

Newfoundland

Jabo, Weightin' For That Train and Other New Routes. Expedition members Eric Baldwin, Jeff Butterfield, Craig Comstock, Chris Kane, Karen Rogers, Paul Ryan and Joe Terravecchia arrived in Francois, Newfoundland on September 7. Over a 19-day period, the four climbing teams managed to establish a total of 11 new routes on Jabo and nearby cliffs. Before arriving in Newfoundland, there was a logistical division between the Missoula contingent and the climbers from New England, but we started functioning as a group of eight upon our arrival in activities such as meals and fixing the traverse over the best of the main wall named Jabo. Most of our time was spent, however, as climbing teams of two. Each pair had its own tent and food and was fairly self-contained. My climbing partner, Paul Ryan, and I established four new routes in the area, ranging from two to eight pitches long. Our routes followed natural lines on quality granite. Three of the routes were all-free Grade IIIs up to 5.10 and required no fixed protection. The fourth route, *Weightin' for the Train*, was a Grade V that climbed a superb natural line on the main face of Jabo and included quality aid as well as free climbing. This route required some bolts at anchors, two rivets, and several drilled hooks all placed with a hand drill using stainless steel hardware. Our equipment included a full aid rack including hooks, copperheads, thin pitons, and bolting/riveting hardware.

Weather was a major factor during the expedition. Base Camp and the walls we were climbing on were very exposed to harsh Atlantic storms. Devil's Bay is known by locals for generating strong circulating winds which have lifted boats off the water and thrown them into the rocks. Although we experienced some severe weather during our stay, it was nothing outrageous. The most stable and dry months for climbing in Newfoundland are July and August. Depending on the year, however, the area is climbable from early May through September.

BEN GILMORE, unaffiliated

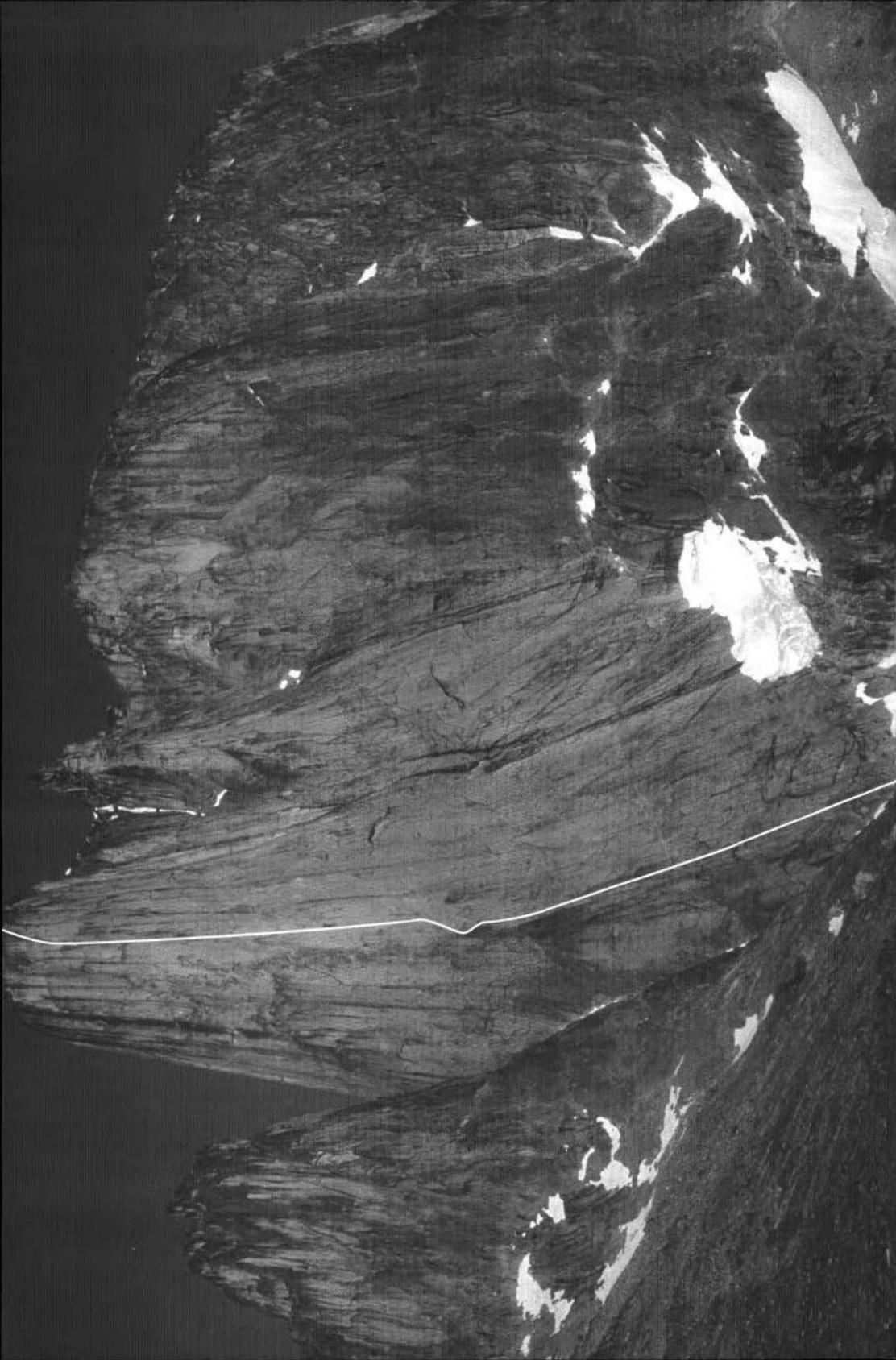
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GREENLAND

Ulamertorssuaq, Moby Dick. We were seven climbers (Ben Masterson, Didi Langen, H.M. Gotz, Walter Obergolser, Heli Gargitter, Stefan Glowacz and myself). We started the climbing on July 3 and arrived on top July 20. We had fixed ropes all the way to the summit. We climbed in three teams. Everyone reached the top. The wall is divided into two parts. The lower part contains 13 slabby pitches that lead up to the top of a flat buttress we called "Schwarzer Mann." There we installed a camp. Extending vertically above is the column and its crack system. The pitches above the camp offer excellent crack climbing. Finger jams, overhanging fist and hand cracks and some short off-width passages call upon a full repertoire of crack climbing tech-

Ulamertorssuaq, showing *Moby Dick.*

Kurt Albert



niques. The character of the rock reminds us again and again of the wonderful Yosemite classics.

We worked on obtaining the summit by rotating teams. Our main goal was to create a well-thought-out, secure free climbing route. We protected the cracks with cams and nuts, and placed bolts where it became too thin. The belays all are secured by two solid bolts. Our goal was also to later free climb the whole route, but we failed by one 5.13 pitch near the top. There were a lot of 5.12 pitches and one 5.13. I highly recommend this unique line on the Ulamertorssuaq. Now it's possible to repeat the route alpine-style in two to three days. We left all the gear that was placed by a hammer on the wall. To repeat the route I recommend a double rack of Friends and Stoppers up to number four Camelot and two 60-meter ropes. It's possible to abseil the route.

KURT ALBERT, Germany

Ulamertorssuaq, Left-Hand Tower. High quality big-wall-type climbs can be found in the Tasermiut Fjord region of South Greenland. Many lines have not had ascents. The Ulamertorssuaq Towers form a line of three satellite peaks to the main mass of Ulamertorssuaq. The latter was climbed for the first time by a French party in 1960. It was our original intention to attempt a line on the central tower; however, on our arrival we found that a Swiss party was firmly ensconced on this route (they subsequently failed after about 10 pitches). We therefore decided to attempt the line that had been tried by Masterson and Albert.

After flying from London on June 28, David Anderson, Craig Dring, Paul Tattersall and I made two boat trips to Base Camp in Tasermiut Fjord. From July 2 to July 5 we set up Advanced Base Camp and fixed the approach to the route. From the top of the moraine we crossed a small glacier to the base of a band of wet slabs stretching across the bottom of the face. We ascended the slabs at the narrowest point to a band of ledges. The route started just left of a series of vertical crack lines in the center of the face. From July 6 to July 14 we managed four climbing days, climbing in pairs. We fixed 12 pitches over three days. We followed leftward-diagonal cracks for 14 sustained and steep pitches to a large ledge, then a short pitch right across a gentle slab to a series of roofs. A further three steep pitches led to the top. The climbing was predominantly crack climbing from finger to off-width/chimney. Fifty-meter ropes were required. We protected the stances with one or two bolts. Protection on pitches consisted of nuts and camming devices. No bolts or pegs were placed for direct aid or protection on pitches. On day four all members reached the summit then rapped the line of ascent. We graded the 800-meter route E4 A2; a strong team would be able to free the route in its entirety at a standard of E5 with one pitch of E6.

A note on existing and potential climbs in the Ulamertorssuaq basecamp region: The best rock in the area is to be found on the steep vertical faces. The low angel rock tends to be mossy and loose in places.

IAN DRING, *Alpine Climbing Group*

Ulamertorssuaq. Quadrophania. Our team (Paolo Cavagnetto, Manlio Motto and Vecenzo Ravaschietto from Italy, and me, Michel Piola, from Switzerland) took a train from Geneva to Luxembourg, a flight from there to Rejkiavik, Iceland, a boat to Massansuak, a helicopter flight to Nanortalik (where we bought basecamp materials), before finally navigating to basecamp in the Tasermiut Fjord area of Greenland in a small Zodiac boat. We had come to try a new route in the heart of the south face of Suikarsuak. This was the third time I had visited the area; in 1983, I had climbed the *Diedre de Genevois* with Christian Dolphin, Jean Probst, and Bernard Wielisbach on the same formation, and in 1984, I had completed a new route on Ketil, the *Directissime*, with Dolphin and Nicholas Schenkel. The face of our present objective had been climbed by two different routes besides *Diedre des Genevois*, which climbs the big central dihedral: the 1977 *Voie Originale*, through the big dihedral on the left and, in 1994, *Moby Dick*, which ascended the pillar just on the right. Despite bad weather (strong winds, considerable precipitation, and only two consecutive days of good weather in one month), after a good month of pregnancy in basecamp we became the proud fathers of *Quadrophenia*, a new-born that measured as follows: 1000 meters, ED (sup) 6c A4 on extremely steep sharp granite. After an initial exposed free climbing section (6b/c) on the lower part of the face, the overhanging central part was a delicate progression up very compact rock. Some delicate A4 pitches, with lots of hooking, gave us lots of problems before we got to our first camp on portaledges, which we installed at the base of the Shield. From there, we followed a single crack for 350 meters, climbing seven continuous pitches that ranged from thin crack to off-width. Although at first it had looked quite improbable, it became an extremely beautiful line.

A bad storm, with strong winds, cold and snow, surprised us five pitches from the summit. Manlio and I joined the *Diedre de Genevois* 40 meters below the top (a section of the wall that I'd already climbed in 1983), but then were forced to retreat to our bivy at the base of the face. Paolo and Vicenzo left toward the summit and gained the 1983 route at the end of the day. They then descended to the portaledges and spent the night there. In the middle of the night they found themselves hanging in the void after the wind shredded their portaledges to pieces.

We encountered very good rock all along, with very good free and aid climbing. All the belays were equipped for rappelling. We placed 64 bolts, 25 in between pitches and the rest in belays. We kindly ask future parties not

to add any new bolts to our route, even if it should eventually be free climbed.

An important notice for those not used to expeditions in this area: The risk of bad weather is continuous, mosquitoes in basecamp are quite miserable, and the area is completely isolated. Don't get hurt. In certain cases the ice pack closes the access to the fjord, making return impossible.

MICHEL PIOLA, *Club Alpin Suisse*

Mount Forel Attempt. The Isortoq-Mount Forel Kuummiut '95 Expedition consisted of Jan Mila (Norway) Nels Niemi (Alaska) and Hans Christian Florian (Greenland). The objective was to travel in the previously unexplored area from Isortoq to Mount Forel, approaching the 3360-meter peak from the west, around the huge Helheim Glacier. This approach had been tried by Mila and Florian in 1993 but was abandoned because of huge crevasses west of Helheim Glacier. This year they met with a stronger party and chose a more westerly route which avoided the crevasses. This revised route took them about 90 kilometers inland and through the upper parts of the Skakt, Fenris, and Jura Glaciers, reaching the entrance to the glaciers of Schweitzer Land through the Doren ("The Door") at 2100 meters altitude. At this point they encountered polar bear tracks. This was very surprising, as the nearest hunting grounds were at least 80 kilometers distant. Luckily, the bear itself was not encountered. The base of Mount Forel was reached, and, on May 1, an attempt was made to climb Mount Forel from the northeast. The attempt was abandoned at ca 2900 meters altitude because of steep blue ice. It had been a very windy and snowless year. The route down to the village of Kuummiut was heavily crevassed and difficult to negotiate. This is thought to be because of the small amount of snow this year. The expedition covered new land and made the earliest yet attempt of Mount Forel. The team traveled 370 kilometers in 23 days.

DAN CHÁVEZ

Ascents in the Mount Forel Area. Paul Walker and Tangent Expeditions made several climbs in the Mount Forel area. Walker flew his expedition in and out with a ski-mounted Twin Otter.

