

China

XINJIANG PROVINCE

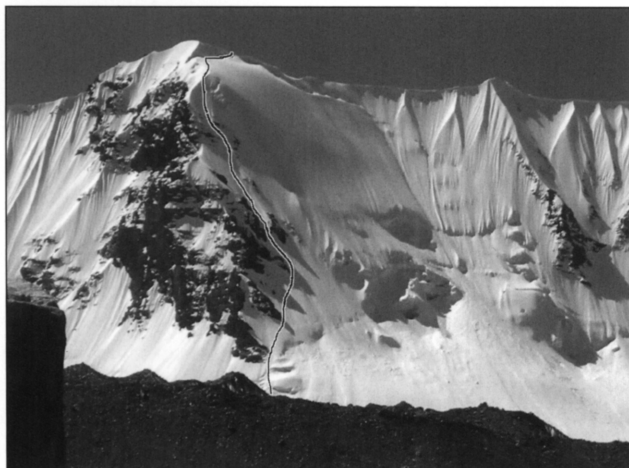
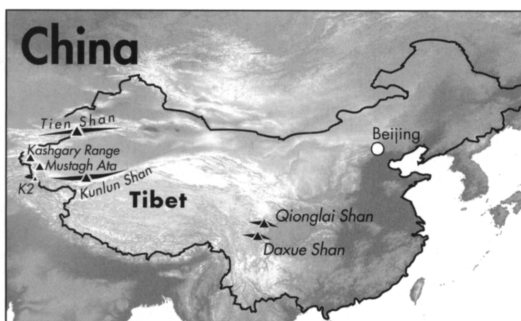
Pt. 4,976m (*Kichinekey Tagh*), first ascent; *Chiatuk* (5,582m), northwest face; Pt. 5,485m (*Tiltagh*), west face route; *Yilpiz* (ca 5,315m), north face. From Bishkek

our organizers on the ground (Novinomad—very good) arranged overnight accommodation and road transport to Torugart Pass on the Kyrgyzstan-China border. (Be warned: if you are getting Kyrgyz double entry visas at the airport, do not allow them to issue you a group visa: it causes a hassle at the border. Get individual visas for every member of the party. It doesn't cost extra.) Two days of hard road travel took us to Kashi, then a further day to Subax, the starting point for the walk to base camp. Three days' walk to base camp was extended to four because of difficult terrain on the 9km up the north side of the glacier. We helped the porters as much as we could, but their Chinese bosses helped very little. Local Kyrgyz porters were excellent: experts with pack animals (camels and donkeys) and hardworking; we formed good relationships with them, especially those from the village of Chiatuk.

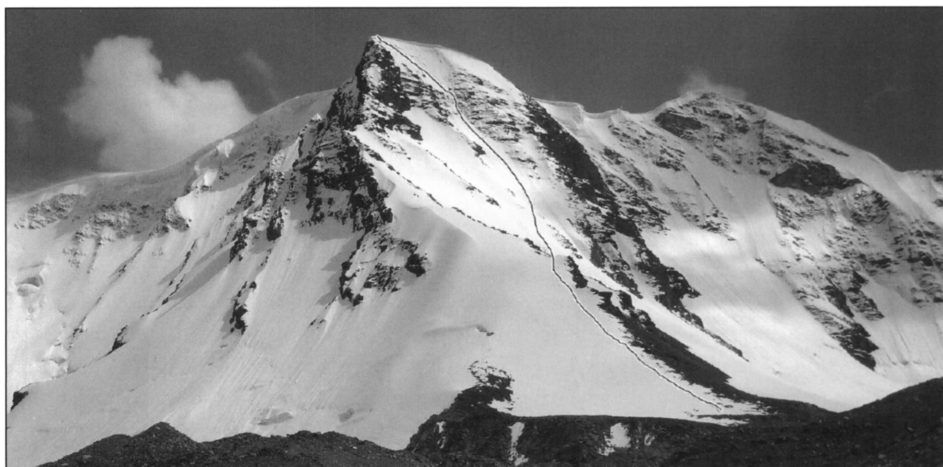
A donkey fell and was badly injured on the first day on the glacier. It was bleeding heavily from a wound to its cheek. Fortunately, Joe Howard is a farmer, and he applied pressure and then expertly stitched up the wound using our sewing kit. The porters were amazed and grateful, as was the donkey!

We arrived at base camp at 4,500m on July 25, where it snowed. On the 27th Kevin, Isobel, Richard Taylor, Joe, and I crossed the glacier to the central rognon, and all climbed Pt. 4,976m for acclimatization, except Isobel who was feeling the altitude. We climbed it by a broad snow couloir due east of the summit, followed by the summit rocks. We named the peak *Kichinekey Tagh* (Kyrgyz for "small mountain") and graded the route PD. It had two pitches of Scottish III toward the top of the couloir.

