

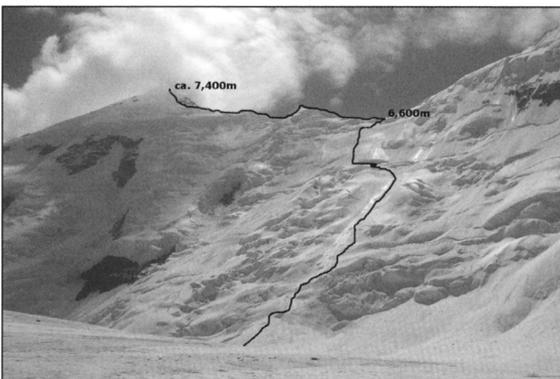
MASHERBRUM RANGE

Masherbrum, northeast face, attempt. In late June a strong Russian expedition under the noted leader of the Russian Big Walls Project, Alexander Odintsov, set up base camp on the Yermanendu Glacier for an attempt on the futuristic northeast face of Masherbrum (7,855m). This face is as impressive and as hard as the north face of Jannu, climbed by the Russian team in 2004. It is 3,000m high, and the crux will undoubtedly be the near-vertical yellow rock band starting around 7,000m. A reconnaissance in 2005 led the Russians to believe the wall would be very difficult but possible. However, it failed to reveal the objective dangers.

Immediately after arrival at base camp, Odintsov became seriously ill with hepatitis and had to be evacuated by helicopter. Later Michel Michailov was injured falling into a crevasse. Alexander Ruchkin, who was the first to summit Jannu in 2004, took over as leader and, having decided that the lower northeast face was severely threatened by avalanche and serac fall, switched to an approach via the north ridge to the right. The weather was unhelpful, and work on the route had to be carried out at night or during early morning. Eventually they established an advanced base on the ridge at 5,800m. However, after repeated snowfalls, Ruchkin realized that there was no safe way forward, and they abandoned the objective in mid-July. Interviewed later, the climbers stated they had no intention of returning, leaving this awesome project for the next generation.

The north ridge itself is a superb and elegant goal that has been attempted three times. Japanese tried it in 1975 but retreated from 5,500m, when they found the start too threatened by serac fall. Another Japanese expedition started up in 1985 but, finding the upper glacier dangerous, made a long traverse right to the northwest ridge and climbed it to the summit. A strong American-Slovenian team tried the face in 2003 but retreated in dangerous avalanche conditions from 5,900m

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, *CLIMB Magazine*



The line of the Spanish route up the northwest face to southwest ridge of Chogolisa (7,665m). The face is over 1,000m high and a camp was placed half way up, with a second on the col at 6,600m. The climbers retreated in bad weather from 7,400m. *Carles Figueras Torrent*

Trinity Peak, northwest ridge, attempt; Chogolisa, northwest face of southwest ridge, attempt. Two days after leaving Hushe village on July 16, we established our base camp at a pleasant site called Xhuspang (4,680m) on the northwest side of the East Gondogoro Glacier. We spent several days acclimatizing around and above this camp, then, due to poor snow conditions caused by the hot summer of 2006, we decided not to attempt the impressive west face of Laila Peak. Instead, Pep Permañé and I devoted our efforts to the northwest

ridge of Trinity Peak (a.k.a. Tasa Peak or Tasa Burakha), a ridge leading to the southwest summit (6,614m). On July 24 and 25 we climbed alpine-style 1,700m up the ridge, the first day on excellent granite to grade IV and the second day mixed climbing, first on snow, then ice. However, 300m below the summit, snow conditions deteriorated so badly that we retreated. The descent involved 25 rappels to Gondogoro Glacier. [The southwest summit was reached in 1978 by a Japanese expedition, which sieged the northwest ridge, not realizing that the ca 6,700m central summit was higher. It was reached in 1988 by British climbers Nicolas Hellen and Julius Grainger, either by the same route or the southwest ridge. —Ed.]

On July 29 we crossed the Gondogoro La and established an advanced base camp at Ali Camp on the west side of Vigne Glacier. On July 30 and 31, Jordi “Barraca” Bosch, Ramon Estiu, Pep Permañé, and I climbed the 1,100m northwest face of the southwest ridge of Chogolisa (7,665m), by a route to the right of the line followed in 1986 by the British team that traversed both summits. On the first day we pitched our two tiny tents at 6,000m. The next day we continued to the 6,600m col on the southwest ridge between Chogolisa and Prupuo Barakha [the Kaberi Col, reached from the Kaberi Glacier on the far side in 1975 by Edi Koblmüller’s expedition, which made the first ascent of the southwest, highest summit of Chogolisa.] Just below the col we had to climb a serac, where we left a fixed rope. By the afternoon of that second day we were back at Ali Camp. On August 2, Barraca, Estiu, and Permañé reascended the face to the col, where they pitched a tent. The next day they found the ridge ahead to be corniced with deep snow. Estiu stopped at 7,100m, but Permañé and Barraca went on without rucksacks until above 7,400m, a point where all difficulties had been overcome. It was snowing and was late, so they did not push on to the summit. They returned to the tent and the next day reached Ali Camp.

CARLES FIGUERAS TORRENT, *Spain.*

Editor’s note: A British expedition was on Chogolisa at the same time, having had their permit to Noshaq in the Hindu Kush denied shortly before leaving for Pakistan. They were behind the Spanish but found the route dangerous. One evening a colossal serac fell down the entire face along the line of ascent. The Spanish had just finished climbing through this section, and the British felt they were lucky to escape disaster. After a week of bad weather at base camp, the British returned and climbed a steep 400m ice line to a col on the northwest ridge, above which they made a cache on a flat section of the crest at 6,000m. They hoped to return and follow the ridge to the summit, but daily snowfalls of 15cm prevented further attempts.

CHARAKUSA VALLEY

Charakusa Region, corrections. The following information relates to the Italian expeditions operating above the Chogolisa Glacier in 2004 (AAJ 2005) and 2005 (AAJ 2006). Pointed Peak (5,400m), climbed by Giordani, Maspes, and Paoletto in 2004 by the northwest face and west ridge (where on the upper crest they found indications that the peak had been visited), was first climbed, by the same route, in 1989 by George Armstrong and George Szuca. They also climbed the peak immediately to the west, from the col between the two, naming it Parantha Peak (ca 5,300m). The same two also made the first ascent of what the Italians refer to as Sheep Peak (ca 6,000m), climbed by Barmasse and Giordani in 2004. Armstrong and Szuca climbed it twice, via the north couloir (climbed by the Italians) and the south couloir. They refer to