

through a smooth overhanging wall to reach easier ground above. From there they averaged three or four pitches a day until they reached the north ridge on the seventh day. Above, the angle eased considerable, and the team reached the summit the next day. They climbed the wall capsule-style, placing 45 bolts on the 33 pitches to the summit ridge plus another 15-20 shallow holes for rivets or hooks. The route received an overall grade of 6b A3. (*High Mountain Sports* 165)

Peak 4810, Various Ascents. It was reported that on the 1100-meter east face of 4810 two significant routes were established in 1995. M. Astakhov, A. Kniazhev, Y. Koshelenko and A. Popov from Rostovna-Donu made the second ascent of the 6B Klenov route. The St. Petersburg team of I. Barikhin and A. Odintsov put up an even more demanding 6B route on the face as well. (*High Mountain Sports* 165)

TIEN SHAN

Ala Archa National Park

Kyrgyzskiy Alatau Mountains, Various Ascents. At the end of August, Brady Van Matre and I traveled to Kyrgyzstan with the intention of climbing Khan Tengri in the Tien Shan mountains. We arrived in time to drink vodka with the Russian guides who had pulled camp in the South Inylchek Glacier the day before. Winter had come to the Tien Shan, and we were forced to turn our inebriated attentions elsewhere. Our altered itinerary was not without its merits.

The Ala Archa National Park in the Kyrgyzskiy Alatau mountains rises out of the foothills of Bishkek, the nation's capitol, in dramatic serrations of rock and ice. Though they are less than 5000 meters in altitude, they are readily accessible, offer exquisite rock, ice and mixed objectives, and, due to the devastating effects perestroika has had on the Kyrgyz economy, are almost never crowded. The climate is cool, but stable, and three climbers' huts built over the years by the climbers of Bishkek offer a dry, if somewhat squalid, place to cook and sleep.

On August 25, we took a 40-minute car ride to the park entrance, then walked five hours to the first of the huts. The next day we continued up the Ak-Sai glacier to a second hut, where we set up camp for five days. We spent our time gawking at the alpine cathedrals, and managed to make ascents of the following: the 1986 Yugoslav route (IV AI 4), a stellar 2,000-foot ice couloir on a peak to the right of Iziskatel (4400 m), in one day from camp; descent was made via the moderate north slopes and couloirs of Ak-Too Peak (4620 m). A couple of days later we climbed up the Korona glacier (45° at its steepest), and, after the sun had warmed our frozen digits, climbed a three-pitch route we suspected was new (5.9) on Korona's rock crown (4860 m). We made one more ascent, a two-pitch 5.9 on the way out of the valley at the end of the week.

The Alatau mountains are a Chamonix on a smaller scale; we found the ice to be superlative, the rock magnificent, and the setting sublime. Unless you speak Russian, getting info on routes is a fool's errand. All our objectives in Kyrgyzstan were approached with a first ascent mentality. Though few probably were, no one who spoke English dissuaded us otherwise. It was one of the cooler aspects of the trip.

CHRISTIAN BECKWITH, *The Wayward Mountaineers*

Pic Korona, Various Ascents. It was reported that I. and V. Plotnikov and V. Sergeev from Barnaul in Central Siberia climbed a new route (5A) in the winter on the west spur of Korona and another route (5B) up a series of icefalls on the northwest face. (*High Mountain Sports* 165)