



AAC Publications

Bill's Dome, Delusion Dweller

Canada, British Columbia, Selkirk Mountains, Valhalla Ranges

Delusion Dweller (500m, 13-14 pitches, 5.10d/5.11a) on Bill's Dome. Photo by David Lussier

One hundred years ago, a trapper named Bill Drinnan roamed the headwaters of Hoder Creek, in the southwest corner of what's now Valhalla Provincial Park. Drinnan Pass is named for him, and so is Bill's Dome—an imposing hulk of compact gneiss 1.5km from the Drinnan Pass trailhead. In 2019, its 500m west face still had yet to be climbed.

Over the course of four years, Steve Ogle and I made four ground-up attempts on this impressive face, which is not quite so slabby as it looks. On August 28 we finally succeeded. We left the trailhead at 5:30 a.m., and by 2 p.m. we were up to our previous high point from 2017, 350m up the wall. We spent the next few hours making our way up the last 100m, topping out at 5 p.m. We walked off via the north ridge to the Drinnan Peak–Bill's Dome col and then down a west-facing bowl to reach the trail by 9 p.m.

We believe this is the easiest and most natural line up the west face. About half the route was under 5.10, which we often ran out as the compact gneiss does not present an abundance of gear placements. The other half of the route was in the 5.10/10+realm, with bolts where necessary (placed on lead with a power drill). Anchors are all equipped with two bolts, but not with chains or rap rings; you can rap the line with two 60s and a bit of extra tat/carabiners. It is also possible to “walk off;” however, this option is convoluted, requiring a handful of short rappels, difficult route-finding through terrain that is likely snow-covered in early season, and at least a couple of hours to return to the base.

We named our route Delusion Dweller (500m, 13–14 pitches, 5.10d/5.11a) due to a particular optical illusion that occurs when climbing the route—you'll have to do the climb to see it for yourself. The best season is from mid-July to late September, as the route is often wet early in the season, due to lingering snow patches. Cornices along the summit ridge also have been noted earlier in the season.

– David Lussier, Canada

Images



The route line for Delusion Dweller (500m, 13–14 pitches, 5.10d/5.11a) on Bill's Dome in Valhalla Provincial Park.



Steve Ogle following pitch six of Delusion Dweller (500m, 13–14 pitches, 5.10d/5.11a) on Bill's Dome in Valhalla Provincial Park.



Steve Ogle belays as David Lussier leads across the 5.10d eighth pitch of Delusion Dweller (500m, 13–14 pitches, 5.10d/5.11a) on Bill's Dome in Valhalla Provincial Park, British Columbia. Drinnan

Pass and Drinnan Lake are in the background, and the Devils Range (a subrange of the Valhallas) behind.

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