

Looking southeast up the Uchitel Glacier at (A) Korona and (B) Pik 4,300m, with new route Discovery. Sergey Dashkevich

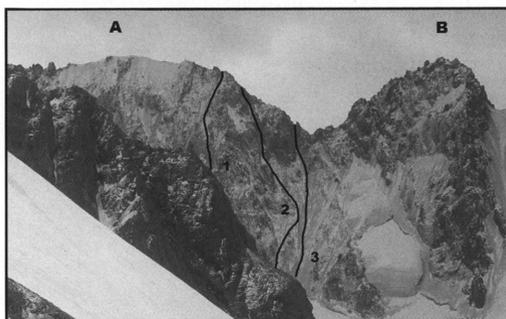
equipment. All that day and through the following night we progressed by mixed climbing and dry tooling. We completed the 1,070m route entirely free—the second overall ascent—at M6+. We were exhausted when we reached the summit.

During our few remaining days the weather got worse, but we wanted to climb one last route. We chose the northwest face of Baylyan Bashi, which lies on the ridge between Svobodnaya Korea and Korona at the head of the Ak-Sai Glacier. Our new line, which we called Long Way Home (700m, M5+), wasn't so hard and took the right flank of the buttress followed by the 1985 Kuzmenko route (6A). It proved a fine end to the trip.

SERGEY DASHKEVICH, *Russia*, supplied by Anna Piunova, *mountain.ru*, photo captions translated by Luca Calvi



Sergey Dashkevich starting an ice pitch on the first ascent of Discovery. Boris Tretyakov



The northwest face of (A) Baylyan Bashi and north face of (B) Simagina. Svobodnaya Korea is just off picture right. (1) Kuzmenko route, 6A, 1985. (2) Long Way Home (Dashkevich-Kabalin-Tretyakov, 2010). (3) Mansurov route (includes traverse of peak), 5B, 1961. Lindsay Griffin

#### TORUGART-TOO

*Various peaks above the Karakol and Arpa valleys.* In July I returned to Kyrgyzstan for the third time, my main goal being to explore more of the Torugart-too and in



The steep ice runnel splitting the upper tower on Long Way Home. *Sergey Dashkevich*

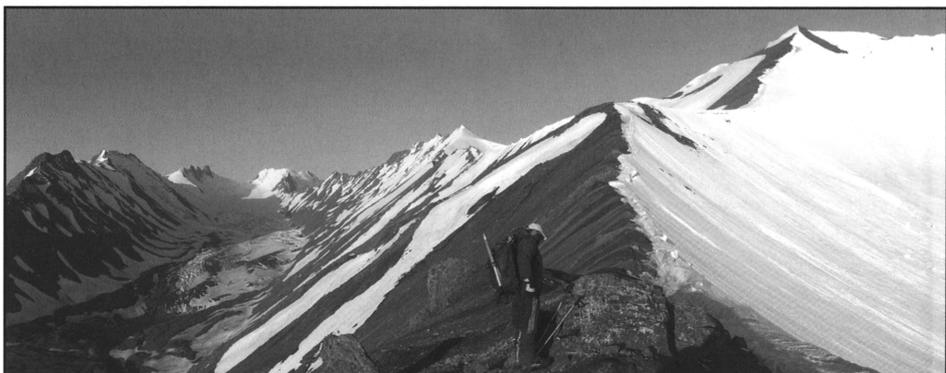
particular to push further along the Fergana range, an extension of the Torugart-too running northwest along the divide between the regions of Osh and Naryn. In this, Misha Sukhorukov, Glenn Wilks, and I were highly successful.

We began by again visiting the Naryn Tal to acclimatize. The wooded valleys make for beautiful camping and the clear streams pleasant fording. We climbed a prominent peak at the head of the Kandi Valley. A steep moraine led to a long snow bowl and onto the flank of the northeast ridge. Crossing below a prominent gendarme, we roped up for a steep, loose step. This was fortunate as Misha took a fall. A direct ascent of the headwall led to the summit of Pik 4,450m (41°21'28" N, 76°28'38" E, all GPS readings). To the west we could see the mountain I climbed in 2008 (*AAJ 2009*). There was no evidence that any human had been here before, but ibex tracks crossed the summit.

