

go on to the true summit. We also climbed the spire between Bastion and Skuzerian Peak. We had no information about anyone climbing that spire before. We found an easy couloir up to the ridge and grade IV and V on the ridge to the summit. We named the spire Garvey Spire, after the late Steve Garvey, a well-known Alaskan climber. We left the glacier on July 1. It's an amazing area with tons of possibilities for new routes.

KLEMEN MALI, *Alpine Club of Slovenia*

WRANGELL MOUNTAINS

Peaks 9,035', 9,400'+, and 9,436', first ascents. Peak 11,000', attempt. On June 2 Kelly Bay of Wrangell Mountain Air flew me into the upper Nikonda Glacier at 7,200 feet for reconnaissance. I soloed the east face of Peak 9,035'. The climb started with easy snow, to around 8,000 feet. From here the slopes continually steepened, and I climbed a couple of mixed pitches to reach the summit ridge at 8,700 feet or so. I followed the broken rock ridge with some fifth-class moves for a couple of pitches, before it became easy snow again to the high point. I tried to stay in safe terrain, because of extreme avalanche conditions. On the summit ridge the slopes settled with me, and when I returned to camp I noticed that the whole northeast face of the peak had slid. That was my other choice of a route!

In late August I returned with Kevin Smith to attempt the peak I had been scouting in June. This time we had to hike in to reach my previous camp at 7,200 feet. It took two and a half torturous days to walk in from the Nabesna River landing site at 2,800 feet. We spent most of our time in the creek and climbing the canyon walls with heavy packs. The weather



Peak 11,000'+ in the Wrangell Mountains, taken from the lower glacier on the north and west side of the peak. The attempted route follows the west ridge running from right to left. The still-virgin summit is hidden behind the leftmost high point of the ridge. *Danny Kost*



Pure as the driven snow: Just another 11,000-foot virgin summit in the Wrangell Mountains. Photo taken from the north showing the north face and east ridge on the left. *Danny Kost*

for the rest of the trip was unsettled. It started out clear and extremely windy. On August 28 Kevin soloed Peak 9,436' northeast of camp while we waited for the winds to subside. On August 29 the two of us climbed Peak 9,400'+, which is exactly two miles east of the terminus of the Nikonda Glacier. On August 30 we tried for an early start on our main objective, Peak 11,000+, but again the winds and weather were unsettled. We waited a few hours, and the weather looked better, so we gave it a try. We ascended from camp on a long snow ridge. At around 8,700 feet, we were forced to do a few pitches of fifth-class rock before getting back on snow. At 9,000 feet we began a long traverse across moderate slopes, past Peak 9,903'. We then ascended a short slope to re-access the ridge proper and followed the ridge to around 10,500 feet, where the ridge narrowed to paper thin. It was extremely corniced, and the right side of the ridge was maybe 60 degrees, with the left side approaching vertical. We traversed the ridge on the right side for a few pitches before I decided to turn around. There was nothing but clouds in every direction, and we heard thunder in the valley to the east. It was a tough decision to turn around within an hour or so of the summit. As we were getting off technical ground onto the easier ridge, the summit disappeared in the clouds. After descend-

ing for a few pitches we were caught in a total whiteout, with high winds and blowing snow. This continued until we reached base camp. After an hour or so in camp, the clouds lifted again. We'll have to return to finish the last 400 feet to the summit. I believe the ascents we did make were all firsts.

DANNY KOST, AAC

Peak 9,200'+. In mid-June Paul Claus landed Bill Chapman and me on the western end of the Nabesna Glacier at around 7,400 feet. We came to climb the peaks on the ridgeline between the Kluvesna and Nabesna glaciers. We climbed at night due to snow conditions. On the first night, June 17, we attempted the east face of a 10,000+-foot peak above camp. We climbed steepening snow and ice to around 10,000 feet, where we set up a belay beneath an overhanging serac. This serac was constantly spitting out spindrift. We started up steep ground around the serac, but it was apparent that we were moving too slowly. We needed to be off the face before the sun hit it at 7 a.m. The face was sliding frequently during the day, so we turned around. Little did I know that, because of weather, this was to be our best night of climbing. On the night of June 18 we ascended Peak 9,200'+ about a mile south of camp. We skied up to around 9,000 feet southeast of the summit. From here we went over Peak 9,155' and followed the ridge to the summit of Peak 9,200'. A steep traversing pitch brought us under the summit block, and a short, steep snow pitch to the summit's narrow ridge. We alternated standing on the summit. The climbing was marginal, due to warm temperatures and rain.

On the night of the 19th we attempted another 10,000+-foot peak about four miles northwest of camp. We skied to a saddle at 8,400 feet, about a mile from the peak. Here we sat waiting for the weather to break, but it only got worse. The weather was again bad on the 20th. On the 21st we skied around to attempt the peak again. We reached a saddle on the north ridge at 9,040 feet. Here the wind and snow pinned us down for a couple of hours. As it subsided we decided to attempt the ridge. However, the loss of time, as well as deep snow on the ridge, forced a retreat from around 10,000 feet. Our pickup was scheduled for the following day, but the wind shifted to the north. Fires were burning in the interior, the glacier had smoke down to the ground, and we were only able to talk with our pilot by radio as he flew over. Luckily, the winds shifted, and we were picked up late in the evening. I believe the ascent we made was a first.

DANNY KOST, AAC

Peak 9,072' and Peak 8,778', corrections. On page 218 of the 2001 AAJ first ascents of Peaks 9,072', 8,625', and 8,778' were reported. In 1995 Alaskans Danny Kost and Harry Hunt reached about 10,000 feet in an unreported attempt on the then-unclimbed northeast ridge of Mt. Natazhat. In the process they climbed Peaks 9,072' and 8,778', which lie on this ridge and must be summited to continue to Natazhat. The 1997 AAJ (p. 189) reported a successful ascent of Natazhat's northeast ridge, in April 1996, by Hunt and fellow Alaskans Paul Barry, David Hart, and Dave Lucey. They also climbed Peaks 9,072' and 8,778'. Burch and Taylor's routes (2001 AAJ) on these peaks were probably new but not first ascents of the peaks, and thus their naming of Peak 9,072' may be inappropriate. Their climb of Peak 8,625', however, was likely a first ascent.