

weather window toward the end of September to climb a 900m ice line on the west face, leading to the 6,100m col between Bhagirathi III and IV. The crux, early on the route, was a 60m pitch of maximum angle 90°. The exit, on soft snow, was difficult, and, as the continuation to the summit of Bhagirathi III was considered too dangerous under the conditions, the team descended from the col. La Fée Clochette (ED) was a tribute to team member Chloé Graftiaux, a young Franco-Belgian who was killed in a fall on the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey that summer.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*

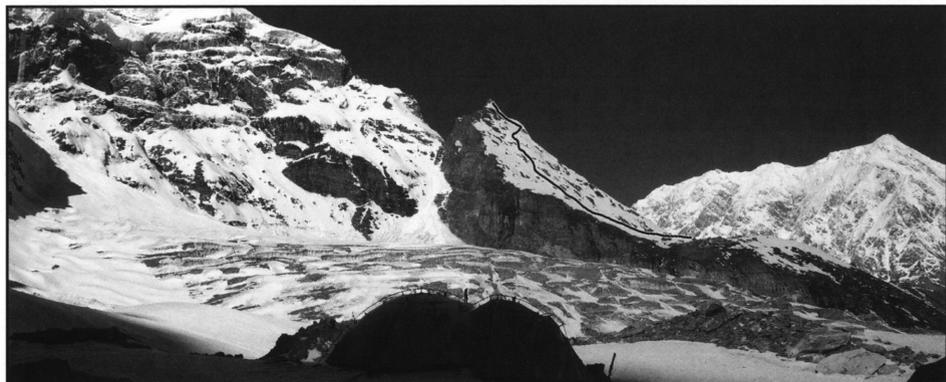
Gangotri, Vasuki Parbat (6,792m), west face. Attempted once before, by Mick Fowler and Paul Ramsden, the 1,600m west face of the rarely-visited Vasuki Parbat gives sustained mixed difficulties of Scottish VI, 7 (or approximately M6). British alpinists Malcolm Bass and Paul Figg reached the summit ridge after nine days on the face, and traversed the serpentine crest over the top and down the northwest ridge, returning to base camp in a round trip of 10 days. There are only two previous claimed ascents of this mountain, but the first does not seem to be recognized by Indian authorities. For details, see Bass's feature article in this Journal.

CENTRAL GARHWAL

Ekdant (6,128m), north spur and northeast ridge; Kartik (5,113m), north face. Ashes from the Iceland volcano threatened our flight, but Paulo Roxo and I arrived in Delhi as planned, on May 11. Our goal was the virgin Parvati Parbat (6,257m) above the Satopanth Glacier, and something more if we had time. We had little information: a few pictures we found on the Internet and the best available map (1:125,000). Our aim was to explore and enjoy all the inevitable surprises.

We established base camp on the glacier at 4,179m, 30°45'18.47" N, 79°22'46.57" E (GPS). Our choice of route was an elegant spur leading to a plateau, from which we hoped to reach the summit of Parvati Parbat. We pitched a tent at 4,750m, hoping the following day to make an acclimatization climb. However, in the night we were hit by a huge thunderstorm and snowfall. Deciding that perhaps we were not in the safest place, we dressed hurriedly and headed down to base camp.

Deeming that we were now acclimatized, we decided to try our luck with the spur over a two-day weather window. On May 21 we left base camp at 3 a.m. and climbed the more gently angled, lower



Kartik, with route of first ascent marked, lies to the right of the serac torn north face of Peak 5,812m. In the right distance is Chaukamba (7,138m). Daniela Teixeira

section of spur and pitched our tent on a col 5,450m. After 7 a.m. the snow became soft and deep and, with the heat from the sun, started to sap our energies. An easy rock scramble, followed by a 15m rappel, brought us close to the col, which we reached at midday.



Upper section of the new Portuguese route on the north spur of Ekdant. The main summit of Parvati Parvat is just off picture to the right. Daniela Teixeira



Paulo Roxo on the north spur of Ekdant (taken during the descent). (C) marks the high camp at 5,450m. Satopanth Glacier below. Daniela Teixeira

Next day we began at 1 a.m., hoping to reach the summit by midday at the latest. Even at night the snow was far from perfect, and we protected an increasingly steep ascent with snow stakes and ice screws. At 5 a.m. we reached the crest and saw that the plateau marked on the map was in fact 100m down the far side. We closely followed the crest toward a prominent triangular peak not marked on the map. We traversed 30m below its summit and then descended to the plateau, following it monotonously southwest, thinking it would lead directly to the main summit of Parvati. Two previous attempts on this ridge had stopped at a “dome-like foresummit,” and at 7:30 a.m. we indeed reached a snow dome at ca 6,150m. To our horror, between us and the main summit was another sharp peak. “What’s this f...ing mountain doing here?” I exclaimed to Paulo.

The main summit was still an estimated three hours distant, and the snow was becoming increasingly poor. We had to be realistic. If we went on, our return would be dangerous, with no reliable protection in the softening snow. Our spur

was original, the first Portuguese new line in the Himalaya, but we hadn't reached the summit.

Then, turning back, we saw the triangular peak we had passed. "Let's go for it." We climbed to the summit, now pleased that our new route had a logical conclusion (1,900m, D+ 65°). At base camp we discovered that this peak was called Ekdant and had a previous ascent. [Editor's Note: this was in 1980, by Shashank Kulkarni and high-altitude porter Narayan Singh, who were part of an Indian expedition attempting Parvati Parbat via the northeast ridge, from the ca 5,500m col between it and Nilkanth. They named it Ekdant, meaning "one tooth"]. The descent of course was epic, with many 25m rappels from Abalakovs, as we had only climbed on a single 50m rope.

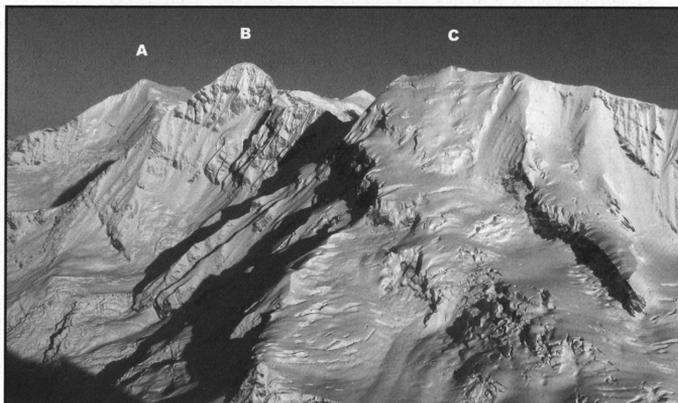
A few days of bad weather intervened before we again tried Parvati, by a more direct line on the north face. This time huge avalanche danger turned us back at 5,100m. On the last day of good weather, June 2, we opted for a beautiful, triangular peak farther east, immediately south of Lake Satopanth. We took minimal gear and reached the top by the north face at 10 a.m., the crux being the last seven meters, where we had to climb rock (UIAA IV). We named the route Directa Lusitana (D+, 55-60°) and the peak Kartik (30°43'52.93" N, 79°21'9.96" E, GPS), to maintain the Hindu spirit of the area. Kartik was the smaller brother of Ekdant and warrior son of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati. It is the first virgin Himalayan summit reached by Portuguese.

DANIELA TEIXEIRA, *Portugal*

EASTERN GARHWAL

Nanda Khat (6,611m), east spur and north ridge. Situated immediately west of Traill's Pass, Nanda Khat has been a much-attempted peak, though few have reached the main summit. In pre-monsoon, a team of seven male and five female climbers, organized by the Indian Mountaineering Foundation and led by Anil Ghurtoo, established base camp on the Pindari Glacier at 4,482m. The team then ascended north to the vicinity of Traill's Pass, and after establishing two high camps, Bharat Bhushan, Dhruv Joshi, Takpa Norbu, and Cheten Pandey reached the summit via a partial new route up the east spur to the north summit, then back along the sharp north-northeast ridge to main summit. The date was June 22, and the final ascent made in a 22-hour roundtrip from their highest camp. They employed no high-altitude support.

HARISH KAPADIA, AAC
Honorary Member,
India



Looking southwest from northwest ridge of Changuch. In foreground are crevassed slopes of Traill's Pass, while Pindari Glacier lies down to left. (A) Maiktoli (6,803m), (B) Panwali Dwar (6,663m), and (C) Nanda Khat, with north-northeast ridge forming right skyline. Martin Moran