

Kyrgyzstan

PAMIR ALAI

KARAVSHIN

Ak-su valley, Pamir Pyramid, west face. The Anglo-German team of Daniel Danzer, Jens and Michael Richter, Markus Stofer, and Sarah and Tony Whitehouse climbed a new route on Pik 3,700m, the pyramid that stands immediately west of the Russian Tower. This summit has become known as the Pamir Pyramid, though it is not clear whether the name was originally given to this formation or to the smaller pointed summit below the northwest face of the Russian Tower.

The team arrived early, reaching base camp in the Ak-su valley at the start of July, and had mixed weather throughout their stay. Their new route, Russendisko, lies well left of center and left of all known lines on the triangular, slabby, west face. It has 10 pitches at 7a, 6c obl. The crux eighth pitch comes just below the second overlap high on the face. From the top a few



The west faces of the Pamir Pyramid (3,700m) and, above, the Russian Tower (a.k.a Pik Slesov, 4,240m). Only a few of the existing routes are shown. (1) Semiletkin Route (6B). (2) Klenov Route (6B, 1993). (3) Peristroika Crack (7a A2, 1991, 7b 1995). (4) Russendisko (7a, 6c obl, 2006). (5) Reluctant Chief (British E3 5c, 1999). (6) Missing Mountain (6b, 1998). (7) The Hostage (E5 6a, 1999). (8) The Last Laugh (E5 6a, 1999). The big face right of (8) is the Wall of Dykes. *Tony Whitehouse collection*



High on Perestroika Crack (18 pitches, 7b) on the west face of the Russian Tower (a.k.a. Pik Slesov, 4,240m). The route starts on a shoulder below and just to the right of the climber. This shoulder is the top of the Pamir Pyramid (3,700m). Way below is the Ak-su valley. *Tony Whitehouse*



During the ascent of Russendisko (10 pitches, 7a, 6c obl) on the west face of Pamir Pyramid (3,700m), Ak-su valley. *Tony Whitehouse collection*

the brilliant Perestroika Crack (7a A2, Faivre-Gentet-Givet-Roche, 1991; 7a+/7b, with one pitch of aid, by Francois Pallandre in 1993; all free at 7b/5.12 by Greg Child and Lynn Hill, 1995) on the west face of the Russian Tower (a.k.a. Pik Slesov, 4,240m). We fixed ropes, and most members of the party eventually completed the ascent, the best effort being a continuous 9:40 ascent by the Richter brothers. We climbed the route in 18 pitches, with the crux on the 12th pitch.

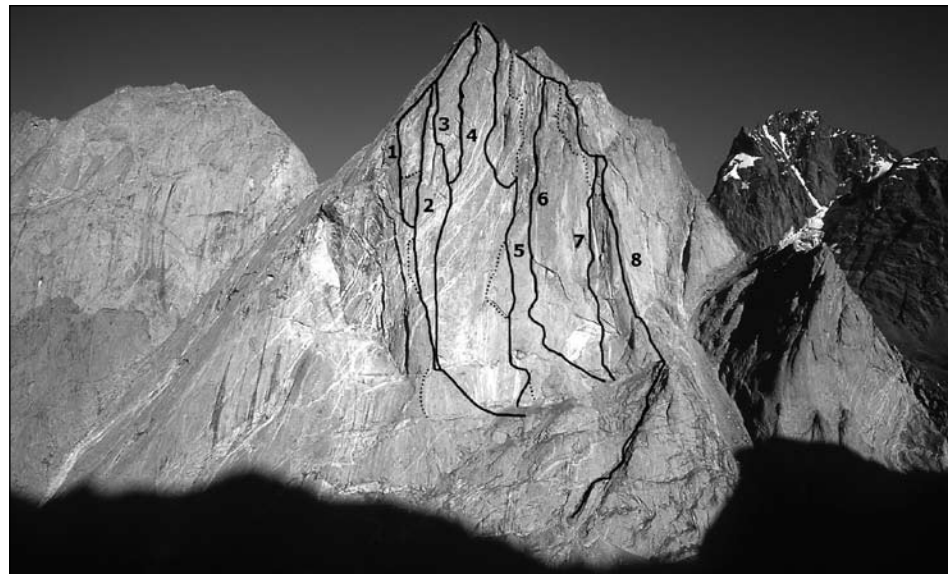
SARAH AND TONY WHITEHOUSE, U.K.

Kara-su valley, Asan, Alperien Route, variant finish. Through friends in China who had contacts with local Kyrgyz, I acquired permission to visit an area in Uzbekistan. I got the idea from photos taken from a helicopter by an Austrian friend. Our goal was to reconnoiter and then climb some of these granite formations. The backup plan would be the Karavshin. When we reached the Uzbek region, our hopes were quickly shot down. My brother Andy and I looked

easier pitches up right lead to the start of Perestroika Crack, or a short rappel down the wall to the left leads to scree slopes and an easy descent.

The original route on this face, Trento Passi nella Meta del Cielo (18 pitches, 6c+/7a), which was climbed in 1996 by Italians Marco Borghetti, Roberto Invernizzi, and Stefano Righetti, took a fairly direct line up the center, right of the prominent rock scar. In 1998 Sonja Brambati, Eraldo Meraldi, and Paolo Vitali added Missing Mountain (580m, 14 pitches, 6b), a route toward the right side of the face, finishing on the last pitch or two of the 1996 route. In 1999 Ian Parnell and Mark Pretty climbed The Reluctant Chief (530m, E3 5c) just to the right of the 1996 route, while Anne and John Arran climbed The Hostage (550m, E5 6a), which starts toward the right side of the face, crosses leftward through Missing Mountain and parallels it until moving right for the final three pitches. The same year Mark Baker and Chris Forrest climbed a series of corners around to the right, to give Mr. Chippendale (550m, E2). In 2005 Niall Grimes and Donie O'Sullivan thought they were on an unclimbed line left of The Reluctant Chief but met bolt belays and probably made a variant start to the 1996 Italian route.

The main objective of our Anglo-German expedition was a free ascent of the



The ca 900m northwest face of Asan (4,230m) in the Kara-su valley, Karavshin. To the left is the broad-summed Pik 1,000 Years of Russian Christianity (4,507m), whereas the rocky peak to the right with a left-slanting snow couloir is sometimes confusingly referred to as Aksu (4,925m). (1) Pogorelov Route (6A, 1986). (2) Moros finish (6A, 1986). The dotted lines show the Australian party's variants on the first free ascent via the Moros finish. (3) Odessa (Moglia) Route (6B, 2004). (4) Gorbenko Route (6A, 1986). (5) Russiacv Route (6B, 1988). The dotted lines show The Hammer and Sickle (2006). (6) Timofeev Route (6A, 1988). (7) Odessa (Pugachev-Maksimiyana) Route (2004). (8) Alperien Route (5B, 1986). The dotted line is the Libeck variant. *Lukasz Depta*

at valleys close to those I had seen in the photos and saw finger-like spires encased like children in a family of snowy peaks, but access was impossible in the time we had available. With all the river crossings and bushwhacking, it would have taken a few weeks just to get our gear to a base camp. I still felt blessed: it would be an area for future adventure in a virgin amusement park of climbing.

