



## AAC Publications

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### **Zeiss Needle Subpeak, Southwest Face, Via della Seta; Gateway Ridge, South Face, Terzo Paradiso**

Antarctica, Antarctic Peninsula

Terzo Paradiso (700m, AI5 M5) on the south side of Gateway Ridge, Børgen Bay. The drop-off point was off the right side of the picture, while the pick-up point was off the left side. Photo by Marcello Sanguineti

**Gian Luca Cavalli, Manrico Dell'Agnola, and I spent January 2020 on the Peninsula in largely poor weather. We traveled aboard Icebird, captained by Oliver Grant.**

On January 10, we climbed a steep mixed route to a subpeak (unofficially dubbed Cima Cocoon) of Zeiss Needle (696m), on the northwest Arctowski Peninsula. (The subpeak is approximately 64°40.251'S, 62°34.823'W.) The 600m route, Via della Seta, ascended the rocky southwest face and, unusually for a climb on the Peninsula, climbed M4 terrain as well as more moderate snow and ice to AI4. We descended via a combination of downclimbing and rappelling. The rock was of typically poor quality and hard to protect, but the unusually warm temperatures of this season also resulted in bad snow and ice conditions, which we found as we visited all the popular climbing and ski areas of the region. [Zeiss Needle itself was climbed and skied by an American team in February 2000.]

After exploring possibilities around the Wall Range on Wiencke Island in poor weather, we sailed to Anvers Island and into Børgen Bay. There, we noticed a beautiful ice/mixed line on the south side of the end of Gateway Ridge, a southern extension of Mt. Rennie (1,555m). On January 16, in improved weather, we were dropped off at a weak point in the seracs some hundreds of meters east of this wall (64°43'48.80"S, 63°30'45.97"W). A circuitous and difficult route led in four hours to the bergschrund. After steep snow, ice, and mixed pitches heading right, we reached a second bergschrund and then climbed multiple steep pitches—one vertical pitch with sections of 95°, and others at 60–85°, all with generally good ice screw protection. Before the top, we negotiated almost vertical pitches with mushrooms and cornices, reminiscent of Peru and Patagonia, which were poorly protected with deadmen and stakes. We reached the top 12 hours after drop-off to complete the 700m Terzo Paradiso (AI5 M5).

Due to the poor ice conditions, we decided to descend the back of the ridge rather than rappel the route, traversing the Hooper Glacier and eventually rappelling a serac to the shore, a long way west of our drop-off point, where Icebird's Zodiac retrieved us (64°44'03.67"S, 63°33'15.94"W).

During the expedition we conducted snow sampling as part of a research project in collaboration between myself from the DIBRIS Department of Genova University and the Institute of Polar Sciences of the Italian National Research Council.

– Marcello Sanguineti, CAAI, Italy

## Images



Marcello Sanguineti during the descent of Gateway Ridge after climbing the new route Terzo Paradiso.



Manrico Dell'Agnola on the upper section of Terzo Paradiso, south face of Gateway Ridge.



Terzo Paradiso (700m, AI5 M5) on the south side of Gateway Ridge, Børgen Bay. The drop-off point was off the right side of the picture, while the pick-up point was off the left side.



A difficult descent after climbing Gateway Ridge. The three climbers (circled) had to rappel the serac to reach the pick-up point marked.



Gian Luca Cavalli exploring interesting rock climbing on the upper section of Via della Seta, a new route to a subpeak of Zeiss Needle.





Gian Luca Cavalli in the middle section of Via della Seta on a subpeak of Zeiss Needle.



Manrico Dell'Agnola on the lower section of Terzo Paradiso, Gateway Ridge.





The travels of the 2020 Italian expedition. The green circles represent summits climbed on skis. The two red circles mark the location of the two new routes, while the red/magenta solid dots mark the location of snow sample sites.

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