We then moved south to the Torugart-too, driving across trackless country in 4WD. We stopped at the last civilization; a collection of yurts hard up against an impassable Karakol

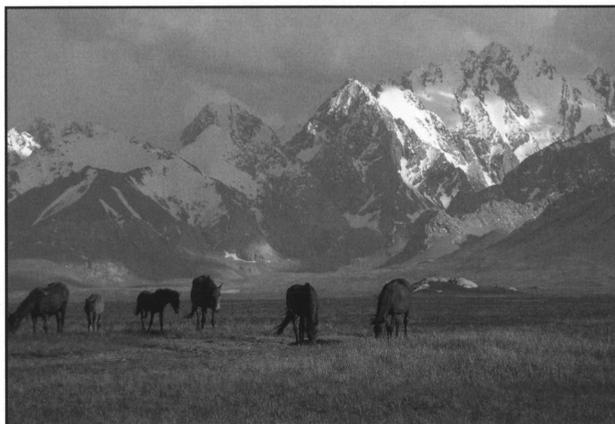
River, but with a way open to the target valleys we had identified in the UK. The resident families were most friendly, and like so many people who have little, they were generous and hospitable.

We first headed southwest and camped just below a glacier at 3,500m, surrounded by unclimbed peaks of 4,400–4,700m. Our ascent of Pik 4,470m (40°37'58" N, 74°31'45" E) took place in full Scottish conditions: wind, rain, snow, and cloud. In a whiteout I drifted over a cornice in the final section, fortunately having just put on the rope. Dropping down from the summit, an intense tingling in the rear warned us of the thunder clap that was shortly to follow.



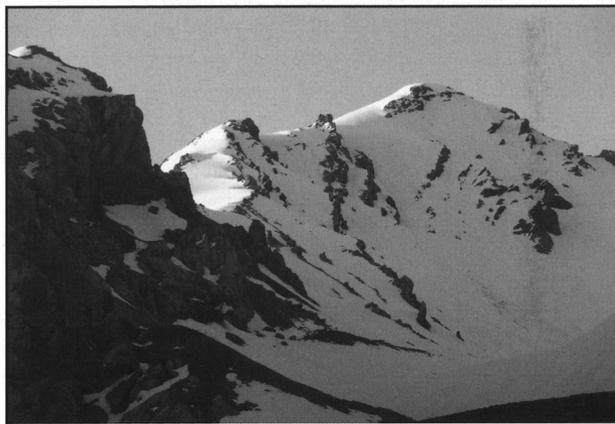
The inner ranges of the Fergana, with summit of Peak 4,318m up to the right. *Mark Weeding*

Our next ascent took us west to the peak at the head of the glacier above base camp. The summit was 4,510m (40°38'41" N, 74°30'04" E) and gave views of a huge horseshoe with a higher peak on the other side. How could we resist the temptation of a long ridge traverse on such a great day? Going up and down repeatedly at over 4,500m was hard, but the views, south to the Pamir, east to the Kokshaal-too, and north to the endless inner ranges of Kyrgyzstan, were wonderful. Soon, we arrived at the main top: 4,616m (40°39'10" N, 74°28'54" E), as marked on the Russian Military map.



Enigmatic peaks of the Torugart-too rise above the Arpa Valley. *Mark Weeding*

Our plan was now to head south along the Karakol River and up to the snout of a long glacier marked on the map. The range is relatively deep here, and a score of peaks appeared unclimbed. We camped next to a torrent disgorging the fastest flowing milk chocolate yet discovered, and the following morning, at 5 a.m., Misha and I forded it in our underpants (Glenn was ill). Moving east on a narrowing ridge, we ascended the loosest and steepest scree in my memory. We reached a top of 4,318m (40°36'41" N, 74°34'35" E) but were denied a further summit by my lack of crampons, which had been left at camp. One thousand meters of perfectly padded descent on soft shattered slate had us down in minutes.



