

Ball Bearing Amphitheater. The rock pitch was hard, sometimes wet and run out. Instead of heading right onto Serpentine Arête, we finished in the long, ice-filled corner to the right of the spectacular slab known as the Fin. Throughout the route, the ice runnels were very narrow but always thick enough for good tool placements (AI-3).

MARK BEBIE

*Hozomeen, Southeast Buttress of South Peak.* Dave Adams, Don Goodman, John Petroske and I climbed this new route on June 25 and 26. We approached from the Lightning Creek trailhead at Ross Lake, hiking east to just beyond Willow Lake, where we left the trail. We bashed our way through a tangle of timber and avalanche debris east to a deep ravine. Steep dirt and brush on the far side brought us to open timber on the broad shoulder which sweeps to the south from the south peak. We ascended this to meadows at 5000 feet. We bypassed cliff bands to the west and gained the 6200-foot saddle on the ridge directly below the southeast buttress after six hours of travel. We bivouacked there. The next morning, we headed up the divided buttress. The eastern portion is an extension of the ridge. Bench systems cut diagonally across this buttress. We climbed the most prominent of these. This 700-foot-high lower east buttress leads to a vertical headwall which is bounded on the right by the sheer east face. From there, we crossed left into the gully that splits the lower buttress and traversed to the left on detrius-covered slabs and steep heather to gain the obvious flat shoulder, the crest of the western half of the lower buttress. We roped there and climbed straight up until we had to traverse to the right to gain a ramp system that rises diagonally to the left. This ramp ends at a steep, loose chimney (5.6), which we climbed to a belay at its top. The route then led us up a 50° dihedral for 80 feet and up to the right on gravelly slabs to a poorly protected belay stance. We then climbed to an overhang and traversed to the right under it to gain a 4th-class chimney, which took us to a small notch. The fourth pitch went to the right to the entrance of a broad, loose gully which splits the vertical upper buttress. We continued up the right side of this to a belay among large blocks. From there it was 80 feet of 4th class to the top of the gully. We scrambled the remaining 200 feet to the summit. The cruxes were the first and third pitches with the rest of the roped pitches 4th class (III, 5.6). The rock was often loose and friable. Hard hats were a must. Protection was scarce.

KENNETH JOHNSON

## California

*Rock climbs along the John Muir Trail.* While working on a story for the *National Geographic*, I skied the length of the John Muir Trail in February with David Wilson and Rob Mckinlay. We saw no one for the first 160 miles and made ascents of Mount Whitney and Cathedral Peak by the easiest routes. I also noted dozens of apparently unclimbed rock walls to return to in the summer when I