



## AAC Publications

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### **The Cholesterol Wall: Two New Routes**

Canada, Newfoundland, Gros Morne National Park

Red line: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (2016). Yellow line: Apocalypse Now (2015). Will Mayo Collection

**On March 7, 2015, Anna Pfaff and I completed Apocalypse Now, a traditionally protected mixed climb (220m, 7 pitches, WI7 M9) on the Cholesterol Wall, a large cliff above Ten Mile Pond on the west coast of Newfoundland.** We climbed the route over five days, fixing ropes to our high point each day. All pitches were onsighted except the second, which we aided and then freed with the gear in place. The route awaits a single-push ascent, as of this writing.

A year later, on March 11, Ben Collett, Chelsea Rude, and I completed a harder variation of Apocalypse Now that we called The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (220 meters, 7 pitches, WI7+ M12). This line took 10 days, fixing ropes to our high point each day. Pitches two, three, and six were aided and then freed with the gear in place; the other pitches were freed first go. The climb has four pitches of M8 or harder and a wild ice roof, all protected without bolts. As of spring 2017, it has not had a single-push ascent.

– Will Mayo, USA

**Editor's note:** In early 2017, Will Mayo returned to Gros Morne National Park and climbed several more new routes, with various partners, including Dreamline (1,250', WI6), a spray-ice route to the right of Pissing Mare Falls, climbed with Anna Pfaff and Newfoundland ice pioneer Joe Terravecchia. These routes will be documented in AAJ 2018.

### **ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **Apocalypse Now (220m, WI7 M9)**

Pitch one: Dry-tool the granite corner chimney system to a fixed nut, Specter, and small cam belay.

Pitch two: Dry-tool the vertical wall on the right diagonally, using seams and edges for hooks with micro-cams, small beaks, and small blades for protection to a ledge with a fixed nut, micro-cam, and piton belay.

Pitch three: Climb the relatively easy shield of ice to an ice ledge with a fixed cam belay augmented with screws or V-threads.

Pitch four: Climb up onto the three-dimensional ice structure with scant protection to a fixed piton belay augmented with screws or V-threads on an ice ledge at its top.

Pitch five: Traverse thin ice straight right with no protection, except one small blade halfway across, heading toward the large corner system to a fixed cam, nut, and piton belay at a small stance on the arête, four or five meters before the corner. Use caution that the formation of the ice above does not threaten this belay position.

Pitch six: Climb the classed rock corner using cams, nuts, and pitons for protection and swing onto the icicle to reach an ice gear belay tucked behind the right side of the final ice column.

Pitch seven: Climb the vertical ice column and easy ice bulges above to the top.

Descent: Rappel the upper two pitches with V-threads. From the fifth belay, rappel straight down to the snow slope below and right of the ice ledge of the third belay, which can be reached with a bit of shenanigans by climbing up and left while still on rappel. Rappel the ice shield to the second belay. One final rappel from the second belay reaches the base. Rappelling the wall in this way reduces one's exposure to the hazards of the icicles that hang overhead.

### **The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (220m, WI7+ M12)**

Pitch one: same as the first pitch of Apocalypse Now.

Pitch two: Step left into a left-facing corner and surmount an overhang, protecting with a couple nuts and a wide assortment of pitons. Belay on ice gear on the hanging smear.

Pitch three: Climb through the stepped roof diagonally right, protecting with a wide assortment of pitons and small and medium cams, to a hanging fixed rock belay beneath the left side of the shield of ice.

Pitch four: Climb the relatively easy shield of ice to a bomber fixed piton and nut anchor on an ice ledge slightly lower and left of the ice ledge of the third belay of Apocalypse Now.

Pitch five: similar to the fourth pitch of Apocalypse Now.

Pitch six: Climb ledges leftward with little protection to the arcing, overhanging thin crack. Climb the crack and flake system protecting with a healthy assortment of pitons (beaks, blades, arrows, and small angles), more than a few small to medium nuts, and a full set of cams to fist-size with duplicates in the small to medium sizes. Belay on ice screws underneath the ice awning.

Pitch seven: Surmount the surrounding ice roof and climb up easy ice bulges to the top.

Descent: Rappel the route.

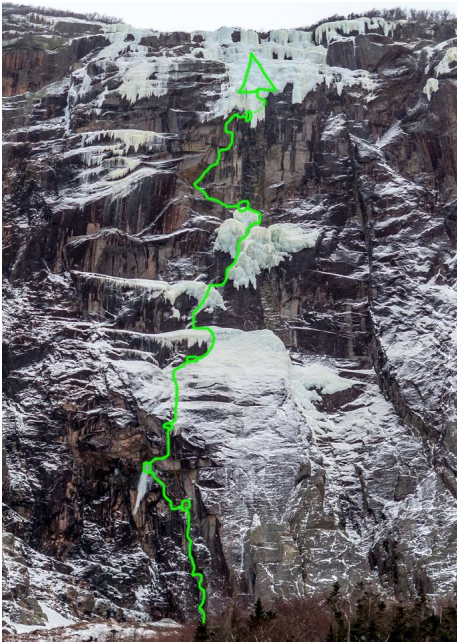
## Images



The line of Apocalypse Now (220m, WI7 M9).



The lines of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (2016, red) and Apocalypse Now (2015, yellow) on the 220-meter Cholesterol Wall, above Ten Mile Pond in Gros Morne National Park.



The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (220m, WI7+ M12).

## Article Details

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