



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 Austvågøy, 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*

slabby, with lots of vegetation, leading to an easy gully. The upper section is clean, quasi-vertical, and significantly more difficult. The route has 24 pitches, with difficulties up to VIII-.

The rock proved to be of good quality, solid granite (even in the grassy sections), and there are plenty of places to use nuts and Friends, though pitons and birdbeaks were also useful.

VLADO LINEK, *Slovak Mountaineering Union, Slovakia*

*Moskenesøy Island, Helvetestind, west face, The Next Best Thing and Norwegian Sheep Ranch.* On July 3 Adam Stack and I climbed a six-and-a-half pitch line on what is locally known as Den Franske Pillaren (*the French Pillar*) on the west face (*Hell's Wall*) of Helvetestind (606m). The route, which we named *The Next Best Thing*, was 5.10+ and probably shares some common ground with the original line on the French Pillar, which was put up over six days in 1983 by Anne and Eric Lapied and party, though no one here quite knows where the Lapied line goes. From the top of the pillar we continued with 150m of easy simulclimbing/scrambling to the summit ridge, making our route 450m long. It was great climbing in a beautiful setting. We descended by the normal route on the south ridge (4th Class).



The west face of Helvetestind, on the island of Moskenesøy, Lofoten. Two routes on the French Pillar, which almost certainly share some common ground with the original 1983 line, are marked: (1) *The Next Best Thing* (ca. seven pitches, 5.10+, Stack-Wiik, 2005), (2) *Norwegian Sheep Ranch* (six pitches, 5.11, Caldwell-Rodden, 2005). In the middle of the face to the left is an incomplete route that stopped two pitches short of the top (11 pitches, 5.8 A1, Jensen-Meyer, 1984). *Odd-Roar Wiik*