



## AAC Publications

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### **Mt. Assiniboine, East Face**

Canada, Canadian Rockies

**Because those damn British Columbia hippies don't allow choppers to fly over their side of the Rockies, Dave Cheesmond and I had to hike half a day to even see the east face of Mt. Assiniboine (3,618m).** (OK, I kind of agree with those hippies!) When we finally got there, we should have just sat staring at it, because it was too late to start. But we weren't good at sitting and staring. So, of course we started right away up the middle of the east face.

Thirty-six years is too long for me to remember details, but bits of the route are still quite clear. I'm a little surprised that it hasn't become more popular, because I think it is a good line (biased of course!) I remember that we struggled that first evening at a vertical icefall about eight rope lengths up. It was probably too warm! So we rapped to a minuscule ledge at the foot of the icefall to bivy. During the night, things cooled down considerably, and I don't think we slept much.

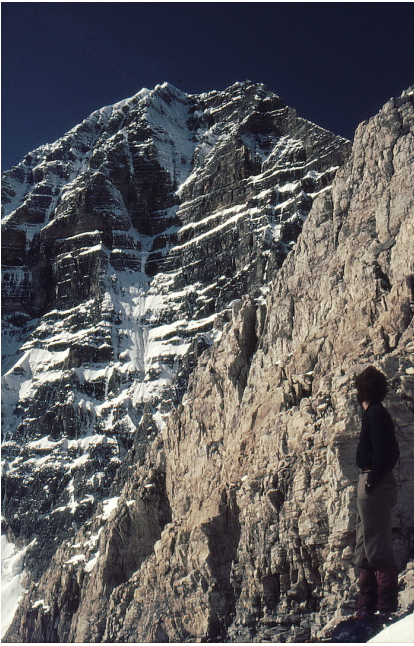
Mainly for safety reasons, the climbing next day took us left of the fall line, up to the big rock bands at half height. Here we traversed back to the center on a convenient narrow ledge, and then up steep rock for about five ropes to reach the start of the bowl-shaped summit couloir. A nearly horizontal slot just right of the start of the couloir provided one of the best bivy sites of the many I have enjoyed. Again, I didn't sleep much, but that was mainly because I couldn't give up watching the flashing lights of the most spectacular aurora borealis I'd ever seen.

The final couloir was in superb condition, so we summited before the ice softened and spared a moment thinking of Bugs McKeith, who had fallen down the east face four years earlier. Our descent was a pleasant doddle after the steepness of the face. I think I would probably have been happy to call it a day, but Dave was sure we should rush to Mt. Kitchener's north face to beat an approaching early-winter storm. We didn't—but that's another story, which wasn't nearly as much fun as the east face of Assiniboine!

– **Tony Dick, South Africa**

**Editor's Note:** Dave Cheesmond and Tony Dick climbed Assiniboine's east face in September 1982, a little over one year after they climbed the second route up the Emperor Face of Mt. Robson. Both climbs were reported in a terse note in AAJ 1983. Tony Dick's account was facilitated by Chic Scott and Patrick Kavanagh and was originally published at Supertopo.com.

## Images



The east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



Steep ice near the first bivouac on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



Dave Cheesmond at the first bivouac on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine in 1982.



Exposed traverse at about half-height on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



Finishing the steep rock pitches on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



Dave Cheesmond at the comfortable second bivouac on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



Heading up the final couloir on the east face of Mt. Assiniboine.



On the summit ridge of Mt. Assiniboine after climbing the east face.

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