Peak 4,450m in the Naryn Tal. The route of first ascent crossed the basin and then climbed the snow slope on the far side of the rocky rib that comes down from the squat rock gendarme. Above, the crest was followed easily to the summit. *Mark Weeding*

Next day, while Glenn headed down to summon the horses, Misha and I traversed another horseshoe ridge culminating in a massive, overhanging cornice on the final summit, which had been visible far down the access valley: Pik 4,378m, 40°34'28" N, 74°37' E. This appears to be just north of the 4,848m peak climbed in 2007 by Dmitry Shapovalov (*AAJ 2008*).

Deep in the broad basin of the Arpa Valley, the Fergana peaks have a remote and isolated feel, and the Karakol Valley provides access to a pass over the range known to locals. While probably visited by adventurous trekkers, the yurt families had seen only one group of trekkers (French) in 10 summers. There is opportunity to climb an almost unlimited number of peaks with no recorded

ascents, although the presence of the Russian military makes it likely that some may have received the attention of enthusiastic Red Army alpinists if they were allowed to escape the clutches of their organized climbing camps, none of which were in this area.

MARK WEEDING, UK

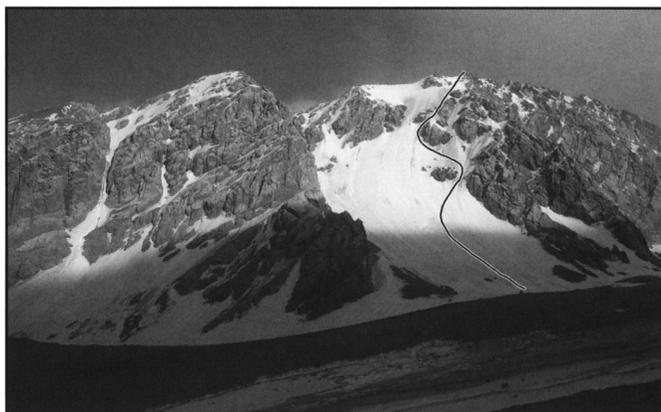
*Mur Samir (5,035m), northeast ridge; Pik Karyshkyr (4,836m), Ten Pin; False Pik (4,801m), west face.* The Torugart-Too is a range of glaciated peaks rising to 5,000m on the border between Kyrgyzstan and China. There have been few expeditions, but the highest peak, Mustyr (5,108m), was first climbed in 2007 by Barney Harford and Pat Littlejohn. From July 22–August 12, John Proctor, Robert Taylor, and I from Edinburgh University Mountaineering Club visited Kyrgyzstan, spending 12 days in the range and making three first ascents.

We knew that the recent revolution and riots in Kyrgyzstan might cause problems, and when we boarded the flight to Bishkek in July, it was suspiciously empty. On our first day in the capital we were picked up by local police and taken to the station, but they only wanted to check our paperwork and search us for knives. Soon, with the help of our agency, ITMC, we were driving south. A few days later we established base camp in the Mustyr Valley opposite Middle Sister.

While two of us climbed, the third would remain at base camp the entire time to guard against inquisitive locals, who showed a keen interest in our gear. I took the first shift while John and Robert headed up the Three Sisters, first climbed in 2008 (*AAJ 2009*), for a reconnaissance of the unnamed glacier east of Mustyr. Next day I made a quick ascent of the Sisters while John and Robert packed for a bivouac below their objective at the head of the glacier.

John writes: “Mur Samir was climbed by the northeast ridge. Prior to the ascent the only information we had about the mountain was the map, and a few glimpses through partial breaks in the cloud while acclimatising on Big Sister. We observed that the main north face had a number of séracs, so opted to climb a broad couloir at the eastern edge, and then follow the ridge above to the summit. Easy ground in the couloir led to the ridge, and in the mist we chose the wrong couloir, resulting in a long traverse to reach the summit. Most of the crest was pleasant and spectacular, but in places we had to negotiate thin and rotten (but thankfully not steep) ice, and scramble over rock

like Weetabix. By the time we neared the summit the weather had cleared, and we could see down the north face. It was obvious that there was ample space toward the eastern end to climb the face while staying clear of the séracs, so we descended this way over easy ground. With a GPS we recorded an altitude of 4,419m at the base of our route, and 5,035m (slightly higher than the 5,008m recorded on the



West face of False Pik with line of ascent. Pik Helen to the left.  
Adam Russell