



## AAC Publications

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### **Seraph, east face, Mandarin Mounty**

Alaska, Revelation Mountains

Chris Thomas and I completed the first ascent of Seraph (8,540') on April 14. The peak is northeast of and adjacent to the Angel (9,265') and was named by David Roberts during the first climbing expedition to the Revelations in 1967. According to Clint Helander, Roberts and team attempted the peak but did not summit.

Chris and I flew to Anchorage on April 4. The weather forecast was poor and we heard rumors of other teams being pinned down for up to two weeks in terrible weather. We were finally able to fly into the range on the 10th. We did some recon on the way in and settled on the Revelation Glacier for our base camp due to poor landing options near our other targets. Once on the glacier we found dry climbing conditions, with many of the ice smears we'd seen in photos nonexistent. It then proceeded to snow, relegating us to base camp duties and the occasional scouting mission until April 12.

On the 13th we attempted Seraph, climbing one pitch and then descending in snow and spindrift. The skies cleared that afternoon, however, so we went back up and completed the climb the following day. Our route ascends an obvious weakness on the east face of Seraph. We approached by crossing an icefall and hanging glacier below the Angel. The crux came low on the route (WI5+ A2). This was followed by several pitches of sustained 5.10 rock with snow mushrooms. We climbed somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 full-length pitches (there was a lot of simul-climbing in the middle portion), with a significant amount of snow/ridge climbing on either side of these pitches. Overall the route went pretty quickly, due to having the approach dialed, and we were camp-to-camp around 17 hours.

We spent April 15 resting in base camp, eating bacon and reindeer sausage, and drinking a cocktail that Chris concocted of warm Tang and Canadian whiskey. We have decided to name the route in honor of this stroke of genius: Mandarin Mounty (2,300', 5.10 WI5+ A2). The Mandarin Mounties were integral to our survival in the coming days.

On April 16 intense winds quickly destroyed our snow walls, cook tent, and nearly our sleeping tent. We sat through the worst of it holding up our sleep tent's internal poles, ready to be thrown out at any moment, jackets and boots on, with the sat phone in my pocket. Eventually things calmed down, but with our weather window gone we departed on the 19<sup>th</sup>, deciding to ski and walk the 20-plus miles down the glacier, north to Big River, and finally back to the R&R Hunting Lodge, where we waited for our pilot Rob Jones. We would like to thank the Mugs Stump Award and Rob Jones of Hesperus Air Service for making our trip possible.

– Rick Vance

## Images



From left to right: Apocalypse, Dyke Peak, Pyramid Peak, and the Four Horsemen, as seen from base camp on the Revelation Glacier.



Chris Thomas leading the crux pitch (WI5+ A2) of Mandarin Mounty on the east face of Seraph.



Chris Thomas leading a snowy pitch packed with 5.10 climbing.



Expedition essentials.



Angel (left) and Seraph (right). Mandarin Mounty (2,300', 5.10 WI5+ A2) follows the obvious weakness on the center-left side of Seraph's east side.



The western Revelation Mountains. "J" is the Angel and "K" is Seraph.





Rick Vance tops out a pitch of snowy 5.10 climbing.

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