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## Thrill seekers

By DAVID LEACH  
Globe and Mail Update

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Fifty years ago this month, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay stepped onto the summit of Mount Everest and added an exclamation point to the Age of Exploration. Everything after that, it was assumed, would be just a footnote in the annals of adventure.

Well, not quite. Outdoor athletes and explorers continue to traverse remote corners of the globe, overcome extreme tests of endurance and define new ways to understand what "adventure" really means. And Canadians have been leaders in this wave of discovery and derring-do. Here are some of our best.

### Will Gadd: Canada's action hero

He has soared hundreds of kilometres. He has burrowed deep into the Earth's poisonous belly. He has shimmied up towers of ice that would leave a spider weak-kneed with doubt. The latest Hollywood superhero? Sort of. It took growing up in the playground of Alberta's Rocky Mountains to really inspire this Canmore, Alta.-based free spirit to become the world's most versatile adventurer. A top competitive ice climber, the 36-year-old Gadd has toolled his way up precarious new alpine routes in the Rockies and is heading north in June to sink his crampons into unstable Arctic icebergs. On his paraglider, he has hopscotched across the entire continent and holds the world distance record for a single flight. (423 kilometres).

In February, Gadd joined an expedition that used high-altitude mountaineering gear to explore deadly CO2-filled caverns in Thailand. "Several leading cavers told us we were going to die, but that's par for the



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