



AAC Publications

Sheepshead, North Face

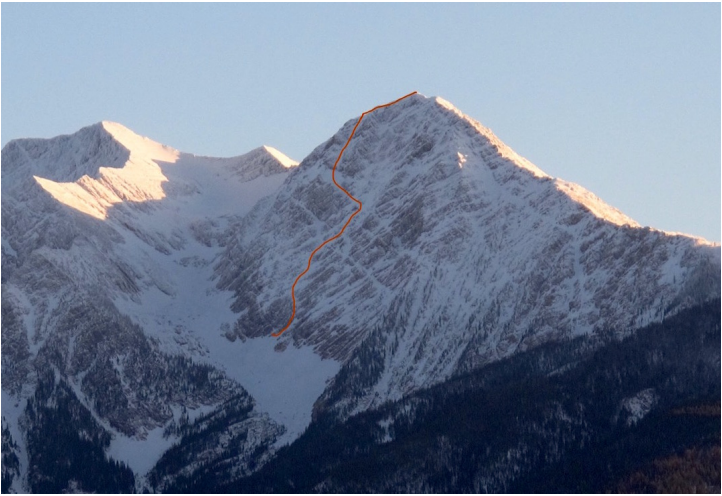
Montana, Mission Mountains

On May 1, Damien Mast and I made the first ascent of the 2,200' north face of Sheepshead (9,417') in the Mission Mountains of northwest Montana. (This peak is also known locally as Sheep's Head or West McDonald Peak.) The face had been attempted many times, but due to poor conditions was never completed. We walked five hours from McDonald Lake to get to the base, bushwhacking through extremely dense forests for three miles.

Upon arrival at the bottom of the face, we found perfect climbing conditions, and we soloed about 1,000' of AI3 and 70° névé to a series of cliff bands. Here, we roped up and climbed two 60m pitches of M5. Then we put the ropes back in the packs and escaped climber's left, out from underneath the 30- to 40-foot cornices that loomed high above us. Another 850' of névé up to 80° brought us to the summit ridge. After about five hours of climbing we reached the summit of Sheepshead, where we ate food in T-shirts and then descended off the west ridge and then down the south face.

– Justin Willis

Images



The north face of Sheephead in Montana's Mission Mountains, showing the line climbed by Damien Mast and Justin Willis in May 2016.



Justin Willis heading into mixed terrain on the first ascent of Sheephead's 2,200-foot north face, in the Mission Mountains of northwest Montana.



Damien Mast soloing easy névé on the lower portion of Sheepshead's north face.

Article Details

Author	Justin Willis
Publication	AAJ
Volume	59
Issue	91
Page	0
Copyright Date	2017
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions