

2003 British Kyrgyz-Kuilu Expedition

9th to 31st August 2003



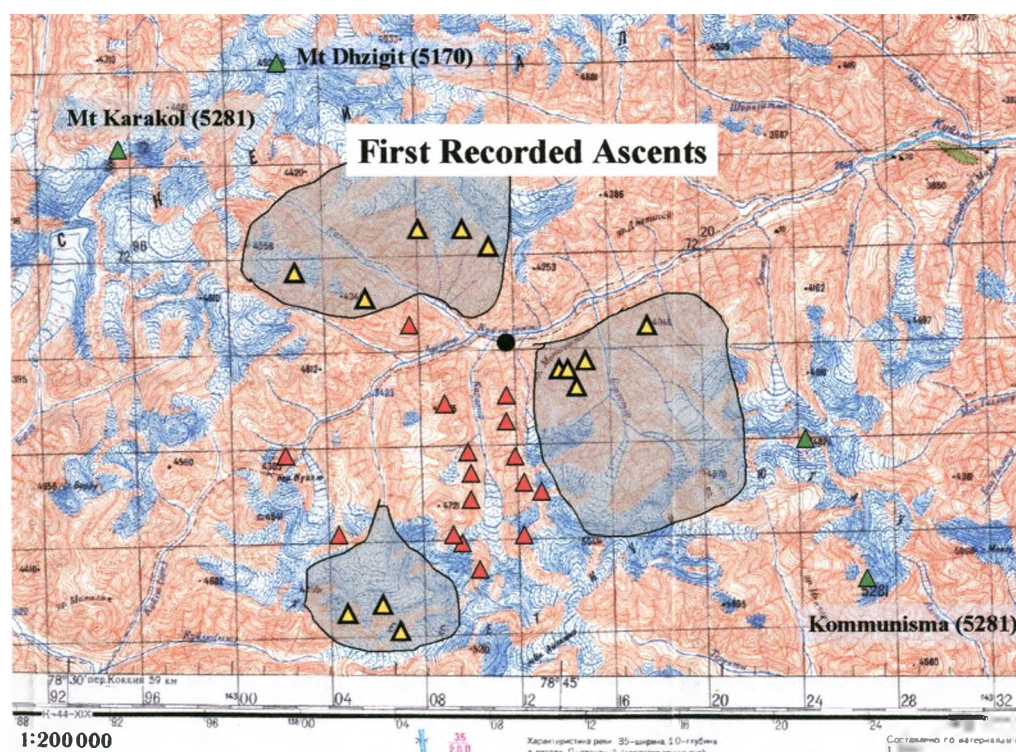
Sponsored by the Mount Everest Foundation, The British Mountaineering Council and UK Sport

Robin Gibson

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SUMMARY



Between 9th and 31st August 2003, a team of 14 mountaineers from Chester Mountaineering Club under the team name of “2003 British Kyrgyz-Kuilu Expedition” made over 10 first recorded ascents in the Teresky-Tau and Kuilu-Tau ranges in the Issyk Kul Khrebet in Eastern Kyrgyzstan. The ascents made by the team were graded from PD to D.

The weather during August 2003 was near perfect for the expedition however the low level of precipitation prior to the trip meant that the snow line was perhaps higher than had been observed in previous years which resulted in more loose rock and less snow/ice than perhaps might be ideal.

The group employed the services of ITMC Ltd, Bishkek, to arrange all travel in Kyrgyzstan, visa support, access paperwork, transport, base camp, cook, base camp food, base camp tents, drivers, camp manager, porters and miscellaneous accommodation en route amongst the many items necessary. As a result of their efforts which contributed to our success, ITMC are highly recommended.

While much of the western end of the Kuilu valley is now explored with many major peaks picked off, the Kuilu valley and surrounding ranges still offers a huge choice of unclimbed peaks and climbing styles in an alpine setting. When this is combined with the relative ease of access (3 days into BC), it is clear that much potential remains. In particular the areas to the south and west of the Kuilu Tau seem particularly attractive and remain accessible.

THANKS

Many people were involved in the organisation, funding and execution of this expedition. It is with thanks that the following are recognised

- The Mount Everest Foundation (financial support)
- The British Mountaineering Council (financial support)
- UK Sport (financial support)
- Harcourt Drums Ltd (donation of plastic drums for air freight)
- Camp and Climb, Chester (generous discounts on equipment purchases)
- Stargate 3 (discount on satellite phone rental)
- Baldas SpA (for snow shoe discounts)
- ITMC Ltd, Bishkek (for providing excellent service)
- The Ogwen Mountain Rescue Team (for self rescue advice and practical help)
- The team from Chester Mountaineering Club whose friendliness and support are not always guaranteed on a trip of this nature. They are (left to right)

Andy Bond, Gwyn Ingman, John Buckle, Angela Wright, John Tranter, Phill Reay, Bill Dean, Mike Evans, Martin Astley, Robert "Nobby" Wright, Andy Cole, Robin Gibson, Malcolm Eldridge, Nev Croston.



1. INTRODUCTION

Chester Mountaineering Club was 50 years old in 2003. The club sprang into life in 1953, the same year than Mount Everest was conquered. The club was founded by Storm Bate and the event was recorded in the Chester Observer in March 1953 - "Mountaineering Club formed by local climbing enthusiasts - Chester rambling, scrambling and rock climbing enthusiasts have decided to form their own club, The Chester Mountaineering Club came into being at a preliminary meeting last Friday." Storm was elected as the first secretary while Sir Geoffrey Summers and ex-Everester George Wood-Johnson were elected to the posts of Chairman and vice-Chairman respectively. Since the club's inception, its interests have long been looked after by renowned mountaineers such as Sir Jack Longland who served as vice-President for many years.

As well as bringing together a group of like-minded individuals driven to climbing by the national success of John Hunt's Everest expedition in 1953, the club purchased two huts in North Wales to provide a strong base in one of the UK's best climbing areas at a time when transport meant that a trip to Snowdon was an endeavour in itself.

Since the birth of the club, many climbers have swelled the ranks and members today exceed 300 world-wide. As numbers have increased, so has the sphere of interest of the club that now includes armchair enthusiasts, hill walkers and die-hard alpinists as well as the scramblers and rock climbers that defined the earlier years. Whatever the activity preference, the club today is more active than ever with a packed programme of winter and summer activities covering meets all over the UK and further afield in the greater mountain ranges, meets at indoor climbing walls, winter lecture series and many social gatherings.

The 50th anniversary was celebrated with three milestone events – A special anniversary dinner, a golden jubilee journal and expedition to unclimbed peaks of the Kuilu valley in Kyrgyzstan.

The 50th anniversary dinner was held at the Queens Hotel in Chester on 22nd March 2003 and all past and present members are invited. The special guest speaker was George Band who formed part of Hunt's original team in 1953.

The golden jubilee journal, compiled by the 2002-2004 chairman Malcolm Eldridge, was published in Spring 2004 and contained a full history of the club as well as a wealth of individual mountaineering achievements and anecdotal evidence that mountaineering is perhaps the only sport where beer is considered an essential nutritional intake for maximum performance !.

The 2003 British Kyrgyz-Kuilu Expedition team of 14 club members, led by the secretary Robin Gibson, endeavoured to conquer previously unclimbed peaks upto 17,000ft in the little visited and mountainous east of Kyrgyzstan, in August 2003. This expedition was sponsored by the British Mountaineering Council/UK Sports Council and Mount Everest Foundation (MEF).

2. EXPEDITION OBJECTIVES

The CMC caters for all general mountaineering interests and abilities so combined with the fact that most members are not professional mountaineers with only limited annual holiday to devote to the exploration of mountains, the following was the objectives of the expedition

"To build an expedition team from as many CMC members as possible to explore and make first ascents in the greater ranges of the global that would be a significant contribution to British

mountaineering and personal achievement. This would have to be achieved within the limits of private funding and within a four week time period during British Summer time."

An analysis of the limitations surrounding the expedition including funds, limited time for acclimatisation, maximising period for climbing, climbing season limitation and general personal safety in region to be visited when combined with the need for originality excluded the greater Himalaya (height), South America (winter), Greenland (time and logistics) and Middle East (inc Afghanistan etc – general political instability).

2.1 KYRGYZSTAN

The Tien-Shan range while being an extension of the Himalaya in geological terms is generally at a lower altitude than the Himalaya and many parts sit within politically stable although sometimes undeveloped countries/Chinese provinces – Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous province (Peoples Republic of China). In particular, since the disintegration of Soviet Union in the late 1990's from which the country declared its independence, Kyrgyzstan has become a popular destination for mountaineers attracted by the significant peaks of the Tien Shan such as Pobeda (7439m) and Khan Tengri (6995m) in the most eastern part and the Peak Lenin (7134m), Zaalaiskii range and Pamirs in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan.



Figure 1. Overview of Kyrgyzstan Geography

The eastern most province, Issyk-Kul Khrebet (khrebet means province), is so called due to the presence of the worlds second largest inland lake by the same name. The Tien-Shan range to the south of the lake contains two very significant peaks named above, Pobeda and Khan Tengri, as well as a huge array of smaller but unclimbed peaks. Exploration of the general area by western mountaineers started proper post Soviet era with most expeditions heading for the Inylchek glacier which is the gateway to highest peaks in the area. The areas surrounding the Inylchek glacier are less esoteric in altitude terms but many peaks rise to over 5500m.

2.2 THE KUILU VALLEY

One of the adjacent areas recently visited by western mountaineers is the Kuilu valley (pronounced *kway-loo*) which sits between the Teresky-Tau range (just south of Issyk-Kul) and the more southerly Kuilu-Tau range which is accessed prior to the Inylchek valley on the road from Karakol (Issyk-Kul Khrebet regional capital). Peaks in this area rise to 5281m (Constitution Peak) and several of the more striking peaks in the region were climbed by Pat Littlejohn in 2000 with his team from the International School of Mountaineering (Leysin, CH). The valley also benefits from being around 500km from the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, with the majority of travel being possible on aging metalled roads (Bishkek to Karakol). The remainder of the journey is largely completed on dirt track with the final 30km of the valley requiring a robust AWD vehicle. The journey by land to the Kuilu valley takes around 2.5 days.

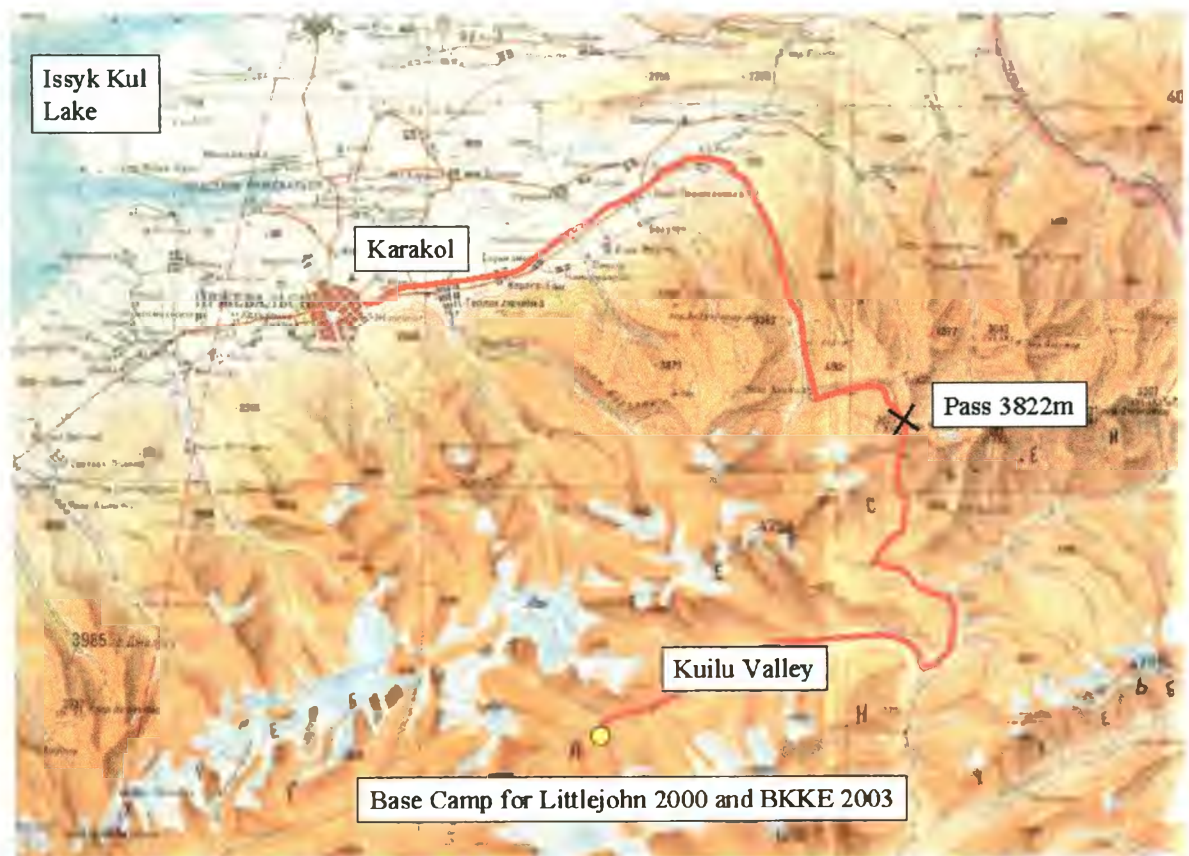


Figure 2. Position of Kuilu Valley relative to Karakol

The Littlejohn team visited the most westerly end of the valley and spent over two weeks exploring the Kuilu tributary valley, the Karator valley, which culminated in several first ascents of the more accessible peaks in the valley (Figures 3 and 4). For detailed description, see Appendix B which contains Pat Littlejohn's report of the ISM visit in 2000.

To translate, the ISM successes into 1:200,000

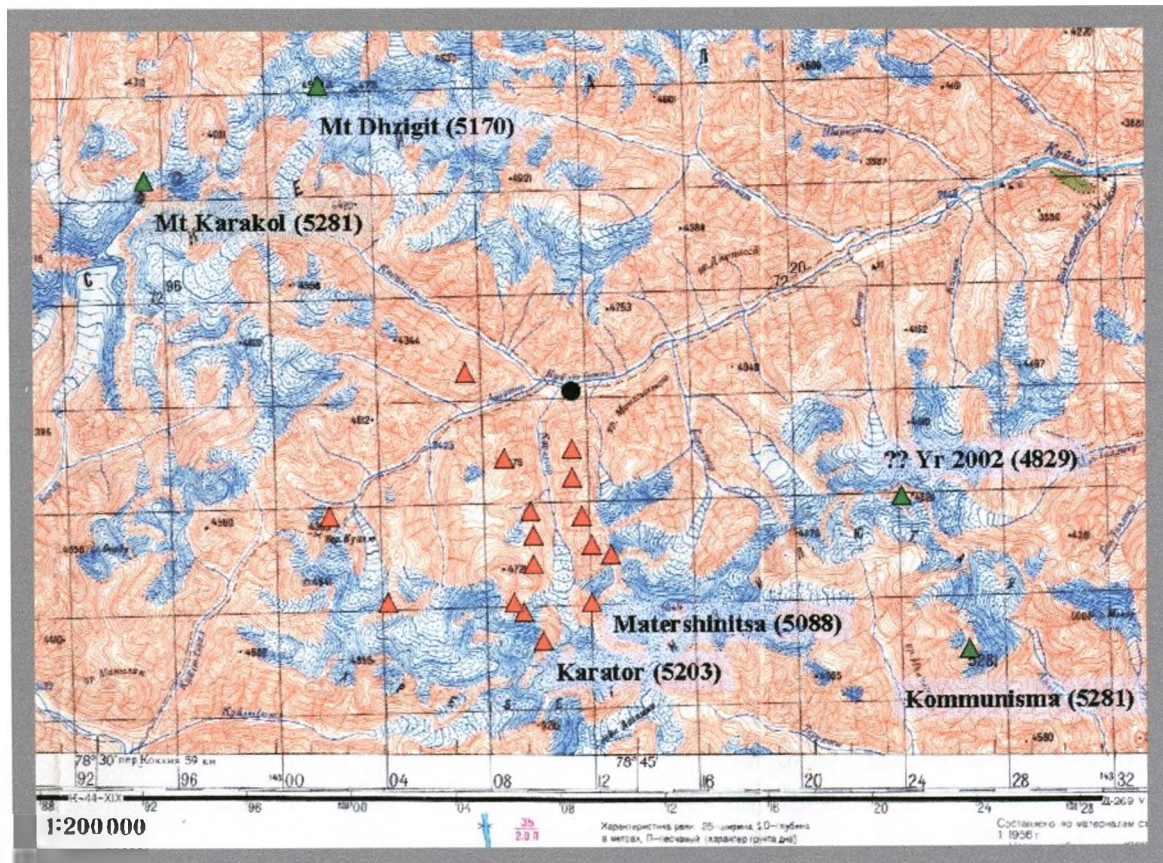


Figure 4. ISM Peaks in 2000

2.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE 2003 BRITISH KYRGYZ-KUILU EXPEDITION

From discussions with both Pat Littlejohn and Vladimir Komissarov, the objectives of the team essentially included all areas without previous exploration, the North, South East and South West of base camp

3. THE BRITISH KYRGYZ-KUILU EXPEDITION TEAM

3.1. TEAM DETAILS

Name	Age	Nationality	Occupation	Experience
Dr Robin Gibson <i>Expedition Leader</i>	33	British	Commercial Manager	3 Alpine Summer, 2 Alpine Winter, 6 Scottish Winter, 17 yrs mountaineering lead to Scottish Grade III and rock HVS
William (Bill) Dean <i>Equipment Officer</i>	62	British	Retired Teacher	20+ Alpine Summer/Winter inc Mt McKinley, 43 yrs mountaineering to rock HVS. Ogwen Mountain Rescue Team Member
Malcolm Eldridge	59	British	Retired Teacher	30 Alpine Summer/Winter inc ski-touring, 43 yrs mountaineering, Member of Alpine Club and FRGS
Dr Andrew Cole	53	British	Head of Laundry Packaging Development	6 Alpine Summer, 8 Scottish Winter, 37 yrs mountaineering lead to Scottish IV and rock E1
Dr Martin Astley <i>Food Officer</i>	37	British	Supplier Liaison Manager	1 Alpine Summer, 1 Alpine Winter, 4 Scottish Winter, 19 yrs mountaineering to Scottish Grade III and rock VS Trekking in Patagonia
Phillip Reay	25	British	Site Engineer	1 Alpine Winter, 6 Scottish Winter, 10 yrs mountaineering to Scottish IV and rock E1
Dr John Tranter <i>Air Freight Officer</i>	59	British	Lecturer	7 Alpine Summer, 30 yrs mountaineering to rock HVS
John Buckle	45	British	Banking Research Manager	6 Alpine Summer/Winter inc Mt Kenya. 12 Scottish Winter, 30 yrs mountaineering to Scottish III and rock HS
Nevil Croston	49	British	Solicitor	3 Alpine Summer, 15 Scottish Summer/Winter, Trekking in Peru (Cordillera Blanca) and Algeria (Hoggar), 33 yrs mountaineering to rock VS
Robert Wright	47	British	Sports Facilities Mgr	10 Alpine Winter, 20 Scottish Winter, 25yrs mountaineering to Scottish IV and rock E2. Mountain Leader Award
Angela Wright	47	British	Teacher	20 Scottish Winter, 25yrs mountaineering to Scottish II
Michael Evans	59	British	Electrical Technician	6 Alpine Summer, 42 yrs mountaineering to rock lead S.
Andrew Bond	28	British	Teacher	2 Scottish Winter, 12yrs mountaineering to Scottish II and rock VS
Gwyn Ingman	36	British	Special Needs Teacher	5 Alpine Summer, 20 yrs mountaineering to Scottish V

