

UNITED STATES

Alaska

Denali National Park and Preserve Mountaineering Summary, 1991. The 1991 mountaineering season on Denali began with a rumble as a major earthquake hit the range on April 30. It measured 6.1 on the Richter scale. The epicenter was just south of Mount Foraker. Huge avalanches were triggered throughout the range and there were several close calls among climbers, luckily none with injuries. The 1990-1 winter was another with heavy snow in the Alaska Range. There were no winter attempts on Mount McKinley. The weather in the spring was generally poor. An abundance of cold and stormy weather turned away most summit tries until late May when a stretch of stable weather arrived. Still, the success rate remained low until another stretch of good weather in mid to late June brought the success rate up to normal. This year, in order to maintain safe, reliable and timely air support for high-altitude rescues on McKinley, the National Park Service contracted an Areospace Lama helicopter to be stationed in Talkeetna for the mountaineering season. U.S. Army Chinook helicopters were not available as in years past. The Lama was successfully used in five major rescue missions this year. Its worthiness was especially proven after it completed two rescues above 18,000 feet, one of which required four landings on the "Football Field" at 19,500 feet. In addition, for the first time in Alaska, the Park Service implemented "short-haul" rescue using the Lama. This is a technique of inserting rescuers who are clipped into a fixed line suspended beneath the helicopter into rescue sites where it is not possible to land nearby. Once the victims have been stabilized for transport, they are extracted from the rescue site in a similar manner. The Park Service plans to keep the Lama helicopter under contract and stationed in Talkeetna for at least the next two years. Due to the unavailability of air support from the U.S. Army helicopters, the Denali Medical Research Project did not operate this season. However, the Park Service maintained a camp at the 14,000-foot basin on the West Buttress. Mountaineering rangers were able to provide emergency medical care, coordinate rescues and base their patrols from this camp. The Park Service conducted four 24-day patrols on McKinley, plus numerous other patrols in different parts of the Alaska Range. We continue to staff a ranger station in the town of Talkeetna where climbers register for their expeditions. Registration is required for all expeditions on McKinley and Foraker. Climbers headed to other areas in the South District of Denali National Park and Preserve are encouraged to register. A strong emphasis is placed on the importance of environmentally sound expeditionary climbing and sanitation practices. Additionally, mountaineers must remain self-sufficient and conduct their own rescues whenever possible.

Interesting statistics: *Number of climbers on Mount McKinley:* In 1991, 935 climbers attempted to climb McKinley. This is 63 fewer persons than in 1990. Although this is a drop of 6.3%, it still represents a vast increase over the

previous two decades: 1972=181; 1973=203; 1974=282; 1975=362; 1976=508; 1977=360; 1978=459; 1979=533; 1980=659; 1981=612; 1982=696; 1983=709; 1984=695; 1985=645; 1986=755; 1987=817; 1988=916; 1989=1009; 1990=998; 1991=935. *Success rate*: 557 (59%) of those attempting McKinley reached the summit. Ten expeditions attempted six different routes on Foraker. Four out of 28 climbers (14%) reached the summit. Nine expeditions attempted Hunter via five different routes. Five out of 24 climbers (21%) reached the summit. *Acute mountain sickness*: 79 (8%) reported symptoms. Of these, 60 (76%) were mild, 16 (20%) were moderate, 3 (4%) were severe. *Frostbite*: 43 (5%) reported some degree of frostbite. Of these 26 (60%) were mild, 11 (26%) required physician care, 6 (14%) required hospitalization. *West Buttress Route*: 680 (73%) climbers on McKinley attempted the West Buttress, by far the most popular route. It is interesting to note, however, that the percentage on the West Buttress has dropped during the past two years. Typically, 80% to 85% of the climbers on McKinley attempt the West Buttress. *Soloists*: 14 (1.5%) persons attempted a solo climb of McKinley. Eight reached the summit, including two on the Cassin Ridge. *Mountain Guiding*: 265 (28%) persons climbed with one of the seven authorized guide services. The success rate for the guided groups was 67%. They attempted the West Buttress, West Rib, Muldrow Glacier and West Buttress-Muldrow Traverse. *Nationalities*: 531 (57%) of those on McKinley were Americans and 404 (43%) from foreign countries. This is a large increase in foreign climbers. The average for the past ten years is 30%. A total of 28 nationalities was represented: Argentina=5; Australia=14; Austria=29; Barbados=1; Canada=25; Czechoslovakia=13; England=47; Finland=3; France=21; Germany=51; Hong Kong=1; India=1; Italy=21; Japan=29; Korea=50; Mexico=13; New Zealand=2; Norway=4; Poland=2; Puerto Rico=1; Scotland=9; Spain=13; Switzerland=42; USA=531; USSR=1; Yugoslavia=2. *New Routes and Interesting Activities*: On Mount McKinley, new routes were made on the start of the Cassin ridge, on the northwest face, on the southeast face above Thayer Basin and on the south face between the Orient Express and the Messner couloir. New routes were climbed on the south face of Foraker, the west face of Huntington, the south face of Dickey, the southeast face of Barrille and on P 6800 above the Ruth Gorge. [These are described in articles or in the "Climbs and Expeditions" section.]

Accidents: The National Park Service conducted five major rescues on McKinley in 1991, resulting in the evacuation of nine climbers by helicopter. An additional nine incidents were reported to the climbing rangers. Of these, two climbers were evacuated by helicopter coincidental to other rescue operations that were in process. The remainder of climbers were able to conduct their own self-rescues without assistance from the Park Service. For the first time since 1982 there were no mountaineering related fatalities in the Park. Following are the more significant accidents and incidents that occurred in 1991. *Avalanche, Multiple Injuries, Self-Rescue*: On April 25, Klass Wierenga, Frank De Vos, Frank Kleinbekman and Matthijs Wiggers of the Dutch Mount Foraker Expedition were climbing at 8000 feet on the 1974 variation of the southeast ridge of

Foraker. Just a few feet below the ridge crest, the group triggered a large slab avalanche with a five-foot crown and running about 1600 feet. All four climbers were swept to the base of the ridge. Kleinbekman and Wiggers received minor injuries and were able to dig out Wierenga, who was unconscious and suffered a pneumothorax. De Vos was semi-conscious, suffering a pneumothorax, dislocated shoulder and fractured humerus. The climbers were unable to raise help with their radio and began a self-evacuation to the landing strip on the west fork of the Kahiltna Glacier. On April 28, they were able to contact their air taxi and were flown out to Talkeetna. *Falls with Injuries, Frostbite, Acute Mountain Sickness*: On May 14, four members of the Korean Blue Fire Expedition left their high camp at 18,200 feet at Denali Pass on the West Buttress and climbed to the summit. Due to fatigue, acute mountain sickness and poor weather, the climbers became separated on the descent. Go Il-Soon, Ann Jong-Ho and Lee Beom-Kyou bivouacked in the open. On the morning of May 15, frostbitten Ann fell 100 feet while descending to camp, sustaining minor head injury. Go had frostbitten hands. Meanwhile, Lee and Park Jun-Chan, who had been waiting at Denali Pass, fell 500 feet while attempting to descend to the 17,200-foot camp to obtain food and assistance. Park sustained fractured thoracic vertebrae and Lee a cervical strain. On May 16, mountaineering rangers and the NPS Lama helicopter evacuated Ann and Go from Denali Pass and Lee and Park from 17,200 feet. *High-Altitude Pulmonary Edema, High-Altitude Cerebral Edema, Frostbite*: On May 22, Korean Kim Hong-Bin, who was camped at Denali Pass became seriously ill with severe acute mountain sickness and high-altitude pulmonary edema. Kim was lowered to the 17,200-foot camp by other climbers. On May 23, he was lowered down the Rescue Gully to 14,200 feet by the para-rescue team from the 210th Air National Guard, assisted by rangers and other climbers at the 14,200-foot camp. On May 24, he was airlifted from 14,200 feet by an Air National Guard Pavehawk helicopter. He suffered severe frostbite to both hands and pneumonia complicated by high-altitude pulmonary edema. In a related accident on May 23, Kim Geo-Bong of the Korean Mokpo University Expedition fell seriously ill with high-altitude cerebral edema while camped at 17,200 feet on the West Buttress. He was lowered down the Rescue Gully to 14,200 feet by members of his own expedition. On May 25, his condition remained critical and a ground evacuation was determined not feasible. He was airlifted from 14,200 feet by the NPS Lama helicopter. *Crevasse Fall, Multiple Injuries*: On May 29, New Zealander Tara Wingfield of the Taking the Dog for a Walk Expedition was ascending from Windy Corner to the 14,200-foot camp. While crossing a heavily crevassed area near 13,400 feet, a large snowbridge collapsed. Wingfield fell about seven feet before her rope team arrested her fall. She was immediately hoisted from the crevasse. She sustained a dislocated patella, knee sprain and fractured ribs. With assistance, she continued to the 14,200-foot camp. On May 31, she was airlifted by the NPS Lama helicopter after it was determined that a safe ground evacuation by the remaining members of her expedition was not feasible. *Acute Mountain Sickness, Search, Self-Rescue*: On June 21, Japanese climbers Hiroshi Sakurai and Hiroshi

Urayama arrived at 15,500 feet on the Haston-Scott route on the south face of McKinley. They had ascended 3500 feet from the bottom of the face that day. Urayama was struck by acute mountain sickness and felt he should be rescued. That evening, the pair began calling "May Day" on their radio. The National Park Service responded with a search plane attempting to locate the "May Day" calls. Numerous contacts were made with climbers, including the Japanese, but due to a communication barrier, the two remained unidentified. "May Day" calls were again reported on the 22nd and the NPS Lama helicopter began to search. Again the two Japanese were not identified. Urayama decided that he wasn't going to be rescued and so the pair began ascending the route very rapidly, summitting the next morning. They then descended and reported to the NPS ranger camp at 14,200 feet that they were the ones calling "May Day." With this information, the search was called off. *Open Bivouacs, Frostbite:* Late on July 3, Polish climber Krzysztof Wiecha began climbing alone to the summit of McKinley from the 17,200-foot camp on the West Buttress route. As he approached the summit from the 19,500-foot area, the weather rapidly deteriorated with clouds, snow, high winds and zero visibility. He became disoriented. Early on July 4, he sought shelter in a small snow cave he dug at 20,000 feet. He carried no bivouac or survival gear. At seven A.M., he was reported as overdue to the NPS mountaineering rangers. The weather remained extremely poor on July 4 and 5 with heavy snowfall, strong winds and high avalanche danger prohibiting air and ground search. Meanwhile, Wiecha wandered around near the summit, seeking the descent route, taking shelter in several locations. He suffered severely from the cold, altitude, dehydration and exhaustion. By midday on July 6, it began to clear and an air search began. Miraculously, Wiecha was spotted crawling from a crevasse just below the summit. The NPS Lama helicopter was dispatched from Talkeetna and two rangers were flown to the "Football Field" at 19,500 feet. The rangers climbed to Wiecha, who was coherent but could barely move due to exhaustion and severely frostbitten feet. He was lowered 900 feet to the "Football Field", where the helicopter landed once again. Wiecha was flown off the mountain early on July 7. Both his frostbitten feet were amputated. There were a number of other incidents of altitude illness and frostbite. Many were treated at the National Park Service first-aid-and-rescue camp at 14,200 feet on the West Buttress.

