



AAC Publications

Mt. Asgard, south face, Scott-Hennek route; Mt. Loki, southeast ridge

Canada, Baffin Island, Auyuittuq National Park

In March, Rueben Shelton and I shipped 200 pounds of food and climbing gear to our outfitter Peter Kilabuk in Pangnirtung, which he snowmobiled to a cache near Summit Lake prior to our arrival. Rueben and I arrived in Pangnirtung on July 3, and Kilabuk motored us up the fjord to the drop-off point with one backpack each. Our light and fast program was in full swing.

Over the next two days we backpacked up the Weasel Valley. By midday on July 5 we reached the shelter at Summit Lake and breathed a sigh of relief to find our five boxes of essentials intact. Three days later, on July 9, we set off from camp at 4 a.m. with daypacks and a few snacks, and by 9 a.m. we were at the base of the south side of Mt. Asgard, hoping to repeat the Scott-Hennek route. Mark Synnott calls this “one of the most classic long free routes on the planet,” and as we stood on the summit at 5:30 p.m., after 20-plus pitches of splendid free climbing, we had to agree. We rappelled the route and arrived back at base camp after 26 hours on the go.

After some poor weather, we left camp again on July 16, intent on a new route on Mt. Loki. Our day began at 3 a.m. with thigh-deep wading across the frigid, churning creek near camp to reach the Turner Glacier. At 9 a.m. we set off up a nice crack system just left of the very toe of the southeast ridge. The climbing was fantastic. After a few opening pitches we veered to the crest of the ridge, following it for the remainder of the route. The first section of the climb followed a steep, clean, and dry right-facing corner system, with continuous 5.8–5.10 jams and laybacks for about 800'. This section was capped by a sandy ledge and a short section of tricky 5.10 climbing, which led to easier ground.

From this point we gazed up at an orange false summit and also got a clear view of the south buttress route to our left. The single rope-length of climbing on the orange wall would define our route: a perfect 5.10 crack, narrowing from chimney-size to fingers. Easier ground brought us to the summit of Mt. Loki at 5:30 p.m. (20+ pitches, 5.10+).

We made eight rappels off the north side, aiming for a snowy col and ramp system on the east side of the peak. However, what we'd hoped would be an “easy ramp” turned into many hours of sketchy, character-building downclimbing to return to the Turner Glacier. We arrived back at camp after 27 hours away.

Dave Nettle, USA

Images



Climbing a 5.10 corner high on Mt. Loki.



Mt. Asgard as viewed from Mt. Loki.



Boat pickup.



Mt. Asgard from the Turner Glacier.



Chimney climbing on Mt. Loki.



High on the Asgard headwall on the Scott-Hennek route.



Mt. Loki from the Turner Glacier, showing the approximate location of the south buttress route on the left and the new route on the southeast ridge [Nettle-Shelton, 2013] on the right. Dave Nettle and Rueben Shelton descended the right skyline to the snowy ramp system.



Rueben Shelton ascends clean splitter cracks on Loki's southeast ridge below the prominent orange headwall.

Article Details

Author	Dave Nettle
Publication	AAJ
Volume	56
Issue	88
Page	178
Copyright Date	2014
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions