

2012 the team completed the 2011 line, which reaches the top of the triangle at 6,800m. From there they continued to the upper section of the southeast ridge, joining the original American Route at 7,500m. Given the conditions experienced by the Poles during their descent, it is surmised that when the bad weather struck, Goeschl, Hahlen, and Sadpara were caught by strong winds and blown off the mountain.

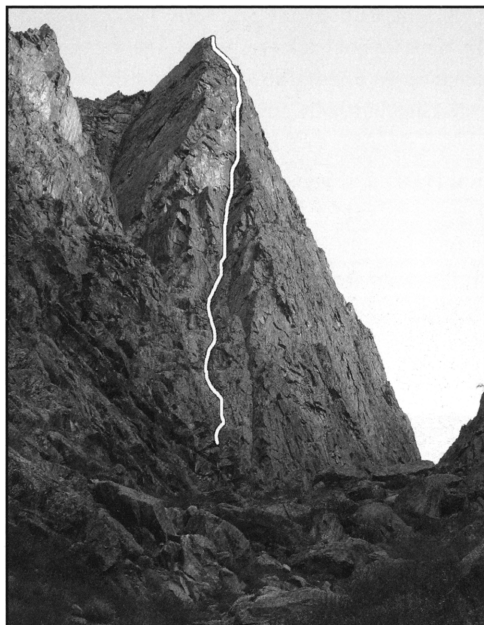
Although a rescue helicopter was called in immediately, continuing poor weather meant flights were repeatedly canceled, and it wasn't until the 15th that a weather window in the upper Baltoro allowed Askari Aviation to look for the missing climbers. A helicopter flew to 7,000m, studying the line of ascent, and later the Normal Route up the Japanese Couloir. There was no trace of the three, and after discussions with Wolfgang Goeschl, the brother of Gerfreid, who had arrived in Skardu that day, further searches were abandoned. The helicopter landed at base camp and evacuated the two frostbitten Polish climbers.

Goeschl came from a mountaineering family, his father having made the first ascent, in 1968, of the well-known 7,257m Karakoram peak Diran. Gerfreid had climbed seven 8,000ers, including Everest without supplementary oxygen, and in 2009 completed a partially new route on Nanga Parbat.

Hahlen, an aspirant guide, had climbed K2, Broad Peak (foresummit), and Kangchenjunga, and in 2006 made the first ascent of the north (Chinese) face of Gasherbrum II East (7,772m), with Hans Mitterer and Ueli Steck. Sadpara was one of three professional Pakistani mountaineers to have climbed all five 8,000m peaks in the country.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN. *MOUNTAIN INFO*

MASHERBRUM RANGE



La Belle Epoque on La Nariz. Provided by Francesc Estorach

Various ascents and attempts from Hushe, Charakusa, Kande, and Atoshar valleys. Between July 15 and September 3 the Federacion Espanola de Deportes de Montaña y Escalada (FEDME) organized two expeditions to the Hushe Valley. The first was an all-male team of Silvestre Barrientos, Mikel Bonilla, Alex Corpas, and Martin Elias, supervised by the guide Simon Elias. The expedition served as the perfect end to FEDME's three-year High Performance Alpine Program. The second comprised Esther Fresneda and Berta Terres (two other women nominated for the trip were unable to go), FEDME's female national climbing team. They were accompanied by Simon Elias and another guide, Pere Vilarasau.

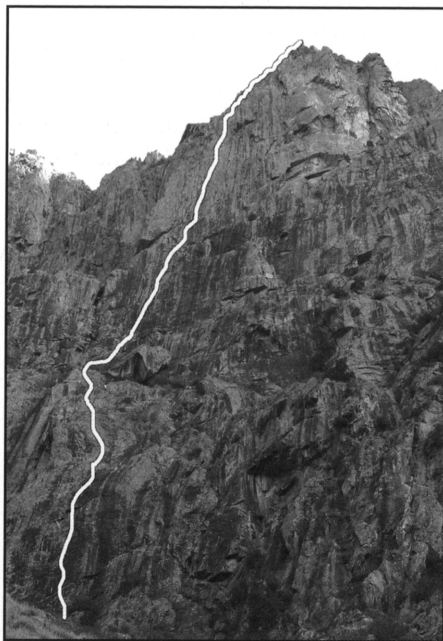
The groups based themselves in the comfortable refuge built two years ago in Hushe by the NGO Sarabastall. For acclimatization Barrientos and Simon Elias climbed Karpo Tower (4,630m) via the south face, naming their 360m, nine-pitch route,

Barba Roja (Red Beard) as a tribute to Spanish alpinist Daniel Crespo, who died in Peru during 2010. They reached the foot of the face after a five-hour walk from Hushe and completed the climb over two days, July 25 and 26. It is generally sustained at 6a, with the crux 7a pitch at the top.

