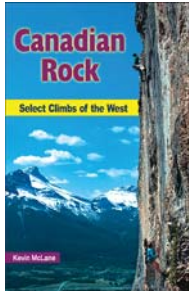


# West Coast Ice

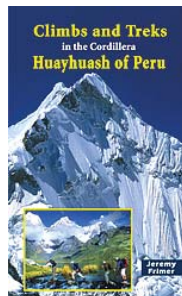
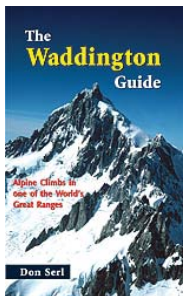
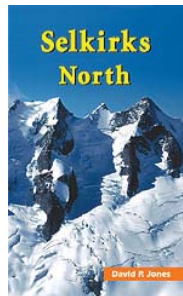
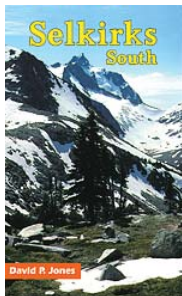
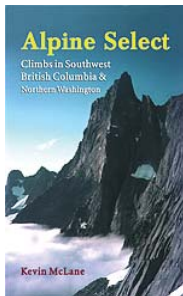
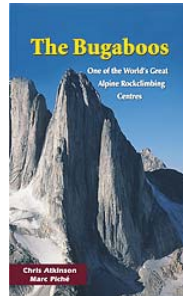
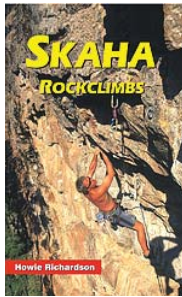
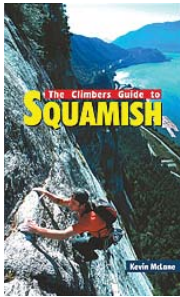
**FREE  
PREVIEW**

**Don Serl**

**The Climbers Guide**



This full-colour guide brings together into a single collection 1300 of the great rockclimbs of Western Canada, from Squamish to Lake Louise to the Ghost River Valley, world-famous crags, popular classics, alpine crags, and little known jewels in one of the most beautiful regions of the world. Over 70 climbing areas are described, with over 800 topos and photos covering sport, trad, long climbs and crags.



# West Coast Ice

## The Climbers Guide

### Free Preview Edition

*West Coast Ice* is the classic, comprehensive guide from Don Serl to winter ice climbing in southwestern British Columbia, detailing climbs north and east of Vancouver, through Squamish and the Fraser Valley to the finest and largest climbing centre around Lillooet.

This free 36 page PDF Preview Edition is a sampler of what the full book contains, showing the page detailing, much of the extensive prologue, and galleries presenting how the climbs and topos are presented. If you would like to purchase the full 228 page guidebook, please visit us at [www.highcol.ca](http://www.highcol.ca).

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Craig McGee and Brad White  
on Prophet's Wall.  
photo Jia Condon

# West Coast Ice

Don Serl

Elaho Press  
Squamish, B.C.

## West Coast Ice

Second edition

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Design, editing, and production: Kevin McLane.

**Front:** Graham Rowbotham on *Red Wall Wanderers* photo Janez Ales.

**Back:** Chris Romeskie on *Farmer Finestone* photo Jia Condon  
Dave Burdick wading the Bridge River photo Lauren Campbell

**Page 2:** Craig McGee and Brad White on *Prophet's Wall*. photo Jia Condon

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### Disclaimer

Mountaineering is a hazardous activity carrying a significant risk of personal injury or death and should only be undertaken with a full understanding of all inherent risks. This publication is only a guide to the climbs, a composite of opinion from many sources, some of which may not be accurate, and the information contained may not reflect the circumstances of a particular climb on a given day. Use of this guide must always be conducted with the required experience and good judgement necessary for safety.

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It is painfully obvious to anyone who spends a 'winter' in southwestern BC that this region is not the ice climbing capital of the universe. By mid-December, however, arctic air masses on the Interior side of the Coast Mountains are rapidly freezing a vast number of weeps, runnels, and waterfalls into an impressive array of winter routes. And in one winter out of every two or three, a great continental high pressure zone forces frigid air to spill over the mountains and pour out through the valleys, and the Coast experiences real winter.

For a small group of devotees, these relatively rare conditions are the stimulus to a frenzy of activity: sorting and sharpening gear, early morning starts, bruised knuckles, damp clothes, and late drives home. Ice climbing season has arrived, and every day is precious.

In fact, to be a keen ice climber on the Coast is to endure virtually endless frustration, interrupted occasionally by a few weeks of nirvana. When the big freezes do come, the conditions are magnificent, and the scope for climbs almost limitless. This is not the time for a low-key approach – grab what you can while it lasts; all those routes will soon be on the ground!

This guidebook is intended to increase the pleasure available during our short winters. Numerous day-trip routes are to be found close to Vancouver, particularly around Squamish and Whistler, and out the Fraser Valley to Hope and just beyond. For weekenders there is almost unlimited scope in the country surrounding Lillooet. In fact, this guidebook contains 436 named routes plus more than 50 peripheral formations, which is plenty enough to keep even the most active ice-o-holic content for many seasons.

§

**8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Between February 1991 and summer 1993, Bruce Kay and I pulled together a guidebook to the ice climbs within weekend reach of Vancouver. Published late in 1993, *West Coast Ice* contained descriptions of 136 routes, which we thought at the time was an amazing amount of route variety for the 'Wet Coast'.

A decade of activity later, *West Coast Ice 2* hits the streets with 436 routes between its covers, well over three times as many climbs. The amount of activity has been a great surprise – I certainly had no idea of the volume of new climbs done in the previous decade until I got well into the project of updating the info. My first thank you then, is for all of you who have devoted your energies to exploring the icy possibilities of southwestern BC, and who have been so generous in sharing information with me to enable this new edition to come into being. In fact, more than 30 people have each contributed 6 or more routes in the area, so despite the inevitable frustrations, Coastal ice climbing seems healthy and vigorous.

A big thank you must go again to Bruce Kay, for the impetus and energy devoted to the original edition, which provided a superb foundation from which to build. Bruce continued to be a key source for route clarification, topo layouts, and details throughout the process of pulling together this second edition.

