

Couldoir alone in about six and a half hours and descended it\* in less than 15 minutes—seven feet a second! The conditions were windpack that I broke into occasionally on the ascent, but not at all on the descent. It was one of the best descents of my life.

STEPHEN KOCH

\*This was the first documented snowboard descent of the route.

*Mount McKinley, Northwest Face, New Route.* On May 19, Juraj Hreus and I climbed a new route on the northwest face of Denali. From the 14,200-foot camp we started climbing at 8 a.m. and climbed on the northwest face until 7 p.m., encountering 10 pitches of ice and bad snow, then 25 pitches of mixed (40° to 75°) ice, rock, and snow through rock pillars. When our route joined the West Buttress route, we stopped for one hour, made hot water and then climbed the rest of the buttress to the top of Denali. We returned at 3 p.m. to the 14,200 foot-base camp. The complete climb had taken us 19 hours nonstop.

JAN SVRCEK, *Slovakia*

*Mount McKinley, Northwest Face of the West Buttress, Beauty is a Rare Thing.* In June, Steve House soloed a line to the left of the Collins-Powers-Walters route on the northwest face of the west buttress of Denali. A full account of his story appears earlier in this journal.

*Mount Hunter, Moonflower Buttress.* It was reported that in 1995, Alex Lowe and Conrad Anker spent 36 hours camp-to-camp on the *Moonflower Buttress*, reaching a point below the "Come Again" exit, which is approximately five pitches below the Stump-Aubrey 1981 high point. Their effort represents amazing proficiency on a route that, at Alaskan Grade 6 ice/mixed 95° 5.8 A3, is still considered an Alaskan testpiece 16 years after it was established. (*Climbing* 167)

*Mount Hunter, Southeast Ridge, Hard Saying Not Knowing.* In early May, Judd Stewart and myself (Wesley Bunch) were flown into a seldom-visited arm of the Tokositna Glacier by pilot Doug Geeting. We arrived with the intention of attempting a new route on the southeast face of Mount Hunter. After heavy snowfalls and the near-loss of our Advanced Base Camp, we decided to change our plans as the face was just too dangerous. We decided to attempt the once-climbed southeast ridge, but we intended to start the route over a mile lower on the ridge. The initial climbing entailed interesting mixed rock, ice, and snow climbing to reach the ridge proper. Once on the ridge we continued to climb untrammelled ground with hideous snow conditions. Belays and intermediate anchors were non-existent or useless for the better part of three days of corniced ridge traversing. An irreversible rappel of a rock gendarme sealed our commitment. After intersecting the original Southeast Ridge route we bivouacked and decided to make for the summit the following night. Our summit attempt was thwarted a couple of hours from the top due to the never-ending fear that the snow conditions presented. Climbing the heavily corniced ridge with sugar snow was one thing, but downclimbing over two miles of it was unthinkable. After seemingly endless hours of rappelling down the original route we returned to advanced Base Camp and laid our tensions to rest. We flew to Talkeetna two days later. We named our variation *Hard Saying Not Knowing*. For any alpinists seeking high adventure there is still another