

Bugaboo Baddies Trip Report

Itemized Budget (the amount you received and the amount you spent – provide as much detail as possible. We recommend saving all receipts to make this part easier)

| Item | | Price | Used/Price if more |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Equipment | | | |
| Guidebook | | \$50.99 | yes |
| Fuel (900g) | | \$21.90 | 30 |
| Bear Spray (2 pack) | | \$95.90 | no |
| Wag Bags (12 packs) | | \$35 | 12 |
| Aquamira Kit | x2 | \$29.80 | 35 |
| Toilet Paper | | \$4.75 | yes |
| Dr. Bronner's Hand San. | | \$5.75 | yes |
| Dr. Bronner's Soap | | \$5.75 | yes |
| Carbon Travel Offset | | | |
| Driving Offset | | \$17 | yes |
| Housing | | | |
| Bozeman Hotel | x2/ 100 | \$200 | yes |
| Transportation | | | |
| 1,244 x2 miles (there and back) | \$4.00/gallon) | | |
| Car with 16 miles to the gallon | | | |
| 155.5 gallons of gas | | \$622 | 750 |
| \$0.61/mile maintence, subaru outback | x2488 Miles | \$1,517.68 | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | -1000 | 532 |
| Campsite | | | |
| \$10 per person per night | x14 nights | \$280 | 300 |
| Food | | \$733 | 850 |
| Total W/ 8% sales tax | | 2684.2536 | \$2862.42 |

Food and rationing (what did you eat, not enough, enough, or too much, what would you change, etc.)

Our primary consideration with food was the tradeoff between having enough calories and making our packs too heavy. We opted for slightly more food, and we were happy to have it. Before the trip, we sat down for two hours and planned out our food for every day of the trip. Our basic plan was to have a proper breakfast and dinner every day, and eat snacks while we were out climbing. Our breakfast and dinner planning was perfect. The only thing we could have improved on for our meal planning was having a bit more variety. However, we were able to save money by buying some items in bulk, which was definitely worth it. By the time we walked out, we only had a few extra bags of emergency mashed potatoes. We recommend bringing light emergency food. Shortly after we left, the only access trail to our campsite flooded and became impassable.

We did end up bringing in too many snacks (bars, gels, etc.). Our guess is that we overestimated how much we would be able to eat while climbing and how hungry we would be on rest days. Unless we were belaying, there was not much time standing still to eat. By the time we hiked out, we probably had 15 individually wrapped snacks to carry out. Additionally, we left approximately 15 snacks in the car during our resupply because we still had so many up at camp. We had rationed three snacks per day for each person. In hindsight, we should have only rationed one snack each on rest days, as our caloric needs were exceptionally low while just sitting at camp.

Equipment (what did you end up not using, what did you wish you had brought, etc.)

Every piece of equipment we brought was used at least once during the trip. Before the trip, we conducted extensive research on the gear commonly used in the Bugaboos and tailored our kit accordingly. Our choice of gear was definitely the strong point of our preparation. We were undecided about whether to bring spring mountaineering boots or waterproof approach shoes. Bringing spring mountaineering boots with lightweight aluminum crampons was the right call because of the wet glacier travel. Crampons were especially nice for going up and down the

Bugaboo-Snowpatch col. Most days, we both wore our long underwear under climbing pants to start the day and then removed them before the descent. Neither of us climbed in the shorts we brought, but they got a lot of use in Camp, and we would bring them again.

Our climbing-specific gear was spot on. Having a light 60m rope and tag line was definitely the right move. The tagline spent most of the time in the tent, but when we needed it, we were definitely glad we had brought it up. We were happy to have all the rack we brought. For the more challenging climbs (harder than 5.9), we got every piece of gear and were happy we did. Had we only been attempting easier and shorter climbs, we could have definitely gone without the microcams. We ended up using both cordelletes when we had to bail. It was definitely worth bringing extras.

Both of us would have liked to have more layers for our legs. Proper alpine-style climbing pants would have been nice, so we wouldn't have had to wear long underwear at the start of climbs. Robbie only brought leather belay gloves and wished he had lightweight, waterproof gloves instead. We hope we have sprung for a nicer lightweight tent. Having the beefy 3-person tent was nice at basecamp, but when we had to travel to East Creek, our packs were weighty. On the theme of weight, we both wished we had found ways to reduce the weight of our gear. Walking into and out of Basecamp, our packs weighed around 70 pounds each. Even after we arrived at Basecamp, any weight savings we could have made during the route would have been appreciated. Weight was definitely the name of the game when choosing gear, and we both wished we had sprung for some of the lighter options.

What worked, what didn't, and why

Besides a few hiccups, our planning and preparation were spot on. From a planning perspective, there are only a few minor tweaks we would have made in hindsight. It would have been nice to plan out some possible routes in addition to what we had in our daily plans. Inclement weather and conditions in the Bugaboo-Snowpatch col caused us to change our plan to include new routes. While we were able to do these unplanned routes in a highly safe manner, planning with the use of the internet would have saved us from some tough route finding. Some additional information on the descent from Ears Between would have saved us a decent amount of time.

Our preparation for the physical rigors of the trip was also good. Leading up to the trip, Robbie had to get stitches on his knee, and he also contracted the flu two weeks before the trip. Both of these ailments had passed by the time the trip started, but his fitness was lacking for the first couple of days. Despite both being in Colorado this summer, we only had three opportunities to climb together before leaving on the trip. Only one of these outings involved proper alpine climbing. This training plan didn't work out because of unexpected time requirements for our jobs and a multitude of family obligations. Cam was also fighting a hand injury for most of the spring, which also limited the number of times we were able to climb

together. For the longer climbs in the Bugs, having your systems dialed is essential. A few of the early climbs we tried came with some faffing that might have been avoidable. However, by the end of the trip, our system had significantly improved, and we were able to climb the Northeast Ridge in nine hours, camp to camp.

Travel logistics (how did you end up getting to/from the experience, what should others know)

Two days before our departure date, Robbie drove from Colorado Springs to Cam's house in Boulder. After a few days of preparing gear and doing some pitches together, we loaded up the car and drove from Boulder to Bozeman. This drive is exceptionally boring. Tired from the drive, we had dinner and quickly went to bed. After an early start the next day, we were able to make it all the way to the trailhead. We had very little trouble entering Canada; however, DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT!!! Robbie had to drive from Boulder back to Colorado Springs the day before we left to get his passport. Also, be sure to fuel up before entering Canada, as the gas there is expensive. The directions linked from Mountain Project are accurate, and as long as you load the map before, they will take you all the way to the trailhead. We found the dirt road to be in good condition; however, heavy snow or rain could definitely make the drive more thought-provoking.

When you arrive at the trailhead, you will find every car wrapped in chicken wire. We were able to find an ample amount of chicken wire in the parking lot to adequately protect our vehicle from the porcupines. While the exercise of building a wall around your car may seem excessive, we have heard numerous accounts of parties returning to their cars and finding that their brake lines had been chewed through. You definitely want working brakes for the drive out.

On our way out, we spent a whole day breaking down camp and getting back to the car. After sleeping in the parking lot, we got an early start on our way home. Our drive home was very similar to our drive there. However, the U.S. border patrol agent was a lot less friendly than his Canadian counterpart. Having a set of clean clothes waiting in the car was essential. After showering in Bozeman, it would have been a big ask to put dirty clothes back on. Open-toed shoes were also essential.

Permitting/government relations (any hang-up, what others should be aware of, etc.)

We had very few issues with permitting or dealing with the Canadian government. As long as you have a passport, passing between the U.S. is no problem and takes less than five minutes. Camping permits can only be reserved 30 days in advance, so be sure to do so as soon as possible. In case of an emergency or severe weather, you can usually secure a spot in the Kain hut on the day of (as long as you bring cash). The hut is also open to visitors during the day and makes a nice place to hang out on a rainy rest day. There are outlets for charging devices and up-to-date weather forecasts. The one regulation we were surprised by was the prohibition on

bathing/swimming in the Crescent Basin. This severely altered our personal hygiene plans. There was the option to walk to the next valley, but we only mustered the strength to do this once. Many water bottle showers were taken.

Leadership and group dynamics (how did your team operate, any challenges, etc.)

Our team operated in a well-organized and conservative fashion for the majority of the trip. Robbie and Cam have spent a lot of time in the field together and know when to chat it up and when to just shut up. This was imperative for a partnership, as there is not necessarily a group leader or follower. The 13 days we were actually in the field, and 17 for the trip as a whole, is a lot of time with just one other person. However, we were able to communicate well while climbing, helping each other out if one person wasn't feeling it and taking extra weight. Maybe leading an extra pitch if needed. When we disagreed about the best way to approach something, there was always a long conversation about it, to see both sides, and to try to make the best decision. That tactic worked great for 95% of the trip. We both have different strengths, and these were shown while we were in the field. Making sure we add to each other and not take anything away from each other's strengths and weaknesses was imperative, and we can both confidently say we achieved that. Overall, it was a very enjoyable, somewhat relaxing, somewhat extreme, but overall such a joyous experience with a great partner.

Safety and risk management concerns (how did you manage risk in the field, did anything unexpected come up, etc.)

