

base of the awesome feature. From our camp on top of a big flat rock, we scoped a great line that split the wall. The highlight was what looked to be a succulent hand-crack that ran for two full pitches just below the blocky tip. We fixed two lines over the bottom slab pitches, which Jakub described as some of the most fun friction he had ever done. The next morning we packed the haulbag and headed up. Jakub's memory must have been giving him hunger flashbacks, for although the wall was only 1,200 feet high, he wouldn't stop packing until the huge bag was bursting.

The alpine granite was spectacular. The third and fourth pitches were beautiful shallow grooves that required several 'biners worth of heads. Lugging our massive bag-o-rations we moved steadily. A small traverse at the top of pitch four brought us to the bottom of what we'd thought was the great hand crack. "Oh sheet," said Jakub. "Hand crack, my azz." The crack turned out to be a nasty little offwidth. We suffered through that evening and into the morning before we perched below the summit overhangs. I led the last pitch over the upside-down stairs, and finally a heart-stopping mantle put us on the summit.

We unpacked the haulbag and noticed that we still had five beers, three-quarters of a pack of Oreos, a tin of sardines, cheese, and ten liters of water. We had gone heavy; we had gone Loaded for Bear (V 5.9 A3).

BRENT EDELEN, AAC

*Mt. Hooker, Pay to Play.* On their first trip to the Wind River Range in late August, Chattanooga climbers Jim Hewett and Neeld "Off the Couch" Messler established a new route on the Northeast Face of Mount Hooker. In nine free pitches and four of aid, Pay to Play (VI 5.11 A3) ascends the face between Brain Larceny and Red Light District, continuing straight up from Der Main Ledge to the top. It was completed over five days of climbing in good weather, with the team enjoying about four hours of sunlight each day.

A day of scoping revealed many potential lines. A distinct roof crack attracted the team's attention, along with a line of corners and cracks with just one blank section. Pitches one through three climb moderate cracks topped by an awkward 5.9 squeeze/offwidth. Pitch four, the free-climbing crux of the route, blasts through the offwidth roof crack and up a lower-angle squeeze to the bottom of the blank section. The next pitch involves slabby face climbing, protected by two 5/16-inch buttonheads. The sixth pitch and aid crux comes next, a seam with thin nailing to a string of bat-hook holes, protected by one rivet, that leads up and right to the next feature.

The left-facing dihedral of the seventh pitch continues to arch left until it becomes the traversing roof beneath the eighth pitch. Two crack pitches then gain Der Main Ledge. The eleventh pitch traverses up and left to gain the left-facing corner that leads to the top in two final pitches.

The climbing is, for the most part, straightforward and enjoyable, though there are some loose sections. More good routes await climbers willing to brave the inconvenient approach and possible bad weather.

JIM HEWETT

*Cathedral Buttress, Northeast Face, The Flight of the Golden Camelot.* Around to the right from the Orion's Reflection wall is more good rock, though the wall is not as high. There Jason Keith and Alan Hunt established The Flight of the Golden Camelot (IV 5.11). The route begins with a ramp, followed by a step left. Pitch two ascends steep cracks. A hand traverse left (5.10+)

avoids an offwidth. The route's crux is a 5.11 finger crack in a corner. Above are occasional 5.10 and much high-quality 5.8.

JOE KELSEY

*Cirque of the Towers, Warrior I, Northwest Face.* In late August Brian Edmiston and I, both from Carbondale, Colorado, freed the 60-foot A3 hook traverse on the stunning 1,000-foot Northwest Face route on Warrior I at IV 5.11R. No bolts or pins were placed. First climbed in 1970 by George Lowe and Jeff Lowe at IV 5.9 A3, the Northwest Face involves mostly straight-forward jamming on stellar battleship-gray granite. I took one 25-foot penduluming leader fall on the crux second-pitch (the site of the hook traverse) and returned to the belay before heading back up to link the delicate edge sequence together. Although the climbing is otherwise not difficult (5.9 with two small sections of 5.10), and the upper dihedral is one of the most commanding features in the Cirque, neither of us could find any information about previous free ascents of this outstanding route.

JONATHAN THESENGA

*Cirque of the Towers, solo traverse.* Squinting into the sun, I stood on the top of War Bonnet gazing across at what I had just traversed, the Cirque of the Towers in the Wind River Mountains. Above me cumulus clouds benignly drifted by, resisting the afternoon weather pattern that usually transforms them into angry thunderheads. Two weeks before, after climbing the classic War Bonnet route Black Elk, I was zapped by lightning. Today I was suffering from another environmental hazard, severe dehydration.

From a climber's perspective the Cirque of the Towers is the most impressive feature in the Winds. In a three-mile semicircle that rises above picturesque Lonesome Lake to elevations as high as 12,406 feet, the 11 granite spires contain a perfect blend of cracks, edges, and friction.

Much of what has been climbed in the Winds has been loosely recorded and often underrated. For all I knew Fritz Wiessner had done the Traverse in the 1930s wearing hob-nailed boots. I decided to add the modern car-to-car element, which added 16 miles to the adventure.

On August 14 I left the Big Sandy trailhead at 2:00 a.m. I arrived at the base of Pingora as it was getting light and followed the South Buttress to the summit. I rappelled to the notch to the west of Pingora and climbed the classic East Ridge of Wolf's Head. I continued to Overhanging Tower, Shark's Nose, Block Tower, and Watch Tower. I chose the path of least resistance, soloing some established routes and improvising other routes. I descended by both down climbing and rappelling. The rest of the traverse is a scramble over the summits of South Watch Tower, Pylon Peak, Warrior II, Warrior I, and War Bonnet.

I remember downclimbing from War Bonnet's summit by liebacking a minivan-size boulder. I remember it suddenly starting to roll. The next thing I remember is coming to 30 feet lower and scrambling down the ridge. Regaining control over my runaway body I realized I must have blacked out due to my severely dehydrated state. Having watched too many Hollywood movies, I thought, "Am I alive or did that boulder roll over me, and now I am just an invisible spirit like Bruce Willis in 'The Sixth Sense'?"

Finally, I got down to the trail and a stream. With a belly full of power gel and water I started jogging back to my car. Coming out of my stupor I laughed at myself for thinking I was dead. As