



AAC Publications

Alpine Summary 2022

New Zealand, Southern Alps

The Darran Mountains, in the lower South Island, hosted the bulk of the alpine climbing activity over the summer months of 2022. In January, Bruce Dowrick and Llewellyn Murdoch ventured into the heart of the central Darrans, where they climbed new routes on the west face (Statue Wall) of Karetai Peak (2,206m), called Ara Whero (300m, 21/5.11a), and on the north face of Mt. Patuki (2,246m), called Short Cut (300m, 20/5.10d). The following month, Derek Chang, Richard Thomson, and Richard Turner visited the same area and established two new routes on Karetai: Butt Cheek Booma Gutsa (260m, 21/5.11a) on the Statue Wall, and Super Crack of the Darrans (150m, 23/5.11c) on the upper portion of the southwest face.

In the same general area, Peter Le and Liam Pyott made their way up the untracked Donne Valley to make the second ascent of The Big Easy (Thomson-Vass, 2012) on the imposing west face (Donne Face) of Mt. Revelation (2,176m)

In the Cleddau Valley, Daniel Joll and Murdoch climbed 24 pitches to make the first ascent of Wild Dykes (650m, 23/5.11c) on the north-facing Charismatic Wall of Point 1,655m. The route starts with the first seven pitches of Uprising (2018), which itself was an updated version of the cliff's original route, climbed in 1994.

In the northern Darrans, Pat Gray and Ruari Macfarlane spent a week based around the Donne Glacier, where they climbed a multitude of new routes, the most significant being Wonderland (450m, 18/5.10a) and Gray Matter (500m, 20/5.10d) on the west and south faces of Alice Peak (2,155m). They also completed The Price of Doing Business (800m, 17/5.9) on the Donne Face (east face) of Mt. Tutoko (2,723m), following a prominent buttress before joining the upper southeast ridge. Across the Ngapunatoru Ice Plateau from Tutoko, Steven Fortune and Rose Pearson climbed the region's largest wall (the 1,300m Kaipo Wall) when they made a rare repeat, and only the fifth ascent, of the Range Rover Route (Dingle-Gill-Jones, 1974).

To the south of the Darrans, in the Glaisnock Wilderness Area, Macfarlane and Tom Hadley went well off the beaten track in their adventurous first ascent of the south rib of Pariroa/Castle Mount (2,122m). This was done as part of an eight-day round trip, which culminated in them climbing 700m of new terrain on the rib, with difficulties up to grade 17/5.9. On the same trip, they also made the first ascent of the west ridge of Barrier Peak (1,982m), which provided eight pitches up the initial buttress at 18/5.10a, followed by easier ground that was soloed along the aesthetic and exposed summit ridge.

Following this, Macfarlane paired up with Allan Brent for another intrepid adventure, this time to South Westland, where they climbed a 750m new line (20/5.10d) on the Troyte Face of Fettes Peak (2,451m). The route follows a steep buttress on the left-hand side of face for seven pitches, before the angle eases leading to the upper east ridge. The ridge was then followed for another 200m to reach the summit.

The line of Silver Lining (1,100m, WI5 M4 A1) on the southeast face of Mt. Madeline. Ruari Macfarlane soloed the first ascent, descending the south ridge to the left, in a 36-hour round trip. With the onset of the austral winter, Macfarlane made a bold solo first ascent of the southeast face of Mt. Madeline (2,536m) in the northern Darrans. Macfarlane approached for two days, crossing over

several peaks en route to a bivouac near the face. After waiting until afternoon for the sun to leave the serac-ridden face, he climbed a gully to access the main wall, raced across the most threatened gully below seracs, and then climbed the southeast face's main gully, which was mostly moderate but had two very difficult ice pitches.

After sleeping for an hour in a cave near the top of the gully, he continued up in the dark as light snowfall started, having to cut holes in a pack liner for a poncho after his jacket's zipper broke. From the upper snowfield, he cut sharp left above the seracs to gain a gully leading toward the summit. After another nap in a cave, he traversed over Madeline's summit and down the south ridge until he could rappel back to his camp below the face. Picking up his bivy gear, he continued down but spent six hours in the dark trying to find his way through steep bluffs, eventually stopping to bivouac, 36 hours after starting up the face, before continuing down in the morning. The route is Silver Lining (1,100m, WI5 M4 A1).

The West Coast Neves, at the head of the Fox Glacier, also saw plenty of action, as Jake Gray, Josef Kral, and Gavin Lang teamed up from a base at Pioneer Hut. From here they climbed a new route on The Buttress (2,776m), an outlier from the north ridge of Mt. Tasman (3,497m), with Deuce (180m, 4, M4, III), as well as Psychoterratica (200m, 5+, M5, III) on the west face of the middle peak of Mt. Haast (3,099m).

Further north, in the Arrowsmith Range, Pearson and Sophie Jenkins climbed the Jagged-Upham Couloir (Anderson-Main-Franklin-Jenkins, 1973), between Jagged Peak (2,706m) and Upham Peak (2,705m). Pearson then returned with Richard Measures to make the third ascent of Whiplash (Franklin-Main-Thompson-Wethey, 1975) on the south face of Jagged Peak.

Back down in the Darrans, Steven Fortune and Maddy Whittaker made an ascent of Heart of Gold (Perry-Ritchie, 1981) on the upper tier of the south face of Mt. Crosscut (2,263m). They then moved north to Aoraki/Mt. Cook National Park, where they climbed the Macfarlane Route (Andy Macfarlane, 1993) on the south face of Nazomi (2,925m). Ruari Macfarlane (Andy's son) also made an ascent of the face via the adjacent route Slightly Scottish (Ball-McArthur-Williams, 1980). This was done as part of a one-day link up in which he climbed the south faces of Turner (2,338m), via one of the Guides Routes (Wolfgang Maier and clients, 2007), Pibrac (2,514m), via JM Goes Tramping (Central Gully) (Jaz Morris, 2013) and Nazomi.

To close out the year, Macfarlane kept up his high work rate by climbing a further two new routes: Happenstance (240m, 4+, 17/5.9, IV) on the southeast face of Ferintosh Peak (2,497m), in the Ben Ohau Range, with Andy Hoare, and Enchanted (350m, 16/5.8) on the northeast rib of Eyetooth (1,934m), at the head of the Blue River, with Ben Mangan.

– Ben Dare, New Zealand

Images



The line of Silver Lining (1,100m, WI5 M4 A1) on the southeast face of Mt. Madeline. Ruari Macfarlane soloed the first ascent, descending the south ridge to the left, in a 36-hour round trip.



Camp on the summit of Mt. Crosscut (2,263m) after climbing Heart of Gold on the south face.



Maddy Whittaker leading a pitch on Heart of Gold on Mt. Crosscut (2,263m).



Maddy Whittaker on the summit ridge of Nazomi (2,925m) after climbing the Macfarlane Route (Andy Macfarlane, 1993) on the peak's south face.



Llewellyn Murdoch following a pitch on Wild Dykes (650m, 23/5.11c) on the north-facing Charismatic Wall of Pt 1,655m.



Llewellyn Murdoch on Wild Dykes (650m, 23/5.11c) on the north-facing Charismatic Wall of Pt 1,655m.



Richard (Reg) Measures following a pitch high on Whiplash on the south face of Jagged Peak (2,706m).



Richard (Reg) Measures on the summit of Jagged Peak (2,706m) after climbing Whiplash on the south face.

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