



AAC Publications

Middle Triple Peak, northwest pillar, Hard Arteries.

Alaska, Kichatna Mountains

It started on a sun-soaked crag near home, when Twid Turner asked, "Dave, do you fancy getting strapped onto a new route in Alaska in a few weeks? My partner has just dropped out. I have some funding, loads of kit already there, and the new route potential is crazy."

Twid and I arrived in Alaska after the usual airport shenanigans, but before we knew it, we were on our way to Talkeetna, blurry-eyed, with a month's food and climbing kit. We arrived in the "drinking town with a climbing problem," and spent five days there before I began to dream of an easier life in the mountains. Eventually a fly-window appeared, and we had five minutes to haul-ass and make our flight to the Kichatna Spires.

My usual approach to climbing peaks is to go alpine-style, packing everything I need for a safe multi-day trip, then halving the load and accepting that once you start you just cannot stop. But after five days of snowstorms, the avalanche risk was high, so Twid's approach of, "Come on, lad, let's just get strapped onto something and suffer," really paid off as we suffered our way up inch-by-inch while other parties in the Alaska Range continued to get shut down.

The climb started with 500m of snow and ice, that led via a precarious traverse to the base of a superb pillar, topped by amazing snow ridges. We chose a direct line linking perfect cracks and icy corners via steep aid and mixed climbing. We named the line Hard Arteries (1,000m, Scottish V A3) after the lads Stu Inchley and Kim Ladiges, who joined us for the climb and withstood a diet of pure butter during our six-day effort. I have no doubt that the majority of this line could be free-climbed in ideal conditions, as it takes on beautiful soaring cracks, which were unfortunately plastered with snow and ice.

David Gladwin, U.K.

Images



Snow cave bivy on Middle Triple.



Steep, snowy corner mid-route.



David Gladwin leading on Middle Triple Peak.



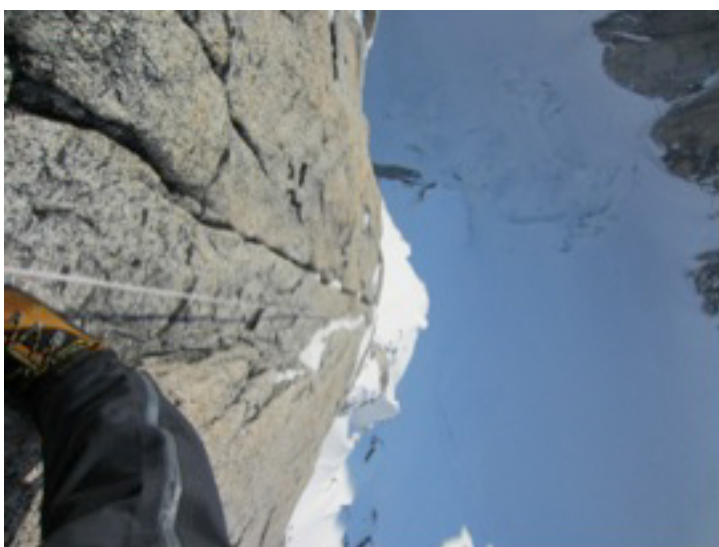
Kim Ladiges' utterly frozen hair.



Twid Turner on skis below Middle Triple.



Hard Arteries on Middle Triple Peak. The rock pillar had mostly solid, splitter cracks.



Looking down one of the steep splitter cracks.



Turner aiding a steep crack.



Turner leading a snow ramp.



The upper snow ridge on Middle Triple Peak.



David Gladwin leading on Middle Triple Peak.

Article Details

Author	David Gladwin, U.K.
Publication	AAJ
Volume	55
Issue	87
Page	155
Copyright Date	2013
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions