As we climbed up a new system from CI, our new route set a consistent pattern of loose and unknown. Some pitches were beautiful cracks while on others we wrestled with loose blocks. On June 6, Russel, Mike, John, and I ascended 800 feet of fixed rope above CIII to our high point. I climbed 150 feet of mixed aid, free, and snow until it we were on the summit. Without much debate we all agreed a fitting name for the route would be *Earth, Wind, and Choss* (VI 5.10 A2+) We all had done much harder, and more technical, A5, but this was the most dangerous climb we had ever done. It just goes to show that putting a rating on a climb means very little.