

We descended the southwest gully; the peak's original route, then proceeded east back to our camp after crossing a small canyon with a waterfall.

It appears to me there could be a few more routes still worth doing on this peak for those interested. We rate our 1,000m route TD 5.8 60°.

RAY BORBON, AAC



Caroline Van Hemert packing next to the Sirocco on a dock on the Homathko River, about two kilometers upriver of Butte Inlet. Patrick Farrell

*Mt. Waddington, possible variation and bushwhack from the sea.* On July 28 Patrick Farrell and I began the approach to Mt. Waddington following the Munday's first 1926 attempt via Coola Creek. This journey proved to be unusual in several ways. First, we approached overland, unsupported, from the ocean, a route that hasn't been reported since the late 1970s. We planned to approach from the water in a single push, without ferrying loads or receiving air assistance. Also, before arriving at our jump-off point, we sailed from Bellingham, WA in a 27' Catalina [sail boat] up Butte Inlet and the heavily silted Homathko River. At low tide the mudflats surrounding the mouth of the Homathko are too shallow even for a tiny skiff, so we pored over the tide book and hoped for the best, making headway at only a knot against the river's strong current. We moored our boat at a logging camp on the east side of the Homathko River, were shuttled across via skiff, and Chuck Burchill, the resident caretaker, brought us to the mouth of Coola Creek.

From here we planned to follow the recommendation in Don Serl's guidebook to the Waddington Range, which suggests that Scar Creek should be avoided at all costs, leaving Coola Creek as a supposedly favorable alternative. Our experience suggested otherwise [the good Mr. Serl prefers helicopters—Ed.]. We battled head-high devil's club and tightly woven thimbleberry and salmonberry bushes, growing on steep, previously clear-cut slopes. This disturbed Pacific Northwest rainforest proved to be so impenetrable that we took off our packs and rolled

them ahead of us to pack down the thorny vegetation so we could climb atop it. At times in the horrendous terrain we made only a mile in over eight hours; sometimes one of us braced the other while trying to scramble up or over downed logs on the thrashed, uneven hillside.

After eventually reaching the glacier, we were unable to follow the suggested route, which skirted the edge of the glacier between the rock and ice, because of significant glacial retreat. The glacier was also far too broken up at its terminus to access, and thus we continued on through the forest and joined the Scar Creek approach route on top of the ridge leading to Pivot Dome. From here, we accessed the Waddington Glacier, and traveled without problems, other than being pinned down by weather at the Agur-Munday col at 9,100'. We dropped to the Corridor Glacier and wrapped around the impressive southwest face of Mt. Waddington to our final high camp, on the Dais Glacier at 7,000'. The next morning, July 4, we began our ascent under a nearly full moon, heading up the Dais Glacier to an alternate couloir line 150 yards to the right of the commonly ascended Dais Couloir. This route would not be visible from camp on Dais Glacier, lying between the Dais Couloir and prominent left-leaning couloirs to the right. Accessing the couloir presented a snow step of half a lead, followed by 650 feet of ice up to 50°. To our knowledge, this variation has not been previously climbed. We summited the northwest peak that afternoon, under beautiful skies (alpine grade D).

Due to the unfavorable conditions of our approach route, we returned to the Homathko River via Scar Creek, despite the miserable reports we'd heard. The return to the Homathko River down the Scar Creek drainage, while very steep at times, offered much more feasible travel than Coola Creek, and we recommend this approach over the latter. During our 11-day trip we encountered no other people, only a cougar, brown bear, and wolverine.

CAROLINE VAN HEMERT

*Mt. Combatant, The Incisor, The Smoke Show.* John Furneaux, Paul Bride, and I made base camp on a protected ledge 500 feet above the Tiedemann Glacier on Day Trip Ridge, directly below the unclimbed 2,000' south face of the Incisor. We fixed five pitches, enabling us to work out the free moves on the first 1,000', 500' of which is an overhanging headwall. With one day of rest, John and I left camp at 6 a.m. on July 17 and climbed to our high point halfway up the tower in only two hours, leaving behind four 5.11 pitches, a 5.12b 200' offwidth, and a 5.13 face pitch that I managed with one fall. By 10 a.m. we reached the top of the Incisor, after more 5.10 and 5.11 pitches on gold alpine granite. We had accomplished our goal of a new route on the Incisor. We then linked into Belligerence for another 1,500' of sharp, difficult ridge, called the Jawbone, and climbed 1,000' more vertical rock to Mt. Combatant's summit, which we reached after 11.5 hours. We placed no bolts; several cruxes were protected by bird beaks. We rappelled to a snow shelf and traversed into the Combatant-Waddington col.

The south face of the Incisor is one of the grandest unexplored pillars of perfect granite I have seen. The potential for new hard aid or free routes is vast. The rock is similar to the upper ramparts of El Capitan. A savvy party could link vertical to overhanging features between Belligerence and our route to create something in the 5.11 to 5.12 range. There is at least 500 feet of unclimbed rock separating the two routes. You can put your rock shoes on at our safe and comfortable base camp, and there is ample snow there to fill your water needs. Good hunting!

MATT MADDALONI, *Canada*