



AAC Publications

Wolf Mountain, Northwest Couloir

United States, Montana, Beartooth Mountains

In October, my dad, Rusty Willis, and I climbed the Northwest Couloir of Wolf Mountain (11,808').

We used a Jeep to crawl up the horrible road toward the Grasshopper Glacier trailhead, an incredibly slow drive. We then hiked from Star Lake up and over Goose Pass to the Grasshopper Glacier, then wrapped around the backside of Sawtooth Mountain, gaining another pass before finally dropping into the basin beneath the north ridge of Wolf Mountain.

We started our climb from the spectacular Wolf Glacier. Several hundred feet of 70° alpine ice led to the base of the large chimney splitting the northwest face. The climbing consisted of steep snow interspersed with short steps of rotten ice and several large chockstones, which required fun mixed climbing to surmount. As we neared the top of the couloir, the angle steepened and my dad led a difficult pitch to gain the ridge. Third-class terrain brought us to the summit.

From the top, we descended south until we could no longer downclimb without a rope. One rappel got us to easier ground, and we were able to traverse to the top of Wolf Mountain's south couloir, a ski line, which we slowly descended to Glacier Creek. We arrived back at the car after 18 hours. The Northwest Couloir (1,700', IV A14 M5) almost certainly has been skied in the springtime, when the couloir fills in with snow, though I have yet to meet someone who has done so.

— Justin Willis

Images



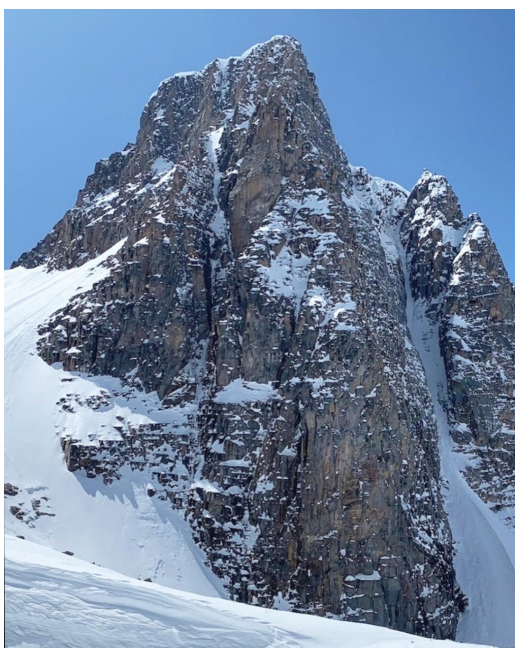
Rusty Willis during the October first ascent of the Northwest Couloir (1,700', IV AI4 M5) of Wolf Mountain, which he climbed with his son, Justin.



Rusty Willis in the Northwest Couloir (1,700', IV AI4 M5) of Wolf Mountain, Beartooth Mountains, Montana, in October.



The north face of Wolf Mountain in autumn condition. The Northwest Couloir (1,700', IV AI4 M5) follows the obvious snow-filled cleft on the right side of the photo.



The north face of Wolf Mountain in midwinter. The Northwest Couloir (1,700', IV AI4 M5) follows the obvious snow-filled cleft on the right side of the photo.

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