Trends and Items of Special Concern: *Heavy Use:* Nearly record numbers of climbers attempted to climb Mount McKinley this year. They spent more than 17,000 user days on McKinley alone. Over 12,000 of these were on the West Buttress. The use on the West Buttress is even higher when considering that many other routes are accessed via the West Buttress. Also, many climbers acclimatize there too. *Rescues:* Ten of the 11 climbers (91%) that were rescued by helicopter this year were foreigners. 1.2% of climbers attempting McKinley this year required rescue. *Sanitation:* With the heavy use, it is more important than ever for mountaineers to dispose properly feces and urine. Many camps, especially at higher elevations, are littered with feces and frozen urine spots that are not covered by the annual accumulation of snow. Not only is this an

DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE 1991 MOUNTAINEERING SUMMARY

	<i>Expeditions</i>	<i>Climbers</i>	<i>Successful Climbers</i>
<i>Mount McKinley</i>			
West Buttress	145	475	275
West Buttress (guided)	24	205	137
W. Buttress/Muldrow Traverse	7	26	15
W. Buttress/Muldrow (guided)	3	23	20
Muldrow Glacier	2	4	0
Muldrow Glacier (guided)	2	22	10
Muldrow/W. Buttress Traverse	3	9	7
West Rib	15	58	33
West Rib (guided)	3	15	11
West Rib Cutoff	19	46	16
Cassin Ridge	18	37	24
Cassin Ridge (guided)	0	0	0
Haston-Scott	1	2	1
South Buttress	2	4	2
Reality Ridge	1	2	0
Northwest Face	1	3	2
Northwest Buttress	2	4	0
Wickersham Wall	0	0	0
	<u>248</u>	<u>935</u>	<u>553</u>
<i>Mount Foraker</i>			
Archangel Ridge	1	4	0
Infinite Spur	1	2	0
Northeast Ridge	3	8	0
Southeast Ridge	3	10	4
Southeast/Viper Ridge	1	2	0
Talkeetna Ridge	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
	10	28	4
<i>Mount Hunter</i>			
Kennedy-Lowe	1	2	0
North Buttress	1	3	0
Southeast Spur	1	2	0
Southwest Ridge	1	3	3
West Ridge	<u>5</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>
	9	24	5

	<i>Expeditions</i>	<i>Climbers</i>	<i>Successful Climbers</i>
<i>Mount Huntington</i>	6	18	2
<i>Moose's Tooth (west summit)</i>	9	26	9
<i>Mount Silverthrone</i>	1	6	6
<i>Mount Dan Beard</i>	1	7	0
<i>Peak 11,300</i>	2	5	3
<i>Ruth Gorge Peaks</i>	4	9	7
<i>Mount Brooks</i>	2	5	5
<i>Mount Russell</i>	0	0	0
<i>Middle Triple Peak</i>	1	2	2

NOTE: Since registration is required only for mountaineers attempting Mount McKinley and Mount Foraker, statistics for other mountains represent those climbers who voluntarily checked in with the mountaineering rangers. Other climbs, especially in the Ruth Glacier area, are likely to have occurred.

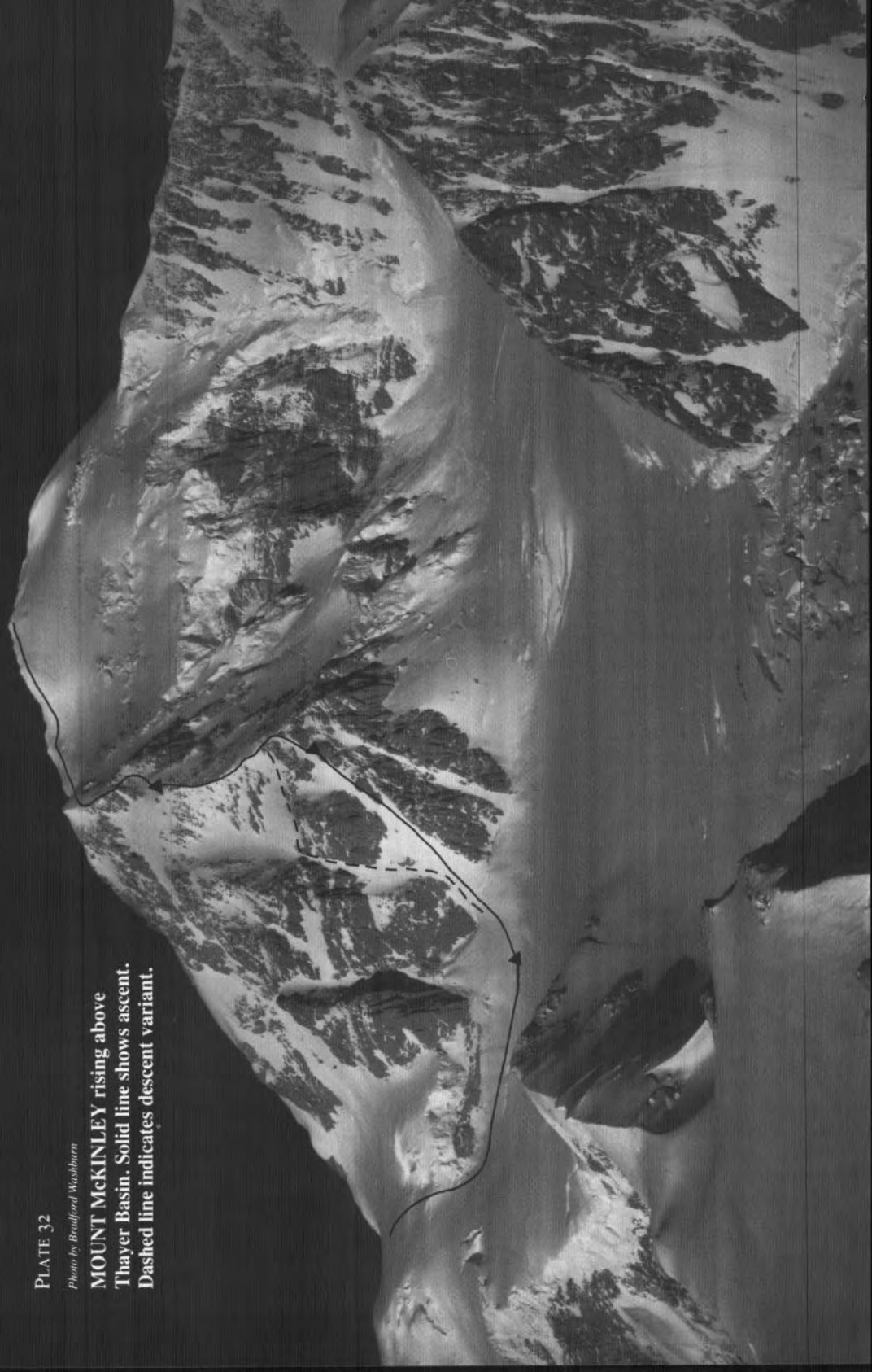
environmental degradation of the mountain, but there is risk of contamination of snow that might be melted and used for drinking water by future expeditions. We still suggest the use of plastic bags for latrines, which should be disposed of in deep crevasses. The Park Service maintains pit latrines dug deeply into the snowpack at the Kahiltna Glacier Base Camp, at 14,200 feet on the West Buttress and at the landing area in the Ruth Amphitheater. *Trash:* Many expeditions haul trash to Base Camp where it is flown off the mountain. Still others continue to dump trash in crevasses. Mountaineers of all nationalities must take the responsibility for, and the initiative in, preserving the quality of the world's mountain environments. A combination of education, leading by example and peer pressure are probably the most effective tools that can be brought to bear against less considerate mountaineers. Citations were issued for unauthorized guiding, littering and improper disposal of human-body waste. *Administrative Notes:* A portable radio repeater was again installed in the Ramparts west of the lower Kahiltna Glacier. This helps to improve communications between the Talkeetna Ranger Station and the mountaineering patrols. The newly constructed Park Service building in Talkeetna was occupied this year. It serves as seasonal quarters, year-round office for the South District Ranger and search-and-rescue coordination center. For more information or to request mountaineering information and/or registration forms, please contact the Mountaineering Rangers, Talkeetna Ranger Station, PO Box 588, Talkeetna, Alaska 99676. Telephone: 907-733-2231.

ROBERT SEIBERT, *South District Ranger,
Denali National Park and Preserve*

PLATE 32

Photo by Bradford Washburn

**MOUNT MCKINLEY rising above
Thayer Basin. Solid line shows ascent.
Dashed line indicates descent variant.**



McKinley, Southeast Face from Thayer Basin. On May 28, Bob Gammel and I flew to Kahiltna Base to attempt a new route on Denali, one rising out of Thayer Basin to join the southeast spur at P 18,900. It was our perhaps perverse intent to approach the Basin via the East Fork of the Kahiltna and the Japanese Ramp, which would require a descent of 1500 feet from the crest of the South Buttress—should we be fortunate enough to survive the objective hazards of the Ramp and reach the South Buttress at all! We spent four days hauling up the East Fork, establishing our final glacier camp on June 1 at 12,000 feet. The technical crux involved wild stemming between a sérac flake and the main crevasse wall early on in order to gain the Ramp as the lower section was badly broken. Our only camp on the Ramp was made on June 3 at 14,000 feet beneath a sheltering sérac, just left of the icefall which separates the Ramp from the Wyoming Spur. This icefall provided interesting moments, fortunately the only area active during our time on the Ramp! On June 8, we moved up over the South Buttress, picked up a food cache and staggered into Thayer Basin, where we were greeted by an unrelenting ground blizzard which continued for the next three days. On June 13, the weather let us move onto new ground. We climbed the right branch of the great couloir that splits the southeast face to its junction with the east ridge on 50° to 60° ice and snow, with a camp at 16,000 feet below the top of the couloir. Beautiful weather held and the following day we climbed to 17,800 feet on the ridge, finding moderate to easy climbing on snow and weaving a line through rock buttresses and outcrops with only intermittent rock or mixed moves necessary. At that point, the weather deteriorated and the next five days were spent tent-bound, watching food and fuel supplies evaporate mysteriously, as it didn't seem we were eating all that much! A second crux, this one psychological, was encountered when, on June 20, the weather broke and we were able to complete our climb of the ridge to P 18,900 and follow the Southeast Spur to the summit—an exhilarating finish up a sharp, exposed ridge with 8000 feet of the South Face falling below us! We retraced the route of ascent on our way down, with a variation involving a traverse south into the main branch of the great couloir just above the narrows at 16,000 feet, which allowed us to avoid down-climbing some rock encountered on the way up. We left Thayer Basin on the 22nd, beginning a 40-hour marathon, reaching Kahiltna Base on the evening of the 23rd, after climbing through the night on our descent of the Ramp. The route is moderate and enjoyable, yet committing and remote. Aside from the summit day and some specks on the Cassin, we saw no one for over three weeks . . . on Denali!