Lyle Knight was totally remarkable in his contribution of information, his patience with my many questions, and his ability to pass along cogent, concise, accurate knowledge. Without his help, heaven knows where I'd have had some of you climbing and camping 'round Lillooet.

Jia Condon occupies a similar role in the Squamish-Whistler-Cayoosh area, and he gets further afield than that too. In fact, Jia is the most prolific creator of new routes in the area covered by this guide, and without his enthusiastic (and surprisingly often, unbidden) participation, this project could not have reached the degree of completion that you hold in your hands.

The list of folks who I queried is very long, eventually including at least one of the participants in almost every first ascent listed in this book. Since that list is a couple hundred people long, I'll not list every person I spoke to, but without exception everyone was helpful and enthusiastic about the project. Thanks for all the time spent on the phone and e-mail, all of you.

Several people proofed various generations of the manuscript. Thanks to Lyle Knight, Anders Ourom, and Drew Brayshaw for their sharp eyes and minds; every comment made the final version better.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 9**

I owe a major debt of gratitude to Aaron Clements for his creation of the original of the photo-topo for Husume Buttress, which Jia Condon and Bruce Kay added to and helped perfect in detail. Jia was also invaluable in helping clarify which routes are which amidst the plethora of ice formations in North Joffre Creek.

Many people dug through bottom drawers and dusty boxes to dig out photo material. Thank you to Janez Ales, Paul Baker, Drew Brayshaw, Tom Bridge, Dave Burdick, Loren Campbell, John Chilton, Chris Christie, Aaron Clements, Jia Condon, Phil Fortier, Steve Hargn, Dave Humphreys, Jens Klubberud, Lyle Knight, Kevin McLane, Ade Miller, Kelly Mortensen, Shaun Neufeld, Adam Palmer, Jordan Peters, Mark Price, Graham Rowbotham, Stan Sabourin, Jason Sinnes, and Iain Stewart-Patterson for supplementing my photos and making this a more informative and interesting book.

Kevin McLane also once again deserves immense respect and thanks for turning a mass of words and photos into a logical, readable guidebook. His skills, abilities, and organizational focus continue to grow with each project, and better books result. And the guide's cover owes much to Angela Muellers' fine sense of design.

Finally, I once again must thank my wife, Sue, and my kids, Ashley and Graham, for their patience with my time stolen from them, spent at the keyboard and out in the hills. I count myself extremely fortunate to have the 'space', tolerance, and understanding which enables me to do all this.

Don Serl

November 2004

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Routes are described in the order in which they are reached from Vancouver, first north from Vancouver along Highway 99 to Squamish, Whistler, and Pemberton, with branching continuations to Mount Currie, D'Arcy, and North Joffre Creek.

Starting again from Vancouver, there is a side-trip south of the border to Mount Baker, then routes are described east out the Fraser Valley to Hope. This is followed by climbs beyond Hope along Highway 3 and Highway 5. The pattern of description then follows Highway 1 north through the Fraser and Thompson canyons as far as Cache Creek.

The final sections cover the best climbing in the guide, centered on the small town of Lillooet. Included are Marble Canyon (northeast), the Cayoosh River canyon (southwest), Seton Lake (west), and the Bridge River canyon (northwest).

### Maps

An overall regional map appears on page 1, and there are three section maps. **Pemberton (p70)** covers Whistler north to D'Arcy; **Hope (p104)** covers the Sumallo, Fraser Canyon, Fraser Valley and Coquihalla areas; and **Lillooet (p148)** covers Marble Canyon, the Duffey Lake Road, Seton Lake and Bridge River areas.

### Accessibility

Most climbs in this guidebook lie in a narrow band of accessibility, within easy reach of major year-round roads that penetrate the sprawling mass of mountains that blankets southwestern BC. A few are deep enough into the backcountry to require snowmobiles for practical access, and are noted as such in the text.

### Disclaimer

Some of the climbs in this guide have received few if any repeat ascents, so be warned that the information given is no better than the memories and opinions of the first ascensionists, which in some cases leaves much to be desired.

### Distances and Waypoints

Distances given in this guide (like those given by automobile odometers, particularly over longer distances) are somewhat approximate. Thus '2½km' means 'more than 2km but less than 3km'. In the few cases where distances are given to the nearest tenth of a kilometre, a relatively exact measure is implied, usually from an accurate nearby waypoint, often a highway mileage post.

### Length of Climbs

The length of the climbs is given as the rope-runout length in metres, *not* vertical height gain. Note that this is a change of practice from the first edition of *West Coast Ice*.

### Steepness

Steepness is easy to overestimate. 80° to 85° ice feels vertical, and truly vertical ice soars back over your head disturbingly when you attack it. An attempt has been made to remain realistic with angles mentioned in the guide, but most claims are almost certain to be exaggerated.

### Left and Right

With very rare exceptions (which are noted), left and right are indicated as perceived when facing in towards the route (i.e., climber's left and right). This is usually true for the starts of descents as well (e.g., "traverse right, then climb down a rib" means traverse to *climber's* right).

### Quality Ratings

A list of some the best and most sought-after routes is included. See pages 20–21. A star system has not been applied.

### Cross-Referencing Photos and Text

Where relevant photos are available, the far right side of the route-line text shows the page number as: **211** Photo captions also show the reference numbers of displayed routes for referring back to text.

## 14 WEATHER AND CONDITIONS

The mean daily minimum temperature in the Coastal areas of southwestern BC barely falls to below freezing in January and the mean daily maximum bottoms out at about 5°C. Except in exceptional circumstances, it is simply not cold enough in the areas close to the sea for ice formation.

Move inland or gain altitude and the story changes, but with qualifiers. The Whistler-to-Pemberton corridor, which used to offer consistent climbing at areas like Soo Bluffs, now seldom comes ‘in’. The same is true of the Hope-to-Yale area. Recent winters have seen a trend towards limitation of a climbing ‘season’ (as opposed to a few days on which routes may be well enough frozen to be climbed) to the Duffey Lake road, Bridge River road, and Marble Canyon areas centered on Lillooet. Luckily, there are now more routes in those areas than in the whole of the first edition of *West Coast Ice*.

Climbing generally starts late in December and continues roughly till the end of February, although a few routes tucked into particularly shady corners may remain climbable until the end of March.

