



Sam Ford Fjord, Polar Sun Spire, north face, Superbalance

Canada, Baffin Island, East Coast

In May 2012, Marcin Tomaszewski and I completed a new route on the north face of Polar Sun Spire in Sam Ford Fjord. We began climbing on April 14, and after 24 days on the wall finished our new route Superbalance (VII M7+ A4) on May 7.

There are two other routes on the north face. In 1996 the American team of Chapman, Hollinger, and Synnott spent 39 days establishing the Great and Secret Show (VII 5.11 A4 WI4). And in 2000 the Norwegian team of Bo, Hagen, Roisli, and Wiik spent 19 days establishing a route on the pillar on the east side of the north face (VII 5.10 A4). In comparison with these expeditions, we arrived at the fjord very early in the season and experienced low temperatures (-20°C on average) but relatively stable weather.

We chose the most natural unclimbed line on the wall, a large, red crack and corner system, which we called the Boomerang. The cold temperatures allowed us to climb loose sections up this feature, but unfortunately we still found some pitches dangerously runout because of loose rock. We tried to free climb as much as possible, and on the sixth pitch we freed the most difficult section of the route at M7+. Higher up, we crossed the Norwegian route via an offwidth crack to reach a large unclimbed corner system on the headwall, which we called the Arena. The quality of rock was much better on the headwall. Starting from our third portaledge camp, we climbed the most difficult aid pitch on our route (pitch 23, A4), which required two rivets, some hooks and heads, and many beaks in different sizes.

Climbing on the north face of Polar Sun Spire in a team of two was a big challenge for us, and we are happy that the conditions allowed us to complete such a beautiful, natural, and logical line without excessive aiding or drilling.

Marek Raganowicz

Images



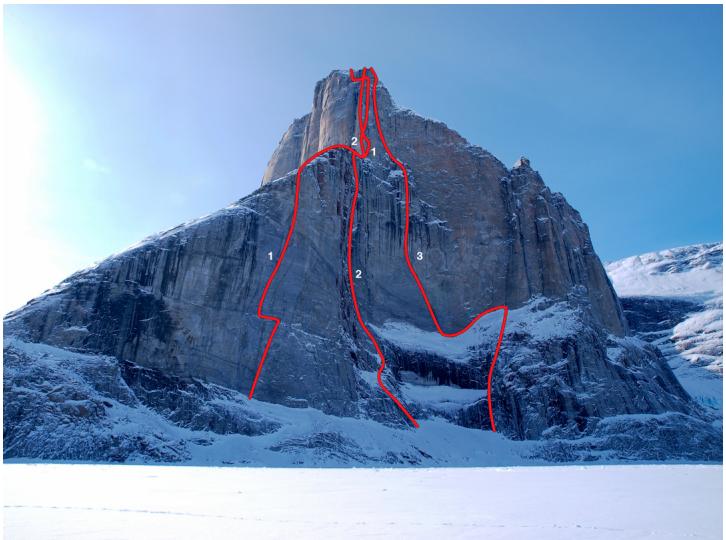
Following pitch 27, "We were like soldiers in the trenches. We had no choice. We had to fight arm-by-arm from the bottom to the top. Bad conditions are not a sufficient excuse. We resolved to climb every day," said Tomazsewski.



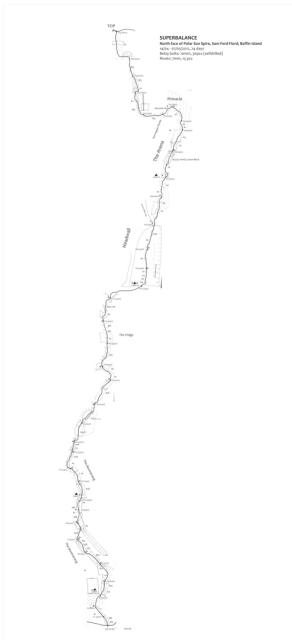
Looking up the Boomerang on the lower wall.



Racking up in a storm on Pitch 27.



Polar Sun Spire. (1) Norwegian Route. (2) Superbalance. (3) The Great and Secret Show.



Superbalance topo.



A splitter crack on the upper headwall.



Annotated route photo.



Resting in the portaledge.



Camp on the upper headwall.



The duo climbed in extremely cold conditions.



The upper headwall, what the team dubbed the Arena.



Tomazsewski leading in the Boomerang.

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