

“Madhil Sar” (ca 5,700m) in the 2007 *AAJ* (pp 321-322) was in fact Shifkitin Sar, climbed by a British team in 1986. This peak on the north ridge of Shimshal Whitehorn was subsequently climbed in 1996 and April 2006, as well as during Harrison’s July 2006 expedition.

## PANMAH MUZTAGH

*Suma Brakk, first ascent; Latok I attempt; Choktoi Tower, new route to just below summit.* On June 15 Doug Chabot, Steve Swenson, and I arrived in base camp on the Choktoi Glacier for an attempt on the unclimbed north ridge of Latok I and other peaks. After acclimatization with an ascent of the striking Biacherahi Tower, ca 5870m, directly behind base camp, we focused on the 6,166m triple-summitted peak due west of camp, which we would name Suma Brakk, meaning “three summits” in Balti. This peak had been previously called Choktoi Peak and other names.

Leaving base camp on June 23, we descended the Choktoi Glacier to the southwest drainage off Suma Brakk and climbed to a glacial cirque at ca 5,000m, below the south face of the peak. The next morning, in three hours, we climbed a steep snow gully to a col on the south ridge and a perfect camp below a rock promontory at ca 5,600m. We left camp the following morning at 5 a.m. with daypacks and began a long, rising traverse across the south face, simul-climbing over moderate snow with passages of steeper ice and rock up to 5.8 or so. After about 500 meters of climbing we reached a saddle on the south ridge, where we continued through

deep snow, arriving on a tiny summit perch at 9:30 a.m. With bad weather looming, we descended all the way to the Choktoi that day, arriving at base camp well after dark after 16 hours on the go.

On July 5 we made our only attempt on Latok I with a midnight start, taking a line of snow and ice couloirs just left and east of the main rock ridge. We simul-climbed for 500m until it steepened and we had to belay three pitches of steep ice and mixed ground (about M4 A1) to reach the main ridge. From there, eight more pitches of steep snow and ice runnels on the west side led to the second horizontal ice ridge, where we placed a camp on a fine platform after 20 hours of continuous climbing. The next day we continued on the west side of the ridge across snow flutes and good ice to the third horizontal ridge, where we had considerable difficulty



Suma Brakk (6,166m, a.k.a. Choktoi Peak). Doug Chabot, Mark Richey, and Steve Swenson climbed the south face from a high camp at ca 5,600m. Steve Swenson

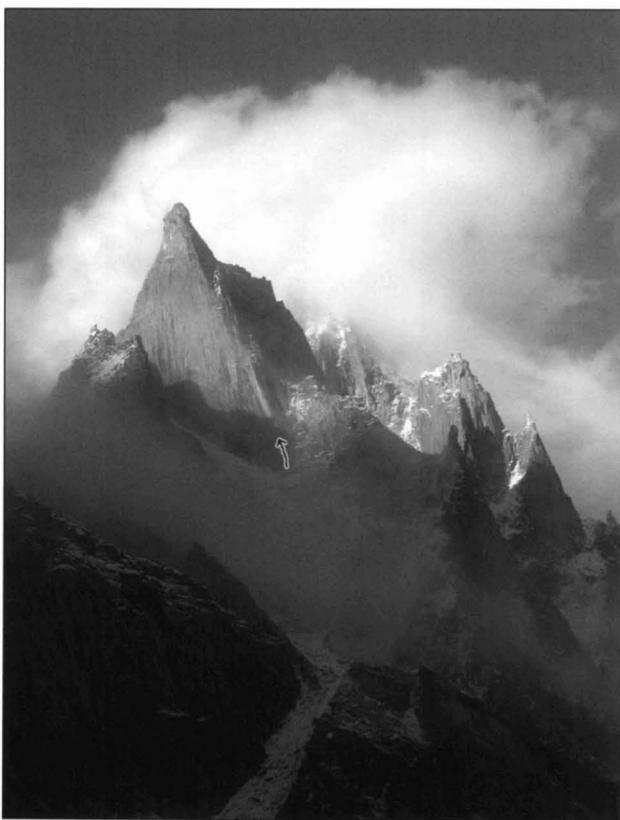
breaking through the cornice to find a spot suitable for a bivouac. The vertical, unconsolidated snow seemed bottomless and nearly impossible to protect. We carved out a small ledge below a mushroom atop the rock ridge, and I recognized it as the same place I had camped in 1997, nearly halfway up the climb, at 5900m.

Despite our rapid progress, the loose snow would soon seal our fate, and next morning, after several frustrating hours and less than a rope length of progress, we abandoned our attempt in impossible conditions. As Doug remarked, "You need a snow blower, not ice tools." We descended directly to the glacier on the west side of the ridge, reaching the Choktoi that day in about 26 rappels, considerably quicker than our descent along the main ridge in '97.

With Latok I out of the question and Doug heading back to the U.S., Steve and I looked around for another objective. We made one attempt on the southeast ridge of the Ogre, but again found deep and dangerous snow in the initial icefall. On July 20 we settled for a new-route attempt on the pointed Choktoi Tower, ca 5700m, the peak that forms an island at the head of the Choktoi Glacier. Steve and I climbed a long couloir on the north side of the tower to a rock col northwest of the summit. From there we traversed and ascended for eight or nine steep pitches on rock of increasing difficulty (to 5.11 A1), moving from one side of the ridge to the other. We were stopped just 4m from the true summit by a short, blank wall. Nonetheless it was great climb, with superb position on the ridge. We descended through a tranquil night and reached our glacier camp by 9 a.m. after 27 hours of climbing, just as it started to snow. Unbeknownst to us, the peak had been climbed to the top by the opposite rock ridge the year before by a Canadian team (Relph-Walsh, 2006).

MARK RICHEY, AAC

*The Bean Pole, first ascent; Latok I attempt.* On July 12 Bean Bowers and I headed up the north ridge of Latok I to put in a cache and check out the bottom section of the climb. Skirting to the west the rock buttress climbed by many parties, we climbed 3,500' to ca 18,500' (5,639m) in seven hours. The climbing was mostly moderate and low-angle,



The Bean Pole (ca 18,500') on the north side of Choktoi Glacier. Bean Bowers and Josh Wharton climbed six long pitches (5.11+ A0) to the summit, starting on the southeast pillar and then moving right. *Josh Wharton*