

Route Synopsis - Trident/Neptune

📍* All information is relevant to having a base camp on Bigmouth Creek approximately 2 kms west of Dolphin Peak. This campsite has been traditionally called Dry Valley. The camp was at an elevation of 6620'. Refer to Map 82-M16, Argonaut Mtn. UTM reference is 206488. Information source - Guides and Leaders, 2001 ACC GMC.



➤ Neptune - (3201m/10,499') UTM - 218226

FA - S. Slopes - Aug 8, 1950 (Alex Faberge, Norman Goldstein, Donald Hubbard, Arnold Wexler)

GMC Route - New Route - FA – NW Buttress – July 15, 2002 (Jim Gudjonson, Doug Nelson, P. Clements, R. Cruickshank, T. Rasmussen, B. Jussila, G. Whetham, A. McGee, C. Allison, D. Gregantz, R. Roe)

- ❖ – follow moraine S of camp. Ascend small patch of snow to rock band. Work right up chimney system and up to grassy slopes. Good belay boulder at top of pitch. Climb up working left to right until you reach snow. Ascend snow for approximately 200' to obvious gully system on left. Follow gully until you reach the E side of the buttress. Scramble up loose ledge systems until reaching vertical face with roof at the top. Climb 5.8 section (chossy rock) to roof, work right around roof and then up slippery ledges to a good belay boulder. This section is a full 30 meters. Scramble (4th class) up remainder of buttress to snow bulge. Head directly S to obvious notch after reaching the top snow bulge. Descend 200' down loose gully and onto the Escarpment Glacier. Cross the glacier aiming for the bergschrund and W facing snow/ice slopes directly below the Cronus/Escarpment col. Cross bergschrund and ascend 750' of up to 45° snow or ice. Follow SW ridge to the summit block, working left and following 4th class gully systems to the summit.

Descent: Retrace route

- ✓ **Party Size** – Rope teams of 3
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings, add 2 small cams, 2 pins and #4-#7 nuts, 3 large slings
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 8 – 11hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – highest peak in the area, challenging alpine route with lots of variety including some tough rock climbing and steep snow. Rock is good on the summit block. Excellent views from summit
- ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall and exposed scrambling on buttress, avalanche possibility on W slopes below Cronus/Neptune col.

- ❖ **Variation** – FA – N Face/E. Ridge – August 14, 2002 (Brian Webster, H. Microys, M. Rosenberger)
 - ❖ - follow moraine S of camp, head E and climb quickly up the Rhea Glacier underneath obvious rockfall hazard from the Neptune buttress. Approach the obvious N facing ice slopes of Neptune via the glacier. Ascend to the climbers right of the seracs and up to the base of the ice face. The ice face is 350 meters long and has an average angle of 55° with one 60° section. Exit off the ice face and onto the E ridge by climbing to the right of the striking granite gendarme at the top of the face. Once on the ridge climb 5.7 rock (good granite) for 30 meters to get on steep snow slopes. Ascend snow slopes to upper summit tower and turn tower to the south where the regular route was joined

Descent – follow normal descent route

- ✓ **Party Size** – Rope teams of 3
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings, ice screws, 5 small to medium cams
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 8 – 11 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – highest peak in the area, steep ice face, good granite on rock portion, very aesthetic, great views
- ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall under NW buttress just above camp, ice face will often have large cornice at top but it had collapsed this summer on July 8th.

➤ Trident - (3136m/10,246') UTM - 221501

FA - S. Slopes/W Ridge - July 18, 1937 (Kate Gardiner, Lillian Guest, Christian Hasler Jr., Edward Fuez Jr.)

GMC Route - New Route - FA – N Glacier/W Ridge – July 15, 2002 (Brad Harrison, Cam Roe, Doug Hogg, R. Sawler, D. Ash, C. Mooney, P. Repp, J. Nichols, C. Beers, D. Cousins, C. Cousins, K. MacKay, R. Fournier)

- ❖ – ascend S slopes directly above camp. Ascend 700 meters, working scree, grass and snow to the lowest col on W ridge of Trident. After reaching col climb up 20 meters on E side of col, then gently diagonal down steep snow to scree rib. Diagonal down scree (lose 50 meters) to E side of rib. Traverse steep (45°) snow slope, very exposed, to N glacier. Ascend glacier heading E, stay N of obvious false summit. Gain high point and cross upper glacier N of false summit to col at the base of the W ridge of Trident. Stay on the ridge proper, mostly 4th class with two mini-pitches of 5.2 on good granite. Follow the ridge to a small snow patch directly W of the summit block. Cross low-angle snow patch and then up scree to the summit.

