

Upper Powell Glacier and Upper Barnard Glacier, various ascents and ski descents. Mike Meekins flew Dave Kinsella (Ireland), Wilfred Glanznig (Austria), Wolfgang Huber (Austria), and me into the upper Powell Glacier on the north side of the Chugach Range on May 4. We set up camp at about 7,000' in the middle of the glacier. Dave and Wilfi then headed up the northeast ridge of Peak 9,845' and Wolfgang and I to the ridge southwest of Peak 9,138'. We reached a subsidiary peak of about 9,100' on the southwest ridge of Peak 9,138', and I made a ski descent via our route (Wilfi downclimbed). Dave reached Peak 9,845' (Wili skied back from 8,500') and attempted to ski the north face, but after encountering ice, instead skied the northeast ridge. On May 5 Dave, Wili, and Wilfi headed to Peak 9,570' at the head of the glacier and skied the south face, though they didn't reach the summit. On May 6 Wilfi and I attempted Peak 8,710'. We didn't reach its summit either, but skied a couloir on the east side of the peak. On May 7 Wili and Wilfi climbed a 9,400' peak northwest of camp and skied a couloir on its southwest face. Dave and I climbed the 9,200' peak southeast of camp to within 10m of its summit and skied the couloir on its northwest side. Wili and Wilfi repeated this couloir the following day, and Dave skied one just to its northeast (no summit). At the same time, I climbed Peak 9,138' by its northwest face and skied the same route in descent. On May 9 we all climbed Peak 9,570', at the head of the glacier, to within 20m of its summit. Dave, Wili, and Wilfi skied a couloir starting on its northeast shoulder, while I skied a direct line down its east face.

Paul Claus flew us into the upper Barnard Glacier in the Wrangells, just east of University Peak, on May 13. We set up camp at 7,200' in the middle of the glacier. I then climbed the west face of Peak 10,170' to where it flattens out at around 9,200' and skied down. On May 15 we all climbed the southeast face of the south ridge of Super Cub Peak to its apex at around 11,500' and skied it. On May 19 we climbed a 9,800' peak just south of a 9,695' spot height, southeast of camp, and descended by the obvious couloir on its south side.

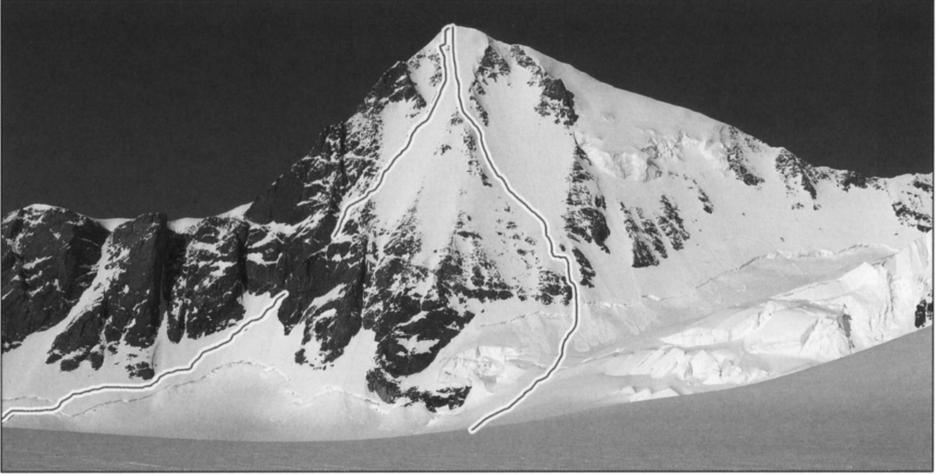
Reviews of the previous ten AAJs and discussions with the pilots lead us to believe that none of the peaks that we climbed on, other than Super Cub Peak, had been climbed before. The ski descents were between 45° and 60°, exposed, and we believe they were firsts.

PHILLIP A INGLE, *Wales*

FAIRWEATHER RANGE

Various ascents and ski descents. The name, bestowed in 1778 by the range's discoverer, Captain James Cook, is itself a curiosity. The Fairweather Range experiences some of the world's worst weather, including over 100 annual inches of precipitation. It can snow during any month, as low as 6,000' during summer. Overcast days and rain predominate.