So we proceeded with a back-up plan. We headed to the Karavshin and spent four days scouting the area, while indulging in boiled goat, horse milk, and pungent yogurt curds. We were accompanied by beautiful local people, through a landscape that fueled enthusiasm and appreciation for life. This was when our first bout of sickness began. If you've walked from sunup to sundown while "it" is coming out both ends, you'll know the agony. Antibiotics had to be unleashed like warriors to kill demons ravaging our digestive systems. Five weeks later, at the beginning of September and after another dream trip of culture, reconnaissance, and climbing mayhem, the antibiotics were still being sent in for battle. I had to go through four courses to sustain vertical progress.

In our weakened state we scoped beautiful, enticing granite towers and slabs in two valleys, but, once we got up on a ridge and looked down into the Kara-su valley, where Asan and Usan emanate grand majesty, we could not resist temptation. We set up base camp with our sights on the 900m golden-granite northwest face of Asan.

We battled intestinal aliens while climbing easy pitches to a big ledge 250m up. That's where the spiciest part of the route began. Four consistent ropelengths of off-width challenged



Andy Libecki high on the Alperien Route on the northwest face of Asan (4,230m). Mike Libecki

gear, and the temperature was below 0°C. Next day we made the summit a few hours after the sun reached us. When we reached the top, where we took pictures in our Year of the Dog masks, we had been gone 35 hours from our high point.

It was clear that trying to rappel the route would be too risky. Ropes would inevitably get stuck and pull loose flakes onto us. Late that night, 15 hours after we had reached the top, we found ourselves in a gully that led to the valley floor. From the summit we'd made 17 new rappel stations down an untouched section of the wall on the side of the mountain opposite to that we'd climbed. I was in a paranoid state for the entire time. I knew if we got our ropes stuck, we were basically fucked. It was Russian Roulette every time we pulled the ropes. From our high point it had taken us 50 hours to summit and get down. Our climb had 21 pitches and rated 5.11 A2.

MIKE LIBECKI, AAC

Editor's note: the line climbed by the Libecki brothers appears to follow the classic 1986 Alperien Route (Russian 5B) on the right pillar of the northwest face. Above half-height, where the original route continues directly up to the crest of the southwest ridge, the pair moved left onto the wall and climbed a variant between the Alperien and the 1988 Timofeev Route, gaining the southwest ridge nearer the summit.

Kara-su valley, Asan, northwest face, The Hammer and Sickle and a free ascent of an existing aid line. During July and August, a team of four Australian climbers, Steve Anderton, Julian Bell, David Gliddon and Kent Jensen, spent 40 days living and climbing on the huge northwest face of Asan (4,230m). While climbing lines on the wall, we raised money for the charity Project Dare. Members of the public pledged cash, based on the number of hours the team spent

my old skills, learned when I was living in Yosemite. Nothing better than being 25m above the belay, walking a fully spread cam that is probably only good enough to hold itself. Although my brother had jumared before, he'd never had to deal alone with logistics. I led all the pitches; he belayed, cleaned, and dealt with hauling issues for the first time.

On two pitches we found ancient rivets and remnants that could have been hemp rope. Once we got higher, we traversed left to splitters. From this point the climb appeared to be on untouched stone. There was some basic A2 coral digging, but two of the pitches were among the best 5.11s I have experienced. We fixed six pitches, then took a few rest days through rainy weather. We still had around 450m to go to the top.

We started just before dawn, taking only one liter of water each. After 20 hours we found a nice ledge, where we each ate two inches of summer sausage, curled up in fetal positions, and shivered like cartoon characters until dawn. We had no bivouac

on the wall. For the duration of our climbing period we were supported by three Australian climbers and two locals, who tirelessly brought food and water to a camp a few pitches up the face.

The approach, in an ex-Soviet truck via the dusty town of Osh, was incredibly taxing. The team faced endless roadblocks by gun-toting soldiers demanding bribes. These ranged from money to vodka and cigarettes. A washed out road extended the approach and caused the team to spend three days on horseback before arriving at base camp. However, a clever maneuver by an interpreter avoided the \$10 per day protection fee administered by a wandering contingent from the Kyrgyz army.

The four of us initially summited the wall in a relaxed style, taking 16 days and using plenty of fixed rope. Our climb was rated A3+ 5.10+ and we established a rappel route with the aim of free climbing and filming the line. To our surprise, it was not an original route, as we discovered an array of decrepit Soviet hardware [apart from a more direct start and a couple of variation pitches along the way, the line was the same as the 1986 Pogorelov Route, with the 1986 Moros finish, 6A—Ed.]. The climb featured excellent bivouac ledges every 200m, with each able to accommodate at least five people. Portaledges were only used for comfort and convenience.

After a few days' rest at our advanced base camp on a vast, comfortable ledge at 150m, we began free climbing and filming the route. To our surprise we managed to free most pitches first try. The climbing was of excellent quality, with soaring cracks and plentiful features. The solid pinkish granite sucked up natural gear and only nine protection bolts were used during the entire climb. After nine or so pitches the angle increased, giving six steep, wildly exposed pitches of 5.11+ crack and face climbing. After a rest at the luxurious Camp 4, we traversed right and climbed another 10 or so pitches of mainly 5.10-5.11 to the summit.



The ca 900m northwest face of Asan (4,230m) seen from Yellow Wall. On the right is the highest peak in the region, Pik Piramidalniy (5,509m). Marked are the three routes climbed by visiting parties in 2006. (1) A combination of the 1986 Pogorelov Route and 1986 Moros finish climbed free at 5.11d by an Australian team. (2) The Hammer and Sickle (VII A4 5.11, Bell-Gliddon). (3) The 1986 Alperien Route (5B) with a variation finish climbed by the Libecki brothers. Dave Gliddon



Steve Anderton free climbing pitch 10 (5.11b) of the 1986 Pogorelov Route on the northwest face of Asan. This is the second pitch above Camp 3 on top of the pillar. Dave Gliddon

The resulting climb is a superb 25-pitch (many 60m in length) line at 5.11d. The quality is excellent, the rock good and the bolted belays provide a continuous rappel line. With fantastic bivouac ledges and a sustained level of difficulty, this is surely one of the best, moderate, big wall free routes in the world. Oh, and did I mention that it hardly rained and the temperature hovered around 25°C?

Later, over eight long days, Julian Bell and David Gliddon climbed a steeper line on the face to the right. The Hammer and Sickle (VII A4 5.11) was completed in capsule style, featured a 30m pendulum, and had two huge roofs, including a 70m A3+ arch that I felt was the greatest pitch of my life. The route featured substantial sections of hooking and copperheading up a very steep section of the wall [the route uses a few of the lower pitches of the 1988 6B Russiaev Route, before a pendulum left leads to the left slanting arch. Higher, it rejoins the Russiaev for two more pitches. Where the original route swings left, a direct line is followed to the summit ridge]. The route gave around 1,300m of climbing and a small video of the ascent can be found on YouTube at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=SUWSx2x9FgE>

Our base camp manager, Glen Foley, and Kyrgyz climber “crazy” Alex climbed a line up Yellow Wall on the opposite side of the valley. Over three days they retrieved bullet-riddled gear and a portaledge abandoned by the Caldwell-Dickey-Rodden-Smith party in 2000, when they were kidnapped. In the last week of the expedition Steve Anderton went back to the summit of Asan with “crazy” Alex, and on our 40th day jumped from the top in a wingsuit.

JULIAN BELL, *Australia*



The line of the new Polish route, Czarna Wolga (29 roped pitches and ca 1,700m of climbing, 7a), on the northwest face of Kotina (4,521m), Kara-su valley. *Jan Kuczera*

Kara-su valley, Kotina, northwest face, Czarna Wolga. There are many problems to overcome if you go to the Karavshin. It's possible to hire an agent to prepare everything, but we couldn't, as we didn't have the money. Nevertheless, at the beginning of August we reached the Kara-su, the western of the region's two main valleys. The five climbers in our group split into two teams: Łukasz Depta and Wojciech Kozub as one and Artur Magiera, Jerzy Stefa ski, and I as the other. Artur, though, was ill at the start of the trip and didn't take part in the initial climbing.

To get the feel of the rock, we first chose the Diagonal Route, the most logical line up the Yellow Wall (3,800m). We climbed this 500m line at 6a+, but moved simultaneously up half of it because of the low level of difficulty. Artur and Wojciech later also climbed this line.

Next Jerzy and I climbed the Timofeev route on the 900m northwest



On the first ascent of Czarna Wolga (ca 1,700m of climbing, 7a) on the northwest face of Kotina (4,521m). *Jan Kuczera*

face of Asan (4,230m). This route was established in 1988 at Russian 6B, but it subsequently became popular and was downgraded to 6A. Because our ropes were only 50m long, we had problems on some pitches, which were up to 60m long. The difficulties were 7a and A3, on solid rock except in the upper section, which was friable and wet. We made two uncomfortable bivouacs and arrived on the summit of Asan during our third day, having made the ascent in alpine style.

Our next objective was the beautiful, huge northwest face of Kotina (4,521m). We first rested for six days in order to heal finger wounds, then Artur, Jerzy, and I set off alpine style. We estimated that it would take us three days to climb the face, but in fact we completed it in half that time. The entire route gave nice climbing on solid rock. Up to two-thirds height the face offered mainly slab climbing, up to 6a, but the line through the steeper headwall above followed cracks and corners, which we found harder and graded 7a. We used mostly nuts, Friends, and occasional pitons and placed no bolts. After one-and-a-half days we were on the summit. However, an unpleasant descent was still to come. After eight hours of rappelling, downclimbing, and walking to the east, we arrived in the Ak-su valley, from where it was another three hours walk back to our base camp. We finally arrived at our tents at midnight. We named our route Czarna Wolga (1,500m of climbing plus 200m up the summit ridge, 29 pitches all climbed onsight, 7a). The name roughly translates as “Black Volga,” in reference to the infamous Soviet car associated with the KGB.

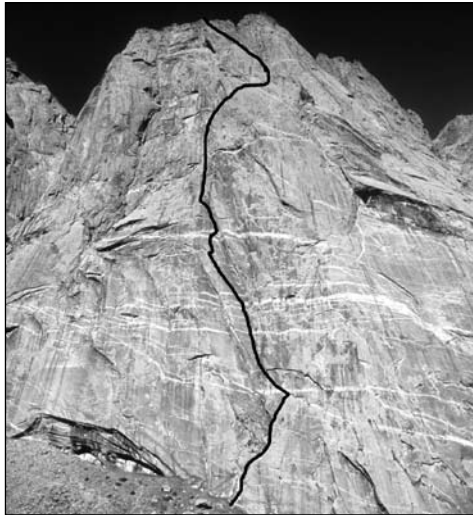
Artur, Jerzy, and I now wanted to try the awesome west face of Pik 4,810m. Our plan was to repeat the Rusayew route, graded Russian 6A, but we weren't prepared for the 10-15m ice wall that guarded access to the foot of the face; without ice gear we were unable to set foot on the wall. Meanwhile, the other two members of our team, Łukasz and Wojciech, completed a new route on a nameless peak opposite Asan [see report below].

It was now September, and temperatures were getting lower and the wind stronger. We made two other attempts, one on Asan and the second on Yellow Wall, but due to poor weather, tactical mistakes, and a certain lack of motivation, we decided to go home.

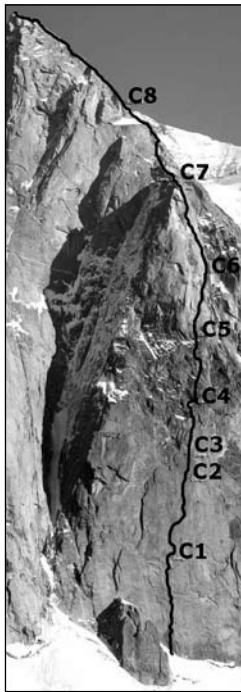
JAN KUCZERA, *Poland*

Kara-su valley, nameless tower, Opposite to Asan. Our plan was to repeat existing routes but also climb new ones in the Kara-su valley. For our new route we chose the east face of the nameless tower directly opposite Asan; its altitude is ca 4,000m. We met a Kyrgyzstan climber named Alexiej who told us this yellow granite wall was unclimbed. Stable sunny weather helped us achieve our goal.

We scoped the face from the ground and saw a possible line up a system of corners and chimneys in the central section of the face. We sketched topographic details, to make route-



The new Polish line, Opposite to Asan (6a, 700m), on the east face of a ca 4,000m rock formation on the opposite side of the Kara-su valley to Asan. *Lukasz Depta*



The new Ukrainian route up the right side of the north face of Rocky Ak-su (a.k.a. Aksu North, 5,217m). *Anna Piunova collection*

finding easier once we were on the wall, and with this topo of a nonexistent route and some aid gear we set off at daybreak.

From the start we were pleasantly surprised by the quality of the granite and hoped it would continue. We climbed the great corner by a system of elegant cracks. A little roof appeared above, and it seemed likely we would need to use aid, but we found that it went free. The pitch above, however, turned out to be the hardest of the route, though perfect Friend placements assured good protection for this 40m dihedral.

By now the sun was leaving the wall. We exited the great corner and followed a system of shallow chimneys, while watching shadows creep slowly up the west face of Asan. Chasing darkness but still on excellent rock, we came to the end of the difficulties and avoided an unpleasant bivouac on the harsh vertical wall, reaching the summit at twilight.

Although it was a frosty night, it seemed better to stay than lose our way in the dark. The sparkling lights of the other climbers on Asan disappeared, to be replaced by familiar constellations appearing from behind the ridge. Cuddled inside a rescue blanket, we fell into a restless slumber. Next day we returned to the valley and paid our respects to shepherds in a wooden shelter, before making our way back to base camp. We named our route, logically, Opposite to Asan (700m, 17 pitches, French 6a, sustained at V and V+, 150m of easier II-IV). We also repeated the classic Alperien Route (Russian 5B) on the west face of Asan, taking one-and-a-half days to make a redpoint ascent at 6c+.

LUKASZ DEPTA, *Poland*

Liayliak Valley, Rocky Ak-su, north face, Odessa Route. In July and August Ukrainians V. Cheban, A. Lavrinenko, T. Tsushko, and V. Mogila (leader) climbed a new 6A route up the right side of the north face of Rocky Ak-su (a.k.a. Aksu North, 5,217m). The route starts on the steep wall between the original line on Aksu, the 1982 Troshchinenko route (6A), and, to the right, the 1988 Pershin route (6B) and its more direct variant, the Klenov route (6B, 1996). After broken ground above the first buttress, the new route cuts through the Pershin route to take a line more toward the right edge of the second pillar. Above, it follows the Pershin and then the Troshchinenko up the long but easier

ridge above to the summit.

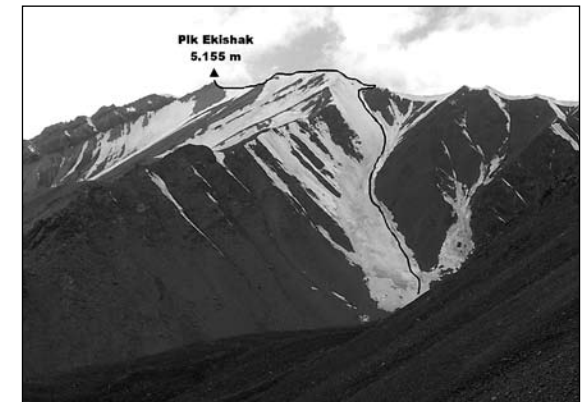
The Odessa Route is 1,700m long, with technical difficulties up to A4. Eight camps were required on the face. With the exception of a 30m section below Camp 4 (at the top of the first buttress), the first 20 pitches (as far as Camp 6, midway up the second pillar) were new. The remaining 22 pitches to the summit coincided with the Pershin and/or Troshchinenko. The climbers left all pitons in place, and the ascent was awarded second place in the Alpinism category of the CIS championships.

PAUL KNOTT, *New Zealand*, and ANNA PIUNOVA, *www.mountain.ru, Russia*

PAMIR

Zaalayskiy Range, Pik Ekishak, first ascent; Pik Molly, northwest ridge; Zarya Vostoka and Kurumdy West, attempts. Our Madteam/X-plore Expedition of Raúl Andrés, Olga Ariño, Irene Artuñedo, Enric Cano-sa, Albert Falcó, Daniel Guimaraens, Julio Masip David Oliveras, Jordi Sidera, David Taurà, Quim Valentí, and Gerard Van der Berg visited the eastern Zaalayskiy Khrebet, close to the borders with Tajikistan and China.

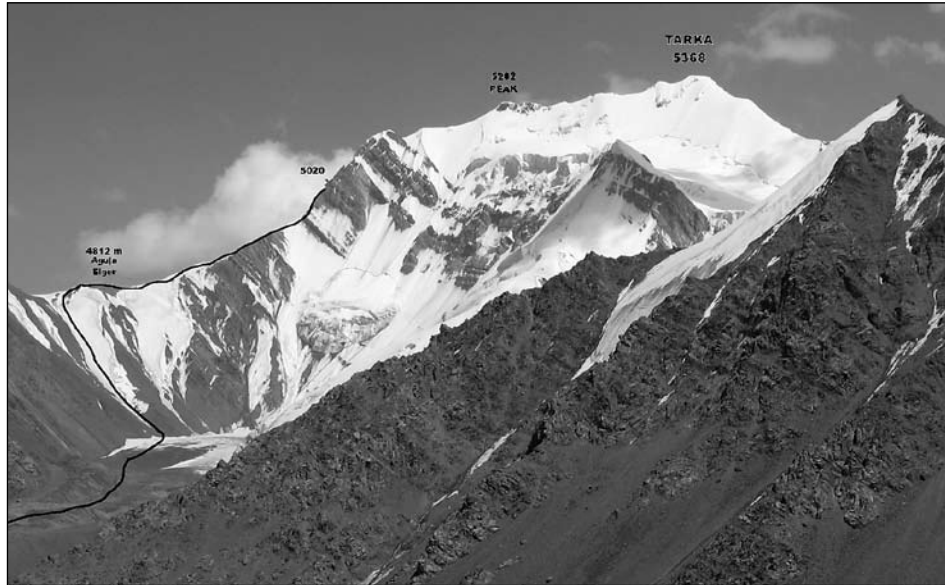
This is a rarely visited region of the Pamir, the northern flanks of which have been explored by only four or five expeditions to date. There were no other climbers in the range while we were there, and we found the solitude and vast potential for exploration amazing. However, we were not able to make major ascents, due to the poor weather and poor mountaineering conditions. Summer 2006 featured rain every afternoon and high temperatures (a minimum of -1°C at 4,200m). There was no frost at night, the snow was always soft, there were avalanches and rock-fall day and night, and the rock we encountered was of poor quality. We established base camp at 3,550m, an



Ekishak (5,155m) showing the route of the first ascent up the south-east couloir to northeast ridge (PD+). *David Taurà*



The north face of Zarya Vostoka (a.k.a. Eastern Sunrise Peak, 6,349m) in the Zaalayskiy Range of the eastern Pamir. The line of the first ascent by a four-person Kyrgyz team in 2000 follows a hidden ridge to gain the snow rib in the center of the lower face. It then climbs straight up the uniform snow face above to reach the summit ridge left of the highest point. The lower, flat-topped peak to the right contains two summits both marked as 5,998m. *David Taurà*



Pik Tarka (5,368m) on the east side of the Kurumdy Glacier. A Spanish expedition made an attempt on Pik 5,262m to the northeast of Tarka, climbing a 45° couloir on the west flank of its north ridge. They crossed a small top, which they named Aguja Eiger (4,812m), before reaching a high point of ca 5,000m. *David Taurà*



Climbing the easy couloir on the southeast face of Ekishak (5,155m) in the Zaalayskiy Range to make the first ascent. *David Taurà*

advanced base on the western bank of the Kurumdy Glacier at 3,950m, a second advanced base alongside the upper eastern bank of the glacier at 4,200m, and placed a high camp on the east side of Golova Orla (5,441m) at 4,650m. From this high camp we attempted the northeast ridge of Golova but failed short of the summit. A British-Russian team climbed this peak via the northwest ridge by in 2000.

Falcó and I did make the first ascent, on August 1, of an easy route to the summit of a 5,155m peak on

the long ridge connecting Golova Orla and Shining Peak. We climbed a couloir on the southeast face, which in the last 200m steepened from 50-65°, to break through a cornice onto the northeast ridge at a 5,030m col. We continued up the crest on poor rock (II) to the summit. As the top was composed of two horns, we named the peak Ekishak (Kyrgyz for “two horns”) and our route Chocolate Ice (700m, PD+). Artuñedo and Oliveras repeated the route two days later.

From our first advanced base we climbed the east flank of Shining Peak (4,789m) at PD, a peak first climbed by the mixed north ridge by a British expedition in 1999. From our second advanced camp we climbed the northwest ridge of Pik Molly (4,748m), a peak also first climbed

by the 1999 British expedition via a rather dangerous snow face. Our 600m ridge (Dancing in the Moonlight) was AD, largely rocky (II/III), with some snow and ice ramps of 55°.

The highest peak in the ring of mountains immediately east of our advanced bases on the Kurumdy is Pik Tarka (5,368m). We attempted Pik 5,262m to its northeast, first by walking up a side glacier to ca 4,300m, then climbing an open couloir/snow slope of 45° on the west flank of the north ridge. Turning right at the top, we crossed a small point that we named Aguja Eiger (4,812m) and continued up the ridge above (60° maximum, mixed), until forced to retreat by bad weather at just over 5,000m.

We tried to climb Zarya Vostoka (a.k.a. Eastern Sunrise Peak, 6,349m,) via the north ridge-north face, the route of the first ascent in August 2000 by the Kyrgyz team of Leonid Fishkis, Aleksandr Novik, Daniil Popov, and Natalya Zotova. This team reached the crest of the ridge via a snow couloir on the west flank. We climbed to the left, on the west face of a point on the ridge we named Aguja Jularg (4,890m). Our route to this small summit we named Chiquita cuesta Chacho (410m, D 65° M3). We then continued up the ridge and onto the broad slopes of the north face of Zarya Vostoka, reaching a height of 5,400m before deep, unconsolidated snow forced us back.

The other big peak we tried was Kurumdy West (6,545m), from our high camp east of Golova Orla. We only reached a low col, having experienced dangerous rock fall. We retreated from 5,000m. The main summit of Kurumdy (6,613m) was climbed in 1932 from the south: the west peak is still unclimbed.

DAVID TAURÀ, *Spain*

WESTERN KOKSHAAL-TOO

Navlikin and Malitskovo glaciers, first ascents. At the start of September our ISM expedition made the now-familiar trip via Naryn to the Kokshaal-Too and established base camp at the delightful lake below the west side of the Navlikin Glacier. The team comprised Ulrik Andersen, Ben Box, James Bruton, Joanne da Silva, Greg Paul, Todd Siemers, Nick Wheatley, and guides Adrian Nelhams, Vladimir Komissarov, and I.

On our first full day all of us walked five hours up the glacier to reconnoiter objectives and acclimatize. After this the weather closed in, and it snowed heavily for 24 hours, putting 30cm of snow at base camp and considerably more at higher altitudes. Once the weather cleared, we made an exploratory trip to the Malitskovo Glacier immediately east, which revealed a cluster of excellent unclimbed peaks. After a “council of war,” one team led by me attempted Pik 5,611m, the peak next to Pik Byeliy (a.k.a. Grand Poohbah, 5,697m) at the head of the Navlikin, while two other teams led by Nelhams and Komissarov attempted peaks around the Malitskovo.

It took two days for da Silva, Box, Bruton, and I to establish a camp at 4,650m below Pik 5,611m, but we were then pinned down for the next three days by evil weather. Most slopes were then even more heavily laden and avalanche-prone than before. We climbed to ca 4,850m but turned back when the depth of unstable snow reached the handles of trekking poles. At night wind gusts were like express trains, but we had a bombproof tent (Bruton’s Hillenberg). On the plus side, da Silva taught us to play Bridge, which gave some in-tent entertainment. A tent fire also enlivened proceedings. Finally, there was a brief clearing, and we climbed a small



Looking south up the western branch of the Malitskovo Glacier. On the left is Pt. 4,996m (dubbed Pik Kanashay), which was climbed via the north ridge facing the camera to a point ca 300m from the summit. The big peak in the far distance is Byeliy (a.k.a. Grand Poohbah, 5,697m), a well-defended summit that awaits an ascent. *Pat Littlejohn*

peak above camp (Pt. Argon, 4,880m), before heading down when food ran out. On the way back to base we had a fantastic day, making the first traverse of Macciato Peak (4,656m), nine hours of fine mountaineering along a sharp crest.

Meanwhile, the other teams had been attempting five peaks above the Malitskovo Glacier. Here the weather was much better, it being lower and farther north. Byeliy seems to hold its own weather system and often be in a storm cloud when everything lower is clear. Andersen, Komissarov, and Paul climbed Pik Ascha (4,717m) and the more distant Pik Novey (4,760m). Nelhams, Siemers, and Wheatley then joined them for an ascent of Pik Berum (4,812m).

The dominant peak of this glacier is the superb, fin-like Pik 4,996m. Nelhams, Siemers, and Wheatley climbed the east flank of this, and then followed the sharp north ridge to a ca 4,940m forepeak just short of the summit, where they were stopped by lack of time and 300m of dangerously corniced ridge ahead. They propose the name Pik Kanashay (Queen). Finally, Andersen, Nelhams, and Paul reached 4,900m on Pik 4,975m but turned back because of avalanche danger. The expedition was felt to be excellent and memorable, despite not achieving the major objective of Byeliy.

PAT LITTLEJOHN, *Alpine Club*

BORKOLDY RANGE

Southwest Borkoldoy, Pks 4,608m, 4,778m, 4,661m, 4,705m, and Damdjeggs, first ascents; At Bashi region, first ascents. We traveled to Kyrgyzstan in September for a month's climbing. After a few days acclimatizing in the Ala Archa National Park, we headed for the Borkoldoy, just north of the Kokshaal-Too in the southeast of the country. This proved to be a two-day journey on deteriorat-

ing tracks, where we met Pat Littlejohn and members of an ISM expedition. Following their generous advice, we went to a previously unvisited valley in the southwestern corner of the range.

We established base camp, just beyond the valley's narrow entrance, at 3,300m. Our first day involved climbing a steep ridge above the south side of the valley, which we followed for three hours to a prominent whaleback plateau marked with a distinctive set of gullies in the shape of a chicken's foot. The flat glaciated plateau led onto a narrow snowy ridge, with a line of sharp peaks linking to the highest summits above the valley.

On this day we were limited to an ascent of the first of these, a sharp peak that we called the Chicken's Head, marked 4,608m on the map.

Subsequently, we made an advanced base 8km farther up the widening valley at a delightful spot (ca 3,800m) near the foot of the main glaciers. The following day we climbed the distinctive snow peak on the south side of the valley, the main summit on the ridge farther on from the Chicken's Head. A long, snow slope led to a sting in the tail: a steep snow-covered ice slope (AD) leading to the shapely summit. Our maps gave the height as 4,778m and we named it Hamish's Peak. There were fantastic views in all directions, especially to the south toward the mountains of the Kokshaal-Too.

The north side of the valley was our next target. While the southern slopes are mainly snow-free and covered with vast piles of scree, the northern slopes are entirely snow-covered, with glaciers spilling down from summit ridges. Steep scree-scrambling (or scree-stumbling) brought us to steep, loose, rocky slopes. These gave two pitches of III to a summit of 4,661m, which we named the Bear's Paw. From here we had extensive views over the Borkoldoy Range, looking down onto the main wide valley running from the western edge of the range right into the center. We romped along the narrow ridge, ascending steep little summits. At one point, ca 4,500m, we encountered large animal tracks. Their size (as big as size 10 boots) convinced us they were bear tracks. Eventually, Misha, our Russian camp manager, declared he'd had enough of our seemingly insatiable progress, so we made a long scree descent.

The next day we headed up-valley in deteriorating weather to a distinctive long, hump-shaped mountain splitting the valley in two, with large glaciers on either side. It turned out to be farther away than we estimated and provided a demanding slog up the ridge and onto the 4,705m summit, where a cairn and large wooden posts clearly revealed we weren't the first. Puzzled by the size and weight of these posts, we later asked Vladimir Komissarov, who suggested they may have been deposited by the military in the days of border tensions. As they were most likely dropped by helicopter, perhaps we could claim the first ascent on foot.

After a rest day due to heavy snow, we walked into the cwm south of our camp and, crossing to the southeast corner, went up straightforward snow slopes, with a few small crevasses, to a summit named Pik Damdjeggs (4,690m). Clear weather revealed farther peaks and ridges still waiting for ascents. None of the peaks was significantly higher than any other, so the highest is probably be no more than 4,800m. Placing a camp farther up the valley, either on the moraine or on the glacier would give more reasonable days.

Leaving the valley, we moved farther west to the At Bashi Range, making the first full exploration of the gorge and valley above the village of Akalla. Our Russian-built UAZ 4x4 van took us high into the valley, where we placed a camp at 2,885m. However, we underestimated the size of the mountains and failed to put our camp high enough to ascend any of the peaks we were after.

On our first excursion we explored a hanging valley, heading for distinctive sharp summits at its head. Poor snow led to a retreat at 3,780m, after a small slab avalanche gave a clear warning.

We will be returning to some unfinished business. The following day we scrambled up the ridge east of our camp, only to find deep snow over large blocks, which limited us to a prominent top at 4,100m. One kilometer farther more distinctive peaks appeared to rise to ca 4,400m.

Attempting to improve our chances, we bivouacked the following night at 3,350m on the far side of the valley, hoping the extra height and an early start would allow us to reach a more satisfying summit. Deceptively large distances and hidden drops took us to an attractive sharp ridge that provided enjoyable scrambling reminiscent of the North Ridge of Tryfan in North Wales. However, fatigue limited progress to a height of ca 4,200m at a prominent top, the ridge continuing to a distinctive summit at ca 4,600m.

We thank Igor Prasolov, Dmitry Sosodov, and Micha Suhorukov from ITMC for their devoted, unstinting support: Dima for ascending his first 4,500m peak, Micha for letting himself be towed along an apparently unending and bear-infested ridge by two crazy English guys, and Igor for his inimitable approach to driving and keeping us safe for the month.

DAVE MOLESWORTH *and* MARK WEEDING, U.K.

Editor's note: the At Bashi (Horse's Head) is a range of limestone peaks immediately north of the Kyzyl Asker group at the west end of the Western Kokshaal-Too. There are no peaks above 5,000m and no record of any climbing until 2002, when it was visited by an ISM expedition. An adjacent area was visited the same year by another British expedition (see AAJ 2003, pp. 352-353, which includes a sketch map of the At Bashi).

TIEN SHAN

Ak-Shirak, seven first ascents, first south-to-north crossing. By daylight the river flood plain of moraine debris stretched away to where distant peaks shone whitely. The skis and sledges lay forlorn at the roadside, where we had been unceremoniously dumped in pitch darkness the night before. The drivers had caused a five-hour delay in reaching our destination by getting the truck stuck in thawing river ice. Those same drivers had assured us that no vehicle track led up the Kara Suy valley. We were looking at one now. There was no option but to break camp and follow this track.



Looking from the northwest over a ruined meteorological station toward the peaks of the Ak-Shirak, Tien Shan. From left to right: Piks Eagles, Koyon, Kargo, Chasovoi, and Kyrgysia. Dave Wynne-Jones



The upper reaches of the Petrov Glacier, an unexplored part of the Ak-Shirak Range. Dave Wynne-Jones

Our seven-member team, comprising Derek Buckle, Alistair Cairns, John Goodwin, Lizzy Hawker, Anna Seale, Mike Sharp, and I as leader, traveled by 4WD from Bishkek via the Barskoon Gorge and Suek Pass (4,000m) to Kara Suy village, where a border-zone permit was required. We then moved on to the Kara Suy valley, up which we expected to continue by vehicle on a dirt track, seen during our 2003 reconnaissance.

After four days of sledging on gravel and river ice, with a few double carries, we camped at the snout of the Kara Suy Glacier. The Mer de Glace in the Mont Blanc Massif of France carries a wealth of associations, but this sea of ice had more and bigger waves than any of us had seen from Ecuador to Antarctica. Navigating to a high camp, from which we could access several peaks, we found ourselves above the waves at 4,200m.

We sited our camp (N 41° 48.560', E 78° 13.815', 4,193m GPS) on the flank of an icefall, beneath a ridge coming down from Kyrgysia (4,954m), the highest peak in the northern half of the Ak-Shirak. After making a first ascent of Pik Chasovoi ("Sentinel," 4,765m) in a near white-out, then scouting the route to Kyrgysia Pass in a bitter wind that froze fingers and cameras, we climbed the south spur of Kyrgysia. From the summit we enjoyed panoramic views of the Ak-Shirak Range and the extensive peaks of the Tien Shan beyond. The ski descent to camp was superb.

Over the next few days we climbed the exposed Pik Karga ("Raven," 4,831m) and the superb viewpoint of Pik Anna (4,658m), skinning to within 100m of the summits before donning crampons. Then, on a less auspicious day, we moved camp to the glacial watershed and made three further first ascents.

A glacier bay to the northwest gave access to two of them. Skirting the steep north face of Pt. 4,865.9m, with its tottering seracs, we gained the north col and found a good line up its steep north ridge. On the way up we were surprised by tracks that could only have been those of a hare, so the summit had to be Pik Koyon ("Hare" in Kyrgyz). Returning to the col, I led off up the south ridge of the second peak, rising through a series of ice bowls to a fine, narrow summit ridge. Hunched brooding above the gold mine far below, we Eagle Ski Club members named our summit Eagle's Peak (4,822m).

We climbed our final summit, east of camp, in flurries of snow, first ascending an easy snow dome, then, when it looked as though a nearby rocky pinnacle could be higher, along a mixed ridge to that summit. Scrambling along granite blocks reminiscent of Chamonix, we reached a turret with “twin cannons” pointing to the sky. We took turns bridging up between these rocks to a precarious summit, which I christened Snow Cannon (4,720m at both summits).

We had been on the traverse for 15 days, and it was time to ski out. An unknown glacier system on the far side of a pass provided an easy descent for the laden pulks. We glided through stunning scenery to the foot of the Petrov Glacier, where we finally camped on the fine gravel shores of Lake Petrov. But there was a sting in the tail. The lake ice would not bear our weight, so we were forced to carry heavy rucksacks and drag our pulks along the increasingly chaotic moraine banks on the southern shore of the lake to reach the road.

