



Farol Central Peak (ca. 6,350m) with the line of the south pillar, climbed by Cedric Haehlen and Hans Mitterer, facing the camera. The route gave over 1,300m of ascent from the glacier, the pair reaching the crest via the snow ramp indicated. They bivouacked once at the end of the long rocky section, below the final snowfields leading up to the summit tower. They rappelled the snow face to the left, between seracs and the pillar. *Hans Mitterer.*

the foot of the pillar, and started our ascent at midnight on July 26. We first climbed a big snow ramp leading to the start of the rock ridge at 5,650m. Arriving there at dawn, we were confronted with a demanding pitch of near-featureless vertical granite. The terrain above provided several pitches of challenging climbing, crossing loose flakes, followed by steep ice and mixed climbing through beautiful sound granite. Every tower and gendarme proved unavoidable, and between them was much deep soft snow, through which we had to wade, often up to our waists. Several vertical snow walls consumed much time and energy. Finally, we reached the end of the ridge at 8:00 p.m. and bivouacked under a cornice that formed the start of the summit snowfield.

Next morning we had a hard fight negotiating waist-deep snow, before reaching the summit tower. This final section began with a wonderful mixed pitch, but the last few rope lengths,

stopped by bad rock on the final 100m. Two days later we repeated the first four pitches of Tasty Talking (300m, 11 pitches, III 5.10+, House-Prezelj-Swenson, 2004) on the southeast ridge of 5,200m Naysner Brakk, then rappelled into the gully on the right and continued to the summit via the classic British Route up the north ridge (300m, British VS plus aid; climbed free at 5.10-, Burnage-Hamilton, 1988).

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*Central Farol Peak, probable first ascent.* At the start of July our German-Swiss Expedition (Cedric Haehlen, Urs Stoecker, Rainer Treppte, and I) left for the Charakusa Valley. Like other expeditions in 2005, we were refused permits for K7 or K6 for security/safety reasons. However, we decided to go anyway and look at 5,000m-6,000m peaks, as we all felt there must be plenty of worthy objectives giving good climbing.

After acclimatizing with an ascent of Sulo Peak (5,950m), Cedric and I climbed the middle summit of the three Farol Peaks, via the striking south pillar. We camped on the glacier at 5,000m, close to



Negotiating one of the gendarmes on the middle section of the south ridge of Farol Central Peak. *Hans Mitterer.*

on steep smooth slabs covered with a thin layer of snow, demanded a lot more concentration. The last 30m of steep, waist-deep snow slope nearly exhausted us. We found no evidence of previous passage on the route and assume we made a first ascent. Jan Mersch and a German party attempted the route a few days before us and also found no trace of previous attempts. As to grades, we climbed several rock pitches between V and VI, a few meters of A1 on the last big gendarme of the rock ridge, two pitches of M6 or M7 on the first part of the pillar, and a pitch of M6 on the summit tower. Our altimeter read 6,350m on top,

confirming our view that the West (Main) Summit (6,370m) was only slightly higher than us. The East Summit was around the same height and the Far East somewhat lower. Cedric and I descended by rappelling to the big snowfield, then on down between glacier and pillar. Although exciting, due to horrifying seracs, it was quick, and we reached base camp late in the afternoon.

During the next three weeks the weather was generally bad with only a few isolated fine days. We used these to repeat the popular British Route (north ridge) on the fantastic pyramid of Naysar Brakk (5,200m), the South West Couloir of Beatrice (ca. 5,800m), and a rock route (Asteroid Valley) on Iqbal wall (ca. 5,400m).

HANS MITTERER, *Germany*

*Editor's note: In 2004 a guided CAF expedition of primarily young French climbers reported attempting Farol Central by the 1,400m south spur (TD+) and a summit they refer to as the Fourth Point of Farol (6,200m) via a line of icefalls, followed by big wall climbing (ED). It has not been possible to confirm their lines; they may have attempted the south spur of the West Summit.*

*Hassin Peak and the East Peak of Farol, attempts.* On August 12 Steve Swenson and I, joined by Hans Mitterer from Germany, hiked up to the base of the west buttress of unclimbed Hassin Peak (ca. 6,300m) at the head of the Charakusa Glacier. Hassin is the local name for the mountain and means "beautiful peak." The following day we climbed 60° icefields, topped by a couple of rope lengths of near-vertical ice, to reach the crest of the buttress. We wound our way up, linking snow couloirs, dry chimneys, and strips of perfect styrofoam ice, as well as insubstantial slush tucked into the backs of corners. Just as the sun was leaving the mountain, we popped back out on the crest, where a ropelength or two of snow climbing yielded a promising spot for the bivouac tent. The summit was only 800m above; the next day we would leave the camping gear and make a dash for it.

Leaving the bivouac in the morning we climbed a moderate 60-70° snow and ice face, but as the day wore on, it warmed up considerably. By the time we were negotiating the final