



## AAC Publications

---

### Stjerntinden, Northeast Face

Norway, Nordland, Lofoten

Foreshortened view of the northeast face of Stjerntinden with the line of the first ascent and bivouac marked.

**Despite spending a lot of time winter climbing in Lofoten, Stian Bruvoll and I had never bivouacked on a route there.** In March, we decided we should test an ultra-light ice hammock before a planned expedition to the Himalaya. We figured we'd probably learn something from spending a night crammed into a bivy, though neither of us could have said exactly what.

With a thousand objectives on the to-do list, we settled on one that looked better that season than it had in the past: the northeast face of Stjerntinden (938m) on Flakstadøya. Though the face dominates the view from the road rounding the fjord near Flakstad, it was not something I found particularly alluring, but it was nonetheless attractive because it looked reasonable to get up with a heavy pack. Moreover, because the face did not normally look climbable at all, it had not, in fact, been previously climbed in any season. Stian had done the locally classic east ridge and thus knew the way down.

We set off on the morning of March 9, and as usual the day began with a scenic walk that transitioned into absurdly good climbing on the classic Lofoten mix of thinly iced slabs, turf, and frozen corners. In keeping with tradition, the climbing was steeper than it looked and of the highest quality. We swapped leads through a series of smears and flows, which eventually brought us to one of the horizontal tiers we thought might offer a suitable bivy. I led a long pitch toward a rock band and was bitterly disappointed to find a cave that not only did not require a hammock but was shaped such that one could do one's best to jump out and not succeed. When Stian arrived, we agreed it would be a glorious bivy, but did not suit our present need for a bad one.

We continued upward, and as the sky grew dark we accepted our fate: The mountain was offering only comfortable ledges broad enough to pitch a tent, without using our hammock and without even needing an anchor. We unroped on one and settled in for a night with a remarkable aurora light show.

In the morning, we began by traversing toward the summit headwall. Stian led an intricate piece of climbing around an awkward roof and toward a ramp we hoped would take us into the meat of things. It did, and once again Lofoten delivered the pinnacle of rimed perfection as I took over for an absolutely brilliant series of pitches following the most perfectly iced corners imaginable. These brought us to the summit plateau, where we followed a mixed version of the summer route to the top, concluding the first ascent of the northeast face (650m, AI4+ M5). The day was bluebird, and we marveled once again at the wonder of having this playground to ourselves.

We retraced our steps back down a short distance then rappelled to the south, where we descended into the Skja dalen and down to Nusfjord. Halfway through our walk along the road to our car at Storvatnet, a friendly passerby pulled over and asked if we'd spent the night on the face and if we were alright. We said yes to both questions, and he informed us that our lights had caused such alarm to the few people of the village that the police had been notified in case someone needed rescuing. We told him we could use a lift to our car instead, and he was happy to oblige.

We tested the hammock later that season at the base of Stian's new mixed crag behind the petrol station at Osan near Svolvær. This was nowhere near as enjoyable as climbing the fine array of routes

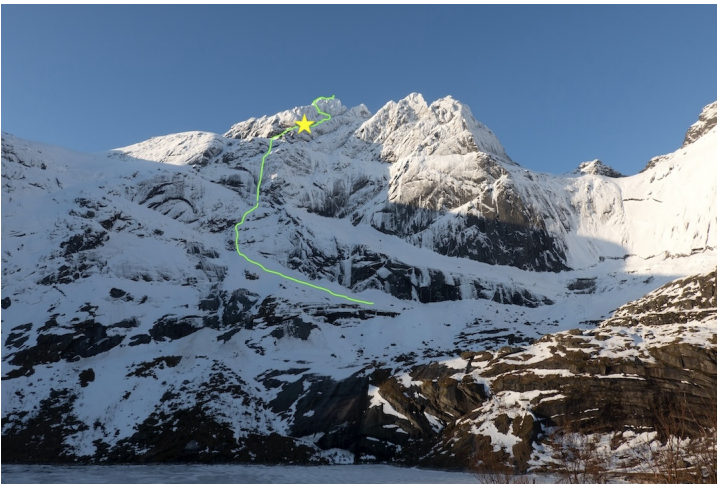
he and fellow local Sjur Hauge have opened, up to M9 or so. I have yet to use the hammock anywhere else.

—Chris Wright, USA

## Images



Chris Wright starting a pitch high on the northeast face of Stjerntinden.



The northeast face of Stjerntinden with the line of the first ascent and bivouac marked.



Stjerntinden failed to deliver a suitable site to test a hammock bivouac, but it delivered a superb bivouac view nonetheless.



Stian Bruvoll (left) and Chris Wright on top of Stjerntinden after completing the first recorded ascent of the northeast face.

Article Details

Author	Chris Wright
Publication	AAJ
Volume	66
Issue	99
Page	236
Copyright Date	2025
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions