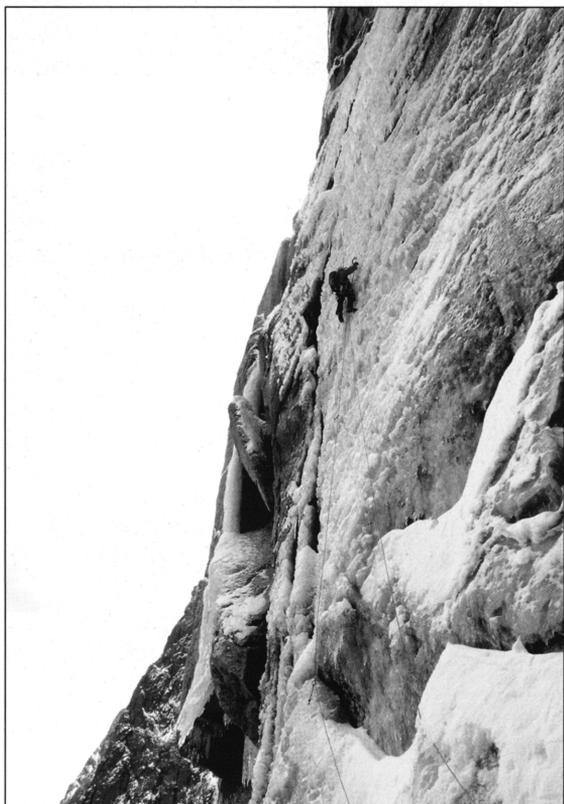




The 800m line of Strandhogg, which ascends the wall below the famous BASE jump launch site at Kjerag. *Bjorn-Eivind Aartun*



On the poorly-protected crux pitch of Strandhogg (WI6+) at Kjerag. *Bjorn-Eivind Aartun*

*Kjerag, Strandhogg and Pin-up.* On February 12 and 14, I climbed two new ice lines on Kjerag in southwest Norway. Kjerag is close to 1,000m high and rises directly from the Lysefjord. It is Norway's number one big wall, for rock climbers and BASE jumpers, but the ice climbing is also spectacular. Harald Berger, Edvard Middelthon, and Marius Olsen completed the first two ascents some years ago. One of these, Svigermors Droem (600m, WI6), was rated first on his World's Top 100 Ice Climbs by second ascensionist Guy Lacelle from Canada. Routes are sustained, from 600-800m high, and are not generally frozen waterfalls. The ice is pasted in granite dihedrals and onto blank walls. Weaving through overhangs, it forms wonderful lines with highly interesting climbing.

Logistics are unique, because the wall rises from the sea. We brought our own outboard engine to mount on a dingy, kindly lent to us by BASE jumpers. Climbs start at night, with a 30-minute ride across the fjord to reach the foot of the wall. On February 11 Stein Ivar Gravdahl and I inspected the lower section of the most coveted line at Kjerag, which ascends the front wall immediately below the BASE-jump launch site. We climbed the initial mixed ground to where the ice begins in order to check out the quality of the first pitches and rapped down, not leaving ropes fixed.

After an early start next morning, we climbed the initial 200m mixed section and arrived below the ice at 9:30 a.m. I made a small pendulum (A0) to reach an

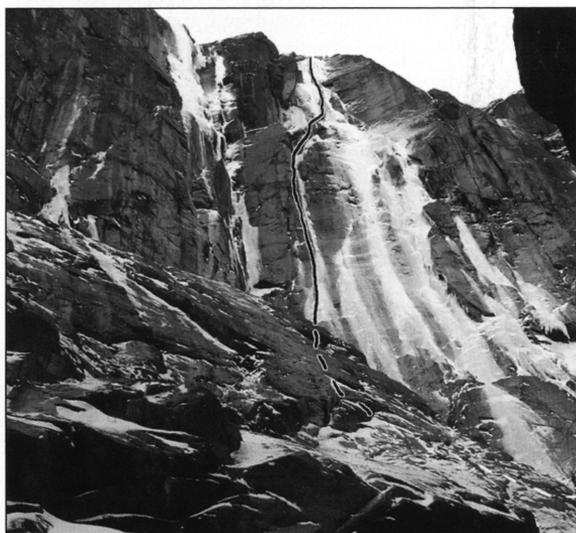


Climbing the vertical formations of Strandhogg during the first ascent. *Bjorn-Eivind Aartun*

ice dagger around a corner. At 9:15 p.m. we were standing atop Kjerag, stoked and happy. We had taken no bolt kit yet were prepared to back down if the route proved to be above our standard. It turned out to be psychologically at our limit. I believe it would have been a tragedy to bolt it; if there is no protection, one should wait until the climb gets into shape, simply admiring the beauty of a line that is currently unobtainable. We named the route Strandhogg (800m, WI6+ M5+ A0).

On the 14th, with Annelin Henriksen, I climbed Pin-up (600m, WI6), the last remaining major unclimbed line in the hanging valley left of the main massif.

There are existing lines on each side, and our route finishes with the last two pitches of Svigermors Droem.



Pin-up (600m, WI6) in the hanging valley left of the main massif of Kjerag. The major ice smear to the right is Svigermors Droem (WI6). *Bjorn-Eivind Aartun*