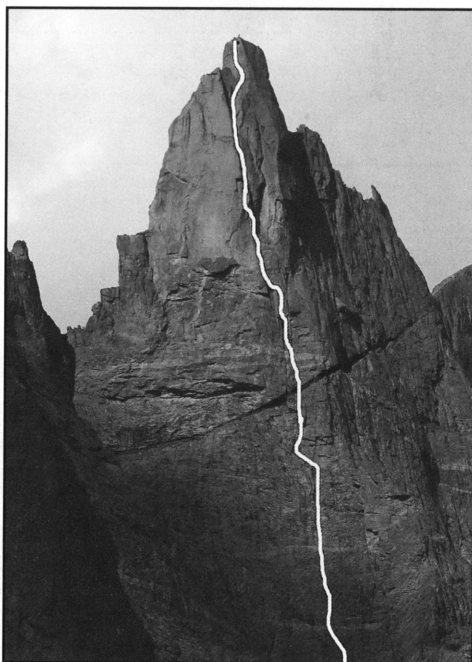
On August 3 and 4 Corpas and Martin Elias climbed La Belle Epoque, a steep 700m rock pillar leading to the summit of La Nariz (the Nose), a 4,710m rock tower four-five hours walk from Hushe. Difficulties were 7a, 6b obl. Members of the team repeated Las Damas Primero, a route put up on the lower west flank of 5,810m Baush-ul in 2010 by a FEDME women's alpine team (*AAJ 2011*). This 850m, 16-pitch route to the top of Garidas Pillar was originally climbed at 6c+, 6b obl, with a short step of A0 (2p) near the start of pitch eight. This short bouldery section was free climbed at 7b.

The women (with Simon Elias and Vilarasau) began a series of ascents on August 3, when they completed a route on Stago Peak (4,140m), a wall on the north side of the lower Homboro Valley first attempted by the 2010 women's team. The 12-pitch route, with 590m of climbing, was named La Puerta Cerrada and offered difficulties of 6c+, 6b+ obl on exceptional, though often compact, granite. The route was repeated by members of the men's team.

The women's team then explored the Kande Valley, which rises west-northwest of Kande village, noting four virgin peaks above 6,000m and more than a dozen above 5,000m. On August 10 the two women and Simon Elias made the probable first ascent of Kande Peak (5,470m) at the head of the Nangrol Glacier. It provided a great viewpoint, reached over nontechnical glaciated terrain. In the meantime the men went to the Charakusa, where they summited the two previously climbed peaks Hassan Boulder Peak (5,900m) and Brethes Peak (5,860m)—short ascents without difficulty. They also attempted an interesting couloir on Farol East Peak and a new route on Farhod Brakk (ca 5,300m). The



La Puerta Cerrada on Stago Peak. *Provided by Francesc Estorach*



Barba Roja on Karpo Tower. *Provided by Francesc Estorach*



Naisa Brakk, with line of the Spanish route. No More Tasty Talking follows crest of ridge throughout. *Provided by Francesc Estorach*



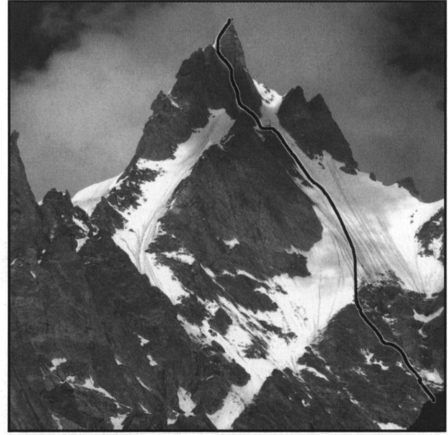
Northeast spur of Farhod Brakk, attempted to nearly two-thirds height by three Spanish climbers. In right background are flanks of Namika (6,325m). *Provided by Francesc Estorach*

