

scrambling), only to see a thunderstorm coming at us. We hurried down as lighting came closer but lost hope when our ropes got stuck on the rappels. We sat on a small ledge like ducks waiting to be fried, but miraculously the storm passed right next to us, and we saw lightning starting forest fires in a valley below.

Next we opted for the smaller faces of the Pigeon Feathers. We thought we were climbing a new line on Lost Feather Pinnacle but ran into bolted belays on the first four pitches. After the crux pitch (5.12+ in thin cracks) we found no further sign of passage, so we're not sure what the deal is. However, the climbing was superb with an incredible dihedral and a big-fist roof crack for the seventh (last) pitch.

With Ben Ditto on Wide Awake Tower, we climbed a free variation (Wide Awake Corn Flake, 8 pitches, 5.12-) to Wide Awake (8 pitches, 5.10+ A2). We avoided the crux A2 pitch by traversing left on a delicate slab to a roof and an enormous flake the thickness of a corn flake. We also added a direct finish to the climb. The next day we woke to 20cm of snow in East Creek and decided it was time to move out.

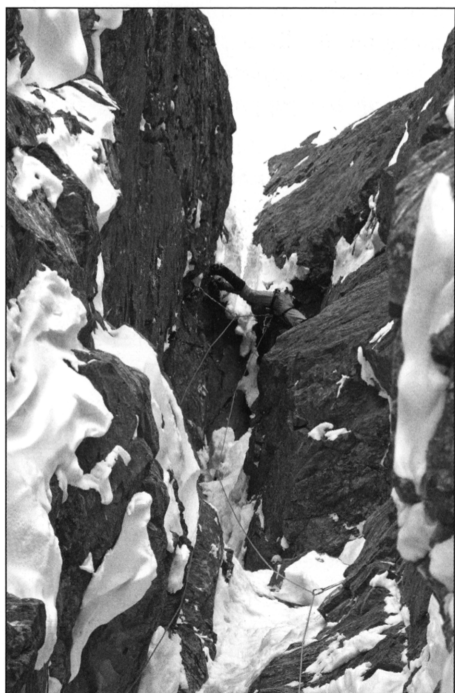
NICOLAS FAVRESSE, AAC, and SEAN VILLANUEVA, *Belgian Alpine Club*

*Canadian Rockies, summary.* After an eventful couple of years, the summer of 2008 and the winter of 2009 were relatively quiet. Given the short windows for the high peaks, and how few people are drawn to hard alpine climbing in what is a demanding yet unglamorous range, big sends in the Canadian Rockies have always been few and far between.

In July on Mt. Louis (2,682m), a spire of unusually good limestone, Brandon Pullan and Will Meinen established a significant variation start to the left of the Kain Route (III 5.6). The Gargoyle (III 5.10a) is mostly mid-fifth class with a harder crux. After some seven pitches it joins the Kain Route.



Raphael Slawinski on one of the crux pitches of Icarus Buttress on Mt. Temple. *Eamonn Walsh*



Jon Simms sending the crux on the FFA of The Wild Thing. *Jon Walsh*

Also in July Eamonn Walsh and I climbed a possibly new route on that weekend warrior's dream, the north face of Mt. Temple (3,543m). The Icarus Buttress (IV+ 5.11-) takes the prominent rib right of the classic Greenwood-Locke route (IV+ 5.9), and though the vertical gain is 1,000m, only 300m are sustained rock climbing. The crux was two pitches of 5.11-ish climbing up rather friable rock.

The steep, rocky, and remote south and west aspects of Mt. Joffre (3,449m), the highest peak in Kananaskis Country, had likely never been attempted before last summer. After hiking up the wrong valley on their first attempt in August, Steve Holeczi and Eamonn Walsh consulted a map and returned a few days later to establish the South Ridge (IV+ 5.9) over two days. Not surprisingly, the rock left something to be desired.

The winter of 2008-9 saw the establishment of the hardest multi-pitch sport-mixed route in the range. Will Meinen and Brandon Pullan began aid climbing and bolting their

way toward a distant hanging dagger on the east aspect of Pigeon Mountain two winters ago, but a long approach and overhanging rock made for slow progress. This past winter they recruited Will Gadd to redpoint the line. Gadd suggested a grade of M12 for the crux pitch to the final ice dagger. With the lower pitches featuring dry-tooling up to M9, the five or six-pitch Jimmy Skid Rig (250m, M12 WI5) is easily the hardest route of its kind in the Canadian Rockies.

But it was another multi-pitch bolted mixed route that stirred up plenty of controversy. Patrick Delaney bolted The Doors of Perception (12 pitches, M5+ WI2) on the east face of the front-range Loder Peak during the summer, using a combination of bottom-up and top-down tactics. In January 2009 Delaney returned with Mathieu Audibert to make the route's first ascent. But it quickly came to light that the line had been climbed before, aside from minor variations. In fact, while bolting the route Delaney encountered old pitons. The ensuing debate involved two issues: Just what constitutes a new route? And is bolting a line that can be climbed largely on natural gear acceptable? One thing is certain: a line that until last winter saw maybe a couple of ascents suddenly received multiple ascents within a couple of months.

The alpine world was quiet last winter though not unremarkable, as two ascents provided stark proof of the rise in standards. Both were ascents of that "hard" classic, The Wild Thing (VI M7 WI5) on the northeast face of Mt. Chephren (3,266m). In late November Jon Simms and Jon Walsh made the first free ascent (and likely fifth overall), climbing an M7 chimney to the left of the original A3 crux, in a 44-hour round-trip from the road. In February 2009 Dana Ruddy, Eamonn Walsh, and I made the sixth ascent. Motivated by a tight work schedule, we eschewed bivy gear and climbed the route in a continuous 29-hour push from base to summit.

It was the first time a Canadian Rockies grade VI had been climbed in this style in winter. We took the more challenging and aesthetic ice-climbing on the direct start, climbed by Ben Gilmore and Kevin Mahoney in December 2003 but never completed to the top. On the upper headwall we followed the original line, freeing the supposed A3 crux at well-protected M7.

RAPHAEL SLAWINSKI, *Canada, AAC*

*Baffin Island, Buchan Gulf, The Bastions, Take the Long Way Home.* After a five-day snow-machine approach, from May 2 to 14 German climbers Klaus Fengler, Stefan Glowacz, Holger Heuber, Mariusz Hoffmann, and Robert Jasper established Take the Long Way Home (ca 650m, 21 pitches, 5.13b A4) on the south face of the Bastions. After the climb, they skied for 17 days back to civilization. See Glowacz's feature article in this *Journal*.

*Baffin Island, Mt. Overlord, Overlorded.* In the Weasel Valley on July 1, Chris Atkinson and I established Overlorded (1,800m, 30 pitches, TD+ 5.10-) to Overlord's summit in 18 hours roundtrip. Although we did not see any evidence, the first half of the route, where we climbed the right side of the west-facing lower pyramid face, might follow the Traversée Pyramidale, as described in Synnott's book. (Other routes exist on big ridge/butresses on Overlord's west face.) The top half moves left across snow patches to the steeper northwest buttress. Most of the climbing is in the 5.7–5.9 range, with a few pitches up to mid-5.10 near the top. The rock is generally good except for the last pitch, which recently melted out of the summit icecap and is a maze of teetering blocks and sandy ledges.

MARC PICHÉ, *Canada*



Overlorded, on Mt. Overlord. Other routes exist to the right. Marc Piché