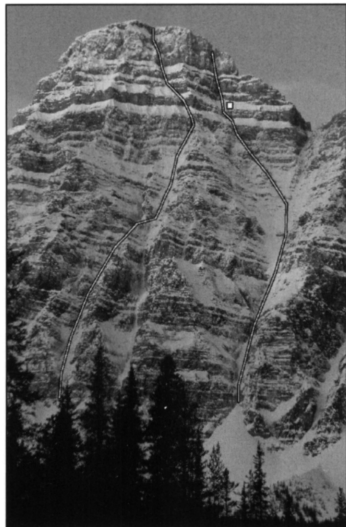


Snow Dome: (1) Borderline. (2) Aggressive Treatment. (3) Slipstream. (4) The Real Ice Porn (ends at serac band; inset). Cory Richards



Mt. Chephren's northeast face, including the Wild Thing (left) and Dogleg Couloir, with the bivy at the square. Raphael Slawinski

to claim an alpine FA one must top out on the mountain (Although certain prominent FA claims do not follow this rule). This, at least, is what some of us eager for the fame of FAs have agreed upon.

A good day was had by all on the route, marked by Dana-rope gunning all of the vertical ice, plus a bivy at 10,500' on the descent, thus bucking the trend to do routes in a rush.

IAN WELSTED, *Canada*

Mt. Chephren, Dogleg Couloir. Our second night on Chephren sticks in my mind. A night spent surfing the line between control and chaos. The final rock band on the face festooned with obscene snow mushrooms, like a scene from a demented dream. But I am getting ahead of myself. I cannot recall when I first heard the line right of the Wild Thing on Chephren's northeast face referred to as the Dogleg, but the name was appropriate and it stuck. The line starts as a snow gully, then at two-thirds height abruptly bends left, culminating in a series of chimneys cutting through the rock bands guarding the summit.

On a crisp morning in early April 2007, with the first hint of dawn lighting the eastern sky, Dana Ruddy, Eamonn Walsh, and I were a few hundred meters up the initial gully when the sun hit the face. I never cease to be amazed at how quickly pleasure can turn to terror in the mountains. Slides came thundering down and we spent several hours hunkered under a rock outcrop. Once things quieted down, we got out as quickly as possible.

Less than twelve months later I was back, with Pierre Darbellay, enticed by a full moon and a good forecast. An avalanche tried to toss me down the giant snow cone below as I soloed the initial ice step, but it was the only one all day. We simul-climbed past our previous high point, through more ice steps, up a broad snowfield, and into a narrowing couloir. By mid-afternoon the couloir had steepened to a vertical corner. We pulled out the rest of the rack and the other rope, and got down to business.

The next two pitches, thinly iced, with decent rock gear, would have been fun had it not been for the overnight pack. But after some whining, I grunted onto the largest ledge girdling Chephren's summit block. A crater in the slope blasted out by a snow mushroom that had fallen from somewhere above helpfully exposed some choss into which to drive iron, lash it all

together, and call it an anchor. The next rockband went easily, and it was time to find a bivy. We slept so well in our comfortable cave that we overslept the alarm. Outside, the clouds were barely above our bivy site. By mid-morning it started snowing, and suddenly the sky was full of rocks, and Pierre came hammering down the chimney. We found the tool he had lost during the fall, but his hip was bruised, and I went up to finish the pitch.

As he climbed past my stance, I remarked cheerfully that it looked like the angle eased above, the chimney turning into a snow gully. For the first but not the last time that day, I was right about the snow but wrong about the angle. Snow choked the overhanging chimney above, and two hard pitches later we emerged onto the snow ledge below the final rock band. By then the light snow had turned into a swirling mass of heavy flakes. With strange detachment I watched small slides start on the ledge and gather volume as they disappeared down the chimney, following the parallel lines of the ropes. Tools slid off of marginal edges, and crampons sparked on the smooth limestone, as I managed the next pitch without falling. Actually, that is not quite true. I was standing on a snow mushroom fiddling a nut into crack when I felt myself fall—and then stop. The umbilical on my tool had caught my plummet. While Pierre seconded the pitch, I tried to memorize the terrain above the belay in the fading light. The chimney system continued straight up, while off to the right weird snow blobs seemed to promise lower-angle terrain. I headed that way first, only to retreat below a blank wall. I was balancing between snow mushrooms, traversing back left above Pierre's stance, when overhanging rock and snow rushed upward. I bounced to a stop 10m lower, unharmed.

I yarded back up to the cam that had held me and that now became the anchor. Pierre came up and continued across the traverse that I had helped clear of treacherous snow formations. At 3 a.m. I started up what I hoped would be the last pitch. The keychain thermometer on my pack showed -15°C . Between the fatigue and the spindrift blowing from the summit ridge, it felt colder. My first charge, up the right-hand branch of the chimney, ground to a halt at an unprotected, overhanging offwidth. The left-hand branch did not look much more promising, but after trying to squeeze and then dry-tool my way up, I shamelessly hung from a few knifeblades to gain more reasonable ground above.

Wind gusted across the summit ridge as I struggled into my belay jacket and overmitts. I was too cold and tired to feel exultation, only relief. Pierre came up, somehow manhandling both our packs. As we traversed across the wind-scoured southern slopes, they slowly turned from black to gray. Day was breaking. Six hours later, after wading down avalanche slopes that thankfully stayed put, and post-holing to the ground with every step in the woods, we were back at the car. We had a bottle of single malt waiting for us, but were too dehydrated to celebrate. We brushed a thick layer of fresh snow from the roof of the car and drove off to find water.

Mt. Chephren, Dogleg Couloir (V+ M7 A1), March 22-24, 2008.

RAPHAEL SLAWINSKI, *Canada*, AAC

Mt. MOG, Owens-Walsh, and Mt. Bell, Zeitgeist. Alpine climbing—or perhaps “alpine cragging”—on lesser known, lower elevation peaks (but still with decent-sized faces) is catching on in the Canadian Rockies. This winter I enjoyed a number of great days on these sorts of objectives, including some new routes.

On October 26 Eamonn Walsh and I headed for the north face of an unnamed 2,680m peak in the Chickadee Valley, just on the B.C side of the Continental Divide, off the west side