### Temperature

A considerable variation in daily highs and lows is found within this guidebook area. The only certainty is that the further inland from Vancouver (and/or higher) you go, the colder it gets. The coldest area covered, Lillooet, has average highs and lows of 5°C and -2°C in November, dropping to -2° and -9°C in January, and rising to 10°C and -1°C by March. Whistler area temperatures, being more Coastal influenced, will usually be a little milder than Lillooet. The temperatures up in the North Shore mountains above Vancouver vary wildly, but are usually below freezing most of the time in mid-winter.

Good weather forecasts can be obtained from Environment Canada. See: [www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca)

### The Effect of Altitude on Temperature

Note that Lillooet readings are taken at the airport, which is just southeast of town and about 125m higher [400m altitude]. Most of the climbs lie at somewhat higher elevations yet [600m–1200m altitude], and temperature falls 6°C–8°C per thousand metres altitude, so expect the temperatures encountered on the routes to be 2°C to 6°C colder than in town.

## WEATHER AND CONDITIONS // GEAR 15

### Precipitation

Lillooet is the driest area covered by the guide, with precipitation on only 9 to 11 days per month between November and March. This compares favourably to the Coastal areas, with 16 to 22 days of precipitation per month in that period. Snowfall amounts around Lillooet are low, rising from only 6cm in November to a peak of 23cm in January, then falling dramatically to only 4cm in February and 1cm in March. It can rain too, but just 16mm to 27mm per month. As you might expect, snowfall is considerable in the Coastal mountains. Whistler boasts 79cm in November, rising to 184cm in January, the heaviest snowfall month.

### Hours Of Daylight

There is never enough daylight in the winter. Around Lillooet there are only 8 hours between sunrise and sunset at the New Year, rising to 11 hours by the end of February. Start early and carry a headlamp.

## GEAR

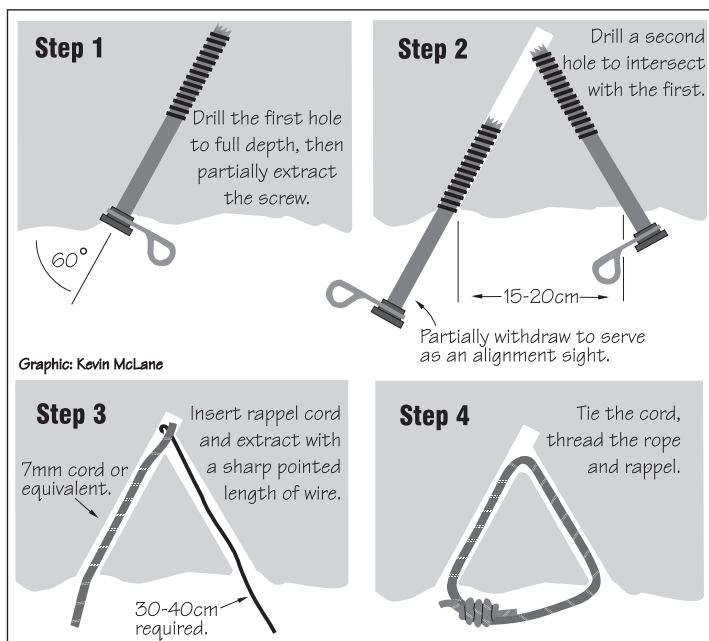
**Headlamp:** A good headlamp will save many a long, cold night out. Modern multi-LED lamps provide plenty of light for uncomplicated descents of the route climbed, but are generally not powerful enough for efficient route-finding in valley forest that might have to be navigated between the route and the road. If using a non-LED lamp, log the hours used onto a piece of masking tape on the battery, and carry a spare once you get beyond about half the expected burn time. Remember that cold will greatly decrease the power output of any battery. Make sure you have a spare bulb.

**Rap prep:** Carry 10 to 20 metres of ½ inch to ¾ inch tape or 7mm cord for rappels, and a knife to cut it with. I’d like also to encourage climbers to carry 2 or 3 rappel rings or mallions, so that the common rappel points don’t get unnecessarily weakened by repeated rope-pulls. You’ll also need an Abalakov hooker for setting V-thread anchors when trees are not available. See page 14.

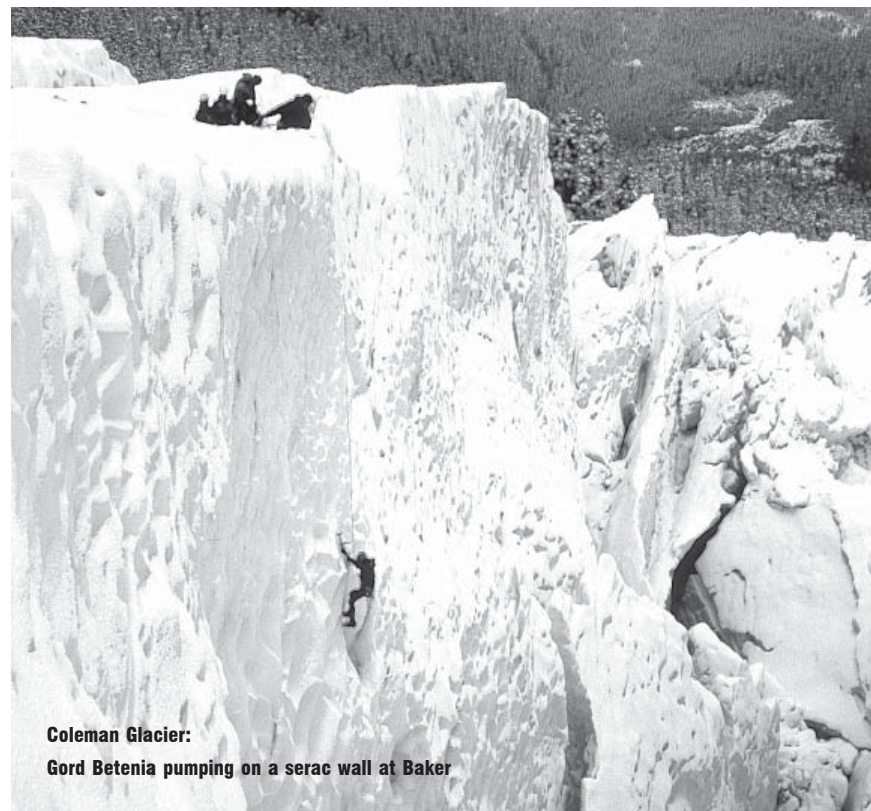
**16 THE ABALAKOV**

Many routes can be descended by an easy walk-off; others can simply be rappelled from trees along the side. In many cases, though, rappels from the ice must be arranged. The Abalakov V-thread is the anchor of choice for these situations. The concept is simple: drill a hole with an ice screw angled horizontally at about  $60^\circ$  to the surface of the ice, drill a second hole 15cm to 20cm away angled back across to intersect the first, blow the holes clear, and thread and tie cord or sling through the holes. Threaded with 7mm cord, the anchor tests at 1000kg or more, in good, solid, non-aerated, cold ice with adequate span between the holes.

