



*Shipton's Arch from the south, just outside the small village of Mingyol, about 30 kilometers west-northwest of Kashgar. MARK NEWCOMB*

hangs that went at about 5.6. The rock is loose conglomerate. The exposure is similar to the East Ridge of Wolf's Head in the Wind Rivers with several hundred more feet of exposure on either side.

Having climbed the arch and done some measurements via a wild rappel undertaken by Sam, we proceeded to rappel down the 800-foot wall that led down to the slot canyon beneath the arch. We rappelled off double bolt anchors placed in relatively solid, water-polished conglomerate. Once down, we threaded our way southward out the slot canyon, reaching in a few hours the point to which we had been led before by our local guide and completing our journey through the Kara Tagh.

MARK NEWCOMB

*Chakragil, West Ridge.* While taking advantage of a free week during a visit to the far reaches of Xinjiang Province in northwestern China, I climbed the west ridge of Chakragil (22,071'). I took no map or altimeter and am therefore uncertain of the elevations of my camps. The roundtrip, from the Karakoram Highway and back, took six days. I had long been intrigued by Eric Shipton's account, in his book *Mountains of Tartary*, about his attempt with Bill Tilman in 1948 on the north ridge.

I took three days to ascend to a high camp. My route ascended the northerly of two glacier basins. A deep gorge with a swift, muddy stream exits the southerly of the two. A clearer, mellower stream and a substantially shallower gorge exits the northerly. It's an easy hike up the northerly basin, onto the terminal moraine of the glacier and along the lateral moraine on its north-northwesterly flank.



*The west ridge of Chakragil, as seen from the south.* MARK NEWCOMB

From a second camp on the lateral moraine of the glacier, I ascended about 2,000 feet to a high camp on the rim of a small, glaciated basin that leads to the west ridge. The ascent to the summit took six hours from my high camp, first along a sharp, sometimes corniced ridge and then up a broad, well-rounded ridge with a few false summits. New snow along the first two-thirds of the ascent hampered progress, but the upper third was blown relatively free of snow and made for easier travel. The summit is a broad dome of ice with no well-defined single highest point.

After summiting, I descended past my high camp to the next camp down. The next day I hiked south across the glacier and over a saddle, dropping about 2,000 feet down the south side of the saddle to the southerly of the two glacier basins. I followed a goat path out the narrow mouth of this basin and hiked to a hidden meadow not far from the Karakoram Highway. The next morning I hiked out to the highway and caught a ride into Kashgar.

MARK NEWCOMB

*Mt. Mustagh Ata, East Ridge.* In 1994, Dan Waugh had seen and photographed the east ridge of Mustagh Ata (7546m) and suggested we might try to be the first to climb it. Through correspondence with Japanese Alpine Club members, including Masanori Suzuki, as well as a previous attempt on the route in 1998, Daniel Mazur and Jon Otto (U.S.) established that the ridge was unclimbed.

Our journey started on June 10 with a preliminary climb of the normal route, on the western slopes of the mountain, where the team used snowshoes and skis to place all members on the summit. After reaching the summit, Thijs Van der Plas (Belgium and the Netherlands), Christian Zimmer Conrad (Germany), Walter Frehner (Switzerland), and Krzysztof Berbeka