LEE L. JAMES, *Hosemeisters International*

McKinley, Cassin Ridge Variant. Our Slovak expedition was composed of Emil Hasík, Josef Nežerka, Igor Valiga and me as leader. After landing on the Kahiltna Glacier on May 20, for acclimatization we climbed that same day to 3000 meters on Mount Crosson and reached the summit on the 21st. While Hasík and Valiga climbed the West Buttress, Nežerka and I left for the southwest



PEAKS

from Colby to the westburn

Czechoslovak variant on
McKINLEY's Cassin Ridge.

face on May 25 via the northeast fork of the Kahiltna Glacier. We headed up the southwest face to the left of the usual Cassin start and to the right of the Denali Diamond route. We started about 150 feet to the left of the Henrich-Volkman route. We bivouacked at 4200 and 4400 meters on May 27 and 28 and then were forced to the right to join the Cassin route at 4700 meters by very strong winds and heavy snowfall. We were on new ground for 1100 meters or 3600 feet. This was difficult mixed climbing (up to 5.9) with long sections of 60° ice. The lower face offered only hanging bivouacs or bivouacs on ice-chipped ledges. We found some old fixed ropes early on, probably from Japanese attempts in the 1970s. After our bivouac on the Cassin Ridge at 4700 meters, we again bivouacked on May 30 at 5600 meters. We climbed to the summit on May 31 and were back at the airstrip on the Kahiltna on June 2.

ZOLO DEMJÁN, *Spectrum Alpine Club, Bratislava, Czechoslovakia*

McKinley South Face, New Route. Josef Rakoncaj and I came to Alaska at the end of April. We flew to the Kahiltna Glacier. We climbed slowly as high as Denali Pass on the West Buttress. After acclimatizing to the altitude and cold, on May 17, Rakoncaj climbed the Messner Couloir in half a day. The next day, I climbed a new route between the Messner Couloir and the Orient Express. The maximum difficulty on rock was 5.8 and the ice was up to 70°. I descended to the 14,000-foot camp without going all the way to the summit. We two then climbed with skis over Denali Pass and continued in storm, cold and wind to the north on the Harper Glacier. We descended to the Muldrow Glacier and out to Wonder Lake. Rakoncaj flew home. I returned to Talkeetna, where I spent several days drinking beer in the Fairview Inn and loving Alaska. In early June, I flew again to the Kahiltna and then climbed the Cassin Ridge in five days. This was a great climb for me with very hard ice and a very heavy rucksack. As I bivouacked in the first rock band, at five A.M. I became aware of someone passing my tent. Was it a yeti? I looked outside and saw a solo climber with a small rucksack. "Hi. Good morning. If you like tea, we can do five-o'clock tea." We spent twenty minutes in my tent. "What are you doing here?" "Climbing the Cassin." "And you?" "The same." "And what is your name?" The man was Mugs Stump. And he took only a few hours to climb the Cassin!

MIROSLAV ŠMÍD, *ADR Rocks, Czechoslovakia*

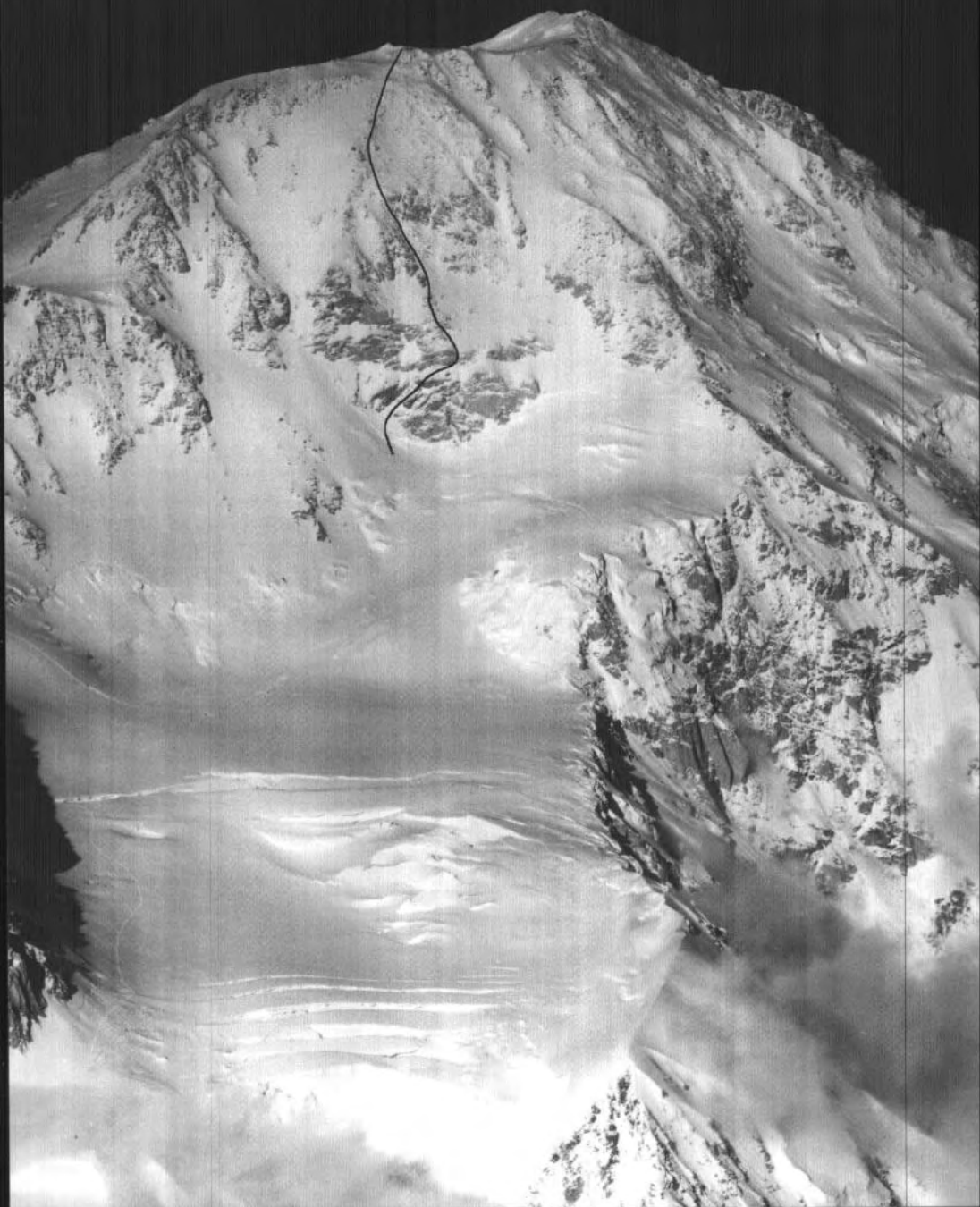
Mount McKinley, Northwest Face of the West Buttress. A full article on this climb appears earlier in this *Journal*.

McKinley, Rapid Ascent. On June 4 late in the afternoon, Mugs Stump left the camp at 14,000 feet on the West Buttress of McKinley and crossed to the West Rib, which he descended to the northeast fork of the Kahiltna. He then climbed the Japanese Couloir and the whole Cassin Ridge to the summit in 15

PLATE 34

Photo by Bradford Washburn

**Šmid's new route between the
Messner Couloir on the left and the
Orient Express.**



hours and descended to the 14,000-foot camp, which he reached just 27½ hours after he had left it.

McKinley Climbed by a 12-Year-Old. Taras Genet, 12-year-old son of Kathy Sullivan and the late Ray Genet, climbed on July 21 to the summit of McKinley via the West Buttress. He is probably the youngest person to do so. The group of seven was guided by Chip Faurot and José Boza. His father died on the descent from Everest when Taras was 18 months old and was awaiting in Base Camp with his mother the arrival of Ray in vain.

Huntington Winter Attempt, West Face to the Harvard Route. Leo Americus, Dave McGivern, Charlie Sassara and I flew to the upper Tokositna Glacier on March 11. From an 8000-foot Base Camp, we moved through an icefall to a secondary camp on a bench below the notch where the Harvard route joins the west face at 9000 feet. On February 11, we fixed 750 feet of rope over nearly 2000 feet of terrain to the base of an ice couloir over mostly 35° to 45° ice and snow. Two days later, we jumared and climbed to that 1500-foot water-ice gully that joins the upper Harvard route above the "Nose Pitch." The first lead was the steepest with a 30-foot vertical section at the onset. The second was on 75° black ice. The third 300-foot pitch began with a 20-foot vertical apron and eased to 55° to 60° ice. The final two pitches varied from 45° to 55° ice, some covered with snow. On the traverse that leads to the upper snow face, night closed in and forced a bivouac on a tiny 15-foot ledge. The next day, we completed the traverse and climbed 600 feet of 40° to 60° blue ice to a rock outcrop, where we hacked a tiny ice ledge out of an ice bulge. A weather system moved through and created high winds at the exposed bivouac site. Short calm breaks were never long enough to complete the remaining 700 vertical feet to the summit. We had begun with only 2½ days of food. By rationing, we held out for three days of high winds on this tiny perch. On the fifth day, we packed our gear. During a slight break at midday, we went for broke on a summit bid in questionable weather. Sassara led 300 feet on 50° ice to the French ridge, followed by McGivern, but hurricane-strength winds on the ridge made them bail out. We began to rappel off, but darkness fell and we spent the night at the lower bivouac site. None of us could sleep that night. It was a relief to descend the ice couloir in daylight to the lower snowfields.

JOHN BAUMAN, *Unaffiliated*

Huntington, South Face. Jay Smith and Paul Teare climbed a difficult new route on the south face of Huntington to the right of the Harvard Route. This is described in a full article earlier in this *Journal*.

Huntington, West Face Attempt. In April and May, William Kito and I, both recipients of the American Alpine Club Climbing Fellowship grants, flew to the



PLATE 35

Photo by Andreas Orgler.

**"Werewolf." Routes from left to right:
1990, 1991, 1987.**

Tokositna Glacier below the west face of Huntington. Our objective was the unclimbed rock buttress immediately to the right of the Colton-Leech route. Of great help logistically and morally was the support of Rit Kellog. It took us 27 days to fix nine pitches (V, 5.9, A3) because of poor weather and snow-and-ice conditions on the face. We successfully surmounted the "bottleneck," a 150-foot section of overhanging wall at the apex of the rock climbing. We turned back at that point. Unconsolidated snow and ice covered rocks upwards from this point for 1000 feet to where our buttress intersected the Colton-Leech route.

CLAY WADMAN, *Unaffiliated*

Foraker and Barrille. A full article on remarkable new routes on the southeast ridge of Foraker and the east face of Barrille appear earlier in this *Journal*.

Mount Dickey South Face. A full article is found earlier in this *Journal*.

P 7500+ ("Werewolf"), *Anenome Buttress, Ruth Gorge.* On July 14, Klaus Geisswinkler and I were flown by Doug Geeting to the Ruth Gorge. On the 6th and 7th, we climbed on a rock face on the west side of the gorge but had to give up the attempt because of the outbreak of a storm. Bad weather continued until July 17. Nevertheless, we started on July 9 up the southwest buttress of "Werewolf." In ever-increasing rain, we climbed 12 pitches but had to wait for two hours on a big shoulder when it turned to snowfall. At about eight P.M., the precipitation stopped and we continued up the pillar, reaching its summit at midnight in damp cold. The 18-pitch route is mostly 5.8 to 5.10. After a two-hour rest we rappelled down the route and reached Base Camp at nine A.M. after I had fallen into a snow-covered glacial stream. Geeting was able to pick us up during a window in the clouds on July 16.