We had completed the first south–north traverse of the Ak-Shirak Range, a distance of ca 50km on foot and ski, during a trip lasting from April 29 to May 21. En route we made seven first ascents of summits from 4,600m to 4,954m, all at a standard of around PD. We thank the Mount Everest Foundation, British Mountaineering Council (UK Sport), and the Eagles Ski Club for their support.

DAVE WYNNE-JONES, *Alpine Club*



This 900m face is only a small part of the huge north face of Pik Karakolski (5,280m) in the Terskey Ala–Too. Most of the north face is seriously threatened by serac fall. The two new Slovenian routes are marked: (1) Frappuccino Kirgizzo (TD+ V/5+) and (2) Espresso (TD+ V/5). The rock rib between these routes is The Snake, a Russian route (Belousov) from 1978. *Andre Magajne*

derstorms with snowfall are common during summer. September is the most stable month but is cold, with short days. The town of Karakol is the starting point for climbs in the Karakol Valley, with relatively good 4WD roads leading into the massif.

I first visited the area in 2004, trekking around Karakol and admiring the 1,500m north face of Pik Karakolski (5,280m), which became the main objective for Simon Slejko and me in 2005. However, bad weather forced us to change plans; large quantities of fresh snow on the north faces of Pik Karakolski and Dzhigit (5,170m) forced us to acknowledge that climbing would be too dangerous. When the skies finally cleared, we decided to go for a consolation prize, the north face of Pik Slonenok (4,728m). This gave a potentially classic ice route, with 700m of good névé, vertical steps, and an exposed, corniced summit ridge. The climb took

Karakol region, Pik Slonenok, north face; Pik Karakolski, north face; Dzhigit, north face. The Terskey Ala–Too runs for 300km along the southern edge of Lake Issyk Kul. Its highest summits are located by the Karakol Valley. The range used to be a venue for mountaineering championships in the former Soviet Union, but the Soviets weren't so keen on climbing ice and escaped onto rock faces wherever possible. Today there are many incredible virgin ice lines.

The range is also well known for rapid changes in weather. Although the majority of the annual precipitation falls at the end of spring, and the weather in July and August is considered relatively stable, frequent thun-

nine hours on August 7. We required a further four hours to downclimb and rappel the Normal Route. We named the new line Amor Therapeutica and graded it TD+ (V/5).

Unfinished business saw my return in 2006. This time Simon and I were accompanied by Andrej Erceg and Dejan Miskovic. On our first acclimatization trips we found that, even in the Tien Shan, global warming has changed proud ice faces into a burial ground for seracs. But ice conditions on Pik Karakolski and Dzhigit seemed good, and we turned our attention to our first goal, the north face of Karakolski.

We traveled light, not taking a tent or making food dumps above base camp. A few minutes after midnight on August 11 we started up the obvious 900m snaking couloir on Karakolski's north face. We found excellent 60–75° ice and climbed unroped, except for the last 100m, which were quasi-vertical. We descended the Normal Route on the west ridge over tricky ground, reaching base camp that evening. We named our route Espresso (900m, TD+ V/5).

The next day Andrej and Dejan climbed a parallel line to the left on the same face, a long icefield cut by two vertical ice steps, each one pitch long. Toward the top they worked right to finish at more or less the same point as we did. Around midday they joined the west ridge, which Dejan followed to the summit. The pair bivouacked on the On Tor glacier and returned to base camp on the 13th. They named their route Frappuccino Kirgizzo (900m, TD+ V/5+). The same day Simon and I inspected the north face of Dzhigit and were amazed by the number of continuous ice runnels on the right side of the wall. However, access to the headwall appeared to be threatened by a 300m-high serac barrier.

The weather now became unstable for the rest of the trip, but on the 22nd all four of us left a relatively comfortable bivouac at On Tor Pass and started up a huge couloir, which promised a relatively safe passage through the far right side of the serac barrier on Dzhigit's north face. By early morning we had made an exit from this ice trap, had a short break on the mid-height snowfield, and begun the steep headwall. Although the entire runnel on the headwall is steep, major difficulties were presented at mid-height by a 60m vertical corner with unconsolidated snow and poor protection. In the upper section the weather rapidly deteriorated, and climbing became a run for life through spindrift avalanches. After almost 17 hours of nonstop climbing, we reached the corniced ridge, dug a small ledge, and survived an uncomfortable freezing bivouac. In the morning we climbed the final few meters to the summit, where in excellent weather we enjoyed breathtaking views over countless



The final section of Frappuccino Kirgizzo (TD+) on the north face of Pik Karakolski (5,280m) before it reaches the broad glacier terrace below the summit slopes. The pointed Dzhigit (5,170m) is visible in the background. *Andrej Erceg/Andre Magajne collection*



The north face of Slonenok in the Terskey Ala–Too, showing the line of Amor Therapeutica (700m, TD+ V/5). The normal route up this peak, which lies between Karakolski and Dzhigit, is the east ridge (left skyline), although the easiest route is via the dangerous hanging glacier to the right and the long corniced west ridge. The rock pillars on either side of Amor Therapeutica were climbed in 1978 and 1984. *Andre Magajne*

peaks, many of them still unclimbed. We descended the Normal Route. We named our route Tretje oko (The Third Eye; 1,200m, ED2 VI/6).

ANDREJ MAGAJNE, *Slovenia*

TENGRI TAG

Pik Pogrebetskogo, northwest face. From August 10-16 the Krasnoyarsk team of Vladimir Arhipov, Sergey Cherezov, Vladimir Gunko, Andrey Litvinov, Alexander Mikhailitsin (leader), and Alexander Yanushevich made the long-awaited first ascent of the northwest face of Pik Pogrebetskogo (6,487m) at the head of the South Inylchek glacier. This mountain appears to have been climbed only once before, in 1980 via the west ridge. Its name commemorates the first ascensionist of nearby Khan Tengri, M Pogrebetskiy. The face consists of an initial 1,000m-high snow-and-ice slope, topped by an 800m rock wall. It was first attempted in 1984 by a team from Moscow, again in 1989 by Krasnoyarsk climbers, and subsequently in 1991 by a team from Irkutsk. All were defeated, as was an attempt by four strong British climbers in 1994, and the face gained the reputation of being the last virgin high-altitude wall in the former Soviet Union.

On the recent ascent the team found serious difficulties on the upper rock wall, reached the summit in the early afternoon on the 16th, and then began rappelling the route. However, part way down the weather deteriorated, and heavy snowfall made the lower section dangerous from avalanches. They continued through the night of the 17th and by midday on the 18th were safely back at base camp. The overall grade was 6A.

PAUL KNOTT, *New Zealand*, and ANNA PIUNOVA, *www.mountain.ru, Russia*

Tajikistan

FANSKIE MOUNTAINS

Chimtarga, west face. From August 4-7 the four-man team of Gladysheva, Igolkin, Kondrashov, and Soldatov (leader) climbed a new route up the center of the west face of Chimtarga (5,489m), the highest peak in the Fanski mountains, a beautiful alpine range northwest of Dushanbe at the western end of the Pamir Alai.

