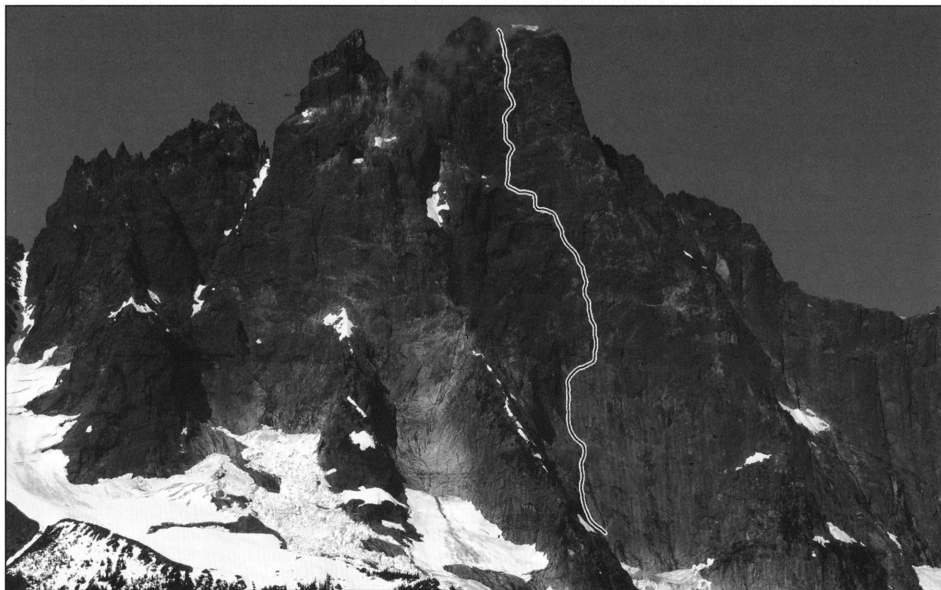


COAST MOUNTAINS

Southern Coast Mountains and Canadian Cascades. It's been a slow few years in the mountains of southwestern British Columbia. There is energy and talent concentrated in the Vancouver-Squamish-Whistler-Pemberton corridor, but the focus remains at Squamish. When these talented climbers focus on the alpine, it seems they go to established areas like the Waddington Range, the Bugaboos, the Adamants, and Patagonia, rather than hunting for new climbs closer to home.

First, a couple of older things that have recently come to light. In November 2008, on the left side of the north face of Dalton Dome, one of the summits of the Garibaldi massif, Damien Kelly and Trevor Hunt climbed a nice snow/frozen rock/gully line, avoiding troublesome seracs and finishing near the summit. The line is 350m long and AI3. In August 2007 Kelly, with Derek Flett and Justin Cassels, climbed a difficult new route on the right edge of the north pillar of Mt. Joffre. The left edge of the pillar was climbed in 1995 by Rich Prohaska and Bruce Kay, at 5.10c, but the right side is steeper for longer. The 2007 climb began with a few easy pitches, soloed, then six roped pitches, up to 5.11c (400m, TD).

The 2009 season saw more failed attempts on the East Face route on Mt. Slesse. Put up in 1997 by Sean Easton and Dave Edgar, at ED2 VI 5.9 A3+, this climb remains unrepeated. In the mid-2000s Craig McGee, with various partners, worked on free-climbing it, redpointing the first seven pitches, at 5.12c, but failed to make further progress. Last summer Squamish hotshots Will Stanhope and Andrew Boyd retreated after a few pitches, spooked by poor rock, run-out climbing, tricky route finding. Next, Washington hardmen Colin Haley and Dylan Johnson tried, bailing after about seven pitches. Haley blogged that he thought it was the



The approximate line of the Easton-Edgar (1997; first two pitches hidden). See AAJ 2003, p. 258, for other routes on this side of the Slesse massif. Drew Brayshaw

hardest route in the Cascades.

Across the Nesakwatch Creek drainage from Mt. Slesse lies the Mt. Rexford massif, well-loved by local climbers for its solid granite. In late June, Jesse Mason, Marc-Andre Leclerc, and I took advantage of reopened logging roads on the east side of the massif to climb a new route on the subsidiary Nesakwatch Spires, following the buttress just right of the Priest-Coupe Couloir to the summit of the South Nesakwatch Spire. The line went at D-, III 5.9, with 10 pitches, mostly in the 5.7 range but with a couple of short, probably avoidable cruxes.

Finally, Mt. Robie Reid has a massive northeast wall rising 1,700m vertically to the summit ridge. The true face has one route, the awesome Pacemaker (ED1/2, VI 5.10a A1), established over eight days, on the third attempt, by John Black, Reinhard Fabische, and Chris Rowe in August 1998. Last September, Chris Geisler and Tony Richardson finally made the second ascent and first free ascent of Pacemaker. They walked in from the logging road in five hours and bivied near the base, then climbed 20-some pitches, with much simul-climbing and long runouts to mid-5.10, past bolt anchors destroyed or damaged by a 2007 rockfall, to the Ice Block Ledge bivy, near the edge of the rockfall scar. Geisler estimated it at 50' wide, 60' high, and 30' deep, creating a massive new roof to circumvent. The next morning they climbed another eight long or simul-climbing pitches to the top of the face (28 pitches total, vs. nearly 40 on the first ascent), descended the standard route, and were back at their car before dark, with the route going at ED1/2, VI 5.10R.

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Pacemaker, on Robie Reid. *Scott Pick*

Mt. Desire, East Ridge. On July 17, with the support of the American Alpine Club and the McNeill-Nott Award, Brianna Hartzell, Eric Dalzell, Mike Pond, and I made our way to the Bella Coola Valley. Our objective was the unclimbed east ridge of Mt. Desire, 15 miles south-east. The brief glimpse we got of the route as the helicopter landed was our only beta. With a stellar forecast, the following morning we descended the crevassed glacier, downclimbed a 50° snow slope to a small band of rock, and climbed a ramp to the ridge proper. We began simul-climbing along the crest, occasionally pitching-out short sections of 5.7. We skirted an imposing gendarme to its north, returned to the ridge, and followed a beautiful knife-edge snow arête with amazing exposure.

Our first glimpse of the headwall gave us a collective sense of "Holy Shit!" As Mike and I studied the rock, we saw weaknesses and became enthusiastic. Brianna and Eric were less optimistic and descended, while Mike and I continued.