ANDREAS ORGLER, *Österreichischer Alpenverein*

P 6850. There are two Bugaboo-like rock peaks that rise between the lower Kahiltna and Lacuna Glaciers, which had never been attempted. Jim Okonek flew Clay Wadman and me to a glacier landing at 4000 feet. After setting up camp, we immediately set out for a long, steep snow couloir that splits into the northern and highest of the two peaks (62°38'N, 151°29'W). Our all-night climb took us to the top of the couloir, a few pitches being of steep ice. The crux of the ascent was a series of traversing leads on the northwest face on frozen, but sometimes breakable, snow. Fortunately we were able to protect with rock pitons some of the exposed pitches here and along the narrow, technical summit ridge. The descent took the same route.

FRED BECKEY

Whale's Back, Avalanche Peak and Citadel, Kichatna Spires. My husband Gino Buscaini, Helma Schimke and I were flown to the Shadows Glacier by Doug Geetings. We all climbed Whale's Back by the north ridge on May 22, Avalanche Peak by the east face and north ridge on May 24 and Citadel via the first gendarme on the north ridge, climbing from the north left of the icefall and descending to the Shelf Glacier and the couloir in the south face of Avalanche Peak and back to the Shadows Glacier on June 2.

SILVIA METZELTIN BUSCAINI, *Club Alpino Italiano*

Mount Thor, North Ridge, Chugach Range, Winter Ascent. Leo Americus and I spent four days skiing the 32 miles to the base of the north side of Mount Thor via the Nelchina and Sylvester Glaciers, starting on February 10. From there we made the first winter ascent of the north ridge, which rises 3750 feet from 8500 feet on the Sylvester Glacier. Thor (3734 meters, 12,251 feet) is the third highest peak of the Chugach Range. A storm moved in. A window in the multiple fronts opened on the sixth day and allowed us to climb. The first 1500 feet were a well defined ridge of blue ice and rotten snow, sometimes knife-edged, with a drop of 1000 feet or more on both sides and at a 35° to 50° angle. The ridge broadened as it met the north face, crossing a 250-yard area of crevasses. The upper 2250 feet were on good snow. We summited on February 16 after only six hours, having placed one ice screw on the lower section. We spent three days skiing 33 miles out the Powell Glacier to the south fork of the Matanuska River.

JOHN BAUMAN, *Unaffiliated*

Ptarmigan Peak, Western Chugach. In mid February, Tom Walters and I climbed the prominent north buttress of Ptarmigan Peak. The route ascends steep corners formed by massive blocks. With four 5th-class pitches on relatively sound rock, the climbing was steep and varied. (III, 5.8.)

CHARLES SASSARA

Mount Jarvis Ascent and Tragedy, Wrangell Mountains. Japanese climbers Hiroshi Oda and Ichiro Mitoda were flown to the Nebesna Glacier by bush pilot Ken Bunch on April 4. They started alpine-style up the southeast ridge of Mount Jarvis (4091 meters, 13,421 feet). (The first ascent was made on July 26, 1967 from the saddle between Mount Jarvis and Wrangell by Ed Lane, Barbara Lilley, Bill Morris and Dick Beach.) On April 6, Oda climbed to the summit, while Mitoda quit some 650 feet lower. The next day, they both returned to the summit and descended to the landing point, hoping to be picked up on the 10th. Bad weather intervened and it was not until April 16 that Bunch could return to pick them up. There was so much new snow that they failed to take off after a run of 1000 feet. They began to pack the runway with skis. Bunch emerged from the

plane to help, took ten steps, collapsed and died immediately from a massive heart attack. When the skilled bush pilot with 45 years of experience did not return, other pilots set out to search for him. After they located the problem, eventually the Japanese were evacuated by Army helicopter. A full account appears in *Iwa To Yuki* N° 147, August 1991.

P 12,200, Wrangell-Saint Elias Mountains. On April 23, my wife Siri, Paul and Donna Claus and I made the first ascent of P 12,200, a border peak due west of Mount Logan. Landing at 8400 feet on an unnamed glacier west of our summit, we established Base Camp. The next day, we skied three miles up the glacier to 10,000 feet and camped below the route. The next morning, we ascended a 1000-foot high gully on the southern flank of the peak's western buttress. We then wandered up through snow patches and around rock outcrops at times on terrain up to 60°. A final pitch of shattered rock through a steep chimney brought us to a glaciated plateau a half mile west of the summit. After crossing the plateau, we turned our attention to the summit pyramid and the many crevasses that guarded the top. Two hours later, after snaking our way up the crevassed knoll, we looked at the last large crevasse, whose upper overhanging edge was six feet above us. Donna and Siri decided to wait it out while Paul and I finished the last section. With shoves from our wives, we climbed the overhang. An exposed, nearly vertical snow lead and another pitch brought us to the summit.

CHARLES SASSARA

Neacola. A complete article on the ascent of this remote peak appears earlier in this *Journal*.

P 7205, Philip Smith Mountains, Brooks Range. After a failed attempt on the south face of P 7240 above Echooka, our party passed to the Marsh Fork of the Canning River. The canyon here is reminiscent of the Alberta Rockies. We followed it west and then south to twin-glaciated P 7205 on the Continental Divide. From an unmapped lake, we ascended the east ridge, traversed the snow domes to the summit and descended by the glaciers.

DENNIS SCHMITT, *Unaffiliated*

Northernmost Peaks on the Continental Divide, Romanzof Mountains. I began this soujourn at Okpilak Lake with three Swiss climbers. After an ascent of Mount Michelson, we entered the Arey Creek drainage. Granite P 8405 stood directly north of our camp on the glacier. We climbed directly up the south ridge, finishing with a harrowing ice ridge to the summit. The ice wall of the north face feeds the Bravo Glacier basin. The following day, we waded through deep snow to the pass atop the icecap and camped below the north face of P 8715. We

climbed again that night. Our route veered to the west of the icefall where it meets the triangular rock cliff of the upper northwest face. We placed two ice screws where the steep ice dropped over the face. After traversing the icecap, we descended into a stream canyon that took us to the Jago River. We turned south to Gothic Mountain (8620 feet). I had made the first ascent of this peak ten years before. New maps depicted an icefall along the summit ridge, which I had not encountered. We ascended the eastern canyon, entered the icefields and followed them to the south summit in good weather. From this summit, I witnessed the same gothic formations I had seen from the summit a decade earlier. The icefield on the new maps was misplaced. In correcting the old errors, these maps had created new ones. Further up the east fork of the Jago, we ascended to the icefields south of P 7800, the westernmost high Alaskan Arctic peak. Three of us reached the summit from the south. Heading west the next day, we crossed a 7100-foot pass just south of the Obolisk (8440 feet), which two of us climbed by the narrow southwest ridge. Descending into the Sheenjik drainage, we camped at the base of the glacier. That night I climbed the twin-horned P 7985, traversing the ice wall to the unnumbered peak to the west and descending to the point where the stream on the icecap splits north and south. This is the northernmost point on the Continental Divide.

DENNIS SCHMITT, *Unaffiliated*

Fairweather, Eliza and Other Ascents and Traverse from Mouth of Alsek River to Davidson Glacier and Chilkat Inlet. Our trip members were Betsy Fletcher, Craig Hollinger, Markus Kellerhals, Peter Stone and I as leader. After placing food caches by ski plane with Mike Ivers of Gulf Air, on May 7 we headed from its mouth up the Alsek and then up the Grand Plateau Glacier. Six-and-a-half days later we stood on the summit of Mount Fairweather, having climbed the west ridge from the plateau to the north. After feasting, we spent five days climbing some of the technically more difficult minor peaks near the plateau. These included P 11,105 (3354 meters) $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles northwest of Fairweather by its south ridge and the 3280-meter (10,761-foot) bump 2 kilometers east of Mount Root from the south. (Peaks in Alaska are given in feet and those in Canada in meters.) We also made a tiring ascent to the Fairweather-Quincy Adams col. After completing the first two weeks, we headed on the second leg of the trip with seven days of food. From lower on the Grand Plateau Glacier we crossed on skis a mile north of Mount Lodge and skied along the Grand Pacific Glacier to our next food cache near its junction with the Malbern Glacier. With three days to spare, we moved into the Mount Eliza area. We unsuccessfully attempted Eliza from the south but did climb P 2360 (7743 feet). The next day, two of us climbed to the summit of Eliza (2960 meters, 9711 feet) via the north ridge, a thrilling knife-edged, snow-and-ice route. We also climbed two minor bumps $1\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 kilometers north and northeast of Eliza (2720 and 2632 meters, 8924 and 8635 feet). On skiing back down to the Grand Pacific Glacier, we took a two-hour side-trip to climb the higher of "The Rabbit Ears," (1680 meters,

5512 feet), located 7½ kilometers northeast of Eliza. After picking up our next load of food, we started up the Tenas Tikke Glacier. The weather turned poor. We spent five days, from May 27 to 31, either in the tents and at other times crawling along with the aid of map, compass and altimeter. We crossed the Carroll Glacier to go along the Tsirku Glacier, entering Alaska again just south of Mount Harris. We arrived at our final food cache in the upper cirque of the Riggs Glacier a day behind schedule. After descending the glacier 5½ kilometers the following day, we were held up by Peter Stone's snow-blindness for 2½ days at 3500 feet on the Riggs. In good weather for the first half of a day, we climbed P 5280 (1609 meters) on the western flank of the Riggs. With the recovery of Peter's eyes, we continued on in "in-and-out" weather. We ascended a glacier to a pass north of Sith-gha-ee Peak and descended south to the Casemate Glacier. We ascended it over the divide to the Davidson Glacier. The Davidson was formidable, spectacular and time-consuming but possible on its southern ice and moraine. On the shores of Chilkat Inlet, we attracted a local fishing boat with an explosive white-gas fire. Haines Airways then was alerted and picked us up and dropped us off in Haines on the morning of June 9.

DAVID E. WILLIAMS, *Varsity Outdoor Club of the
University of British Columbia*

St. Elias, Fairweather and Peaks in the St. Elias National Park and Glacier Bay National Park. Many expeditions made their access to the mountains which lie within these parks or near them through Yakutat. Of eight expeditions, only three were truly successful. The weather was the predominate cause of the low success rate. Yakutat received over 240 inches of precipitation in 1991 in both rain and snow. Americans Rick Holmes and Bob Branscomb attempted the south ridge of St. Elias but did not have enough time to complete the climb. Four attempts were made on Fairweather. Canadians Conrad Baumgartner, Alan Massin and Steve Bertollo made a successful five-day round-trip from the Grand Plateau Glacier up the west ridge. The splendid Canadian ascent of Fairweather and the crossing to Chilkat Inlet led by David Williams is described in another report in this *Journal*. Americans Joe Carriveal and Bill Mickel were turned back by the weather on the Carpe Ridge. Americans Tom Nickerson, Dave Baratt, Steve Wheeler and Mexican Vince Radice could not complete the climb on the west ridge, also because of the weather. Americans Patrick Simmons and Phil Kaufman were turned back on the south ridge of Mount Orville by rotten snow and technical difficulties. Silas Wild describes his and Sam Grubenhof's expedition to the same region in a separate note. A successful expedition to Mount Logan in Yukon Territory was made from Yakutat. Englishmen Dean James, Mid Glamorgan, Tim Stimson, Scot Alex McNab and American Rick Wentz took 19 days to make the climb and commented that it was easier access to Logan logistically through Yakutat than through Canada. Climbers may contact the National Park Service Yakutat District Ranger Station for information on mountains and weather. The Ranger Station is open year-round and serves the Yakutat

District for both Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Climbers are encouraged to submit a voluntary registration form with the Ranger Station for climbs. For forms or information, please contact National Park Service, Yakutat District Ranger Station, PO Box 137, Yakutat, Alaska 99689. Tel.: 907-784-3295.

RICK MOSSMAN, *Yakutat District Ranger*

Mount Orville Attempt and Ascents of P 8900 and P 7209. On June 14, Sam Grubenhof and I were flown by Mike Ivers from Yakutat to 4000 feet on the North Crillon Glacier. We did a double carry the next day and set up Base Camp at 5300 feet. On the 16th, we set off at four A.M. with bivouac sacks and two days of food. We cramponed up a wide gully on the south slopes of Mount Orville (3199 meters, 10,495 feet), using pickets for running belays and reached a 7000-foot gap on the southeast ridge at 6:30 A.M. Then we climbed mixed snow and fourth-class rock to a flat area at 8000 feet where we could finally see the next 2000 feet of the climb. We belayed along the ridge on rotten snow and loose rock to 8400 feet where, at three P.M., we decided to abort the climb since the route ahead looked steeper and just as rotten. The following day, we rappelled and climbed down to Base Camp. On June 19, we climbed to a ridge just east of camp and purposely set off many slush avalanches to clean the route toward the gap between Orville and P 8900 (2713 meters). This is incorrectly named Mount Wilbur on the Mount Fairweather C-4 quadrangle. It lies on the ridge between its foresummits: P 8826 and P 8632. Trying to climb in the safest snow conditions, we set out for P 8900 at nine P.M. on June 20. We reached the summit of this spectacular viewpoint at 7:30 A.M. after a challenging glacier climb, weaving our way through numerous Alaska-sized crevasses. On the 23rd, we moved our camp back to the landing site and then walked under the northwest face of Crillon through the gap where Loren Adkin's party began their west ridge climb in 1972 and on to P 7209 (2198 meters), which afforded a marvelous panorama. We called our pilot to change return plans and retraced our steps to camp. The next morning Mike picked us up and returned us to Yakutat.

SILAS WILD, *Boeing Alpine Club*

Mount Abbe, Main Peak. A full article on the first ascent of the main peak of Mount Abbe and its approach by kayak appears earlier in this *Journal*.

Devil's Thumb, New Routes. There is a full article on new, difficult routes on the Devil's Thumb earlier in this *Journal*.

Devil's Thumb, West Buttress, 1990. In pounding rain in May, 1990, Jim Haberl, Michael Down and I helicoptered from Petersburg to set up Base Camp at the fork of the Witch's Cauldron just north of the Devil's Thumb. When

the weather cleared, we learned two things. First of all, there is no north face, *per se*, but rather a northeast face (solo attempt by Krakauer in 1977), a north buttress (climbed by Stutzman and Plumb that same year, 60 pitches, 5.9) and a huge northwest face (attempted by Bearzi and Klose in 1982). Second, we learned we didn't want to climb there. We shifted our focus to the unclimbed west buttress, which Bearzi and Klose had attempted in 1980. We moved camp up the south arm of the Witch's Cauldron and ascended the icefall and glaciers under the Fox Head (the double summit immediately west of the Cat's Ears). In deteriorating weather, we set up a gear cache at the bottom of the 55° ice couloir leading to the Cat's Ears-Devil's Thumb col. When the weather cleared, we moved to camp at the cache and climbed the couloir and the first two rock pitches (5.6), but severe weather forced us to fix ropes and descend. Our third attempt took us six pitches up steep corners and huge flakes (5.9, A2) to below the prominent roof which splits the route at half height. Again, the weather pushed us down. An early start on June 7, 1990 put us at our previous high point just as clouds began to move in. A few dicey A2 moves surmounted the roof and delicate slab-and-corner climbing led to a good ledge. The next two pitches followed steep dihedrals visible from the glacier. The climbing was on wild flakes and steep corners (5.10). The weather turned ugly: 10-meter visibility, strong winds and snow, and rime on the rock and ropes. At the top of the buttress, some 20 meters from the true summit, the difficulties lessened to fourth-class. We turned back there in truly miserable conditions. A lengthy descent followed in blowing snow, darkness and rime. We had prepared the rappel stations on the way up but were unable to find them under the ice on the way down. In the interests of climbing light, we had not carried boots and had only one headlamp between us. There were several hanging stances, cold and slippery feet and much fumbling about. We continued rappelling down the couloir, finally arriving back at our high camp at 7:30 A.M., after a 27-hour round-trip. We walked out to Thomas Bay via the Baird Glacier in four days.

ALASTAIR FOREMAN, *Alpine Club of Canada*

Washington—Cascade Mountains

Liberty Bell and South Early Winter Spire. On August 16 and 17, Keith Hertel and I completed the first free ascent of the Independence Route. During the summer of 1990, with Bruce Anderson we had climbed the first six pitches, which were enjoyable climbing up to 5.11c. Unfortunately the next two pitches, originally A4 and A2, have several sections of decomposing granite cracks and seams, which required some yo-yoing but were done at 5.12a (V, 5.12a). Over Labor Day, Brooke Sandahl, Kurt Schmier and Adam Grosowski freed Liberty Crack with the crux at the Lithuanian Lip (V, 5.13a). Passenger route on South Early Winter Spire follows a line directly up the center of the southeast face. It was completed in August by Brian Burdo, Pete Doorish and Greg White. It features eight pitches, all but one of which are 5.10d or harder (V, 5.12a).

STEVEN RISSE

The Tooth, Snoqualmie Pass. Cindy Long and I established a direct route up the east face of the Tooth on August 3. We started up the steep but mostly easy 5th-class corners past a tree. We then moved left onto a high-angle slab and up an exposed nearly vertical dihedral (the crux) to an easy off-width crack. We angled left and up several more pitches to join the east-face slab route.

TIM OLSON

Ingalls Peak, North Peak, Northwest Ridge. On October 6, Dred Dunham and I completed this short but interesting route. We gained the ridge from a polished ramp on the west about 150 meters from the start of the ridge proper, which was too rotten to climb direct. (II, 5.7.)

STEVEN RISSE

Oregon

Mount Hood, Illumination Rock. In early August, Jim Petroske and I started up what we thought was the South Chamber Route. We ascended steep snow and ice to the base of the wall at the upper end of the chamber and directly below the South Pinnacle Notch. From a large, flat ledge at the north corner of the wall's base we climbed two pitches to gain the notch. The first (5.7) was a crack and mantle out of an overhanging slot choked with loose rocks and grit. The second was easy but delicate climbing over big ledges of large, loose blocks. From the notch we climbed steep, crumbling rock directly toward the summit ridge's crest, keeping on the east side of a small arête. On the crest we joined the standard route to the top.

BILLY PETROSKE

Razorblade Pinnacle, Mount Hood. On September 29, Cindy Long and I climbed the beautiful west arête of this hidden classic in the Sandy River Basin on Mount Hood. After a 2½-hour approach, we began up a grungy but easy first pitch that was followed by an exhilarating, steep climb up the right corner of a box-shaped arête (II, 5.10b). We call it "Gillette Arête." Wayne Wallace and I returned on October 20 and established another new route near the overhanging northwest ridge of the pinnacle. We climbed the first pitch of Gillette Arête, then down-climbed and traversed left to a notch. We nailed up slanting, thin cracks to the summit (III, 5.4, A3).

TIM OLSON

California—Sierra Nevada

Mount Whitney, East Face. On June 16, David Wilson and I ascended a new all-free route, *Left Wing Extremist* (V, 5.11a, 16 pitches) on this 2000-foot

granite wall to the left of the old Direct East-Face route. We ascended a pedestal for two pitches, then veered slightly right up vertical and overhanging cracks for four continuous pitches of 5.10 and 5.11 into a huge open book joined by an overhanging seam without a continuous crack. On the right wall is a full-pitch, five-to-seven-inch, off-width crack with parallel sides and rounded edges. Lack of protection stopped a 1990 attempt here with Kike Arnal of Venezuela. This time we brought #5 and #6 Friends plus a Big Bro for what turned out to be a 5.10d groaner at nearly 14,000 feet. Above, the difficulties eased into superb 5.8 and 5.9 plates and knobs on a rib that stayed left of the upper part of the standard east-face route. The route took a full day and is similar in length, rock and steepness to Keeler Needle, but with more continuous difficulty and fewer cracks.

GALEN A. ROWELL

Keeler Needle, East Face, The Crimson Wall. During the first week of August, Mike Carville, Kevin Brown and I added a new long, free route to Keeler Needle. Possibly the hardest free wall above 10,000 feet in California, the route strikes straight up the center of the east face of Keeler Needle, following an obvious line between the Harding route on the left and the Lowe route on the right. We named it the *Crimson Wall* (V, 5.12-) due to the incredible pre-dawn alpine glow that colored the face each morning. We ascended ten full pitches before connecting with the Harding route for the final four pitches. We originally intended to finish straight up the virgin headwall but, alas, cracks that appeared finger-width through binoculars turned out to be incipient when we arrived. Short on bolts that would have been necessary to protect the headwall pitches, we vowed to return to complete the direct route. (In fact, as you read this, it is likely that the headwall is virgin no more—we are returning in May, 1992.) The *Crimson Wall* is characterized by its diversity of pitches; corner systems, blank faces, cracks and dikes lead the eye upward from the base. Three pitches of superb climbing form the soul of the route. The 7th, 8th and 9th link an arching corner, a huge flake and a sustained and steep layback corner that go 5.11, 5.10 and 5.12 respectively. The rock is solid and a full rack is called for. A total of 20 bolts was needed to protect the first ten pitches. Pitch 1 begins at the very center of the base of the wall and ascends to a belay just under a three-foot roof. The line is straightforward from there.

KEVIN STEELE

Day Needle. On June 16, Cameron Burns and I climbed an all-free variation of the Beckey-Reese route on Day Needle. (IV, 5.10b). The crux came in the second to last pitch, which followed left-angling cracks up steep rock that offered knobby face-climbing. It bypassed the bottom of an enormous off-width that slants up and right in the center of the face. The off-width is clearly visible from the base of the needle. Although we climbed the route in 16 pitches, it could have been accomplished in less.

STEVE PORCELLA

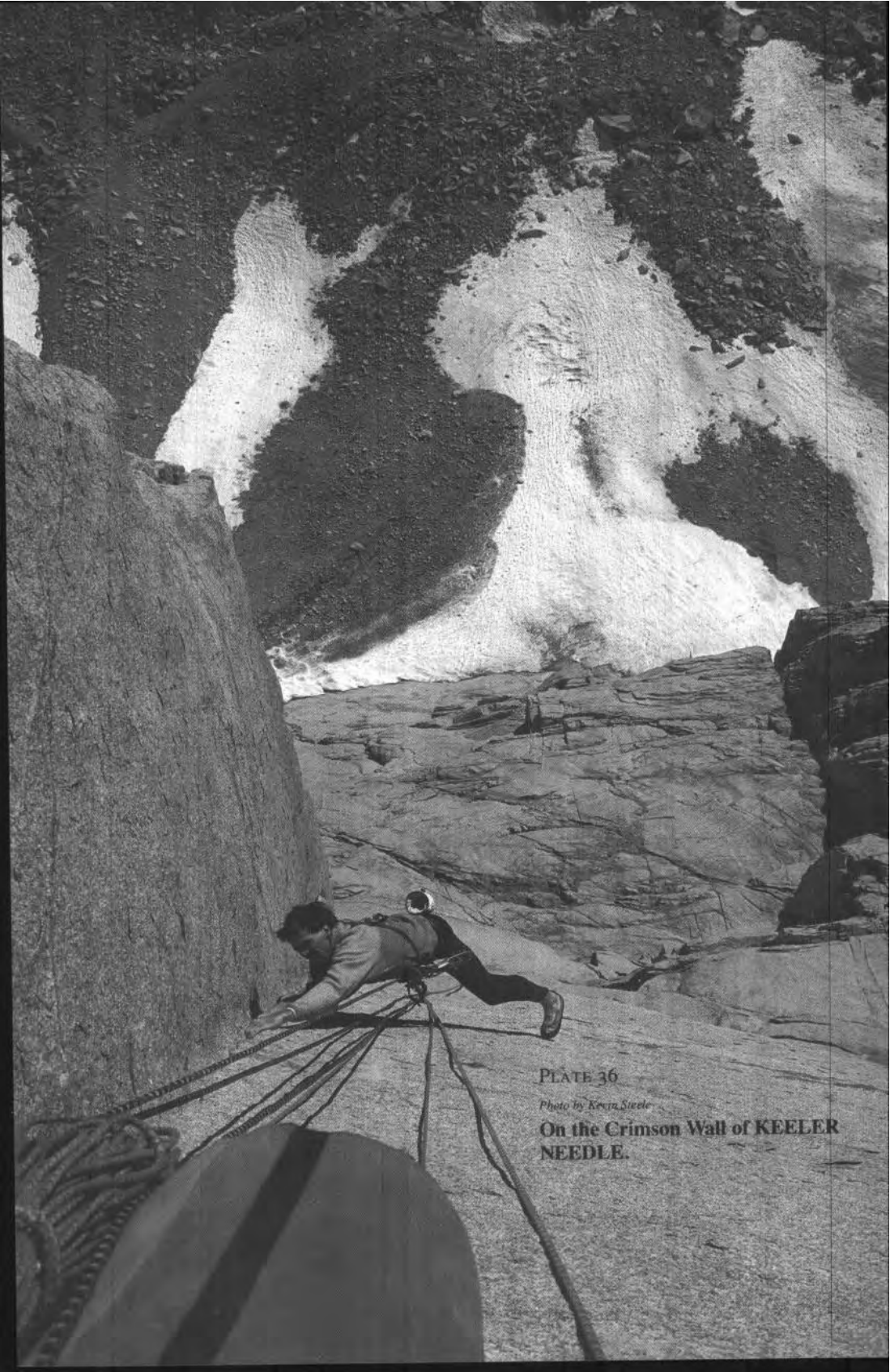


PLATE 36

Photo by Kevin Steele

**On the Crimson Wall of KEELER
NEEDLE.**

Mount Russell, West Face. Steve Untch and I did a new route on the west face of Mount Russell (III, 5.10d). We started about 20 feet right of the Rowell-Jones route and kept straight up for nine pitches. The short fourth pitch was 5.10a and the fifth was 5.10d.

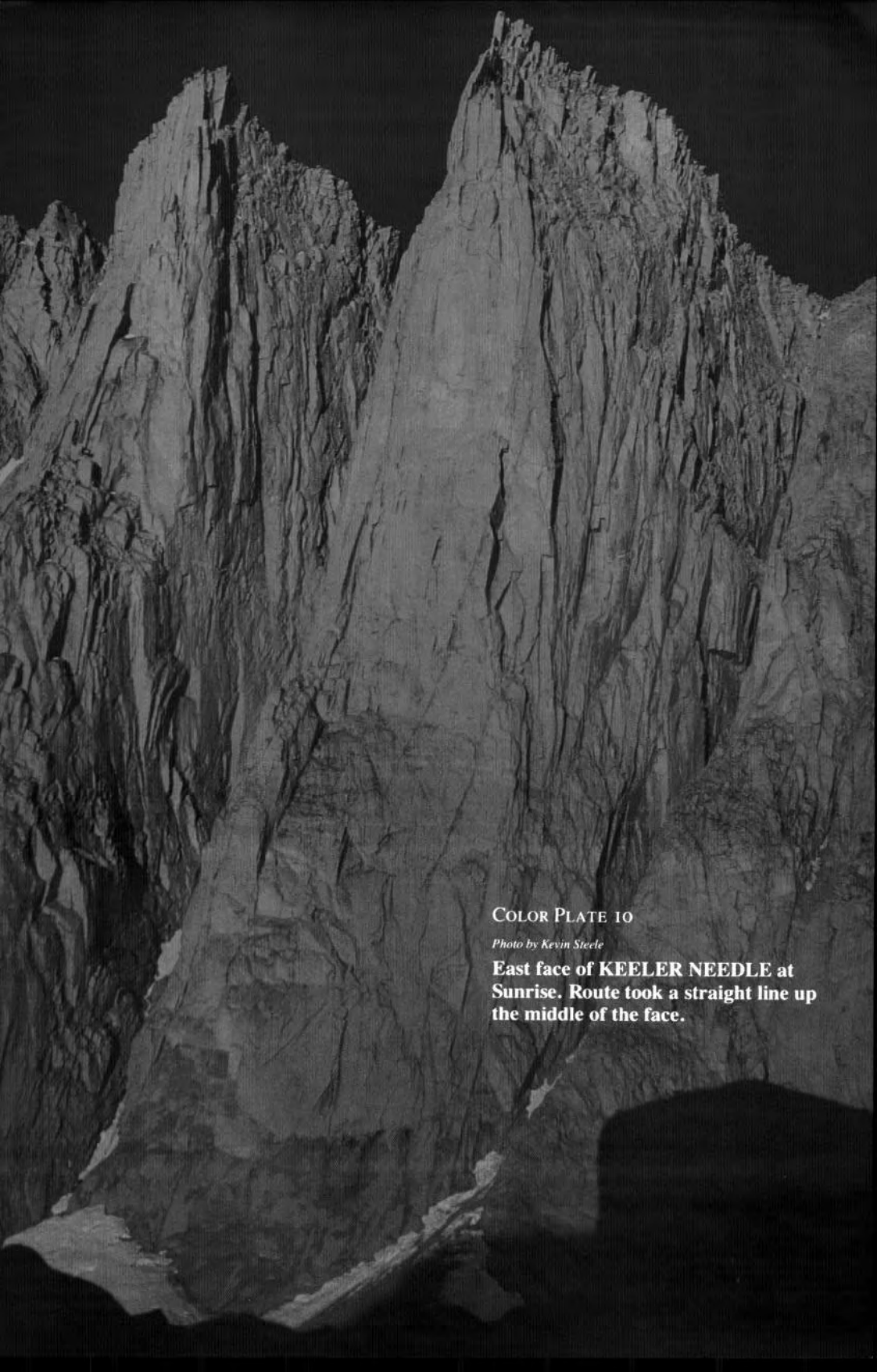
PATRICK BRENNAN

P 13,680+, Mount Sill, Mount Mendel and Other climbs, 1990. In June, 1990, Ken Kenega and I climbed a dihedral on P 13,680+ for seven pitches on the right of the Rowell route (III, 5.10a). In July, Kevin Malone and I did a direct finish of Mount Sill's east face. Where the Roper guide says that at one point there are two choices, we went in between. Three of the last five pitches were 5.9. In September, Kenega and I did a route on the north face of Mount Mendel on the rock rib right of the Mendel Couloir (III, 5.8). It was very loose and we wandered a lot.

PATRICK BRENNAN

Sierra Nevada Ascents. By the time you read this, a new *Sierra Nevada Climber's Guide* will have appeared, authored by R.J. Secor and published by The Mountaineers. The following is a list of previously unreported Sierra Nevada routes that arrived too late for publication and will *not* be given in the new guide. These reports were submitted by Claude Fiddler, Bart O'Brien and Sam Roberts. *Wheel Mountain, Southeast Arête:* This is a pinnacled ridge. FA (first ascent) by Sam Roberts, Brian West, August 1977 (II, 5.4). *Stonehouse Buttress, "Rots of Rock:"* This route begins right of Milky Way and passes through an area of very loose rock. FA by Sam Roberts, Mark Bowling, April 1987 (IV, 5.9, A2). *The Miter, North Ridge:* FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, September 1979 (Class 5). *Mount Muir, East Buttress Direct:* By staying on the prow of this buttress, a fine route can be completed. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, 1980 (III, 5.9). *Mount Hale, West Face:* Follow a gully and face ending a few feet from the summit. FA by Claude Fiddler, Bob McGayren, Danny Whitmore, September 1991 (II, 5.8). *Mount Barnard, North Face:* Follow a rib directly to the summit. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, July 1986 (III, 5.8). *Mount Williamson, "The Long Twisting Rib:"* As seen from Highway 395, this climb from Williamson Creek leads to Williamson's satellite summits. FA by Claude Fiddler, Jim Keating (III, Class 5). *Vandever Mountain, North Face:* FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, August 1985 (II, 5.6). *Needham Mountain, North Face:* FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, August 1985 (III, 5.6). *P 11,861, "The Wall above Big Five:"* This peak is 1.5 miles northeast of Needham Mountain. Climb a crack system up the center of the face for 17 pitches. A committing route. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler (V, 5.11). *"Two Fingers Peak," Northeast Ridge:* This is listed as being 1.3 miles northeast of Needham Mountain in the Roper guide. The route is a traverse from P 11,861. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler (Class 3). *P 11,772, Northwest Ridge:* Roper