We flew in on April 20, planning to ascend the west ridge and ski the northwest face of Mt. Fairweather. The day after arriving on the Grand Plateau, though, we were treated to some of the best tent-flattening, snow-pummeling windstorms any of us had endured or wish to experience again. However, after eight days the sun emerged and allowed us to make a seven-hour push to the summit of Fairweather via the west ridge. This is the most accessible and shortest route up the peak. The primary objective hazard is a large serac on Fairweather's north face that looms over the approach to the west ridge. We skied the northwest face directly back onto the Grand Plateau. The skiing was never steeper than 45°, and the climbing was Alaska grade 3 to 4. As far as we know this was a first descent. Now, with a month to spare, we set out

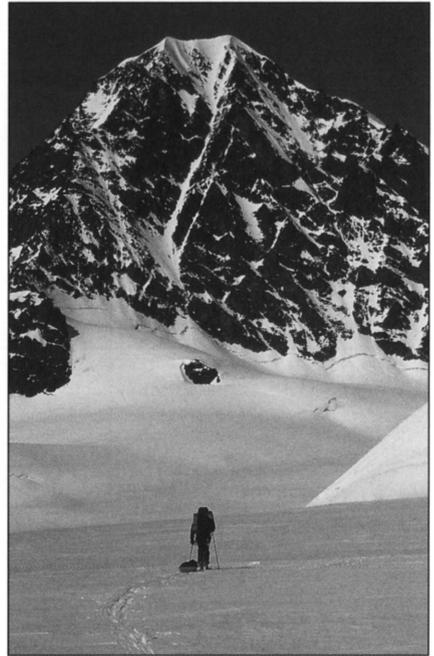


Left is up (in crampons) and right is down (on skis) on Peak 12,300'. *BJ Brewer*

to climb and ski some adjacent peaks, including Mt. Root (12,860', 3,920m), Mt. Watson (12,516', 3,815m), and Peak 12,300'. We moved camp approximately five miles northwest, down the Grand Plateau and into an amazing cirque, close to all three peaks

Next up, a 3,200' face on Peak 12,300' looked to hold steep, albeit skiable, terrain. Our route up started with a short traverse, followed by a large bergschrund and a northwest-facing couloir on the left side of the west face. The climbing in the couloir was steep, with one 50' pitch of vertical ice. The couloir deposited us halfway to the summit. We continued up the face, still favoring the north, climbers's left, ridge. The climbing there was consistently 40°-50°. The summit is a small knife-edge ridge with great views north to Mt. St. Elias. We skied from the top, down a slope that was about 50° for the first 200-300' and then the low to mid 40s for the remainder of the descent. As far as we know this was a first descent. The climbing was Alaska grade 2/3+.

Mt. Watson has one of the most impressive couloirs any of us had ever seen. The line cuts into the south/southeast side of the mountain for 3,000'. This was to be our final climb. We accessed the couloir via snow ramps to the west, as the bottom cliffs out. We ascended the steep hallway, and descended the same way. The climbing was again Alaska grade 2/3+, with slush giving way to hard, granular snow as we ascended the 42°-47° couloir. To the best of our knowledge this was



The 3,000-foot ski couloir on the south/southeast side of Mt. Watson. *BJ Brewer*

another first descent. We believe that our routes of ascent on Watson and 12,300' were also firsts, as we could find no documentation or sign of previous passage.

On May 17, with time to spare we packed our belongings and started walking back to Haines. The seven-day, 120-mile traverse was a whole other story in itself.

For further specific information contact the Yakutat District Ranger, Glacier Bay National Park/Preserve, P.O. Box 137 Yakutat, AK 99689 (907-784-3295) or the Glacier Bay Chief Ranger at (907) 697-2230. We flew in with Drake, a professional pilot from Haines. We recommend him and his services to anyone going into that area. Drake's Phone # is (907) 723-9475.

BJ BREWER, MAD DOG, and JAMIE LAIDLAW

ALASKA COAST MOUNTAINS



The southwest flank of Mt. Blachnitzky in the Juneau Icefield. The route wanders up snow on this face through haze from forest fire smoke. *Keith K. Daellenbach*

Various ascents. My father, Charles B. Daellenbach of Albany, Oregon, Scott McGee of Anchorage, Alaska, Fred Skemp III of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and I, of Portland, Oregon, took a helicopter transport from Juneau to the Gilkey Trench in the Coast Range of Alaska. We climbed the previously unclimbed Mt. Blachnitzky (6,552', N58°47'47" W134°23'38") on June 30 via the southwest cirque/south ridge (45° snow, class 3 rock) from a high camp at a previously unvisited tarn, which, located at 3,600' on the southwest flank, seemed like Shangri-la. Fred and I also climbed a route on the previously unclimbed Peak 6,500' (N58°48'17" W134°35'56"). The date was July 4, and we named the route the Independence Route. Our route took us from the Bucher Glacier up the north-northeast ridge, across 55° snow slopes of the northeast face, and finally up the southeast ridge, where we encountered 5.3 rock and WI2 ice.

Our egress off the Juneau Icefield took us from the Gilkey Trench on a traverse into the north side of

Avalanche Canyon, a river ford across the Avacan, and up the steep valley to the "high ice" of the Northwest Taku Glacier. From here, we skied towards Taku D (5,810', N58°42'17" W134°17'530"), a previously climbed peak at the confluence of the Taku and Matthes glaciers.