When the team in question is a partnership, things do change in terms of decision-making when compared to a group of three or four. Each decision is more personal, which makes decision-making exponentially more complex. Decisions can get on some people's nerves, or if there is a power imbalance, perhaps of experience or certain strength, that can also change the decisions made. Sometimes for the worst. Luckily, this was not a problem, as both of us really worked each decision out together, making sure we found a compromise we were both happy with. We feel as though we managed these emotions and tactics well. Even when it came to Becky-Chouinard, even when things started to go wrong, we eventually took a step back and really worked together to make it back to camp safe.

Becky-Chouinard was a great teaching moment. Here are some things that are emblematic of the entire trip's decision-making, as well as BC:

1. Actual rest: We were so stoked about being in the Bugaboos that we were doing something every day. However, even if it is going down to the Kain hut, it takes energy out of you. Sleeping in a tent and eating fewer calories than normal means your body doesn't recover as well as in a bed at home with a big dinner. Even though we had to work around the weather, making sure we were rested is something we should have prioritized more. We realized this after 2 days of rest and then doing the NE ridge on

Bugaboo Spire. We felt so strong, and if it had been BC, we would have had a much easier time on it. Additionally, taking into account the day's travel/approach, especially for BC, is crucial.

2. Weather: We knew that the weather was going to be unpredictable and funky, but we did not know to what extent. Garmin forecasts ended up being completely useless, as well as the bulletin posted at Applebee's. The best thing, and what we learned on day 11, was to ask someone in the normal world what the weather looked like on Windy.com. This was the most predictable and useful tool, and one we should have utilized earlier.
3. For BC specifically, knowing when not to attempt the route. There is not much to say besides that we shouldn't have attempted BC that day. Although, as stated later on, we do not believe it was an objectively bad decision. However, the more correct decision would have been not to attempt it. The problem is that there was no 1 large factor that was turning us around. It was the culmination of small things that led to our failure. Seeing this beforehand and being aware of it is a vital skill in the alpine. We have learned from our mistakes and are better climbers because of it

Please reach out to me, Cam, if you have any questions about BC and our day on it and the decisions that went into it. I would like to add this small note as well:

When friends or family ask me about my experience on Becky-Chouinard, I will always speak about it positively. Often in outdoor circles, we talk about turning around and the ability to do so. However, it is so rare that we are faced with an opportunity to do something that we can't "just do next weekend." To be in that position, and have worked so hard to be in that exact moment and place, and turn around, not knowing the next time one will be back, is a crucial skill and one that I now know cannot be taught. My previous experience with this was Gannett Peak in Wyoming. Although we turned around, and it taught me the fundamental idea of turning around on a big objective, it was not my decision; it was my dad's. The decision to bail on BC was mine and Robbie's and no one else's. That experience is invaluable, as well as the experience of why perhaps that wasn't the best idea to attempt. It is because of the RKMF grant that my growth and experience in the outdoors have been exponential, and I wouldn't be the outdoors person that I am today without it. These opportunities are so valuable, and I truly hope the RKMF continues to supply them for CC students for a long time. What a privilege it is to fail in the mountains.

Our decision-making throughout the trip we were highly satisfied (besides BC), even when things could have been dicey, we worked around them and made sure we were always safe and stoked. Obviously, there is always room for improvement, and experience is the best teacher, which is why we are so grateful for this opportunity to gain that experience.

Specific route descriptions & concerns (did you have to make in-field changes, did anything unexpected come up, etc.)

This is embedded in our detailed daily course log. However, one thing to note overall is that having the guidebook was extremely helpful. Taking photos of it and having the route descriptions/photos saved us quite a few times. It is by far one of the best guidebooks I've ever read, and it makes for great camp reading as well. Easily worth the pound and a half.

A detailed daily course log

Travel day 1:

After packing up the night before, we left Cam's home in Boulder, Colorado, around 7 am. A long drive, all uneventful, we arrived in Bozeman, Montana. That drive, is, so, goddamn, boring.

Travel day 2:

An early 6 am wakeup, we left Bozeman, Montana, and made our way to the highway, headed due north toward the border. After stopping in a weird small town for a burger, we crossed into Canada without any problems. The drive had been stunning all day, and continued to be. The mountains grew higher, and we could see snow atop some of the peaks. We filled up on gas, which is not subsidized by the government, so it's about \$6.50 a gallon, and drove the 2 hours of dirt roads to make it to the trailhead. Already, it felt a bit wild being on the old logging roads, leading seemingly nowhere. We bypassed several entire mountains on our drive as well. After setting up the tent, we made a wonderful dinner of pasta and pasta sauce, and turkey jerky, and went to bed.



Field day 1:

Learning from Cam's trip last year, we decided to only bring up one week's worth of food and supplies. Even so, our packs were both around 65 pounds. The hike was a menacing 3.5 miles with roughly 3,300' of elevation gain. We were both happy to have more supportive boots, even though they were pricey to buy. After 1 mile of hiking, and about 20' of elevation gain, we were both starting to get a little scared. Not scared for our safety, but that type of "oh shit this is about to suck" scared. Luckily, the infrastructure in the Bugaboos is amazing. The trail was very well maintained, and although the steps were big, they were flat for the most part. Over the next 2 miles, we ascended 3,100'. The views were incredible. They were some of the best either of us had ever seen, but certainly the most dramatic glacier views. Once at Applebee camp, we found a decent camp spot and sat down and ate some cheese and salami. That lunch would become a staple lunch for us, and something to look forward to. We read for the rest of the day, and went to bed excited to climb tomorrow as the weather looked great.



Field day 2:

We woke up a bit late to be labeled as an alpine start, but we were up and at 'em by 6 am. By 6:30, we were out of camp and walking towards the Bugaboos-Snowpatch Col. We had talked to a guide and some other parties the previous day, as well as checked the Facebook group for condition updates. People were traveling through it, but it was definitely a bit dicey. We reached the base right as the sun hit it, perhaps a bit late on our part, and started to make our way up quickly. We both slept like a rock, so we were moving fast and efficiently, both very excited for our first climb. The fully waterproof boots were great to have, as well as the crampons, as we

passed 2 groups up to the funnel part of the col. Waiting for a group to go through, we ate a snack, and then once safe, continued on. We reached the top of the col by 7:15, and made our way over to the west face of Snowpatch Spire. Our eyes were set on surf's up, a 7 pitch grade II climb. Making our way over the base, we quickly realized we were far too early for the west face. It was freezing. We both had every layer on as soon as we stopped moving. After a quick chat, we made the decision to hang out to see if it would warm up. It didn't. So we just decided to climb. The climb went slowly, but efficiently. Much to our surprise, we nailed the routefinding and easily got to the lunch ledge, which was in the sun. A lovely snack spot, and we finished out the route. Some of the coolest crack climbing with an absurd overlook of Vowel glacier and Pigeon Spire. After finding the rappel rings and talking with a guide who had just done the Snowpatch route, we did the 8 rappels needed to get off the massive granite spire. On the ground, the guide asked if we wanted to join forces to do the Pigeon-Snowpatch rappels to avoid the col, and we quickly agreed. After climbing up the col, we decided that for the rest of the trip, we wouldn't travel in it. All four of us, Cam, Robbie, Guide, and guide-ee, did the rappels in 3 lengths with the double ropes and quickly made our way back around the north side of Snowpatch. We did get the rope stuck in the glacier for 15 minutes, which wasn't awesome, but we didn't think much of it (foreshadowing here). After the walk back, it made for roughly an 11-hour day. Overall, we worked, but we felt good, and nothing had gone extreme in any specific way. A great day in the mountains.



Our first views of Pigeon Spire, which were unbelievably amazing

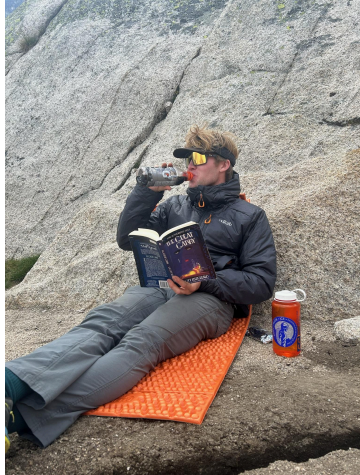
Field day 3:

Another day that was not quite early enough to call an alpine start, but we were walking by 6:20. We headed over to the crescent spires to take a look at Ears Between, a fun 7-pitch 5.9. There was a party at the base of it when we got to the bottom, so we decided to go with plan B, a route called tiger tail. Robbie led the way up a moss-covered first pitch. Cam then led the “crux” 2nd pitch, and to no surprise at all, it was covered in moss. Although a bit sketchy to rely on moss for feet, we both made it happen with no falls and got to the top of the runout part of the route. Robbie led a great lead of 5.8 R, and we made it to the summit shortly after. After 1 rap, we descended the mandatory gully, which, later in the trip, we would see massive boulders come crashing down on. We never traveled this gully again for that reason. At camp, some very kind climbers from Canada gave us some extra fuel and food. They heard we were there for another 11 days, and as they were hiking out, they wanted to offload their extra gear. One woman had a great story of packrats eating rope, one that has to be told in person. We went to bed happy and full of chocolate.



Field day 4:

A rest day filled with cribbage, reading *The Lord Of The Rings*, and *The Great Gatsby*. We made quesadillas at the Kain hut and contemplated the weather, as it was rather nice even though the forecast was abysmal. Even by the end of the trip, we didn't have it figured out.



<- view from the bathroom

Sipping juice in camp, doing some preformative reading

Field day 5:

Almost a true alpine start! Waking up at 4:45 to beat the crowds, which is somewhat crazy to say but was the reality, we intended to go for McTech Arete, 6 pitches, 5.10-. However, the saddest thing in the world happened. We had brought back the oatmeal the night before so we could stay in our sleeping bags to cook, but we forgot the tea and coffee. So Cam had to get out of his sleeping bag and brave the cold and the dark. Oh, the things we view as “sad” in the backcountry, what a privilege to experience it all. We were out of camp by 5:30 and made our way over to the McTech area. After our previous experience of walking around the North side of Crescent Lake, we very quickly realized that the South side was safer and faster. We waited for a slower party to make their way up P1 at the base for about 45 minutes, and then Robbie started up the 5.10 roof variation. We both cleaned it, as well as the crux 2nd pitch, led by Cam. The rest of the route was a joy, but sadly not very fast due to the party in front of us. After reaching the top of the 2nd to last pitch, we decided not to go for the chossy summit and opted to rappel down with another party. It was slightly contrived as there were so many other parties in the McTech area (the weather was supposed to be bad around 12). We made it to the base, started to put on our shoes, and as Robbie was putting on his shoe, it flew out of his hands and into the glacier below. After 30 minutes, we finally found it, and made our way back. The rest of the day was spent reading, feeling excited about how easy the route had felt.



The sunrise that morning was especially good, as well as our lunch.

Field day 6:

Based on the forecast and our overarching goal of doing Becky-Chouinard, we decided this was the best day to resupply. Not much to say about the descent, but we mostly talked about BC, and how we wanted to execute. At the car, we had a treat of pasta and Rao's unbelievably good sauce. We each loaded up with roughly 40 pounds of food and other supplies in our bags, as well as 2 more books each. Robbie had gone through 2 LOTR and Camden two smaller ones. On our ascent, we met someone who was going back up to East Creek for a week, and his friends who were putting up new routes there. The conversation with him was always fascinating, as we would bump into each other later. Also, we brought up 3 rolls of toilet paper to Applebee camp from the Kain hut, trying to follow the ethics of the grant and our own. Later in the day, we hiked over to a different basin, one where bathing was allowed, and jumped into the lake. Sadly, because of contamination issues, no campers are allowed to bathe in Crescent Lake or the surrounding Crescent Basin. It makes sense, but for two dirty and stinky boys, this sucked. Overall, the lake dip in the other basin was well worth it. Somehow, we also forgot toothpaste and had to barter away some chocolate. A sad moment indeed, but a great chill day overall.



We were very happy to fully clean our bodies

Field day 7:

After a stark realization that the trip was halfway over, and seemingly a month had gone by, we decided to do ears between. We had slept in a bit, and we left around 7 am. Sadly, because of the location of Ears Between, we had to go around the right side of the lake. This wasn't ideal because of the loose rock, and the general lack of trail. However, it was much better than passing through the death gully. Finally making it to the base of the 5.10 start variation, Cam racked up and went up. A weird pitch and notable for sure. No way to describe it, just weird. On previous routes, we had been collecting tat, trying to leave the area better than we found it. But nothing compared to this route, as we cleared perhaps 3 pounds of tat off the route and descent. Making quick work of the 7 long pitches, we got to the top without any major setbacks. The descent was slightly convoluted and definitely put our route-finding to the test. The loose stuff is always what gets you in the mountains, so we did our best to avoid major exposed sections of loose rock. After a rather technical and tricky route down the ridge, we made it to a well-worn path. We followed that down to the last vertical section, clearing tat along the way. The last option was either a low 5th-class downclimb or a rappel on a sketchy horn. The rock was solid, so we opted for the downclimb. Although mossy, we made it work. Making it back to camp in roughly 6 hours, we were finally finding ourselves more comfortable in the bugaboos. However, the decision to climb this day would eventually hurt us. In hindsight, this should have been a full rest day. We got back to camp, looked at the weather reports, and decided to go for BC the next day.

Our plan was to load up to camp in East Creek tomorrow, and attempt BC the day after. Because of our decision to do Ears between, we would be tired tomorrow.



Some beautiful rock and views from this route

Field day 8:

(This day was written with a lot of hindsight and awareness of our mistakes, so please consider this when reading)

Wow. What a day. We woke up feeling anxious, but prepared for the day ahead. After sleeping in till 7 am, we packed up our bags for a night in East Creek. Our plan for the next two days was to hike to East Creek, camp for the night, and then start walking to the base of BC at 2 am. We would climb throughout the day, and hopefully be back to camp around 5 pm at the latest.

Putting our bags on, they were much heavier than expected. Even with only 3 days of food and no water, our bags felt like they weighed an insane amount for such a short mission. Perhaps it was due to tiredness. (It was most likely was) We nailed the route finding on our way to the Son of Snowpatch route up to the glacier, and roped up quickly as we passed below the Pigeon-Snowpatch icefall. Something that we had rappelled earlier, so we knew the terrain well. Passing far away from it, we sauntered up the glacier as the sun beat down on us. Our seemingly unnecessarily heavy packs weigh on us as the glacier got warmer and warmer, making travel even more difficult. We still passed two groups making their way up, and managed to travel

relatively fast. One group, heading down, had climbed the BC the day before. We stopped and talked to them for a second about beta and conditions.

(Cam wrote this section, and from here on this will be my perspective, but is very representative of both Robbie's and I's experience.)

I distinctly remember the second of the team say "I am so happy to have not been benighted on that climb," with an emotion that can only be described as relief. We descended into East Creek, and before our eyes, was what can only be described as truly unbelievable. Never in my life have I ever seen such sheer, terrifying, vertical walls. The aura in the air and in my mind quickly changed when looking down into a seemingly endless basin. Said aura was one of seriousness and remoteness, and I knew that any climbing in this basin would be bold and consequential. The basin started off so close together that it could almost be considered a canyon, and it went down into a lush green forest, all the water from the sides converging into a violent stream. When standing at the top, you could see down most likely 5-6,000 vertical feet.



We descended into the East Creek Basin, and were shell-shocked. My mind, from this moment on, was amazingly present. Not until we would leave this basin would my mind venture from outside these walls. The snow was getting warmer, even on a slightly shaded aspect, so we decided to move fast through the gully down the ECB. We made it to camp shortly and started setting up. I went over to the bear hang and talked to a team that was leaving that day via helicopter. They had been in the basin for around a week, and were finally leaving. We talked about plans and their experience here, and finally, the incoming weather. Allegedly, the weather had shifted from the next day being beautiful and sunny to afternoon lightning and thunder. As this was the largest route either Robbie or I had ever done, and as stated in our trip proposal, we would not attempt the route if we didn't have a sufficient weather window. We got a garmin weather forecast, as well as input from our new friends, and talked for a while about what our plan going forward should be. Our helicopter friends suggested that we take supplies to bivy on pitch 10 of the route. Since we were already most likely going to bring bivy gear, at the moment, we were very open and optimistic about that idea.



Camden standing underneath the South Howser tower



A pano of the bathroom on Pigeon on the left, all the way to the South, Center, and North Howsers' on the right

Talking over it for a bit, we decided to attempt the route that same day. In hindsight, we stand by our decision to attempt the route. Given the conditions, how we were feeling (not crazy tired) and what we knew at that moment about the weather, we did not and still do not view our decision to climb as an objectively bad or dangerous decision. However, was it the best decision? No. We were more tired than if we had gotten a night of sleep and some rest at camp. Additionally, there was a very very small chance of rain forecasted around 8 pm. In hindsight, we would not have made the decision to climb, and rather chosen a different and less difficult route to climb.

Breakdown from after leaving camp:

We started up the slabs and made quick work of the bottom scree section. I (Cam) had more weight in my pack as it was slightly larger, and was behind Robbie. We made it to the solid part of the class three scramble, gathering some water from snow melt on the way. After about 30 minutes of walking the time was around 2pm, and we had made it to the base of the climb. Racking up, we got stoked with Disco Line's summer hit "No Broke Boys," and started simuling the first three pitches. After around 40 minutes, we were on top of the 3rd pitch. Robbie started on the first 5.10 pitch of the day. He led up, doing so quickly, and got to the crux. Placing gear at his chest, I watched him pull the crux move, and I let out a loud "Hell yeah dude!" This was quickly silenced by Robbie's own loud "FALLING" scream. His foot had slipped, and being decently above his last piece of gear below the small roof he fell around 25 ft. In the process, his crack glove had torn, and his head must have hit something, as there was a dent in it. I checked in with him, and he said he had hurt his ankle, or heel, on the fall. Besides that he was fine. He quickly said he might be too tired to try that move again, and decided to aid up. Effectively and efficiently, due to our experience with trad climbing, Robbie ascended the rope and aided through the section. Backcleaning and placing gear as necessary. He climbed the rest of the pitch, and put me on belay. I climbed the pitch as efficiently as possible, knowing I might be leading for a while, but also heavily considering turning around. If Robbie was already feeling tired, and this pitch felt difficult with a heavier pack, it might be in our best interest. Getting to the top of the pitch, I remembered this was our last place to bail easily, as any further would be a large

commitment. Luckily, our decision was made for us. A large storm cloud, dark and ominous, was headed towards us. Lighting flashed for the first time in front of us. Being that the storm only seemed 10-15 miles away, we knew that it could easily be on top of us within the next 20-30 minutes. Immediately, we decided to turn around. The anchor was a horn, which we left a cordalette on, backing up the slew of tat already on it. We felt it would be unsafe to try to clean the tat due to time issues, and sadly, we had to contribute to the nest. Luckily, we had our tag line with us, for this exact case. We did a full 60m rappel, and made it safely to the base of pitch 4. We pulled the rope, and used another existing rappel anchor that looked to be in decent shape, backed up with a cam for the first person, and removed for the second. As it was already raining, we were focused on just getting down as fast as possible. The terrain was starting to get more and more low-angle, and we should have shortened our rappels to 30m instead of 60m. After we had rappelled 60m to a set of bolts, the rope got stuck. It took around 30 minutes of weighted pulling with all of our might to get this thing off. Pulling 60m of 6mm line really takes it out of you. Then we did another 60m rappel. Our decision here ended up being the biggest mistake we would make the whole trip. Because the angle of the terrain was so low, it was impossible to pull. Additionally, the knot we used had to be re-tied. Because we were in a rush, I opted for a carabiner block. That was definitely the wrong decision, and made the 60m rope impossible to pull from below. We yarded on it extensively; however, because we were so tired, we knew we had to ascend the rope, and one of us would have to make another anchor 30m up. Robbie announced he had some fight left in him and started to ascend the rope. After he had gained about 15-20 feet, the rope made a loud POP sound, and he fell directly on top of me.

After getting up, realizing we were both okay, we decided to take a deep breath and stop for a moment. This was something that we should have done earlier. We talked over the situation, realized what had most likely happened was that we didn't pull the rope back all the way through our anchor, and the only chance of getting both of my ropes back was to ascend the line again. I ascended the line after testing it heavily and stopped at about 30m. Of course, it was easy to pull, and I built an anchor, coiling the tag line and putting it in my backpack. I rapped off two nuts equalized and made it safely down to Robbie. We took our time going down the wet class three friction slabs, and made it back to camp right as the sun set. The party next to us, and the only other party in the entire basin, were doing a puppet show.

Not getting stressed, and staying calm in those moments is something I pride myself on; but something about that afternoon got to me. Perhaps it was how far away from help we were, or the build-up to that route. I had dreamed of this route, stayed up late reading, been kept up in the tent thinking about the route. Perhaps our stroke got to us, and we made an ambitious decision. Maybe we should have never attempted the route, and just enjoyed the basin. Our decision-making was not what it should have been, nor was our climbing. Very rarely in the outdoors are we faced with a challenge that we can't immediately come back to. However, what a gift that is. To face that challenge and have the opportunity to attempt a route like BC, is such a privilege.



Robbie approaching the massive east face of the South Howser Tower

Field day 9:

After sleeping in till 7:30 we packed up camp and made our way back up the basin. Tired and mentally worn out, we made our way through the talus field with our packs. We got to the base of the glacier and realized there had been a small avalanche the day before. Most likely around 3-4 pm while we were in BC. It was not in our path as we stayed far away from the overhead seracs, but was wild to see in person. We passed through quickly though, not wanting to spend more time than necessary on the glacier. Making it safely to the gully, we ascended quickly once again, redlining trying to move before the snow got too hot. After a break at the col of Pigeon and the Howser towers and a Pop-Tart each, we continued our journey back to basecamp. Making our way down, we were happy with our preparation for glacier travel. I went first over a snow bridge above a crevasse, but said that jumping over might be safer as the snow bridge felt and looked very small. As Robbie took the final step forward, he fell into the crevasse. I had him tight on the rope, as anyone should when their partner is crossing over a crevasse, so the fall was smaller. Robbie was able to pull himself out, and we made our way back to basecamp without any more excitement. The waterfalls this time of year were beautiful, and we were rather sad to not be able to jump in.



The recent avalanche pictured from above



A cool mushroom rock

Field day 10:

A true rest day, and one we should have had days before. We read, played cribbage, read some more, and chatted about the previous days. Applebee camp had almost completely cleared out and was a large change from the previous week. It was great to see only a handful of tents

compared to the 20-30 the week before. This is when we realized how amazing it was to spend such a large amount of time in a singular place. We talked to some Europeans and Canadians about everything and nothing throughout the day, and enjoyed some solidarity journaling and reading some more.



The view from camp, and some great lunches. We made quesadillas that day

Field day 11:

Another rest day, although forced, was extremely nice to have. We woke up to rain and wind, and our poor REI tent was clearly at its max. However, after the morning showers, it cleared up a little bit. Cloudy throughout the day, it was a lovely temperature and we made the most of our books and cribbage set. The weather looked good for the next day, and we set our minds on the NE ridge of Bugaboo Spire.

Field day 12:

Wow. What a day. In the best way possible. We woke up early, a good alpine start of 3:30, leaving by camp 4:15. After two true rest days, we felt top of our game. It's amazing what rest does to the body. I treated myself to some coffee for the first time all trip, and as I didn't sleep well. We made our way through known terrain to the base of the scramble that would take us to the col between Mctech Area and Bugaboo Spire. Within 10 minutes, we were at the top of the col, and the 4th, low 5th class scramble was an absolute joy in the dark. Some of the best scrambling of the trip. Once at the ramp up to the base, it was almost flatiron-like, in that it ramped up slightly, but a great consistent angle made the 4th class terrain continuous and super enjoyable. Robbie's ankle was still hurting a little from BC, so we took the whole day at a

moderate pace. We got to the base of the climb, ate a snack, and I blasted off. The beginning of the route was the crux, and had a thin layer of ice on it from the night before. Luckily, it was a crack, so it felt mostly secure. Linking pitches 1-2, we were both on top of the 2nd pitch within 25 minutes of reaching the base. Robbie led pitch 3, a great traversing pitch. I led up to the next ledge for pitch 4, and looked up at the 5.9 variation we were planning on doing instead of the 5.6 chimney. Robbie came up quickly, and blasted off for the variation pitch. I yelled up to him, that I was starting to feel like I had to poop. I had felt it slowly building leading the pitch before, and now it was not something I could ignore. My hope was to save it for the col, however, I realized there was no way that was happening. Yelling up at Robbie, I asked him to build an anchor, and little did I know the horrible position he was in. After what seemed like an eternity, he yelled down that he was safe. I was on a large enough ledge that I took off my harness, ripped open the wag bag, and took maybe the most magnificent poop of my life. We were on the ridge of one of the most beautiful big walls in North America, looking over glaciated terrain and other glacier-carved granite spires in the depths of the Canadian wilderness. Applebee was almost completely empty, the sun was out, and the glaciers below looked like they went on forever into lush green forest. How could life be any better? The rest of the climb was amazing, albeit a bit easier than expected and uneventful. Pitching the whole thing out, we made it to the summit extremely efficiently and un-tired. We chilled at the summit for a second taking in the beauty of Crescent Basin, and then made our way across some of the coolest and most exposed 4th class terrain either one of us had been on. There are no words for how much fun we were having during that ridge, and we enjoyed every second of it to the fullest. To make things better, we were the only party on the spire for the entire day. Not another soul did the NE ridge route, or the Kain route.

The descent is mostly unremarkable; it just took a long time. Following the guidebook directions was perfect and made it super simple and easy to do. The reason it takes so much time is that it is convoluted. We made it back to camp, via the snowpatch-pigeon descent, in 9 hours. A fantastic way to close out the big routes on the trip that we had planned.

At camp, we did Applebee crack a couple of times to make use of the beautiful day, and enjoyed a wonderful sunset.

Field day 13:

After staying up enjoying what we had decided to be our last night in camp, we packed a little bit, and decided to try our luck at Paddle Flake Direct, a 5.10 right next to McTeach Arete. After a fun walk over, Robbie led the first pitch but placed too much gear. This led to some terrible rope drag and made it impossible to pull up the rope. After some schenagins, we figured out a system and I made my way up. Somehow, this 5.10b/c pitch felt a lot easier than the 5.10a pitch on BC. I led the second 5.10b/c pitch, also feeling it was rather soft. After Robbie got up, he said he was feeling rather mentally tired from his 3 unexpected falls the past few days, and wanted to head down. Luckily, we were right by a bolted anchor and made a swift escape down.

This would be the last route we would do in the Bugaboos. After coming back to camp, we packed up, and just like my last trip, left in a torrential downpour.

Travel days 3 and 4 (days 16 and 17)

A quiet drive back through Montana, and a stop in Bozeman, we finally made it home to Boulder. Cheers to Robbie for driving almost the entire way.



Bugaboo Spire at 5am



Robbie almost to the top of p2



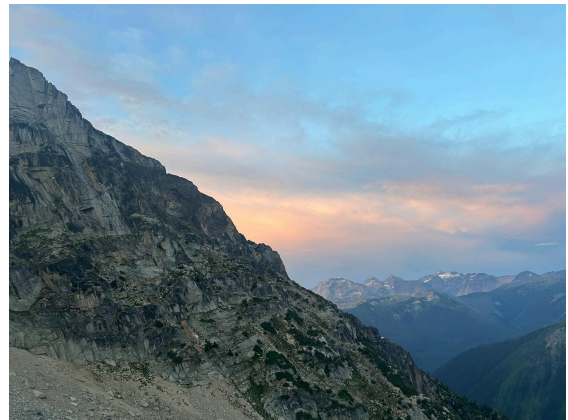
Snowpatch in the morning light



Cam on the ridge, feeling rather fine



Our camp



The last sunset we saw in the Bugs



Robbie monter à cheval!



All the trash we packed out of the bugs



Leaving camp



THANK YOU, RITT KELLOGG COMMITTEE!!!!