Descent – retrace ascent route until reaching major col at the base of the upper W ridge. Descend steep scree or snow directly down S slopes until you are approaching the cliff bands that empty into the valley above the campsite. Start diagonal line left to right through a mixture of grassy slopes, scree or slabs. Stay just above the top of the cliff bands. Once you are directly above a large cirque (often full of avalanche debris) start switch backing down the grassy and slabby slopes. As it steepens, traverse left to a good rappel station. One 25-meter rappel will leave you in the valley proper and hiking back to basecamp.

- ✓ **Party Size** – Rope teams of 4
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 8 – 11 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – 2nd highest peak in the area, very impressive summit block, good quality granite on summit ridge, interesting route finding on descent, nice round trip
- ✓ **Hazards** – exposure (difficult to protect) on steep snow when entering the N glacier, rockfall on descent, slabs just above rap station would be tricky and difficult to protect if wet.

Variation - FA – W Ridge – July 30, 1989 (Steven Horvath, Brad Kryski, Tim Vangelder)

- ❖ - ascend S slopes as per normal GMC route. When nearing col began ascend to the climbers right and onto the W ridge proper. Scramble E along ridge until reaching a vertical notch. A difficult downclimb leads into a notch. Climb a short pitch (10 meters) on crumbly granite to regain the ridge. Scramble along the ridge along 4th class and easy scrambling

➤ Escarpment Peak 3121m/10,237' UTM - 211465

FA – SW Ridge - July 11, 1956 (Sterling Hendricks, Don Hubbard, Alvin Peterson)

- ❖ **GMC Route** – head down Bigmouth Ck until you reach a small lake on the true left of the creek. Contour around cliff bands until you reach a well traveled game trail. Aim for the W end of the ridge that runs from Neptune and ascend trail until the toe of the glacier is visible. Cross drainage and scramble up 4th class ledges to small buttress. Follow buttress to the toe of the glacier and easily access the glacier. Once on the top of the glacier crest head SSE for 1 km and then due E to the SW ridge of Escarpment. Easy scrambling on snow and some rock will lead you to the summit.
 - ❖ **Descent** – retrace ascent route until you are able to turn N and descend to the flat part of the Escarpment Glacier. Head ENE on the glacier until you reach the notch on the W Ridge of Neptune that will lead you to the normal ascent/descent route used to climb Neptune.
 - ✓ **Party Size** – Rope teams of 4
 - ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, rappel device, tat for the rappels
 - ✓ **Length of Trip** – 12 hours
 - ✓ **Highlights** – non-technical trip with great views. Round trip
 - ✓ **Hazards** - creek at the toe of glacier can be difficult to cross if high, if this is the case you will have to climb the E side of the creek on obvious ledges. Glacier has a lot of slots, particularly evident on the lower part of the glacier. Rockfall on NW buttress above camp on descent. If it is wet it may be better to descend the ascent route thereby avoiding the rockfall on the buttress.

➤ Cronus Peak 3076m / 10,089' UTM - 215470

FA - SW Ridge - August 4, 1950 (Alex Faberge, Norman Goldstein, Donald Hubbard, Arnold Wexler)

❖ **GMC Route** – follow moraine S of camp. Ascend small patch of snow to rock band. Work right up chimney system and up to grassy slopes. Good belay boulder at top of pitch. Climb up working left to right until you reach snow. Ascend snow for approximately 200' to obvious gully system on left. Follow gully until you reach the E side of the buttress. Scramble up loose ledge systems until reaching vertical face with roof at the top. Climb 5.8 section (chossy rock) to roof, work right around roof and then up slippery ledges to a good belay boulder. This section is a full 30 meters. Scramble (4th class) up remainder of buttress to snow bulge. Head directly S to obvious notch after reaching the top snow bulge. Descend 200' down loose gully and onto the Escarpment Glacier. Cross the glacier aiming for the bergschrund and W facing snow/ice slopes directly below the Cronus/Escarpment col. Cross bergschrund and ascend 750' of up to 45° snow or ice. Upon reaching the ridge crest follow the NE ridge to the summit of Cronus. Stay on the top of the ridge climbing a number of false summits and spires. There are some difficulties that can be easily managed. You may need to pitch out some small sections. The rock quality is marginal.

❖ **Descent – Retrace ascent route.**

- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 3
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings, ice screws, 5 small to medium cams
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 10-13 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – challenging climbing on the buttress and on the NE ridge. Interesting route finding on ascent and descent
- ✓ **Hazards** - rockfall and exposed scrambling on buttress and upper ridge, avalanche possibility on W slopes below Cronus/Neptune col.

➤ Dolphin Pk 3026m/9925' UTM - 229491

FA - S Slopes - August 2, 1951 (Peter Aspinwall, Fred Dunn, Tom Nevison, Thayer Scudder)

❖ **GMC Route** – climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Head E up the glacier and into the col. Take the right or S col, which is slightly higher than the pass proper and the start of the Rhea N ridge. Descend onto the Misty Glacier working around the bergschrund on the SE side. Once below the second crevassed section traverse to the E side of the Misty Glacier to avoid the heavily slotted steep roll on the upper glacier. Ascend steep snow/ice to a patch of scree below the summit snow patch. Climb the snow to and fall a short section of rock to the summit.

❖ **Descent – Retrace ascent route**

- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of four

- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, long slings for t-slots
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 9 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – non-technical climb covering a nice variety of terrain. Good views of the Rockies and the Halia/Pluto area
- ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall on W glacier, crevasses on Misty Glacier side

GMC Route- New Route - SW Ridge -Aug 7, 2002 (Helmut Microys, Michael Rosenberger, Paul Rosenberger, Tim Maryon)

- ❖ Route - climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Head E up the glacier and into the N or left and lowest col. Descend slightly onto the S face of Porpoise. Climb any number or easy slabs, flakes or cracks ranging from 5.2-5.6 to gain the summit. Rappel (7 meters) off the N end of Porpoise and into notch. Traverse left or S around a small tower to a protected boulder stance. Climb the next tower (5.4) on ridge proper. Follow along snow arêtes and small towers to the summit of Dolphin. There is a variety of 4th and low 5th class climbing with some exposure and good protection
- ❖ **Descent - follow normal Dolphin descent route**
 - ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of three
 - ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, long slings for t-slots, 3-4 small camalots, 3-4 medium nuts
 - ✓ **Length of Trip** – 9 hours
 - ✓ **Highlights** – nice positions, good rock, some exposure, exciting free hanging rappel off the end Porpoise
 - ✓ **Hazards** – soft snow on arête could present avalanche hazard, crevasses on the Misty Glacier, rockfall on W side

➤ Priapus Peak -2952m/9683' UTM - 184450

FA - N Glacier - July 31st, 1989 (David Lemon, Pamela Olson, Fred Theissen)

- ❖ **GMC Route** – head down Bigmouth Ck until you reach a small lake on the true left of the creek. Contour around cliff bands until you reach a well traveled game trail. Aim for the W end of the ridge that runs from Neptune and ascend trail until the toe of the glacier is visible. Cross drainage and scramble up 4th class ledges to small buttress. Follow buttress to the toe of the glacier and easily access the glacier. Cruise across the glacier to the base of Priapus. Scramble up the snow slopes working left around the large slots and up to the ridge. Follow the ridge traveling SW and easy scrambling leads you to the summit.
- ❖ **Descent –Retrace ascent route.**
 - ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 4
 - ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons,
 - ✓ **Length of Trip** – 9-12 hours

- ✓ **Highlights** – non-technical route with great views of Celeano and the peaks of the Argonaut group.
- ✓ **Hazards** – crevasses on the middle part of the Escarpment Glacier

➤ Porpoise Peak -2943m/9653' - UTM - 226486

FA - Unknown -

❖ **GMC Route** – climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Head E up the glacier and into the N or left and lowest col. Descend slightly onto the S face of Porpoise. Climb any number or easy slabs, flakes or cracks ranging from 5.2-5.6 to gain the summit.

❖ **Descent –Retrace ascent route.**

- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 4
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings for t-slots, 3-4 small camalots, 3-4 medium nuts
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 7-9 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – nice positions, good rock, some exposure, and lots of different routes on the rock portion. A GMC favorite.
- ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall on the W side approach

➤ Rhea Pk -2939m/9640' - UTM - 224282

FA - SW Ridge - August 6, 1950 (Alex Faberge, Norman Goldstein, Donald Hubbard, Arnold Wexler)

❖ **GMC Route** – climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Head directly across the glacier and ascend a steep, 100 meter snow pitch that is up to 45°. Work left to right around a large bergschrund that dissects the middle of the slope then directly up to the ridge crest avoiding the overhanging cornice. Follow the W ramp and scramble to the summit.

❖ **Descent –Retrace ascent route** to the top of the steep snow pitch. Descend on the left or S side of the rocky ridge. Work down the glacier staying close to the ridge there by avoiding rockfall from the N side of Neptune. Once the glacier flattens out cross high and directly underneath the N wall of Neptune. Quickly contour and then descend the snow ramp to the scree slope. Follow the scree to the moraine that leads back to camp.

- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 4
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings for t-slots,
- ✓ **Length of Trip** – 7-9 hours

- ✓ **Highlights** – shorter day, exposed and steep snow pitch is fun, easy climb
- ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall on W side approach, difficult to protect party above the bergschrund if one chooses to work up the left side of the steep pitch. Crevasses and early season avalanche danger on the glacier below Neptune. Definite rockfall danger underneath the NW buttress of Neptune, it is imperative that one moves quickly through this area. Not recommended if there has been any recent precipitation

GMC Route- New Route - N Ridge -July 9th, 2002 (T Palechuk, M Peters, T Johnson, A Villeneuve, D Austin, M Raven

- ❖ Route - climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Take the right or S col, which is slightly higher than the pass proper and the start of the Rhea N ridge. Ascend the very loose, chossy N ridge. The rock is of very poor quality, loose and difficult to get any decent protection in. It is relatively easy climbing with 2 or 3 difficult small sections. It is not a recommended route
- ❖ **Descent –Retrace ascent route** to the top of the steep snow pitch. Descend on the left or S side of the rocky ridge. Work down the glacier staying close to the ridge there by avoiding rockfall from the N side of Neptune. Once the glacier flattens out cross high and directly underneath the N wall of Neptune. Quickly contour and then descend the snow ramp to the scree slope. Follow the scree to the moraine that leads back to camp.
 - ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 3
 - ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings for t-slots,
 - ✓ **Length of Trip** – 10-12 hours
 - ✓ **Highlights** – few, some may like the challenge of negotiating vertical slag
 - ✓ **Hazards** – rockfall on W side approach and N ridge, difficult to protect party on N ridge. Crevasses and early season avalanche danger on the glacier below Neptune. Definite rockfall danger underneath the NW buttress of Neptune, it is imperative that one moves quickly through this area. Not recommended if there has been any recent precipitation

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➤ Nereus Pk - 2910m/9550' - UTM - 173459

FA - N Glacier - July 31, 1989 (Kim Kratky, Peter Mclver)

- ❖ **GMC Route** - head down Bigmouth Ck until you reach a small lake on the true left of the creek. Contour around cliff bands until you reach a well traveled game trail.

Aim for the W end of the ridge that runs from Neptune and ascend trail until the toe of the glacier is visible. Cross drainage and scramble up 4th class ledges to small buttress. Follow buttress to the toe of the glacier and easily access the glacier. Descend slightly and head directly to the large serac field and eventually on to the NNE ridge of Nereus. The serac field is easily negotiated but not advisable if the temperatures rise. It is much longer but possible to work SE, around and then above the serac field. In either case climb onto the NE arête. Follow the snow arête, which becomes quite narrow and exposed near the summit.

❖ **Descent** – scramble down scree on the E side until the angle on the snow slope backs off. Descend the snow slopes, being aware of 3 or 4 large slots that cross the width of the slope. Head NE across the flat part of the glacier, climb slightly until you have cleared the heavily slotted steep rollover. Once you are able to see down the length of the slope descend onto the lower glacier and then retrace the regular ascent route.

- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 4
- ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings for t-slots, 2 ice screws
- ✓ **Length of Trip** –9-11 hours
- ✓ **Highlights** – plenty of variety on climb, exciting and exposed route through the seracs, very aesthetic and exposed route on summit arête
- ✓ **Hazards** – difficult to protect on the snow arête, serac fall is possible particular if weather is warm

➤ Halia Pk - 2778m/9112' - UTM - 240480

FA - E Ridge - August 8, 1950 (Peter Aspinwall, Fred Dunn, Tom Nevison, Thayer Scudder)

❖ **GMC Route** - climb E along Bigmouth Ck aiming towards Porpoise Pk. Stay on the N side of the W ridge of Porpoise. Ascend low angle glacier beside the ridge. Climb through slot in ridge (this is not visible from below but works well), and contour across low angled snow and ice until you reach the glacier that leads to Rhea Pass. Head E up the glacier and into the col. Take the right or S col, which is slightly higher than the pass proper and the start of the Rhea N ridge. Descend onto the Misty Glacier working around the bergschrund on the SE side. Descend and then cross the Misty Glacier to the NW ridge. A small bit of low 5th class climbing will lead you to the ridge proper. Follow the ridge to the summit.

- ❖ **Descent** – Retrace ascent route
- ✓ **Party Size** – rope teams of 4
 - ✓ **Equipment Required** – helmet, ice axe, harness, crampons, long slings for t-slots, 3-4 small camalots
 - ✓ **Length of Trip** –9-11 hours
 - ✓ **Highlights** – plenty of variety on climb, interesting route finding on NW ridge, marginal rock
 - ✓ **Hazards** – crevasses on Misty Glacier, rockfall on W side approach, difficult to protect 5th class climbing on Halia summit