

we climbed down toward Huntington's southwestern side (Death Valley), making one rappel. We started climbing the southwest face at 7:00. First we climbed continuously up 800m of ice (55°) on the Phantom Wall. After passing a steep gully (one pitch, M5), a remarkable gully appeared overhead. The ice in the gully was thin and the granite smooth. It was not easy to get reliable protection, but the actual climbing was comfortable and brought us fun. The maximum steepness was 90°, and the grade was AI5 and M5. We climbed 450m in this gully, then reached the South Ridge (Jay-Woolums, 1979). We got more tired climbing the ice on the ridge. Just below the summit was a 20m serac that began at 95°. We reached the 3,730m summit at 19:00, then descended via the west ridge. It was a long descent, with over 20 rappels. The complicated routefinding consumed us. At 2:00, 22 hours after leaving, we returned to base camp.

This line might have already been climbed, due to its prominent location, but I couldn't find any record in the literature. Or it may be a variation of the Phantom Wall route. Anyway, this line was so beautiful, and we enjoyed the climbing. We named the route Shi-Shi (1,800m, Alaska Grade 4, M5 AI5). Shi-Shi means a person who works to realize his worldly ambitions at the risk of his death, like a Samurai. Shi-Shi never regrets, even if his body is thrown in a ditch or a ravine after his cruel death. The person like Shi-Shi always must imagine his body lying in a ditch.

We flew to the Kahiltna Glacier base camp on May 5. After waiting out a week of intermittent bad weather, we traveled up the Northeast Fork Kahiltna Glacier, weaving our way among the many icefalls and hanging glaciers to reach Denali's 2,500m southwest face. We started climbing the Denali Diamond (Becker-Graage, 1983) on May 19. On day three, the crux pitches appeared, with continuous 90° sections. At the uppermost part, there was no ice in the corner, so we used dry-tooling technique. We took the left-hand line of the chimney, climbed by the first ascent party. I supposed it was also the line of the second ascent, reported at M7 with two point of aid. I also used two rest points, but regret using the protection for rest and believe a completely free ascent possible. On day five we reached the summit of Denali (6,194m), following the upper Cassin Ridge. We went down to base camp via the West Buttress.

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*Idiot Peak, The Mini-Intellectual, and Peak 11,520', repeat to summit cornice.* Chris Thomas and I climbed the sub-peak immediately south of Mt. Huntington's South Ridge route on May 9. Beginning from the Mt. Huntington base camp (ca 8,000') at 11:00 p.m. on May 8, we climbed to the "upper park" snowfield (ca 10,000') on the Harvard Route. We then made a descending traverse south-southeast below Huntington's towering Phantom Wall until we reached the fan of the large gully that drains from the col separating Mt. Huntington from the sub-peak. Returning to upward progress, we surmounted a 70° ice bulge and crested a snowy rib, to attain the rotten gulch that provides access to the stunning bobsled run-like ice couloir arching directly to the summit. We simul-climbed the 600' gully, which consists of two snowfields and two steep steps of loose, scantily protected rock. At last we reached the ice and raced up the 1,200'-vertical couloir of perfect 70° alpine ice and straddled the summit (ca 10,700') as it started to snow. We rappelled, and fortunately the snow squall subsided, because the gully to which we were returning would spell doom during a snowfall. The sun emerged, and the return trip was enlivened by multiple rockfall events, which resembled dismounted jet engines at full throttle hurtling end-over-end down the southwest face of Mt. Huntington,



The Mini-Intellectual on Idiot Peak. Will Mayo

occasionally colliding with the wall and exploding into white rock dust like the final flash of a firework with the accompanying delayed "BOOM." We finally staggered back into base camp at 10:00 p.m. on May 9 after having ascended and descended ca 5,100' vertical of demanding terrain in 23 hours.

We named the route The Mini-Intellectual and chose the name Idiot Peak for the summit. We named it for ourselves, for climbing such an insignificant peak with such significant objective hazards, and to continue the longstanding tradition of naming mountains after Presidents.

On May 17 I soloed the striking ice couloir, clearly visible from Mt. Huntington's base camp, that bisects the 2,800' north-northeast face of Peak 11,520'. The face is 2,800' of vertical relief, and took five hours from the 'schrund to the summit-ridge cornice (13 hours round trip from base camp).

It involved a short 80° step of exceedingly thin climbing at 400' and a short 85° step of ice at 1,200'. Otherwise, the couloir arches up like a parenthesis, reaching the ridge just to the west (right) of the enormous cornice and is mostly 70° ice with an easing angle at the top. On the descent I stuck a rope after about eight rappels, cut what I could off the end, and continued for another 16 or so 100' rappels.

Jack Tackle later informed me that, 48 hours after I had climbed it, the couloir ran from top to bottom, leaving a pile of serac debris at its base. This climb was one of the least prudent outings of my life and also one of the most exhilarating.

[Editor's note: Unbeknown to Mayo at the time of his ascent, this couloir on Peak 11,520' was climbed by Marty Beare and Pat Deavoll in 2003.]

WILL MAYO, AAC

*Thunder Mountain, new route attempt, and other ascents.* Over about three weeks in May, Ken Glover and I climbed a little in the Alaska Range. First, we flew into base camp below the south face of Thunder Mountain, where we endured about a week of good-to-great weather and repeated the Cordes-DeCario mixed line (Deadbeat, 2001) in about 24 hours (including a nice five-hour nap on top while waiting for the gully to calm down). We also did about 3,000'-vertical on the big, unclimbed rock ridge to the right of the snafflehounds' gully [Walk of the Schnitzelkings, Duepper-Traxler, 1999; for lines on this face, see *AJ* 2005, p. 192], retreating after about two days (one bivy plus an into-the-darkness climbing day). We followed the ridge as much as possible, though we went around a few towers, and turned back about 400'-vertical and three gendarmes shy of the summit. Not quite a new route but a worthwhile effort, resulting in much fun and a close call, with a rope-sawing fall on a sharp edge. The climbing was about 5.10 A1 (probably would go free in the 5.10+ or low 5.11 range) on great rock, with the odd ice/mixed move, and lots of easier terrain. This is the line attempted the year before by Jeremy Frimer and Jay Burbee.

Tired from Thunder and all the good weather, we got a lift to Kahiltina base camp and