



AAC Publications

Mythics Cirque, Many New Routes

Greenland, East Greenland, Kangertitivatsiaq Fjord

The Equipo Femenino de Alpinismo (Women's Alpine Team) from the Spanish Mountaineering Federation arrived in Kulusuk on August 4 and stayed in Greenland for one month. The group comprised Angela Altaba, Julia Casanovas, Ruth Fornós, Uxue Loizu, Miriam Marco, Maialen Rojo, and Amaia Segurola, and was accompanied by two males, mountain guide Rubén Sanmartín and cameraman Juan Miguel Ponce.

The team established base camp below the Mythics Cirque, where two fjords intersect: Kangertitivatsiaq and Sangmilik. The first few days were spent exploring the area and scoping possible new routes. Approaches were either on foot or using inflatable packrafts, which allowed gear and supplies to be moved faster through the fjords.

The first new route was climbed on August 7, when Altaba, Casanovas, Fornós, and Sanmartín put up El Espolón de las Zorras (1,000m of climbing, 5+) on the southeast buttress and northeast ridge of Aurora Tower. [The upper part of this route is similar to a 2018 ascent by a French team; see [AAJ 2019](#).] They descended via the very loose Tortures Traverse (5.4), a crossing of four small summits to the northeast, first completed by Matthew Bunn and Mike Royer ([AAJ 2013](#)).

The climbers then used packrafts to reach the glacier south of the Mythics Cirque. From there, on the 10th, Altaba, Marco, and Segurola repeated the 2012 Bunn-Royer route Assembling the Tupilak (450m, 5.10), on the southeast buttress of Hidden Tower. At the same time, Loizu, Rojo, and Sanmartín climbed a new route a little to the left, which they named Fumantxus (400m, 8 pitches followed by an easy ridge, 7a).

The next day, Casanovas, Fornós, and Sanmartín moved farther up this glacier and opened one of the hardest and most sustained routes of the expedition: Lady Garsa (325m, 9 pitches, 7a). It takes a steep pillar they named Punta Juanillo.

After returning to base camp, Altaba, Fornós, and Rojo spent three days establishing La Jubi (600m of new climbing, 7a) on the northeast face of Ataatap Tower. After starting up the initial pitches of Built Fjord Tough (Libeck-Pringle, 2012), the route moves right and climbs a parallel line until rejoining the Libeck-Pringle route high on the face. Later, Casanovas, Loizu, and Sanmartín would start up the first part of the 2018 French route on this face, join La Jubi, and finish up the final section of Built Fjord Tough, giving "1,000m of amazing climbing in a breathtaking environment."

Prior to this ascent, Casanovas, Loizu, Sanmartín, and Segurola had used packrafts to reach Borsch Soup Tower, first climbed in 2021 by Nico Favresse, Aleksej Jaruta, and Jean-Louis Wertz ([AAJ 2022](#)). It took two hours on the rafts and three hours of walking up the glacier to reach the foot of the tower, where they split into two parties to climb a pair of new lines just left of the original route, Borsch Soup.

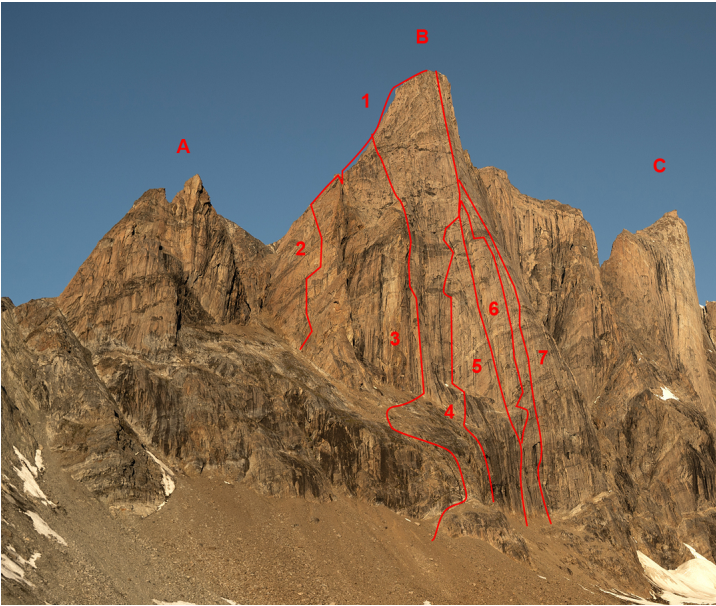
Casanovas and Loizu put up Izar Askea (600m, 11 pitches, 6c), while a little to the left Sanmartín and Segurola climbed Gure Gidari (600m, 6c). The teams began a rappel descent upon reaching the summit ridge.

After a few days of bad weather, there was just time to climb two more routes. Altaba, Fornós, and Sanmartín headed to the far left side of the northeast face of Ataatap, where they climbed Rostoll Verbenero (750m, 6c+). This route ascends an east-facing wall for eight or nine pitches before joining Coronis (AAJ 2013), which it follows to the summit. Meanwhile, Loizu and Seguroola explored the south face of Damocles (ca 1,250m, the most northeasterly summit in the cirque), where they climbed the 200m Azken Aukera (6b) to a point they called Pico Osobucas.

With a forecasted storm now on its way, the expedition beat a hasty retreat to Kulusuk, where they sat out a hurricane in the town's community center, kindly offered by the residents, before starting their journey home.

— Information provided by Miriam Marco, Spain

Images



(A) Ganja Tower. (B) Ataatap Tower. (C) Siren Tower. (1) Coronis (2012). (2) Rostoll Verbenero (2023). (3) The Mental Breakdown (2023). (4) Daddy's Sweet Tooth (2021). (5) Built Fjord Tough (2012). (6) Jubi (2023). (7) Northeast Face (French Route, 2018).



Julia Casanovas climbing on the northeast face of Ataatap during the link up of three routes.



Ruben Sanmarting during the first ascent of Lady Garsa on Punta Juanillo.



Maialen Rojo during the first ascent of La Jubi on the northeast face of Ataatap.



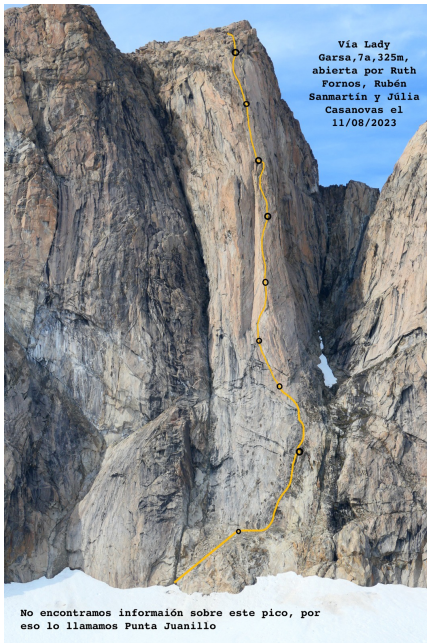
A difficult traverse on the slabby section of La Jubi on the northeast face of Ataatap.



The launching "pier" in the Mythics Cirque.



Angela Altaba on Assembling the Tupilak on the southeast buttress of Hidden Tower.



Lady Garsa on Punta Juanillo.



Borsch Tower and the three established routes: from left to right, Gure Gidari, Izar Askea, and Borsch Soup



The south side of the Hidden Tower with approximate lines of Fumantxus and Assembling the Tupilak.

Article Details

Author	Miriam Marco
Publication	AAJ
Volume	65
Issue	98
Page	180
Copyright Date	2024
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions