

A reconnaissance of the Nangma Valley was our next foray. We spent a week in the Nangma looking for new route possibilities. Believing it unclimbed, we started up a line on Brakk Zang, but bailed after learning that it had been climbed by Silvia Vidal and Pep Masip some years earlier. Todd and I returned to Islamabad and flew home August 15 while Sean stayed on another week to make a trip up to Bublomotin and Ultar.

NILS DAVIS

Brakk Zang, South Face, Ascents. It was reported that a Korean expedition was responsible for two new lines on the south face of Brakk Zang (a.k.a Sotulpa Peak, 4800m). Jang Hyung-Won, Lim Sung-Muk and Shin Moon-He established a route over the course of 15 days that was given the grade of VI 5.9 A4-. "A lot" of fixed ropes were used in the course of the ascent. Anjong Neonj and Moon Sung Wook established a second route to the right of the first in capsule style at VI 5.9 A3+. A portaledge was employed during the ascent. Both routes occur to the right of the 1998 south pillar route *Ramchekor* (Peter-Thomas, VI 5.10 A2, 600m) and left of the 1998 route, *Ganyips* (Masip-Vidal, VI 6a A3, 540m), which takes the southeast pillar. Parties visiting the area later in the season were reported to have noted that large, bright silver spots were painted on the rock to indicate belay stations of the Korean routes. The Koreans were said to have replaced the carabiner left by the British women on the summit with one of their own. (*High Mountain Sports* 221)

Amin Brakk, New Route. Juan Miranda and I arrived in Islamabad on June 3 with the intention of climbing a new route on the 1300-meter west face of Amin Brakk (5850m). We established Base Camp on the Changma Glacier at 4300 meters. Our idea was to climb the route as a two-person team.

The climb kept us in the Changma Valley for 51 days, 31 of which were spent on the wall itself. We spent ten days carrying gear and getting used to the altitude, then lived in portaledge between July 5 and August 4. On the wall, we had 13 days of bad weather (during which we could not leave the portaledge), four sunny days and mixed weather for the remaining days.

Namkor (6b+ A5, 1550m) is 31 pitches long, 17 of which were free climbed. The rest were aided. Even though the route reaches the summit ridge, we did not ascend to the summit, since a storm with heavy lightning forced us to descend back to Camp III. After riding out the storm in the portaledge for two days, we ascended back to belay 27 to recover a haulbag with gear and to clean up the fixed ropes that were still on the wall. The following day, August 4, we returned to Base Camp with our seven haulbags and their 300 kilos of weight.

Namkor has three parts: the first follows angled terrain over loose slabs and flakes up to belay 11 (Camp I). It can be free climbed at 6b+. The second part involves serious aid climbing: two A5 pitches and one of A4 lead over a smooth, slightly overhanging wall to Camp II. Finally, the third part is a magnificent 600-meter dihedral that reaches the summit ridge. We graded this section 6b A2+.

ADOLFO MADINABEITIA, *Spain*

Saltoro Mountains

Tahir Tower, First Ascent, and Exploration of the Kondus Valley. During the months of June and July, Dave Anderson, Steph Davis, Brady Robinson, and I were given a special permit to