Two tricks ease the task: leave the first screw part way into its hole while you start the second screw to give something to aim at, and carry a 30 to 40cm piece of soft wire or a similar section of coathanger (or a commercially available ‘hooker’) with a sharp hook at its end to snag and extract the cord from the back of the holes.

**MOUNT BAKER SERACS 17**

The easily accessible Coleman Glacier on Mount Baker has proven over the years to be particularly suitable for off-season ice climbing practise. From Vancouver, the quickest route is out the Highway 1 freeway to Abbotsford, then south on Highway 11 (Exit 92) to cross the border at Sumas. Turn left at the south side of town and follow the Mount Baker Ski Area signs east and south 18km on State Highway 547 to State Highway 542 at Kendall, then continue east 17km to the village of Glacier. The Public Service Center (a.k.a. The Ranger Station) lies just east of the hamlet. Turn south (right) onto Forest Service Road 39, 1km to the east, and follow it about 13km to the trail, roughly 2 hours from Vancouver, depending on traffic and the border. An easy walk leads to the Coleman Glacier in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 hours, with many possibilities for a few hours of fun seracing.



**18 HAZARDS**

Most of the routes in this guide are fairly safe from objective dangers, especially in the dry country near Lillooet. The typical Coastal snowpack seldom contains instabilities which persist for long periods of time, unlike the Rockies. High avalanche hazard is generally associated with times of rapidly accumulating new snow and/or temperatures rising to and above freezing.

That said, **attention must be paid to avalanche hazard on all ice routes.** Observations on the approach and while climbing are important for assessing snow stability, and remember to look up. Even on a fine, clear day, ridge-top winds may be transporting snow into an unseen bowl above your gully, or the sun may be baking a quivering slab while you shiver in the shadows below.

Nor does an avalanche need to be large to do damage. Even a small sluff can knock a climber off a pitch, with disastrous results.

**Ice-fall**

◆ Most of the time, on most routes, ice-fall is a greater hazard than avalanches. A chunk of ice does not have to be large or to fall far to do serious harm.

◆ Above-freezing air temperatures and strong direct sunlight are the primary causes of naturally-triggered ice-fall. More common is a constant barrage of debris knocked down by another climber, usually your partner. While a skilled ice climber will dislodge far less ice than a neophyte, some ice-fall must be expected and planned for on any route.

◆ Minimize your exposure, and protect yourself by wearing a helmet. Choose a line which uses the terrain to direct falling ice away from those below. Belay off to the side and under sheltering overhangs whenever possible.

◆ Multiple parties can seldom safely share the same ice line. It is bad form verging on negligence to traverse-in above another party. Similarly, it is foolhardiness to willingly expose yourself to ice-fall from a party already established on a route above you.

**Frozen Slopes**

Several serious accidents have occurred in the Lillooet area as a result of slips on steep, frozen, snow-free hillsides. Consider carrying and wearing a pair of old 'beater' crampons for approaches to and descents from routes like *Synchronicity* and *Salmon Stakes*.

**USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES 19**

Listed below are some phone numbers and websites of use to ice climbers. The information is current as of autumn 2004, but may change over time.

**Environment Canada (voice recordings)**

Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Whistler Forecast 604-664-9010  
Winter Mountain Weather Forecast 604-664-9021

**Environment Canada (Website)**

BC city forecasts: [www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca) Buttons on map for Vancouver and Whistler; drop-down menu list for Pemberton, Chilliwack, Hope, Lillooet, Clinton (Marble Canyon), etc. 24 Hour Trends Graph can be useful.

**The Weather Network (Website)**

BC city forecasts: [www.weather.ca](http://www.weather.ca)

**Highway Conditions**

604-299-9000, then enter 7623

Website: [www.th.gov.bc.ca](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca); road reports link

**Avalanche Conditions**

1-800-667-1105 to access the Public Avalanche Information Bulletin. This is a recording from the Canadian Avalanche Association which is available between November 15th and April 30th. It is updated three times per week and is most useful for the alpine regions, but includes lower level conditions if they are pertinent.

Website: [www.avalanche.ca](http://www.avalanche.ca); Avalanche Bulletins link.

**RCMP Detachments**

The RCMP coordinate search and rescue operations.

North Vancouver.....	604-985-1311
Squamish.....	604-892-6100
Whistler.....	604-932-3044
Pemberton.....	604-894-6126
Coquitlam.....	604-945-1550
Chilliwack.....	604-792-4611
Agassiz.....	604-796-2211
Hope.....	604-869-7750
Boston Bar.....	604-867-9333
Lytton.....	250-455-2225
Ashcroft (Cache Ck).....	250-453-2216
Lillooet.....	250-256-4244

The cradle of North American waterfall climbing was the Canadian Rockies, and their grading standards have been imported to the Coast reasonably intact. A conscious effort seems to have been made by most first-ascensionists (most of whom have a reasonable amount of Rockies ice experience) to apply 'Rockies' grades comparatively and consistently out here, much in the same way that 'Yosemite' ratings are applied to rock climbs throughout North America.

That being the case, the following technical grades are directly comparable to those of the 2003 edition of *Waterfall Ice*, by Joe Josephson. A few routes out here have been given Grade 5+/6-. These are clearly as hard or harder technically than Rockies Grade 6s, but are only 20m or 25m long, thereby lacking the full-on Grade 6 pump factor. While the Rockies grading system allows for routes of this sort to be called 6s if they are of so-called "nasty proportions", it was felt to be more comparably realistic to hold back a bit – superb technical skills are required on these pitches, just as in the Rockies, but the demands on physicality are somewhat diminished.

Ice, unlike rock, does not lend itself well to grading according to the difficulty of the crux alone, not least because of its variability. A grade attempts to answer the question "How hard is it to get up the climb?", and that includes aspects of "how long?", "how steep?", "how bad?", and "how technical?", all integrated into a single number. Add in a real variation of at least half a grade (and perhaps a whole grade) as the condition of the route changes during the season, and it is not surprising that grades are subject to vigorous debate.

Pluses and minuses are sometimes attached to grades (e.g., WI4+) to indicate whether the route typically is a soft-touch, or stiff, within the grade.

R ratings are attached to routes when even expertly placed protection is inadequate, and a long fall and serious injury could result. Most of the routes in this category are thinly iced WI3 and WI4 smears (especially in Squamish): not overly steep, but with little (if any) pro available on the underlying blank, slabby rock.

An X rating is acceptable only if typical ice conditions imply that a ground fall is a distinct possibility, even with expert ability to place protection. Big air-time is always a possibility on a 6, and does not warrant an X unless there is something to hit.

Overall Commitment Grades have not been applied to routes in this guide, almost all of which would be I, II, or III if scaled on the Rockies scheme.

### Technical Ice Grades

- WI1** A straightforward ice-slope up to 50°.
- WI2** An easy waterfall. Consistent 60° to 70° ice, perhaps with a few short sections to about 80°. Good ice, good rests, easy protection, and solid belays.
- WI3** Moderate water-ice. Sustained 70° to 80° ice, often with short near-vertical sections. Usually thick and solid, with good rests, protection, and belays.
- WI4** Challenging climbing. Sustained 75° to 85° ice, usually with short vertical sections (up to about 10m). Reasonable quality ice offering satisfactory protection which may, however, be somewhat awkward and/or strenuous to place. Or (pretty frequent out here on the Coast) less steep but thin, requiring delicate climbing, often with thought-provoking runouts and minimal pro.
- WI5** A long, strenuous pitch with sustained technical difficulties. Continuously near-vertical, less-than-perfect ice, significant difficulties in finding rests and placing protection. Pretty decent gear.
- WI6** A long, technically difficult, physically and mentally challenging, serious pitch. Continuously vertical to overhanging. Poor ice, tricky placements, few resting places, and dubious, difficult-to-place protection.

### Mixed Grades

Modern M-graded dry-tooling routes are very rare in southwestern BC, and the few that do exist are still more 'mixed' than is now usual in Colorado and the Rockies, where long sections of pure dry-tooling are the norm. Descriptions of the type of terrain and/or moves required at each grade level are not possible, but one can say that a given mixed route 'climbs like' a certain rock grade, in terms of difficulty, strenuousness, and technicality. The approximate cross-references are as below (per *Waterfall Ice*, 4th edition):

- M4** = 5.8  
**M5** = 5.9  
**M6** = 5.10  
**M7** = 5.11  
**M8** = 5.11+/5.12-  
**M9** = 5.12+/5.13-  
**M10** = 5.13

**22 RECOMMENDED ROUTES**

These Recommended Routes are the most-rewarding routes in their area, routes which stand out from the crowd. Most are routes with which I have direct personal experience, although a few have made the list on the basis of second-hand reports – on reputation, if you will. Most are quite easily accessible. Any of the listed routes should provide a great day on superb ice in amazing surroundings. Only routes which form consistently have been included, except as indicated, where the route is so fine as to be worth waiting for.

De Pencier .....	The Hose .....	30m .....	WI3 R
De Pencier .....	Mixed TR lines .....	8m–12m .....	M3 to M6
Squamish .....	Shannon Falls (very rarely formed) .....	400m .....	WI2+
Squamish: .....	Olesen Creek A Scottish Tale .....	300m .....	WI3 to WI4R
Cal-Cheak: .....	all routes .....	25m ..	WI2+ to WI4+
Blackcomb: .....	Husume The Conspiracy .....	200m .....	M6
Blackcomb: .....	Husume Twenty-Nine Forever .....	180m .....	5.9/M5+
Blackcomb: .....	Flanks of Phalanx On Ramp .....	160m .....	5.9/M5+
Blackcomb: .....	The Office Another Day at the Office .....	20m .....	WI3+
Blackcomb: .....	The Farm Too Fat to Fly .....	20m .....	WI5/5+
Blackcomb: .....	The Farm Farmer Finestone .....	20m .....	WI5
Blackcomb: .....	The Farm Chasing the Chicken .....	25m .....	M6 to M7
Wedgemount .....	Mystery Roach Hotel .....	25m .....	WI4
Soo Bluffs .....	Entropy .....	120m .....	WI3
Fluffy Rock .....	Green River Thriller .....	150m .....	WI5+/6
Bert and Ed's .....	Mixed TRing .....	15m .....	M3–M5
Green River .....	Blue Moon on Rye .....	180m .....	WI5 5.9 R
Birkenhead .....	Candlewax .....	75m .....	WI3
Birkenhead .....	Class in Session .....	200m .....	WI2-
Birkenhead .....	The Plum .....	300m .....	WI5
Birkenhead .....	Politically Correct Valentine .....	200m .....	WI4
Birkenhead .....	White Blotter .....	130m .....	WI5
North Joffre .....	Schniedelwurz .....	150m .....	WI4
North Joffre .....	Spank Me .....	100m .....	WI4+
North Joffre .....	Things We Do .....	100m .....	WI4/4+
Mount Baker .....	Coleman Glacier seracs (off-season practise) .....		
Mount Baker .....	Pan Dome Falls .....	50m .....	WI3+
Fraser Valley .....	Medusa .....	100m .....	WI4-
Fraser Valley .....	The Mousetrap .....	300m .....	WI3+/4-
Sumallo Bluffs .....	Buszowski–Kippan Route .....	200m .....	WI4
Manning Park .....	Nepopekum Falls .....	55m .....	WI4