lists this as 1.2 miles north-northwest of Needham Mountain. From Cyclamen Pass, follow the ridge to the summit. A rope was thrown over the true summit and handwalked to the top by Claude Fiddler, who left a small stopper for a rappel. FA by Fiddler, August 1985 (Class 5, A0). *Lippincott Mountain, North Face*: Follow a crack system in the center of the face. Excellent climbing on superb rock. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, August 1985 (III, 5.10). *Mount Chamberlain, Northeast Face*: This route is about 200 meters left of the West Pillar Route (Rowell-Farrell). Follow the crack systems leading directly to the summit. Fiddler says this is the finest wall he has climbed in the High Sierra. FA by Claude Fiddler, Bob Harrington, 1980 (V, 5.10, A2). *P 13,920+, East Ridge Direct*: This peak is 0.6 miles west of Mount Russell. This route follows the ridge from Russell. Roper describes this as being Class 3, but that means dropping well off the ridge when difficulties are encountered. By staying directly on the ridge, an airy traverse can be had. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, September 1979 (II, 5.6). *"Mount Carl Heller," West Rib Center*: This is a proposed name for P 13,211, southeast of Vacation Pass in the Roper guide. It has also been called "Vacation Peak." Climb the southernmost arête on the west face, which leads directly to the summit. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger (II, 5.6). *"Mount Carl Heller," West Rib North*: Follow the prominent rib on the north side of the west face. Both this and the previous route are excellent climbs. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, Bob Harrington, 1984 (II, 5.9). *Eagle Scout Peak, North Face*: Many possible routes. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, August 1985 (II, 5.6). *Koontz Pinnacle, East Face*: Not recommended: loose rock. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler (IV, 5.9). *Second Kaweah, East Spur*: A loose, undesirable climb. FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, August 1985 (IV, 5.9). *P 13,520+, Northeast Ridge*: [Probably the flat-summitted peak 0.5 miles southeast of Milestone Mountain — Editor.] FA by Claude and Nancy Fiddler, Dieter King (Class 3 or 4). *Ericsson Crags, Traverse from 1A to 3*. Crag 1A shares a notch with Mount Ericsson. The western gully to this notch is a good route. About 100 meters below the notch, head up and left to the summit of 1A (Class 4). Descend and head northeast to the broad shoulder between 1 and 1A. Follow the south ridge of 1 to its summit (5.8). A Class 3 ridge goes out to 1W (no record of prior ascent). Crags 2 and 3 can be climbed from the notch between them, which can be approached from either the east or west. The north ridge of Crag 2 is Class 3 or 4. The south ridge of Crag 3 is Class 5. The traverse is on great rock in a remote setting and is highly recommended. The entire traverse was first climbed by Claude Fiddler and Jim Keating in July 1991. *Center Peak, Northwest Arête*: Follow the prominent arête which drops into Bubbs Creek. FA by Vern Clevenger, Claude Fiddler, 1983 (III, 5.7). *Mount Goode, North Buttress Left*: This is left of the north buttress route described in the Roper guide. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, 1979 (IV, 5.10). *Mount Gilbert, West Face*: FA by Vern Clevenger, Claude Fiddler, 1985 (II, 5.7). *Mount Haeckel, East Arête*: FA by Claude Fiddler, Leon Borowsky (III, 5.8). *Wheeler Peak, North Arête*: Climb from the junction of the north and northwest faces. An excellent mountaineering route. FA by Claude



COLOR PLATE 10

Photo by Kevin Steele

**East face of KEELER NEEDLE at
Sunrise. Route took a straight line up
the middle of the face.**

Fiddler, Jim Keating, 1991 (Class 4-5). *Peak near Mount Ritter, Southwest Ridge*: Follow the long ridge from the San Joaquin River to the summit. The first-ascent party continued over the Ritter Pinnacles to the summit of Mount Ritter, making for a long, classic climb. FA by Vern Clevenger, Claude Fiddler, 1984 (IV, 5.9). *Minaret Traverse*: This is a multi-day classic. FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, 1980 (VI, 5.9). *Mount Lewis, East Face*: Loose and not recommended. FA by Claude Fiddler, Jim Keating, 1980 (IV, 5.10). *Kolp Crest Traverse*: A long traverse beginning at the Kuna Crest and ending at P 11,601. FA by Claude Fiddler, Rick Cashner, 1986 (V, 5.7). *Matthes Crest, Main Summit*: FA by Claude Fiddler, Dieter King, 1981 (III, 5.9). *Matthes Crest, North Summit, West Face*: FA (?) by Alan Bartlett, Bob Bartlett, October, 1974 (II, 5.6). *Cleaver Traverse*: FA by Vern Clevenger, Claude Fiddler, 1984 (Class 5). *Sawtooth Ridge Traverse via the Cleaver*: FA by Claude Fiddler, Vern Clevenger, 1984 (VI, 5.9). *Finger Peaks Traverse*: FA by Claude Fiddler, 1989 (II, Class 4).

BART O'BRIEN and ALAN BARTLETT

Half Dome, Tis-Sa-Ack Climbed by a Paraplegic. Mike Corbet and paraplegic climber Mark Wellman, who serves as a Yosemite Park Ranger, climbed the Tis-Sa-Ack route on Half Dome, reaching the top on September 16 after 13 days on the wall. They suffered from bad weather and lack of food. Wellman had been injured in a climbing accident in 1982 but refuses to consider himself disabled.

Mount Hooker Correction. On page 173 of *AAJ 1991*, a report of the ascent of the north face of Mount Hooker was incorrectly said to have been written by Annie Waterhouse. The correct name is Annie Whitehouse. This account states correctly that they spent three days route-finding, leading and fixing the first five pitches and another 3½ days on the actual climb. This is very much less time than the 21 days stated on page 132 in the full article on another ascent of the north face.

Utah

San Rafael Swell, 1990. On April 25, 1990, I climbed *Lightbulb*, a bizarre 170-foot tower named for its overhanging bulbous shape. Located near the San Rafael River Campground, it is clearly visible from the road and requires a 30-minute approach. The first pitch, which goes free, starts on the far right or northern edge. Fingers to hands to fists, it wraps around left to a good ledge. The final short pitch ascends bolts up the inverted bulb. (II, 5.10, A1.) On October 29, 1990, Allan Murphy and I climbed *The Daughter* (III, 5.10, A1) in the Southern Swell, south of I-70. It is the middle tower of the five-tower formation called Family Butte. Mike Friederichs and Gene Rousch made the first free ascent during the second climb of the tower, rating it 5.11b. Friederichs and I added a second route (III, 5.10+, A2) on the same tower on November 3, 1990.

Both routes ascend the south side on excellent Wingate sandstone. On *P 7601*, north of and visible from Family Butte, Friederichs and I then climbed the west face (III, 5.10d, A2). Mike led an impressive 165-foot, left-facing dihedral hand-to-finger crack in the first steep pitch. On the same tower but on the northeast corner, Seth "ST" Shaw and I added another route (III, 5.9, A2) on November 19, 1990. These two climbs are actually on separate towers as a 20-yard cleft divides them.

JAMES GARRETT

Angel's Landing, Zion National Park. Two new routes were put up on the north face of Angel's Landing. The *Swiss-American Route*, done in October by Xaver Bongard and me, climbs the major crack line to the left of the Lowe route and ascends directly to the summit. We drilled no holes on pitches (14 holes for belays only). This is a very clean route with several very serious leads. (VI, 5.10, A4.) Barry Ward and I climbed *Days of No Future* on the far right side of the north face, ascending an overhanging, loose and soft natural crack system. We used no bolts on pitches (10 holes for belays only; VI, 5.9, A3+.) Elsewhere in Zion, Conrad Anker and I climbed a new pitch at the base of the Watchman (5.9+) and did the first link-up of two Zion walls in a day: *Touchstone Wall* and the *Northeast Buttress* of Angel's Landing.

JOHN MIDDENDORF

Climbs on the Colorado Plateau in Arizona and Utah. In early 1991, Bill Hatcher, Barry Ward and I climbed *The Teapot* (III, 5.8), an interesting 350-foot formation near Jacob's Ladder on the Navajo Reservation. In June, I made the first solo ascent of *Standing Rock* by the original Kor route in eight hours' climbing time. In October Karen Lysett and I found a short spire to ascend, *Mr. Potato Head* (I, 5.9), located on a dirt road 6.6 miles southwest of Natural Bridges National Monument on Route 276. Also in October, Xaver Bongard, Melissa Wruck and I climbed *The Sitting Hen* (II, 5.8) in the Valley of the Gods. In November, Jimmy Dunn, Betsy McKirkick and I made the first ascent of *The Bear* (IV, 5.10, A2) in Monument Valley. This spectacular route on the 650-foot tower climbs through a window near the top of the formation, 70 feet high and 50 feet wide, to the other side of the formation and then on to the summit. There are pitches both of loose and solid free-climbing and pitches of moderate aid on relatively good rock. The tower had previously been attempted by at least three other parties.

JOHN MIDDENDORF

Canyonlands National Park. The Monument Basin Towers are located off the White Rim of the park. A number of climbs were made there. *Staggering Rock* (IV, 5.9, A3, 3 pitches) by Strappo and Crusher; *The Meemohive* (IV,

5.9+, A2, 4 pitches) by Crusher solo; Shark's Fin, west ridge, *Fetish Arête* (IV, 5.10, A2, 4 pitches) by Rob Slater, Jim Bodenhamer, Tom Cotter. This was the third ascent of the tower and the second route. On Enigmatic Syringe, *Altered Sanity* (III, A3, 2 pitches) by Strappo solo. In the region of Moses in Taylor Canyon, the west ridge of Aphrodite, *Swedish-American Route* (III, 5.9, A2, 6 pitches) was climbed by Anders Bergwall, Anders Swensson and Ed Webster. Jim Beyer, solo, climbed a line on Moses between the Primrose Dihedrals and Desert Prophet. This IV, 5.9, A3 ascent used no bolts and was the fifth route to the summit of the tower. Later in the year, Webster soloed Beyer's climb (adding bolts at belay stations), making the second solo and the second ascent of the difficult route. On the approach to Taylor Canyon, Bret Ruckman and Marco Cornacchino freed *A Circle of Quiet* at 5.11d, a route they had pioneered in 1988. In the Needles area, Angel Arch received its first ascent by Steve Anderton, Mike Colacino, Bill Duncan and Paul Midkiff (III, 5.10+, A2). It is a climb frowned upon by the Park Service and if done would call for a stiff fine. The ascent is documented here for historic record, but repeat ascents are discouraged.

