



The Gunsight Peaks. Gunrunner starts slightly down and left of the arrow, out of view, and climbs over the Northeast, North, Middle, and South peaks. *John Scurlock*

Gunsight Peaks Traverse, Gunrunner. Tales of white granite and striking crack systems on the Gunsight Peaks have intrigued climbers for years, but the two-day approach and notoriously unstable weather have kept the number of actual visits low. On July 9 Dan Hilden and I crossed onto the Chickamin Glacier at Blizzard-Gunsight Col and carefully traversed north on icy slopes beneath the four major peaks of the Gunsight group. At the ridge's northern end we began climbing a corner and face on clean granite. We followed the crest for seven pitches to a cavernous chimney below the summit of the misnamed Northeast Peak (which is actually NNW of the North and Middle Peaks). Dan led up under a large roof, which capped the chimney, and emerged out of a hidden escape hatch hole at the top. We continued along the crest, simul-climbing a couple of pitches and making one short pendulum (A1) on the North Peak, which can be easily avoided by future parties. From the namesake Gunsight Notch, we reached the Middle Peak via a 5.9 dihedral on the east side of the crest, above the Blue Glacier. As twilight faded, we picked up the pace. After topping a penultimate gendarme, Dan led the final pitches to the South Peak by moonlight. We did the rappel descent to the Blue Glacier in total darkness, with just enough starlight reflecting off the snow and white granite to display the gaping moat that we carefully avoided.

Gunrunner (IV 5.10 A1) covered mostly new ground; I think only four of the 18 pitches had been previously climbed. Since the north end of the ridge starts considerably lower, the route felt more upward than traversary, with 12 of the first 13 pitches being up pitches. The route gains approximately 1,500 vertical feet.

The day before Gunrunner, we did a three-pitch new route on the steep east face of South Gunsight Peak, Accidental Discharge (5.10), which varied from rad 5.10 hands to horrifyingly bad rock. The day after Gunrunner, we made the second ascent of Middle Gunsight's East Face (7 pitches, III 5.10d), which is an immaculate route, as good as it gets.

Photos: www.cascadeclimbers.com/forum/ubbthreads.php/ubb/showflat/Number/702676