

enjoyed the view and waited for evening cooling, since our descent route was exposed to snow and rock fall. Seven 60-meter rappels dropped us right back to our start, with no rock fall. The cloud ceiling descended with us, and that was it for our Alaskan summer. Our route, Baked Alaskan (IV+ 5.10 A2) had superb crack climbing of every size and great ledges. After a number of trips I'm finally feeling somewhat comfortable in the Land of the Giants.

BRIAN TEALE

Mt. Barille, East Face, Orgler-Bonapace, probable third ascent. On June 21 Ken Sauls and I flew into the Ruth, where we made a second ascent of the 1988 Orgler-Bonapace East Face route on Mt. Barille. Just gaining the rock was tricky, involving a complicated icefall at the base of the mountain. About 280 feet up the rock, at the start of huge dihedrals, weather moved in quickly, so we fixed our ropes and left a small amount of gear at this high-point.

A few days later, on about July 1, we returned to good cracks and a mixture of free and aid climbing. Ken led the first block of about 10 pitches in eight hours. By 11:15 p.m. we were on a reasonable ledge, when small clouds dropped a little precipitation. Snail eye clouded my vision. "Ken, I don't know about this," I said. Ken replied, "If we're gonna climb this peak, we're gonna have to deal with some weather." I imagined a soaking-wet rappel epic down the grainy granite we had just climbed. When we opened our pack, we found that one of our water sacks had leaked its entire contents onto Ken's fleece jacket. "Jingis," Ken stated. Now we had only four liters of water, instead of six. Then it was my turn to lead. It was good free climbing up cracks and chimneys, pitch after pitch, fixing short where possible and aid soloing. With dawn approaching we reached the first pendulum point. I tensioned off 70 feet before gaining a series of small ramps and ledges that led toward the target crack system. Within 10 feet of the crack was a chimney, and I crawled in. Yahoo! After several more fine pitches and another series of tension traverses, at about 1 p.m., about 24 hours after starting up, we were seated on top of the first-ascent team's first bivy ledge. We lazed in the sun and drank nearly all of our water. By 3 p.m. we switched leads, and Ken set out onto the upper half of the wall. We were so thirsty we drank water trickling down the rock. Ken, like a bulldozer, kept the upward progress happening. His shout of "Line fixed!" broke my delirium, as I fought and struggled with the back-breaking pack. Instead of hauling, we had the second jumar with the pack. By 4 a.m. we reached the first-ascent's second bivy ledge, at the top of the face proper. We ate our last few energy bars. Belaying Ken became torture, as I could hardly stay awake. Every 10 minutes or so I would feel dizziness. Many outstanding 5.9 and 5.10 rock pitches zigzagged us to the top of the east face of Mt. Barille. By 10:30 a.m. we were on top of the formidable rock wall.

Up the steep snow face Ken went, into the mist, until I could hardly make him out. We stood on the flat snow summit with no view except thick Alaskan fog. What now? We were in a frightful position; no food, no bivy gear, and fog preventing us from going farther. Feelings of impending doom: Are we gonna perish here? We lay down and rested. My weariness prevented clear thought. Small things seemed impossible. Then false starts in the fog and snow, huddling from the wind and rain in an alcove, trying to nap, until the mist settled a little around midnight. Suddenly we could see Mt. Dickey. Realizing we could leave this cold place and make it to base camp got us going. We managed to figure out the descent—down the southwest ridge, through the Sheldon Amphitheater, and around into the Gorge and our camp by Dickey.

Variable stone quality, a couple of whippers, and some heart-pounding rock fall kept the descent interesting. We returned to camp 64 hours after leaving.

JON ALLEN

Mt. Barille, Feeling Randy. On April 22 Sean Easton, Dave Marra, and I flew into the Ruth Gorge with aspirations to climb new routes. We decided to “warm up” on the southeast buttress of Mt. Barille. Two days after landing I started up the first pitch, quickly discovering that we were on our way up an enormous pile of gravel. Sean climbed the second pitch to confirm it, and Dave the third. Had it not been for the arrival of our first storm we would have surely abandoned the route. We pushed on in foul weather, because we were on the only safe line in the Gorge.

We spent 11 nights on the wall, but for 4 days we were stormbound in the portaledge. The route was climbed in 15 pitches, primarily aid climbing. Most of the rock was horrible; in places we aided off pitons placed, snow-picket fashion, at the back of a hole dug with hammers. At one point we removed a 3/8-inch bolt by hand, after hauling on it. At other times we couldn't even get bolts in, as the rock disintegrated as we pounded them.

We started the route at an obvious notch 200 feet above the 'schrund, then climbed a short offwidth to face climbing that led to the left side of a large roof. Traversing under the roof we passed it at its apex, then entered a left-facing corner. The corner led to a snow patch 1,000 feet up. We then worked left to another chimney/groove system for 300 feet. Then back right onto the headwall and a straight-in crack for 300 feet. Straight up till we reached a small ridge that took us to the summit.

We named the 850-meter new route Feeling Randy, in honor of our pilot from K2 Aviation. Randy saw us returning from the climb and tipped his wings. An hour later he landed in front of our tent and handed us a pizza. We rated the route Rockies 5.9 A2 [*a Canadian sandbag rating for hard routes with loose rock—editor*]. However, the rating will probably change as our bolts erode out over the next few months.

We attempted a couple of other routes but found similar or worse rock and poor snow and ice conditions. We flew out on May 17.

CONNOR AMELUNXEN, *Canada*

LITTLE SWITZERLAND

Dragon's Spine, Apocryphal Arête. I went to Little Switzerland for the first two weeks of June. There Adam George, Ben Lamm, and I climbed the Dragon's Spine. We climbed the south-facing slab to the left of the major dihedral that splits the wall. We named the route the Apocryphal Arête and rated it 5.10cR WI0-. Our route, unfortunately, didn't top out. We got to a small platform 30 feet below the actual top of the formation, but were stopped by snow, lack of balls, and fatigue. I say lack of balls because we could have gone up a steep slab that was clear of snow but opted not to chance a big fall. “I know I've done boulder problems that high and harder than that,” I told Ben and Adam, “but there's no way I'd go up that here.” Ben tried to traverse around to the north side, but that's where he encountered the snow. Oh, well. Then began our hellish descent. “I love alpine climbing, except for the going-down part,” Ben kept saying. He was getting dehydrated, and kept repeating himself, and eventually started mumbling incoherently to himself. The next two tent-