



The Chinook

The Newsletter of the Calgary Section of the Alpine Club of Canada

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**The next Calgary Section meeting will be 7:30 pm Tuesday October 16th at 7:30 p.m. at the Bow Waters Canoe Club, 1975—26 St SE
Presentation by Sandy Walker:
Ski Touring in Iceland, a Sailor's Tale**



**Campsite at Mt Iconoclast, looking up valley towards Benedict Head
By Bill Marriott**

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting and election of Executive for the 2007/2008 year will take place at the Section meeting at 7:30 pm on Tuesday November 20th, 2007 at the Bow Waters Canoe Club, 1975 – 26 Street SE, Calgary, Alberta.

If you know of anyone who would like to stand for election it is easiest if you let Ray Norman know before the meeting. However, this is not a requirement, as nominations from the floor are also permitted. You can reach Ray at raynorm@telus.net or (403) 609-0337.

A significant number of this year's executive are standing for re-election, but as yet we do not have a candidate for the following job:

Member Services/Weekly Breeze

If you are interested in knowing more about this or any other Executive positions, contact Ray Norman or go to the Section website

(<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/calgary/index.html>) and click on:

About Us/Organization of the Section for job descriptions.

For people who haven't attended a Calgary Section AGM before, don't be put off! The AGM portion of the meeting usually takes about 15 minutes, and takes place during the regular business portion of the meeting. After the business is done, we will have lots of time to enjoy the program portion of the meeting.

ACC CALGARY SECTION
SECTION MEETING

Date: Tuesday September 18, 2007
Location: Bow Water Canoe Club
Commenced: 19:45
Adjourned: 20:30

MEETING MINUTES

Section Business

- Ray asked for volunteers to help with hall clean up at the end of the evening.
 - Members can sign up for collating the Chinook by signing the volunteer sign up sheet
- Volunteers are invited to attend the Volunteer Party held at Chuck and Leslie's on Friday September 28, 2007. Please sign up with using the provided form.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Climbing Committee

- Peter asked all trip leaders to submit their completed waivers to the Climbing Committee. The ACC Calgary Section is required by law to retain these waivers on file for six years.
- The Outdoor Wednesday Night Rock Rage was a good success this summer and attracted several new members.
- The climbing committee is now starting to put together the winter schedule. The Ice Review is planned for the first weekend in 2008 and will be held in the Ghost.

Ski Committee

- The ski committee is also starting to put together the winter schedule. Target completion date is November 1, 2007. Trip leaders are requested to submit their trips to Tom Fransham.
- The BITS (Backcountry Introduction to Skiing) Program will run again this year. Events will include an Intro Night and trips to Chester Lake, Rummel Lake, Observation Peak, and Bow Summit.
- Other planned events are a Ski Technique Day and an Introduction to Glacier Travel trip.
- A Ski Leaders & Coordinators Skills Review Weekend is planned for mid-January 2008. Ski Camps planned for 2008 include Campbell Icefields (February) and Icefall Brook (April).

Training and Leadership Committee

- A Winter Kickoff party is scheduled for October 1, 2007 at CAOC. This event is open to all ACC Calgary members, leaders and non-leaders alike and is a joint program organized by Ski, Climbing and Training & Leadership Committees. Andrew Brash will be the guest speaker.
- A Short Roping Workshop will be held on October 4, 2007 at CAOC.
- A Meteorology Workshop by Andy Strangeman will be held on November 5, 2007 at CAOC.
- Other planned courses include Crevasse Rescue (Greg McDougal), Introduction to Mixed Climbing (Sean Isaac), Advanced Ski (Jeremy McKenzie), Mentorship Program (Greg McDougal). All dates are TBD.
- Members who participate in training and leadership courses are expected to lead club trips. Course discounts are available to ACC members. These discounts are outlined in the schedule.

Treasurer

Invoices for the summer section camp should be submitted by tonight .

Social

- The fall lineup for speakers includes:
 - September: Tom Fransharm on ACC Ski Season
 - October: Sandy Walker on Ski Touring in Iceland
 - November: Raphael Swalinski on Alpine Climbing in Rockies
 - December: Murray Toft on Two European Ski Traverses

Library

Library material is here available for check out for section members.

National

- The ACC National Board Meeting will be held October 13-14, 2007 in Canmore and is open to all ACC members. All members are also encouraged to attend the Mountain Guides Ball October 13, 2007 at the Rimrock Hotel in Banff. Cost is \$95 per person.
- One of the roles of the ACC is to represent Canada to the UIAA (Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme). The UIAA General Assembly will be held October 5-11, 2007 in Japan. Cam will be attending to represent the ACC. Topics to be discussed include safety standards and the introduction of sport climbing and backcountry skiing to the Olympics.
- The ACC GMC (General Mountaineering Camp) will be held in the Vowells in July-August 2008.

NOTICES

- National Parks will be providing the ACC with two huts: The Asulkan Cabin and the Glacier Circle Hut in Roger's Pass. The ACC submitted a proposal to build a backcountry hut in the Robson area and is currently in negotiation with BC Parks regarding this site.

NEW BUSINESS

- The ACC Calgary Section AGM (Annual General Meeting) will occur at the November Section meeting. There exist 15 positions on the Executive committee and a few of the positions will need to be filled. Ray encouraged section members to get involved if they are interested in helping out.
- Two books were donated to the library in memory of the two hut custodians who passed away last season.

Advance Notice
 Tuesday 20 November 2007
 The presentation at the November section meeting will be
 Raphael Slawinski:
 "If You Can Fail Here, You Can Fail Anywhere"

Attention All Members

On Monday November 5th, at 7 pm you are cordially invited to attend our first ever
"Meteorology Seminar"
 presented by the training and leadership committee. We will start with a practical introduction to basic meteorology in order to make better forecasts in the backcountry.
 Learn more about weather systems, cloud identification, the dangers of thunderstorms, snow levels, winds and fire.
 Find out what to do to improve your safety in the event that you are caught off guard. We will also be talking about local weather phenomenon, specific to the Rockies. There will be enough time for us to share experiences; don't miss it!

The place: Calgary Area Outdoor Council (CAOC)
 Rocky Mountain Room
 1111 Memorial Drive NW
 SW corner of Memorial Drive and 10th St NW

The Date and time: **Monday November 5th.... 7:00 PM**

Parking: Lot located immediately west of the building. Bring a toonie.

**New Interactive Trip Scheduling
By Ray Norman**

Over the past few years, we have received numerous complaints about getting on Section trips. Complaints range from "by the time I hear about it, the trip is full" to "I can't get hold of the trip leader" to "how can I find out more about a trip".

At the same time trip leaders complain that participants no-show, that non-members try to get on trips and that collecting emergency contact and other info is a pain. Also, many trip leaders are uncomfortable having their personal phone numbers and email addresses freely available on the web and ripe for access by any spammer.

Finally, we have trouble collecting statistics about trip participation - something that is useful both for our trip planning and for our applications for grant money from the government.

We have been trying to find ways to address all these issues for quite a while - indeed a "New Website" project led by Dave Hanson has been going on in the background for more than a year. Thank you Dave for all your efforts!

We now think we have found a way to handle our trip scheduling which will not only address the above issues, but which will ease the burden on trip leaders - and hopefully encourage more people to come forward and lead trips. We have been having discussions with the small web-consulting firm of Andwa Consulting who have set up interactive web-based event scheduling software for a number of organizations. We believe we can adopt the software virtually unchanged, and have it in place for the coming winter's trips.

The new software will allow the general public to see what trips we are offering, but the details and leader info will be available only to members. Members will be able to sign up for trips by putting their names on a "waiting list". The trip leader will then be able to see what trips the member has done in the past and will contact the member to confirm his or her spot on the trip.

At first we will populate the database with minimal info about each member - but the software will allow members to choose how much of their personal information they want to make available to other members and to trip leaders.

Watch this space for more news. We'll keep you posted.

