


# PAKISTAN

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during the winter of 2014-'15, Tomas Mackiewicz (Poland) and Elizabeth Revol (France) reported reaching 7,800m (likely the same point as the Austrians). Mackiewicz and Revol tried again in 2015-'16, making to 7,500m with Arsalan Ahmed Ansari (Pakistan)

From the small col at 7,760m, it would be possible to reach the 8,126m main summit either by following the original 1953 route or by traversing to the upper Kinshofer Route. 

— LINDSAY GRIFFIN, FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MARKUS GSCHWENDT, AUSTRIA

## HINDU KUSH

### TIRICH MIR, NORTHWEST FACE, RARE ASCENT AND MINOR VARIATION

FRENCH CLIMBERS JÉRÔME Chazelas and Thomas Quillet reported reaching the summit of Tirich Mir (7,708m), the highest peak in the Hindu Kush, in July, via the normal route (1967 Czechoslovak Route) up the northwest face. The crux of this route is climbing a couloir above the normal site of Camp 3 (ca 6,700m). Here, rather than climb the couloir direct, the two moved out left onto snow slopes and climbed more mixed ground to the ridge above. They placed a high camp above the couloir at 7,200m and then took six hours to reach the summit.

More significant is that Tirich Mir, accessed through Chitral and lying very close to the Afghan border, has seen very little recent activity because of the perceived heightened terrorist threat in this area. This appears to be the first time the mountain has been summited since the summer of 2001. The pair reported no safety issues and added that a small Russian expedition was arriving at base camp just as they were leaving.

— LINDSAY GRIFFIN

[Above] Ganalo Peak at sunset from high on the northwest face of Nanga Parbat, during a 2008 attempt on the northwest face. Markus Gschwendt

## HIMALAYA

### NANGA PARBAT, NORTHWEST FACE VIA DIAMA GLACIER, PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED ATTEMPT AND OTHER HISTORY

IN 1895, HAVING attempted the so-called Mummery Rib of Nanga Parbat to 6,100m, the celebrated British alpinist Alfred Mummery, accompanied by two Gurkhas, Gorman Singh and Ragobir Thapa, headed up the Diama Glacier in an attempt to reach the northern (Rakhiot) side of the mountain via 6,300m Diama Pass on the east ridge of Ganalo Peak. They were never seen again.

In 1988, Karl Herrligkoffer began organizing a succession of expeditions to find a new route up the mountain, starting with attempts on the Mummery Rib in 1988 and '89. In 1990 he changed plans to an attempt on the northwest side of the peak via the Diama Glacier. Sepp Walter led the 1990 expedition, which did not get far due to serious objective danger. However, the following year, a ski expedition led by Peter Worgotter climbed the main northwest face toward the north summit, with Herbert Rainer reaching 7,400m.

In 2000 another team tried this line, ignoring past events and billing it as a first. Hanspeter Eisendle, Hubert and Reinhold Messner, and Wolfgang Tomaseth found the Diama Glacier truly treacherous but managed to progress up the northwest face to about 7,500m, where they intersected with the 1978 Slovak Route, which had reached Nanga Parbat's 7,816m north top (AAJ 2001).

A previously unreported attempt on this unfinished route came in 2008, when Markus Gschwendt and Clara Kulich (Austria) reached a new high point using skis. The approach up the Diama Glacier from the standard 4,250m Kinshofer Route base camp presented serious route-finding difficulties, due to impressive seracs and crevasses. (However, Gschwendt believes that in some years an easy passage could be found by keeping to the south flank.) Moving on skis over terrain rated F to PD+, the pair made camps at 5,100m, 5,800m, 6,400m, 7,000m, and 7,600m. Bad weather set in and prevented them from climbing to the north top; the pair retreated from a small col just below and south of it at 7,760m.

