

# Elite Climber Alex Honnold Leads First Ascent of One of the Tallest Unclimbed Rock Faces on Earth



Photograph by Matt Pycroft, National Geographic for Disney+ [caption] **WHO / WHAT:** While filming the upcoming original series from National Geographic for Disney+, **ON THE EDGE WITH ALEX HONNOLD (WT)**, world-class climbers **Alex Honnold** (“Free Solo”) and **Hazel Findlay** made the [first-known ascent of Ingmikortilaq](#), one of Earth’s tallest unclimbed natural monoliths. The cliff, composed of 3-million-year-old granite and gneiss, rises 3,750 feet out of a remote peninsula jutting into a fjord on Greenland’s eastern coast. The team began the climb from a dinghy at the base of the formation and camped out on what is known as a “shiver bivvy” — overnighting in their sleeping bags safely clipped in as they progressed up the face. Honnold and Findlay were able to free-climb the entire route of the 3-million-year-old rock. For the last 150 feet of the climb, they were able to disconnect from their ropes and walk safely to the summit. In the lead-up to Ingmikortilaq (pronounced Ing-mick-ort-till-lack), which in Greenlandic means “the separate one,” the team was joined by **Dr. Heïdi Sevestre**, a glaciologist working with the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program, and **Adam Mike Kjeldsen**, a Greenlandic guide, to complete what might be the first true crossing of the critical Renland ice cap from the Pool Wall. As they traversed the Renland ice cap, Sevestre and team dragged a special radar that took real-time measurements of the depth and density of the snow and ice below them. **WHEN:** After a 5-day climb battling icy weather conditions, Honnold and Findlay successfully summited the granite-gneiss rock face on Tuesday, Aug. 16. **WHERE:** Sitting at ground zero of the climate crisis, Ingmikortilaq, a 3-million-year-old gneiss-granite monolith, rises directly out of the Nordvestfjord in the Scoresby Sound region of eastern Greenland. It ranks among the *tallest big walls ever climbed* and heretofore stood as perhaps one of the *biggest unclimbed rock faces in the world*. **WHY:** In addition to summitting the never-before-climbed rock face and offering a window into that experience with audiences for the upcoming series produced by Plimsoll Productions for National Geographic, Honnold was motivated by the climate crisis. The scientific community desperately needs scientific data from remote locations like Ingmikortilaq, according to glaciologists like Sevestre. Through the Greenland expedition — and with Honnold’s team helping to fix ropes for her — Sevestre was able to measure the depth and density of ice caps, begin capturing crucial insights on the rate of polar ice melt, and more. **HOW:** The team approached the “4000-foot wall that came straight out of a fjord” in ocean-up style, according to Honnold, meaning they rowed a dinghy from a nearby land basecamp to the monolith and began their dramatic [ascent of the rock face](#), by Tuesday reaching the 3,750-ft tall summit – approx 750 ft higher than El Capitan, and almost three times the height of the Empire State Building. **MANDATORY MENTIONS:** The Disney+ Original Series from National Geographic **ON THE EDGE WITH ALEX**

**HONNOLD (WT)** will stream soon on Disney+. Learn more about this breaking news at [NatGeo.com](https://www.natgeo.com).  
**VISUALS AVAILABLE:** Hi-Res images and video available [HERE](#). **PLEASE NOTE:** When using any of the visuals, we ask that you include a mention of **ON THE EDGE WITH ALEX HONNOLD (WT)** and link to Nat Geo's story at [NatGeo.com](https://www.natgeo.com).