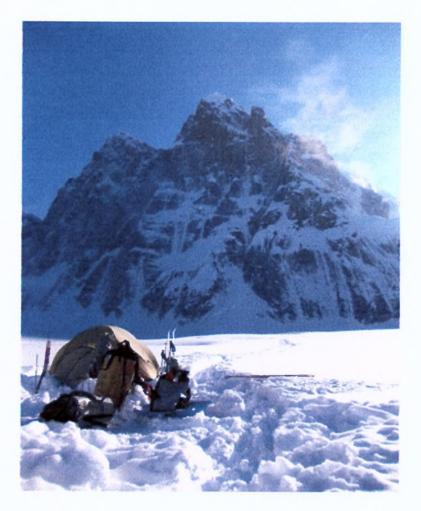


# 'Bearly Adventures 2013'

# **Expedition Report**



Team

**Dave Gladwin** 

Mike'Twid'Turner

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#### Acknowledgments

All members of the Bearly Adventures expedition would like to thank the following charities, organisations and businesses for their financial support; without which this expedition would not have been possible. Thank you.

#### The Mount Everest Foundation

#### **British Mountaineering Council**

**Gino Watkins Award** 

Montane

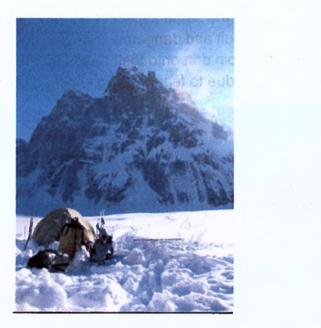
Lyon Equipment

Mountain Boot Company

DMM

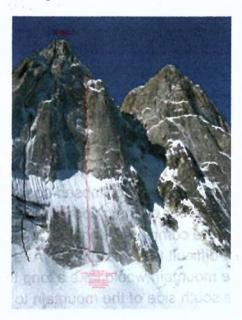
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#### Objective



North East Face of Bear Tooth and Moose's tooth

Our aim was to land on the Buckskin glacier, with the help of TAT to attempt a line on the left hand side of the North East face of Bear's Tooth 3070m Summit. The line is 1400m high and a Big Wall mixed and ice route. The line climbs an amazing groove line on the wall right of 'You can't Fly' 41 pitched route 2002. It's basically a steep ice line with sections of big wall.



The line we Hoped to climb is the black line. The red line is the French line.

Unfortunately the day before we flew onto the glacier 50cm of fresh snow landed which made the face very dangerous. We gave the face 3 days to allow the snow to settle and during this time we transported equipment to the base of the wall.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day an American team attempted to repeat a line on the North east face of the Moose's tooth which is the same aspect of our proposed new route. The two climbers experienced difficult and dangerous climbing through unconsolidated snow and received continuous spin drift onto their heads for the two days they were on the face before they retreated due to fear of being knocked off the face by the snow.



The snowy Approach to the face

After this experience we decided to wait another day during which time more snow fell and we saw point release avalanches and serac collapses in the valley on various aspects.

After a further two days of waiting for the snow to settle we decided to attempt a line on the Bears Tooth. We travelled to the face sorted the equipment and whilst approaching the base of the route a serac collapsed so we immediately starting running in the opposite direction. For the next couple of minutes we were unsure of what was happening as we were completely engulfed in avalanche dust which made it impossible to see and very difficult to stay standing. After this experience we decided the north face of the mountain would take a long time to come into condition so we bumped across to the south side of the mountain to the route canal which is just above the Ruth Gorge. We were lucky with conditions as it is south facing so climbed Shaken not Stirred. A thousand meter ice and mixed couloirs.



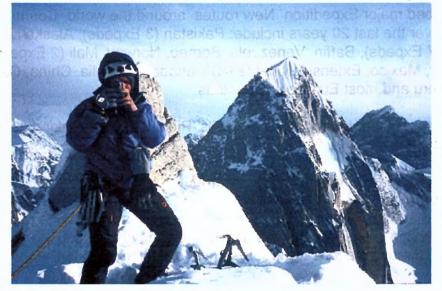
Twid climbing one of the steeper steps of Shaken not Stired

The conditions on the south face were very good and with an early start safe ascents could be made.

