

Martencamp Lake Ice Climbs

by Danylo Darewych
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Martencamp Lake is a smaller lake north of Huntsville with an unremarkable looking cliff line, mostly obscured by trees, that has a surprising amount of ice of decent length (30 m). The climbing is somewhat scruffy and better later in the season.

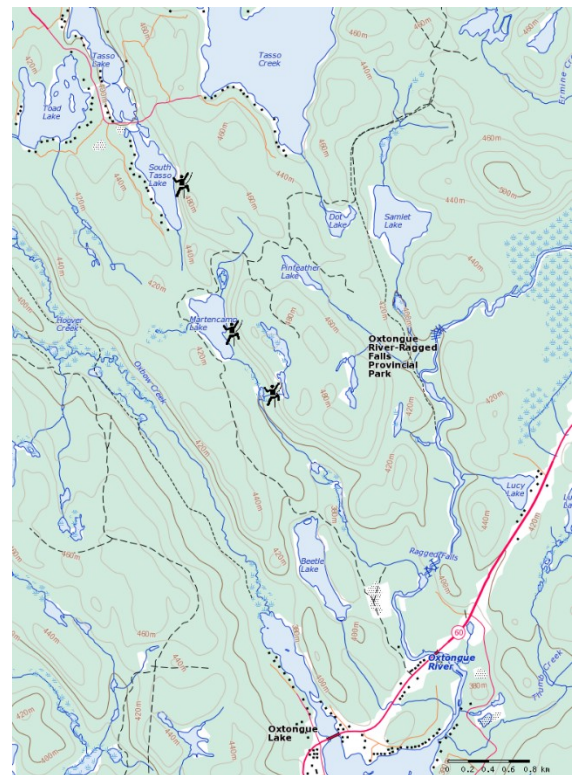


Directions

Martencamp Lake lies between the South Tasso Lake crag and the Timbertrail Crag, so the directions are basically the same as for South Tasso, but you just have to walk a little further south.

Get to Huntsville. From Huntsville head east along Highway 60 for about 12 km and then turn left (north) onto Limberlost Rd (Muskoka District Rd. 8). Drive for 23 km down Limberlost Rd to the end of the plowed section of road between Tasso Lake and South Tasso Lake (labelled Blue Lake on Google Maps). Park at the plowed parking area here.

Walk south down South Tasso Lake to its southern end (about 1 km). Pop over the small rise at its southern end and then continue south along a small, snow-covered, frozen creek/marsh area. There will be a steep, slope on your left. After 300+ m you should hit a small snowmobile trail that comes in from the right. Continue along it for another 350 m until you hit another, larger, more-travelled snowmobile trail. Bear left along it for 50 m and then turn right onto a cottage laneway that will bring you to the



north end of Martencamp Lake. Head south across the lake for about 250 m to the cliffs along the eastern shore. All the ice climbs are found along this 150 – 200 m long cliff band that runs along the eastern shore. The total distance of the approach is about 2.5 km and should take from 30-40 minutes depending on snow depth.

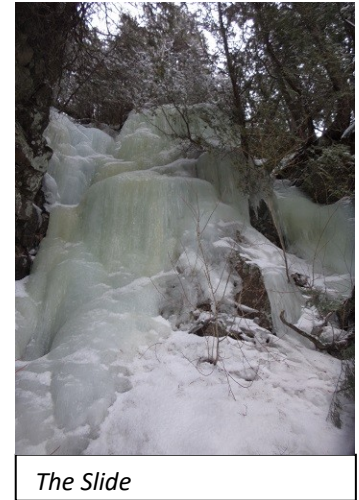
Routes

The Slide, WI2, 30? m

(Danylo Darewych, David Britnell, March 26, 2017).

This route is located in a notch at the left end of the cliff line, up a short slope. A small creek spills down the notch, creating a fat iceflow. Climb the fat, bulgy ice for as long as you like. It just kind of keeps going, but gets very easy angled after about 20 m.

Right of *The Slide* the cliff gets taller and steeper. The middle section is capped by a large, horizontal roof. The base in this section is obscured by trees. Towards the right end, the cliff becomes more broken, more open and easier-angled. There is a lot of fat, fairly easy-angled ice rolling down the rocky open face. There is a sting in the tail, however. Most of the face is capped with a short overhang. To exit you often have to climb out on steep bulges or pillars of various widths and heights (from 2-6 m) while at the same time battling through a maze of cedar branches. If this top-out does not sound appealing, then bring a v-thread hooking tool and descend off a v-thread (or a nearby tree).



The Slide

The Dozer, WI3+, c. 30 m

(Danylo Darewych, David Britnell, February 11, 2018).

Located just right of where the overhanging roof section ends, in a groove left of a big block with a large tree on top of it. Contrary to the route name, a delicate touch is required at the start. Climb thin, snow-covered ice up an easy ramp for 4-5 m. If the ice is thick enough, climb the steeper ice in the groove directly above. If not, head right up a corner onto the side face of the big block (3/4 driven stubby) and then up and back left to thicker ice. Continue on fat, rolling ice. There is a steep step at the top, made awkward by cedar branches, and a then a final bulge amongst the cedars. A partial path has been bulldozed for you.



Left: *The Dozer*. Right: *The Roller*. Below: *Skidder* area.

The Roller, WI2+, 30 m

(Danylo Darewych, Dave Britnell, David Wardlaw, February 11, 2018).

Located about 10 m right of *the Dozer*, right of the big block. Choose any line between the shrubs up the big, fat, rolling flow. There is final, slightly steeper step to top out.



Skidder, WI3+, 24 m

(Danylo Darewych, February 11, 2018).

This route starts about 10 m right of *The Roller*. Walk up the slope 5-7 m to the first ice step (with a bush in it), climb it and then head diagonally up and right over a second ice step. I was hoping to exit on a vertical 5-6 m curtain on the right, but that proved unconsolidated and full of branches, so I exited further left with the assistance of tree roots on a shorter (2.5 m), but still vertical, narrow pillar.

Lumberjack, WI3, 30 m

(Danylo Darewych, Dave Britnell, March 26, 2017).

Located another 15 m right, just past the first line of shrubs/trees. Climb big, fat ice over bumps and steps that get bigger and steeper as you get higher. Stop for a rest under a two metre overhang and then exit to the right of it up a short pillar, hacking through the cedar branches to the top.



Left: *Lumberjack* bottom. Right: Upper section. Below: *Timberjack*.

Timberjack, WI 3+, 24 m

(Danylo Darewych, March 26, 2017).

Located another 25 m further right, under the trees. Climb an initial easy, short (5-6 m) step, then walk up 7-8 m to a fat, wide, steep exit curtain and exit by whatever line strikes your fancy.



Just Because, WI3, 23 m of ice

(Danylo Darewych, Natalia Danalachi, March 12, 2023)

Located another 10-15 m right of *Timberjack*. Climb an initial 6-7 m of easy angled ice WI2), the wander up the treed slope for 12 m to the base of a bigger, fatter, upper ice-flow. This is the continuation to the right around a small rock buttress of the *Timberjack* ice flow. Belay here. Climb 10 m of iced-up steps, then head up and right to a final vertical ice step that forms over a small overhang, climb this step and hack through the iced up cedars to the top (another 10 m). Tree anchor.