Herb Kariel

Longtime ACC Calgary member, Herb Kariel, welcomes visitors at his home in the Edgemont Retirement Residence. Herb is not able to attend ACC meetings or get out much any more. Please call him first to set up a good time to visit.

His phone number is 288-3747.

Belaying and Anchors
By Greg McDougall

The first rule of pitched-out climbing is that the anchor must never fail. The general rule for multi-pitch is that the anchor must be multidirectional, with the bottom piece acting as a multidirectional piece, which means that it can take an upward pull, preventing the other pieces above it from pulling out if they are not multidirectional (e.g.: a cam).

But how many pieces of gear in an anchor is enough? There is no hard and fast rule on this subject; it "all depends" on the circumstances and what the pieces are. The anchor should be redundant, meaning that there should be a minimum of two pieces in case one fails. Another good rule is to strive for an anchor strength of around 40 KN (which is 9000pd). Again this can vary, but the anchor must never fail. In professional rope rescue scenarios an anchor of 44 KN (likely derived from 10,000pd) is considered the minimum. So, while climbing, if we quickly add up the little numbers on the gear, taking into account the quality of the placements, we can estimate the strength of the anchor.

Another important technique is the dynamic belay, which reduces the force on the anchor as well as on the protection. Currently in Yosemite, the trend is for speed climbing, which involves short fixing and Grigris. A Grigri, while offering a safe way of belaying (if used properly) is incredibly hard on the pieces of pro that are placed on the pitch, as it offers very little dynamism in the form of rope slippage through the device. Absorbing some of the energy of a fall with your body is another important part of a dynamic belay, as is the use of dynamic climbing ropes, as rope stretch absorbs much of the energy of a fall, minimizing the force on the anchor and the gear.

Fall Factors, a quick review: Fall Factor is an easy-to-figure number that gives a good idea of the 'seriousness' of a fall. The higher the Fall Factor, the worse the fall in terms of forces on the protection system, as the Fall Factor is the ratio of fall distance to the length of rope between the belay and the climber: A fall factor of 2 is the worst case, a clear fall from above the belay to below it without protection. In standard factory drop tests for rating ropes in number of falls, the fall factor is about 1.9. For example, if you lead out 5 meters of rope, then fall without an intermediate piece, the fall distance is 10m and so the Fall Factor is $10\text{m} / 5\text{m} = 2$ (ie., BAD). Now, same climb, but you placed a bomber piece of gear at 2.5m above the belay: this time, your fall is 5m with 5m of rope out, so the Fall Factor is 1.0.

This may seem a little redundant to some: basically, a longer fall is worse (more energy), while more rope between the belay and the climber is better (more stretch and thus energy absorption), but it brings up the importance of placing a piece of protection (preferably multidirectional) as soon as you can after leading off from a belay, and even clipping the lead rope into a high anchor placement, to prevent a theoretical factor-two fall from ever occurring, while keeping the anchor from failing! The most important lesson of Fall Factors is a bit hard for most people to believe: surprisingly, a short, seemingly-innocent fall can be much more dangerous than a spec-

tacular whipper at a lower fall factor. Another example of this is climbing with daisy chains (bad) and climbing above a piece that you are clipped to. If the daisy chain user falls from above they have just created a factor fall two fall by having 1 M of an un-dynamic Sling and falling 2M. So what does this mean? The climber will be in a world of pain and will likely feel his kidneys in his throat.

Now you are climbing in Squamish or on some stupid aid problem where there isn't a piece of gear for a while above the belay (e.g. Deidre or some of the Squamish apron climbs), and if you blow it, there is the potential for a factor-2. So, what do you do? Well, for one, the belayer can extend his tie-in below the anchor, so, instead of being .25m from it, he's maybe 2m or so below (clove hitch attaching him to the anchor) and belay off his harness, and for another, the leader can clip the highest anchor piece with a short draw as he leaves. What does this do? Well now before the leader even starts climbing, there's an extra 2m of rope out and he has a runner above the belay, thereby eliminating the theoretical factor-2 fall as a possibility. As he moves up without further protection, the potential Fall Factor increases, but the urgency for extra placements is reduced.

