

a cornice and up a mound appeared to be all that separated us from the Knik Glacier. We were out of food, fuel, and time, and another storm had arrived from the Aleutians. We had pioneered a route from the sea to where we stood, but we would not reach the top of Marcus Baker this time. Two days later we were back at sea level. During the climb we had read aloud *The Life of Pi*—a parable about the nature of reality, a survival story of a boy, Pi Patel, on an improbable ocean voyage. Our climb and the story became the same the night we returned to the sea and finished the last pages, igniting a discussion about perception, reality, their relation, and our creative roles in both. Our route was Pi Ridge: AK Grade 3, 6 miles, 8,700' gain.

JEFF PFLUEGER

## ALASKA WRANGELL MOUNTAINS

*Peaks 10,478', 9,900', and 10,088'.* From May 8 to 17, James Dietzmann, Paul Templeton, and I did three possible first ascents of 10,000' peaks in the Wrangells. We had bad weather for most of the trip and were lucky to get any climbs in at all between storms. I had hoped to climb some of the bigger peaks, but it wasn't to be on this trip.

Kelly Bay of Wrangell Mountain Air dropped us off at roughly 7,700' on an eastern fork of the Russell Glacier north of Mt. Churchill near the volcanic cone of Mt. Sulzer, which Bob Jacobs climbed in 1980 from the White River. It is a nice area with some big icefalls to negotiate. I had hoped to get great pictures looking to the south, but that wasn't to be either.

We climbed Peak 10,478' on May 9 via an easy glacier and ramp from the west, finishing on the south ridge for the last few hundred feet. It was very windy and the weather was changing. We could see only clouds above 11,000 feet. On the 11th we climbed Peak 10,091' to its eastern summit of 9,900'+ via a steep, south-facing gully that tops out at 9,700 feet or so between the two summits. On May 12 we skied southwest from camp using a glacier system and icefall to reach a 9,600' saddle between Peak 10,088' and, to the south, Peak 10,400'+. We then ascended the south ridge of Peak 10,088' to the summit. It was not technical, mainly a narrow ridge walk to a pointy summit. We barely made it back to camp when the next storm blew in. We had hoped to climb Peaks 10,400'+ and 10,600'+ on the 12th, but the weather shorted our day. On the other days we also couldn't climb because of storms. Our pickup on the 16th was delayed by weather until the 17th. These were probably first ascents, but I don't make that statement as fact, just probability.

DANNY KOST, AAC

## ALASKA SAINT ELIAS MOUNTAINS

### WRANGELL-SAINT ELIAS NATIONAL PARK

*Mt. Gunnar Naslund, Uncle Gunny's Weight-Loss Program; Mt. Huxley, first ascent.* On April 22 Carlos Buhler and I were flown onto a spur of the Barnard Glacier below the unclimbed 3,000' east face of Mt. Gunnar Naslund (Peak 12,659', located 10-15 miles southeast of Mt. Bona and 20 miles west of Mt. Bear). Weather was perfect for our eight days in the range. We acclimated on the 23rd by doing the first ascent of the ca 11,600' peak above base camp to the east of Gunnar