

anticipated crux section, yet I had not done a move harder than 5.8! The remainder of our voyage wove its way through a complex passage of vertical crack systems. Pitch after pitch ended with the drill still at the previous belay. In fact, throughout the entire route the only drilling done, aside from several of the belays, was the enhancement of one hook move on the fourth pitch. Just three days after leaving the ground, we found ourselves once again on horizontal land, having completed *The Northwest Passage* (VI 5.9 A3, 12 pitches) over a period of nine days. The summit of Mount Hooker is a vast and fairly level island in the sky. Upon reaching it, a climber may shed the harness and pack it away in the depths of a haul bag, the only remaining problem being to carry said haul bag back to the car.

KIRBY SPANGLER, *unaffiliated*

Mt. Hooker, Year of the Horse. Hiring horses and taking the "long way in" from Dickenson Park, Jeff Maus, Kevin Dunkak and I spent 11 of 21 days scouting, fixing and climbing a 13-pitch route on the north face of Mt. Hooker. (This line shares ground with the 1995 Donahue-Harvey route; see topo.) Our line climbs up the large alcoves to the left of the *Third Eye* and to the right of *Red Light District*. On the third night of our seven-day push, we saw what we thought was a dramatic display of the northern lights above Muesembeah Peak. Astronomers have since said that the celestial events we witnessed on August 27 had more to do with a mega star than the northern lights. Whatever it was, it was an awesome sight. The route, *Year of the Horse* (a.k.a. *Northern Lights*, VI 5.10 A3), shared a pitch and a half from a previous attempt, from the high point of which we removed water bottles and rusted cans. We used 19 holes, including one pre-existing.

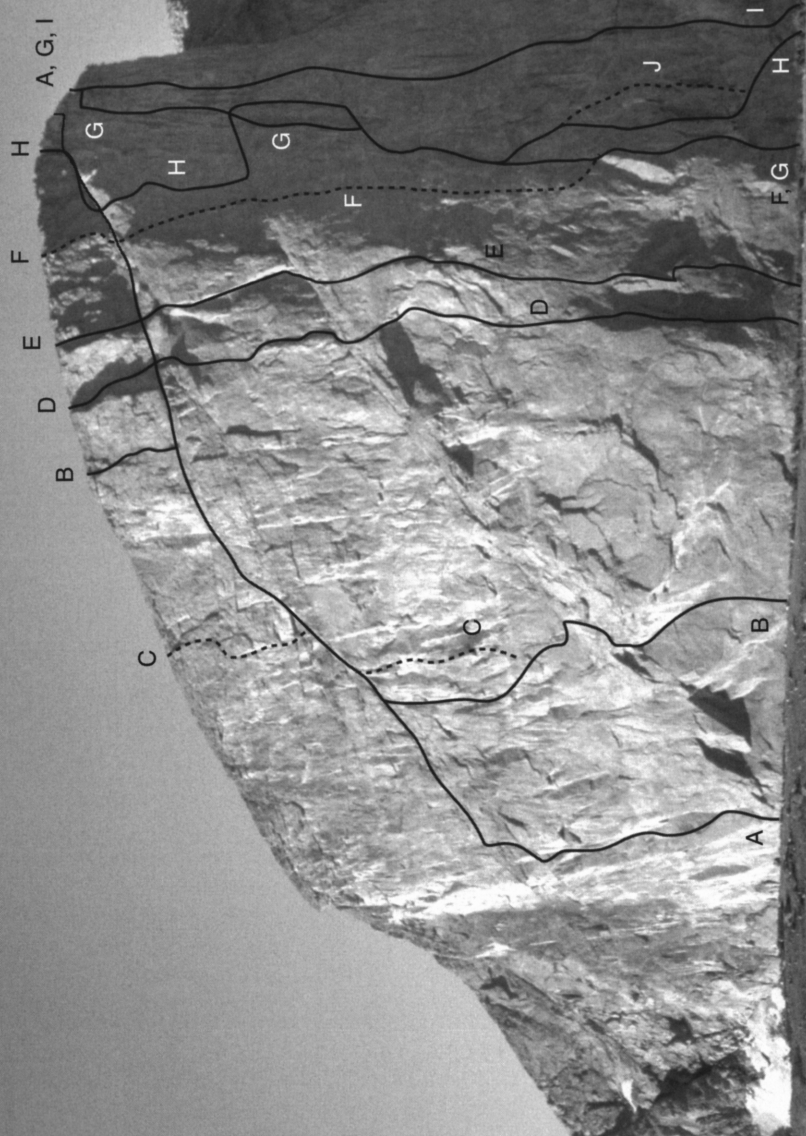
CLAY WADMAN

MONTANA

Glacier National Park

Glacier National Park, New Ice and Alpine Routes. New routes in Glacier National Park often come in flurries, largely because they depend on rare combinations of fair weather and minimal avalanche hazard. Such was the case in 1998, when climbers established several new ice and alpine routes during brief windows at the end of one winter and the start of the next. On April 1, Marc Venery and Blase Reardon climbed *The Bohdi Tree* (IV WI4, 450') in Avalanche Basin. This climb shares a first pitch with *Monument Falls*. The route diverges left at the snow ledge, then ascends a sustained headwall for two pitches. Though the fall was warm and dry, a polar front arrived the week before Christmas, diverting locals from moist-tooling experiments on mossy boulders. Routes formed within days, and climbers established three new routes in Avalanche Basin. On December 20, Kirby Spangler and Marc Venery climbed *Contrarian Investment* (IV WI5, 400') in bitterly cold temperatures. The route is the leftmost

RIGHT: *Mt. Hooker.* A: Red Light District (IV 5.12-, Toulal-Lleuben, 1992). B: Brain Larceny (V 5.12R, Donahue-Harvey, 1994). C: Northern Lights (VI 5.10 A3, Wadman-Maus-Dunkak, 1998). D: Third Eye (VI 5.10 A4, Quinlan-Middendorf, 1993). E: Boissonneault-Larson (VI 5.10+ A4, 1979). F: Sendero Luminoso (VI 5.10 A4, Quinlan, 1980s). G: Shady Lady (VI 5.11 A4, Dockery-Bradshaw, 1978). H: Original Route (VI 5.9 A4, Robbins-McCracken-Raymond, 1964). I: Northwest Passage (VI 5.9 A3, Hokanson-Spangler, 1998). 10. Free variation. NORM LARSON





of three drips on Bubba's Moonshine Wall, and like the remaining two routes, rewards a long, dangerous approach with an airy, fantastic position. Two days later, Spangler and Venery returned with Ryan Hokanson. The trio climbed *The Fountainhead* (IV WI4, 275'), a steep pillar below and left of *Monument Falls*. Spangler and Hokanson rested another day, then followed Kelly Cordes up *Treehugger* (III WI4, 200'). This route is located 300-400 feet above the outlet of the lake, in an amphitheater on the lower reaches of Bearhat Mountain.

BLASE REARDON, *unaffiliated*

North Face of Mt. Edwards, Ascent. Chris Trimble and I hiked in to an igloo constructed at Lower Snyder Lake late in the evening on April 2. At 7 a.m. the next morning, we were looking up at the north face of Mt. Edwards immediately above Upper Snyder Lake. The vertical gain from the lake to the summit is 3,500 feet, with the lower third being a rock band. Chris and I had climbed *Baby Semmler* on this wall previously, but our goal this trip was to continue on the upper two-thirds of the mountain to the summit.

We climbed *Six Pack of Beer and Nothing to Do*, a 1,400-foot WI4 done previously by Kalispell locals, reaching the top of this climb at 4 p.m. We slogged on to intersect the north ridge at around 7,700 feet. Despite the early hour, we elected to bivy here because of the pleasantness of the evening and the spectacular position of this bivy spot, surrounded by the peaks of Glacier National Park.

In the morning we continued for three hours of steep snowy climbing on the north ridge of Mt. Edwards with an occasional excavated rock move to the summit. We descended the east ridge toward Comeau Pass, then down the small ice climb below the pass between Mt. Edwards and the Little Matterhorn. Firm snow conditions at the time made this route safe, feasible, and enjoyable. The route (V WI4 5.8) is very good ice/alpine route, but is not recommended in summer or during periods of high avalanche danger.

JIM EARL

ALASKA

Thorn Peak, East Face, 100 Years of Solitude. During late July, 1992, I traversed the Gakona Range from the range's high peak (misabeled on most maps) of Gakona over to Thorn Peak (Peak 9200'). My main memory of the climb was banging in a ringing angle piton, taking a peek down the east face of Thorn through the mist and then blindly rappelling down the south face.

February, 1995. Convincing neophyte climber Rick Studley to attempt a winter ascent of the unclimbed and unseen east face of the Thorn was easy. Skiing 40 miles up a frozen river covered with a foot and a half of water was not. Five miles from the road and two days into the slog from hell, we turned around.

February, 1996. Ian McRae didn't want to ski 40 miles to climb a face I had no photos of. When we got a grant to fly in, he bit the hook. After taking all our money, our pilot landed us a week from our objective. Ian and I proceeded to spend the next 17 days in -50°F weather hating life, digging snowcaves, and trying to stay warm. By the time we got to the base of the face, we were complete-

LEFT: Ian McRae at the base of the east face of Thorn Peak during the 1996 attempt.

JEFF APPLE BENOWITZ