

Their variation, which they called *Korean Fantasy*, is located at the separating point of *The Grand Voyage* and the Norwegian Buttress Route (see topo on p. 86). The next day, an avalanche swept away food and equipment, forcing the team to spend the next four days searching for lost supplies and carrying loads again. During their climb, they bivouacked at the second, sixth, ninth and tenth pitches. They began the climb proper on July 21st, climbing some 12 new 45- to 50-meter pitches, including one A4+ and three A4 pitches, before joining the Norwegian Route. This they followed to the east summit, which they reached on July 28. Choi Seung-Chul paraglided down to BC; the others rappelled the route. On August 1, they reached the base of the route and withdrew the fixed ropes. They departed BC on August 7.

KIM WOO-SUN, Korea

*Great Trango Tower, Northwest Face, Parallel Worlds.* From July 2-August 1, Alex Lowe, Jared Ogden and Mark Synnott, with Darren Britto, Greg Thomas, Jim Surrette and Mike Gruber operating as film crew and internet coordinators in Base Camp, established *Parallel Worlds* (VII 5.11 A4, 6,000') on the northwest face of the Great Trango Tower (20,415'). A full account of their climb appears earlier in this journal.

*Great Trango Tower, Northwest Face, Russian Direct.* Alexander Odintsov, Igor Potankin, Ivan Samoilenco (high-altitude cameraman) and Yuri Kosheleko arrived at Base Camp on July 7. From July 15-August 10, the team established *The Russian Way* (VII 5.11 A4, 2675m) on the "prow" of the northwest face of Great Trango Tower. Three of the team led by turns; Ivan Samoilenco made a film. It was a rule to climb each day, even if the weather was bad and they could only climb ten meters. On the big ledge beneath the headwall, the Russians shared time with the American team (see above) for several days. The story of their climb appears earlier in this journal.

*Great Trango Tower, Northwest Face, Lost Butterfly.* Our expedition was planned to be a first ascent of the (presumed) highest big wall on earth, the nearly 2000-meter northwest face of the Great Trango Tower. With this project we garnered the Polartech Challenge Prize. In addition, we had strong support from the German Alpine Club (DAV), as well as from brand-name mountaineering gear companies. Unfortunately, we also had a rival for the wall. An American trio (Lowe, Ogden, Synnott) who knew our plan in detail hurried to the mountain a month before us in order to secure a first ascent for themselves. They were supported by a million-dollar (!) budget from the internet company Quokka, and they were "on stage" day and night. At the last moment, a four-person Russian expedition was also added. Our team for the wall climb was Gabor Berecz, Oskar Nadasdi and Thomas Tivadar, along with Peter Schäffler. Rita Bürger and Stephan Huber accompanied us to climb the standard route via the north shoulder.

We started from Munich on July 14 and reached Base Camp at 4200 meters on the Trango Lake on July 25. Here we were received by, among other expeditions, an American high-tech village, as well as trash and fields of fecal matter. The Americans had occupied the most logical line on the face, the only large system of dihedrals. The Russians chose a series of small crack corners to the right of that line. So what was left over for us was the left side. We started on the flatter, lower part of the wall on July 27 and climbed 25 pitches (maximum 5.10 A3) to the middle of the wall (5200 meters), hauling with us ten sacks and barrels. It had

taken us ten wall days to this point, along with a few bad weather days in BC. Unfortunately, we found massive amounts of trash here (especially Russian candy wrappers, packaging materials and gas cylinders) and thrown-down gear (lots of US ropes). Later, the Russians even threw their portaledge down, which barely missed us. Even their line did not take a pretty end: about 200 meters under the exit they could go no further with their spartan gear and had to traverse about 100 meters to the left.

Rita and Stephan left us on August 13 after their summit attempt failed at 6000 meters due to weather. After the Americans and the Russians ended their routes (both supposedly VII 5.11 A4), we started our final push on August 14. We climbed for a number of rope lengths on an almost continuous series of corners and cracks that moved to the left. Since most of the formations were polished and compact, we had to climb mostly on tied-off hooks, beaks and copperheads. The passage between 5300 meters and 5600 meters thus became the key to the route (A4+, A3, A4, A3, A4-, A3, A4- clean, new-wave pitches).

Unfortunately, the weather was bad and very cold nearly throughout. A number of times, we were forced to wait idly through storms and snow for many days in the portaledge. After August 25, it turned into downright winter in the upper part of the wall (-10°C in the tents). On August 28, P. Schäffler finally gave up and descended.

Because we were only a threesome from that point forward and we had too few days for an independent line, we decided to climb into the American route, only ten meters away, in order to make more rapid progress. So on the 36th pitch we climbed over and repeated from that point forward all the rope lengths judged as difficult by the "Quokka Route." Unfortunately, we found a climbing style that showed only one thing: when you have a million dollars backing you up, you have to get up no matter how! Next to "normally" climbable fine cracks, corners and hook areas, we found drilled rivets and copperheads, as well as rows of bathook holes (25 holes in the 26th pitch alone). We also often found the ratings exaggerated (the most difficult US pitch, pitch 28, was actually A3+). Had these pitches been, for example, on El Cap, then these three top men would have lost face.

From the 40th pitch on, the wall laid back a bit, but on the other hand the icing up of the cracks increased dramatically. Thus our "winter ascent" was made more difficult. Renewed storms stopped us once again for three days. At this point, time became too tight, but we wanted to continue until the last hour. We stopped about 60 meters before the exit (at about 6000 meters) in the 44th pitch, which would offer fantastic free climbing in the summer.

We rapped down and broke down all of our equipment in three days, cleaned up and transported all of the trash that could be burned to BC, where our porters were already waiting. During the night, everything was packed into porter loads and the next morning we were allowed to begin our three-day walk out after 25 wall days. The result: *Lost Butterfly* (VII 5.10 A4+), new plus ten pitches of the American route, *Parallel Worlds*.

THOMAS TIVADAR, Germany

*Trango Pulpit, More Czech, Less Slovak.* In July, the Czech/Slovak expedition consisting of Ivo Wondráček, Tomáš Rinn, Pavel Weisser and Michal Drašar (all Czech) left Prague June 18. Jaroslav Dutka from Slovakia had problems with his transit visas to Great Britain and joined the expedition in Base Camp on July 2. The approach to the face of the Trango Pulpit was grade 4-5 climbing in itself. The team established Camp I at the base of the wall. The face is composed of three pillars separated by big snow fields. There were already climbers from Norway to the right of their proposed route. The Czech climbers had food for 20 days.