

ROMSDAL

Trollveggen, French Route, first free ascent. In a remarkably fast two-day ascent, August 7-8, Sindre and Ole Johan Saether made the first free ascent of the French Route on Troll Wall. Since it was first sieged from July 22 to August 10, 1967, by Yves Boussard, Jérôme Brunet, Patrick Cordier, Claude Deck, and Jean Frehel, there have been relatively few ascents of this direct line up the tallest part of the face left of the Rimmon Route. A topo from ca 2000 described the 1,200m route in ca 37 pitches up to Norwegian 6+ (5.10c) and A4. Sixteen of the pitches needed aid. The Norwegians made one attempt prior to their successful ascent and established a few variants while climbing the route at 8- or 5.12b. Sindre is considered to be ahead of his time in the context of Norwegian climbing. He prefers to climb hard in the mountains, with his father and close friends, but if he competed in national bouldering championships, he would certainly finish in the top three.

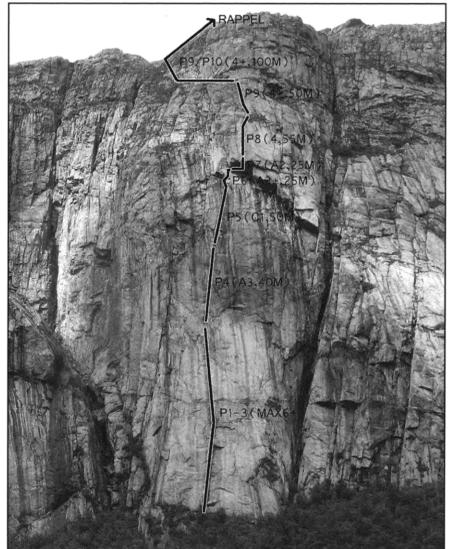
LINDSAY GRIFFIN, MOUNTAIN INFO, *from information supplied by Marten Blixt, Norway*

ROGALAND

Gloppedalen, south face, Civil Twilight. There are climbers, and there are *climbers*. The *climber*, Johannes, who has honed his skills doing several serious solo climbs on Blamannen, is struggling midway to the great roof on the south face of Gloppedalen. Your humble narrator—the climber—who has lately spent too many hours on his laptop, is munching a chocolate bar 15m away. Johannes stops exhausted, biceps bulging from continuous maximal reaches, and digs out his first aid kit to get some power gel. It occurs to me that I'll have to bag this pitch as well, it being too steep to clean while jumaring.

I ended up in this miserable situation because of the wettest July in Rogaland in 25 years (this says something) and exceptional routefinding skills of my friend Johannes Karkainen. The rain wrecked plans for multipitch free-climbing, so we drove between cliffs depicted in *Klatring I Rogaland*, looking for a dry valley. Eventually, in the parking lot of the mighty Gloppedalsura, Johannes dug out the ancient telescope that once belonged to his girlfriend's grandfather, and became obsessive about a potential aid route that would pierce the impressive, complex roof system of Gloppedalen south face.

Johannes negotiated the roof, while I hunched on the haulbag, shivering in soaked clothing. Following, I wasted a lot of energy trying to free a stuck Camalot but made it to the edge of



South face of Gloppedalen, with Civil Twilight.
Marten Blixt

Eventually, in the parking lot of the mighty Gloppedalsura, Johannes dug out the ancient telescope that once belonged to his girlfriend's grandfather, and became obsessive about a potential aid route that would pierce the impressive, complex roof system of Gloppedalen south face.

Johannes negotiated the roof, while I hunched on the haulbag, shivering in soaked clothing. Following, I wasted a lot of energy trying to free a stuck Camalot but made it to the edge of

the roof easier than expected. From there it was another 30 minutes of struggle with jumars stuck in a deep, narrow crack. We set up the portaledge and collapsed into a well-deserved but broken sleep. It was not the remaining part of the route that kept me awake but the thought of descending with a 40kg sack. The traditional descent involves scrambling down a notoriously slippery slope and finding a tree from which to rappel the last 100m. This, I quickly realized, was not an option, but luckily, after a phone call, a local contact came to our assistance. And before reaching the parking lot, we had to cross the god-forsaken boulder conundrum that probably still hoards the corpses of German soldiers from WWII. Weeks later, as I went climbing back home, I found my rock shoes full of lichen, a reminder that the last two pitches involved more bushwhacking and blueberry eating than climbing.

While the most memorable section was aiding across the big roof, it is at the start of the aid-climbing, where the line deviates from all-free route, Nr. 1, that the technical crux is found. Here a series of thin cracks requires precarious placements (A3) and a pendulum from dubious gear. Above, the next pitch (C1) could be free-climbed when dry.

We called our route Civil Twilight (A3, 11 pitches). It shares its first three pitches with Nr. 1; the last four are easy free-climbing. The rest are generally A2-A3. The route name refers to the time of day when the sun has set, but civil servants are still able to work. It kept appearing in the weather forecasts we checked several times each day, hoping that a dry summer might be on its way.

JUHA EVOKARI, *Finland*

Editor's note: there are 10 routes on the south face of Gloppealdan. After climbing the first three pitches of Nr. 1 (6+, 400m, Bjorgen-Price, 1995), Civil Twilight moves right to finish between Slipset (6+ A3, 425m, Basen-Bjorgen, 1993) and Reisen til Ixtalan (7, 425m, Diesen-Ormseth, 1993).

Kjerag, Russian Route. I've not been climbing in the mountains that long, and although I'd visited the Caucasus, Crimea, Tien Shan, and Khibiny peaks of the Kola Peninsula, I'd been fascinated by mountains outside the former Soviet Union. After training in summer 2008, we decided to visit Norway and enter the Russian Winter Championships by climbing a new route on the Troll Wall. However, the Troll Wall was well-known to Russian climbers, and the championships are oriented toward first ascents, so we consulted Andrei Varvarkin from St. Petersburg, who knows Scandinavian mountains well. He provided three alternatives, of which we chose Kjerag.

Kjerag is popular with local climbers, and there were at least 13 existing routes, with grades of Norwegian 6 and 7 free and A3+. According to the information we found, the left side of the central wall is taken by the 21-pitch Hoka Hey, first climbed in 1996 at Norwegian 7- A2+ and freed in 1999 at 7+ (5.11c/d). Toward the right is the 1995 route Skjoldet (A3, 18 pitches, climbed free at 8). We decided to create a direttissima between the two.

We started our journey on the night of February 20, with support from the Russian Mountaineering Federation and Sport Committee and friends who lent us equipment.

Galina Chibitok, Ivan Dozhdev, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Aleksey Lonchinsky, and I, with 10 huge bags in two cars, headed to the Finnish border. We spent a day on a ferry to Stockholm and the following night reached Oslo, where we stayed with friends, Marina and Feodor Iskhakov, who had been gathering information on Kjerag. We took a second ferry in the evening and