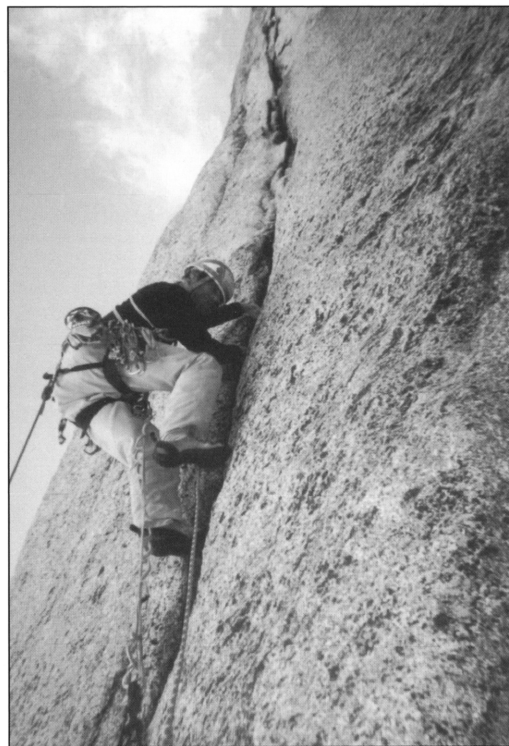


mer was the result of rockfall in the Bugaboo/Snowpatch col. The victim escaped with only minor injuries. The oldest climber was 76 and was not Fred Beckey. During mid-August a team of 17 women known as Girls-Rock ruled the Applebee campground and completed everything from Wildflowers on Snowpatch to the Beckey-Chouinard on South Howser. Some men were afraid, while others were delighted. A lone Minnesota climber attempted a burly aid line on the east face of Bugaboo Spire, only to be defeated by a week of poor weather at the end of July. Hence he called his effort Unfinished Symphony. Rumors of a new and improved rappel route on Snowpatch Spire proved to be true. The creator is unknown, but suspected to be Joe Benson. Several speed ascensionists found that running shoes are not appropriate for approaches in the Bugaboos, resulting in many a hairy descent from the Bugaboo/Snowpatch col. Overall, a good season was had in the Bugaboos, with many good stretches of weather and a busy campground and Kain Hut throughout July and August. No incredible epic Krakauer-type stuff to report—just, lots of good alpine granite climbing that is truly world-class.

WAYNE J. SOBOOL, *Bugaboo Ranger and ACMG Member*

*Bugaboo-Pigeon-South Howser-Snowpatch enchainment.* I realized I was super-anxious to climb in the Bugaboos when I arrived at the Applebee Campground five days before my partner was scheduled to arrive. I figured I would keep myself busy hiking around and scoping out routes, but soon discovered solo potential. A lot of the classics were within my comfort level, from 5.4



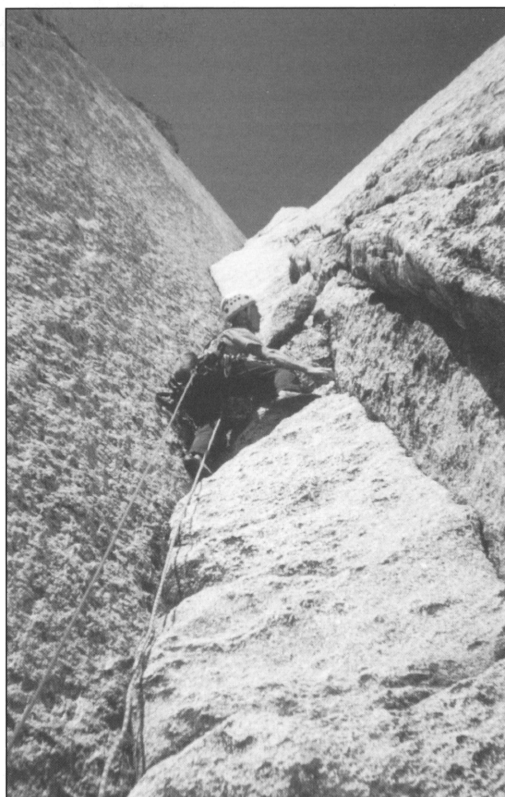
Aaron Martin on Retinal Circus, The Minaret. Zack Smith

to 5.9. After climbing the northeast ridge of Bugaboo Spire and the west ridge of Pigeon Spire, I saw potential for an amazing day involving numerous classic alpine granite pitches and four of the best summits in the Bugs. On August 8 I awoke at 5:30 a.m. and was out of camp by 6:00. After repeating the northeast ridge of Bugaboo and west ridge of Pigeon, I journeyed to the South Howser. Soon I found myself on the ultraclassic Beckey-Chouinard, doing hand jam after hand jam. A few hours later I was sitting on an amazing summit in a spectacular granite arena. The next goal, Snowpatch Spire, was staring at me from across the glacier, but I had to get off the Howser Tower first. I had brought one 60m, 7.5-mm line for rappelling, but after asking around camp, I wasn't sure one 60-meter rope would cut it. Turns out one rope worked until the last rap. My rope went from the last rock anchor to the top of the 40-foot bergschrund. Luckily, I had collected enough bail slings and 'biners that when

all were tied together they extended the last anchor enough to put me into the 'schrund. I showed up at the base of the Kraus-McCarthy on Snowpatch, gulped the last of my water, and began climbing again. At around 6:00 p.m., 12 hours after I had set out, I stumbled back into camp and slept like a baby.

AARON MARTIN

*South Howser Tower, The Minaret, Retinal Circus.* In early August Aaron Martin from Mammoth Lakes, California, and I, from Moab, Utah, visited the Howser Spires in the Bugaboos. Before I arrived, Aaron had a huge solo day linking four major formations (see above). Two days after hiking in we started up a striking line on a feature called The Minaret, which is a turret of steep, clean granite attached to the South Howser Tower. We decided to attempt this route with a minimum of equipment: a double set of cams up to three and a half inches, eight pins, one hammer, a 9mm lead line, a 7mm tag line, and food and water for one day.



Zack Smith on Retinal Circus. Aaron Martin

This style looks good on paper, but you usually get skunked trying it. This time we scored, though. Someone else had attempted the line before but had bailed about eight pitches up, placing bolts and leaving pins and stoppers. This helped us tremendously, because we would often short-fix off their anchors and lead in blocks. The climbing here was sustained and mostly high-quality free and aid. The crux free climbing went to Aaron—flared runout liebacking above an uninspiring TCU belay. We topped out on the Minaret at dusk, all smiles but ready for it to be over. However, with our rack we felt it unwise to try to rap our route, and other routes that end here are about 20 pitches long, leaving us little choice but to continue to the summit of the South Howser Tower. The guidebook said something about a few low-fifth-class pitches leading to the summit, so we figured we would be fine. Several hours and a thousand feet later, in the dark, we would joke about this. We discovered solid 5.10 climbing and circuitous route finding.

The sky, however, felt it was showtime. Simulclimbing and short-fixing along the exposed ridge, I would sometimes stop moving and stare at our first sight of the northern lights. A half-moon of Halloween orange highlighted the distant peaks and valleys. In another direction a meteor shower was exploding with streaks of light lasting several seconds. We motored along and after dozens of false summits we found the real one, 15 hours after we started.

Early the next morning the perfect weather broke into a violent lightning storm just hours after we touched down. We fled our exposed bivy and began a heady descent to Applebee Campground,