ERIC BJØRNSTAD

Moab Area. On the Merrimac Butte, 200 feet left of its prow, Stuart and Bret Ruckman established *The Albatross* (I, 5.11c). There have been at least six new lines climbed on the butte that are still to be documented. Jim Dunn and Betsy McKittrick climbed a tower up Mill Creek about a half mile from the trailhead. They rate *Little Big Man* at I, 5.8. Along Kane Creek Boulevard, the same pair climbed *Pit and Bear* (5.10+). It is located 50 feet right of the first "Chicken Cave" reached from Moab while driving along the paved portion of the road. Also in the Kane Creek region, Dunn, Kyle Copeland and Eric Johnson made the first ascent of *The Predator*, naming their route "Rain of Terror" (II, 5.11-). Dunn and McKittrick teamed with Chad Wiggle for an ascent of a spectacular hoodoo *Cobra I*, (5.10+) located between Ancient Art and the Echo Pinnacle/Cottontail landforms of the Fisher Towers. Dunn and Copeland freed the Corkscrew summit route on Ancient Arts (III, 5.10). Also in the Fisher Towers, H.T. Carter and Bruce Hamilton climbed *Fine Endeavor* above Lizard Rock (II, 5.10). Directly above the Mystery Towers of the Fisher Towers area at the "Top of the World," Strappo and Crusher climbed *Cooler than Jesus* (2 pitches at 5.10-). Just beyond the Rhino Horn, up the Sand Flats Road, the hoodoo *Elvis' Hammer* was climbed by Glenn Dunmire and Stew Sayah, who named their north-side route *Harmones in Waiting*. The south side was soloed by Dunmire, who named it *Black Elvis* (5.10). In Arches National Park, Dunn and Bob Palais pioneered a third line up the popular Owl Rock, *Rasta Magnola* (5.9, A2). *Jr. Buttress* on the Convent was climbed by Jim Bodenhamer, Rob Slater, Bruce Hunter and Tom Cotter (IV, 5.10). In the Corona Arch area up the Potash Road, Laytor Kor and Copeland did a three-pitch, 5.10 fin. The first free ascent of Big Indian Rock, *It's a Gas*, was made by Jim Howe and Keith Maas. The freed ascent had a slight variation at the bolt ladder (5.11). The first free ascent

of Texas Tower (IV, 5.11c, 8 pitches) was done by Derek Horsey and party. The second free ascent was accomplished by Bret Ruckman and Tim Coats. The remote spire is south of Canyonlands National Park near Arch Canyon and Natural Bridges National Monument. Closer to Moab, in Bluff, Utah, six short but exacting routes were climbed near the Navajo Twins landform by Mike Friedrichs, Jay Anderson, Manuel Rangel and Jean Rousch. They were all of 5.10 to 5.11 difficulty.

ERIC BJØRNSTAD

New Mexico

Sandstone Towers near Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu. There are numerous sandstone towers near my home in northern New Mexico and until February they were all unclimbed. When I set out to ascend them, little did I know that I'd be pushing the limits of "soft rock." Mount Ethan Putterman and Ghost Tower, above Ghost Ranch, were ground-breaking because of the consistency of the rock. On lead I used more three-foot gardening stakes than anything else. This rock makes the Arches and the Fisher Towers in Utah look like concrete! *Mount Ethan Putterman*, which Mike Baker and I climbed over four days (March 13, 17, 18 and 28), offers some of the softest sandstone in the Southwest. The upper half of this tower is a bizarre conglomerate of loose, brittle calcite, black shale and gypsum. Three bolts were used for a rappel anchor, three for a belay station and five for a bolt ladder. (III, 5.9 R, A4+, 2 pitches.) *Ghost Tower* appeared in the March, 1991 issue of *New Mexico Magazine* and on the cover of the book, *Ansel Adams in the Southwest*. It has the same soft rock. The capping layer is part limestone, part sandstone, part mud. Mike Baker and I made its first ascent on February 14. It overhangs on all sides. The crux was an overhanging off-width crack on the first pitch, belayed in the eye that pierces the entire tower. This pitch was very soft and, in retrospect, crazy. The second pitch moves through the west face and up the north side of the west face. We placed several knifeblades and small angles there. (III, 5.10 X, 2 pitches.) *Animas Spire* is located just 50 feet downhill from Ghost Tower. Baker and I climbed it on February 15. Baker led the single pitch by first threading the lead rope through the middle of the spire, tying it off and then jumaring the fixed "sling" around to a stance on the northern side of the tower. An awkward off-width followed. Descent was made by using simul-rappel techniques. (I, 5.7+, A3.) *Crackerjack Tower* is a tiny tower located up a canyon directly north of a rest area on NM Route 84, a few miles south of Ghost Ranch. Baker and I made its first ascent on February 25. He led, placing several pitons and drilled angles. (I, 5.9, A2.) *Coyote Pinnacle* was climbed in June, 1990 by Mike Baker and Leslie Henderson. It lies in a canyon west of Crackerjack Tower and is almost invisible to passers-by as it blends into the cliffs beyond. (I, 5.9, A2.)

CAMERON M. BURNS

Kokopelli Spire. This intriguing spire, located across the river from Farmington, had seen several attempts before Mike Baker and I made the first ascent on February 3. Seven drilled angles were used as a bolt ladder and several pitons, ranging from bongs to baby angles, were placed. The rock was quite loose. (II, 5.9 R+, A2+, 1 pitch.)

CAMERON M. BURNS

Zuni Needle, Gallup Area. Mike Baker and I made the first ascent of this beautiful 250-foot tower on April 7 and 8. Mike led a long pitch with a short section of 5.10. A second short lead (5.8) put us on a ledge two-thirds of the way up the tower. We rappelled off double ropes. The following day, after jumaring to the high point, I led a beautiful, overhanging A2 seam that quickly turned into 5.6 face-climbing. The descent required two double-rope rappels. We placed five drilled angles for rappel anchors and three knifeblades. (III, 5.10, A2, 3 pitches.)

CAMERON M. BURNS

Animas Spire (I, 5.7+, A3) is located just 50 feet downhill from Ghost Tower. Mike Baker and I climbed it on February 15. Baker led the single pitch by first threading the lead rope through the middle of the spire, tying it off and then jumaring the fixed "sling" around to a stance on the northern side of the tower. An awkward off-width followed. Descent was made using simul-rappel techniques. *Crackerjack Tower* (I, 5.9, A2) is a tiny tower located up a canyon directly north of a rest area on NM Route 84, a few miles south of Ghost Ranch. Baker and I made its first ascent on February 25. He led, placing several pitons and drilled angles. *Coyote Pinnacle* (I, 5.9, A2) was climbed in June 1990 by Mike Baker and Leslie Henderson. It lies in a canyon west of Crackerjack Tower and is almost invisible to passers-by as it blends into the cliffs beyond.

CAMERON M. BURNS

Ford Butte. Ford Butte is mentioned in Herbert Ungnade's *Mountains of New Mexico*, but precious little history of climbing on it is recorded. This volcanic plug has three separate and distinct summits, the highest being either the north or south summit. On April 6, Mike Baker and I made the first ascent of the south summit (II, 5.9, R). We then climbed the regular route to the north summit (5.7). The lower west summit remains unclimbed.

CAMERON M. BURNS

New Mexico

Angel Peak Correction. In AAJ 1991, page 169, Angel Peak was incorrectly placed. It rises in northeastern New Mexico.

PLATE 37

Photo by Michael Baker

**Cameron Burns rappelling off
Kokopelli Spire after the first ascent.**



Idaho

Chimney Rock, Selkirk Crest. On August 19, Ann Robertson and I made the first ascent of a new three-pitch route on the north side of Chimney Rock. The first lead was a superb 5.10c crack system that split the middle of an obvious prow just a few feet left of Greymatter. The crux was a 4-inch roof near the top of the lead just three feet from the Greymatter dihedral. The second pitch was of continuous A2 up a very thin seam that burst into an off-width after 40 feet. Because Ann did not want to jumar the second lead, I fixed a bomber second-pitch anchor, then clipped my 180-foot rope through it and ran out the third 100-foot lead to the top. On the third pitch, I turned progressively easier roofs (5.9+, 5.9, 5.8). When I tried to pull up the rope to rappel, Ann accidentally left a knot on her end, making the rope jam through my second-pitch belay. Since the rope had logged over 100 leader falls, I left it, as well as my second rope as Ann and I rappelled off. Ann was hypothermic by the time I reached her and when we reached the ground, she vomited repeatedly. We left the retired ropes hanging and hiked out to the car. Karl Birkinkamp cleaned my mess for me. I am very grateful to him. I did not want to trash out a climbing area where I was just a visitor, but I just had to get my partner off.

CAMERON M. BURNS

Wyoming—Wind River Range

Square Top Mountain 1990. Doug Colwell and I climbed an excellent new 17-pitch route (V, 5.10d) on the east face of Square Top Mountain in September, 1990. We began by scrambling up a series of obvious ramps to an intersection with the main crack system that splits the lower quarter of the east face. We then climbed three 5.5 to 5.8 pitches up the crack system to a grassy ridge. We traversed the ledge 300 feet left to the base of the lower right-facing dihedral marked by a fixed pin. Beginning at the dihedral, we followed the corner system by climbing a 5.10 face pitch with sketchy protection and two more 5.10 crack pitches that led to a large ramp. We traversed the ramp left for 165 feet to a semi-comfortable bivouac. The next morning, we climbed a 5.8 pitch a short distance up the face and left to a small ramp. We continued up another 5.8 pitch that followed the ramp left to a small steep seam. We then climbed the 5.10d crux pitch, placing limited but good protection. We next moved right and ascended a 5.7 slab to a prominent ledge, followed a 5.6 ramp to a second corner on the southwest and climbed straight up the corner system through a 5.9 chimney. We continued up a 5.7 crack to a belay at the right of the big roof, stepped left on small 5.10 holds that led to easier climbing and a big ledge and finally finished with a short 5.2 pitch to the expansive moonscape that forms the summit of Square Top.

DOUGLAS ABROMEIT

"Cloudburst Buttreß," near Temple Lake. While in the Temple Peak area during the first week of September, Reid Dowdle, Jeff Niwa and I made the first ascent of a very attractive buttreß on the west valley wall immediately north of Temple Lake. The rock was excellent (not a loose stone) and the climbing superb on massive granodiorite—with just enough cracks and holds to make the route possible. There were five pitches, 5.8 to 5.10c, and two scrambling pitches at the finish to the divide overlooking Big Sandy Opening.

FRED BECKEY

Little El Capitan, Southern Wind River Range. In August, Jeff Alzner and I hiked 16 miles to climb a half dome marked on the map as Little El Capitan. The first day, we free-climbed two 5.10 pitches, fixed two ropes and rappelled off. The next day, we free-climbed toward the top. The crack ran out one pitch from the top and, lacking a bolt kit, we rappelled off. After another bivouac at the base, we chose another line, left of the first attempt. We ascended 350 feet of strenuous climbing, fixed our ropes and bivouacked again at the tarn. On the fifth day, we free-climbed 5.10 until we were benighted at 13,000 feet. We wedged ourselves into coffin-shaped cracks. In the morning, Jeff bolted the 95° off-width crack above and then free-climbed the triple visor to the summit. (V, 5.10, A2.)

ROBERT MCGOWN

Colorado

Climbs in Colorado National Monument. Mike Colocino and Calvin Herbert climbed *Tunnel Vision* (III, 5.10+, A1, 4 pitches). The route ascends the second crack system right of the tunnel located right of Ribbed Buttreß. Fred Knapp, Sharon Sadleir, Jules Raymond and Richard Starness climbed *Queen and Her Jewels* on Remnants Tower (II, 5.9). The route follows the crack system just inside the right profile of the topo in *Desert Rock* on page 51.

ERIC BJØRNSTAD

CANADA

Yukon Territory

Mounts Logan, Queen Mary, McArthur and Hubbard, Icefield Ranges, Kluane National Park Reserve. During the 1991 climbing season, there were 16 groups that climbed or skied in the park. A total of 83 people spent 1497 person-days in the mountains. A large number of these climbed or attempted Mount Logan via the King Trench route. They were Canadians Al Dennis, Jack Bennetto, Tony Moore, Linda Zurkirchen, Garry Nixon and Rob Whelan; Swiss