



AAC Publications

Organa Pipette (Peak 5,660'), First Ascent

Alaska, Coast Mountains, Boundary Ranges, Juneau Icefield

Worth the Jaunt (300m, Alaska Grade III, 5.10), the first ascent of Organa Pipette on the Juneau Icefield. Photo by Cameron Jardell.

Loaded up with Costco's finest provisions and two modified plastic sleds, Vincent LaPointe and I helicoptered into Death Valley on the edge of the Juneau Icefield on the morning of July 9. We then traversed deep suncups to reach a band of granite peaks on the east side of the Taku Glacier.

The following day, we climbed seven pitches of immaculate granite on the prominent west face of a peak lodged between the Organ Pipes and Hodgkins Peak, labeled on the maps as Peak 5,660'. We named the mountain Organa Pipette and our route Worth the Jaunt (300m, Alaska Grade 3, 5.10), before descending the south ridge to join snow ramps leading back to the icefield.

It took another full day of skiing northeast down Hades Highway to reach the base of the Devils Paw (2,616m) on the U.S.-Canada border. Dense clouds shielded the mountain from view as we approached, and they loitered through the next day.

On the fifth day of our trip, the sun returned, allowing us to attempt Black Roses (1,000m, 6c A1 M4, Gietl-Schäli, 2015), a route to Devils Paw's north summit. After we simul-climbed to the headwall, Vinny took the lead. Within seconds, he exfoliated a large flake and decked onto our belay ledge; luckily the only casualty was one of our ropes. After retreating, we promptly switched objectives to the north ridge (III 5.7) on Michaels Sword (Beckey-King, 1949), a satellite peak of the Devils Paw. Several lengthy pitches of simulng brought us to the summit. We descended a chossy, low-angle face back to the glacier with seven 30m rappels.

On our sixth day, we traversed to the Demorest Glacier before making camp near the border. We spent another full day on the Llewellyn Glacier, eventually exiting the accumulation zone and hiking on blue ice to sleep near Juneau Icefield Research Program's Camp 26, one of a few permanent camps on the icefield. The crux of the trip was hiking out of the lower Llewellyn under heavy packs to Llewellyn Inlet on Atlin Lake. We were picked up on July 17 by a chartered vessel and transported to the town of Atlin before hitching rides and ferry-hopping back to Juneau to complete our journey.

—Cameron Jardell

Images



Vincent LaPointe approaching the striking spire of Michaels Sword on the Juneau Icefield.



Vincent on the North Ridge (Becky-King, III 5.7) of Michaels Sword, with the summit behind him.



Vincent LaPointe on the top of Organa Pipette (Peak 5,660') after making the first ascent with

Cameron Jardell via its west face.



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