



Looking south-southeast from summit of Icarus, At Bashi, toward virtually unknown peaks. Vanessa Wills in foreground. Eddy Barnes

north ridge at 5,100m. However, the views across the border from the southwest face were spectacular, particularly the Great Walls of China. There is huge potential for much harder routes, although descents could be entertaining.

On August 20 we drove west for eight hours to the At Bashi Range. As with the Western Kokshaal-too, we'd had no plans to climb here, so we had no maps and had conducted no research. In a hamlet on the south side of the river (opposite side from At Bashi Village), we found the start of an entertaining track leading south into the Acha

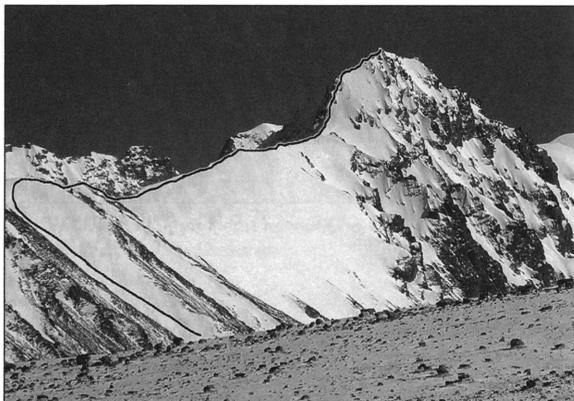
Kaeyndi Valley. This valley lies about halfway along the At Bashi, a chain ca 80km long. After establishing a base camp at 2,790m and an advanced base at 3,513m, we summited 10 peaks in a northeast-facing cirque. The highest we dubbed Pik Icarus (4,537m). It is likely that four of the 10 were first ascents: Dove Peak (4,311m, PD+), Crow's Nest (4,155m, AD+ with several pitches of scantily protected British VS), Chook Mountain (4,063m, PD+), and Icarus (PD). The only good rock was on Crow's Nest.

The excellent, sustained Wills-Brown Couloir was the most technical ascent we achieved, involving 800m of ascent (including approach), with the final four pitches being on superb 70-80° water ice (NZ Grade 4/Alpine D). The route topped out at 4,242m on the ridge connecting Shark Peak (4,249m) and Crocodile Peak (4,352m).

The fluidity of visa regulations, the vagaries of Central Asian diplomatic relations, the dancing water fountains in the central square of Bishkek, the sweet, hydrating, red flesh of the ubiquitous watermelon, and the stark beauty and contrasts of the Kyrgyz mountain landscape, all contributed to make this expedition an unforgettable, not-to-be-missed roller coaster ride. Huge thanks go to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the Mount Everest Foundation for their support.

SALLY BROWN, U.K.

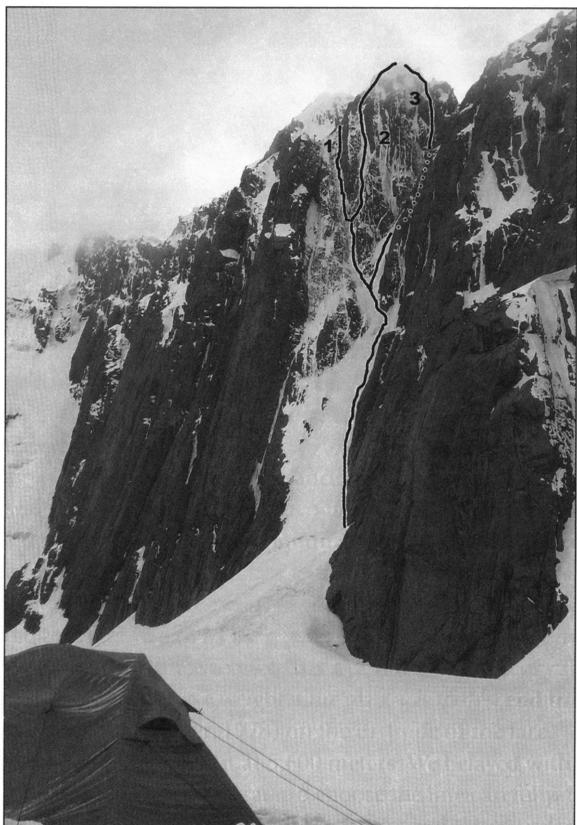
*Peak 4,863m, north ridge; unnamed Trezubet summit, north ridge; Pik 5,046m, south ridge; Pik ca 4,800m, Sarah's Daddy; Kyzyl Asker, north summit (ca 5,500m), Gladwin-Stewart Ridge. Buying supplies should not be the most dangerous part of an expedition. Bishkek's roads are such that pedestrians are often forced into suicidal bids to cross six lanes of moving traffic. At least in Kyrgyzstan getting to our base camp should not have been an issue, as*