4. MOUNTAINEERING ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE KILU

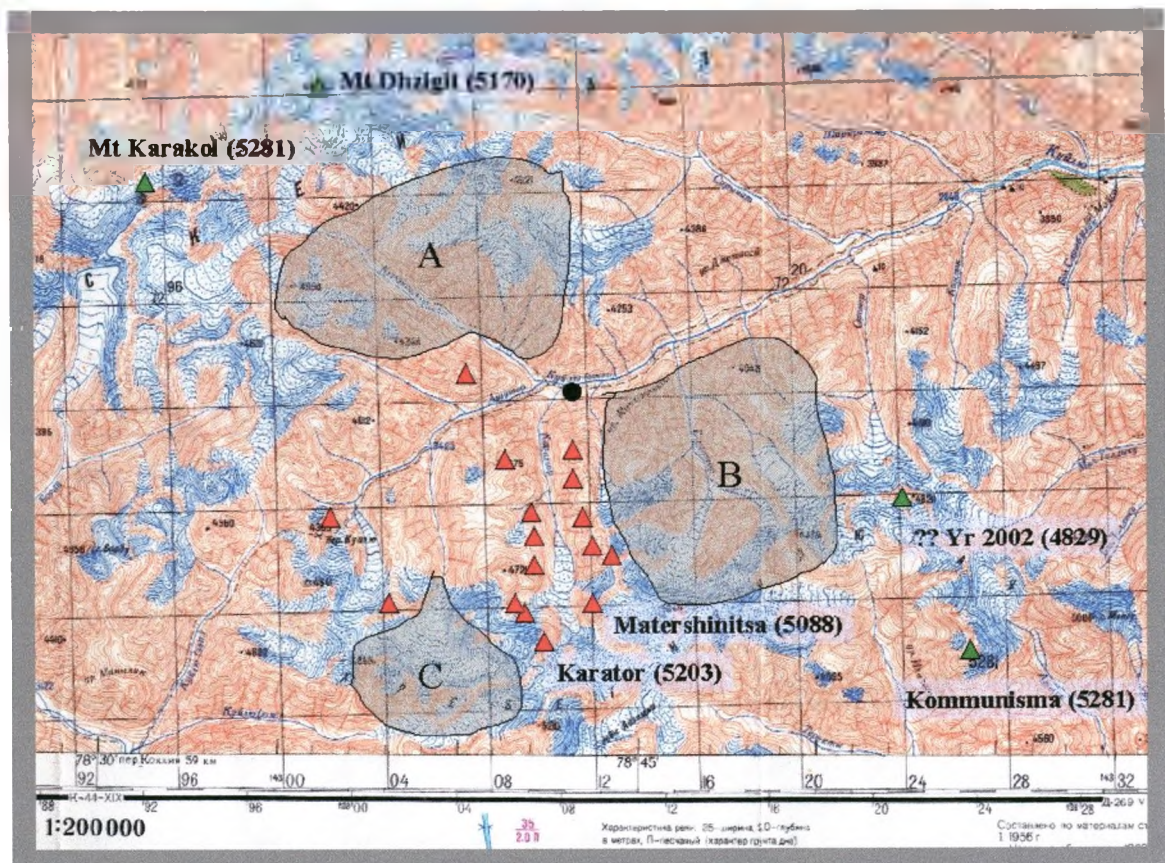


Figure 5. Areas explored by the 2003 BKKE. A is "In search of Pk 4921", B is "In search of Pk 5041" and C = "The Eralma Valley"

The activities of the expedition were split into three distinct areas that broadly reflected the efforts of essentially three separate teams (as indicated in Fig 6). Although the whole team was aware of the trip and successes of the ISM team from 2000, few records are available regarding mountaineering activity in the valley prior to 2000. Despite contact with Russian, Kazakh and Kyrgyz climbing authorities, it was not possible to ascertain what, if any, climbing had been done prior to 2000(see review in Appendix A). It is clear that the Soviet military completed manoeuvres in the area pre-1998.

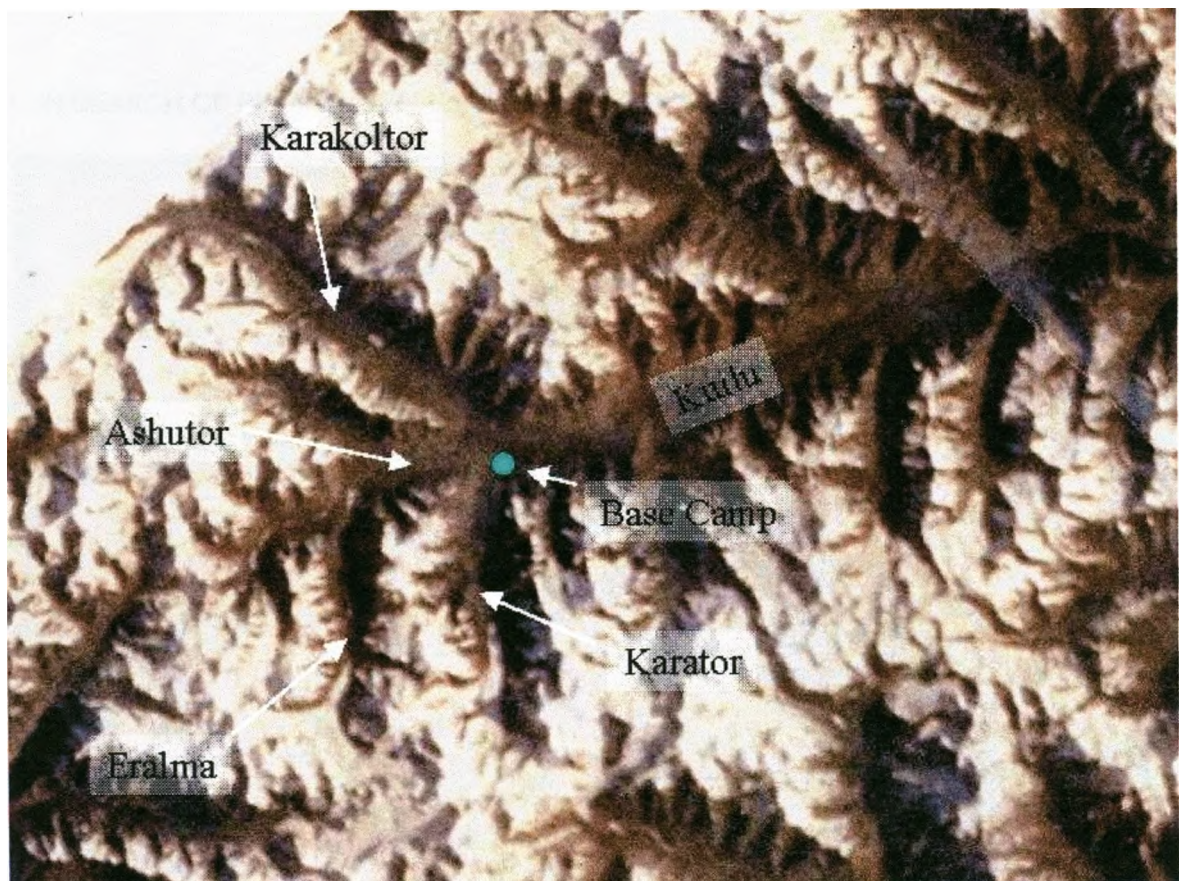


Figure 6. Annotated Satellite Map of the Kuilu and other main features (for larger image see appendix G)

Evidence of soviet military and meteorological activities in the area are to be found as well as the odd climbing shoe or rusty tins cans that may indicate specific mountaineering visits.



Figure 7. Nev Croston on Kuilu rock with graffiti from 1979

4.1. IN SEARCH OF PK 4921 (SEE ALSO APPENDICES C AND G)

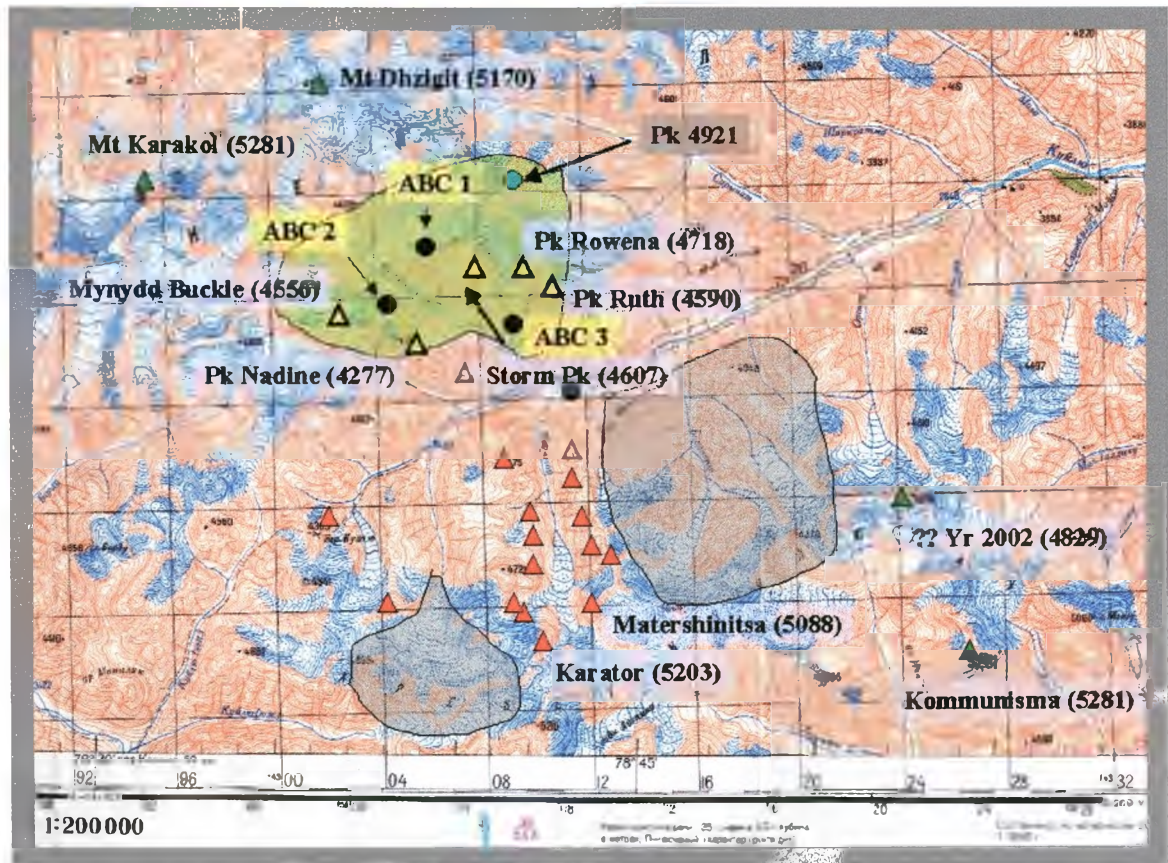


Figure 8. Peaks climbed around the Karakortor Valley

The majority of the activity in this area was completed by the PAWNstars (an acronym of their first names) who were Phill Reay, Andrew Bond, William (Bill) Dean and Nev Croston. Their endeavours to climb Pk 4921 from the Kuilu and Karakortor valley were rebuffed due to poor access -see PAWNstar topo in Appendix C. The direct approach via the obvious three tributary valleys joining the Karakortor almost opposite base camp ("Four Sisters of Karakortor") proved too complex as a route to Pk 4921 however the exploration of this area including ABC 3 at 3757m in "100 Wall Valley" resulted in the ascents of two new peaks, Pk Rowena (4718) and Pk Ruth (4950), both PD. Access to the NW side of Pk 4921 was also explored by gaining a hanging valley located on the eastern side of the Karakortor valley around 8km NW of base camp. ABC 1 was established on a terminal moraine at 3730m. An exploration of the glacier system from ABC 1 to the N of Pk 4921 revealed a possible access route involving a steep iced headwall (60 to 70°) to reach the crenellated NE summit ridge, however at an estimated D to TD this was not attempted. After a late start at 7am and overnight snow, the team made an ascent of Storm Pk (4607m, PD, fig 11) during this reconnaissance (3km to the west of Pk 4921) which provided a clear view of the access to Pk 4921 from the west generally which was believed to be poor. The conditions made for slow progress with a 9hr round trip. The PAWNstars did make one foray on to the W side of the Karakortor valley to bag Pk Nadine at 4277m (PD) on mixed rock/snow.

It is clear that access to Pk 4921 may be best gained from a Kuilu tributary valley (Sary Cham, entrance at N 42° 10' 2", W 78° 51' 0").

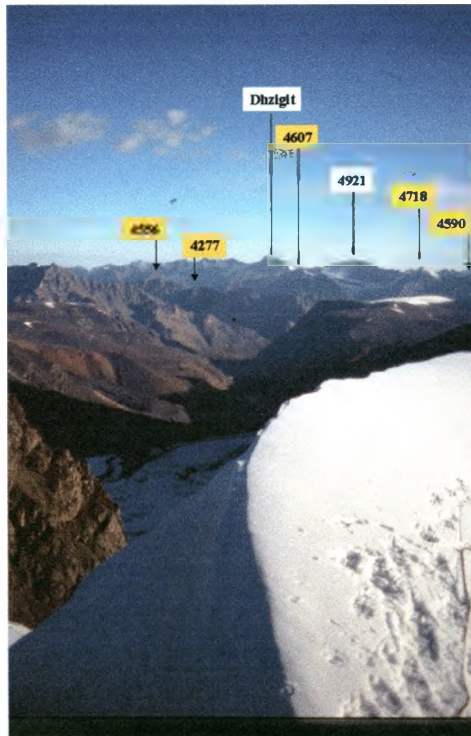


Figure 9. View of Teresky-Tau from Pk 4741 in the Eralma Valley



Figure 10. View W from the summit of Mynydd Buckle (4556m)



Figure 11. View ESE from ABC 1 at 3730m

Further successes were recorded in the same area by team of Buckle and Ingman who made a first ascent of Mynydd Buckle at 4556m (PD) and a local ridge, Pinnacle ridge (V Diff) as part of their peripatetic efforts covering the whole SW of the Kuilu Valley.

Having established ABC 2 at around 3500m in the bottom of the Karakoltor valley, 5km NW of base camp, Buckle and Ingman gained a hanging valley on the W side of the valley (entrance at around N 42° 10' 1", W 78° 38' 0"). Finding conditions good, they gained the S summit ridge gaining the peak via a mixed route at PD.

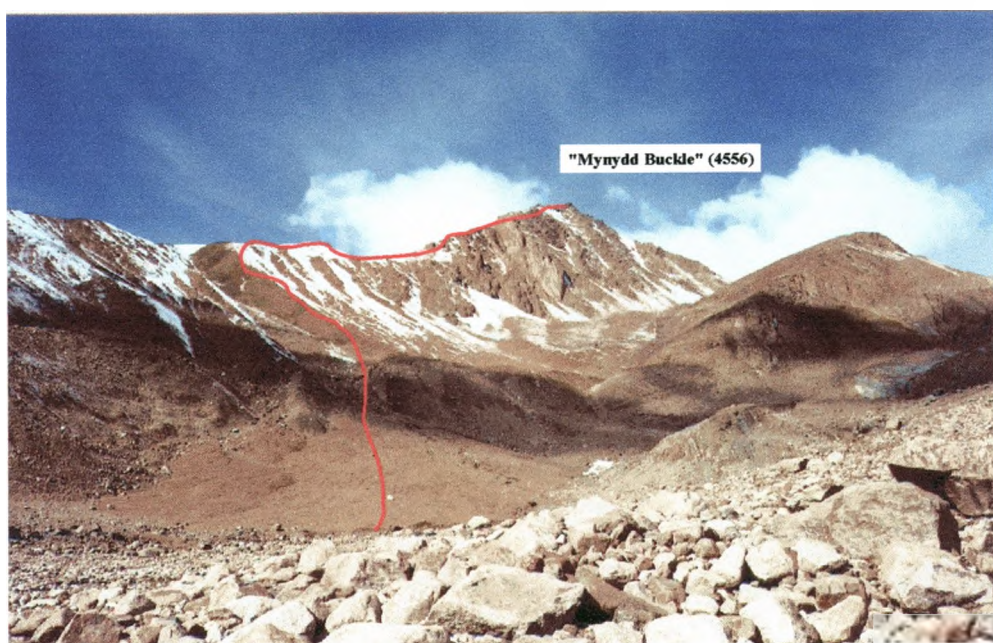


Figure 12. The route to Pk 4556

Further efforts from the Buckle/Ingman team involved an ascent of an obvious rock ridge (Pinnacle ridge) requiring a day trip from base camp. The rock was typical of that found in the valley as it was friable and chossy in all areas.



Figure 13. Pinnacle Ridge is the skyline feature on the RHS

4.2. IN SEARCH OF PK 5041 (SEE ALSO APPENDICES D AND E)

The team of Wright and Wright made an independent effort to explore the portion of the Kuilu-Tau range to the immediate SW of base camp with the broad aim of ascending the fine snow dome of Pk 5041. Their efforts resulted in the first ascents of several sub peaks as described fully in Appendix D. Although the pair enjoyed generally good weather establishing two ABC's (4 & 5), the general condition of the rock and snow as well as an unhappy knack of locating difficult-to-cross natural features meant that Pk 5041 was never reached although many subpeaks were bagged along the way. A few days rest from this exploration, saw the pair reattempting Matarshinista at 5088m (see ISM 2000) via Karator valley. After establishing ABC 6 at around 3800m on the lateral moraines of the in the Karator glacier, poor weather overnight saw both temperature and snow plummet. The resulting poor conditions forced the pair to retreat to BC.

