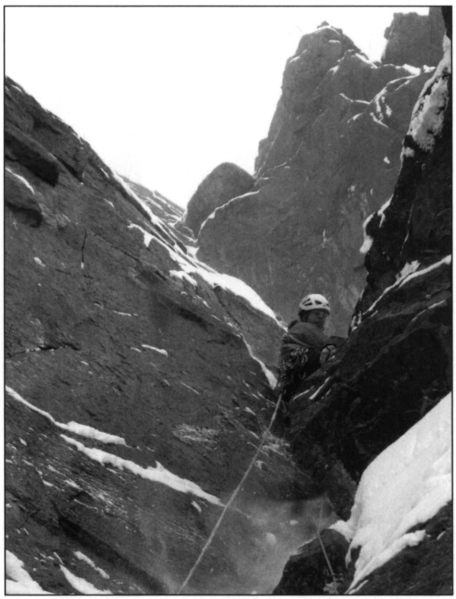


Robert Jasper on Deutsch Slowenische Freundschaft. *Markus Stofer*

north faces in the Alps, and almost all are virgin and circa 900m high. But we were so far out there that whenever the plane flew overhead toward the North Pole it kindled human warmth and a desire for civilization.

We were guests in the kingdom of the polar bears and we protected our camp with an alarm fence including a gun. We realized that this wasn't a game when we discovered fresh frying-pan sized footprints on the glacier close to our base camp. Luckily they led down and back out to the fjord. It seems climbers are less interesting than fat seals down on the ice pack.

Our complete expedition team was Anderj Erceg, Grega Kresal, and Boris and Klemen Zupanc from Slovenia; Markus Stofer from Switz-erland; and me from Germany. All routes were climbed alpine style without bolts and first ascended from the ground up. Only friends, nuts and pegs were used for protection.

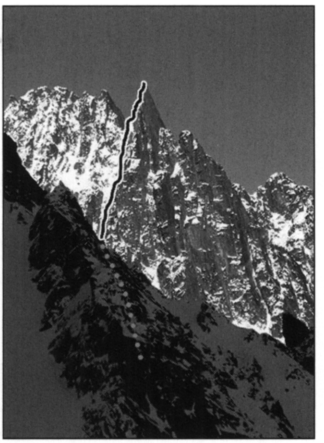
The following are the first ascents put up by Markus Stofer and myself: Chadwickrüggen, northern foresummit, ca 1,600m, north face, "Knut" (600m, M5), possible first ascent (descent via east face to southern col 500m 40–45°), April 17; Ceresfjt, 1,677m (N 79°08.166', E 016°55.662'), west face, "Northern Siesta" (750m, M6), (descent from summit circa 500m east along the crest, down S face 40° to glacier, then west to the col, down west face 45°), April 19; Perriertoppen, 1,717m (N 79°09.237', E016°46.763'), south face, "Ich möchte kein Eisbär sein" (900m, M7), (descent across summit west-southwest to foresummit, then down to col, continue down east couloir 600m, 40–45°), April 20; Chadwickrüggen, 1,641m (N 79°05.787', E 016°47.890'), east face, "Polar Pow(d)er (700m, M6), (descent from main summit down via the S couloir 700m, 45°), April 22; "Triangle" NW Face, "Deutsch Slowenische Freundschaft" (450m, M7), (descent from main summit, abseil ca 80m down via north face into gully, then descend 400m 45°), by Andrej Erceg and me.

ROBERT JASPER, *Germany*

Atomfjella Mountains, new Slovenian routes. This was my third Svalbard expedition. There were so many things I had to learn about Arctic logistical problems and the secrets of these cold mountains. The experience you gain in Svalbard is unique, and my knowledge from other parts of the world just didn't work here in the beginning. As a matter of fact, at the end of the second expedition (2006) we climbed a very good route, The Partner (600m, M6+, Kresal-Zupanc). With that route I realized that the Atomfjella Mountains were worth coming back for to try the hardest needles.

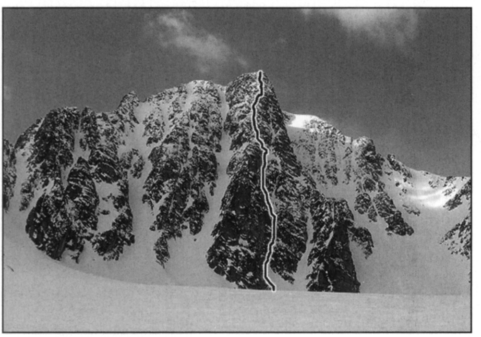
It's true that the rock is usually quite bad around Spitsbergen, which is the main island of the Svalbard Archipelago, but there is one place where it's hard to the bone. This is Atomfjella. A little copy of the Alps. The place in one word is… amazing! Mixed climbing, which is usually

a combination of snow and extremely hard rock with good drytooling cracks, can be awesome. A lot of peaks are still awaiting their first ascents, and even though people mostly think that Svalbard is a flat land, some of it is extremely steep. There are literally hundreds of walls facing all directions. The painful thing about climbing in Atomfjella is the temperature. I had never experienced such constant cold in over 23 years of climbing all around the world. When you're moving, climbing or skiing, it's still OK, but staying in your tent is sometimes pure torture. Bring only the best and warmest equipment!



Little Bears Are Dancing. *Gregor Kresal*

The Slovenian part of the team (Andrej Erceg, Boris and Klemen Zupanc, and me) climbed 10 new routes. When we were not climbing, we were skiing excellent lines down numerous couloirs. We made roughly 15 first descents on skis. For our hardest climb we had to attack the so-called Arctic Needle three times. On the second try, after 12 hours of climbing, we had to stop just five meters from the top. The blizzard was simply too strong. We left some knifeblades and copperheads on the last pitch and were finally able to free the entire route a few days later. The top was so sharp we couldn't even stand on it. And the last two meters of rock were totally unstable, so we just put our hands on the top and that was it. Crazy climbing, extraordinary landscape! We all climbed in alpine style, without leashes and without placing bolts.



Partner. *Gregor Kresal.*

Our Slovenian routes: Arctic Needle, ca 1,450m, "The Little Bears Are Dancing" (500m, M7+, 90°), A. Erceg and G. Kresal, May 3; The Ridge Pallas—Ceres, ca 1,550m, "Besnica" (600m, M6), B. and K. Zupanc, April 27; "Mirkos Route" (600m, M5), B. & K. Zupanc, April 20; Chadwick Ryggen North, ca 1,580m, "Mis Usate" (600m, M5), G. Kresal and K. Zupanc, April 24; Ceres Fjellet, 1,677m, "Rocket Men" (750m, M4), A. Erceg and G. Kresal, April 19; Chadwick Ryggen Central, 1,641m, "Bulls Eggs" (800m, M4), A. Erceg, May 2; Broad Peak, ca 1,600m, "Kapucinsky" (700m, M4+), A. Erceg. May 1; "Bulldozer" (850m, M4), G. Kresal and B. Zupanc, May 2; "Sunny Couloir" (600m, III+/M), G. Kresal and B. & K. Zupanc, April 18; Pallas Fjellet, "Couloir Ideal" (700M, M3), G. Kresal, April 23.

GREGOR KRESAL, *Slovenia (adapted from www.planetmountain.com)*