

Ringzum Gonpo, Sago Namgo, the “spirit catchers,” and the legend of Guru Padmasambhava.

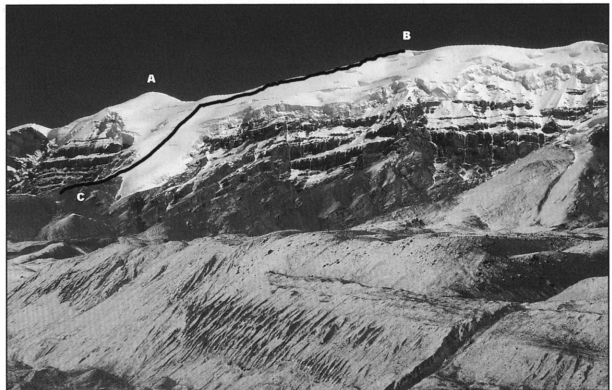
As for our climbs, on October 11, Marie-Christine Cler and I climbed Sonam Himal and Karsang Peak, two small summits of 6,225m north of the Saribung Pass (6,042m). We named our route *Les Bosses à Mary*. These provided an easy, scenic, snow traverse with a Himalayan grade of II/F. [Editor’s note: These rounded summits lie between the Saribung and De Hults passes, or between the peaks of Saribung and Kumlung Himal]. Two days later, with Jean Milteau, Pascal Pueyo, and Vincent Stellato, I climbed the *Le Belvedere d’Alfred* (6,226m) in the middle of the Damodar Glacier. We reached the summit via the snowy east ridge at II/PD [Editor’s note: This peak was likely first climbed by the Belgian, Alfred de Hults, more than half a century ago]. On the 14th Paul Vulin and I climbed Kumlung Himal (6,365m) to the north of De Hults Pass. We first climbed over the Col Cler between Sonam and Karsang, descended to De Hults Pass, climbed the west face of col 6,273m, and then the south flank of Kumlung’s north-west ridge. This snow route, which we named *Honorez la Vie*, was technically more demanding, at II/D. We descended the 40–45° southwest face directly to De Hults Pass. [Editor’s note: This peak was attempted in 1986 by a French expedition, thinking it was Bhrikuti Sail].

In addition we discovered the ideal route for the traverse from Mustang to Phu, on the way also climbing Saribung Peak (6,328m, southwest of Saribung Pass), likely the fifth ascent. Further information is available at [www.paulo-grobel.com](http://www.paulo-grobel.com). We also discovered how fragile some of these wilderness areas are. We should approach them conscientiously, with respect, on our best behavior as alpinists. It’s in-evitable that I’ll come back here to establish another Mustang–Phu route, and to play again, jumping over mountains and borders.

PAULO GROBEL, *France (translated by Todd Miller)*

*Bhrikuti Sail* (6,361m), *probable second ascent*. On May 14 Mick Chapman, Bryan Fruish, and I (all U.K.), Bett Koch, Liz Armitage, and Peter Allen (all Australia), with Pasang Sherpa, Mingba Sherpa, and Lhakpa Sherpa, made what is probably the second ascent of Bhrikuti Sail. We climbed from the south via the south face and west ridge, the route first ascended by Paulo Grobel’s French expedition in 2005. After establishing a base camp at 5,400m, four days walk north of Phu, we put in a high camp at 5,700m on a loose, rocky ridge slightly left of and above the ice bosse first climbed by Grobel’s expedition. From high camp we fixed ropes on 200m of 40° ice immediately above, then followed easy snow slopes of approximately Alpine PD to the upper west ridge and the summit. We then likely made the first complete crossing of the Saribung Pass (ca 6,042m) from the south, exiting the region via Damodar Lakes and South Mustang.

LINDSAY ABBOTTS, *U.K.*



The Damodar Himal. (A) Pt. 6,337m and (B) Bhrikuti Sail (6,361m) from the southeast. Marked is the line of the British-Australian expedition in 2008, with (C) the high camp at ca 5,700m. The 2005 French expedition, which made the first ascent, climbed the prominent ice bulge to the right of this camp—otherwise the two routes are identical. *Lindsay Abbotts*