
Jordan 1987: Rum Goings On

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With the publication of Tony Howard's Guide to *Treks and Climbs in the Mountains of Rum and Petra*, these recently discovered desert towers are receiving the attention of increasing numbers of climbers. Teams from Germany, Austria, France, Spain and England were in the area this spring. The Austrian team, under the leadership of Wolfgang Nairz, with the assistance of Tony Howard, Wilfried Colonna and Di Taylor, made a climbing/adventure film for Austria's TV series *World of Mountains*.

Other climbers made repeat ascents of existing routes, confirming their quality. Bernard Domenech of France took out the first guided party and included the first ascent of a previously unknown Bedouin route on Jebel Rum in his itinerary, describing it as 'amazingly beautiful'. His companion 'guide' on the trip was the incorrigible Sabbah Atieeq: a Bedu of the area who is proving himself indispensable.

The new-route bonanza continued unabated, with discoveries of two new 'mini-canyons' having perfect room walls on both sides. Howard, Colonna and Taylor added another half-dozen routes, including a probe on to the ubiquitous 'walls of overhangs like bracket fungi and melting candles'. The 5A/B route was named 'Where Angels Fear to Tread'. Behind the Rest House, on the E face of Rum, they added 'Mad Frogs and Englishmen', in the company of Domenech, at 5B (English grade).

Earlier in the spring, the team of Rowland and Mark Edwards climbed some excellent new routes, from 5B unprotected slab-climbing on the 300m E face of Burdah to the superb 300m and 400m 5C crack-lines of Abu Aina and South Nassrani E faces. They also added a short but desperate wall climb on the E face of Traif al Muragh, graded E6 7A – the hardest route in the area to date.

Doug Scott was also there, adding his quota of new climbs and getting benighted in the process at the top of his 350m, 5C 'Crack of Cracks' on the W face of Khazali. Finally, when we left the valley at the end of April, Miguel Gallego and partner from Spain were last seen working their way up the Jebel Rum E face, on their third day.

All the new-climbs information is being recorded in a New Routes Book, courtesy of Troll, which will be kept in the Rest House for use by future climbers, in conjunction with the guidebook.

The Hoggar mountains were visited by a Dutch expedition over Christmas 1987. Base Camp was set up on 13 December under Mount Saouinan. Hans Lanfers writes:

On 14 and 15 December Hans Lanfers and Erick van Heugten climbed a new

line on the N face of Saouinan: 'Rêve pétrifié' (6a).

On 20 December Paul Lahaye and Philip Simons climbed another new route on the W face of this mountain: 'Via Magnetron' (6b). Erick van Heugten and Hans Lanterers made the second ascent on the same day.

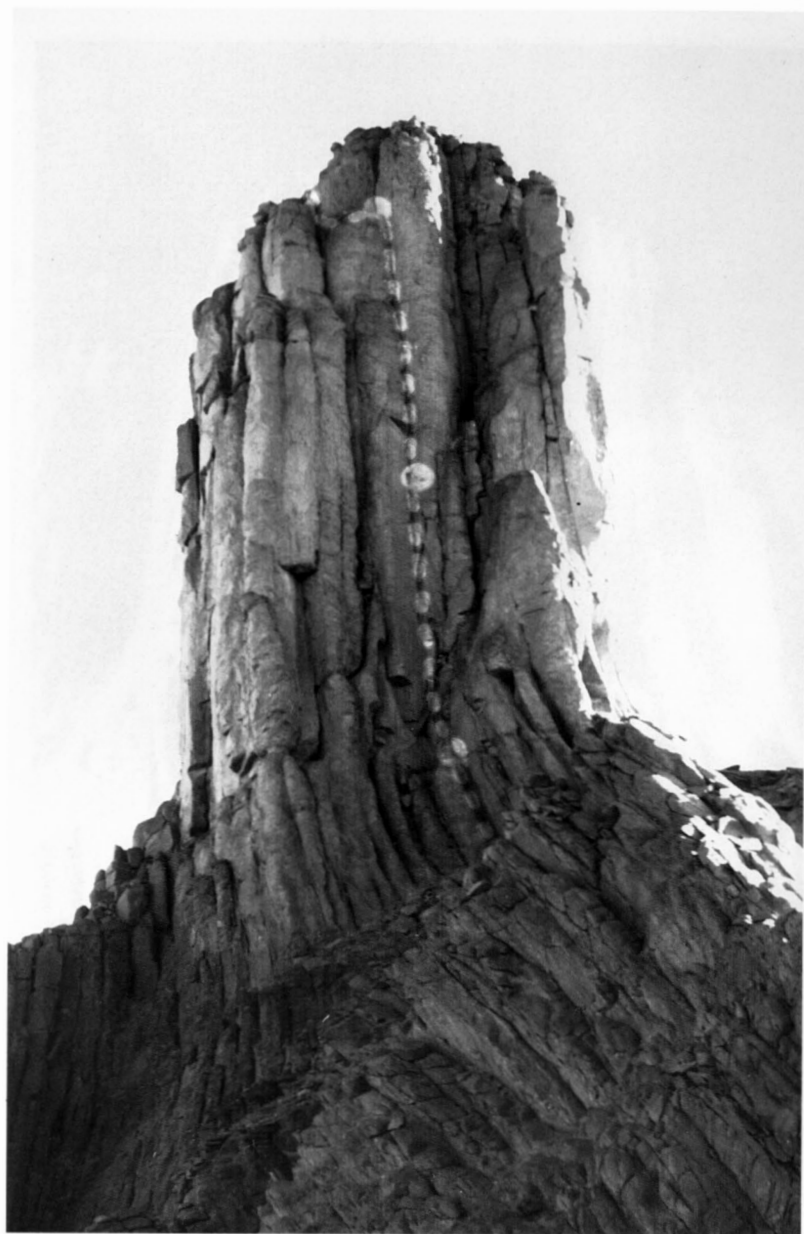
On 24 December Hans Lanterers, Philip Simons, Paul Lahaye and Erick van Heugten climbed a new line on the superb W face of Tezoulaig-Sud (2702m): 'Les garçons du pays plat' (6a, sustained). Second ascent (not free-climbed!) by a Swiss team the day after.