latter was the 1,200m northeast pillar, tried by Bonilla, Corpas, and Martin Elias from August 21 to 23; they retreated from two-thirds height. After waiting out a spell of bad weather, Corpas and Vilarasau climbed the southeast ridge of Naisa Brakk (5,200m) over two days, August 25 and 26. The crest of the ridge is followed in its entirety by No More Tasty Talking (1,000m, 5.10+, Miller-Prezelj, 2004), but over the years parties have created sport routes on the lower east flank (Prezelj remembers finding bolts.) It appears the two Spanish may have climbed one of these hard pitches (7b+ or 6c and A1), though they found no gear here or anywhere else on the route. They then continued directly for several more difficult pitches, before slanting up the right flank of the ridge (6a+, 400m) to the notch. A short descent right led to a bivouac. Next day they continued up

Tasty Talking (11 pitches, 5.10+, House-Prezelj-Swensen, 2004), which climbs the upper crest.

On August 23 Terres and Simon Elias climbed Little Karim Brakk (ca 6,150m), at the head of the Atoshar Valley (a side valley flowing west into the Gondokoro, north of the Charakusa, and two valleys south of the one containing ca 5,860m Cholon). Their 22-hour ascent of the 900m south face involved difficulties up to WI5+ and M4+.

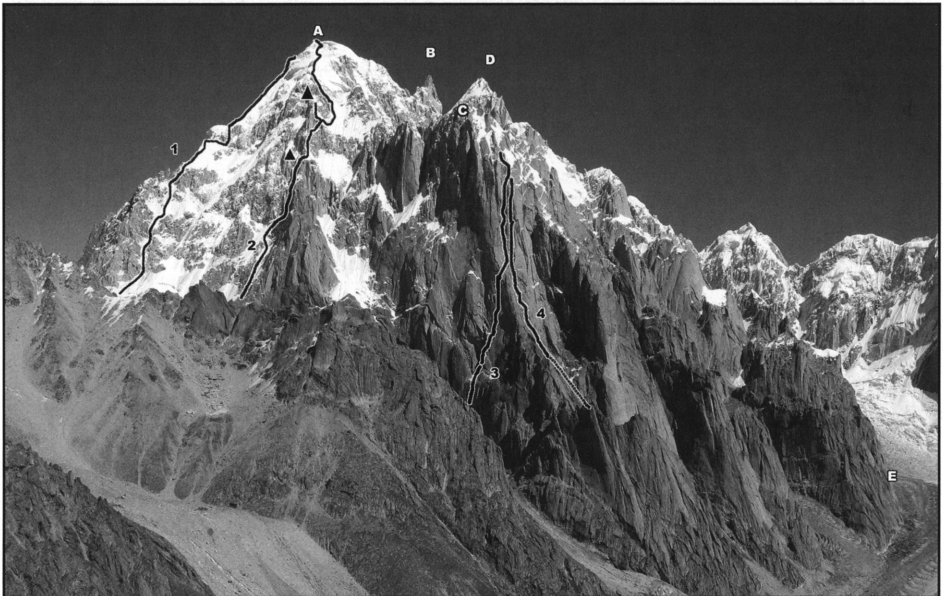
FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY FRANCESC ESTORACH, *Director de Comunicaci3n, FEDME, and SIMON ELIAS, Spain, translated by Alex Horner.*



South face of Little Karim Brakk showing Elias-Terres route. Provided by Francesc Estorach

Charakusa Valley, K7 West (6,615m), northwest face, Dreamers of Golden Caves. You never forget your first Himalayan experience. Charakusa was mine. Our first problem was visas. We were unable to obtain these in Slovenia and eventually were forced to go to Rome. Driving home with our visas, which we received on the last possible day before the flight, I wondered if this 20-hour ordeal might be the biggest adventure of the expedition. Instead it turned into one good story in a series of many.

During the dark morning of September 6, Nejc Marcic and I heard our cook say “chapattis”



(A) K7 West. (B) K7 Middle. (C) South West Summit. (D) K7 Main. (1) 1980 British attempt and high point on unclimbed northwest ridge. (2) Dreamers of Golden Caves, with bivouacs. (3) 2007 Belgian-Polish attempt (Badal). (4) 2009 Italian attempt (Children of Hushe). (E) Around to right of this buttress is approximate start of Steve House's 2004 solo ascent of K7 Main and monumental southwest ridge integral (ca 2,400m, upper right skyline arête), attempted in 1990, 1993 and 2006. Kelly Cordes