

the pleasant North Face (II, ice to 55°, steeper at the 'schrund, minor mixed, three 55m pitches) of Dragonback and the excellent Southeast Pillar (II 5.10+, three pitches) of Mt. McCormick. The later trip, in early September, netted the Northeast Face Direct (III 5.9 A2, nine pitches) on the impressive prong of Stiletto Needle.

The redoubtable Fred Beckey revisited the range for the umpteenth time, accompanied by Kai Hirvonen, Lorne Glick, and Witt Richardson. The latter three made a very fine new route, climbing the oft-admired, occasionally attempted Southwest Face (V 5.10 A2, nine 60m pitches) of Stiletto Peak in two days. Numerous other shorter routes on the fine granite of the Upper Tellot Glacier peaks followed, including the first free ascent of the south face (II 5.11a, three pitches) of Tellot Spire.

DON SERL, *Canada*

CANADIAN ROCKIES

Mt. Quadra, Gimme Shelter. In March, Alain Massin and Steve Pratt managed the second ascent of *Gimme Shelter* on Mt. Quadra. First climbed over two days in 1983 by Kevin Doyle and Tim Friesen with exceptionally thin ice for seven pitches, it was easily the hardest ice climb in the world at the time. The last few seasons, it has been forming as a fat pillar of straight-forward water ice. Despite the WI 5+/6 conditions, the seracs at the top of the route have become very unstable, with several close calls keeping most suitors away. The significance of this long-awaited second ascent is somewhat diminished due to the relatively easy conditions of the route and the fact that repeating the route is now simply a matter of being willing to brave the obscene serac hazard.

One of greatest and most sought-after alpine water ice routes in the world, *Slipstream*, in the Columbia Icefields, also has a disintegrating serac barrier. Until recently, the serac atop this 3,000-foot route has been relatively mild, but a large blue hole has appeared directly over the route and is now regularly discharging down the climb.

Other hanging glaciers in the Rockies are in various states of disrepair. Numerous alpine routes are now decidedly unsafe. The North Glacier of Deltaform, *Photofinish* on Andromeda, the *Hourglass Route* on the north face of Athabasca, the Elzinga/Miller on the north face of Cromwell and, most disturbingly, the glacier atop the Lowe Route on the north face of Mt. Alberta have become or are quickly becoming a toss of the dice.

JOE JOSEPHSON, *Calgary Mountain Club*

North Face of the Saskatchewan Mountain Massif, The Silver Lining. On April 5, Barry Blanchard, Steve House and I left the Big Bend parking lot on the Icefields Parkway and skied several kilometers toward the toe of the Saskatchewan Glacier. Our objective was the first steep chimney cutting through the 2,000-foot wall on the left side of the valley. The approach was made up a wind-blown slope to the base (about two hours from the car). The first pitch was the crux, requiring difficult dry tooling to spotty ice above a large roof. Due to unprotectable, detached ice, the next pitch followed a tricky rock corner to a cave on the left, followed by an exposed dry tooling traverse back to the ice. These pitches do not always form and in better times may be straight-forward ice. The next seven pitches followed classic alpine mixed and ice terrain up the gully. Highlights include a wild mixed section coming

out of a large cave on pitch 8 and a difficult overhang on pitch 10. Pitch 11 avoids the obvious, bomb-bay chimney by traversing left to reach an easy gully that leads to the summit slopes. We walked off avalanche-prone slopes in the bowl to the west. The route is 14 200-foot rope lengths and was climbed in 12 belayed pitches. Most belays were off pitons, and none are fixed. We left two in-situ pins near the top. The route, *The Silver Lining* (IV 5.9 WI6R or so), was climbed in 19 hours car-to-car.

JOE JOSEPHSON, *Calgary Mountain Club*

Mt. Babel, East Face, Free Ascent. In August, John Culberson and I made the first American ascent of the East Face of Mt. Babel in the Canadian Rockies. This grade IV limestone wall has seen few ascents overall, and fewer yet as a free route. It was first climbed with aid sections by Bobby Greenwood in 1969. It was freed in 1992 by John Marshall at 5.11b, also the style in which we climbed it.

The mountain hovers over Consolation Valley, a short hike from Moraine Lake. The route is steep enough that a rock gently lobbed from the top hits the talus without a bounce on the way down. The rock is reasonable limestone with good protection at the hard parts.

DAVID TURNER

BAFFIN ISLAND

Auyuittuq National Park

Cumberland Peninsula, Ski Mountaineering Expedition. The objective of our Baffin Island ski mountaineering expedition was to make a self-sufficient 20-day journey in the Cumberland Peninsula mountains, climbing suitable peaks en route with standard alpine ski mountaineering gear. Between April 16 and May 6, the seven-member expedition (Danny Baillie, Rodney Franklin, John Kentish, Ian McKirdy, Graham Rowe, Charles Turner, and I) completed an exploratory journey through the mountains of the Cumberland Peninsula, to the east of the Weasel Valley and to the north of Kingnait Fjord. The Expedition was entirely self-sufficient from the point of drop-off by skidoo, with the supplies and equipment being pulled and carried with a combination of rucksack and specially adapted children's sledge. After a few days around Mt. Asgard, the team moved southeast out of the Auyuittuq National Park into a very dramatic area of large glaciers and steep rock walls. A fairly circuitous travel of some 150 kilometers was made back to a pick-up at the head of Pangnirtung Fjord. Fourteen peaks were climbed en route. Most summits involved a combination of ascent by ski and foot, generally via the easier-looking ridges. The climbing never exceeded alpine PD+ in technical difficulty. Where possible, we attempted peaks suitable for ski ascent and descent. Climbs had to be accomplished relatively quickly in order to let the journey proceed. Of the peaks climbed, four had names and a further four appeared to have had previous ascents (i.e., cairned and/or recorded ascent). No mention has been found of the remaining six, but even so we would hesitate to claim any first ascents. It is highly likely, though, that many of the ascents were "firsts" in the ski-mountaineering sense. The southwest face of Valhalla Mountain was skied by two members from just below summit rocks to the glacier base, a vertical descent of some 500 meters with an average angle of 40° (max. 45°).