Pik 4,863m, with Bide-Hapuoja route on north ridge. Carl Reilly



(A) Pik Zuckerman (5,046m), (B) Pik 5,046m, with Reilly-Schofield route, and (C) Pik Vernyi (5,250m GPS) from Kyzyl Asker Glacier. *Carl Reilly.*



Pik ca 4,800m on Ochre Walls with (1) Sarah's Daddy (ED2 WI5, 500m), (2) Fire and Ice (ED1 Scottish VII, 600m), and (3) Beef-cake (IV M6 WI4, 600m). Spanish route Ak-Saitan (A3+ 6a+ 80°, 600m) climbs granite buttress immediately left. *Tom Stewart.*

we were traveling in a six-wheel drive, 16-ton, ex-Soviet army truck. It beats donkeys and Alpacas, or so we thought.

We got off to a bad start with an eight-hour roadside delay caused by a puncture, flat spare, and ripped valve on a spare inner tube. I never understood what Sergy, the Russian driver, was aiming to achieve by hitting the tire with a mallet, but it seemed to do the trick. Things then went reasonably well for the next two days. We couldn't hear each other, so no one could offend anyone else, and the scenery was becoming more dramatic. On leaving the last remnants of a track, we crossed the plateau toward base camp. Things now went rapidly wrong. One second we were at normal height above the ground and were moving, the next we were a meter lower and not moving. The ground had turned to marsh, and the Soviet Beast had become intimately acquainted with it. It took 24 hours of furious digging, chocking, scraping, and lifting before the Beast awoke from its slumber and regained solid ground.

We never reached our intended base camp, settling instead for the more accessible Komorova Glacier. Here the six of us completed an array of new routes and explored large parts of the surrounding area.

On August 19 Tom Bide and Urpu Hapuoja climbed the north ridge of Pik 4,863m, on the divide between the eastern and central Komorova glaciers. They



Looking south up Kyzyl Asker Glacier. (A) Pik Vernyi (5,250m GPS). (B) Pik Panfilovski Division (5,290m). (C) Sculptura Chokursu, with Gladwin-Stewart Ridge marked. *Tom Stewart*



Dave Gladwin approaching steep ice smear of Sarah's Daddy. Ice line slanting up to right is Fire and Ice. *Tom Stewart*

ascended scree and snow to the crest, before continuing for five ropelengths to the summit (altimeter reading 4,920m, AD, Scottish 2/3). They rappelled a broad couloir on the west face.

On the 23rd we, Graeme and Carl, climbed unroped to the crest of the Trezubet Ridge between Piks Oleg and Jjin. After camping for the night on the eastern Komorova Glacier, we gained the crest via east-facing snow slopes. We then followed the crest south, crossing an initial summit, where we found footsteps [Pik Niknaz, 4,957m, climbed a week earlier by Sally Brown's expedition, see report below], and followed the ridge to a second, higher peak (Alpine D).

On the 28th Tom Reilly and I, Carl, climbed the west face and south ridge of unnamed Pik 5,046m near the south end of the Ochre Walls. [This peak lies south of Pik Zuckerman and is clearly seen between (B) Zuckerman and (C) Unmarked Soldier in *AAJ 1999*, p. 415.] After camping for the night on the Kyzyl Asker Glacier, we followed a heavily crevassed eastern fork to access a smaller glacier between the Ochre Walls and Pik Vernyi. We ascended this, finally climbing a snow

slope, wide gully, and mixed ground (Scottish 3/4) onto the south ridge. The crest gave two short sections of steep granite cracks (Scottish 5/6 mixed), before we reached the summit. It was a fantastic, varied route of TD/TD+.

