

Greenland

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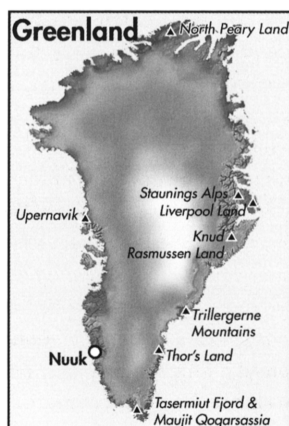
WEST COAST

Upernavik region, new rock routes. Operating from a yacht skippered by 75-year old Bob Shepton, the four-man American-Belgian team of Ben Ditto, brothers Nicolas and Olivier Favresse, and Sean Villanueva O'Driscoll climbed four new routes huge sea cliffs in or near Sortehul fjord. Their tour de force was the first ascent of the Impossible Wall, where the 850m line of Devil's Brew (5.12+ or E7 6c), climbed in 10 days, is most likely the hardest major rock climb achieved in West Greenland. The team then moved to the Cape Farewell region for five more new routes. For details see Shepton's feature article in this Journal.

Upernavik region, various routes on Qaersorsuaq and Umanaq islands. This was my fourth trip to Greenland. The previous three had been to the East Coast, so I had a good feel for what the land had to offer. The plan was the same as other visits: load the boats with as much food and climbing kit as we could feasibly carry, and have an adventure on sea and in the mountains. This time I persuaded Nigel Robinson and Sin Sinfield to accompany me. Neither had been to Greenland before, but they



Northwest face of Sanderson's Hope on the west coast of Qaersorsuaq, a famous navigational headland named in 1587. The first big-wall route on a large sea cliff above the Arctic Circle on the west coast of Greenland was climbed here in 2000, when a three-man UK-Italian team, which sailed to the base on board Bob Shepton's yacht, put up Arctic First Bern (800m, British E3 5c A3+). The following year Canadians added a second route Down North (800m, 5.10+ A1). *Olly Sanders Collection*



were experienced paddlers and climbers who could look after themselves in both environments. We shipped the kayaks and food two months prior to our arrival in Upernavik with the idea of circumnavigating two large islands, Qaersorsuaq and Nutarmiut. This would require paddling almost 300km. The trip lasted 21 days, of which five were spent rock climbing.

Any group visiting Greenland has to accept the possibility of becoming a Polar Bear dish, and it is advisable to carry a rifle to ward off, rather than kill, a bear. Our chosen area