Elizabeth Parker Hut: Winter Memory, February 2007
Ornmadee Baxter-Lovo

Beep!

There we were, parked in between two cars - a family of three about to take on an annual ski trip. We've been coming to these trips since the beginning of 'me!' (Well almost). We sat in the car waiting for the sound of security and safety- BEEP!BEEP! Excellent, the batteries do work and so do the 'peips'! - The first sign that we were in good hands. All we needed was to get up those hills, finish the trails and arrive at the hut. From then on, Steve and Jackie would take care of us for one last time...

Putting it all together

Once at the hut, all of the usual activities took place. I took a look at the box of cards, sorted them and put together a card castle masterpiece. Our dinner consisted of burritos, chocolate and tea. Seated in front of a warm fire, I was at home again. Yummy!

The next morning, two wonderful chefs put on a hearty breakfast. The two and only... STEVE AND JACKIE. Porridge! Dried Apples! Sugar! It was like waking up on Christmas morning. Sitting at a table with so many talented, enthused people and eating the best oatmeal ever!! How delightful! Within the hour, everyone was pumped to go skiing. As always, Steve's secret stash would be revealed once more. I stayed back at the hut with mom dearest playing cards. I couldn't wait for the yummy dinner coming up. Betsy and a few others didn't go far but came back to the hut. I attempted to light a fire but after numerous tries it was time to ask for help. Betsy

came along and did the tipi thing and within seconds a fire was lit.

Bringing back memories

As I've always mentioned in EP Hut articles, comes the time when you gotta' pee. A trip to the famous out house was not pleasant, neither was the fact that there were flies hovering around. But business has to go on...

It was around 3pm and gradually people started coming back. Dinner was being prepared in the kitchen and already you could smell the pasta sauce. Dishes were being brought out and the feast began. It was all very filling but delicious! The whole event had just begun, but already it was dessert time! Betsy made a delicious frozen Oreo dessert and Sandy made the most awesome brownies which, by the way, Ian and I helped make. Just like that, the meal was done. Afterwards, one of the tables started playing a very sophisticated card game. Way too confusing for me. This game continued long into the night.

Sunday

The fun of last night's party was sizzling inside the famous Sunday morning breakfast. Pancakes! How Scrumdidlyumptious! Today was pack-up day for everyone. Also, sadly it was Steve and Jackie's last EP hut that they would coordinate for the time being. We left EP Hut a little (just a bit) before Steve and Jackie and thanked them for their commitment to this event and we left to go home.

Finally, in closing, it was a weekend well spent and we all expressed our appreciation to Steve and Jackie. Thanks a ton guys, and keep rockin' the house!

NE Ridge of Mt. Bell – August 25, 2007

Shaun Fluker

The NE ridge of Mt. Bell is a moderate climb on excellent quartzite by Rockies standards, with one pitch of lower 5th class climbing followed by 4th class terrain to the summit. Combined with a descent to Boom Lake, this makes for a long, enjoyable day in the mountains covering about 15 kms and 5000 feet of elevation. I managed to convince four fellow ACC members to join me on August 25 to climb the ridge – Stan Bobrow, Diane Colwell, Marcus Eyre, and Cathy Pellissier - with the promise of picking berries on the descent.

After leaving the Taylor Lake trailhead at 8:30 am, we accessed the NE ridge on its south side via an avalanche slope rising above O'Brien Lake. After passing a mountain goat disguised as a white boulder, we reached the 5th class step just past noon. A few of us roped up while Stan decided to continue onwards. Climbing behind Stan, I was soon staring at the soles of his boots and had to ask: "Geez Stan, are you sure you don't want the rope?" Stan politely declined and proceeded up the short corner, taking photos as we each surmounted the difficulties.

The weather was threatening all day – we all agreed early on that it was not a question of *if* it would rain, but rather *when* would it rain. The consensus was we had until mid- afternoon to complete the climb without getting soaked. At times this speculation appeared overly optimistic as we observed Mt. Hector being pelted to the north and Castle Mountain to the east, but the weather ultimately held for us.

As we neared the summit, the group split: two of us picking their way thru weaknesses along the ridge, while the other three taking the “hero” line on the ridge. Needless to say, the “heroes” arrived on the summit about 30 minutes late (names withheld).

After taking in the fabulous summit views (as far as the Bugaboos to the west), we headed down the south ridge and eventually dropped into a gully/avalanche slope that led to Boom Lake. With no berries in sight and endless steep side-stepping down the gully, morale was fading when we suddenly stumbled onto large patches of huckleberries and black currents near the bottom of the slope. Our pace of descent slowed as we harvested berries, and I was relieved knowing my promise of berries for dinner was met.

Upon reaching Boom Lake, we walked the trail to highway 93 at dusk. After driving back to the Taylor Lake trailhead to pick up the other vehicle, we drove back to Calgary in the rain.

Week Two, Summer Camp 2007

By Joe Turnham

When Trevor Penford and I pulled into the ‘Subway’ parking lot in Golden, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, we were greeted by ten like-minded, fit looking bodies. Some were familiar to me from other camps and places – Mike McDonough, Sue Scott, Sim Galloway, Marianne Azizi, Rose Archibald ... some were new – Derek Evoy, Ken Vrinten, Liza Kinzikeev, Sue Kuznick, and Josef Heim. A short while later at the staging area, after smoothly loading our gear on the chopper and greeting departing friends from week one, we were whisked up to the camp.

The camp was beautifully located on the west side of a N.-S. valley with flowing streams and mountain flowers in abundance, and plenty of sandy, flat campsites. The brand new lily-white tent looked great as well, and like the shower and the toilet all were nicely set up; many thanks, week one people! The soaring North Ridge of Iconoclast Mountain sat across the valley to the east, while a series of smaller peaks ran along a continuous N-S ridge line on the west side. These smaller peaks, we could see right away, would offer fairly short days out from camp and would probably form the basis of much of the climbing and scrambling here.

Almost as soon as we landed it began to rain. Some of the group, seeing a let-up, went for a hike, while others opted to laze around. My ‘laze around’ personality – plus my age- saw me gravitate to the latter group. Monday saw a slight break in the weather, so we all took off for

'Window', a small peak at the far Northern end of the valley. We returned absolutely soaked through, right through to the underwear in some cases – Rose's thong was wet!

After this somewhat shaky start, on Tuesday the weather turned hot and clear for the rest of the week. All of us took advantage of this in our own way – from Sim and Josef, who climbed every peak and traversed every ridge in the valley, to Derek, who certainly got out a number of times, but also opted to read and relax around camp some days. Not only did he do numerous camp jobs – including changing the toilet bins every day he was in camp – but he also became the steady, calm (and dryly amusing) receiver of the two-hour phone calls. This 'different strokes for different folks' pattern seemed to naturally sort out various groups over the week and from what I saw, nobody appeared pressured to do more climbing, nor was anyone left out. So when all was said and done, we all had a really good time... a 'holiday' in fact. Having Mike along as Camp Manager topped everything off as well. His style of leadership, quietly assuring and always thinking of what needed to be done – and in many cases doing it himself – was appreciated by all of us. Thanks a lot, mate!

So, to summarize our climbing week here are the 'Official Stats': As has been noted, we all climbed Window, as we did Benedict (traverse) and Outrider. Six people, Sim, Josef, Mike, Trevor, Rose and Marianne, climbed Iconoclast; ten people did Joy and the same number did Pain (an aptly named pile of c**p by all accounts). Also a group of four discovered a rock climbing crag behind camp and put up a couple of top-rope problems there.

Unofficial Stats – or The Far Side (visualize Gary Larson when you read some of this): We killed three million mosquitoes. Two million were slapped and flattened; ninety-nine thousand nine hundred were unsuspectingly grabbed in mid-air and crushed; ninety-nine were caught somewhat bloated and unable to fly fast enough. The other one flew into my mouth just as the helicopter was landing to take us out. We also reduced the valley horsefly population by ten thousand or so... by a variety of cruel methods of which many of us should feel ashamednot!

Anyway, onwards. A certain guy with the initials K.V. ate thirty-two 'sidekick' dinners; (Lipton market shares actually jumped the day after he did his pre-camp shopping.) We used forty-five buckets of drinking water, peed out forty-six (go figure), filled four buckets of you-know-what and used thirty-five toilet rolls (twenty-five of these by the female camp members). We endured one sprained ankle, one scraped hand, one sore knee and one 'lip blister' (at least that is how we described it to the horrified sportee, the 'h' word sounding a tad creepy-crawly).

As a final note, although we did try our best to follow the A.C.C. traditional camp format of coffee-swilling/bacon gorging/pipe-smoking (men and women) standing-in-the-campfire-smoke-for-a-week types, the 'new wave' of yuppie climber made that impossible. There they were, eating delicate pieces of smoked salmon, seaweed squares and wheat thins with their wine before supper; and added to this, there was one deeply suspicious 'pooofy' character who shaved four times in the weekwith sweet-smelling shaving cream, no less! A.O. Wheeler would have turned in his grave.

**Mt. Robson, Kain Face
By Paul Masiar**

Mt. Robson, Kain Face (or NE Ridge) is a classic line which sits high on the list of alpine climbers who frequent the Canadian Rockies. There are many reasons why people do not make it, among them the short climbing season, lack of good weather, lack of good conditions, and underestimating the route itself. Just because it was climbed almost hundred years ago, does not mean it is easy. The glacier one hundred years ago was much further down the valley, the face was much lower angled than it is today, and it had a giant serac on the right hand side from which only a large bulge remains.

I tried unsuccessfully to organize this trip for about three years. The team always fell apart due to one reason or another. This year too I had good candidates, but many bailed at the last minute – so again it was a scramble to find partners. I did not want to go as a team of two due to the involved glacier travel, so it had to be three or four. Finally we had a team of four : Paul, Mike, Toby and Nicolas. Our first meeting took place in a well known pub in Kensington – I threatened to burn their houses down if they bailed at the last minute. I knew Mike and Toby from previous outings; Nicolas was Toby's friend, and as it turned a valuable asset to our team.

The basic plan was as follows: reserve seven days, & allow five days for climbing.

Day 1: Take a helicopter to Extinguisher Tower, walk to high camp at the Dome

Day 2: Climb Mt. Robson via Kain Face

Day 3: Descend to Berg Lake

Day 4: Walk out to trailhead

Day 5: Spare day to sit at the Dome just in case of bad weather

We planned to leave on Saturday, August 11th, but the weather was bad, so we postponed till Tuesday August 14th. We left on Monday, slept in Valemount (not the best choice), and at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday we were standing before a closed gate at the Dennison Gravel Pit waiting for the Yellowhead Helicopter pilot. On the way to the pit we had stopped at the trailhead, and left one vehicle behind. We also filled out a voluntary registration form which has two pages; one goes into the slot, the other yellow one you deposit on your return. The Chief Pilot, Dale, was on time, landed on the road to open the gate, and then took off to the proper landing site to load our gear. The helicopter would take 4 climbers plus gear to Extinguisher Tower, but if you fly to the Dome (much more expensive), it only takes 3 climbers plus gear.

We loaded quickly - the sharp stuff and fuel must not go inside the cabin - and took off. The flight is short, and on the way the pilot showed us the landing place at Berg Lake near the ranger cabin, as we have talked about a possible pick up at Berg Lake for the way out. Toby also received frequencies from the pilot, the hope being that when the pilot is in the area, we can contact him and finalize the possible pick up. You can't really plan the pick up, it depends ...

We landed at a small rocky spot below the Extinguisher Tower, but it has bivi rings and a wooden box, which is the toilet. The weather was gorgeous, and our objective was glistening in the sun. It

was time to pick up the heavy packs and move. There is a small rock section which we passed in the morning shadow, but as soon as we got to the glacier, the sun was out. The ropes, harnesses, crampons came out, a little weight distribution took place and we were off again. As we go up the Robson Glacier, it is hot, but the mood is good. We travel as a rope of four, and navigate a maze of crevasses. Nicolas is on front and is doing a great job as leader. In the distance are two objectives, both hard to attain: The Mousetrap and Resplendent / Robson (RR) col. Nicolas feels he can find a way through the Mousetrap, and get us to the Dome. It is a much more direct way to go.

