

3,000 feet out of the sea about 15 miles away. They lay between us and the Polar Ice Cap, The Tasermiut Fjord has an endless supply of granite to rival any place on earth. It was here that we got our first real glimpse of our main goal; Nalumasortoq.

After being turned back on an attempt to establish a new route on an unclimbed peak, we decided to focus our energy on the original goal; a one-day ascent of Nalumasortoq. Several days humping loads were needed before we could establish our second advanced camp in a week. From our new position, we were able to scope most of the lines on the 1800-foot wall. I decided to attempt the probable second ascent of the original route on the pillars, the 1995 British Route up the center of the Left-hand Pillar, climbed by Anderson, Dring, Dring, and Tattersall at British E4 and A2. Following Yvon Chouinard's advice from many years ago, we had been using Yosemite's walls as our training ground and felt that the fast and light skills we had gained would help us complete the ascent.

With a few liters of water, a handful of energy bars and some warm coats, we started climbing at 8 a.m. on August 3. We fixed no ropes nor did we have any detailed information on the route. However, the line is unmistakable, following a single amazing crack and corner system up the dead vertical wall for 17 pitches. Climbing in blocks and short fixing as much as possible, we were able to free most of the classic crack climbing at 5.10 to 5.11 and never used our hammers (which was good because we only had about four pins). Early in the day, Evan dislodged a rock while leading and it zeroed in on the belay below. The rock tagged my hand and helmet, causing me to black out for a few seconds. After a short but violent release of four letter words I decided my hand might not be broken and I could keep going. Ten hours later I was in the midst of seven-pitch block, climbing through the four-hour night with a headlamp to take us through to the top. All John and Evan had to do was hold the break rope, jumar and watch the most marvellous display of Aurora Borealis that we had ever seen.

After 18 hours of continuous climbing we topped out a little after 4 a.m., catching the first glimpses of sunrise. We treated ourselves to a victory summit nap, ate our last pack of gel and started the 17 raps back to the ground. The next thing we knew we were eating Wasa and Nutella in our base camp cave, enjoying our unbelievable weather and relishing possibly the first one-day ascent of Nalumasortoq. Evan Stevens and I were both recipients of Lyman Spitzer and Fellowship grants for 2002.

MICAH DASH, AAC

*Tasermiut Fjord, Nalumasortoq new route and other ascents.* On July 15 Chris Chitty, Ari Menitove, and I departed for Nanortalik, taking a week to arrive from the States. From there we traveled by boat into the Tasermiut Fjord. The ride proved spectacular as we passed enormous sea cliffs and coastal peaks. At the drop-off site we unloaded gear and food, then got our first taste of the relentless mosquito and fly attacks. The boat would come back for us in 28 days.

Our first climb was a new route on Nalumasortoq, located just right of the Original Left Pillar (1995 British Route), marked incorrectly in AAJ 2001, p.265. Our route started approximately 30' to the right of the 1995 line in an obvious left-leaning crack system. It eventually merged with the 1995 Left Pillar at a sloping ledge that we called Banana Ledge. Our route then shared the final four pitches of the Left Pillar. We named this route Ekstra Lagret (750m, 14 pitches; V 5.11a A2) after the extremely odorous cheese we ate on the route. We guessed that Ekstra Lagret must have meant "extra stinky" in Danish. We fixed the first 800' of the climb on



Nalumasortoq, in the Tasermiut Fjord. Identified routes are (left to right): 1. Jumping Zack Flash (IV 5.10 A2, Chitty-Menitove-Su, 2002). 2. Left Pillar route (E4 A2, 1995)—included to eliminate confusion with Ekstra Lagret route, since they are next to each other. 3. Ekstra Lagret (V 5.11 a A2, Chitty-Menitove-Su, 2002). 4. Non C'e Due Senza Tre with variation on the finish (6c A3, 2000).

July 22 but due to rain and snowstorms had to wait another four days before returning to finish the route. We topped out in clear cold moonlit conditions, after being on the face for 16 or so hours. We left no fixed gear on the route and rappelled the British Route. The climbing was straightforward, following excellent cracks on solid rock with one short face section aided with hooks. The route would be a brilliant free climb, with the crack climbing at 5.11d and the face section at around 5.12a.

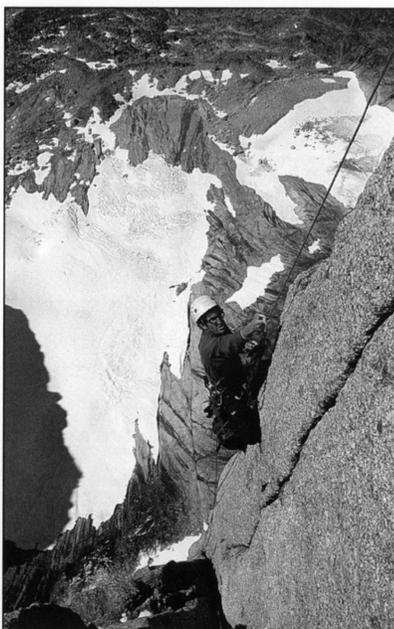
Our next route took us to the top of the unclimbed spire left of Nalumasortoq. We referred to this formation as Little Nalum. I later named our route Jumpin' Zack Flash (400m, 8 pitches, IV 5.10 A2,) in memory of my friend Zack Martin. He was planning to visit this area in 2003 to climb some of the virgin formations that I had showed him in photographs. Due to the featureless slabs directly below the climb, the approach to our new route involved traversing a long ramp. The first pitch was the crux and involved a short section of aid using a beak and some RPs in a shallow left-facing dihedral. We free climbed the rest of the route following crisp hand to offwidth cracks splitting right through the middle of the tower. Close to the summit it looked like we would be shut down. The last pitch was a slab completely covered in black lichen. It would be impossible to climb. Looking closely at the rock, I found that the huge flakes of lichen hid a crack system that led to the top. With each jam my hand completely disappeared into the lichen-covered rock. We finally reached the summit at around 11 p.m. after climbing for about 14 hours. To descend, we rappelled the route. No bolts were placed on the climb but two

rap stations were drilled to descend the blank slabs below the route.

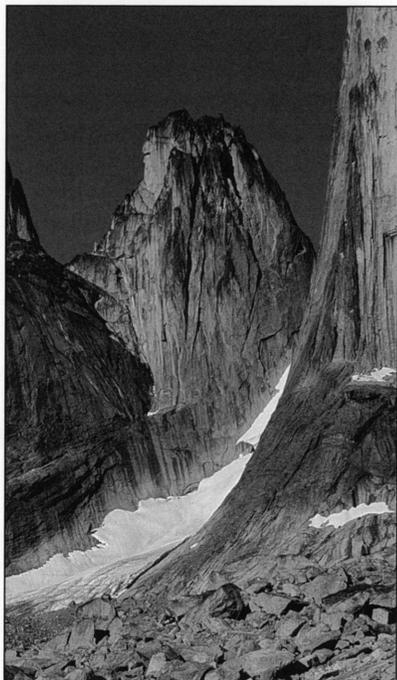
Our third objective was to make the first free ascent of the French-Italian route, *Non C'e Due Senza Tre* (850m, 19 pitches, VI 6c A3). We came close but no cigar, resting on gear for a few moves near the top. However, the A3 pitch was free climbed at 5.11a with bad gear. We felt that the overall rating of the climb was 5.11c. We climbed the route in a period of two days, fixing three pitches on the first day. The climbing took us into the night on the second day, and high on the route we were fortunate enough to catch a display of the northern lights. It started as a faint green glow and then spread intensely through the sky like wild fire—talk about some major tracers. On the last pitch we could not figure out where the route went and rested on a large ledge until dawn. That morning we found a pin and bolt not far off the ledge. The climbing above the bolt was unprotected and involved face climbing on lichen-covered rock. The route did not seem probable, so I lowered off the bolt, which, coincidentally, already had a carabiner. After our ascent another team also backed down from the bolt due to route finding difficulties. To finish the route we made a long traverse to the right, searching for a passage to the top. Finally, I found a way. However, it wasn't pretty—a wet, overhanging offwidth crack. Chris and Ari looked up in disgust, so I guessed I was leading. I aided through the wet section and then groveled up the rest of the 50' offwidth. This put us at the summit ridge, where I made an easy traverse to the top. To my surprise I could not find any anchor left by the first ascent team. I traversed back to the belay and we set up the first numerous rappel anchors leading back to the ground.

In communication with Jérôme Arpin, a member of the first ascent team, he mentioned that he aided past the bolt (where the carabiner was left) until easy ground could be reached. After summiting, he down-climbed due to rope shortage and then rappelled.

STEVE SU, AAC



Ari Menitove taking the express line on Ekstra Lagret. Steve Su



Jumpin' Zack Flash ascends the prominent chimney-like feature in the center of the face. Steve Su