Our line takes the steep, smooth and obvious pillar in the centre of the W face. This face is one of the highest and most interesting in the Hoggar mountains. 'Les garçons du pays plat' is the first route in the Atakor region which does not touch any crack or chimney. The route is probably the finest line in the whole Atakor region (and possibly in the whole Hoggar!)

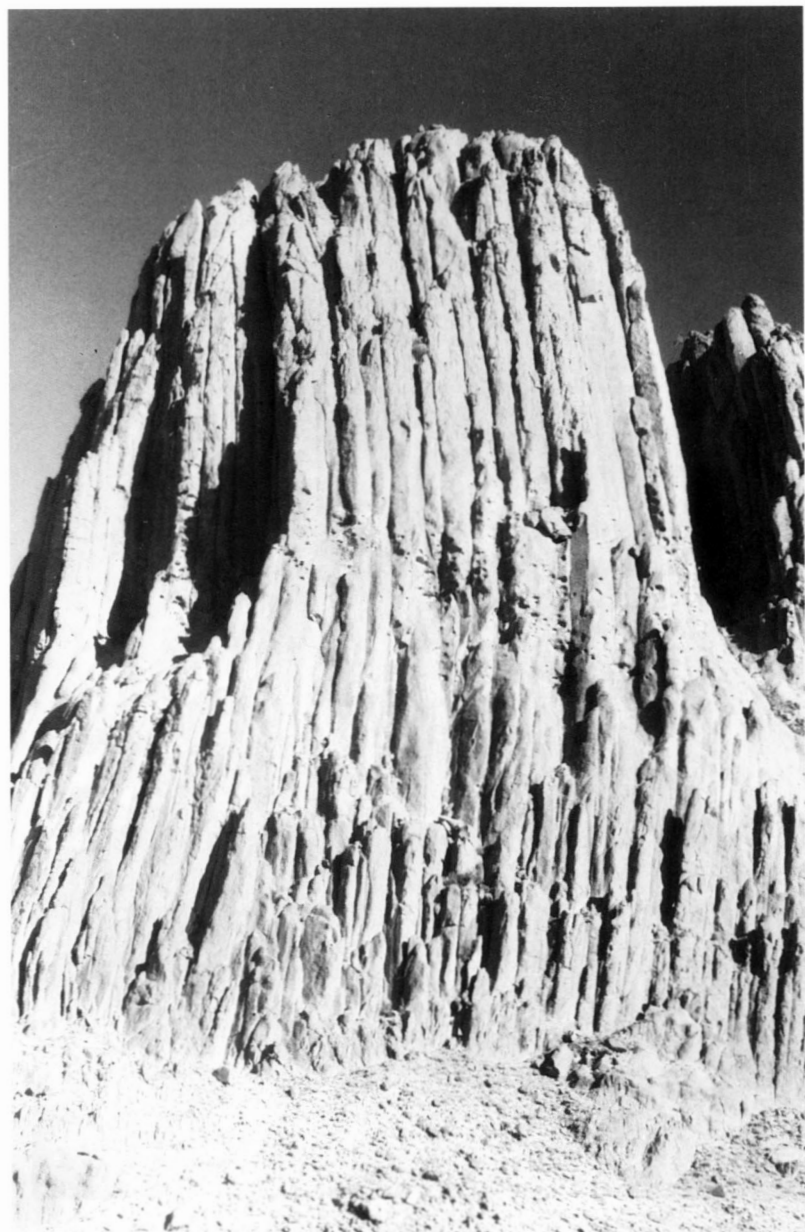
To the right of our new line is the Spanish route of 1967. Hans Lanterers and Philip Simons climbed this route on 19 December. The A1/A2 section went free at solid 6a. Note: Between Christmas and New Year a Spanish expedition was also active on Tezoulaig-Sud. They also made a new route to the left of our line: 'Via Queimados rute' (TD).

Finally, on 3 January 1988, Hans Lanterers and Philip Simons opened a new route on the Clocher du Tezoulaig: 'Voie Iris' (TD-/TD). The line takes an obvious crack between the Edlinger-Merlin-Richard route (1981) and the Kohlmann-Roussy route (1957).

(Editorial note: French gradings are used in this account. Rumour has it that the new routes are 'equipped' with expansion bolts and pitons.)



80. *Dutch Hoggar Expedition '87-'88. Saouinan (2650m), N face, Rêve Pétrifié (6a).*



51. Dutch Hoggar Expedition '87-'88. Tezoulaig-Sud (2702m), W face. Les Garçons du Pays Plat (6a).