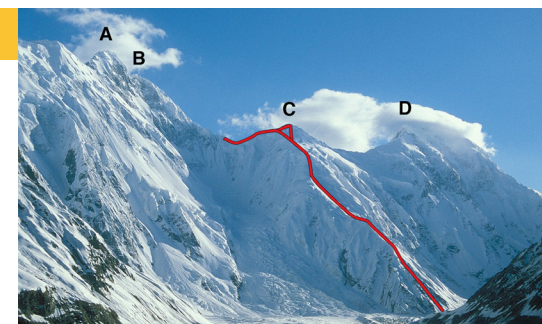
In January 2012, Simone Moro and Denis Urubko reached 6,800m on the same line, and

## KARAKORAM / BATURA MUZTAGH

### BEKA BRAKAI CHHOK, NORTHWEST RIDGE ATTEMPT; PEAK 6,315M, NORTHEAST RIDGE



THIS EXPEDITION WAS not previously reported in the AAJ. In June 1998 my four porters left me alone at Lupdhor, a beautiful spot beside a lake on the north side of the Batura Glacier. My plan was to attempt the first ascent of Beka Brakai Chhok Central (6,882m, the highest of the three Beka Brakai Chhok summits), although I had never seen the peak nor a photograph of it. As I walked up the Batura Glacier, Beka Brakai Chhok (BBC) Central came into view and I was encouraged to see a feasible route up the snowy northeast spur of Peak 6,315m, from which it appeared possible to join the northwest ridge of BBC Central.

ON JULY 4, I reached the base (4,214m) of Peak 6,315m and began climbing up snow and ice,



[Above] Seen from the upper Batura Glacier: (A) Beka Brakai Chhok Northeast (6,842m, unclimbed); (B) Beka Brakai Chhok Central (6,882m, unclimbed); (C) Peak 6,315m (Thompson, 1998); and (D) Sani Pakush (6,952m, climbed via the northwest ridge by Germans in 1991). Peter Thompson's 1998 solo attempt, the first on any of the Beka Brakai summits, is marked. Peter Thompson



camping that night on a snowy shoulder of the northeast spur at 5,080m. Conditions were more difficult the next day, with deep snow, strong wind, and spindrift. I camped again at 6,160m. Next morning I bypassed the summit of Peak 6,315m on the east flank and descended steeply to a col at 6,150m. The northwest ridge of BBC Central is narrow and convoluted, and after climbing along it for 30 minutes I realized there was no way I could do it on my own. I returned to the col, climbed up to the top of Peak 6,315m, and then spent another night at my camp before descending. Beka Brakai Chhok Central is still unclimbed.  

— PETER THOMPSON, ALPINE CLUB, U.K.

**LUPGHAR GROUP, REVISION OF EARLIER AAJ REPORT:** In 2006, Lee Harrison (Norway) and Peter Thompson (U.K.) made the first ascent of a top they named Ghorhil Sar (ca 5,800m) on the southern rim of the Lupghar Valley (a.k.a. Lupgar, AAJ 2007). However, after returning to the Lupghar mountains in 2015, Harrison feels they were wrong to describe Ghorhil Sar as a “summit” and that it is no more than a point on the ridge. A photo of this top and neighboring unclimbed peaks is at the AAJ website: [publications.americanalpineclub.org](http://publications.americanalpineclub.org).



[Above] Nicolas Preitner approaching Maiun Chhish by the Nasirabad aqueduct. The 2016 route climbed a hanging snow slope from bottom right, passing below the sunlit rock walls, then continued left along the skyline ridge to the highest point (marked). The ridgeline was reached from the opposite side in 1993 for the mountain's first known ascent. *Bruce Normand*

and loose rocks, we finally gained the ridge crest at approximately 4,300m. Here we joined the line of a damaged aqueduct built by the village of Nasirabad; at least one local snow leopard had also been using it as a right of way. This led us very easily to the back of the drainage (*Hachindar Nala on the Japanese Miyamori map*), from which a scramble up scree allowed us to gain the small glacier below the eastern ramparts of Maiun Chhish. There we camped at 5,000m.

