

# CLIMBS AND EXPEDITIONS

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## 2007

*Accounts from the various climbs and expeditions of the world are listed geographically. We generally bias from north to south and from west to east within the noted countries, but the priority is on a logical flow from one mountain range to the next. We begin our coverage with the Contiguous United States and move to Alaska in order for the climbs in Alaska's Wrangell Mountains to segue into the St. Elias climbs in Canada.*

*We encourage all climbers to submit accounts of notable activity, especially long new routes (generally defined as U.S. commitment Grade IV—full-day climbs—or longer). Please submit reports as early as possible (see Submissions Guidelines at [www.AmericanAlpineClub.org/AAJ](http://www.AmericanAlpineClub.org/AAJ)).*

*For conversions of meters to feet, multiply by 3.28; for feet to meters, multiply by 0.30.*

**Unless otherwise noted, all reports are from the 2006 calendar year.**

## NORTH AMERICA

### CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES

#### *Washington*

##### CASCADE RANGE

*Washington, summary of activity.* [Note: In addition to mention in this summary, several of the bigger routes have individual reports, below—Ed.] The Cascades saw a fairly typical year of new route activity, with notable winter ascents, ski descents, and summer ascents. Backcountry ski descents continue to grow in popularity, 2006 highlights being Ross Peritore's descent of the Triple Couloir on Dragontail Peak, and Sky Sjue's descent of the Kautz Headwall on Mt. Rainier. Sjue teamed up with numerous partners to make notable descents on Mt. Logan, Mt. Stuart, and West McMillan Spire. A new traverse, over 30 miles, given the current access conditions, was pioneered in the Twin Sister Range.

The 2006-7 winter's smaller-than-typical windows of cold temps and high pressure limited access to a lot of winter alpine climbs, but some great lines were done. Arguably the biggest climb of the winter was the Northeast Face (IV WI4+ M3) of Three Fingers Peak by Dave Burdick and John Frieh. New routes continue to be established within an hour's drive of Seattle,

including Spindrift Daze (III AI3+) on Abiel Peak, by Kurt Hicks, Matt Cusack, and Bob Masasi, and the Conlin-Gullberg Route (III WI3+ M4), by Dave Conlin and Scott Gullberg, on the north face of Kent Peak. Wayne Wallace and Gary Yngve climbed the hardest new ice route on Snow Creek Wall, the North Dihedral Direct-Swing and a Prayer (300m, IV WI5 M6R).

Alpine ascents during 2006 demonstrated that potential still exists even at popular alpine areas. In the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, Dragontail Peak gained a new route on its northwest face, Dragonscar (2,500', IV 5.11R), by Max Hasson and Jens Holsten. At Washington Pass, Ross Peritore and Tony Bentley established the Direct West Face (8 pitches, III/IV 5.10+) on Pernod Spire. Mark Allen, Joel Kauffman, and Tom Smith established Mojo Rising (6 pitches, III 5.11 A1), a direct line on the northwest face of South Early Winters Spire.

Perhaps the most remarkable lines were climbed by Wayne Wallace, Mike Layton, and Eric Wolfe in the Picket Range. In mid-August Wallace and Layton made the first ascent of the Haunted Wall on Spectre Peak (2,100', IV 5.9+). Photos of this wall had led to years of attempts and speculation. Layton returned to the area with Eric Wolfe to make the first ascent of Plan 9 on The Blob (16 pitches, IV 5.10). But the most lauded climb of 2006 was Wayne Wallace's epic solo first ascent of Mongo Ridge (VI 5.10-), a mile-long line on West Fury Peak with 4,000' of elevation gain.

The *Northwest Mountaineering Journal* is an annual online presentation, of the accomplishments of climbers and skiers, and documents the history of our travels in the mountains from the North Cascades to Mt. Hood. *NWMJ* issues are typically published in late summer, covering activity from April 1 to March 31, and can be found at [www.nwmj.org](http://www.nwmj.org).

CHRIS SIMMONS AND ALASDAIR TURNER, *Northwest Mountaineering Journal*, AAC

*Twin Sister High Route.* An easily accessible alpine training ground during the 1980s, the Twin Sister Range on the western edge of the Mt. Baker Wilderness is now isolated behind miles of private and gated logging lands. From May 12-14 Mark Allen, Dr. Greg Balco, Paul Kimbrough, and I made the first known ski traverse (V class 4 AI1 50°) of the entire range, going from south to north: Step Sister Peak to North Twin Sister Peak. The first day involved whiteout navigation in the morning and ski descents of the north faces of Last Sister Peak (5,562') and Saddle Slab Peak (5,802'), as well as a traverse along the east side of the range beneath Nancy, Barbara, and Trisolace peaks, and across the third largest glacier/ice field in the range, which we christened the Ripple Glacier.

On day two we crossed to the west side of the range at Saddle Slabs, skied the North Face of Cinderella (6,480'), and watched Mark ski the proudest line of the trip—the South Couloir of Little Sister Peak (6,600'). Crossing a series of cols past Hayden and Skookum peaks led to the technical crux: crossing the range for the third time to gain the Sisters Glacier just south of South Twin Sister Peak. What we expected to be a simple mixed and steep snow climb proved to be 40m of 4th-class rock followed by 100+m of 50° ice and mixed rock. Our thin rack (one hex, two cams, four stoppers) and short 8mm ropes (one 20m, one 30m) meant that we had to pitch it out on the rock and haul packs and skis, then Mark and Paul simul-climbed on one rope while Greg and I simul-climbed on the other. When we reached the ridge at sunset, we were surprised to find not a simple ski descent, but 100+m of rappelling. Double-rope rappels and down-climbing shenanigans led to a final fixed 40m single-strand rappel with a knot pass. We started setting up camp at 2:00 a.m.