

Informationen zur unmittelbaren Veröffentlichung

A short interview with Dörte Pietron, mountain guide and climbing shoe developer, on the opening and first ascent of ‘Dreamworks Inc’ (8c, 250 m, 8–9 pitches) on the Schwarze Wand.

Why did you decide to open the route?

We’ve been climbing in the Höllental for years and have already opened a few routes on the Riffelkopf. The Schwarze Wand is probably the steepest alpine face in Germany. It already has a number of routes, but until now there hadn’t been one through the steepest section. After we’d climbed ‘Katzen, die auf Löcher starren’, we knew the wall a bit better and wondered whether it might be possible. On the other routes, we’d noticed that there are always pockets whenever it gets steep. That’s why we were optimistic that it would be possible to get through even the steepest section. We then started bolting ‘Dreamworks Inc.’ ground up two years ago.

Was there a moment when you thought, ‘This might not work out’?

There were two such moments on the most difficult pitches. On the first crux pitch, there’s a bouldering section that seemed incredibly difficult to us. At first, we couldn’t find a solution. Looking at the holds, we did think it should be climbable – but it wasn’t clear whether we’d be able to climb it. We had to boulder for ages before we finally got it right. On the second crux pitch, we wanted to climb up an overhanging dihedral from the belay, but the rock quality turned out to be not really good there, so I bolted the line from the belay round the corner to the right, over an overhanging pillar, which required some pretty wild hooking and snapping. It took me ages to work out a solution there too. At first, it wasn’t clear whether going round the corner to the right would work, because you couldn’t see the terrain from the belay.

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How long does it take to set up, what's your approach, and what was particularly special about the Dreamworks project?

It took us three weekends for 'Dreamworks Inc.'. We had a rough idea of where we wanted to go after checking out the wall from the bottom. We knew roughly where it would get tricky. But then we were really surprised, because already on the fifth pitch you suddenly find yourself climbing a massive overhang full of huge jugs. It's almost absurd that something like that exists on an alpine wall at all. When opening a route, we always take turns. The tiring bit is that you're climbing in unfamiliar terrain the whole time and then constantly hopping back down. That is mentally strenuous too. When Dani's tired, I carry on, and vice versa. Usually, one of us manages about half a pitch and then we swap. On easier terrain, we sometimes do a whole pitch in one go.

Why did you link the two crux pitches after climbing the individual pitches?

Our idea is always to put belay stations at points where there's a no-hand rest – in other words, where you can stand or rest comfortably. All the other belays on the route are exactly at such points. It was just that this pitch seemed so difficult to us at first that we decided to split it at a flake where you can shake well, but where there isn't actually a no-hands rest. We weren't really happy with that, though. After I'd climbed the route with the two short pitches, I tried to climb it in such a way that all the belays were at no-hand rests.

How does a project like 'Dreamworks Inc.' or 'Mora Mora' influence you as a shoe developer?

What's great for me is that after two years of learning I finally prefer to climb only in my own shoes. The exciting thing is that it benefits both sides: because I'm so deeply involved in fine-tuning the interaction between shoes and footholds and sensing the tiniest differences, I can now say even more precisely which shoe is best suited to which situation. At the same time, projects like this help me to test any changes I make

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during development straight away and get immediate feedback. This helps me understand constructions and materials. Of course, I also seek feedback from various athletes to ensure the end result is just right.

Why was it so difficult to grade the route?

The move that I found hardest is clearly a morphological one. If you can stand on the low foothold and reach the hold, this move is quite doable. But I can't quite get there. I probably fell off 20 to 25 times whilst trying to send whereas Dani managed to climb this sequence right away. That said, the section after that is probably the opposite in terms of morphology, because shorter climbers might cope better with the high footholds. That's why I'd be very interested to hear what taller climbers think of the grade. Another factor is that it's very difficult to find good conditions on the wall. Because when all the holds are really dry, it's very warm and the grip isn't that good – that was the case on the first ascent. The second time, the easier sections were really wet and I had to climb the upper crux sequences with wet hands. The tricky conditions make it even harder to give a definitive grade.

What would you like repeaters to say about “Dreamworks Inc.”?

“I hope they have as much fun on it as we did. Because it's just really cool climbing and a really cool location. I hope they just think the route is premium climbing.”

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About Dörte Pietron

- **DAV pioneer:** The first female member of the DAV young alpinists team and, in 2011, founder of the women's young alpinists team. Since then, she has trained five generations of young female mountaineers. Recipient of the DAV Sports Award 2025
- **Alpinism:** First female ascent (and seventh overall ascent) of the West Face of Cerro Torre; climbed Fitz Roy four times. Established hundreds of new pitches in alpine terrain and sport climbing.
- **Red Chili shoe development:** Since 2024 she is a climbing shoe developer at RED CHILI – responsible for developing a completely new range of high-end shoes, created in close collaboration with two new athletes. Her first models will be launched in spring 2027.

Red Chili is a brand of EDELRID GmbH & Co. KG

About EDELRID:

Since its foundation in 1863, EDELRID has developed into one of the leading manufacturers of personal protective equipment (PPE), specialising in ropes and climbing equipment. EDELRID products are used in mountaineering and climbing, as well as in high ropes courses. The second major business division is dedicated to the professional use of climbing equipment, for example in occupational safety, industrial climbing, tree care, and mountain and high-altitude rescue. The company is characterised in particular by a high level of innovation and sustainability. EDELRID specialises in rope development and manufacture and was the first to launch bluesign®-certified ropes onto the market. All product development takes place at the company's headquarters in Isny in the Allgäu region, where 60 per cent of all products are also manufactured in its own rope-making facility. Short decision-making processes, flexible and innovative product development, and sustainable value creation are the hallmarks of the company. Through its in-house Academy, EDELRID offers a comprehensive training and course programme, including theoretical and practical courses designed to impart knowledge about PPE products and application techniques. Since 2017, the renowned climbing shoe brand Red Chili has been part of EDELRID's product portfolio. Since 2022, ABS Sports + Protection GmbH & Co.KG, a manufacturer of avalanche safety equipment, has been part of the EDELRID Group.