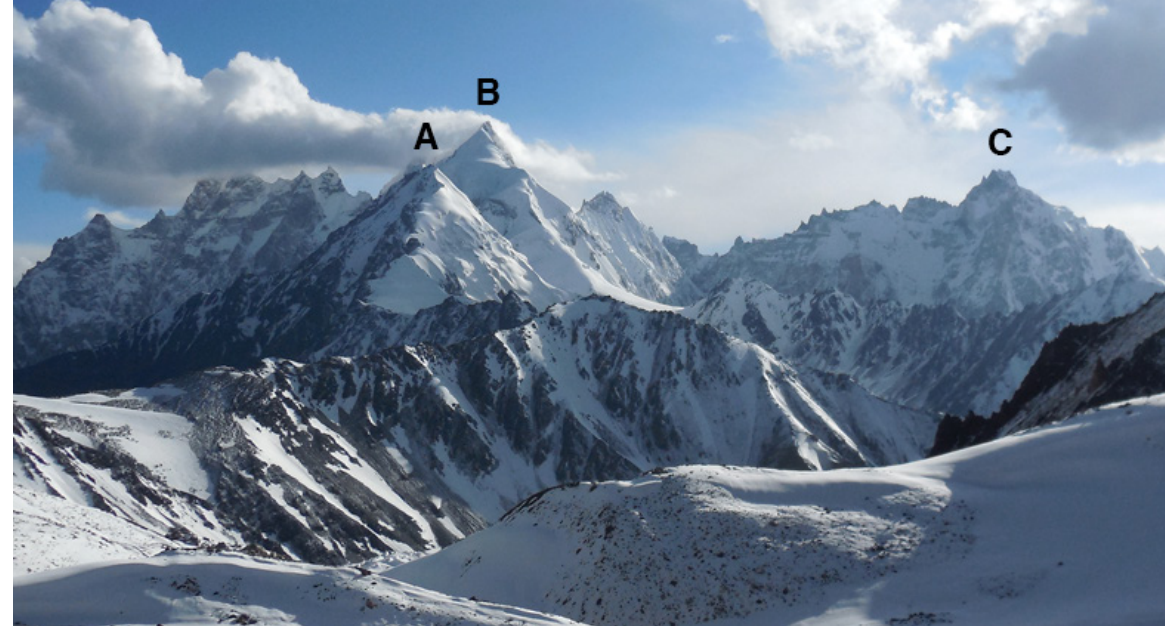
The east face is a steep snowfield (passages of 45°) by which we passed between cliff bands to reach the east-northeast ridge at 5,600m. We proceeded in softening low-angle snow and rising cumulus to the true summit. We camped at 5,600m for acclimatization, and a predawn start due to an approaching snowstorm had us back in Aliabad by midafternoon.

— BRUCE NORMAND, SWITZERLAND

#### MAIUN CHHISH, EAST FACE AND EAST-NORTHEAST RIDGE

MAIUN (MAYUN) CHHISH (5,880m, 36°20'13"N, 74°27'58"E) rises directly above the western end of the main Hunza Valley and offers panoramic views of the Batura chain to its north and Rakaposhi to the south. The only known prior ascent was on August 9, 1993, when Peter Thompson (U.K.) soloed the north face and east-northeast ridge from the Muchuar and Mandosh glaciers.

In June, while Nicolas Preitner (Switzerland) and I were acclimatizing in the Hunza, we approached Maiun Chhish from the Hassanabad Nallah, starting at the bridge on the Karakoram Highway just below Aliabad. After a false start and then a long session of impromptu scrambling up gullies of caked mud



[Above] Looking southwest from below Pregar at (A) Zartgarbin (ca 5,850m, likely unclimbed); (B) Tupo-dan (climbed in 1987); and (C) Jurjur Khona Sar (likely unclimbed). *Peter Thompson*

#### KARAKORAM / KARUN KOH GROUP

##### PREGAR, SOUTH FACE TO JUST BELOW SUMMIT

AIDEN LAFFEY (IRELAND) and I hoped to make the first ascent of Gulmit Tower (5,810m), from the Bulkish Yaz Glacier, above Gulmit village in the Hunza Valley. [This tower in the Batura Muztagh had witnessed five previous attempts. See AAJ 2012.] On June 11, soon after our arrival, a large rockfall hit base camp. One rock came through my tent and hit me a glancing blow on the head. With no other suitable site for base camp, we decided to abandon the attempt.

Instead, we opted to attempt Pregar (ca 6,200m; 6,112m on the Soviet map) from the Moorkhun Valley of the Karun Koh Group. The trail is fairly easy, and with three porters we walked from Moorkhun village to base camp at 4,420m in one day.

On June 23, after a period of acclimatization, we attempted the south face from an advanced base at 5,085m but were stopped at 5,500m by crevasses. On the 26th we made a second attempt by a different route farther right. Unfortunately, Aiden (who had the rope) took a different line and became separated from me by large crevasses. He waited in support at ca



[Above] Looking north from Karun Pir (Pass) at an unnamed and probably unclimbed peak of around 6,000m (left) and Pregar (ca 6,200m). The two routes attempted on Pregar's south face in 2016 are marked. *Peter Thompson*



5,700m while I continued solo on slopes up to 60° (AD). A final steep section of sugary snow on top of hard ice felt insecure, and I retreated just 20m from the summit.

We had thought we were attempting the first ascent of Pregar. However, the report of the Austrian expedition that did the first ascent of Karun Koh (6,977m) from the Moorkhun Valley in 1984 stated they also made “the first ascent of a 6,200m peak west of Karun Koh.” I think this peak is probably Pregar, although our climb could be a new line.

Other reported climbs in this valley are the first ascent of Tupopdan in 1987, an attempt on the difficult Jurjur Khona Sar in 1988, the first ascent of Tapadan Sar in 1988 (all peaks a little above 6,000m), and two attempts on Zartgarbin (ca 5,850m), the last in 1997. All were made by British teams. In 2014, Phil De-Beger and Tim Oates attempted the south face of Pregar from a bivouac at 4,900m but met with bad snow conditions and retreated from 5,600m. 📷

— PETER THOMPSON, ALPINE CLUB, U.K.

## KARAKORAM / HISPAR MUZTAGH

### YAZGHIL SAR, NORTHEAST RIDGE, HISTORICAL UPDATE

WHEN THEY CLIMBED Yazghil Sar (5,964m) in 2006 (AAJ 2007), Lee Harrison and Peter Thompson (U.K.) believed they were repeating the original route up the peak (AAJ 1988). Later, they learned that the first ascensionists had climbed the northwest flank and north ridge from the Yazghil Glacier. Harrison and Thompson followed the long northeast ridge, approaching directly from the north. Ironically, while making their ascent, the 2006 team had noticed the north ridge to their right and thought about cutting across to it, in the hope that it might be a new route, not realizing that they were in fact *already* climbing a new route. The team that first reached the main summit, in 1987, was Jack Brindle, Ernie McGlashan, and John O'Reilly, and their route is thought to have been repeated at least once. 📷

— INFORMATION PROVIDED BY LEE HARRISON, NORWAY

### MALUBITING GROUP, SHALTAR PEAK, NORTH SPUR AND NORTHWEST RIDGE

THIS CLIMB WAS previously unreported in the AAJ. In July 1989, I met a climber named Kees Dykwell (Holland) in Karimabad, and the two of us climbed a new route up Shaltar Peak, approaching via a side valley above the east side of the Bualtar Glacier, two days' walk from Hopar village. Shaltar Peak (map elevations ranging from 5,726m to 5,982m) is believed to have been climbed in 1987 by three British climbers, starting from the Barpu Glacier. [The British called it Mongouo, but Shaltar is the name given by locals; the peak is visible from Karimabad and surroundings.] From a bivouac in a cirque below the peak, Dykwell and I climbed a couloir to join the north spur, which we followed to the upper northwest ridge and then the summit. The difficulty was PD, and we bivouacked during the descent. 📷

— PETER THOMPSON, ALPINE CLUB, U.K.

### FAROLING CHHISH SOUTH, SOUTH FACE; PEAK 5,594M, SOUTH FACE

THESE CLIMBS WERE not previously reported in the AAJ. In August 1988, Walter Phipps and I established base camp at Daltanas (3,922m), at the junction of the Hispar and Kunyang glaciers.

We had no particular objective and decided to walk up the hillside above base camp and see what we could find. This led us into a cirque to the northwest, where we set up an advanced base at 4,910m (36.193268°N, 75.092607°E) and attempted a number of climbs. This is the cirque above the last stream before reaching Daltanas.

First, we attempted Peak 5,643m on the west flank of the cirque. This is effectively a subpeak on the southwest ridge of Faroling Chhish. We climbed a couloir to the left of the peak, breaking right at two-thirds height to reach the difficult 10m rock pinnacle on the summit. This was badly iced and Walter was shivering uncontrollably, so we abseiled back down. The route was alpine PD to our high point.

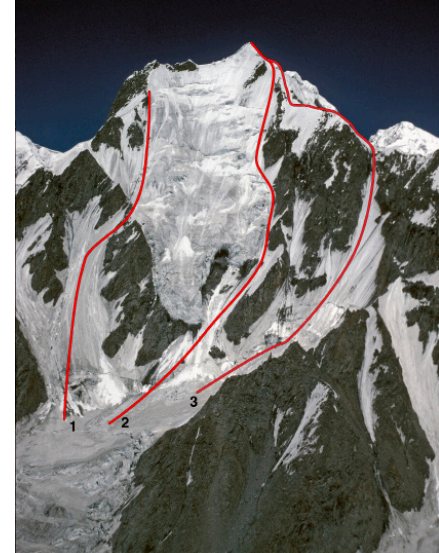
From a bivouac at 5,230m, we next attempted the left side of the south face of Faroling Chhish South (ca 6,170m), the highest peak in the cirque. At about 5,950m, we began to traverse toward the summit. Moving slowly and with no bivouac gear, we decided to descend. The route was on snow and ice (D to the high point).

Walter was still suffering from frostnip and split fingertips, so I decided to attempt Faroling Chhish South on my own, this time opting for the more direct central couloir on the south face. I set off at midnight on September 8. Conditions were good as I climbed the 800m or so of ice unroped to reach the southeast ridge. A long cornice guarded the summit, and I circumvented this to the left with some exposed moves over the south face, arriving at the top at 8 a.m. I descended the southeast ridge, with one short, tricky rock section, and eventually joined a couloir that led back to my bivouac at the base.

After resting at base camp, Walter and I returned to the cirque. On September 14 we climbed a rock peak (5,594m) on the right flank of the cirque, from a col to the south. The rock varied from loose to excellent granite, and the route was alpine D.

The online version of this report has coordinates for all peaks and also describes (with photos) a 14-pitch rock climb the two men climbed in the Uttar Nala, above the village of Karimabad. 📷

— PETER THOMPSON, ALPINE CLUB, U.K.



[Above] The south face of Faroling Chhish South (ca 6,170m). (1) Attempt by Walter Phipps and Peter Thompson in 1988. (2) Solo ascent by Thompson in 1988. (3) Thompson's descent route. Peter Thompson

## KARAKORAM / PANMAH MUZTAGH

### MAEDAN GLACIER, POROK RI, WEST RIDGE; NERA PEAK, WEST FLANK

SUPPORTED BY THE German Alpine Club, Matthias Bohe, Harry Kirschenhofer, Philipp Moser, Chris Romeike, and I began our journey on July 14, aiming to explore side valleys of the Panmah Glacier. The approach from Askole took four days, following the Dumordo River and Panmah Glacier to reach the high meadow of Skinmang at the junction of the Chiring Glacier and Nobande Sobande branch of the Panmah. On the 23rd we established base camp at 4,175m on the lower part of the Maedan Glacier (called South Chiring Glacier on the Japanese Miyamori map). After some steep climbing we placed a high camp at 5,130m.



On July 30, Matthias, Philipp, and Chris left high camp and climbed 3km to the head of the





[Top] Porok Ri (6,020m) from the north. The 2016 first-ascent route generally followed the right skyline. [Middle] Granite towers on the west side of the Maedan Glacier. [Bottom] The west face of unclimbed Chiring I (Chiring West, ca 6,861m). *Christof Nettekoven*

80°. Five and a half hours after leaving camp, we reached the top (35°53.094'N, 76°05.171'E).

The Maedan Glacier still offers attractive unclimbed peaks above 6,000m. At the southeastern end of the basin lies S1 (ca 6,024m) and S2 (ca 6,000m). Opposite Nera Peak, on the west side of the glacier, are four unclimbed rock towers resembling sharks' teeth. The most spectacular targets can be found in the Chiring Range, on the east side of the Chiring Glacier. Here are unclimbed peaks up to 6,861m, as well as 1,000m granite walls and faces up to 1,400m. *The online version of this report includes a brief history of earlier attempts and climbs in the area.*  

— CHRISTOF NETTEKOVEN, DAV, GERMANY



## KARAKORAM / BALTORO MUZTAGH

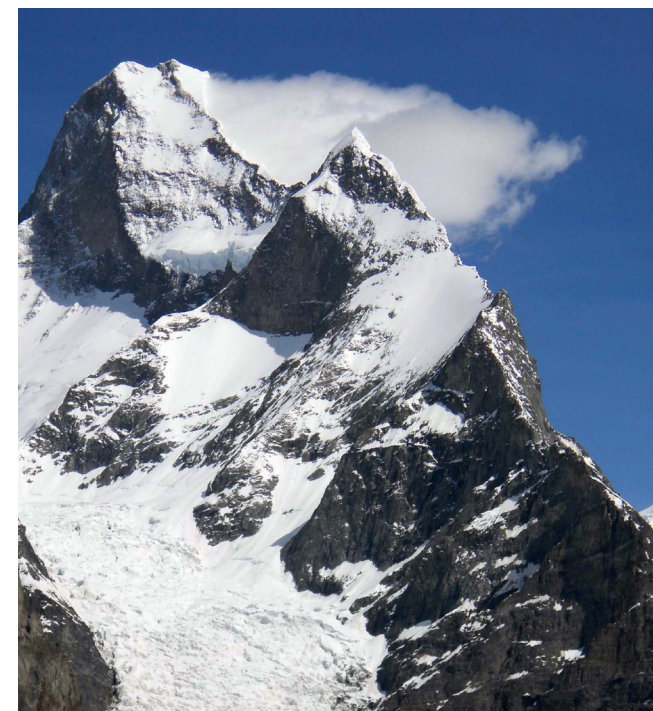
### MUZTAGH TOWER, SOUTHEAST RIDGE INTEGRAL, ATTEMPT

MATTHIAS KONIG AND I hoped to climb the southeast ridge of Muztagh Tower (7,284m) directly from the glacier at around 4,900m, a vertical interval of ca 2,500m and a climbing distance of 6km. Seen from the Baltoro, the ridge has three tops: a rocky tooth, then the Black Tooth at 6,702m, and finally the main summit. The unrepeatable 1956 French Route on the upper southeast ridge followed glacial terrain and mixed ice and rock slopes on the southwest flank to join the ridge crest beyond the Black Tooth.

After eight days of exploring the beautiful Younghusband valley and acclimatizing, we began our attempt in early August, despite mediocre weather. We climbed a 500m snow and ice couloir on the northeast flank to reach a notch in the ridge at ca 5,500m. The rock improved as we followed the exposed crest, passing gendarmes mostly on their east side. Unable to find a tent site, we climbed into the night until we found an open bivouac, on a very small ledge, tied to the wall. We had been climbing for 19 hours.

Next day, after more steep steps and gendarmes that slowed progress, we finally reached the rocky tooth at around 6,000m. To that point we had climbed a distance of 1,700m, belaying and simul-climbing around 24 pitches, up to 6a+ and 60° ice. Above, a beautiful snow arête rising to the Black Tooth promised faster progress. It was already 2 p.m. and now windy and snowing. As we were at the only flat spot seen so far, we decided to pitch the tent. During the night the wind increased, and when we woke next morning visibility was bad. We decided to descend.

Below us lay the only break in the steep walls of the southwest flank. After 700m of downclimbing and five rappels we reached the Dre Glacier. Descending the glacier and icefalls proved epic (the French had fixed ropes here) and led to an unwanted night out. Noisy cracks let us know the glacier was alive, and luckily, after a sleepless night, so were we. Two hours later we regained base camp. Above our high point the route to the summit is largely on snow, but linking it all would be a hell of a job.  



[Above] Muztagh Tower seen from the Baltoro Glacier to the south. The main summit (7,284m) and Black Tooth (6,702m) are prominent. The 2016 team climbed the lower southeast ridge (right skyline) to the top of the "rocky tooth" at 6,000m, and then descended to the southwest (left). *TK TK TK*

— FELIX BERG, GERMANY



## GASHERBRUM I, SOUTHWEST FACE, ATTEMPT ON NEW ROUTE

CZECH MOUNTAINEER MAREK Holecek was back for his fourth attempt at a new route on the southwest face of Gasherbrum I, this time with Ondra Mandula. The pair first acclimatized on the normal route, reaching 7,500m. They set off for a summit attempt on August 9, following a line previously attempted twice by Holecek and Zdenek Hruby, and a third time by Holecek and Tomas Petreck. The proposed line follows the right side of the Afanasiev-Babanov couloir (AAJ 2009) before breaking right across mixed ground onto the main southwest face (above the 1983 Kukuczka-Kurtyka traverse) and then climbing more or less directly to the summit.

Holecek and Mandula bivouacked at 6,000m on day one, 6,800m on days two and three (after poor weather stopped play), and 7,000m on day four, and eventually reached 7,700m on August 15. Here, they were stuck for several days in very bad weather before making a difficult retreat, finally reaching base camp on August 22.