So into the Mousetrap we go, Nicolas in front. First we climb a short WI3 ice pitch, and then the real show begins: navigation in the Mousetrap over weak snow bridges, going around steep seracs, avoiding avalanche paths. We protect with screws and pickets, but I would not like to think what would happen if anyone slipped or fell into a crevasse. Even with three people the rescue would be difficult. When we emerge out of the most broken area, there are still large crevasses to be avoided, but we see a track to the Dome which we shall intercept at some point. We arrive at the Dome, only to find four other tents there, and about 9-10 people. They are all guided parties which got there early in the morning by helicopter. All show a great interest in: "How was the icefall?" We set up camp, sort gear for the next day, take a look at the face and eat. We don't have much time, but we notice that there is no track up the Face. No one has been up yet; the guided groups plan to do Resplendent and Robson, but Resplendent first, so we get first crack at the Kain Face.

Mike and I do not sleep all night. Mike's Thermarest has been punctured, he is cold and uncomfortable. I am tired, but somehow stay awake – "summit fever". At 3:30 a.m. the alarm goes off, we get up, and start making breakfast. The guided parties are also up, everybody milling about. My breakfast is a pack of Idahoan potatoes mixed with precooked bacon, and tea. This is much stronger than oatmeal, the potatoes need just boiling water and are ready in 1 min. We eat, and soon are ready to go until I notice a wet pack – mine; it is the first of the water disasters. I am out of water, & the pack is wet. Quickly I melt another pot, fill a 1L Nalgene bottle and go; everybody is waiting for me. We go towards the Kain Face, cross the schrund, and end up in a runnel beneath a cornice. There are number of runnels which have been created by parts of the cornice falling off; we figure it is the best path. The runnels are hard, going up the face is fast. As we near the top, the sun comes out, and I am overheating in my clothing. Sweat drenches me, but we have to keep going until we get out of the cornice area and on top of the face. There I remove my Goretex pants, additional layers, etc. Toby and Nicolas are ahead of us, as they were climbing first, and with my stop they gain even more distance.

Before us is a corniced ridge, and we see the summit block clearly. On the left hand side of the summit block is a little knoll – the summit of Mt. Robson. We start along the ridge, & it turns out to be the crux. In several places the cornices are weak, overhanging and have features that resemble crevasses running across them. There are holes from ice axes, and blue sky is visible underneath. We are walking on air – literally. Every step is carefully chosen, the cornice is hard enough to hold. In one place I crawl on my knees just to have more surface area – luckily it

is only two foot steps. I would say "one is getting full value" on this ridge..

Finally the summit block - we follow the foot steps of Toby and Nicolas, but we can't see them or hear them. One nice WI3 ice pitch, where we get to use the screws (we carried way too many) and the ground lays back a lot. We move up and see Toby and Nicolas coming back from the summit. They graciously agree to wait for us, so that we can combine ropes to rappel the summit block. Mike and I reach the summit knoll, I'm few meters back. Mike says: "Come closer, stand here", and we stand together on a square two feet by two feet which is the highest point. Quick - camera out, take a few pictures, and we are off to catch up with Toby and Nicholas. When we catch up, Nicolas is belaying, and Toby is constructing an Abalakov Anchor. We rap the ice pitch, down climb and rap the summit block, then pass again along the dreaded corniced ridge. The ridge has been baking in the sun all day, & is much softer, much more treacherous than in the morning. In a few spots we find a better way to go, others present a greater challenge. We are careful and make it to the top of Kain Face, which has been in the shade for a while. It is hard packed, so the decision is to downclimb. Nicolas and Toby take one runnel, Mike and take a runnel beside them. When we reach the camp, Toby has some hot water ready & it is already dark. We have some tea and curl up into our sleeping bags.