**RECOMMENDED ROUTES 23**

Box Canyon .....	Yellow Flow .....	140m.....	WI2
Box Canyon .....	Grim Reaper .....	140m.....	WI4+/5-
Box Canyon .....	Scotch on the Rocks .....	80m.....	WI4+
Fraser Canyon ..	Sailor Bar Sailor Bar Gully .....	120m.....	WI2+
Fraser Canyon ..	Sailor Bar The Riddler .....	110m.....	WI5
Thompson .....	After The Gold Rush .....	45m.....	WI3
Thompson .....	Oregon Jack .....	55m.....	WI3+
Marble Canyon .	Jcy BC .....	150m.....	WI5
Marble Canyon .	Dale's Route .....	30m.....	WI5+/6- M6+
Marble Canyon .	The Dihedral .....	30m.....	WI3+
Marble Canyon .	Waite for Spring .....	35m.....	WI3+ to WI4+R
Marble Canyon .	Deeping Wall .....	40m.....	WI5
Marble Canyon .	First Tier Direct .....	45m.....	WI5
Marble Canyon .	Air Care .....	55m.....	WI4+/5
Marble Canyon ..	Hit and Run .....	35m..	WI4+ 5.9+ or M6
Marble Canyon .	Fender Bender .....	40m.....	WI6
Marble Canyon .	Body Shop .....	20m.....	WI5+/6-
Phair Creek .....	Phair Game .....	45m.....	WI4
Phair Creek .....	A Phairwell To Arms .....	75m.....	WI5+
Phair Creek .....	It's Only Phair .....	65m.....	WI3
Cayoosh .....	Synchronicity .....	300m.....	WI4
Cayoosh .....	Loose Lady .....	150m.....	WI5/5+
Copper Creek ..	Not So Burly .....	55m.....	WI4
Copper Creek ..	Red Wall Wanderers .....	250m.....	WI5
Cayoosh .....	The Tube .....	35m.....	WI3+/4-
Cayoosh .....	Deep Throat .....	100m.....	WI4+
Cayoosh .....	Sergeant Pepper .....	90m.....	WI4
Cayoosh .....	Carl's Berg .....	55m.....	WI5
The Rambles: ..	everything!		
The Closet .....	Closet Secrets .....	80m.....	WI4
Lillooet .....	Honeyman Falls .....	130m.....	WI3
Bridge River .....	Plan B .....	60m.....	WI2
Bridge River .....	Capricorn .....	200m.....	WI5
Bridge River .....	Hell Creek Falls, etc .....	15m–80m .....	WI2 to WI4
Bridge River .....	Old Dogs, New Picks .....	45m.....	WI4
Bridge River .....	Steristrip .....	40m.....	WI4 and/or M5
Bridge River .....	Troubled Waters .....	70m.....	WI4
Bridge River .....	Salmon Stakes .....	250m.....	WI2+
Bridge River .....	Shriek of the Sheep .....	100m.....	WI5+
Bridge River .....	Night N' Gale .....	150m.....	WI4
Bridge River .....	Terzaghi Falls .....	80m .....	WI3
Carpenter Lake .	Cedarvale Falls .....	25m to 40m.....	WI2+ to WI3+

**24 LYTTON–THOMPSON****LYTTON–THOMPSON 25****Oregon Jack**

**273 Oregon Jack** WI3+ 55m **131**  
*Lyle Knight, Garnet Mierau; February 21, 1993*

A superb pitch on a wonderful limestone headwall. Ignored and bypassed for many years, now justifiably very popular, but one party wide, so go early or be prepared to wait. Exit west off Highway 1 onto the Hat Creek road about 30km north of Spences Bridge, 20km south of Cache Creek. Follow this dirt road up Oregon Jack Creek for 12km to a parking pullout at the last ranch in the valley, where the plowing of the road ceases. The top third of the climb is visible across the field in a notch to the left.

Do not cross the field to access the route! The locals have helped rescue injured climbers, volunteered use of their phone in emergencies, jump-started dead batteries, driven people out to civilization when necessary, and so on – and they also have had to spend too much time and energy repairing fences, enough to challenge their innate sense of hospitality, friendliness, and neighbourliness.

The acceptable access is virtually as quick. Walk up the road about 400m to where the fenceline below the road begins to veer away to the left. Follow the fence about 100m, and cross it where it is/was broken-down; a gate and signage are to be installed autumn 2004. Traverse hard left about 50m. Descend about 50m, then angle down and across 100m or so to the bushy drainage from the falls [20–30min].

There is a sheltered belay tree on the left after 40m, or the waterfall can be done as one long pitch, belaying at the lip. Two bolts have been installed on the right wall, but unfortunately they are around the corner just above the falls, hampering communication when belaying, and creating rope-drag when pulling the rappel. Rap from these bolts, or use a tree to the left or an Abalakov.

**Cache Creek**

**274 Sunshine Pillar** WI4 15m  
*Garry Brace, Kris Wild; winter 1997-98*

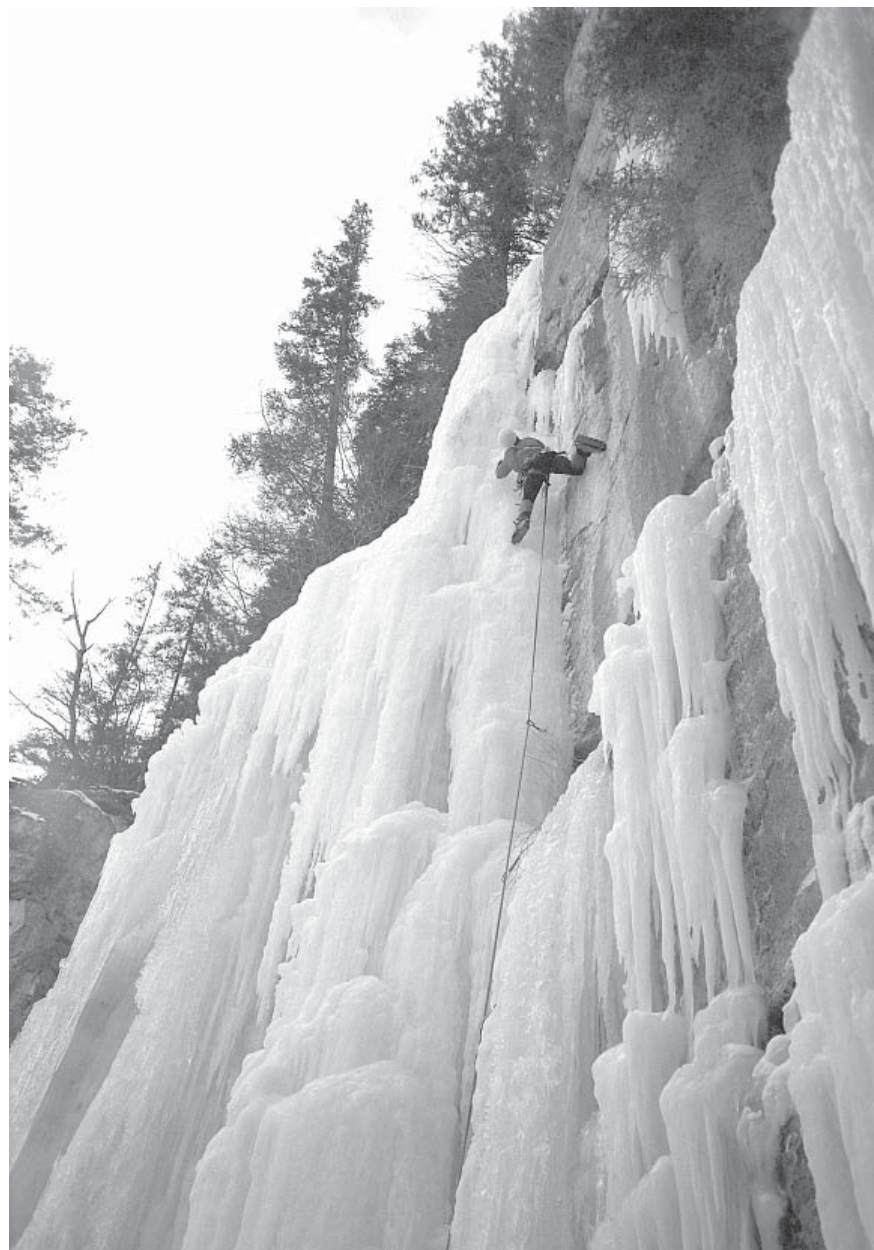
A pretty little free-standing pillar in the middle canyon of the escarpment north of the cattle feedlot about 10km east of Cache Creek on Highway 1. Walk in around fenceline to east [1h]. Forms regularly, but south-facing, so short-lived.



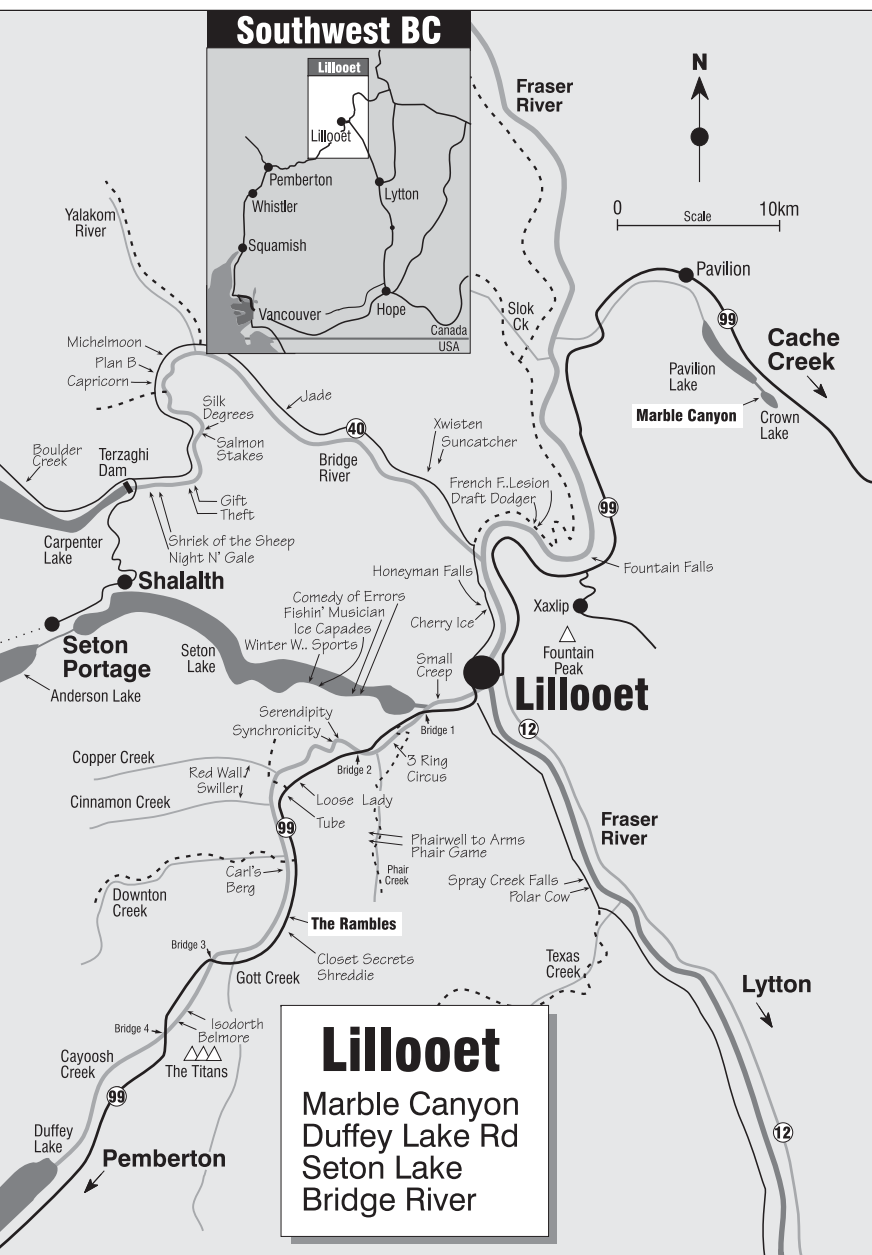
**Oregon Jack (273):** climber. unknown. *photo:* Loren Campbell.



**MARBLE CANYON: Icy BC (275): 1st pitch in fat conditions, Dave Lane. photo: Kevin McLane.**  
Inset: 1st pitch in lean times, Ted Davies.



**MARBLE CANYON: Icy BC (275): Robert Nugent, top tier. photo: Bob Koen.**



## Lillooet

Lillooet is the epicentre of the finest and most reliable winter ice climbing in southwestern BC. The colder Interior winter weather ensures that many routes are in good condition from mid- to late-December through to the end of February or middle of March, even when the weather at the Coast is warm and wet. Steep limestone and igneous walls and some stunning ice formations add an impressive, unique ambience to the area.

