



AAC Publications

Mt. Wilbur, North Face, Winter-Conditions Ascent

Montana, Glacier National Park, Lewis Range

In late October, Justin Willis and I headed into Glacier National Park to explore the area's potential for fall alpine mixed climbing. During a warm and clear weather window, we made what we think is the second ascent and first "wintery" ascent of the 2,500' north face of Mt. Wilbur (9,321') in a 23-hour car-to-car push from the Many Glaciers Trailhead.

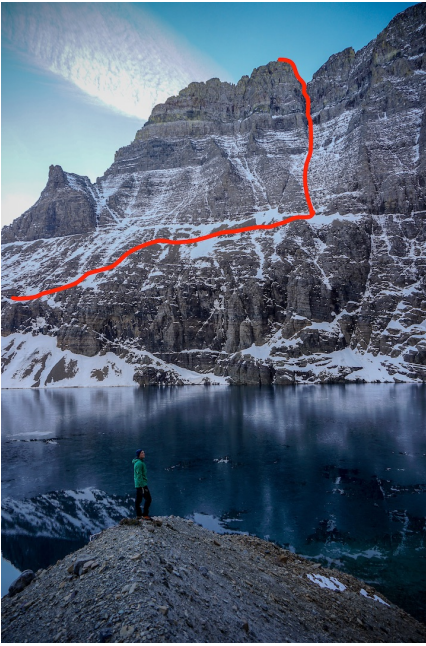
The first ascent of this face was made during the summer season of 1961 by Gil Averill, Tom Choate, and Renn Fenton. Their route was described as an extremely difficult climb involving many overhanging chimney pitches.

We experienced good climbing up to M5, on a rather terrifying blend of sedimentary and metamorphic rock, very little of which is held together particularly well. The cruxes were the same chimneys that the first ascent described. Given the poor rock, we feel the climbing is likely far better in winter conditions.

Justin and I are excited to continue exploring the potential of this area, but with caution: Dangerous snow conditions, big remote faces, and bad rock make climbing here very serious.

– Graham Zimmerman

Images



Mt. Wilbur (9,321') in the Lewis Range of Glacier National Park, showing the north face route, first climbed in 1961. Graham Zimmerman and Justin Willis made the first known ascent in autumn mixed conditions in October.



Justin Willis climbing typical terrain in the technical mixed chimney that defines much of the north face route on Mt. Wilbur (9,321') in Glacier National Park.



Justin Willis nearing the headwall on the north face of Mt. Wilbur (9,321') in Glacier National Park.

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