



## AAC Publications

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### **Snowpatch Spire, west face, Wile Flowers**

Canada, Bugaboos

“Wile: devious or cunning stratagems employed in manipulating or persuading someone to do what one wants.” To an outside observer, it would seem that Chris Brazeau was using powers of persuasion in lining up our rock climbing adventure for the day. The truth is, both of us were equally intrigued by the prospect of a new line, and one should blame the events of my first day in the Bugaboos on the cosmic forces of the gleaming granite and a bluebird August day, not on the wily Canadian.

From below, it was obvious that a prominent, unclimbed dihedral system sliced the west face of Snowpatch Spire, just to the left of the Great Chimney. Chris was certain this system had never been climbed.

Up, up, and away! We blasted off from the snow onto a glorious gray-granite finger splitter. This entry pitch was not new, having been established by Topher Donahue and Patience Gribble (Tower Arête, 5.11). The next pitch approached the dihedral via wandering through ledges, blocks, and flowers (5.8). I stopped 50m up, beneath a gleaming right-facing corner, the bait that had lured us here. Slammed shut. I might have sworn. I might have giggled. Just another one of the many cracks and dihedral systems that look like they will provide when viewed through my wily camera’s zoom.

I waited for Chris to arrive, handed him the rack, and gave him a pat on the back. “I think it will go.” Or maybe I said, “I think it will go?” He headed up for a closer look: no bueno. Not wanting to spoil the fun or momentum, we started looking around. Chris headed right, from below the blank corner, reaching an overlap with some flakey holds on a pillar. It looked spicy but provided the just-good-enough edge or two, finishing with a granite hueco. I led the next pitch, gardening my way up a beautiful left-facing, widening hand crack that paralleled the dihedral system.

Chris took the next wide hands and fists splitter, a burly and radical pitch, with a thoughtful finish stepping left. This landed us back into the dihedral system to our left. The final pitch was mine, and I must admit: I wanted out. I headed up a short ways, but the flaring crack was too intimidating, so I veered sharp right, foot-traversing up a sketchy layback flake. With ridiculous rope drag, I stepped onto moderate terrain above the flake, taking the route to the summit ridge.

It was fun climbing but far from direct, a wily climb but not a wild climb, not what we expected but exactly what we were looking for: Wile Flowers (IV 5.12).

Quinn Brett, USA

## Images



The line of Wile Flowers on the west face of Snowpatch Spire.



Leading up the fifth pitch.



Leading up the fourth pitch.

## Article Details

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