

## Anticipation (M6+ WI3, 400m)

**Location:** Grotto Mountain, Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park AB

**Base Elevation & Aspect:** 1830m, Southwest facing

**FA:** P1-4: Nick Baggaley, Greg Barrett, Gavin McNamara. P5-13: Nick Baggaley, Greg Barrett, January 2-June 30, 2023

**Approach:** Park at the Rat's Nest Cave parking off of Highway 1A east of Canmore as for the Playground, Alcatraz and El Dorado (51.0523°N, -115.2565°E). Hike up the trail at the west end of the lot, up to the power line. Follow the trail west along the power line into the trees, heading northwest around the Burnco gravel pit and eventually following an old road to a cairn at the top of a steep hill. Take a trail on the right up through the trees to a drainage, and follow trails along the drainage past signage for the Playground and Apocalypse Cave. From here, head up the creekbed, and at its head hike up a steep slope to the back of the amphitheatre. Continue up and right along the back wall to the highest point, below a small roof and right of a thin ice flow at the top of the bowl (51.0737°N, -115.2667°E). 1-1.5 hours.

**Gear:** Nuts, cams from #0.2-#4 BD with doubles from #0.3-#3. A few pins and a #5 may be used, but are not required. 2x 60m ropes are essential, either a single and tag, or half ropes (recommended). 2-6 screws ranging from 7-13cm (super stubby to yellow).

### **Rockfall Note:**

In addition to the typical rockfall associated with any winter climbing route, Anticipation is subject to natural rockfall from a gully feature above the route. This threat is mostly present from the end of the approach until reaching the base of the wall below pitch 3. From pitch 3 onward, the overhanging nature of the terrain largely shelters it until P11, at which point the climbing line is right of and above this gully.

We have observed that under dry conditions, or with full cold snow coverage above, natural rockfall is minimal. However, after rain, or when snow is melting due to temperatures or solar input, notable natural rockfall can result. Take this into account when considering climbing this route.

### **Pitch Breakdown:**

#### **Pitch 1: WI3 30m**

At the top of the slope leading to the back of the amphitheatre, climb a thin vein of ice 2m right of a right-facing corner. Clip 3 bolts, then pull onto a snow ledge. From here, climb the big, low-angle flow of ice protecting on ice screws to a chain anchor at the next ledge.

#### **Pitch 2: M3 WI3 55m**

Head left from the belay, and walk up a snow slope to a lower-angled groove. Climb thin but very low-angle ice, protecting on pitons, to the first bolt on the left. Stem up between good rock edges to where the ice thickens and steepens into a thin groove. Tap gently up the ice at the back of the groove, clipping bolts along the way. At the top of the groove, make a few rock moves onto a small ledge, then climb a short step of ice to gain the bottom of a big snow- and scree-covered ledge. Walk up and right to a chain anchor on a boulder at the top of the ledge.

#### **Pitch 3: M5 25m**

Move the belay 15m up to a bolted anchor at the base of the massive vertical to overhanging wall. From this point, step right into the main left-facing corner. Climb up and slightly left to where the corner meets another, right-facing, corner in a roof. Pull the first roof, and torque leftward along the break below a second roof to another right-facing corner. Stem and torque up the corner past the second roof, and continue up the corner, stepping left at the top to a small ledge and a chain anchor.

#### **Pitch 4: M5+ 35m**

This pitch can have significant rope drag - be sure to extend gear as needed. Walk left along the ledge to an easy-looking crack. Climb the crack with some technical tooling, stemming and a few fiddly gear placements to where it steepens. Step left to a small ledge, then reach back right into a cave below a roof. Carefully hook up a series of thin flakes, and pull the roof on the left with good hooks and gear in the crack. Clip a bolt, and climb up then right past another bolt into a chimney behind a huge loose-

looking but solid flake. Wriggle up to the top of the flake, then climb past another 2 bolts and loose blocks to a ledge. Walk leftwards along the ledge, making a few moves around bulges, to a chain anchor in the back of an icy cave.

**Pitch 5: M6+ 35m**

Climb awkwardly up and right from the ice to a traverse ledge below the large roof. Walk rightward to where the roof ends, and clip a high bolt in the corner. Hook and torque gently up through choss to a stance at the base of a right-facing corner. Climb up gradually-improving rock past a few booming flakes and a bolt to another stance, then launch up the sustained but fun corner to the overlap. Hook up the crack past the overlap, then traverse out right above the hanging flake into crumbly kitty litter with surprisingly good hooks and good feet. Clip a bolt, breathe, then traverse hard leftward along the line of 4 bolts to gain a ledge system. Pass the chain anchor, and continue left around the prow to a better stance at a 2-bolt anchor on the ledge.

**Pitch 6: M4+ 25m**

Just left of the belay, climb a short, powerful and deceptively overhung crack to the top of the large block. Clip the bolt with a long draw, then traverse leftwards along the ledge placing gear where it can be found. Make a committing move around a prow, then clip a bolt before climbing up and left on a flaky ramp. Where the holds run out at the top of the ramp, pass one final bolt and mantle up and left onto a dirty ledge. Climb up the corner a short way to a loose pinnacle with a bolt anchor above.

**Pitch 7: M5 20m**

Step right from the belay on small edges, then make a committing move up with good gear behind a small flake to a bolt below the roof. Awkwardly traverse right past another bolt to a stance on the slab, then balance upwards back to the roof and more gear. Keep going straight up the crack with good, if intermittent gear. Pass a bolt and continue up the widening crack to a poor stance left of the corner on a slabby ledge with a chain anchor.

**Pitch 8: M5 25m**

From the slabby ledge, step back into the corner and follow the crack up and right along the slabby wall with thin, technical foot placements. In several places, use features on the steep wall to the left of the crack to pull past constrictions, and continue to a bolt at the base of a bombay chimney. Thrutch up the chimney past another bolt, and exit right to a thin foot ledge just below the top of the slab. Clip a bolt, and traverse tenuously on narrow feet with thin rock climbing moves past another 2 bolts to a chain anchor.

**Pitch 9: M5 18m**

Climb up the steep overlap just right of the anchor, and pull past 2 bolts into a groove on the prow. Mantle up and out of the groove to a stance on a sloping slab, then step down and right around a fin on thin feet with a crack overhead for gear. Make an incredibly airy stem move across to the right of the crack, and mantle up again above hundreds of meters of air to a bolt at the base of an easy corner. Climb easily up to a large flat ledge and a chain anchor.

**Pitch 10: M6+ 25m**

Delicately hook up to the first overhang and a bolt. Pull through a groove left of the loose-looking but solid block to a thin ledge on top. Walk right, protecting in a thin left-facing corner then step right and up to a bolt. Reach high and clip another, then step down to traverse right to a prominent left-facing corner. Hook delicately up the corner and face until able to step right and snag another loose-looking but solid block on the arete. A few technical moves lead up to the top of the corner, then make a few big pulls through the roof to get established on the wall above. One more move gains a semi-hanging belay a little above the lip.

**Pitch 11: M5- 35m**

Hook up the corner right of the semi-hanging belay, until able to hook left past a bolt to a left-trending crack beneath an overlap. Hook and torque up the crack to the loose-looking flake at its left end, and reach high into more flakes above. Climb up a short left-facing corner crack to a small ledge. Clip a bolt above, then step left past loose flakes to a lower-angle wide crack. Pull up the slab and back into steeper ground, heading straight up thin cracks and edges to another bolt. Mantle up onto a ledge, then make a couple last exposed moves to a chain anchor on the left side of another, larger ledge.

**Pitch 12: M6 35m**

From the ledge right of the belay, climb up blocky solid ground to the base of a thin corner crack on a faint prow. Torque gingerly up the parallel crack, pasting feet onto the slab on the left. After a strenuous 5m, clip a bolt on the right and make easier moves up to another bolt above a thin ledge. From here,

either make a few exposed rock moves out left on good hands and feet to a gravel ledge, or make big moves straight up to an edge and step left to reach the same place. Above the ledge, climb straight up improbably solid flakes with good hooks to where the angle steepens, and continue up similar but harder moves to a bolt. Climb right up easier ground to the anchor.

**Pitch 13: M5+ 35m**

Step back left from the belay and up onto a large block, clipping a bolt overhead. Hook and torque up the flaring crack past a couple of small roofs, using great feet on the slab to gain a small ledge below an overlap. Place some high gear, then pull up into a splitter crack with thin feet that quickly run out. At the top, continue left around a small roof then up the widening crack to another thin ledge. Step up through the overlap above, then continue through one final steeper section to ring bolts at the top of the wall!

**Descent:** The route can be descended using two 60m ropes from any point except the top of pitch 6.

Below the top of P8, rappel back to the P4 belay, then descend straight to the snow ledge at the bottom of the wall. Descent from the top of P6 requires leading the pitch in reverse, but one 40m rappel descends from the top of P7 back to the top of P5.

From the top of P8, rappel down and right using directionals to the rappel line. At or above the top of P9, rappel the route back to the station at the top of that pitch in the middle of the Great Roof.

Rappelling P10 requires clipping directionals in the roof to descend. A rappel line descends straight down the wall from the pitch 9 anchor, and 3 rappels (40m, 55m, 40m) lead to the snow ledge. From here, rappel back down the first 2 ice pitches.

Note: Due to rockfall hazard, it is recommended not to descend past the snow ledge until dusk, or if this is done, to descend quickly through the 'firing line' of the lower 2 pitches.