



AAC Publications

Colfax Peak, North Face, Ford's Theatre

Washington, North Cascades

On April 20, Andrew Fabian and I skipped work and put up a fourth route on the north face of Colfax Peak. I spotted the potential route in February when I climbed to the col west of Colfax to get a cell phone call out to my wife. I'd been itching to get on it ever since. Most of the route is hidden during the standard approach to the north face due its location in a cleft around the right side of a buttress.

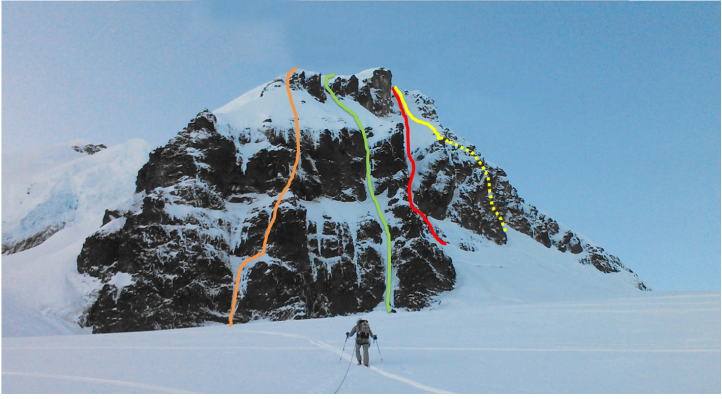
The four known routes on the north face of Colfax Peak. Left to right: Suicide Kimchi Volcano, Polish Route, Cosley-Houston, and Ford's Theatre.

We found the route in great shape and climbed three pitches of steep ice before mellowing out on steep snow gullies and climbing the final 100' of the Cosley-Houston toward the summit. It's a spectacular setting, with amazing views of Lincoln Peak, Thunder Glacier, and the Salish Sea far off in the distance. The climbing is fun and sustained but without many belay options after the first pitch. A bold party could likely combine the second and third pitches into one long pitch and avoid hanging ice-screw belays.

We took 10 ice screws of various length but wished we brought a couple more. Snow pickets were also key for a belay anchor atop the first pitch and also for atop the last ice pitch. They were also nice for the upper snowfields. We carried a small rock rack and pins but didn't use it. We called the route Ford's Theatre (500', AI4+).

Dana Bellows

Images



The four known routes on the north face of Colfax Peak. Left to right: Suicide Kimchi Volcano, Polish Route, Cosley-Houston, and Ford's Theatre.



Andrew Fabian begins the second pitch of Ford's Theatre.



Andrew Fabian at a hanging belay atop the second pitch.



Ford's Theatre (500', AI4+) from the base.

Article Details

Author	Dana Bellows
Publication	AAJ
Volume	58
Issue	90
Page	88
Copyright Date	2016
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions