

## LOFOTEN

*Austvagoy Island, Vagakallen, second ascent of Freya.* Dusan Janak and I arrived on the island of Austvagoy hoping to climb on the big north face of Vagakallen (942m). We were welcomed by six days of perfect weather and made the second ascent of Freya, the 800m, 30-pitch route climbed by Daniela and Robert Jasper in July 1998. Freya climbs the front face of the mountain's most prominent feature, the Storpillaren (*Great Pillar*), which was once dubbed the "Bonatti Pillar of Lofoten," and was graded IX or 7c and new wave A3+.

We climbed Freya from late afternoon on June 12 to early morning on the 16th. Our first bivouac was on a grass ledge at the top of pitch eight, the second at the top of pitch 13, below the big corner with the hardest climbing. The corner gave three pitches: IX, which we climbed AF [AF means that all the moves were climbed free but with rest points—Ed.]; IX-, also AF; and VIII+/IX-, which we climbed onsight. We climbed the next three pitches on aid, at A3+, A3, and A2+. We then rested for a few hours on a small ledge, before finishing the route and descending to the valley.

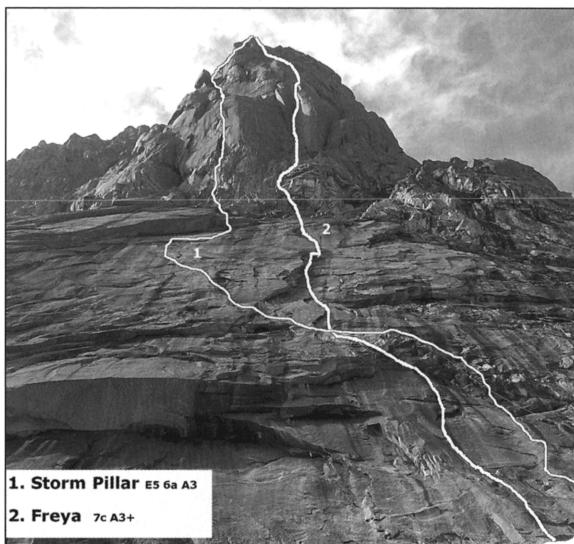
Apart from the belays, there is only one bolt, on pitch three. Although we hauled a portaledge, one is probably unnecessary, as there are good ledges on the wall

JAN KREISINGER, *Czech Republic*

*Austvagoy Island, Vagakallen, second ascent of Storm Pillar.* From June 16 to 18 Vasek Satava and I made the second ascent of Storm Pillar on the Storpillaren of Vagakallen. The route was first climbed in September 2003 by Louise Thomas and Mike "Twid" Turner (U.K.). This pair spent

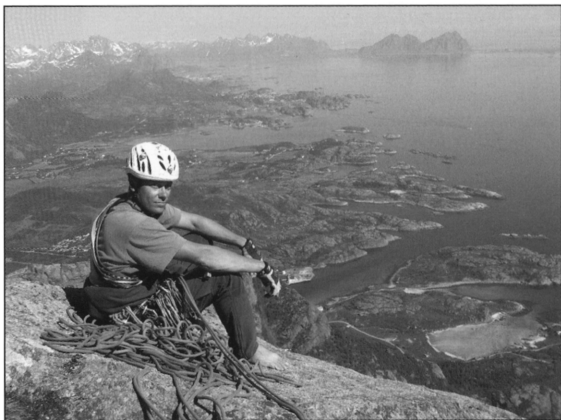
two days fixing the lower section, then made three portaledge camps on the wall, climbing for three days and waiting out two days of stormy weather, to complete the 19-pitch route at British E5 6a A3.

We had a small amount of information from Twid and felt it might be possible for us to make a free ascent. We got a detailed topo from the climbing pub in Hemingsvaer. On the first day we onsighted the lower slabby part of the wall and slept at a grassy spot above the big terrace (top of pitch eight). Next day we continued, planning to make a free ascent of pitch 12, the first aid pitch. However, we met three ugly pitches, including the very steep "water-



**1. Storm Pillar** E5 6a A3  
**2. Freya** 7c A3+

The north face of Vagakallen, Lofoten, looking steeply up the Storpillaren (Great Pillar) and showing (1) Storm Pillar (800m, E5 6a A3, Thomas-Turner, 2003) and (2) Freya (800m, 7c A3+, Jasper-Jasper, 1998). Pavel Jonak



On the top of the Storpillaren, Vagakallen, after a successful repeat of the 800m Storm Pillar. Behind is part of the coastline and off-shore islands of Austvagoy, the main island of Lofoten. *Pavel Jonak*

fall" 11th pitch, which had been given the grade E4 5c. We managed to onsight this hard pitch; the grade was a joke. Above, we discovered that we would be unable to bivouac, as we were not carrying a portaledge. It took us over three hours, using all the gear we had, to overcome the A3 pitch. Without resting for part of the day, we couldn't even attempt to free this pitch. We also felt that we would probably need to replace much of the gear or drill a few bolts. Although there was gear every half a meter in the crack, it was generally poor.

We continued up, looking for a place to rest, but there wasn't a ledge big enough even to sit on, so we continued through the night, which was still quite light at this time of year. At the top of pitch 16, which we reached at 9 a.m., we found a big square block that we could sit on and sleep for three hours in the morning sun. After this rest we climbed the A2+ pitch, which again might be possible to free-climb except for problems with protection. Above, easier pitches led to the top of the pillar. After taking photos we rappelled the route. Due to overhangs and poor belays, rappelling was almost as adventurous as the climb, but we made it down in a few hours.

During my visit to Wales in 2004 I tried to understand the British grading system. Here in Norway I stopped worrying about it, accepting that just about anything could fit any grade.

PAVEL JONAK, *Czech Republic*

*Flakstadøy Island, Stortinden, Slovakiaruta.* Miro Mrava and Brano Turcek, two climbers from the Slovak Mountaineering Union, JAMES, spent two weeks in northern Norway from August 2 to 17. On the 10th they made a new route on Stortinden, an 866m peak on the island of Flakstadøy. This, the first recorded rock route on the mountain, climbed the west face (the summit is easy to reach from south or north). They completed the 1,200m route (climbing length), which they named Slovakiaruta, Alpine style in 12 hours, beginning at 6 a.m. It has two distinct parts, separated by a large terrace. The lower half is generally



The west face of Stortinden (866m) on the island of Flakstadøy, Lofoten. Marked is the line of the Slovakiaruta (1,200m of climbing, VIII-, Mrava-Turcek), the first recorded rock route on the mountain. *Miro Mrava-Brano Turcek collection*