We wake up late next morning; the guided groups are going up the mountain, aided by our steps. We pack camp, and talk to a guide who has returned with his two clients prematurely. We enquire about the RR col descent and decide in favour of it, as it is late in the day for the Mousetrap and the RR is another way which we have not done. As well, there is track from the guided groups which did Resplendent. The going is tough, the packs are heavy. Everyone with the exception of Nicholas has carried too much food. We could all stay on the mountain for another three days. However, the weather is great and we keep moving, wanting to be down at Berg Lake today - I have made camp site reservations for Thursday night.

Mike leads the rock, there are two 30 m rappels in couple of steep places. The rock is initially climbed in crampons, then we take them off for the long, dry section. We arrive at the RR col, and scout a way down to our track below the Mousetrap. The easiest way is just to go straight down, but it is all white - we are afraid of large crevasses waiting to swallow us if we venture onto the white carpet. We decide finally to go under a brown serac, and contour high until we reach a bench which leads to a glacier below. Toby leads, and the going is slow. Every step is checked with an ice axe and a ski pole. We make one false turn, have to return, go up and over and then traverse a steep snow slope. Everything is soft, our steps are causing sluffing - snow travels down slowly creating small avalanches.

This terrain is marginal, and we are all happy when we start down hill, towards a snow bridge which leads onto a bench, our way down to our up track. Needless to say, since we started late, we have no hope of reaching Berg Lake nor shall we reach the Extinguisher Tower. We go towards a waterfall to make camp on the glacier. When we get there our disappointment is huge. We can't get to the water, as there is a huge crevasse between the snow and the rock. We melt some water, have some tea and go to sleep. I have been eating snow all day, as my hydration pack was leaking and I lost my Nalgene bottle on the climb. The other team had a stove that

would not work, so we had to wait for each other to melt water, cook etc. Next morning I get up really early, & cook a good meal, soup, chicken and rice, just to catch up. The day before I had eaten little, since all food requires water to metabolize, and I had no water. I rehydrated, drank a lot of water and had big cup of tea.

The other team woke up, we packed up the camp, and proceeded to Berg Lake. On the way the helicopter overflowed us to bring back the guided parties from the Dome. Toby talked to the pilot, and we arranged a pick up at Berg Lake at 5:00 p.m. The descent from Extinguisher Tower to Berg Lake takes you over moraines, and glacier until you finally merge with the Snowbird Pass trail. It is much longer than the 2-3 hours some guide book says. We met a group of three twenty-something lads who were going up the trail to repeat our ascent. They walked from the trailhead, and it took them 11 hours (including a little nap) to reach Berg Lake. My GPS showed that our group covered almost 40 km with heavy packs in very hard terrain. I did not measure the distance while ascending/descending Mt. Robson, as I left my GPS in the camp.

We stopped at the ranger's cabin (he was away) but his sister from Switzerland was there. She kindly gave us tea, and took us to the heli pad. We all took off boots for an hour, & dried socks in the warm sunlight. Then the yellow bird appeared and flew us back - I could see my car, and I was happy it was Friday. Had we walked out on Saturday, the gravel pit would have been closed, I could not have got to my car, and it would have been a problem to get someone with a key to open the gate - no chance of cutting that thick chain.

We ended up in Jasper, having a beer and dinner. It was only one beer, since we had to drive back to Calgary, and arrived at Mike's house at 2:00 a.m.

Lessons learned:

- Plan for seven days
- Select a window of good weather and GO!
- Mousetrap can be passed
- RR col and Mousetrap are both quite difficult
- The crux is the corniced ridge between the top of the Kain Face and the summit block
- Pickets are good - bring 3-4 per team
- Pack light
- Think about food, it is heavy, we all had too much food
- Bring a good expedition grade stove, white gas as fuel
- Hydration packs leak, bring Nalgene bottles

Climbers: Toby Brodkorb, Nicolas Bussieres, Mike Dodge, Paul Masiar

That's all, folks. Tell us about your adventures! Send stories.

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