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## OCTOBER WEEKEND AT ALBERT HEIM HÜTTE

The plan was to close the 2017 summer season in grand fashion and to squeeze in one last climb on some Furka granite. The weather forecast forced us to lower our expectations, but we still had visions of dry south-facing walls near the Albert Heim Hütte. We decided to go, despite the weather, with a small Hochtour planned as a backup in case the walls were too wet or too cold for barehanded climbing. Our expectations continued to decline as we found the bus from Göschenen to the Furka pass was canceled and as we hiked through fresh snow from Realp to the hut, wasting both energy and daylight. There was more snow than we had expected: the walls were iced up and the glaciers covered in a thin layer of powder. As the

trip organizer, I felt a bit shameful for getting everyone into this situation, but I was overjoyed to find that our spirits never wavered. We spent the afternoon hiking (T4 or L-) to Chli Bielenhorn. Snow lay on the ground, but the skies were crisp and blue, with visibility extending beyond the Matterhorn. The rest of the evening was spent in the nearly empty hut while snow began to pile up outside (roughly 10cm that night). Visibility the next day was minimal, prompting us to head back to Realp without any big peaks or climbs in the bag. We had taken a risk: Furka in October! But even the worst case had turned out quite all right.

*James Patterson*

Climbing Chli Bielenhorn (photo James Patterson)

