

tinued our descent of the Ptarmigan Glacier and into the steep Lemon Creek drainage. We arrived in Juneau on the 15th day after leaving Skagway.

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KEITH K. DAELLENBACH, AAC

*West Witches' Tit, south face, Jack Hicks Memorial Route; and Cat's Ears Spire, Least Snowed-up Route.* From May 16 to June 5 Guy Edwards and I visited the Devil's Thumb region of the Stikine Icecap in southeast Alaska and northwest British Columbia. We had traveled through this region the previous year and were mighty inspired to return for less touring and more climbing. Dieter Klose, the mountaineering authority on the Stikine Icecap, had put us in touch with Jack Hicks, who was more than happy to give us a boat ride across Frederick Sound to Thomas Bay, where we would start our approach to the region. However, his boat was not working, so we spent several days in Petersburg enjoying the hospitality of John Pickens and Liz Cabrera before the boat was ready.

After two and a half days of perhaps the easiest approach in the entire Coast Range, we were below the awesome northwest face of Devil's Thumb. It didn't take long to realize that we were too late in the season for this face. In very high winds we skied around to the south side of the Devil's Thumb massif. We climbed up the unpleasant icefall below the south face of Devil's Thumb and then spent three days in a deluxe snow cave. On the fourth morning we woke to our first blue-sky, "go-for-it" day. We had a splendid climb up the previously unclimbed south face of the West Witches' Tit. The rock was some of the best I've ever encountered in the mountains—vertical, white, solid granite. The next day was again good weather, so we established the Least Snowed-up Route on Cat's Ears Spire. Throughout the climb I marveled at the 1972 first ascent of the spire by Dick Culbert, Fred Douglas, and Paul Starr, and Culbert's subsequent very modest account of their climb.

These two climbs concluded the climbing component of our trip, due to the weather for the rest of the trip. We were, however, successful in route posturing. First we camped under Burkett Needle for a few days, in hopes of repeating the stunning Cauthorn–Collum–Foweraker route. We also attempted Peak 7,190' across the Burkett Glacier, and skied around to the southeast face of Devil's Thumb in hopes of trying the Beckey route. Eventually we bailed on June 4, after a very enjoyable trip that included much reading, poem memorizing, and some brief but intense and beautiful climbing.

Our first ascents: Jack Hicks Memorial Route (800m, V 5.10+ A1), south face of West Witches' Tit, and The Least Snowed-up Route, Cat's Ears Spire (900m, IV 5.10+). (Sadly, Jack Hicks died in August 2002 while on a solo hunting trip. He was an amazing person with a kind character and loving heart—a big friendly bear.)

JOHN MILLAR, *Canada*

*Editor's note: In April 2003, Edwards and Millar perished while attempting the unclimbed northwest face of the Devil's Thumb (see article earlier in this Journal). Their energy and contributions to the world will be missed.*