



## AAC Publications

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### **Anijaaq Fjord, Various Routes**

Canada, Nunavut, Baffin Island

Sarah McNair-Landry on pitch two of Ijiraaq, a.k.a. Shapeshifter (5.10). Photo by Erik Boomer  
**With travel restrictions across the globe, Sarah McNair-Landry and I focused our attention on backyard adventures. Luckily, our backyard is Baffin Island.**

Auyuittuq National Park (where most climbers go) was closed, so we spent months poring over satellite images and scouting for granite walls accessible from Sarah's hometown, Iqaluit on southern Baffin Island. I finally found a hidden fjord with granite cliffs that rise 1,500' out of the Arctic Ocean. The fjord is on the east side of Frobisher Bay, 200km-plus from Iqaluit and only accessible by boat.

It took three days to navigate the ice and fog and wait for winds to calm before we boated into Anijaaq Fjord and set eyes on the cliffs we had only seen via satellite images. It was our little paradise. After a day, our friends boated back to Iqaluit and promised to pick us up, eventually. With a month of food, climbing gear, and kayaks, we set up base camp and settled in, surrounding our tent with a solar-powered electric fence to keep away polar bears (we saw 12 on the trip). Over the next 25 days we put up five moderate routes (5.7 to 5.10), each with between 1,000 and 1,500 feet of climbing.

On July 22, we climbed an obvious line we could see from camp: a fun west-facing route following a wide crack on flawless and featured granite. We named it The Line (1,200', 6 pitches, 5.7).

A week later, we established two routes on a wall we named Sedna, a reference to the Inuit goddess of the sea and marine mammals—we often saw beluga whales and seals from our climbs. To access the base, we kayaked 2km southwest from camp and hauled our boats up onto the wall to secure them from the tides. This south-facing wall rose 1,500' from the ocean and required long days. The first route, Sedna (1,500', 10 pitches, 5.10) had some memorable climbing, including pitch four, a full 70m of 5.10 cracks with a scary slab finish. We also completed a 10-pitch 5.8 we named Beluga. From the top of the wall, we could walk back to camp and then retrieve our kayaks the next day with an inflatable packraft.

For our final route we went back to the west-facing cliff across from camp and found our favorite climb of the trip, north (left) of The Line. Ijiraaq, a.k.a. Shapeshifter (1,000', 8 pitches, 5.10) had outstanding rock, two 5.10 cruxes, and numerous fun 5.8 and 5.9 crack pitches.

A huge thanks to our friends who dropped us off and picked us up a month later by boat!

— Erik Boomer, Canada

## Images



The west-facing wall across from base camp, showing (1) Ijiraaq (8 pitches, 5.10) and (2) The Line (6 pitches, 5.7). The climbers' solar-powered electric bear fence can be seen in the foreground.



Erik Boomer scouting cracks to climb from his kayak.



Sarah McNair-Landry on pitch two of Ijiraaq, a.k.a. Shapeshifter (5.10). Each pitch on this route was

uniquely high quality and each a different style, thus the name Shapeshifter.



Erik Boomer scouting lines from his kayak. Since there was no information about this area and no known routes, the climbers choose the most attractive objectives. The formation in this photo is unclimbed and ripe for the picking.



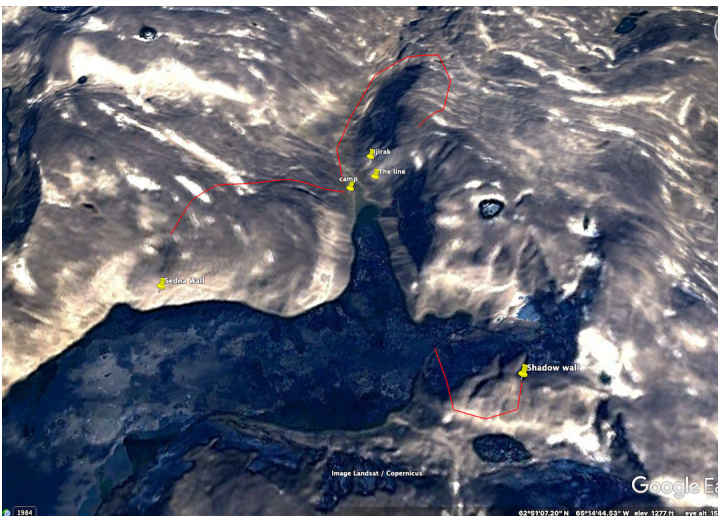
Erik Boomer near the top of a formation the climbers named the Shadow Wall because it was the only north-facing feature they climbed.



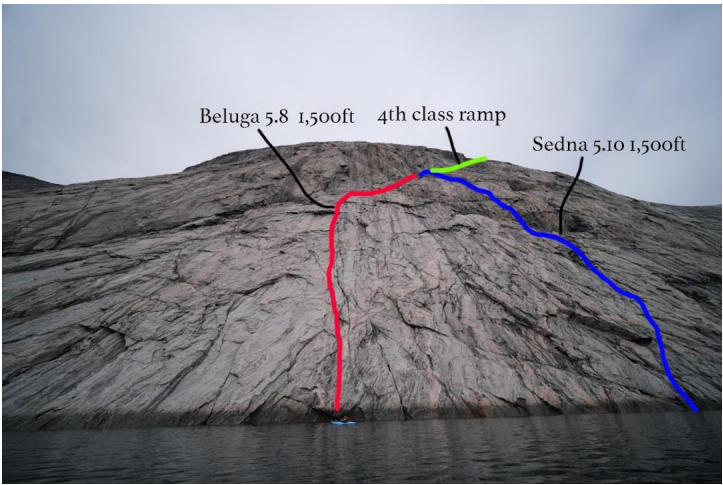
Sarah McNair-Landry coming up to the crux on the Beluga Route (5.8), a nice roof into a great corner system. The route was named Beluga because, hundreds of feet below, white beluga wales were seen swimming around and surfacing.



Photo-topo of the route Ijiraaq (Shapeshifter, 8 pitches, 5.10).



Google Earth map of the Anijaaq Fjord formations explored by Erik Boomer and Sarah McNair-Landry.



Routes on the Sedna Wall, Anijaaq Fjord, Baffin Island.

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