

We spent a restless night at 5,200m and continued toward the summit via a crack and corner system that split a massive headwall, the Golden Pillar. The rock was solid and clean, perfect for free climbing. We had freed every pitch until now, so we were hoping we could avoid aid, but the wall steepened to slightly overhanging and the rock became flaky. I threw my best efforts at a small finger crack, but at 5,400m a dirty, flaky, 5.12+ crack would be hard to onsight. After pulling off a loose block and taking a whipper, I resorted to aiding the steepest pitch of the route.

A couple of pitches brought us to the top of the Golden Pillar, where we found ice to melt into desperately needed water. Another splitter 5.11 finger crack presented itself, bringing us to within one pitch of moderate terrain. The last technical pitch turned out to be another thin crack that was too dirty to free-climb, so we added the second aid pitch of the route (C3). About 200m of moderate terrain brought us to the summit as the sun was setting.

We bivied on top in perfect conditions: no wind, 5°C, and clear skies. The only disadvantages were the pounding headaches and insomnia of altitude. The next morning we watched the sun rise behind Nameless Tower, spreading its rays in a blinding aura of light. We were in no rush to descend; we had food, water, perfect weather, and bolted rappels all the way to the valley (via the 2000 route For Better or Worse), so we took the time to make sure we didn't make any mistakes and to enjoy the splendor of the moment. The Choice (ca 1,000m, 5.11+R C3).

JOSHUA LAVIGNE, *Canada*

*Great Trango Tower, Norwegian Pillar.* The groundbreaking ascent of the Norwegian Pillar in 1984 is still the most outrageous line ever attempted by Norwegian climbers, and their story is the most profound in our climbing history. It was therefore with mixed feelings that Rolf Bae, Bjarte Bø, Sigurd Felde, and I trudged up the Dunge Glacier, a less-visited arm leading north from Pakistan's famous Baltoro. We were goggle-eyed and screaming at the out-of-this-world



(A) Trango Pulpit. (B) Great Trango Tower, southwest summit. (C) Great Trango Tower, east summit. (D) Little Trango. (E) Trango (Nameless) Tower. The Norwegian Pillar route closely follows the sun-shadow line to Great Trango's east peak. *Jafar / Courtesy Stein-Ivar Gravdal*

scenery one minute, and walking past the memorial for Hans Christian Doseth and Finn Daeli the next. Thoughts of their deaths during the descent from the first ascent of the pillar were unavoidable and constantly lurking in our minds. On April 30, when we finally looked up at the stunning beauty of the line, we knew that the climbing ahead would take all we had—if we had it.

We'd heard some nasty stories about the intro gully, but it didn't look too active, probably due to our early-season arrival. It took us six days to ferry our gear and a 30-day supply of food and gas to the last sheltered spot, working mainly during the night. A two-day snowfall delayed our progress and plastered the entire pillar, but the sun soon tidied things up, and we left our fantastic base camp crew on May 5.

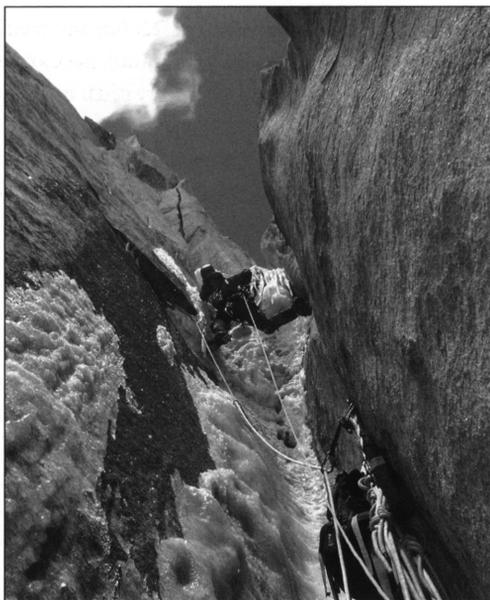
A long night and four more pitches took us across the gully to a semi-sheltered camp at the foot of the pillar. The next day, Bjarte was rammed by an avalanche while running out our 200m static rope across the snow-covered initial pitches. Luckily, the blocks that hit him were ice-free and he kept his stance, if not his cool.

Fantastic ice-filled crack lines took us up the lower part of the pillar to our next camp. Here we managed to drop Rolf's sleeping mat, and then Sigurd failed to put the lid on his piss bottle, leaving Rolf, who was now sleeping on top of his down kit, to marinate.

It was remarkable to climb the same ground we'd had in mental images from Stein P. Aasheim's book covering the 1984 ascent. After more than a week at the base of the upper pillar, fighting incredibly bad conditions, we finally managed to move camp into unknown territory. This is where Aasheim and Dag Kolsrud had descended in '84, thus extending their friends' food supply and ending the supply of photos.

Our last camp was pitched on the very apex of the upper pillar. (If anybody can come up with a more exposed campsite, let us know!) From here we fixed four ropes to below the snow rim, where a 70° Cerro Torre-style snow ditch took us to the summit ridge, and then on to the east summit at 6,230m. We climbed 2,100m in 55 pitches, the crux being around new-wave A3+. We spent 30 days on the wall, including three days for the descent.

STEIN-IVAR GRAVDAL, *Norway*



Stein-Ivar Gravidal leads overhanging mixed ground on the 49th pitch of the Norwegian Pillar, near the top of the headwall. *Rolf Bae*

*Muztagh Tower, northeast face.* At 7,284m, Muztagh Tower is a prominent landmark on the way to most of the 8,000ers in Pakistan, yet there have not been many ascents, and there has never been an alpine-style ascent. Our goal was an alpine-style ascent of the unclimbed northeast face. Pavle Kozjek, Grega Kresal, and I set base camp on the Biange Glacier. During our approach trek, Grega had gotten increasingly ill, and after a couple of painful days, we decided that it was