

From fast ascents of individual routes, one obvious progression was to link-ups of several routes. Kim Csizmazia and Will Gadd combined the classic Sorcerer (185 meters, WI5) and Hydrophobia (125 meters, WI5+) in the Ghost Valley during the short days of late November. The two routes had first been linked solo by Joe Josephson. Using a 70-meter rope and leading in blocks, Csizmazia and Gadd completed their link-up in less than 11 hours car-to-car, with no soloing. In late March, after Gadd returned from the Ice World Cup, he and Scott Semple made the first link-up of Polar Circus (700 meters, WI5), the Lower and Upper Weeping Wall (via the Weeping Pillar, 350 meters, WI6), and Curtain Call (125 meters, WI6). Once again using a 70-meter rope and block leading to good advantage, they completed the link-up in 13:16. In early April visiting climbers Rolando Garibotti and Bruno Sourzac upped the ante by making the first linkup of Polar Circus, the Lower and Upper Weeping Wall (via the Left-Hand Side {180 meters, WI4} and Teardrop {170 meters, WI6}, respectively), and Slipstream (925 meters, WI4+) in 15:15 car-to-car. They soloed all of Polar Circus and all but the last pitch of the Weeping Wall, and roped for only a few pitches of Slipstream. This link-up of three ultra-classic routes had been the subject of talk for years and had previously been unsuccessfully attempted by several strong teams.

RAPHAEL SLAWINSKI, *Canada*

*Mt. Geikie, Lowe-Hannibal Route.* Most Canadian Rockies peaks consist of limestone, some solid, most crumbling. But hidden in the backcountry of the Tonquin Valley near Jasper rises a subrange of quartzite peaks. The gem of the area is the massive north face of Mt. Geikie. Not surprisingly it was George Lowe who, with Dean Hannibal, pioneered the classic route on the face in 1979—750 meters of rock leading to 750 meters of mixed ground. The guidebook calls the mountain the “dark horse of the Canadian Rockies.” While its north face is not as well known as those of Alberta or North Twin, it is definitely one of the grande course routes of the Rockies. The list of unsuccessful aspirants reads like a Who’s Who of North American alpinism: Dave Cheesmond, Barry Blanchard, Scott Backes.... Between the route’s sustained technical difficulties and the Tonquin’s notoriously poor weather, it took three determined attempts before Sean Dougherty and James Sevigny succeeded in making the second ascent of the Lowe-Hannibal in 1989.

Eric Dumerac, Jeff Nazarchuk, and I made the route our objective last summer. We eased the pain of the 30-kilometer approach by having gear ferried on horseback to a fishing camp on the Amethyst Lakes. With light packs and in perfect weather we hiked over Maccarib Pass and got our first view of the face. By early evening we were pitching camp at the edge of the moraine. The solitude was intense.

It was still dark the next morning when we made our way across the glacier to the base of the face. The moat below the described start had opened up, so we made for a dihedral farther left. Jeff volunteered for the first lead block. Changing into rock shoes he stepped over the moat and onto perfect quartzite. Another 1,500 meters of it soared above into a cloudless sky.

Jeff disposed of pitch after pitch, while Eric and I wheezed our way up the lines. (For the sake of speed we compromised on style, and the seconds jumbled with the packs.) By early afternoon we reached large ledges and the last water for a while. After re-hydrating, Eric took off on his lead block. As evening shadows fell across the valley, we made our way onto the steep headwall, the crux of the route.

We spent the night on separate ledges and awoke to another cloudless dawn. It was my turn up front, and I eagerly led off. Pitch followed pitch, and by midafternoon we stood at the

base of upper face. We unroped and scrambled upward. We had hoped to run up the mixed ground, but the snowfields and ice strips were mush. As we traversed back and forth looking for a break, a wet slide engulfed Eric. It seemed wiser to rope up again. Eric took over the lead, and as another evening fell we continued simulclimbing over rock, snow, and ice. We were hoping that our gully would go, as by now we were wet and did not relish the prospect of spending the night standing on steep ground. But a hidden traverse delivered us onto the summit snowfield, and some time after midnight we finally stood on top. We were too keyed-up to sleep, so we dug a trench into the very summit and waited for dawn.

The descent of the west ridge was long but uneventful, and by early evening we were back at our tent. The following day we staggered under heavy loads back to the road. By the time we reached Jeff's minivan our feet were so sore we could barely walk. But the high lasted at least as long as the blisters.

RAPHAEL SLAWINSKI, *Canada*

*Mt. Temple, east-northeast buttress; Squashed Bones.* This beautiful line ascends the buttress between the Aemmer Couloir and the Sphinx Face on the north side of Mt. Temple. It compares in quality with, and is only slightly more technical than, the classic East Ridge. Most of the technical pitches have amazing rock quality and are well protected. The route hits the upper East Ridge route below the Black Towers. The objective hazard is low and crampons and ice axe are not needed until the East Ridge is intersected. It is probably the first route on Temple's north side to dry up in summer.

Traverse east from Lake Annette, staying low, moving past the start of the Greenwood-Jones and the Sphinx Face. Ascend to the col that marks the crest of the buttress between the Aemmer and the Sphinx. Start climbing (low fifth class) on the left side of the buttress, aiming for the right-leaning gully that situates you behind a prominent pinnacle. Eventually you reach a large ledge just to the right of the crest and below the start of the steeper climbing. Climb a 20-meter steep section to another large ledge. Move left on the ledge until a weakness in the headwall is found immediately right of the crest. (The overhanging face left of the crest is an obvious barrier.) Climb three and a half pitches, mostly 5.7 or 5.8, following obvious weaknesses on the right side of the crest. A fifth pitch (5.8), climbed on the crest proper, provides amazing exposure down the steep face on the left. A short sixth pitch on loose black rock gains fourth-class terrain that is best negotiated on the right side. Several short, steep sections lead to a final steep wall of horrendous rock. Climb easily left of the steep wall and gain the upper east ridge below the start of the Black Towers. Either follow the ridge to the summit or bypass the Black Towers by traversing the east face and gaining the popular East Ridge route. Take a set of nuts and cams up to three inches. No pitons were used, but a few may be useful for the Black Towers. We climbed the route on August 5 and rated the difficulty IV 5.8.

ROB OWENS, *Canada*

*Mt. Babel, east face; Mt. Louis, east face.* Kevin Thaw and I arrived in the Canadian Rockies on August 1 with two weeks set aside for an alpine climbing holiday. It seemed that the weather was less unsettled on the more southerly peaks in the foothills, so we drove up to Moraine Lake to have a look at the east face of Mt. Babel. The weather was good, so we bivied and left Moraine Lake around 7 a.m. It took about three hours to get to the first pitch of the climb, partly because we headed up the wrong gully toward the base. The face was dry but covered with an immense amount of loose rock. I was twice hit