ANNA PIUNOVA, *www.mountain.ru, Russia*

SHAKHDARA RANGE

Piks 5,635m, Litovskiy North, Karl Marx, Nikoladsye, Ovalnaya, Nikoladsye South, possible first ascents and new routes. The Shakh dara Mountains are the southernmost range of the Pamir. They lie in Tajikistan's semi-autonomous *oblast* of Gorno Badakhshan, immediately north of the Afghanistan border. The range has three distinct areas, separated from one another by passes. The highest peak is Karl Marx (6,736m), which lies in the Eastern Shakh dara. The highest peaks in the Western and Central ranges are Pik Mayakovskiy (6,096m) and Pik Vorujenik Sil (6,138m), respectively.



Pik Karl Marx (6,736m) showing the line on the west face to southwest ridge to west ridge climbed by a British party as part of a west-east traverse of the mountain. The peak was first climbed in 1946 by Abalakov via the west ridge (4B). The black spot marks the British camp at 6,384m. *Phil Wickens*

During the Soviet era many of the peaks were ascended from large organized camps, notably in the Zugvand and Shaboy valleys. These ascents were well documented in the Russian Mountaineering Classification tables, and many were via extremely hard routes. Ascents outside these camps were poorly recorded and often not included in the tables, the only record being cairns, or a note in a tin left on the summit of an apparently unclimbed mountain. The area has rarely been visited since Soviet times, due to the Tajik civil war, which lasted from 1992 to 1997. However, since 1999 Tajikistan has become both safer and political more stable, making expeditions to this fascinating little-known area again feasible.

I was asked by the committee of the Alpine Club to organize an expedition to coincide with the formation of its Climbing Fund, which had been established to assist members, particularly younger members, with expeditions to lesser-known areas. I had kept the Shakh dara Mountains in the back of my mind, and this was the perfect opportunity to visit.

The journey from the Tajik capital, Dushanbe, along rough roads that cross high hills, before following the river Oxus, must be one of the greatest road journeys in the world. Cutting through breathtaking scenery it follows the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border to the regional capital of Ishkashim. From here a rough road took us along the barren Wakhan Corridor to the village of Iniv, perched above the Oxus and close to the start of a faint mule track that leads northward into the Nishgar Valley. We followed this track steeply up the hillside, before dropping to a pleasant flat, grassy pasture, on which we sited our base camp.

Soon after arrival the whole team headed into the Western Nishgar Valley, which proved ideal for initial exploration and acclimatization. Despite unsettled weather Steve Hunt, Tim Sparrow, and Alex Rickards ascended the northwest flank of Pik 5,635m (initially nicknamed



Rick Allan nearing the summit of the north ridge of Pik Ovalnaya (5,935m). *Phil Wickens*



Rick Allan on the summit of Pik Sosedniy (5,928m). Behind him, across the upper Central Nishgar Glacier, is Pik Ovalnaya (5,935m), showing the British line of ascent up the east flank and north ridge. The peak was probably first climbed via this line in 1961 by a pair from Leningrad University and may not have been repeated before last year. In the distance are peaks of the Afghan Hindu Kush. *Phil Wickens*

the west face of Pik Nikoladsye to reach a col at 6,150m, from where they continued up the rocky north ridge, past three exposed steps, to the summit at 6,340m (500m, AD+, possible new route).

Meanwhile, Rick Allen and I had placed a camp next to a small glacial lake at 5,345m on the relatively benign Central Nishgar Glacier. After climbing Pik Sosedniy (5,928m) by its easy northeast ridge (600m, PD) we started up the west face of Pik Karl Marx. An 800m snow slope led to a broad shoulder and campsite at 6,348m, from where we could see Hunt, Sparrow, and Rickards reaching the summit. The following day was cloudy with light snowfall, but we were able to make use of brief clearings to follow the southwest ridge to the summit blocks. A delicate traverse on steep, loose and poorly iced rocks led rightward to the top of the south ridge, which we followed easily to the small rocky summit (1,200m, AD).

“Peak of the Glorious Committee of the 150th Anniversary of the Alpine Club” but later shortened to “Great Game Peak”), which gave straightforward snow climbing followed by a narrow ridge (PD, 500m, possible first ascent). Two days later Derek Buckle and Kai Green climbed the southeast face of Pik Litovskiy North (5,905m) via a very direct and increasingly steep snow and ice line (750m, D, possible new route).

Access to Pik Karl Marx (6,736m) from the Nishgar Valley is guarded by steep, loose slopes, which we nicknamed “the beast.” These led to the Central and East Nishgar Glaciers. The team split here, with Hunt, Sparrow, and Rickards working a route through the seracs of the East Nishgar Glacier to place a camp directly below the end of the south ridge of Karl Marx. They passed this to the east, ascending a small tributary glacier in a deeply cut valley, then its steep headwall, to reach the Marx–Nikoladsye col (6,200m). Above, steepening slopes led to the snowy upper south ridge and finally the summit (900m, PD+, possible new route). After a rest day at their high camp they climbed diagonally up

We made a straightforward descent in poor visibility down the south ridge and south-east flank, following the line, and occasionally the footprints, of Hunt, Sparrow, and Rickards, whom we met at their upper camp. This exact traverse may not have been completed before.

The following morning we descended the East Nishgar Glacier and icefall, re-ascended the Central Nishgar to retrieve a food depot, and the next day climbed the east face and north ridge of Pik Ovalnaya (5,935m). This gave a very enjoyable climb along a wonderfully exposed ridge, with numerous short steps of perfect water-ice, which we reversed from the summit and then continued over the north top (5,808m) to reach the Ovalnaya-Sosedniy col. From there we returned to our camp at 5,345m. Our route was D- and may not have been climbed before.

At camp we met Buckle and Green, who were back from their ascents of Pik Sosedniy via the northeast ridge and Pik Karl Marx via the west face and southwest ridge (1,200m, AD-). They had climbed the latter after aborting an attempt on the west ridge at 5,840m due to poor rock and deteriorating weather. The next day this pair repeated our route up Pik Ovalnaya.

With time running short but energy in abundance, Hunt, Sparrow, and Rickards set off from base camp to investigate the Far East Nishgar Glacier, which lies below the impressive unclimbed west face of Pik Tajikistan (6,585m). From a large plateau at 5,360m they followed the glacier to its head and then traversed, from north to south (AD and a possible new route), Pik Nikoladsye South (6,265m), returning to base a few hours before the mule drivers arrived. They were just in time for a final celebration of chocolate-garlic gateau and a selection of fine whiskies.

The Shakh dara Mountains have potential for many new routes, though most would be on poor rock. All our ascents were carried out from August 13-27, when the weather was generally unstable, with thick cloud but very little precipitation or wind. More snow and ice lines may be in condition slightly earlier, but remaining winter snow could make access difficult. We thank the Mount Everest Foundation, British Mountaineering Council (U.K. Sport), and the Alpine Club for their support.

PHIL WICKENS, *Alpine Club*