It was a very disappointing trip for the both of us but we discovered allot of new potential in the area which is detailed later in this report

# The Team

# Mike Twid Turner IFMGA Mountain Guide and Mountaineering Instructor



Twid on summit of Cathedral Spire

#### **Professional Life**

Mike has worked in the outdoors all his working life. Over the 25 years he has worked with a wide range of groups and clients. Starting off working in Mountaineering and Outdoor Consultant Management Centres mostly based around North Wales. Also in his early Professional life he worked for Private outdoor companies, Mountain Guides and in Local Education Outdoor centres with young people of all ages.

Mountaineering has always played a major part of Mike's work whether it is guiding clients/groups up rock or ice climbs in Wales, Scotland in winter, in the Alps or on **Worldwide Expeditions**. For 18 years he worked for **Plas Y Brenin**, The National Mountaineering Centre, 15 years of which as Senior **Instructor** and fronting up Rock Climbing (**Head of Rock climbing**) and the Mountain Instructor Certificate. Much of his work was directing all of the National **Governing Body** courses, training trainer's leaders and instructors. He has been a member of the Association of Mountain Instructors (AMI) since its creation.

As a **Mountain Guide** he has worked extensively around the Alps mountaineering on foot and on skis, **since 1993**. For three years he partnered a small Guiding Company '**Alpine Guides'** which he helped start. For the last 3 years he has run his **own business** Mountain Training and Guiding, based in the Alps. For the last 6 years he has been involved with **training Mountain Guides** to become fully qualified for the British Mountain Guides.

#### **Personal Achievements**

started mountaineering with father at an early age. Mike has climbed at a high standard on Ice, Rock, Big Walls and Alpine Summits for over 20 years. He regularly climbs to E6 and has climbed over 75 E7/8 graded routes, many 8a graded climbs made. Winter climbing has been a major part of Mikes Climbing. 20 years working /climbing in winter both in Scotland and the Alps. Mike has climbed many of the worlds classic Hard Ice Climbs. Climbing in the Alps from 14 years old, Mike has made many Major ascents including : North Faces of Eiger, Grand Jorasses, Mont Blanc, Dru, Doites and Marmalada.

He has climbed major Expedition New routes around the world. Countries he has climbed in over the last 20 years include: Pakistan (3 Expeds), Alaska (7 Expeds), Patagonia (7 Expeds), Baffin, Venezuela, Borneo, Norway, Mali (2 Expeds), Madagascar, Mexico, Extensively in the US/Canada, Australia, China, Caucas, Morocco, Peru and most European Countries.

In 2003 he was nominated for the prestigious 'Piolet D'Or' for making a first ascent in Alaska, of the 'Super Dupa Couloir'.

#### Achievements as a Climber and Mountaineer Rock Climbing

Rock climbed from an early age first leading Extremes at 16 yrs of age. Have climbed E7 British grade for 20 years. Enjoys pushing his mental and physical boundaries. Climbing serious trad routes and Red Pointing to 8a French grade. Highlights:

- 100'S E6 and 75+ E7/8 graded climbs all around UK. Included. Vitalstatics E8, Super Calabrese E8, Hard back Thesaurus, E8, Hollow Man E8 (all North Wales), Perfect Monsters E7 (Mingulay)
- Many 8a Red points in North Wales and Mexico. 'Statement of Youth' 23 yrs ago.
- Over 12 new long routes in Mali, Africa 1<sup>ST</sup> British Team to visit area
- New routes in the Tarasorno Massif, Madagascar. 1<sup>st</sup> British Team to visit.
- Climbing on a remote Tepui (Rock Tower) in Venezuela.
- Climbing 'The Nose' in a day on El Cap, Yosemite.
- Early Repeat of the 'Fish' on the Marmalade in the Dolomites. One of hardest Alpine Rock routes of the day.
- 1<sup>st</sup> British Team to Visit the Super route area of Taghia Morocco.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Ascent of Big Wall out of 'Lowes Gully' Borneo. 1<sup>st</sup> Expedition to live stream to the web.

# Ice Climbing

From a hill walking background and climbing in the Scottish Mountains in winter with his father Mike developed a love for Snow and Ice climbing. Mike has extensively climbed in Scotland in winter for most of his life. Climbing many grade 7 and grade 8 (VIII) routes on ice as well as mix climbs. For 20 winters was based from Glen Coe in Scotland during the winter running ice climbing and winter mountaineering courses. He has climbed many new routes across Scotland. Ben Nevis being one of Mikes favourite Mountains to climb on. Mike has also cascade climbed extensively in the Alps over the last 7 years. Running Guided trips in the Italian, Swiss and French ice climbing areas. Mike regularly climbs at French grade 6 and often Guides at this standard. Highlights:

- 1<sup>ST</sup> Ascent of 'Scrabble' VIII Corrie Nan Lochan Scotland.
- 'Octopussy' Colorado M8. One of the hardest mixed routes in the world at the time.
- 'Ames Ice Hose and Bridal Vail'VI Colorado.
- 'Pilsner Pillar' VI Canada.
- 'Super Dupa Coulior' Alaska. 3 days of climbing.
- 'Repentance' Cogne Italy VI.
- Crack Baby 6 Kandersteg Switzerland

# Alpine Climbing

Alpine climbing combines the best of all the mountaineering pursuits. Rock, Ice and mixed climbing techniques combined with the seriousness of being in the 'Bigger hills'. Mike's apprenticeship was with his father and Merseyside Mountaineering club. He started climbing major routes in the Alps from 18yrs old and enjoys still adventuring around the many Alpine regions. Through is Guiding he has been able to inspire many young climbers and climb with some of the best British Mountaineers of his generation. Stuart McAleese, Nick Bullock, Neil Brodie, Mark Thomas and John Bracey. In the past he has teamed up with British Climbing Celebrities like Dai Lampard, Phil Thornhill, Shaun Hudson, Andy Perkins, Gerry Gore and his Wife! He has learnt about having fun, commitment, enjoying camaraderie as well as living 'The life of the Climber'. He has enjoyed every minute and will do so in the future! Notable ascents in the Alps

- Schasplana 3600m Austria with parents at 12.
- Badile North Face 18yrs.
- Walker Spur, Bonnatti Pillar, Freney Pillar, Divine Providence, Attack du Choc- 1990.
- 'Croz Spur' in winter Grand Jorasse.
- 'Fish' free climbed. Point Marmalada in the Dolomites.
- North Face of the Eiger in Winter

#### **Big Wall Climbing and Expedition Climbing**

1987 Caucus reaching 5800m on Mount Elbrus

1989 'Caveman' Torres Del Paine, Chile Patagonia. ED 700M E5. 2 days alpine style

1990 Attempt on Cerro Torre. Retreated from high up. Argentina free climbing nr Baraloche. Salethe, Nose in a day El Cap. Regular route Half Dome

1991 'Halucagen Wall' Black Canyon of Gunnison US.5 Days on route A4+.800m

1992 'For a Fist Full of Dollars' Torres Del Paine, **Chile** Patagonia, ED 800M 12 days Big Wall.

1993 'Shield' El Cap A3 5 days on route. 'Moon light Buttress' Zion. US

1994 'Umweltern', Nalamortorsaq, **Greenland**. 700m 3 days, E5, A1. Free Route. 'Moby Dick' 1200m, Greenland, 2nd ascent Greenland. First time climbed in one

day.

1995 The Excellent Adventure' Beatrice, Hushe **Pakistan**. ED 850M 14 days Big Wall

1996 'Endless Day' The Citadel, **Baffin Island**. ED 1000m 18 days on climb. Big Wall.

'Grains of Sand' Hands of Fatima, Mali. 650m E4. Free route.

1997 'Nawas' Nawas Brak- Amin Brak , Hushe , Pakistan. ED 1300m 18 days on Wall

'Always the Sun'. Madagascar. 500m 7c+. Free route. Many repeats

**1998 'Norwegian Pillar'** Greater Trango, **Pakistan**. Stopped 500m from top. 21 consecutive nights on portaledges after 2000m of big wall climbing at 6000m.

1999 'The Crucible' 850m New route in Lowes Gully **Borneo** E4 ,A4 (12 days on route)

2000 'For a few Dollars more' Torres Del Paine, **Patagonia**. 800m, E4 A1. Free route. Alpine style 3 days on route. Attempted a new line on the Central Tower of Paine (5 weeks!)

2001 'The Land that time forgot'Acapan. Venezuela, 700m, E5. Free route. 'Off the wall Bonkers' Kitchatna Spires, Alaska, Big Wall ED 850m. Big Wall. 7 days

on route

2002 'The Supa Dupa Coulior' The Citadel, Kitchatna Spires. 1000m ED , 5+ French Ice. Alpine.Piolet D'or nominated.

2003 'The Perfect Storm' Mnt Nevermore, Kitchatna Spires, 1000m ED E4, A2. Big Wall 12 days. Alaska. **Mexico** . Free climbing Puchero Chico.

2004 'Storm Pillar', Lofoten, Storen Pillar, 800m. Big Wall. 5 days on route. Norway 2005 Attempted a new line on East Face of Fixroy (7 week trip!)Patagonia

2006 'Biff Bash Bosh ED2 M71000m', 'Artist Coulior TD 800m', 'Cool Coulior

1000m' Kitchatnas. Alaska 'The Good The Bad and the Ugly' Paine. South Tower. Patagonia, 1000m Big Wall ED E3 A4. 24 days.

2007 Taghia Morocco. repeats of major routes, first British ascents of Big Walls 16 pitch 7c.

Climbs in Cordillera Blanc.**Peru.** Alaska, Kitchatna Spires. Snow patch spire 2008 'Like a Pig in Shit'. **Sardinia** 500m new free route 7c. A1. 12 pitch sport route 'Devil Rides Out' Torres Del Paine.800m E4, A4, 12 Days on route. **Patagonia** 

2009 'Big Lips' 500m E56b new route. 6 new routes. 1st Brit ascent of 'Black Mamba' 10 pitch 7b Mali

**2010** Artic Monkeys 1400m 23 days on wall, Stewart Valley, Baffin 36 pitches very hard!

2011 Exstacy, Similstck, Engelhomer, 300m 7c new route.

#### Piolets d'Or Nominee 2003 : 'The Supa Dupa Coulior' ED 4 VI,M7,1000m. Kitchatna Spires

The purpose of the Piolets d'Or awards is to raise awareness about the year's greatest ascents across the world. They aim to celebrate the taste for adventure, the bravery and sense of exploration that lie behind the art of climbing in the world's great mountain ranges.

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David Gladwin



32, British, Snowsports Instructor;

- Rock Climbing all over UK and Europe (up to E5 and sport 8a, 14 yrs)
- British winter climbing up to VIII (6yrs)
- Alpine climbing up to ED4 and continental ice up to WI 5

• Alpine climbing in the greater ranges up to ED2

<u>Notable Ascents</u> : North Faces of Eiger, Matterhorn, Droites, Cima Grande, Piz Badile, 3 routes on the NF Grande Jorrasses, Freney Pillar, Divine Providence, Solo Ascent of American Direct (to end of difficulties)

Greater Ranges - FA ED2/3 North Ridge of Kyzyl Asker (Tien Shan Kyrgystan)

- 4 FA's in Kyrgystan up to ED 2
- FA's in Tajikistan up to D solo
- Cassin Ridge on Denali

David was born in Newcastle which is where he spent his youth exploring the sandstone buttresses of Northumberland. He now lives in the Alps so that he can be closer to his passions.

In the winters he teaches skiing and snowboarding in the Portes du Soleil 'the greatest skiing area on earth' and the summers are spent free from work commitments climbing whenever possible .

He really loves exploring the greater ranges and the cultural diversities they have to offer. Whether putting up New routes in the Tien Shan and Pamirs up to ED2/3 or climbing classics such as the the Cassin on Denali

His best week ever week of climbing he had the week of all weeks. In 7days he did the Colton Mac and the Croz on the Grand Jorasses and also climbed his first 8a.

# Flying to Anchorage

In the past we had used the flights directly from Frankfurt to Anchorage with Condor which is a cheap and fast option but due to airline timetable changes we flew from Manchester with American airlines which was a 23hr flight.

With the flight arriving early in Anchorage it meant we had a whole day to buy provisions and get to Talkeetna.

American airlines offer a good service. We had to buy a second piece of luggage which wasn't too bad compared to paying lots of excess luggage fee. The hand bag allowance was only 6kg and was strictly ahered too.

# **Getting to Talkeetna**

From the airport we took a Taxi to the shopping area around The Mountain Coop. It's a great central place to get all your provisions and any gear you might need. We

shopped in Cars for all our food. A good shopping centre with all your food needs. It has a great cafe also and you can get a Cars Car which will give you a good discount. From here we hired a taxi bus to Talkeetna. This was quite expensive but after lots of effort we couldn't get a cheaper price. I researched 5 different shuttle buses. Most don't start up properly till later in the season as does the train. The shuttle bus takes about 2-3hrs to get to Talkeetna including a half way stop at a town for a coffee. The shuttle buses offer a return rate but for flexibility I would just get a single and shop about on the return leg. Not all buses go every day.

# Staying in Talkeetna

On arrival in Talkeetna we dropped our bags directly at TAT. They have a store room which is dry and reasonably safe. TAT offers a service which includes free use of one of their bunkhouses. The best and most mossy free being the town house in the centre of Talkeetna. Its basic, clean, got a shower, has bed frames, cooking facilities, living space and plenty of covered space to sort and repack gear. Most folk stay in the bunkhouse and eat in town. Breakfast at the roadhouse is preferred and diner at the Roadhouse or other restaurants. The food is excellent and a great place to carbo load before the suffering of the trip.

There is plenty of fun to be had including drinking fine beer in the 'Fairview Inn'. The Fairview is a wonderful place to meet climbers from all over the globe and gain important conditions reports.

# Permits, CMC'S, Rangers base

On arrival in Talkeetna we went to the Rangers station to get our permit to climb on the Buckskin. For this area you just pay \$20 each for permit and sign a form. It's unlike the permit system to climb on Denali. You also need to leave your passport and contact details and its handy if they have your Sat Phone details. On Exiting the Mountains you just call in and sign out. It's a safety concern and very reassuring. We also picked up our CMC (Clean Mountain Can). This is a free service. They provide a plastic resealable container with poly bags to line the can. You crap into the can the seal the bags. This means all waste is brought out by plane. It's a requirement to take these. On the way out of Talkeetna just drop the can and bags back at the Ranger station, they handle the waste from then onwards. The Ranger base offers good weather forecasts for the Mountains, advice on routes and conditions. There a large library of reference books and photos to look at also. A great place to do some further research before you head into the mountain

# **Flights into the Mountains**



Flying into the buckskin with Paul Roderick

There are many companies that fly climbers into the Mountains. But TAT (Talkeetna Air Taxis) have the climbers market on the whole. They offer a great service and its run by Paul Roderick an experienced climber himself. They are very relaxed but totally professional. We booked a flight be email and paid by credit card on arrival. TAT has many planes 6+ including 3 Otters. It's a big operation but still very personal. They provide many extras:

- Free bunkhouse
- Free transfers from bunkhouse for kit in their vehicle
- Wands for the glacier
- Sledges
- You can buy fuel from them
- You can hop on flights from one glacier to the next

Things to consider when travelling by plane in Alaska:

- Pack for the glacier in Talkeetna! We always use the 120 litre Ortalieb bags to keep our kit dry.
- Reduce you weight as much as possible, get rid of any unwanted packaging.
- You get 120lbs free after that it's a \$1 a lb.
- Dress for the mountain before leaving.
- Get ready as early as you can and be ready to suddenly jump on a plane
- Buy the office staff chocolates, not only do they look after you valuables but they are the contact point for any problems and man the phones.
- Stamping out a runway before the plane lands 500m x 10m
- Carry a Sat phone

Contact TAT Paul Roderick 14212 E Second Street Talkeetna AK 99676

Direct Line:(907)733-2218Toll Free:(800)533-2219FAX:(907)733-1434

Email: info@talkeetnaair.com

# Food

There are three areas to our Expedition. Eating while in Anchorage and Talkeetna, eating in base camp and food for hill. While in the Mountains we budgeted for 15 days of hill food and 7 days of base camp food. All food was bought at Carr's in Anchorage or the Mountain Coop. We did bring some instant custard from the UK as it seems unavailable in US. All excessive packaging was removed before heading into the mountains. All glass was let behind and things put in bags or plastic tubs.

#### Food in base camp

We took staples of noodles and pasta. A few tins of fruit, cinnamon buns, pancake mix, wraps, tinned chilli, etc. We took some fresh meat into the glacier and buried it immediately in the snow. Weight is quite an issue but some fresh meat is worth taking.



Cooking on the Buckskin glacier

#### Food for the hill

We made up meal bags while we waited in Talkeetna. In each bag we aimed to have about 4000 calories per person. It offered variety and some treats. It consisted of:

- Breakfast: 2 pkts each of instant porridge; muesli bar, hot fruit drink.
- Day food: nuts and sweats, 2 chocolate bars each; 2 muesli bars each; pkt of dried meat.
- Evening meal: staple(either mash,noodles,rice, couscous); 2 dehydrated meal bags;instant soup;fudge brownie;pkt custard.

#### <u>Maps</u>

The American alpine club have produced a 1: 50,000 map for Alaska. This is clear and easy to read .

Many of the peaks are not defined, especially on long chains of peaks.

#### Insurance

Take some! But in reality you will get rescued either by TAT or by the Rangers which are free. It's the medical bills that will be bonkers. We have used BMC for Expeditions.

#### **Communications**

In Alaska's towns and cities English mobiles worked no problem although at a higher cost than in Europe.

There were multiple internet cafes / shops. These were relatively inexpensive,

# Satellite phone

We hired a satellite phone from a shop in Anchorage opposite the REI store. The basic package for the phone was quite expensive but calls were relatively inexpensive and both members decided it was a worthwhile investment in case of potential issues on the glacier and to organise pick up from TAT,

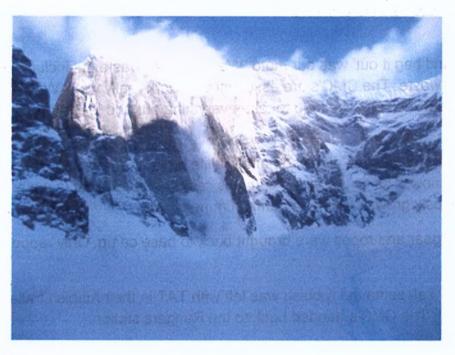
The phone was small and easy to use, a modern type, little different to an every-day mobile phone. The phone came with a charger. However on our expedition where charging was not an issue we requested a spare battery which was permanently kept in a dry warm area to preserve the charge.

However by switching the phone on for short periods only we managed to conserve the battery for two weeks with little problem.

www.anchoragesatellitephones.com

#### **Weather**

The weather was much worse than we had anticipated. Upon arrival in Talkeetna there was snow everywhere and we were unable to fly into the glacier for 2 days due to constant storms. Arriving on the glacier after these storms we soon realised that the pure volume of snow and with temperature changes avalanche activity was very high so safe travel practise was required for the duration of the trip



.Serac collapse on the Brocken tooth

# **Medical Considerations**

Travelling to such a remote location is amazing but you have to consider what happens if you have an accident. Firstly we were both First Aid Trained and hold a recognised first aid in the Mountains qualification. We also carried a big first aid kit for base camp including strong pain killers and plenty of bandaging. On the wall we carried a smaller first aid kit with pain killers. We find the white zinc oxide tape very useful. It's easily got from climbing walls. It's also handy for taping up for jamming. It's worth considering what to do in case of an accident before you go. We talked about:

- Pain relief
- Phone calls from Sat phone. The ranger station and TAT. Plus any Doctors you know. We took numbers of Doctor friends for advice.
- If the weathers bad ad you cannot fly
- Splinting legs and applying traction
- Use of sledges to move injured folk

• We took a mountain medicine handbook.

As far as things to do with first aid we were lucky and nothing was of need except for the odd pain killer for headaches and painful joints.

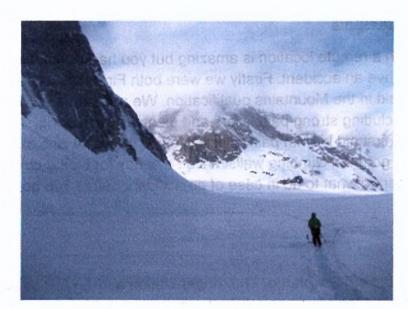
# **Environmental Considerations**

'Take it in and bag it out' was our moto. We carried all waste out including bog paper and human waste. The CMC's are essential and work really well. We took big rubble bags in for our rubbish. We tried to take everything out and leave the tent site as flat as possible.

It's a remote area and we didn't see any wildlife birds or animal. All the plans where covered in snow. The South facing summits seem to be covered in a black lichen which obviously grows well in the damp summers.

All climbing gear and ropes were brought back to base camp. Only rappel anchors were left.

On arrival in Talkeetna the rubbish was left with TAT in their rubbish trailer for sorting and disposal. The CMC's handed back to the Rangers station.



The ago old debate on what gear to take! In our experience take it all from your portaledge, aid gear, various tents, snow shoes, skis and party shirts! Here are some ideas of what to take:

# <u>Kit</u>

- Essential snow shoes and skis, we only had skis mind.
- Hire a couple of sledges and probes from TAT
- We used gas rather than liquid fuel. Bought in Mountain Coop in Anchorage.
- Take portaledges with rainfly (expedition type fly), Haul bags two
- Rope as much as possible. 2 half ropes, a single rope and 100m of static
- 25 pegs ,Mashies, Hooks, Bird beaks, Wall hauler, ropeman, prussiks
- Slings
- 20 quickdraws
- 4 sets of wires, micro wires
- 2.5 sets of cams
- Large base camp tent, small bivy tent.
- Sleeping bags 4-5 season, bivi bag
- Shovel, probe, transceivers
- Stove -jet boil, frying pan, one gas cylinder per day.
- First aid
- Sat phone
- Full clothing plus spare set
- Leather gloves, 2 pairs of spare ski gloves
- Helmet
- Lots of good books

# **Other Potential Routes**

The Buckskin Glacier is an area of granite rock faces and big north faces suitable for mixed climbing. It's a stunning place and a real wilderness experience.

The weather and conditions plays a major part. The climbing is low for Alaska and the conditions of the north faces are very changeable.

. Some things to consider:

- Don't climb in gullies after major snowfall
- Don't climb ice gullies in the Sun, wait for the sun to move.
- Consider fixing a few pitches then go light and fast for summits.
- Take los of gear. I generally take 4 sets of wire and lots of tat and pegs for abseils. Generally 20 abseils per route.
- Take sledges to drag kit.
- Take snow shoes and if possible skis. You can hire skis from Alaska Mountaineering Services in Anchorage or off TAT.
- Take all the toys. Go prepared to ice climb, Mix climb, free climb and aid climb. Then you will get something done. We climbed in appalling conditions

but only because we had all the gear. Our initial aim was to go lightweight alpine but condition and routes didn't allow.

• You will need many options.

There is a good run down on all the Buckskin routes at the ranger station recently complied by Mark Westman. The local guru who works at the ranger station.



The amazing east face of Bear's Tooth



The beautiful North East Face of Bear's tooth



The dangerous south face of the Broken tooth

# Contacts:

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