



AAC Publications

Tasermiut Fjord, Ulamertorssuaq, West Face, Qujanag

Greenland, South Greenland

The 2018 Brazilian line Qujanag on the west face of Ulamertorssuaq. In the upper section the route more or less climbs the right edge of the great dihedral taken by Magic Tromblon, between that route and Moby Dick. Photo by Marcos Vinicius Todero

After three planes, two boats, and four days of travel, Marcos Costa from Brazil and I finally arrived at our base camp beside Tasermiut Fjord in July 2018. Despite the big walls of the Ulamertorssuaq and Nalumasortoq group being among the most famous and popular in Greenland, the area maintains a certain wildness. During our 40-day expedition, we only saw two other climbing parties and a few groups of tourists.

After attempting a line on Nalumasortoq and making a two-day ascent of the classic Moby Dick on Ulamertorssuaq, free climbing most of the pitches up to 7c+, we started looking at our next goal, a new route left of Moby Dick. From the base, we thought we could see a line through a system of cracks in the middle of the upper pillar. We also found a possibly unclimbed corner in the lower wall.

We began the climb on July 26. After three pitches we found two very old anchors. We guess that these must be rappel anchors, as there are no reported routes in this part of the face and the cracks of the lower corner were choked with vegetation, with no sign of previous passage.

From the top of pitch six, there was no new line that offered any possibility of natural protection, so our pitches seven to 12 followed Moby Dick. From the bivouac ledge at around 450m, we moved left, and for pitches 13 to 15 followed the old route Magic Tromblon (6b A2, Agier-Payrau-Vigier, 1977). Above this, the next eight pitches were new and amazing. Starting with superb face climbing, we crossed small roofs and arêtes to reach the system of cracks we had spied from the ground. These started as a finger crack, later widened to hands, and finally ended with a 50m offwidth. Opening some of these pitches free was the highlight of the expedition.

For pitches 23 and 24 we again were forced to follow Magic Tromblon to a small ledge (where it is possible to traverse right onto Moby Dick). Above, our pitch 25 was an impressive, difficult arête, and as there seemed no possibility for natural gear, we placed seven protection bolts. We were unable to climb this pitch free but estimate the difficulty at 8a. Above pitch 26 we traversed right and finished up the Moby Dick chimney to the summit. We spent a total of 12 days on the face in four different pushes. Only pitches 25 and 26 could not be free climbed; the rest involved difficulties up to 7c+.

In the last eight days of our time in the area we planned to attempt an all-free ascent of our new route, but the weather did not allow us to climb at all. Three days before we were due to depart, we were forced to follow an easier route to the top and rappel in to retrieve our gear, still 600m up the wall. We were joined that day by a British base jumper, who leapt from the top into a sea of clouds covering the fjord and was back in base camp in five minutes. We, on the other hand, were about to start 1,000m of rappelling.

We named our route Qujanaq (1,000m, 7c+ and some aid), which means “thank you” in local Greenlandic. [Confusingly, there is already a route of the same name, climbed by Argentinians in 2016, on the southeast side of Ulamertorssuaq.] The inspiration for this name came when a family from the closest village invited us to join them on their fishing boat for a short trip to the upper part of the fjord. There, a giant glacier enters the sea from the inland ice cap. An old lady standing on the boat opened

her arms toward the huge glacier and screamed "Qujanaq!" At the time we didn't understand the exact meaning but knew instantly that she was thanking Mother Nature for her greatness.

– Marcos Vinicius Toderó, Spain

Images



The 2018 Brazilian line Qujanag on the west face of Ulamertorsuaq. In the upper section the route more or less climbs the right edge of the great dihedral taken by Magic Tromblon, between that route and Moby Dick.



Marcos Vinicius Todero climbing one of the new pitches on Qujanag, Ulamertorsuaq.



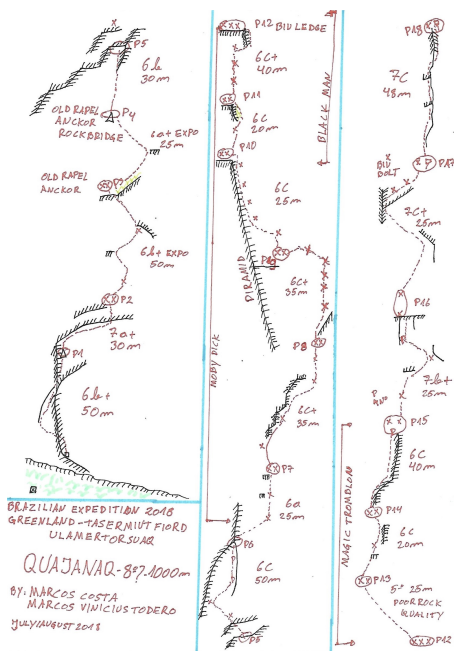
Marcos Vinicius Toderó opening pitch three (run-out 6b+) on Qujanag, west face of Ulamertorsuaq.



Bouldering near base camp with Ulamertorsuaq on the right and the flat-topped Nalumasortoq in the center distance, with its distinctive pillars partially visible.



Marcos Vinicius Toderó on the first pitch of Qujanag (6b+) with the entire height of the west face of Ulamertorsuaq above him.



Topo of the 2018 line Qujanag on the west face of Ulamertorsuaq.

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