

felt the climbing and the generally inclement weather would let us "cut loose". The first two pitches took us to a lead of difficult, free and direct-aid climbing that ended at a hanging belay. Next we were delayed by a day of rain and a half-day of waiting for fresh snow to melt. During the afternoon, as it warmed slowly, we climbed a very difficult section that required bolts on overhangs. Piton cracks bottomed out. A shallow open-book, overhanging all the way, gave way only to difficult pitoning. Parts of the only crack were rotten, and when it bottomed into a groove, we had to place three bolts in the overhanging wall. We completed this pitch the next day and from a very scanty belay stance climbed free on a delicate lead to a roomy ledge halfway up the face. Bottoming cracks prevented adequate protection. The 26th dawned clear and we prusiked early to the high point. After enjoyable free climbing, very difficult going blocked us from a great ledge 200 feet beneath the crag rim. A traverse left solved this but inadequate protection caused concern. A lead of steep but broken rock took us to a seemingly impossible section, with vertical rotten rock on our left and a great overhanging wall on the right. We finally worked this out with a compromise, a traverse to the right on pitons driven upwards into an expanding flake, then a long swing into an open-book. In about 100 feet of exposed climbing on slabs and flakes, the rim was ours.

FRED BECKEY

*Grand Teton, North Face Variation.* It has been clear to several climbers for several years that the few existing routes and variations on the north side of the Grand Teton did not exhaust the logical possibilities of this famous wall. By studying some photographs it appeared to me that a significant variation could be made by crossing from the lower portion of the standard north face route over to the upper portion of the Hossack-McGowan northeast couloir route. On August 24, 1962, Pete Sinclair and I had the opportunity to investigate this unknown section of the north face of the Grand Teton. Having cut steps to the base of the wall the evening before, we were able to make rapid progress up the lower pitches of the north face route. About four or five leads above the snow, at the point where one ordinarily turns right to reach the First Ledge, we turned left (east). The first leads of this upward traverse to the east went without great difficulty. When we reached the small ice chute protecting the east corner of the north face, a lead up its right side was made before crossing. The final lead by Sinclair, up and around the corner into the northeast couloir, was very difficult. An exposed inside corner with smooth walls yielded only by use of a piton in the moss at the corner for a bit

of aid; in the process the moss also yielded so that it was not available for the second man on the rope. We then scrambled up the huge northeast couloir and reached the east ridge just above the Second Tower. If some modification of this route can be found which avoids the difficult inside corner, then this will definitely be the least difficult, but still interesting, route to the summit of the Grand Teton from the north.

LEIGH ORTENBURGER

*Grand Teton, North Face, Direct Variation.* In recent years it has been recognized by several climbers that the standard north face route on the Grand Teton is geometrically "direct" only in the upper portion, from the Third Ledge to the summit. The lower portion of the route approaches this plumb line from a considerable distance to the east via the huge First Ledge, the largest single feature of the face. The desirability of a "direct" approach to the Third Ledge was obvious, and it would have to begin from a point about halfway up the Grandstand.

Rick Medrick and I had been independently thinking along these lines and on August 14 joined in the investigation of this *direttissima* variation. Leaving our camp, which was placed above the icefall of Teton Glacier, we immediately met difficulties in getting started up the Grandstand. A certain amount of aid was used in climbing its first section; the difficulty of the Grandstand seems to depend on the size of the piece of snow above the *randkluft*. This year it seemed larger than usual. From a point about halfway up the Grandstand, our climb began with a moderate rope-length to a prominent black cave. We could not see around the corner to the left (east) so Medrick led out past some loose, grey blocks and found the beginning of a large shelf which diagonals back to the west. After some 50 feet up this steep shelf a short, F8 vertical wall brought us to the start of the third pitch. An upward traverse for a rope-length on good rock to the right (west) past two F6 or F7 overhanging bulges, allowed a diagonal back to the left on loose blocks and flakes toward an obvious wet chimney. This led to the eastern two of the three very large chimneys which end at the Second Ledge. When we reached it, this wet chimney seemed neither attractive nor feasible, so a short, difficult lead onto the extreme eastern end of a second large diagonal shelf was made. From about 30 feet up this shelf, an A2 crack in the vertical wall directly above the shelf, allowed us to continue our upward progress toward the huge chimneys.

From a point some 50 feet up this crack a decision had to be made as to which of the huge chimneys to select for the finish of the climb.