— LINDSAY GRIFFIN



[Above] Nancy Hansen in the couloir leading to the southwest ridge of Gasherbrum VI. Ralf Dujmovits

## GASHERBRUM VI, SOUTHWEST RIDGE, ATTEMPT; PRAQPA RI, EAST-SOUTHEAST RIDGE, ATTEMPT

MY PARTNER, RALF Dujmovits, and I spent the months of June and July attempting two unclimbed 7,000m peaks, Gasherbrum VI and Praqpa Ri. After hiking more than 100km with our cook, liaison officer, several Balti porters, a few donkeys, eight chickens, and two goats, we established base camp at 4,800m on the spectacular Baltoro Glacier, southwest of Gasherbrum VI (a.k.a. Chochordin, 7,004m). Ralf and I found a way through the messy lower icefall into the valley southwest of the peak, and on our second trip we climbed the right side of a broad couloir to reach a spectacular high camp at 6,200m on the southwest ridge. The summit looked tantalizingly close.




We first tried a route directly above our camp, but the snow became shallow and faceted after we'd gained 250m. With just a few centimeters of sugar snow over steep, unprotectable marble, we decided to have a look at another possible route. We ran into the same predicament—it was impossible even to set a somewhat safe belay. We also could

see that the mixed terrain above the rock band was going to present hundreds of meters of the same problem. German Walter Hölzler was stopped by the same issue on the southeast face of the mountain in the early '90s. The only other option for aspiring climbers of Gasherbrum VI is to risk the avalanches, seracs, and cornices on the northeast face, another unappetizing proposition. We believe ours was the fifth attempt on the mountain. [A brief history of prior attempts, plus photos of each line, will be found in the online version of this report.]

As soon as we returned to base camp, we sent for porters to help move our camp below our second objective: Praqpa Ri (7,156m), south of Skilbrum. Amazingly quickly, we were installed at the toe of the Savoia Glacier, an inspiring place less than a kilometer south of K2 base camp. We had found no record of any attempt on Praqpa Ri.

After a reconnaissance of the heavily crevassed Savoia Glacier and a short stretch of bad weather, we packed six days of food and fuel and headed back through the Russian roulette crevasse field. We climbed a steep 300m slope to access Khalkhal Pass (5,705m) at the base of the east-southeast ridge leading to the southeast summit. [Praqpa Ri has three tops: southeast, 7,026m; middle, 7,156m; and northwest, 7,058m.] It started to snow heavily and we quickly set up the tent to escape it.

Early next morning we started up east-facing slopes that quickly turned into a wet, sloppy mess in the blazing sun and started sloughing around us. After gaining only a few hundred meters, we were forced to make camp in a somewhat sketchy crevasse. We hoped to find better conditions on the more defined ridge above, but upon reaching the ridge at 6,300m the next day, we were immediately disappointed. A 2cm crust lay over deep facets, and before long we were in sugar snow to the tops of our legs. It was simply too dangerous to continue. For future aspirants, we suggest approaching the east-southeast ridge via the Khalkhal Glacier to the south. We could see from Khalkhal Pass that it would have been more straightforward and much safer.


It was a big gift to be able to spend almost two months in this wild place. We would like to thank the Gore-tex Shipton/Tilman Grant, Mountain Equipment Co-op Expedition Support, and the Alpine Club of Canada for partially funding this trip.   

— NANCY HANSEN, ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA

## KARAKORAM / HONBORO GROUP

### JUDL PEAK, NORTHWEST RIDGE

THE HONBORO GROUP, with a high point at Honboro Peak (6,459m), lies northwest and west of the Hushe Valley, between the Hushe and Thalle (a.k.a. Yarkhor or Thalay) valleys. In 2011, Simón Elias, Ester Fresnada, and Berta Terres investigated the Apobrok River valley, northwest of Kande. From the upper Kande Glacier, they made the first ascent of Kande Peak (5,470m, AAJ 2012), which lies on the ridge between the Third and Fourth Kande cwms, as designated on Jerzy Wala's 2004 sketch map of the Honboro Group.

In May 2016, Elias returned with Gerald Boess to explore the possibility of ski ascents in the area. The pair reached the upper Kande Glacier and then headed southwest into the First Kande Cwm. From a camp at 5,060m, the pair climbed northeast-facing glacier slopes to reach the watershed ridge with the Thalle Valley, then followed the northwest ridge of Peak 5,871m to its summit. The mountain has been named Judl Peak (35.385584°N, 76.210153°E, Peak 146 on the Wala map), and the 800m ascent was called Skiroute. 



[Above] Judl Peak from the northeast, showing the first ascent by Skiroute. Simón Elias

— INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY SIMÓN ELIAS, SPAIN