



AAC Publications

Greenland, East Greenland

Renland: Four New Routes

Following a visit to a little-explored glacier basin in the east-southeast corner of Renland by Michel Raab (AAJ 2013), Geoff Hornby organized an exploratory expedition here that took place from July 18 to August 19. There was only one day of light precipitation through the entire expedition, and four new routes were completed.

After flying to Constable Pynt, David Barlow, Hornby, Robert Powell, and Paul Seabrook traveled 215km by rigid inflatable boat (RIB) to Renland, where they established base camp at 71°8'52.25"N, 25°38'56.02"W, just above their drop-off point. This voyage took 12 hours, and they strongly recommend that future parties use a hard boat, as they did on the return, which took 4.5 hours and was infinitely more pleasant. From base camp, a one-hour slog up the right-hand moraine, followed by a somewhat perilous descent to the glacier and another hour up the dry glacier, led to advanced base at 526m, 71°10'38.07"N, 25°44'17.98"W. This was provisioned by multiple round trips from base. Unfortunately, during the first of these trips, Hornby sustained a knee injury and had to be evacuated.

On July 26 the remaining three climbers put up Arctic Monkeys (400m, 10 pitches, British E2 5b) on the east face of a formation at the entrance to a side glacier west of advanced base. They reached the crest of the south ridge at 1,114m (71°10'39.39"N, 25°48'20.28"W), from where they made five rappels on the far side, then scrambled back down to the glacier.

On the 29th all three made the first ascent of Cerro Castillo (1,715m, 71°11'50.63"N, 25°42'51.01"W) via the southeast ridge (1,300m, AD+/D UIAA V). This was the first ascent of a peak attempted in 2012 by Raab and Betsy Winston, who retreated after climbing a small summit partway along the ridge. Barlow, Powell, and Seabrook climbed a 600m snow gully to the start of the ridge, then followed it to a foresummit, where a 30m rappel led to a small col. A short traverse right, followed by a 50m pitch, led to the true summit. There are possible bivouac sites on the crest, but the three climbed in a single-push, 24-hour round trip from advanced base, descending the route by rappel and downclimbing the snow gully.

On August 1 the three climbed the Double 00 Couloir (800m, AD 55°, rising to 75° at the top), which leads to a deep col on the ridge immediately west of what they named Mt. Hannes. (The 1,148m col is at 71°9'49.20"N, 25°45'17.79"W.) They descended the route, largely from Abalakov anchors.

Lastly, on August 6–7, the team climbed the northeast ridge of Mt. Hannes, a fine alpine rock arête with 1,400m (20 roped pitches) of climbing at TD-/TD E2 5b. Mt. Hannes (1,330m, 71°9'50.78"N, 25°45'8.30"W) was named after Powell's climbing partner Hannes Esterhuyse, who was killed while climbing in the Alps. They bivouacked during the ascent, a cold night since they didn't take sleeping bags, and descended from the west end of the summit ridge in five rappels to the top of the Double 00 Couloir, which they again descended largely by Abalakov anchors. No snow or water was found from the start of the route until they reached the couloir. The route was named Polar Daze.

This area has plenty of unclimbed summits, long snow and rock routes, and walls up to 1,000m. The east-facing rock wall behind the wall holding Arctic Monkeys was thought to be between 800m and 1,000m high, and has two potential lines following dihedral systems. (The team expected these lines would require a portaledge.) Various alpine summits seem accessible at a moderate grade via a subsidiary glacier on the west, between base camp and advanced base. This glacier is very

crevassed, and one or two sections are threatened by serac fall, though during their stay the party never saw the seracs calve.

The expedition would like to thank the Montane Alpine Club Climbing Fund, ASP International Rope Access, British Mountaineering Council, Mount Everest Foundation, and Mountain Club of South Africa for financial support. A full report is available [here](#).

David Barlow, U.K., and Rob Powell, RSA and U.K.

Images



The 400m route Arctic Monkeys.



Starting the first pitch (British 4c) of Arctic Monkeys.



Run-out slab climbing on Arctic Monkeys.



The southwest couloir and southeast ridge of Cerro Castillo (1,715m), climbed in 2016. This line was attempted in 2012, with the climbers reaching the pointed summit halfway up the ridge, which they named Cerro Castillito (1,563m).



The Double 00 Couloir leading to the 1,148m col west of Mt. Hannes. The couloir was first climbed to the col and then, on a separate day, used in descent after an ascent of Mt. Hannes (1,330m) by its northeast ridge.



Black-ice climbing in the Double 00 Couloir.



Polar Daze on the northeast ridge of Mt. Hannes (1,330m). The Double 00 Couloir is immediately right.



Steep ground on the northeast ridge of Mt. Hannes (1,330m).



High above the approach glacier on the northeast ridge of Mt. Hannes (1,330m).



The east-facing unclimbed big wall behind Arctic Monkeys, thought to be between 800m and 1,000m high.



Polar Daze on the northeast ridge of Mt. Hannes (1,330m). The Double 00 Couloir is immediately right.

Article Details

Author	David Barlow, U.K and Rob Powell, RSA and U.K.
Publication	AAJ
Volume	59
Issue	91
Page	0
Copyright Date	2017
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions