

and we quickly escaped, sprinting to the car amid thunder and laughter.

Jonny took off for Alaska, and I headed home to Missouri, but we promised to return at our next opportunity. This chance didn't happen until two years later, in April 2006, although the Gothic was often on my mind. The scrappy riverside limestone in my home state offered perfect training.

Four pitches up at the belay, white dust collected in my lap. I pretended not to notice the incoming snow; maybe we could sneak by without the weather knowing we were there. We carried on. I followed the fifth pitch admiring various sections of offwidth, perfect hands, a clean slab, and eventually a broken roof. The stone looked as though it had been burning in a fire for the past hundred years, scalloped and fire red. The crux pitches beneath us, we sped up the remaining 700' of highly featured rock, connecting clean faces, deep cracks, and sharp dihedrals. The white stuff came and went, and we summited in a heavenly orange and violet sunset.

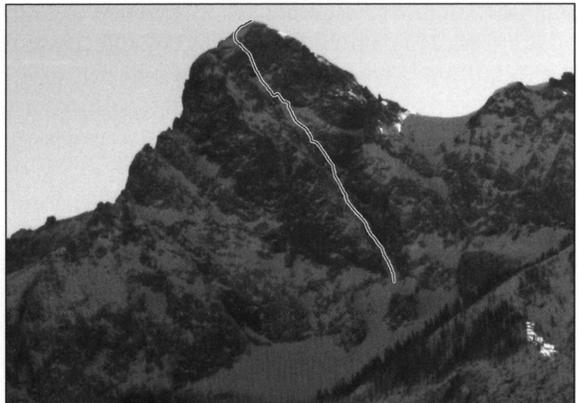
Our route begins a few hundred yards left of Kor's Route on the west face of Gothic Pillar. Approach by passing Exclamation Point, passing two gullies, and descending the third. Where it cliffs out, rap or traverse left to the next gully, descend it for 20 minutes, pass beneath a huge chockstone and continue to a large white boulder on the left. The route starts here, with the fourth pitch roof crack visible above.

On our initial attempt, I'd just returned from Rome, where I'd seen Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel painting. Inspired by the ceilings on the route, we titled our own masterpiece Sistine Reality (IV 5.11+, no bolts, no pins, no lassoes, no big whoop).

JEREMY COLLINS, *Kansas City, Missouri, AAC*

SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS

Peak 13,134', Ski Line. In late October I recruited Dave Ahrens to help me finish a project I started years ago, the north face of Peak 13,134' in the northern San Juans. The face can be clearly seen from Dallas Divide, and I had made several attempts with different partners over the past few years. The most serious attempt was with the late Johnny Soderstrom in October 2004. The route more or less follows a left-angling ramp directly through the center of the rocky north face.



Ski Line on Peak 13,134'. *Jared Vilhauer*

After a fairly short approach, the route starts with a couple of hundred feet of 50° snow. As you near what seems to be a dead end in the couloir, a beautiful cascade of water ice comes into view to the left and is the entrance to the face. We soloed the first 100' pitch of WI3 and kicked steps up more 50° snow. After a few more steps of low-angle ice, we reached the high

point of the 2004 attempt. Johnny and I had tried to follow the obvious weakness by continuing left on snow but were turned around by deep snow on slab rock. This time Dave and I left the snow and took the direct route up mixed terrain. The climbing was typical San Juan mixed climbing, solid in places, incredibly loose in others, and almost always run out. After three long pitches of good climbing, including an exciting, airy 5.8 traverse, we reached the final rock headwall. We ascended a chimney, which provided a good finish to the route, with good dry-tooling and stemming. This pitch resembled the last pitch of Birdbrain Boulevard, but at 13,000', and Dave especially enjoyed following it in the dark without a headlamp. After another 100' of snow we reached the summit in the dark, with whiteout conditions and a few lightning bolts.

While we took a break on the summit, the weather cleared enough that we could see our planned descent route. We traversed just below the south ridge and descended a bowl between Peak 13,134' and Peak 13,252'. After wandering in the forest, we found our way back to the car at Dallas Creek, labeled "Box Factory" on a map. There was no sign of previous ascent on the face and none of the locals have heard of prior climbs. The route is worthy of more ascents if conditions are right, with firm snow. The route would be hard to retreat from, though, with a lack of features for rap/belay anchors. Most of our anchors consisted of ice tools in moss and snow-seat belays. With the conditions we had, the difficulty of the 1,600' route was WI3 M5 5.8R.

JARED VILHAUER, AAC

North Carolina

Whitesides Mountain, Children of the Sun. Mark Ilgner and I had been working on a new line on Whitesides Mountain for two years. We finally completed it in December. The route climbs the left side of the headwall section, beginning between Ship of Fools and The Promised Land. It begins with three beautiful pitches of vertical or near-vertical face climbing (5.11d, 5.12a, 5.12b/c, each 110') mostly protected by bolts. Pitches four (5.10d, 130', mostly traversing) and five (5.11d, 100'), however, are almost completely protected traditionally. Pitch four follows a horizontal crack while pitch five follows a right-arching dihedral. The sixth pitch (5.12 A1, 90') climbs through the upper overhanging section of the wall and is protected by bolts. Here we encountered a blank section too difficult for us to free. Two more pitches of easier-grade climbing (5.10 and 5.5, 100' each) finish the route.

This route is absolutely amazing and requires both sport and trad skills to master. The face climbing is thin, intricate and requires much attention to balance and body position. The trad pitches follow spectacular features in extremely exposed positions. The sixth, crux, pitch has about 15' of aid on bolts, just waiting for a talented climber to free.

ARNO ILGNER, AAC