

retreated, foregoing the summit. The round trip took 15 hours. After getting high on their route, Patricia and Scotty were forced to retreat by unconsolidated snow.

KAREN MCNEILL, *Canada*

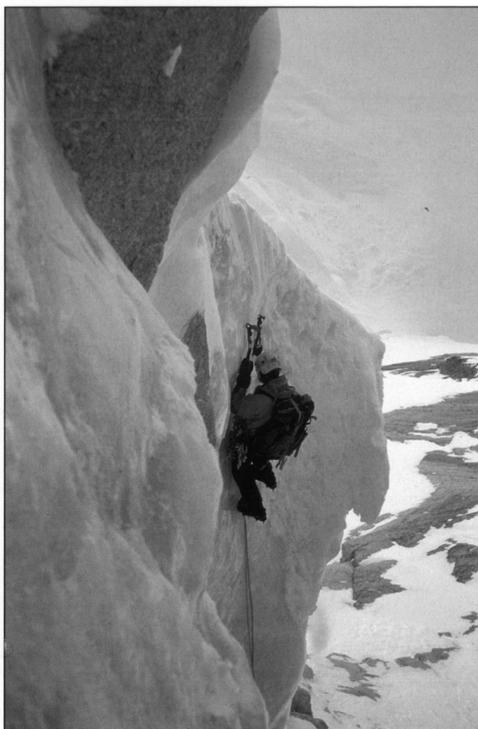
*Mt. Huntington.* The west side of Mount Huntington was in better condition than other terrain at that elevation and as a result saw numerous ascents. The most notable was a 17-hour solo effort by Chris Turiano. He climbed the West Face Couloir to the summit on May 22, finding plastic ice and stable snow conditions.

DENALI NATIONAL PARK

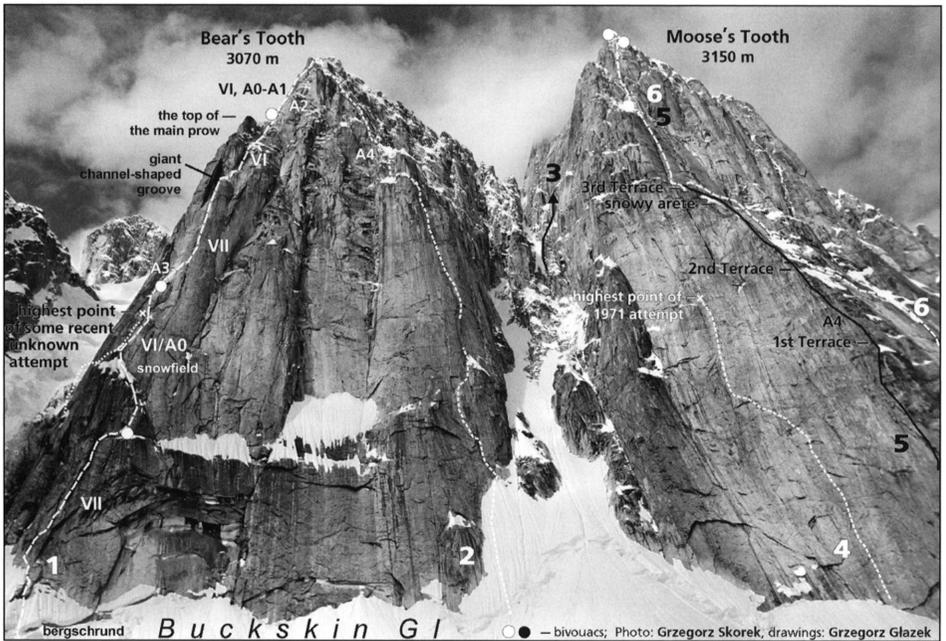
*Bear's Tooth, You Can't Fly.* A six-man Polish Alaska 2002 expedition operated as two independent teams. Two younger climbers repeated routes in the Ruth Gorge, while the four more experienced ones were interested in climbing a big new route on one of the east faces of the Moose's Tooth massif.

The latter team, probably the strongest Polish alpine climbers at present, consisted of Jacek Fluder, Janusz Golab, Stanislaw Piecuch, and Grzegorz Skorek. They departed from Talkeetna and landed on the Buckskin Glacier on the afternoon of June 4. They could not identify the exact line of the 2001 Beast route, or the other attempted lines, on the 800m-high monolith of the Moose's Tooth left pillar, but saw fixed ropes hanging on the pillar. So they chose the Bear's Tooth's left-hand pillar, which is less monolithic but offered a totally new line up the full height of the wall.

On June 5 they crossed the small bergschrund and fixed 300m of rope on rock terrain (UIAA VII A1) dominated by wet and lichen-coated slabs and cracks filled with moss. Next day they installed their first portaledge camp above the sixth pitch. On June 8 they started a continuous push but retreated the next evening in a snowstorm. After six days of snow, the weather was sunny on the 14th, and they pushed again, though both portaledges had holes made by stones. First Skorek led and next Piecuch, in mixed but mostly rock terrain up to UIAA VII A0-A1. The day ended at about 2 a.m. with Piecuch leading a section of A3 on pitch 16, just above the second portaledge bivouac. The next day Golab and Fluder fixed 300 ms of rope above the second bivy (up to pitch 23), first finding orange rock—the best of the route—followed by totally wet corners and slabs. At the end of a giant, 100m long, deep groove they made their only tension traverse. On June 16 again Piecuch mostly led, meeting much rotten rock. They established their third bivouac on pitch 32, just above a significant outcrop that culminates the main prow of the pillar. The terrain then became gentler, with steep steps and snowy ledges, and Fluder led in plastic boots.



Scott Simper enjoying the thrills of camera tilt on Mt. Huntington's West Face Couloir route. Karen McNeill



The Bear's Tooth and the Moose's Tooth, showing: 1. Southeast (left) pillar, You Can't Fly (1,400m, 41 pitches, UIAA-VII A3, Fluder-Golab-Piecuch-Skorek, 2002). 2. East face (right) pillar. Useless Emotion (ca 4,700', VII 5.9 A4 WI4, Bridwell-Christensen-Dunmire-Jonas-McCray, 1999). 3. Southeast face via east couloir (5.8 A3 WI4, House-Gilmore- Mahoney, 2000). 4. East Pillar Direct (approximate 1,600' attempts by Bill-Bonington-Frost-McCarthy, 1971, and Bill-Chouinard-McCarthy-Rowell, 1972). 5. East pillar direct via monolith, The Beast, (Bridwell-Pfingsten, 2001). 6. Northeast face, The Dance of the Woo Li Masters (1,500m, M6 WI 4+ Bridwell-Stump, 1981). Photo: Grzegorz Skorek. Text and topo compiled by GrzegorzGlazek with help from J.Golab and G.Skorek

At night on the 17th the leader of the leading pair fixed the rope on the highest rock, five or ten meters below the top, where he found the highest piton from the 1999 Bridwell route, then rappelled to bivvy. The top consisted of a corniced, snowy arête, and the Poles made probably the first ascent to the true top from this side of the mountain. (According to Bridwell's report, his team found the final cornice too unstable; see *AAJ* 2000, p. 45.) On the 18th at 1 p.m. the whole team reached the top in clouds and worsening weather. After a short stay they started to rappel, clearing the fixed ropes. They bivouaced, then continued rappelling through wet snowfall, reaching the base on the night of the 19th.

They spent 10 days on the wall. The climbing itself took six days, plus two days waiting in portaledge during storms and two days to descend. The height of the route is nearly 1,400m, 41 pitches with 60m ropes. They climbed mostly free, at overall US grade VI and UIAA rating VII A0-A1 with one A2 section (on pitch 35) and one serious A3 section (on pitch 16, with sky-hook and a few bird beak equivalents—“figure-of-one pitons,” known in the Tatra Mountains since 1955). This hardest section started directly above the second portaledge camp but seemed possible to avoid by slightly easier terrain. The one tension traverse was on pitch 23. Rock was generally poor and crumbly, but not as bad as reports of other routes led the climbers to expect. The rock was quite sound on pitches 17-23 but really rotten on pitches 27-29.

The rappel line is well to the right of pitches 1-6 and to the left of pitches 17-20 and 26-29. The team used 350m of fixed ropes, which they removed during the descent.

On the lower third of the route they found rappel stations from an unknown attempt that joined their route from the left (probably via a big chimney), at a snowfield on the 9th pitch, and continued to the 13th pitch. The anchors had slings that looked no older than three years and pitons made in Austria.

After descent by rappel, the team had only a dozen pitons remaining, so they abandoned plans for other climbs and left the mountains earlier than originally planned. They left for Talkeetna on June 23. The name of the route, *You Can't Fly*, reflects the words they heard too often as they tried to depart from Europe, from Talkeetna, and returning home.

*You Can't Fly* is the first big-wall route established by climbers from Poland in North America (though later in the year Poles established slightly harder routes on Mt. Thor on Baffin Island and on El Capitan.) (These are covered elsewhere in this journal – Ed.) (Based on written reports by team members and talks with G.Skorek and J.Golab)

GRZEGORZ GLAZEK, CDW PZA

*Ruth Gorge, ascents and attempts.* The popularity of the Ruth Gorge continued, with many routes seeing ascents. The oft-attempted Cobra Pillar (VI 5.10+ A3, Donini–Tackle, 1991) on Mt. Barrill finally was repeated in June, by two parties. Canadians Jean-Pierre Ouellet and Stefane Perron made the second ascent, after fixing four ropes, in a 37-hour tent-to-tent push. Poles Maciej Ciesielski and Jakub Radziejowski, with American Zack Martin, made the third ascent soon after. Their ascent took exactly 36 hours (including a short break to rest and eat), and they reported mostly free climbing up to UIAA VII/VII+ and two pitches of aid, up to C2.

The Polish pair also repeated Game Boy (400m, UIAA VII+, Neswadba–Orgler–Wutscher, 1995) on the Stump Pillar (left pillar of the Wisdom Wall) and the Orgler–Jochler route on Hut Tower (800m, VI+/VII- RP1987) (“RP” means redpoint style). Radziejowski writes of the Orgler–Jochler, “The best rock of the routes we climbed in the Ruth, but still far from perfect.”

The Poles were also one of several parties to repeat *The Dream in the Spirit of Mugs* (V 5.10, Bonapace-Haas-Orgler, 1994) on the Eye Tooth. They report that Zack Martin climbing with a partner ahead of the Poles, led a new pitch just before the headwall, the direct lower corner (about UIAA VII). The Poles report this pitch to be the hardest of the route. (Ed. note: *Zack Martin, a young, ambitious climber, died in a car accident on Thanksgiving.*)

On the immense walls of Mt. Dickey, Mark Synnott and Kevin Thaw made an impressive attempt at a new route between the Roberts-Rowell-Ward route (5,250', VI 5.9 A3, 1974) and the Italian route (5,250', VI 5.11 A4, Bagattoli-Borgonovo-Defrancesco-De Dona-Leoni-Manica-Zampiccoli, 1991). They climbed about 25 pitches, all free, up to 5.11-, in 11 hours, before bailing in bad weather. Synnott estimates their high point to be four or five pitches from the shale band, and reports that their attempted line contains “600-800' of the worst choss I've ever encountered.”

*Ruth Gorge, Moose's Tooth, correction.* The 2000 AAJ (pp. 212-3) reported that, in attempting the second ascent of the now classic and frequently climbed *Ham and Eggs*, Brian Teale and Carl Tobin retreated short of the couloir top. In fact Teale climbed the upper half of the couloir alone (Tobin was having difficulty because of a previous injury) but retreated from the summit ridge.