

left for BC in this storm.

August 9-15 was another period of bad weather, but on August 16 it cleared, so all four of us returned to CI. At CI it was clear, but above 7000 meters it was extremely windy. On August 19, the wind seemed to abate, so we climbed up to CII only to return due to high winds up high and deteriorating weather.

On August 20, all members returned to BC in overcast conditions and light snow. The section of the ridge above CII looked to be difficult rock climbing and we thought it might take as long as three days to reach the summit from our CII and another day to descend. Faced with this kind of difficult climbing up high, we did not want to commit to alpine-style climbing unless there was some indication that a more stable weather pattern had been established.

We waited at BC from August 21-August 24. We were running out of time, so we returned to CI on August 25 to wait for a break in the weather. The next day a storm dropped two feet of new snow at our CI. The storm continued until midday on August 28. On the 29th, we climbed to CII and spent the night there, hoping to continue upward the next day.

On August 30, a combination of the unsettled weather and some poor health led to a decision to descend from CII and abandon the climb. On August 31, all the remaining gear was carried down from CI to BC, where the porters were waiting for us to leave. On September 1, the expedition left BC. The weather closed in again and it snowed heavily for several days.

STEVEN J. SWENSON

MASHERBRUM MOUNTAINS

Charakusa Region, Various Ascents, Previously Unreported. Giangi Angeloni, Angelo Carminati and Ennio Spiranelli traveled to the Charakusa Glacier (Hushe Valley) in August, 1997. Various ascents were made: Sulo Peak (6000m) by the South Couloir (55°); The Dog's Knob (5400m) via *Andrea Son* (5.10d, A1, 200m) on the southwest face of this short and perfect rock tower. Also attempted was a route on the third rock spur of K7 (4900m). The climb ended on the great ledge after two days (5.10b A1, 16 pitches).

GIANGI ANGELONI, *Club Alpino Italiano*

Charakusa Area, Fathi Brakk, Parhat Brakk and Beatrice, Ascents. Jimmy Chin, Evan Howe, Brady Robinson and Doug and Jed Workman, guided by Ibrahim Zahid of Hushe, base-camped in the Charakusa (Tsa'racksa) Valley. The team climbed three significant new routes over a period of 55 days, as well as throwing their fair share of disc, bouldering and cragging.

Jimmy and Brady entered the valley in late June ahead of the others, anxious to get on the rock. As the others hiked into the valley in early July, Jimmy and Brady were finishing up a new route on Fathi Brakk. This 3,000-foot monolith was first climbed in the summer of 1998 by an Italian team from the southwest. Jimmy and Brady's committing and direct line up the north face was completed in three days and entailed a variety of climbing including face, crack, ice and aid. Success was attained in a 24-hour push after two other attempts to complete the route. Future parties can be assured an adventurous time navigating through loose death blocks and sleeping on sloping, wet bivies. Some weeks later during very wet weather, the team was appalled to watch rockfall scour the bottom of the route.

Brady and Jed then teamed up for the previously unclimbed Parhat Brakk (5300m). The



Fathi and Parhat Brakk. The Chin-Robinson route on Fathi Brakk and Tavis Ridge on Parhat Brakk follow the vague shadowed dihedrals visible on the left-hand skylines of both formations. EVAN HOWE

twin tower to Fathi, Parhat was attempted by Americans Angela Hawse et al in the summer of 1995. In contrast to the loose stone on Fathi, Parhat proved solid with exquisite crack climbing. Over two weeks of climbing and extensive gardening, they were able to free much of the route up to 5.11, including a stout bombay fist crack through a roof that Brady floated. After 360 meters, the weather deteriorated and they aided four pitches, foregoing the all-free attempt. After excessive coffee on day 10, Jed, determined to fire a dyno, whipped into a corner three times. Upon completing the sequence, the two continued up the final four pitches, leaving the redpoint for the future. Perched upon the summit needle far above the glaciers, their cameras buzzed with electrical current, prompting a hasty rap back to wall camp. Their adventure was not over, however. Upon reaching the base of the wall, a catastrophic serac avalanche deposited 30 feet of ice upon their imminent descent route. The airstblast pasted Robinson with ice and sent their haulbags careening down the glacier. Back in BC, the rest

of the team was assembling makeshift probes and rescue gear before a radio call put their minds at rest. Considering the luck they had had, Jed and Brady named their route *Tavis Ridge* (VI 5.11 A3, 850m) after the luck charms (tavis) Zahid had given them at BC.

Meanwhile, across the valley, Doug, Evan, and Jimmy were climbing a new route on the southeast face of Beatrice (5950m). This 800-meter wall was first climbed by a 1998 British expedition in two teams by separate routes. Doug, Evan, and Jimmy ferried 250 kilos of gear 1000 meters to the base of the wall over a period of nine days. An advanced camp was established on the glacier at 5150 meters. Over five days of wet weather, they fixed 300 meters of rope and established a wall camp before descending to BC for respite.

During this hiatus, both climbing teams and Greg Mortenson of the Central Asia Institute convened at BC. Mortenson, acclimatizing for the Gondagoro La and a service project on the Baltoro, was accompanied by Little Karim and his son. A goat was sacrificed for the festivities that followed and the next day everyone departed for their respective projects.

Committing to the wall, the Beatrice team moved into wall camp and continued linking cracks toward the summit. Low pressure continued to tease them until the temperatures dropped and snow began falling in earnest. Wet snow rimed to the face as a meter of snow

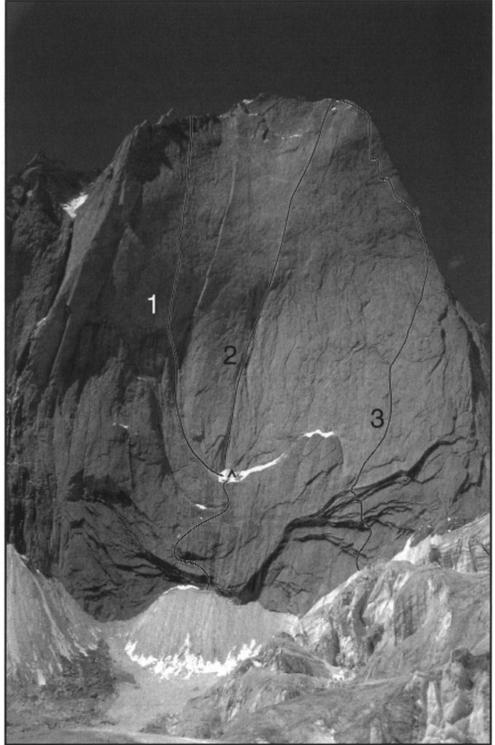
buried tents in ABC. They quickly found themselves cowering in their portaledges. Warm daytime temperatures sloughed snow down the face. As the avalanches bombarded the flies, the team supported the structure of their homes by pushing out with their feet. Two days later, the skies cleared for Doug's birthday and his lead. The following day they jugged 180 meters of fixed line and climbed another 200 meters to the top of the wall. Snow-draped loose blocks guarded the summit, which has yet to be reached by any wall climbers. They called their route *Wanderlust* (VI 5.10+ A3).

Also of note was the expedition's desire to help the Balti people, who were incredibly hospitable to us throughout our stay. Jimmy and Brady, prompted by Greg Mortenson of the CAI, performed skits at the local elementary school in order to teach "Leave No Trace" ethics to the children. Doug, Evan and Jed helped the residents of Hushe haul grass out of the hills to store for winter feed for livestock. The locals enjoyed seeing Americans be porters for once.

Considering the war in Kashmir, a mere 100 kilometers away, and death threats toward Americans from Islamic fundamentalists, we were pleased to

experience nothing but hospitality and enthusiasm from the Pakistani people. We all left regretfully, very anxious to return to our new-found friends and mountains.

EVAN HOWE, DOUGLAS and JED WORKMAN



The southeast face of Beatrice, showing 1. Hatija (Thomas-Huxter-Pyke, 1997). 2. The Excellent Adventure (Farquar-Myers-Turner, 1997). 3. Wanderlust (Chin-Howe-Workman, 1999).

EVAN HOWE

King Brakk, Allah's Finger, Ibrahim Peak, First Ascents. A team of three Italians and one Swiss carried out a massive campaign of exploration in unknown valleys and peaks of the Hushe area. The team was composed of Maurizio Giordani, Lorenzo Lanfranchi (Switzerland), Luca Maspes and Natale Villa.

They first went to Khridas Valley, close to Hushe. The valley entrance is about one kilometer beyond Kande, the starting point for the Nangma Valley. In two days of steep walking plus occasional climbing (V/V+), they got to Base Camp. Because of the serious approach, the porters carried 15 kilos instead of 25, so supplies were limited.

During ten days, they climbed two new peaks that they christened King Brakk and Allah's Finger. The east- and northeast-facing route (VI+ A2, nine pitches, 400m) on King Brakk (ca. 4800m) was climbed in a day. The route was rappelled. The second line took the team four