

Asta Nunaat in Schweizerland showing the line of the first ascent, Tartaruga (18 pitches, 7b A2, Fichtner-Schäli-Hainz, 2006). Roger Scháli collection

covered in icebergs, is sobering. Our only means of transport back to civilization is by small, shaky fishing boat, and sometimes these cannot penetrate the fjord due to ice. In any case we are unable to make radio contact with them from here, and it would take days on foot to reach the nearest Inuit village.

Andi Fichtner, Christoph Hainz, and I flew to Kulusuk with Iceland Air and traveled four hours by boat to the village of Tinitequilaq. From there it took seven hours up an unnamed glacier to reach base camp. We had information from a friend in South Tyrol, who had married a local girl. From mid-July to mid-August we climbed a previously unnamed rock peak. Despite considerable bad weather with heavy rain, we completed a fine crack system up the compact west face. We have named the mountain Asta Nunaat and called our route Tartaruga (18 pitches, 7b A2).

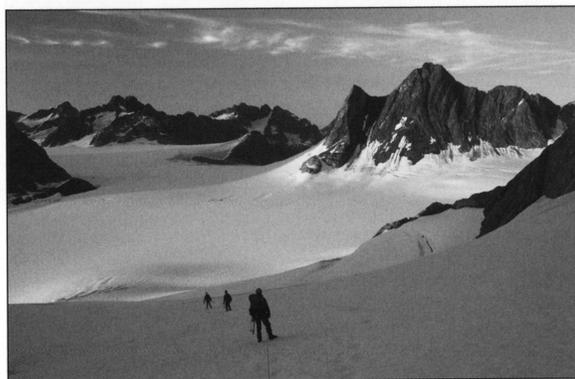
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*Schweizerland, first ascents.* In late June the Cambridge University East Greenland Expedition set off for Schweizerland. Our destination was an area of 20km by 40km situated to east of the Knud Rasmussen Glacier, just south of the Arctic Circle. Over five weeks James Dynes, Lachy Low, Steve Mounsey, and I aimed to put up new routes and make first ascents of peaks up to 1,600m. Several ski-touring parties had visited the area, but we found no evidence of climbing expeditions prior to ours.

The Danish Polar Center has recently changed its regulations, and a permit is no longer required to visit this area. We reached Kulusuk by scheduled flight, our unwillingness to pay excess baggage or freight costs resulting in each man wearing 15kg of gear on the plane, a strat-



One of the four base camps established by the Cambridge University expedition to Schweizerland in 2006. The team climbed the two peaks in the background, linked by an almost horizontal ridge. *Mark Reid*



The area of Schweizerland east of the Knud Rasmussen Glacier. Most of the peaks visible remain unclimbed. *Mark Reid*

egy that miraculously worked. We chartered Inuit-owned boats to transport us to near the snout of the vast Knud Rasmussen Glacier, from which we spent five days ferrying 500kg of equipment and supplies to the snowline. Once we reached snowline, overland travel became more efficient; we hauled everything in pulks.

We spent the next few weeks making alpine-style first ascents up to AD, operating from four base camps during the course of the expedition. We do not recommend a few of these routes, due to horrendously loose rock. The worst incident, which made for a particularly spicy day, involved a falling boulder the size of a washing machine severing a rope. We lost about two weeks of climbing to appalling weather, mostly relentless rain and poor visibility, but by the time the boat arrived to pick us up, we had made eight first ascents. We also climbed a mountain at the edge of the expedition area but found a cairn and an empty sardine tin. A label displaying “Produce of West Germany” indicated that we had been beaten to this summit by a few decades. On our way out we removed not only our own trash but also huge amounts left by a recent French expedition to the lower Knud Rasmussen.

The east coast of Greenland still offers incredible new-route potential in a stunning location. It is hard to imagine any climber not being excited by the sight of hundreds of jagged peaks, many of which await first ascents, jutting out from a vast network of glaciers. We felt we had barely scratched the surface, and our departure day came far too soon.

Our list of peaks, with GPS coordinates is as follows: Mt. Reid (931m, PD, N 66° 4.465', W 36° 8.717'); Mt. Mounsey (1,001m, AD, N 66° 4.085', W 36° 8.300'); Lachy's Jaws (1,117m, AD, N 66° 6.459', W 36° 7.988'); Mt. Dynes (1,242m, PD, N 66° 7.461', W 36° 2.970'); Sara's Left (1,110m, PD, N 66° 11.485', W 36° 3.920'); Lesser Guf (1,152m, PD, 66° 10.843', W 36° 7.979'); Greater Guf (1,231m, AD-, N 66° 10.445', W 36° 7.210'); Mt. Sardine (1,326m, PD-, N 66° 16.436', W 36° 5.947'); 6am Peak (1,589m, AD, N 66° 14.890', W 35° 58.924'). All but Sardine were first ascents.