

Polish climbers history, feb/mars 2013

In February and March 2013 a group of seven Polish climbers was active in Eikesdalen and Litledalen valleys. The expedition, supported by Polish Alpine Association, was organized by me, Przemysław Cholewa.

I am quite well acquainted with the middle section of Norway as I have been working for many seasons in Oppdal area and have been making excursions towards the sea many times, fascinated by the beauty of local mountains. Climbing with my Norwegian friend Rune Kvalsnes I realized that local climbers generally focus on ice cascades leaving the many hundred meters high rockfaces unclimbed. Certainly, low altitude of the peaks as well as abundance of grass in the cliffs are among causes for this. Yet for us, the climbers brought up in Polish Tatras, such conditions (steep or vertical grass especially) are far from inconvenient. It came naturally, thus, that I organized a winter trip to Norway to directly experience mixed climbing there. Having an extensive collection of stills of Eikesdalen and Litledalen cliffs I found companions for the trip with ease. The team comprised of six men and one woman. We hired a cosy hut in Eresfjord, barely 15 minutes walk from cliffs of Goksoyra massif. The weather was benign enough to allow us to complete majority of planned climbs.

We climbed west pillar of northern summit of Goksoyra in a team of three (Małgorzata Jurewicz, Józek Soszyński and me). We will keep in fond memory this fantastic line having all features of a super-classic route. At the beginning we maneuvered using only sparse protection among numerous slabs and crags. After reaching a flatter portion of the pillar we found ourselves surrounded by an amazing landscape of fjords and peaks of middle Norway. The upper part of the route comprised of several mixed and steep grass climbing. We finished the route after 10 hours of continuous climbing in rays of setting sun.

We have also left our own mark in Eikesdalen area by setting two new routes on 450 meters high cliff just above the hut we have been renting. Ice Forest is a line by Jasioł Kuczera and Marcin Księżak, starting with an ice cascade we had climbed before. Vertical Garden, climbed by Józek Soszyński and me, was a pure pleasure to explore a terrain unclimbed before. The routes have abseil stands (some of them involve tree trunks) which are a result of high avalanche danger forbidding us to climb in further parts of the valley.

We also climbed some ice pitches, the more interesting of which are Brudesloret and upper section of Mardalsfosen.

We plan to tap some of the overwhelming climbing resources of Eikesdalen in the following years. It seems almost beyond belief that in Europe there are still so many unclimbed, pristine pitches left to explore.

Yours,
Przemek Cholewa

The climbs, in chronological order:

24th February - Gosia i Józek: Inste Strandkolfossen 80m WI5-,
Yste Strandkolfossen 120m WI5-,

24th February - Jarek i Przemek: Ice cascade, 80m WI5

25th February - Gosia, Józek i Przemek: Goksoyra north summit via west pillar M5+, 900m, 10h (3rd ascent, 2nd winter ascent)

26th February - Jarek i Przemek: Goksoyra massif via eastern gully WI4, snow: 40 degrees, 450m

27th February - Gosia, Józek, Jarek: Yste Mardola WI4+, 400m

28th February - Andrzej i Przemek: Brudesloret WI5, 450m

28th February - Jasiek i Marcin: Brudesloret WI5, without the last 50m (headlamp malfunction)

In the following days due to bad weather (thaw and rain) we all tried some dry-tooling on a nearby crag (max. M7). After the weather improved we carried on mountain climbing activity.

7th March- Gosia, Józek, Jarek: Brudesloret 450m, WI5, without two ice pitches (bad ice)

7-9th March- Przemek, Andrzej, Jasiek, Marcin: Togveggen new route "Droga Polska" M7, VI+, A1+, 700m

9th March- Gosia, Józek: reconnaissance on western Harstadnebba pillar up to ca 400m.

12th March- Jasiek, Marcin: Goksoyra massif new route "Ice Forest" M5+, WI4, 450m, 7h

14th March- Józek, Przemek: Goksoyra massif new route "Vertical Garden" M6+, WI4, 450m, 10h

14th March- Jasiek, Marcin: Mardalsfossen WI6, 7h 300m