On July 18 Dave and I headed for the far side of the glacier to attempt Pt. 5,582m, the peak immediately west of Kala Peak, while the others aimed to climb the north face of Kala. All camped together by river on the south side of the glacier. On July 29 we established a high



John Allen, David Barker, Joe Howard, and Richard Taylor made the first ascent, via the line marked, of the north face of *Yilpiz* (5,313m), which rises from the Kuksay Glacier basin immediately east of *Muztagh Ata*. *John Allen*



The northwest face of Chiatuk (5,582m), showing the route of ascent. *John Allen*

camp at 4,900m on Pt. 5,582, and the following day we summited after about 11 pitches, up to Scottish IV, through the rock ban. The last four pitches on the headwall were relatively unprotected due to unconsolidated snow. Chiatuk (5,582m), northwest face route, 700m, TD Scottish IV 70°.

On August 2 Dave, Richard, Joe, and I headed back to the broad glacier basin below Chiatuk to attempt new routes on the “Barrel,” a rocky buttress not given a height on the map, and Pt. 5,496m. Kevin, Neil, and Isobel headed down the glacier to attempt Pt. 5,485m, the fourth summit marked with a height on the map up from the snout on the south side of the glacier.



John Allen on the summit of Chiatuk, admiring the east ridge of Mustagh Ata. *John Allen Collection*

At 2 a.m. Richard and I headed for 5,496m, Dave and Joe for the Barrel. We quickly encountered poor snow conditions—a thin crust over bottomless sugar snow. This made progress arduous and caused avalanche concern. We abandoned our attempt and joined our comrades on the Barrel, climbing it in 10 pitches, plus moving together, with excellent snow and ice except for the last few ropelengths. We summited around 10 a.m. and were back in high camp just after 1 p.m. Yilpiz (Kyrgyz for “snow leopard”), ca 5,315m, north face, TD, Scottish III sustained, 60°.

August 4-6: heavy snowfall each night, with snow continuing through the day, only easing in the afternoons. By the 6th we were concerned because Kevin, Neil, and Izzi had not

returned from Pt. 5,485m, but on the afternoon of the 7th they returned. They had had a minor epic, but summited the peak. They had to surmount 500m of hideous scree to gain the tongue of the glacier, which they followed to the top. Tiltagh (Kyrgyz for “tongue mountain”), 5,485m, west face route, PD.

The weather continued to be poor, but on the 7th Joe, Richard, and I put up Kuksay’s first trad rock routes, on the buttress to the east of base camp. Come To Daddy was two pitches at HVS 5a; it takes the obvious diamond-shaped buttress via a central line. You’re Mine Now is a 40m HS 4a that follows cracks on the large slab uphill and right from Come to Daddy.

Other Comments: Our ground organizer in China was Kong Baocun, president of the China Xinjiang Mountaineering Organization (CXMO). We found him to be dishonest, difficult to deal with, and manipulative. We would certainly not recommend him to an expedition visiting Western China.

When the team members who climbed Tiltagh traveled down the south side of the Kuk-say Glacier, they noted that it might be easier to establish a base camp on that side of the glacier. A base camp on that side would be in alpine meadows and free of objective dangers, such as rockfall (though our site was reasonably safe).

We were sponsored by the Mount Everest Foundation, the British Mountaineering Council, DMM, and Mountain Equipment

JOHN ALLEN, U.K.

KUN LUN

Mt. Manse (6,355m), Mt. God Tang (6,013m), Mt. Ye Zi (6,046m), Mt. Lazio Tagh (6,045m), first ascents. Our Finnish Kun Lun Expedition set off with a donkey caravan from a Tadjik village on August 4, for a 24-day journey to attempt virgin peaks of the Kunlun massif. Our team consisted of Henri Arjanne, Kalle Berg, Andrey Ershov (expedition manager), Lauri Hämäläinen, Veli-Matti Helke, Mikko Piironen, Rauno Ravantti, and me (leader). We set up base camp at 4,500m and spent six days on nearby glaciers, spotting possible lines to climb in alpine style on the area’s 6,000m peaks. While our main objective was the first ascent of Point 6,355m, our reconnaissance revealed vast first-ascent possibilities throughout the massif.

We climbed four previously unclimbed peaks in the vicinity of base camp. We have searched all databases known to us and have



Mt. Lazio Tagh (6,045m), showing the line of its first ascent. Lauri Hämäläinen