



## **Upernavik region, Red Wall of Agparssuit, Flight of the Dodo and Don't be Gull-able; Impossible Wall, Improbability Drive**

West Greenland

After a comparatively benign passage from Scotland to Greenland in my 10m sailing boat, Dodo's Delight, we made a long motor up the west coast. Either there was no wind, or the wind was against us. Eventually, we arrived at the Sortehul Fjord, close to Upernavik.

This year my crew was the Nerdy Bunch: Steve Bradshaw, David Glass, Clinton Martinengo, and Andrew Porter from South Africa. They were so named as they were always in front of their computers. In 2010 I'd dubbed my American-Belgian team the Wild Bunch, due to their high fives and dancing at the top of climbs.

The South Africans chose to warm up with new lines on the Red Wall, that pleasing playground for pioneering routes. [See note later in this section regarding potential access difficulties with these cliffs.] Landing by dinghy in rather turbulent conditions on July 9, two pairs started lines on the east face from the obvious diagonal grassy ramp (72°39 N, 55°53 W) right of Seagulls' Garden (400m, 5.11, Ditto-Favresse, AAJ 2011). Andy and Dave climbed Don't be Gull-able at 21 (5.10d) C1. They pulled on gear to surmount a roof at the top of the initial corner, and after ca 300m, having joined the 2011 Italian route Little Auk (450m, 7a, Argentero-Maggioni-Villa, AAJ 2012), were unable to find an independent route through the final wall. From this point they scrambled left up an easy ramp to the top of the cliff. Clinton and Steve followed a direct line left of Don't be Gull-able to produce Flight of the Dodo (400m, 24/5.11d). In the meantime, the skipper had moved to the other side of the promontory due to a change in wind direction, causing one pair to walk all the way around the fjord searching for it, one climber with his feet bound in tape rather than enduring tight rock shoes.

After a brief rest the team was ready for the main project, a new route on Impossible Wall. They chose a line adjacent to the 2010 American-Belgian route, and with similar climbing. Improbability Drive (850m, 31 pitches, 26/5.12b), climbed July 12–21, was sustained, technical, and challenging. Four camps were made, with occasional nights spent on portaledges. They finished up the last two or three pitches of the American-Belgian route. We then moved to Baffin Island, as described elsewhere in this AAJ. The expedition received a Gore-tex Shipton/Tilman grant and a Gino Watkins Memorial Award, for which we are most grateful.

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Editor's note: Climbing in this area may be restricted by regulations protecting nesting seabirds. See this article for more information.

## Images



Improbability Drive on Impossible Wall. The 2010 Impossible Wall and the Devil's Brew takes a parallel line immediately left.



The Red Wall of Agparssuit. (1) Red Chilli Crackers. (2) Seagulls' Garden. (3) Flight of the Dodo. (4) Don't be Gull-able. (5) Little Auk.



The first pitch of Improbability Drive, straight off the deck of the boat, set a pattern for cleaning.



One of the crux sections of Improbability Drive.

## Article Details

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