

established on the west side at 4,130m. From here Nelhams, Kettle, Allen & Sutcliffe traversed the fine mixed peak at the top of the canyon (Peak Mars, 4,905m, AD) while Bruton, da Silva, McCafferty, Whitmore, and I climbed the neighboring Peak Virgo (4,744m). Nelhams' team then attempted the fortress-like peak north of Peak Mars, but was stopped by a 50m barrier of steep compact rock near the summit. Bruton, da Silva, and I tried the huge north ridge of Pik 5,060m. We traversed its first summit (Mramorney Cupol [Marble Dome] 4,700m), but an hour beyond this they were stopped by a deep breach which would have been very difficult and time-consuming to cross. This peak remains a major and challenging objective.

The expedition then moved around to more accessible peaks on the north side of the range (two valleys west of the area explored by the 1995 British expedition) and enjoyed more success. Base camp was established in the Chon Tor valley, which divides higher up into two glaciated valleys. The team split and moved up to ABCs high on each glacier. From the east glacier Nelhams, Allen, Kempley, Kettle, and Sutcliffe climbed the southeast ridge of PE Peak (4,740m, PD), the west ridge of Peak Obsorny (4,914m, AD), and the south ridge of Gromovoy (Thunder) Peak (4,840m, PD+). They came close to success on the prominent triple-summitted peak forming the east side of the valley, turning back due to avalanche danger. At the head of this glacier a superb snow peak characterized by soaring corniced ridges remains unclimbed.

From the western glacier Bruton, McCafferty, and I, with a second rope of da Silva, Whitmore, and Russian companion Sasha Miyusov, climbed the southwest ridge of Peak Tomos (4,869m, AD), the beautifully symmetrical snow peak that dominates the glacier. Another classic summit—Shutnik (Jester) 4,890m—was climbed by the north spur at PD+. Ascents were made of Scalnya Kiska (4,666m) and a fine rock pillar above ABC: Snezny Chelovek (Snowman) grade V. Finally, everyone with energy left joined Nelhams for the 4,542m peak above base camp, a stunning viewpoint in perfect weather.

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*Borkoldoj and Southern Kokshaal-Too, Pik 5,471 (Mt. Letavet), first ascent; Krylia Sovetov (Wings of the Soviets), second ascent.* In the summer of 2003 our group—Mikhail Daineko, Dmitrii Konilov, Mikhail Ageev, Anna Perever-zeva, and myself as leader—visited the ranges of Borkoldoj and Western Kokshaal-Too on the border of Kyrgyzstan and China. Because of international disputes between the USSR and China for many years the region was practically closed and impossible to visit. Only beginning in the 1990s did groups of Russian, American, and European alpinists and tourists start to come to the area. We flew from Moscow to Bishkek. Then, we traveled by jeep along the mountain roads from the southern shore of Issyk-Kul' through several mountain passes to reach the river Naryn, to the border outpost Karasaj. From there we organized our cache into the valley of Uzengikush. Before us, until the Uzengikush valley, lay about 130 km of a difficult mountain road, which for several years had been left in neglect. Automobiles cover this stretch in 6-10 hours.

Visiting Borkoldoj, located to the north of Kokshaal-Too, we prepared to acclimate and to attempt to reach the highest point of the range: the unclimbed peak 5,171. Through several mountain passes (just lower than 5000m) we came out onto the largest glacier of the range Borkoldoj Dzhegolomaj and approached peak 5,171 from the southeast. Peak 5171 from the south-east abruptly ends with a rocky wall. The ascent of the mountain turned out to be more complicated than we had calculated drawing on available cartographic information, and could

require three days. Since the fundamental part of the route was planned for Kokshaal-Too, we descended into the Uzengikush Valley to our cache.

We climbed along the Ajtali Glacier to the main range (Kokshaal-Too). Here an unclimbed peak 5,471 is located. Crossing the main ridge from a branch of the Rudnev glacier, located on the southern slopes, along a simple rocky-snowy south-eastern rib (500 meters vertical, steepness up to 40°, 2B) we climbed to the summit. We decided to call the peak Mt. Letavet in honor of the Russian geographer, alpinist, and scientist Avgust Letavet, who organized the first detailed expeditions in region before the Second World War.

In order to accomplish the second ascent of the peak Krylia Sovetov (Wings of the Soviets, 5,560m) (first ascent by E. Monaenkov in 1998; one of the highest points in the Kokshaal-Too range), we continued

through several mountain passes along the axial line of the main ridge to the glacier Sarychat Eastern. We began the ascent of Mount Wings of the Soviets along the western ridge across peak 5,120 and the false summit 5429. The route is rocky-icy-snowy (5A) and took 4 days. While crossing some of the key parts: circumvention of peak 5,120, ascent of the false summit (5,429) and the summit (5,560), 20 ropes were hung. During our overnight near the false summit a strong wind arose which destroyed the frame of one of the tents. We descended along the northern ridge onto the Pal'gov glacier, from where the approach route of the first-ascent team continued. After this we climbed to the upper reaches of the glacier Grigor'ev and continue by traversing peak Friendship (3A, 5,330 m., first ascent probably was done from the north in the 1960s, and in 1995 the traverse was first done by the group led by O. Chkhetiani), and descended (500 meters, steepness of 45-40°) onto the largest glacier of the Western Kokshaal-Too: the glacier Korzhenevsky. We concluded the expedition after 25 days at the border outpost Karakoz, where an auto collected us and took us to Issyk-Kul'.



View to Pik Letaveta (5,471m) from Nalivkin's glacier. The route follows the left skyline. *Danil Popov*



Krylia Sovetov (Wings of the Soviets) from the north. (1) Efimov and (2) Popov routes merge and follow the skyline ridge over the false summit to the pointy peak on the left. *Danil Popov*