### Access

This small Interior BC town can be reached via Highway 12 north from Lytton, or from the west, by taking the Duffey Lake road (part of Highway 99) over Cayoosh Pass east of Mount Currie. From Vancouver, the former route is approximately 330km via Highway 1 from Hope north through the Fraser Canyon, as compared to about 250km via Squamish and Pemberton on Highway 99. In either case, driving time will be 4 to 5 hours. Winter travel can be very slow on the Duffey Lake road, especially during heavy snowfall, whereas the freeway and Fraser Canyon routes are better maintained and at much lower altitude. In fact, avalanches occasionally close the Duffey Lake road between the pass [1290m elevation] and the lake [1120m], so check the road report before setting out. See: [www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighways](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/bchighways) road reports link.

### Weather

Ice climbers need to pay attention to the weather, particularly temperatures. The Lillooet forecast and conditions are available at: <http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca>. The 24 Hour Trends Graph button is interesting and valuable.

Note that Lillooet is at 260m elevation; the airport, where the weather readings are taken, is at 400m. Temperature typically falls about 6.5°C per 1000m altitude gain, and nearly 10°C when dry. With most ice routes lying at 700m elevation or higher, you can reckon the temps at most climbs are 3°C–5°C colder than those reported on the website. Marble Canyon and Oregon Jack, being less Coastal influenced, are colder yet. Check the Clinton forecast [870m] to get the best idea for these climbs: [www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca)

**Accommodation**

Camping is possible, but most ice climbers forgo the pleasures of climbing out of a sleeping bag in a frosty tent long before sunrise to pull on rimed pile clothing (take a second set) in favour of a hotel or motel in town. These are pretty modestly priced, in the \$40 to \$55 per night range for a pair. Ask for the climber's rate.

**Public Camping**

Numerous sites are available, both official and ad hoc. None offers winter services, so travel prepared and take care with waste disposal. Water supplies, especially, can be troublesome. Keep in mind when camping 'wild' that private property must be respected, so pay attention to your surroundings and be discreet.

**BC Forest Service – Bridge River.** The BC Forest Service Mission Dam site lies out in the Bridge River canyon just downstream from the Terzaghi Dam at 49km west on Highway 40, within walking distance of *Night N' Gale*, *Shriek of the Sheep*, and *Terzaghi Falls*, but this is a cold, dark, often-windy, inhospitable spot for camping in winter.

There is a 'wild' campsite in a small gravel pit tucked just off the west side of the road at the 'big bend' 46km west of Lillooet, below *The Gift* and *The Theft*.

**BC Forest Service – The Duffey Lake Road:** Of the several sites on the Duffey Lake road, the most handy and easily accessible from the ice climber's point of view is the Cinnamon Creek site, 20km southwest of Lillooet in the heart of the 'climbing country'. Cottonwood Creek, 23km SW of Lillooet, adjacent to the Downton Creek road leading across the Cayoosh to *Carl's Berg*, is not usually as accessible with a vehicle.

**BC Hydro Recreation Site – Seton Lake.** The gated road on the south side of the highway at the bottom of the hill 4km west of town on the Duffey Lake road serves the BC Hydro Seton Dam Campground opposite the dam. This facility is closed and not maintained in winter, but can be used as a place to camp. The gate on the access road is usually locked in winter, so you'll have to park outside and walk about 100m to the campsites.

The road at the bottom of the hill on the opposite (north) side of the Duffey Lake road follows the Hydro diversion canal and Seton River 700m to the lake and a possible boat launch. Camping is not permitted on this site.

A further kilometre west up the hill is the BC Hydro Seton Viewpoint, from which a steep road leads 400m or so down to the BC Hydro Seton Beach recreation site, a good launch area for those canoeing to the Seton Lake routes. This is posted for day-use only, and the gate gets locked at night; leave your vehicle outside the gate against a late return. There are possibilities for 'wild' camping along an inobvious dirt road on the bench opposite the viewpoint entrance.

**Commercial Campgrounds**

There are two commercial campgrounds in Lillooet, only one of which is open in winter:

**Cayoosh Creek Campground**

1-877-748-2628. [www.cayooshcampground.com](http://www.cayooshcampground.com)

Immediately south of town, between the Fraser River and Seton River bridges on Highway 99. Power and water available for Recreation Vehicles; \$21. Not officially open for tent-camping in winter, but pairs of climbers are welcome to set up their tents without charge – no facilities, however. The proprietors will open washrooms and provide hot water upon pre-arrangement for groups of 8 or more. \$35 and up.

**Fraser Cove Campground:** see Cabins/Houses (page 52).

**Hotels/Motels**

**4 Pines Motel** 1-800-753-2576. [www.4pinesmotel.com](http://www.4pinesmotel.com)  
108 8th Avenue, just west at the bend in the centre of town.  
39 rooms. Kitchenettes (8). Jacuzzis (2) or jet tubs (8) in some rooms in new wing. Old wing cheaper. \$42 to about \$55.

**Mile 0 Motel** 1-888-766-4530. [www.mileomotel.com](http://www.mileomotel.com)  
616 Main Street, east side, centre of town.  
36 rooms. Jacuzzi (1 honeymoon suite). Kitchenettes (5). \$48 to \$60.

**Reynolds Hotel** 1-877-655-5506.  
1237 Main Street, dead ahead as the road T-junctions 100m west of the railway crossing at south end of town.  
15 rooms. Cookhouse Restaurant (open early for breakfast). Pub. Cold beer and wine store. \$40 to \$50.

**Hotel Victoria** 1-866-256-4112  
677 Main Street in the centre of town.  
18 rooms. Kitchenettes (8). Dining Room. Pub. \$55 and up.



DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: Red Wall Wanderer (321).



DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: The Tube (324): Graham Rowbotham, Janez Ales belaying.



**DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: Loose Lady (318):** Hobey Walker below the upper pitches.



**DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: It's Only Phair (310):** Loren Campbell. *photo: Jens Klubberud.*



DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: Carl's Berg (335): Dan Canton.



DUFFEY LAKE ROAD: Shreddie (368): John Irvine.