

attempted Khan Tengri (6995 or 7010m; estimates vary). It was a tremendous opportunity to experience a style of mountaineering quite different from the Western approach, and a lot of fun as well. Andrei Molotov and I reached a group high point of ca. 6550 meters on the normal route from the north side before turning around in tempestuous weather.

The board of the Boukreev Memorial Fund has now paid to fly two young men from the Sports Club to the U.S. this summer. They will take part in a NOLS mountaineering course in Wyoming, on scholarship provided by NOLS (one impetus for this is cultural exchange, and to allow Kazak climbers to learn about environmental ethics in the wilderness). The Memorial Fund is also paying all expenses for one scholarship recipient, Stephan Graepel of Minnesota, to travel to Kazakhstan this summer and join Rinat and the Sports Club in climbing Khan Tengri and Pobeda. Jack Robbins, one of the board members, has been doing a series of fundraising slide shows in the Bay area, and other activities are planned.

It was an honor to climb in the memory of Anatoli Boukreev. The team is in the best of hands with Rinat, a kind and generous individual who has single-handedly insured the continuation of the Kazak Army Sports Club, and Anatoli's character is attested to by the commitment he continues to inspire in his many friends. Long may the Kazak Army Sports Club climb!

CHRISTIAN BECKWITH, *The Wayward Mountaineers*

Khan Tengri, North Face, New Route. There are 12 existing routes on Khan Tengri (7010m) that lead to the summit from the North Inylchek Glacier. Nine of these routes are on the north face. The giant buttress on the left is, between 6300 and 6400 meters, the steepest part of the face and was considered the last great problem. In August, a team of Russian mountaineers from Ekaterinburg (Alexander Mihailov, expedition leader and coach; Nicolai Zhilin, climbing leader; Yuri Yermachek, and Dmitri Pavlenko), joined by Sergei Borisov, Nicolai Shcabara, Vadim Popovich, Victor Shishmintsev and Alexander Korobkov at Base Camp, climbed this line. Team members had worked as guides on the Northern Inylchek Glacier from 1994-'97 and thus knew the mountain well.

Base Camp (4000m) was organized at the base of the north face on July 1. After some acclimatization climbs, the team members climbed the normal route to the summit. On August 9, Zhilin, Yermachek and Pavlenko began fixing 12 ropes on the lower part of the route from the first bergschrund (50-70°). On August 12, the team started out. The first bivy was at 5100 meters. The next day they climbed 50 meters of frozen waterfall and several complicated ice and rock sections to approach the base of a 200-meter vertical rocky "nose" that was one of the key sections of the climb. They bivied at 5500 meters at its base. From 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. the next day, Zhilin and Pavlenko fixed two 50-meter ropes, then returned to the second bivy. On August 15, they finished climbing that part of the route by 6 p.m., then arranged a more-or-less comfortable place for the fourth bivy (5700m). On August 16, they climbed several ice-covered rock walls before making the fifth bivy at 5900 meters. In the evening they fixed two more pitches. The steepness of the next part of the route increased from 50-55° to 65-70°. On August 17, they climbed about 200 vertical meters, using aid in some places, before bivying at 6100 meters. In the evening they worked on the route for an hour and a half. The next day they climbed the last meters of the buttress (the crux), which brought them to the eastern slopes of the summit at about 6300 meters. After that they moved along a snowy/icy ridge to the base of the steep belt of red rock, where they bivied at ca. 6400 meters. On August 19, they climbed the red rocks of the presummit in three very complicated



The 10,000-foot north face of Khan Tengri. NIKOLAI CHTCHECHNIKOV

pitches. After that, several labor-consuming pitches took them to the summit dome at 6900 meters, where they bivied again. The next day's climbing was not difficult. They left the camp at 10:30 a.m. and were at the summit at 12 p.m. They descended to Base Camp via the normal route the same day, reaching it at 8 p.m.

The route is 3950 meters long, with an altitude variation of 2710 meters. The team's climbing time, including evening and preliminary preparation of the route, was 89.5 hours. They used ice fifis 88 times, and rock hooks 78 times. They used gear such as stoppers and friends 147 times. The average steepness of the wall part of the route is 64 degrees from 5100 to 6300 meters, and of the whole route (from 4300-7010m) 52 degrees. This climb took third place in the high altitude mountaineering class in the Russian championships.

ALEXANDER MICHAILOV, *Russia*

KYRGYZSTAN

PAMIR-ALAI

Laylak and Karavshin Regions, Clarification. Vladimir Kopylov, co-author with Paola Sicouri of *Forbidden Mountains*, notes that C.I.S. climbers refer to the two famous climbing areas of the Pamir-Alai as the Laylak (or Laylak Ak-Su) Region, home to Ak-Su North Peak, Iskander, and Admiralteets, and the Karavshin (or Karavshin Asen-Usen) Region, which contains Slesova Peak (a.k.a. the Russian Tower), Peak 4810 (a.k.a. the Bastion), and Asen-Usen ("The Twins"). *The American Alpine Journal* will henceforth refer to the two regions as the Laylak and Karavshin Regions.

Ak-Su North Peak has been referred to in these pages as Rocky Ak-Su to differentiate it from the peak just to the south, which we referred to as Snowy Ak-Su. C.I.S. climbers refer to the latter as Ak-Su Main Peak. We will follow their lead in this matter as well.

Laylak Region

Ak-Su North Peak, North Face, Various Ascents. The Laylak Ak-Su region is still one of the most attractive climbing regions in the C.I.S., with the most technically difficult peak being the north face of Ak-Su North Peak (5217m). From August 12-25, Pavel Chabaline (leader), A. Mochalov and I. Tukhvatullin of the Kirov (Russia) Sport Club Rodina climbed the 1986 V. Popov route (6B). The route was the first to ascend the central part of the north face more or less directly; the 1998 repeat, which was undertaken in bad conditions, was only its third ascent. The ascent was awarded first place in the technical difficulty climbing class of the 1998 Russian mountaineering championship season.

From August 12-18, a team from Magnitogorsk, Russia, led by B. Mineev and comprising A. Vashliaev and G. Kirievskiy, climbed the Cold Corner route (Antonov, 1997, 6A). The ascent was awarded third place in the technical difficulty climbing class.

VLADIMIR SHATAEV, *Russian Mountaineering Federation*

Ak-Su North Peak, First Winter Ascents. The winter season of 1998-'99 saw the first two winter ascents of the enormous north face of Ak-Su North Peak. Pavel Chabaline (Kirov) led the