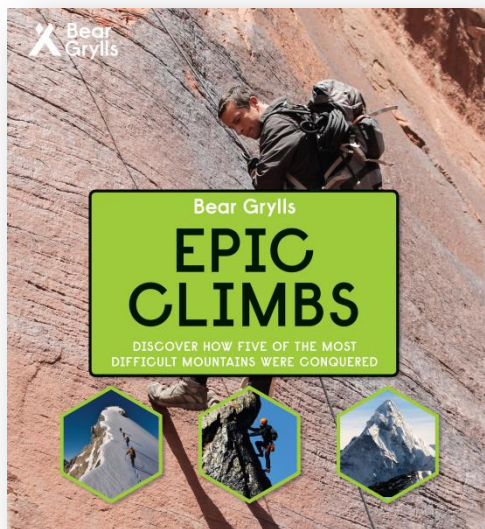


BEAR GRYLLS EPIC CLIMBS

Nonfiction | ISBN: 978-1-61067-938-1 | Ages 8-13 | Hardcover | 8 1/4 x 9 | 112 pp | \$12.99 | LOC: 2019930462

Join some of the world's greatest climbers as they embark on the most unforgettable adventures in history.



- Fascinating look at six of the most epic climbs in the history of mountaineering.
- Stunning photography throughout.
- Includes a chapter on Bear Grylls' personal relevant expeditions and achievements.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS ON THE EIGER		
1938	First successful ascent	Heinrich Harrer, Fritz Kasparek, Andreas Heckmair, Ludwig Vörg
1961	First winter ascent	Tommy Caldwell, Tom Hebl, David Mackintosh, Walter Kurbatger
1963	First solo ascent	Edmund Hillary
1973	First all-Female rope	Ilse and Rutkiewicz, Susana Wachs Stefania
2008	Fastest solo ascent	Ueli Steck

The view from the Eiger north wall, looking out over the Bernese Alps, Switzerland.

Success on the north face

Discovering a feasible, relatively safe route up the Eigerwand was a formidable problem. Max Sedlmayr and Karl Mehringer, the first to try, spent days studying the face through binoculars. The steep limestone often runs with meltwater, and the hanging ice fields are iron hard and frequently swept by falling stones. In bad weather, powder avalanches pour down the face. Safe bivouac sites are few. Hard overnight frost and settled weather

are vital for a safe climb. Despite courage, and their skill on the steep limestone of the Eastern Alps, none of the Eigerwand pioneers had previously encountered climbs of this scale. Also, because the Eigerwand rises from the meadows, climbers are in the public eye—their every move can be followed by tourists and the press through telescopes at Kleine Scheidegg in the valley below.

Four at the summit

In 1938, two experienced German climbers caught up with two capable young Austrians below Death Bivouac and joined forces to make a powerful team. Despite several falls, minor injuries, a fierce storm, snow-plastered rock, and finding a route up unclimbed terrain, they reached the summit after three bivouacs. They descended safely via the west flank.

The Climbers

The successful climbers after their safe descent, left to right: Heinrich Harrer, Ludwig Vörg, Andreas Heckmair, and Fritz Kasparek. Heckmair and Vörg, both from Munich, were experienced climbers. Kasparek and Harrer, from Vienna, were younger but had fine climbing records. The four climbers were feted throughout Alpine countries and their achievement was described in *The Illustrated London News*. Many had thought the north face would never be climbed.

Rescues

Mountaineers are honor bound to assist their fellows in distress, but rescue on the Eigerwand was long considered impossible. In 1957, two Italian climbers, Claudio Corti and Stefano Longhi, were approaching the White Spider when Longhi was injured in a fall. Leaving him hanging on the rope, Corti continued to the Spider where, injured himself, he bivouacked. But the accident had been noticed, climbers mobilized from all over the Alps, and the latest rescue gear was manhandled to the summit. Alfred Heppart was lowered 1,000 feet on a thin steel cable to piggyback Corti, after nine days on the north face, to safety. A storm broke before Longhi could be reached, and his body remained hanging there for two years.

BEAR SAYS

Rockfall is a major hazard. The cycle of freezing and thawing cracks the rock. Sun or warm weather then melt the ice, and pieces of rock fall. Avalanches of new powder snow, and other climbers above, may also dislodge stones.

Amazing feat

The Corti rescue amazed the Alpine world. The Grindelwald chief guide believed that rescue was impossible, but many others disagreed. The Munich Rescue Team had the equipment, and alpinists were determined to help one of their fellows. Only a massive effort, and the courage of other climbers, saved Corti's life.

Helicopters have revolutionized Alpine rescue: few places are out of reach of a rescuer swinging below a helicopter.