In the meantime the other two members of the expedition, Dave Gladwin and Tom Stewart, had also been climbing excellent routes. They started on the 17th, with what they believe was a similar line to Silent Bob (DeCapio-Isaac, 2001) on the west face of Pik Gronky (ca 5,080m). Their route involved 400m in an ice couloir, generally WI4 but with one hard ice/mixed pitch at WI5+/Scottish 6.

On the 18th the same pair climbed a new route, Sarah's Daddy (ED2 WI5, 500m), on

the north-northeast face of the unnamed ca 4,800m summit between Piks Zuckerman and Carnovsky on the Ochre Walls. This route follows the initial big snow couloir of the 2001 DeCapio-Isaac route, Beefcake, and the 2004 Benson-Tresidder route, Fire and Ice, until they fork. It then climbs the ramps of Fire and Ice, but where Fire and Ice moves out right, it continues straight up steep ice to the ridge. The pair did not continue to the summit. This is the fifth route on the peak.

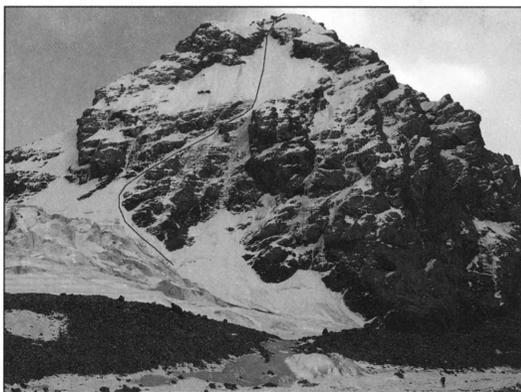
From the 24th to 26th Dave and Tom climbed the north ridge of Kyzyl Asker as far as the previously unclimbed north summit, which they estimate to be 5,500m. The amount of climbing was 2,000m, with a height gain of 1,400m. After a five-hour approach the previous day, they climbed 350m of 50° snow/ice, and then made a rightward traverse for 350m to reach open gullies leading up for 150m (55°) to a notch in the crest of the ridge. Here the main difficulties began, and they climbed at least 20 pitches to the summit. There were several bold leads, with technical difficulties up to UIAA VI, WI 3/4, and M6+/7. The overall grade was ED2/3, the crux being a very thin 10m-high crack in a granite wall—just wide enough to accept monopoints and picks.

After three 18-hour days they reached the north summit in a massive storm, which subsequently caused frostnip. On the fourth day they decided to rappel straight down the (unseen) 1,000m west face. Using Abalakovs, they made 15 rappels in a gully onto a hanging ice field, under the most intense bombardment of spindrift and falling ice either had witnessed. After traversing across the top of a serac barrier, they made a further 10 rappels down another thin, steep ice gully to reach the glacier, and regained the tent that day. They named the north summit *Sculptura Chokursu* (Sculptures' Peak).

CARL REILLY *and* GRAEME SCHOFIELD, U.K.

*Pik Plaza* (4,912m), northwest face, Z-K; *Pik Granitsa* (5,370m), north face, Nordic Walking. Inspired by impressive photographs of *Pik Granitsa*, provided by Paul Knott, who visited this area in 2005 (*AAJ 2006*), Michal Kasproicz, Wojtek Ryczer, and I attempted peaks around the head of the Fersmana Glacier in the central section of the Western Kokshaal-too. We were aware that with limited time and finances our chances of success were modest, but we took the risk in order to have an adventure.

On August 20th we reached the snout of the Kotur Glacier, which was as far east as our driver would take us, and set up base camp. On the 23rd we reached the foot of the divide between the Fersmana and Sarychat Glaciers, where Michal twisted his ankle so badly that he was unable to walk. We established a temporary camp, and Wojtek and I spent the next few days ferrying loads from base. On the 30th we moved camp onto the Fersmana Glacier, and the following day Wojtek and I climbed the northwest face of *Pik Plaza* to its vir-



Z-K on northwest face of *Pik Plaza*. First ascent of this peak was made by Slovenians from the far side. *Wojtek Ryczer*