

# THE VOID/AVOIDANCE

**Grade:** M8+/9 or M7, 55m

**Location:** Stanley Headwall, Kootenay National Park BC

**Base Elevation & Aspect:** 2100m, Northeast facing

**First Ascent:** Alik Berg, Juan Henriquez, Kevin Sevalrud, November 2022

**ATES:** Complex (3)

*Editor's Note: I have reformatted this from the original post by Alik on the Facebook group Rockies Ice & Mixed Conditions. All photos, text and any errors are from that post -NB*

"Climbed the obvious steep wide crack left of sinus gully a couple weeks ago... Sean Isaac put the anchors in and tried it a bit in 2008 but haven't heard of anyone else climbing on it. Besides having possibly the least ice of any headwall winter route, it is quite a unique bit of climbing through the business. Drytooling up an overhanging 5-6" splitter; what fun!"

## Approach

As for *Sinus Gully*. Park at the Stanley Glacier parking lot off of Highway 93S.

Hike or ski up the Stanley Glacier summer trail to the hanging valley below the Headwall. Continue up towards the back of the valley, passing avalanche paths on the left and the prominent ice of *Suffer Machine* and *Nemesis* on the right.

Keep going to the next left-facing corner past *Nemesis*, where a lower-angle ice flow (*Sinus Gully*) drains from a large cave capping the corner. *The Void* takes a wide crack on the left of the ice. 1.5-2.5 hours from the car.

## P1 (*The Void*): M8+/9 30m

Start up the lower stepped corner passing a short wide pod (#5, 6 useful here; backclean the 6) and a piton to a perch on a block. Reach left into the intimidating offwidth and battle on to the chains.

## P1 var. (*Avoidance*): M7 30m

Climb the lower corner of *The Void* past the wide pod and piton to the block perch. From here, climb the thin corner on the right to the right side of the belay ledge.

## P2: M6 25m

Climb the corner above to gain blocky ledges (FP). Step left to easy ground or climb one last short offwidth to the same ledges (#5 useful here either way). Bolt belay.

## Descent

Rappel the route with a single or doubles.

## Rack

Nuts, cams to #6. Doubles #4-5 for the left or #0.4-2 for the right. Single rope sufficient.

## FA Notes

- The first pitch is the business and has two variations of rather different character. *The Void* climbs the steep wide crack directly, with *Avoidance* taking a pumpy hanging corner just to the right. Both are worth doing, but the direct is particularly good and unique for the area.
- It's not the playground so treat the blocks as such and I wouldn't recommend the route in summer or warm temps.
- [Pitch 2 is] not as good as the first pitch but worth it if you've got time.

