

Iceland

Skardatindar, new route. In February Jean-Baptist Deraeck, Sébastien Ibanez, Sébastien Ratel, and I climbed what we think is a new route on Skardatindar (1,385m). We did not have any information on this mountain. We expected to find a route, but couldn't know in advance because it's a half-day walk to the foot of the wall. We did not need to climb to understand that the rock is rotten—to see it is enough! On the other hand, we saw that a beautiful line of ice and mixed climbing seemed doable. We had a bad night bivouacking in the moraines above the glacier due to the wind. The following day we climbed up the corridor 40–50°, then a sheet of 60°. We then found ourselves at the foot of a mixed passage of M4+, and finally, despite the bad rock and some stiff slopes, we climbed an arête in the face. Eventually the slopes of the center of the face led us to our line in the gully itself. Ice and steep snow took us to the foot of the last M5 pitch. It was the hardest and certainly the most exposed part of the climb, and we were battered by a furious wind that knocked us off balance. Easy slopes then took us to the top. We descended along the edge (on the right when looking at the wall), then a little downclimbing and a rappel took us to the huge glacier below. Because of the high wind we hiked to the road, but the next day we regretted this because we could have climbed the beautiful waterfalls on the right side of the face. We called our route Jökullélé (500m, TD+, M5, WI4). Jökull means glacier in Icelandic.

The few days that remained did give us a little ice and some rock, but we couldn't climb the beautiful ice lines because of a rapid rise in temperature. This is a bit of a problem in Iceland: when it is cold, the days are very short, and when the days are longer, it can be too hot for the ice! But that is the chance you take when you try an alpine holiday in this lowland country.

During this trip Christophe Moulin climbed with Julie Gerber, Aurelie Leveque, Cecile Chauvin, and Laure Gaudin to open a route on the left side of the Porcelain Wall. And Patrick



Skardatindar, showing the Jökullélé route by Benoist, Deraeck, Ibanez, and Ratel. *Stéphane Benoist*



On the approach to Skardatindar. *Stéphane Benoist*

Pessi climbed with Basile Ferran, Mathieu Maynadier, Mathieu Detrie, François Delas, and Benoit Monfort on the right side of the Porcelain Wall, combining Doug Scott's route with a more recent route opened by Icelanders.

STÉPHANE BENOIST, *FFCAM, France*

Norway

SPITZBERGEN

Atomfjella Mountains, new German-Swiss routes. I first took note of Svalbard, as Spitzbergen is called in Norwegian, in 1999 when reading an expedition report about mountaineering in Atomfjella. Spitzbergen lies a mere 1,500km from the North Pole and, true to its name and unlike the flat Pole, promised to be a mountaineering paradise par excellence. Markus Stofer and I were delighted to be invited to join Gregor Kresal from Slovenia on the Atomfjella, the steepest mountain range of the island. Grega had been there twice before.

Spitzbergen is roughly as large as the Iberian Peninsula, and Longyearbyen, its capital, has a population of 1,500. A hundred years ago one would have set off from here with sledge dogs, but modern



Deutsch Slowenische Freundschaft on the "Triangle" northwest face. *Robert Jasper*