

us to the bone. At 9 p.m. on September 9 we stood on the summit, screaming with joy while admiring the moonlit scenery. After climbing such a route I was standing on top of Trango Tower with smiling and crying women around me. We regained Sun Terrace at 2 a.m. after loosing a rope, stuck on a rappel. Back at base camp the following night we packed our gear, ready for porters to carry out the following morning. We were only able to really rest once we'd reached Skardu.

For us the ascent of Eternal Flame was challenging from the very beginning, and we walked a thin line between going up and going down. We were tired and cold and frostbit fingers and toes, but each of us kept silent and did her job. We climbed the 1,000m route at 6c A2 M5. It was hard, but it was worth it.

TANJA GRMOVSEK, *Slovenia*

*Trango Tower, West Pillar, second ascent.* A Swiss team comprising Francesco Pellanda, Giovanni Quirici, and Christophe Steck made the second ascent of the 1987 Dedale-Schaffter-Fauquet-Piola route on the west pillar of Trango Tower (6,251m), a demanding 1,100m line originally graded VI 6c A4. This route involves amounts of hard aid, as confirmed by the experienced Spanish big wall climber, Alfredo Mandinabeita, who attempted the route, solo, to half-height in 2004. The Swiss were attempting to free climb the route and, after a lot of work, reached the summit on August 2 using aid only on pitches 13 (A4), 15 (A3), and 16 (A3). They estimate the 13th pitch would go free at around 8a.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO, CLIMB Magazine*

*Trango Group, various new routes; tower northwest of Garda Peak, first ascent; Trango Tower, attempts.* Two Polish teams operated separately from the Trango Glacier during August and September. One comprised Maciej Ciesielski, Wawrzyniec Zakrzewski, and I. At first the weather was bad, and it wasn't until August 31 that we could climb our first route: Oceano Trango (300m, 5.10a), a warm-up on the slabs above base camp. [This route was put up in July 2006 by the Belgian team of Christophe Bingham, Sanne Bostels, Jasper de Coninck, Stijn Dekeyser, An Laenen, and Hans Marien, who compared it to routes in northern Italy's Mello Valley.] More rain and snow intervened until September 5, when improving weather allowed us to open a new line on an unclimbed tower left (northwest) of Garda Peak. The route was 540m long and went at on-sight at 5.11c, with one move of A0: a pendulum from a muddy crack to a crack on the left. We baptized the virgin summit Garden Peak, not only due to the rich vegetation on the face but also as a sort of tribute to nearby Garda Peak. The route, named PIA after the national airlines, offers fine climbing on mostly good rock. It should make a good warm-up for teams coming to the Trango area with more challenging goals. We used 70m ropes, and some pitches are quite long. After reaching the top we rappelled once down the summit ridge, then descended 20-30m to the northwest. We then made four long rappels into a gully, which led down easily to the glacier.

On the 17th the three of us climbed a new route that solves the problem presented by the central section of the southwest face of Sadu Peak. We climbed Pretty Close on-sight at 5.10d. It is the third route on this face, the others being the original Sadu [350m, 5.11b, Antoine and Sandrine de Choudens, 2003], and Piya, Piya [Love, Love, 350m, 5.11a, Jakofcic-Mali-Valic,

2004]. Our line to the right is longer than the previous two, but with 430m of climbing is still a route for a long afternoon, rather than a full alpine day. The rock is good, and some of the pitches are really nice. We named the route after our near miss on Trango Tower and the fact that the approach from base camp to the foot of this wall is a mere 15m. We descended by a gully to the left. This proved inconvenient, and we should probably have kept to the left ridge, more or less following the line of Sadu.

A day later, as a farewell to the Karakoram, we climbed a variation start to Severance Ridge on 6,327m Trango II. This provides a separate route on the First Tower. [The 1,600m Severance Ridge was first climbed in 2005 by Jonathan Clearwater, Sam Johnson, and Jeremy Frimer in 63 pitches at VI 5.11 A2 AI3 M5; see *AAJ 2006* pp. 353-356.] We finished our 670m route just below the top of the First Tower, at a point where only a short section of easy scrambling remained. Our variant climbed at least 200m of new ground, including a 5.11a pitch climbed onsight and a 12a pitch AF (All Free: all the moves were climbed free but rest points were taken). Higher, but before the route joins the original line, there were difficulties between 5.10d and 5.11b, with a short section of C1 (we used no pitons on our routes). After the variant joins the original line of Severance Ridge, the difficulties did not exceed 5.10a/b (with a single point of A0). We called the variant Let's Go Home, and it was one of the most demanding rock climbs we have done. The rock quality was the best of the three new routes we climbed and almost as good as that found on Trango Tower. Protection is good, but, as on neighboring routes, in places cracks are a bit vegetated.

The second Polish team comprised Adam Pieprzycki and Marcin Szczotka. They kicked off by repeating Oceano Trango (as did every team visiting the Trango Glacier this season). On September 5 they repeated Karakoram Khush on Garda Peak, probably following the variation taken a few days previously by the Slovenian women [see above]. In 2004 the first ascensionists used aid points (A0), but now the 300m route goes free at 5.10d, with many variations possible in the upper section.

On September 14 they repeated the original line up the First Tower of Severance Ridge (at the time they didn't realize the ridge had been climbed). The two probably climbed variations to the first three or four pitches but reached the true top of the tower after a 700m climb at 5.11d and A0. From the top they descended easy ground to the south for 150m and then made seven rappels to the gully.

On the 17th they climbed a route on the slabby tower left of Sadu Peak: Escape from the Freedom (300m, 5.10d). They are not sure whether this peak had been climbed before, but if it has not, they propose the name Ibex Peak. Two days later the pair started up a pillar on the Second Tower of Severance Ridge. The line lies on the right flank of the ridge and was terminated 50-80m below the top, as the remaining ground would have probably required hard aid. The unfinished route was named Elusive Summits (650m of climbing, 5.11a/b A0).

JAKUB RADZIEJOWSKI, *Poland*

*Trango Tower, free ascent; Trango Monk, second ascent.* After an unsuccessful expedition to the Trango group in 2004 with 26-year-old Matevž Kunšič, I decided to return to the wonderful people and mountains of Baltistan. Matevž and I were joined by the brothers Aleš (23) and Nejc (21) Česen (the sons of Tomo Česen) and with another five Slovenian climbers [see above] we hit the road to the best golden granite I have ever seen. Our goal was an alpine-style ascent of