



## AAC Publications

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### **Mt. Tutoko, West Face**

New Zealand, Darran Mountains

Mt. Tutoko, west face. Guy McKinnon soloed the first ascent of the west face of Mt. Tutoko (2,608m), the highest peak of the Darran Mountains, near the southern tip of New Zealand's south island. The ca 1,900m face had only one recorded attempt, in 1974, when three climbers reached the upper headwall before retreating.

McKinnon bivouacked at the base of the west face and then climbed the wall in 8.5 hours on July 11, following ice and snow up a gully system. He bivouacked again near the summit and then attempted to descend the northwest ridge (the 1924 first-ascent route on Tutoko). Clipped out near the bottom, he was forced to reascend much of the ridge in order to descend the north face and ultimately walk out the Tutoko Valley, reaching the road 21 hours after beginning his descent. McKinnon described "utterly superb" conditions on the climb, with "nothing overly hard, just a lot of it." He graded the route VI 4+, but noted that if the Darrans' commitment grading were open-ended, the climb would have been given VII.

From a report in *The Climber*, New Zealand

## Images



The ca 1,900m west face of Mt. Tutoko, with the McKinnon route.

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