

## Canada

### ST. ELIAS RANGE

*Kluane National Park Reserve, mountaineering summary and statistics.* Mountaineering use was down by 50% in the St. Elias Ranges, with only 19 mountaineering expeditions registered. Fifty-four climbers and skiers spent 1,009 person-days in the St. Elias Range, the lowest use that the Park has seen in many years.

As usual Mt. Logan received the most attention, with eight parties attempting the King Trench route and six parties attempting the East Ridge route. Four groups reached one of Logan's main summits. Weather and tricky routefinding, due to open crevasses on the upper King Trench route, caused other parties to be unsuccessful. Climbers were also on Mt. Kennedy, Mt. Steele, King Peak, Pinnacle Peak, and Mt. Queen Mary.

Of note was a first ascent of the northwest face of Mt. Kennedy, by two British climbers [see report below]. They took three days to climb the face and descended by way of the Cathedral Glacier.

Also of note is an American team that climbed the East Ridge of King Peak. This was their fourth attempt at King Peak over a number of years and, they believe, the first time a woman has made the summit.

On a sad note, a Canadian was killed in a fall on a ski descent after climbing the East Peak of Mt. Logan. Recovery was not possible due to altitude and location.

Another death occurred during a planned traverse of the St. Elias Range by two Alaskan climbers. One member drowned after breaking through thin ice on Harlequin Lake only two days into their expedition.

Park staff took advantage of the heavy melt this summer and revisited the Project Snow Cornice camp established on the Seward Glacier by Walter Wood in 1948. A Parks Canada historian recorded part of the site, which will contribute to the human history of the St. Elias Range.

Anyone interested in mountaineering in Kluane National Park Reserve should contact the Mountaineering Warden, Kluane National Park Reserve, Box 5495, Haines Jct. Yukon, Y0B 1L0, call 867 634 7279, or fax 867 634 7277 and ask for a mountaineer's package. Or visit the Parks Canada web site at [www.pc.gc.ca/kluane](http://www.pc.gc.ca/kluane)

RICK STALEY, *Park Warden, Kluane National Park Reserve*



*Mt. Kennedy, northwest face.* As a two-man team, Jon Bracey and I wanted a challenging mixed objective we could attempt alpine style, and the northwest face of Mt. Kennedy fit the bill perfectly. In 1996 Jack Tackle and Jack Roberts climbed their Pair of Jacks on this face, a difficult mixed line climbed in capsule style (see *AJ* 1997; route photo p. 79, article pp. 80-91). However, bad weather and a dropped crampon forced a retreat from high on the wall, so this huge

2,000m face was still awaiting its first complete ascent.

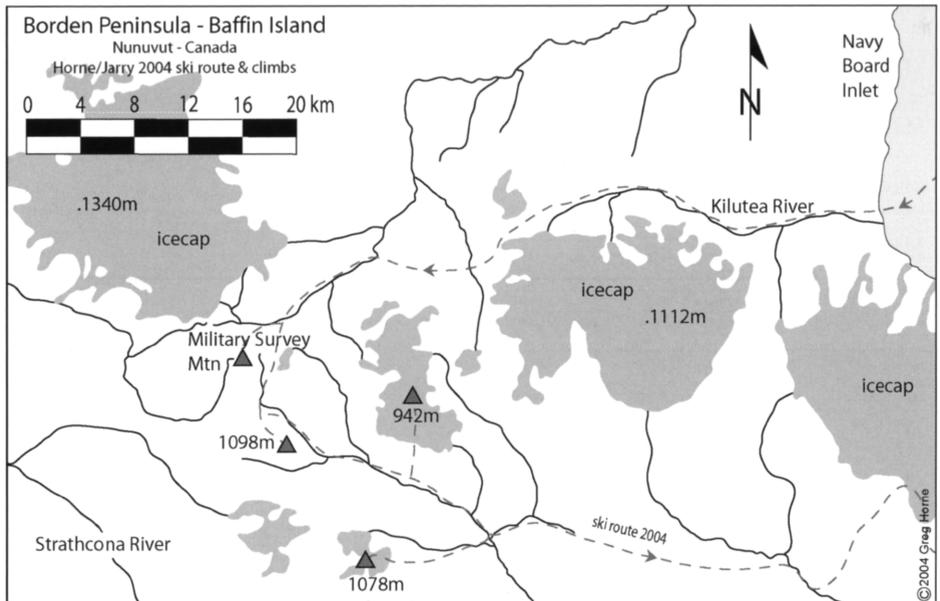
We flew from Kluane Lake onto the Dusty Glacier on May 4. The next day dawned cloudy, with the threat of storm, but we decided to approach the face “for a look.” A six-mile skin took us around onto the Kennedy Glacier, and the gods were with us, as the weather held off and the face was plastered. We spent the afternoon scoping the most obvious line on the face, the icy smears taken by the Jacks, which did, after all, deserve finishing.

Over the next three days we climbed the northwest face, finding excellent conditions. The bulk of the route was pure ice to Scottish 5, with several harder mixed pitches. We made a few variations on the Jacks line, one of which provided the mixed crux at hard Scottish 7. Where the Jacks were forced to descend the north spur, we continued directly through the second rock band on new ground, then straight to the summit via the upper icefield and north spur. The weather had held off until summit day, which was savagely cold and windy. We descended that night to sheltered ground on the Cathedral Glacier for our third (and first lying down) bivvy. As food ran out we spent a couple of nervous days waiting for our pickup, but nothing could dampen the elation of climbing this incredible face, all within a week of leaving the U.K.

RICH CROSS, *United Kingdom*

## BAFFIN ISLAND

*Bylot and Baffin Islands, ascents and exploration.* In May, Louise Jarry and I made a 30-day exploratory ski tour of 300km, with eight peak ascents, from the village of Pond Inlet, Nunavut Territory. On May 1 we were taken by snowmobile on a 5-hour ride to the west coast of Bylot Island, 21km east-southeast of Canada Point. Wishing to avoid polar bears, we moved north,



The Borden skiing and climbing route. Greg Horne