



## AAC Publications

---

### **Grand Aiguille, North Face, Seduce Me in the Sunlight**

United States, Idaho, Sawtooth Mountains

**After realizing that Redfish Lake Creek was too high to cross to reach Elephant's Perch during a trip in early June, Sara Morrow and I opted to backtrack and climb a pinnacle we'd spotted along the canyon rim earlier in the approach.** We scrambled a steep gully to gain this mystery pinnacle, figuring we'd reach the level ground of the rim before dark. Nightfall found us only halfway up the gully, so we used rocks to dig a ledge into the gully's wall where we'd be safe from rockfall. The next day we climbed what we'd later learn was the Split Aiguille, also known as Split Tooth Tower. During the descent, we rappelled a couloir that brought us our first spellbinding glimpse of the unclimbed and severely overhanging north face of the Grand Aiguille (9,622'). (For those approaching after taking a shuttle boat across Redfish Lake, getting to the towers requires 2.5 miles of hiking with 2,250' of elevation gain.)

The 600' Grand Aiguille was first climbed by the northwest face in 1948, by Wesley Grande, Joe Hiebe, Graham Matthews, and Ralph Widrig (5.4). The party surmounted the crux by using a piece of fixed rope left by the Durrance brothers during a 1939 attempt. Sixteen years later, in 1962, Fred Beckey and Jerry Fuller climbed the South Face, rating it fifth class.

We returned the following weekend and began working on a new route up the north face. The first pitch had three hook moves to gain an unprotected slab, and went at 5.5 R A2+. Pitch two was wild and strenuous overhanging A2. Pitch three opened with several more hook moves and a nailing traverse. When the traverse crack ended, I bat-hooked and nailed my way to a wide roof and then zagged left, continuing through a second roof until I reached a pendulum point (A2+). From here I swung right until I could stem and French-free up opposed four- to five-inch cracks that led to a ledge.

We unroped and shuffled right to a low-angle ramp, which led us to a luxurious bivy ledge. The next day I dispatched an elegant dihedral. Halfway up the pitch, as the crack widened to five and six inches, I was forced to leapfrog the only two cams we had in that size (C1). As Sara juggled the pitch, her rope began to saw against the lip of a roof; as a precaution, I threw down the haul line for her to clip into. The next two pitches were interesting and varied free climbing, up to 5.8, and led to the west summit. Four rappels on previously slung knobs and flakes got us back down. We named the route Seduce Me in the Sunlight (550', 7 pitches, 5.8 A2+).

— Earl Lunceford

## Images



Seduce Me in the Sunlight (7 pitches, 5.8 A2+), the first route up the very overhanging north face of the Grand Aiguille in the Sawtooths.



The first of four rappels off the top of the Grand Aiguille in the Sawtooth Mountains, after the first ascent of the north face via Seduce Me in the Sunlight (550', 7 pitches, 5.8 A2+).



Earl Lunceford back-cleaning gear on pitch three of Seduce Me in the Sunlight (550', 7 pitches, 5.8 A2+), which was the first ascent of the north face of the Grand Aiguille, Sawtooth Mountains, Idaho.



Earl Lunceford climbing the elegant dihedral on the second day of his and Sara Morrow's first ascent of the north face of the Grand Aiguille, Sawtooth Mountains, Idaho.





Earl Lunceford climbing the elegant dihedral on the second day of his and Sara Morrow's first ascent of the north face of the Grand Aiguille, Sawtooth Mountains, Idaho.



Earl Lunceford bat-hooking on pitch three of Seduce Me in the Sunlight (550', 7 pitches, 5.8 A2+), the first route up the north face of Grand Aiguille, Sawtooth Mountains, Idaho.



Sara Morrow and Earl Lunceford organizing their rack before the first ascent of the north face of the Grand Aiguille. The Grand Aiguille is on the left, and the Split Aiguille (also known as Split Tooth Tower) is in shade above Lunceford's head.



The bivy ledge on the north face of the Grand Aiguille. Redfish Lake is visible in the back right.

Article Details

Author	Earl Lunceford
Publication	AAJ
Volume	65
Issue	97
Page	
Copyright Date	2023
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions