

# CLIMBS AND EXPEDITIONS

## 2003

*Accounts from the various climbs and expeditions of the world are listed geographically from north to south and from west to east within the noted countries. We begin our coverage with the Contiguous United States and move to Alaska in order for the climbs in the Alaska's Wrangell Mountains to segue into the St. Elias climbs in Canada.*

*We encourage all climbers to submit accounts of notable activity, especially long new routes (generally defined as U.S. commitment Grade IV—full-day climbs—or longer). Please submit reports as early as possible (see Submissions Guidelines at the back of this Journal).*

*For conversions of meters to feet, multiply by 3.28; for feet to meters, multiply by 0.30.*

**Unless otherwise noted, all reports are from the 2002 calendar year.**

## NORTH AMERICA

### CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES

#### *Washington*

*Washington climbing, trends and new routes.* In recent years alpine climbing in the Washington Cascades has become less exploratory. First ascents are still being made but less frequently. However, speed ascents and enchainments have become more popular. Many climbs traditionally done over two to three days are now often climbed in under 12 hours. Speed ascents, as well as other activities, have focused on well-documented classics with easy access. “Select” and “Classic” guidebooks have concentrated crowds on certain routes, while other routes are ignored. Also, the amount of “beta,” including route conditions and gear suggestions, that is available for classic climbs has increased dramatically, partially due to the popular website [www.Cascadeclimbers.com](http://www.Cascadeclimbers.com).

Other trends have resulted from increased Forest Service and Park Service control of access, for instance by permit requirements for areas such as Boston Basin, The Enchantments, Mt. Baker, Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Adams. Furthermore, Mt. Rainier National Park doubled its climbing permit fee to \$30 per person, though the permit is now valid for the calendar year. The Fee Demonstration Program has been increasingly enforced by the Forest Service within Wenatchee, Mt. Baker, and Snoqualmie national forests.

In addition to the individual new-route reports below, the following shorter new routes have been recently established.

On July 19–20 Jens Klubberud and Loren Campbell established a route (12 pitches, III+ 5.6, glacier travel) on the northeast face of Mt. Formidable. The route leaves the Formidable Glacier at the lowest point where the face meets the glacier, on the right side of the face. It goes up for two dirty pitches before traversing left and up on ledge systems, into a delightful, hidden, firn couloir. The couloir, steeper than 50° at the top, leads up and farther left, to a point more or less directly below the summit. In six more pitches the route joins the North Ridge, just short of the summit. While the technical crux is on the ninth pitch, the first two pitches offer challenging climbing on dirty, loose rock, with few protection opportunities.

During summer 2001 a new II+ 5.9 route was climbed on the west face of Lichtenberg Mountain by James Nakagami, Dan Cappellini, and Ray Borbon. The climb began below a headwall shaped like Idaho, just left of a gully. After five 5th class pitches that link cracks systems, the route joined the Northwest Ridge, which was scrambled to the summit. Descent was made by a gully to the south.

Also in 2001 Larry Goldie and Scott Johnston established a route on Goat Wall above Mazama. It is a bolted route, established in full siege style. The eight-pitch route begins 500' left of Bryan Burdo's classic Promised Land, near the base of a prominent buttress.

On September 26, 2000 Tim Kelley and Gordy Skoog approached the toe of the north face rib of McAlester Mountain via the northwest talus fields. They made a new route (II, class 5) that starts left of the North Face Rib route on class 4 slabs and permanent snow, then goes up a loose gully and right on a slanting ramp to the North Face Rib. From there they climbed arrow-straight to the summit on good rock.

GORDY SKOOG, AAC, and COLIN HALEY, AAC

*Silver Star Mountain, Gato Negro.* On June 21, 2001 Larry Goldie and Scott Johnston, both of Mazama, WA, established a probable new route on the west face of Silver Star Mountain near Washington Pass in the North Cascades. The climb follows the line of weakness on a spire, named "Whine Spire" by the pair, that is separated from, and lower than, the true west summit of Silver Star, and south of, but adjacent to, the Wine Spires. Using the climbers' trail that leads from Highway 20 to Burgundy Col, the pair left the road at 5 a.m. and returned at 10 p.m. Of the 11 pitches climbed, five or six are outstanding 5.7–5.9 hand cracks. The crux fourth pitch involves a wonderful, but poorly protected, 5.8 chimney, a hard 5.9 offwidth, and is topped by a vicious overhanging 5.10+ double corner. A few other 5.10 pitches should entertain most parties. The route was climbed onsite and clean. Descent was by rappel and downclimbing in the gully between Whine Spire and the west summit of Silver Star. In the spirit of the Wine Spires the climb was called Gato Negro, rated IV 5.10+.

SCOTT JOHNSTON

*Sloan Peak, Northwest Buttress.* In late September 2000 Mike Preiss and I completed what we suspect is a new route on Sloan Peak. The Northwest Buttress (IV 5.8 A0) starts at the lowest rock on the far left side of the broad west face and ascends the dark buttress to one-third of its height. We found rap slings to the top of the seventh pitch, but no other human sign until we met the north ridge. The first pitch climbs just right of the sharp crest, then crosses the crest past a dead tree. Pitches two to four climb through trees to a gully topped with large chockstones