On the flight to retrieve the Walker expedition, Douglas Cooper's British Mount Forel Expedition was landed at the head of Avantgarden Glacier, just east of Mount Forel. The team consisted of Cooper, Claire Cooper, Jonathan Godson, Adam Hyne, Adam Hanlon and Jon Mayne. The group made climbs in the very remote region around Mount Forel, but failed to climb Forel due to the same difficult conditions experienced earlier this year. Their plan was

to ski, by the traditional route, the approximately 180 kilometers to the fjord close to the settlement of Sermiligaq. On August 23, Adam Hyne was pulled backward by his sledge into a crevasse at the head of the Avantgarden Glacier. Hyne fell 20 feet and suffered a head injury and was unable to extricate himself from the crevasse. A protracted helicopter rescue ensued. On August 26 the whole team was flown to Tasiilaq and Hyne was admitted to the local hospital. Hyne was released two days later in good spirits.

DAN CHÁVEZ

Apostle's Thumb, Northeast Face. Last summer a small but well-organized Austrian party climbed the Northeast Face of the Apostelens Tommelfinger (The Apostle's Thumb) above Lindenows Fjord in South Greenland. The ascent of the 1400-meter face was pushed little by little over a four-week period. A more or less direct line was chosen. The typical unsettled weather repeatedly turned the climbers back to their "Moskito Base Camp." They found good rock on all but some leads, where the granite was rotten. In the lower part the climbing was slowed by wet rock and the climbers were often soaked. Ropes were fixed about three-quarters of the way up the face. In the upper part a portaledge was used. The very delicate upper 300 meters contained a roof which they managed to climb directly. The final ascent was made in a two-day push. More than 40 ropelengths were climbed, over 30 of them at a standard of 6 and 7 with long aid sections to A3. The flat top was reached by all six members: Joachim Lugger, Siegfried Girstmair, Christian Zenz, Hany Riedl, Kurt Radner and Sepp Delmarco. This was the first Austrian ascent of the mountain and probably fifth or sixth ever. The Apostelens Tommelfinger (2300 meters) was first ascended by a French party led by Maurice Barrard in 1975 (first attempts were made in 1971 by French and Irish expeditions, 1973 by Italians). In summer 1976 another French expedition repeated the ascent by a new route. In 1977 the French High Mountain Military Group (GMHM) led by Jean-Claude Marmier climbed the lower southeast face and attempted the impressive northeast face but had to retreat just some 300 meters from the summit.

JÓZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik, Poland*

Ascents of Cone and Dome Peaks and Gunnbjorns. The first Spanish Expedition to the Gunnbjorns Fjeld went to Greenland with the goal of climbing to the top of the highest summit of the Arctic. The team was: Jake Molins, Marc Bernat, Monica Belenguer, Robert Rodergas, and Josep Pujante as an expedition leader. We departed from Akureyri (Iceland) on July 2, refueling in Isafjordur, and landed in Greenland. We camped near the valley at the west of the icefield (a continuation to the north of the

Rosenborg Gletscher). We took special care for environmental conservation, keeping all garbage in big bags. On July 3, we made an exploration around the area, but the weather was stormy, so we went back to the base camp. We were forced to wait because of a big storm of snow and strong wind until July 5, when the weather seemed to be getting better. After a new exploration of a neighboring valley (behind the spur, on the northwest), we could see that that was the right valley to climb Gunnbjorns. On July 6, we set up Camp I in that valley, and on July 7 Josep Pujante climbed the twin peaks of Cone and Dome (3650 meters, aneroid altimeter). On July 9, four members tried to make an attempt at Gunnbjorns. The weather changed and a storm began but Josep Pujante got to the summit (3689 meters) at 8 a.m., after six hours skiing from CI to the South Col and then climbing with crampons and ice axe by the Southwest Ridge. He reached the top of Gunnbjorns solo, the first ascent for Spain and Catalonia.

DR. JOSEP A. PUJANTE, Spain

SOUTH AMERICA

ECUADOR

Chimborazo, West Face, New Route. On February 7, I climbed (solo) a new route on Chimborazo's west face. The route lies between the Southwest Ridge (regular route) and the Whymper Route (approximate west ridge) and follows a long series of ephemeral frozen waterfalls which form in the rock-bands in the center of the face. I left the lower hut at 4:30 a.m. and reached the first water ice at 6:15 a.m. at 17,000 feet. Three series of falls were followed in a direct line (the most continuous set of falls) to 18,500 feet. Here my path crossed the traversing Whymper Route and I continued directly up to maintain the purity of the line and to maximize technical difficulties. More steep ice (70°) was found in the last 300 feet below the false summit. I reached the main summit (20,703 feet) at 9:30 a.m. and was back at the lower hut at 11:00 a.m. I descended the Southwest Ridge. The route is graded III/IV with water ice to 85° (N.E.I. IV).

STEVEN HOUSE

PERU

Pucaraju Colmillo Negro. From the trekking pass of Alto de Pucaraju, this free-standing rock spire appears as a sharp black obelisk below and to the right of the main summit of Pucaraju (16,486 feet). As I approached it