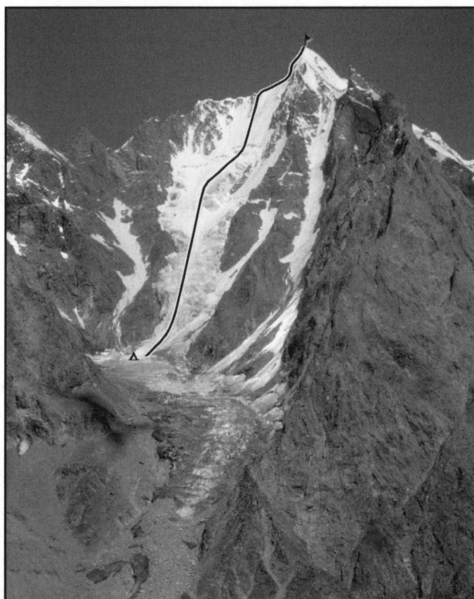


cial basin named Rockfall Basin. Advanced Base Camp (4850m) was positioned on the upper end of Rockfall Basin just below a small icefall that marked the commencement of the route's technical terrain. Despite its ominous name, Rockfall Basin is a breathtaking place with high-quality granite walls towering above in all directions beckoning for future big-wall ascents. Camp I (5300m) and Camp II (5650m) were placed on top of a serac and in a depression on the ridge (Desperation Col), respectively. The angle of ascent ranged from 30 degrees to 70 degrees on consistent ice.

The summit was reached seven days after reaching Base Camp, with three nights spent above Advanced Base Camp. To avoid rockfall, the majority of climbing took place in the early morning. When a snowstorm forced a hasty descent from High Camp, the consistently steep route sent numerous sloughs of snow cascading over the climbers, adding final excitement to the climb. Overall the route offered solid, sustained, and enjoyable climbing throughout, and both climbers deem it worthy of a repeat ascent.



Nico Sar, showing the line of first ascent (Keller-Rice, 2000). WALTER KELLER

WALTER KELLER

Kuti Dorkush, First Ascent, Previously Unreported. The first ascent of Kuti Dorkush, attributed to a 1995 two-person Irish team via the Southwest Ridge, is now thought to have been first made in 1959 by two people who were part of a scientific expedition doing triangulation survey work in the Baltura Muztagh. Rudolf Bardodey and a porter, Kabul, approached from the south, reached a notch at ca. 5300 meters on the west ridge, then traversed to the crest of the north ridge, which they followed to the summit. (*High Mountain Sports* 221)

Ghujerab Mountains

Passes over the Central Asian Watershed, First Crossings. John Mock and Kimberley O'Neil completed a 29-day exploration of the Ghujerab Mountains in the northern Karakoram Range northeast of the Shimshal Pass and west of the Shaksgam (Muztagh) and Oprang rivers, the only part of Pakistan that lies within the Central Asian watershed. We reconnoitered and crossed two previously unknown passes, which we named Ghidims Pass and Ghidims Pass South, over the Central Asian watershed, and also crossed Mai Dur Pass, first crossed in 1925 by the Visser-Hooft Expedition but neglected ever since.

Leaving Shimshal village on June 15, we crossed Shpodeen Pass (5346m) from the Zardgarben Valley into the Pamir Mai Dur Valley on June 17. On June 19 we crossed the