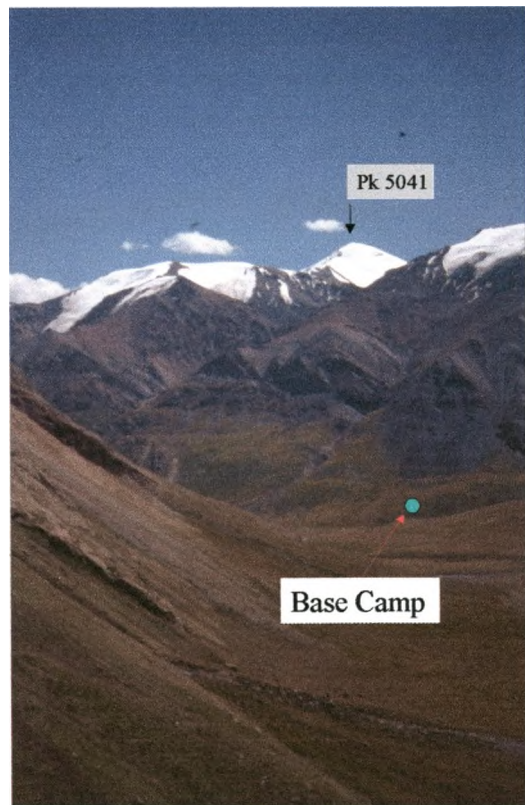


Figure 14. View SE from Karakoltoor Valley

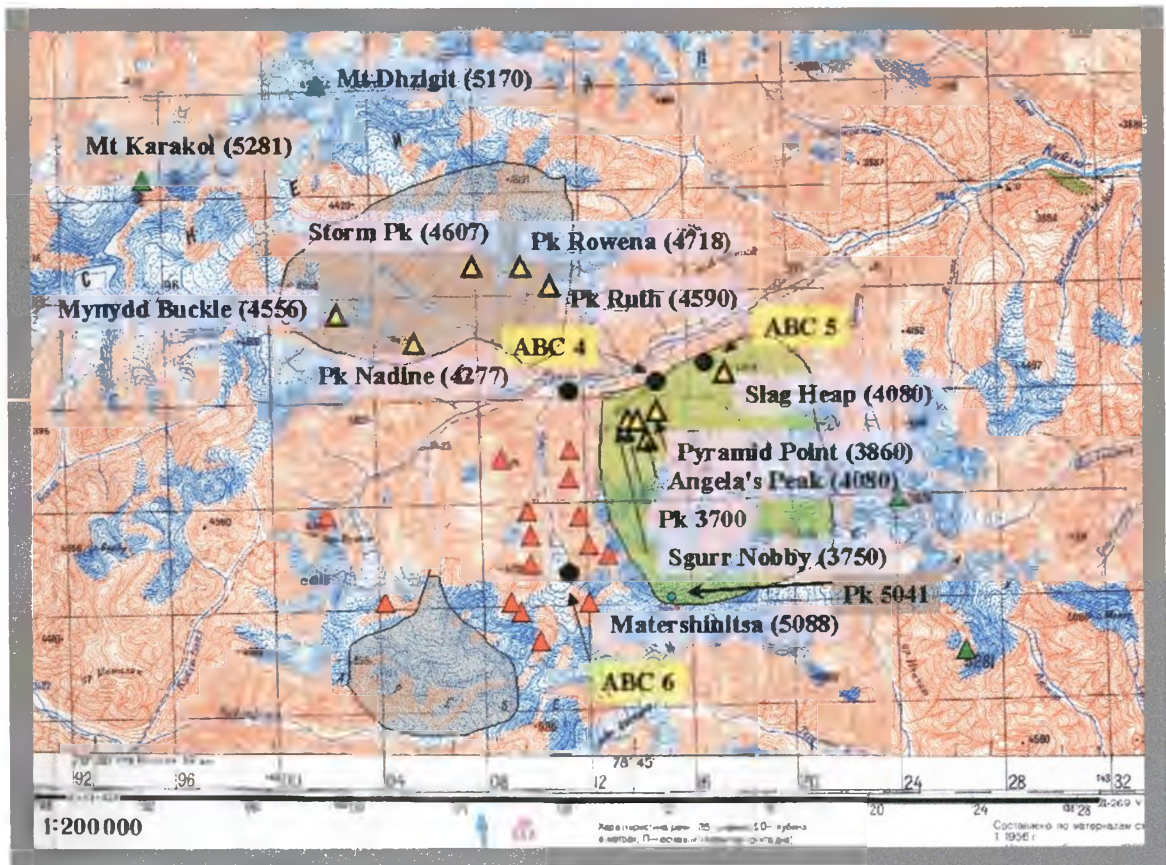


Figure 15. A summary of "In search of Pk 5041"

The team of Tranter and Evans were also mostly active in this vicinity (Appendix E). The pair made a successful ascent of South Peak that had been summited previously in 2000 by the ISM team. This required several attempts due almost entirely to very poor quality rock and unturnable gendarmes. The pair made an attempt on Mateshinista (5088mm) from ABC 6 at the same time as the Wrights. Despite sitting out the weather a little longer, the pair reached a high point of around 4700m before being forced to retreat due to the threat of avalanche.

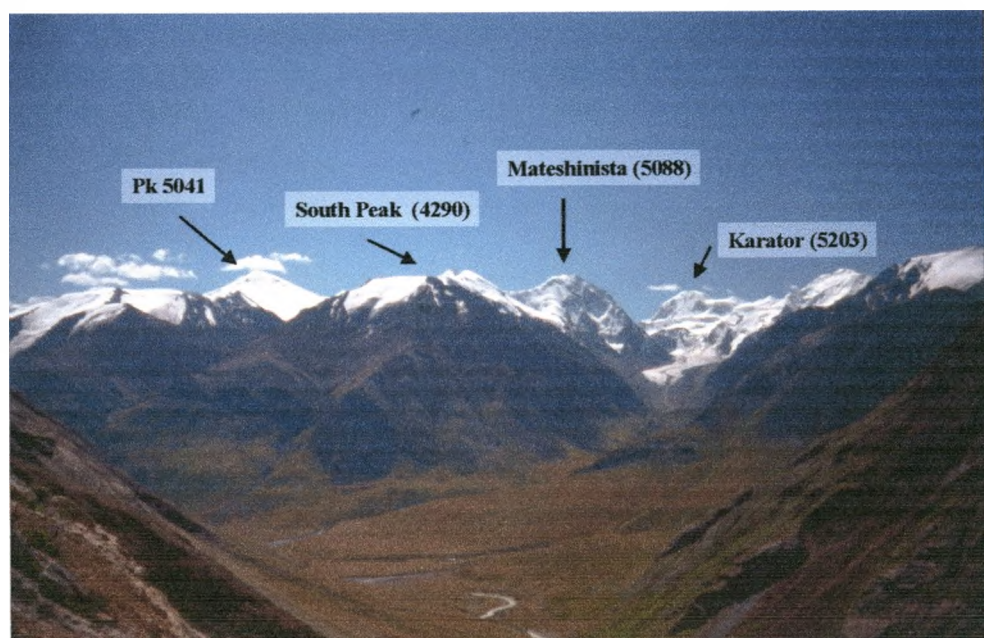


Figure 16. View South from the start of the Karakoltor

4.3. EXPLORATION OF THE ERALMA VALLEY (SEE ALSO APPENDICES F AND G)

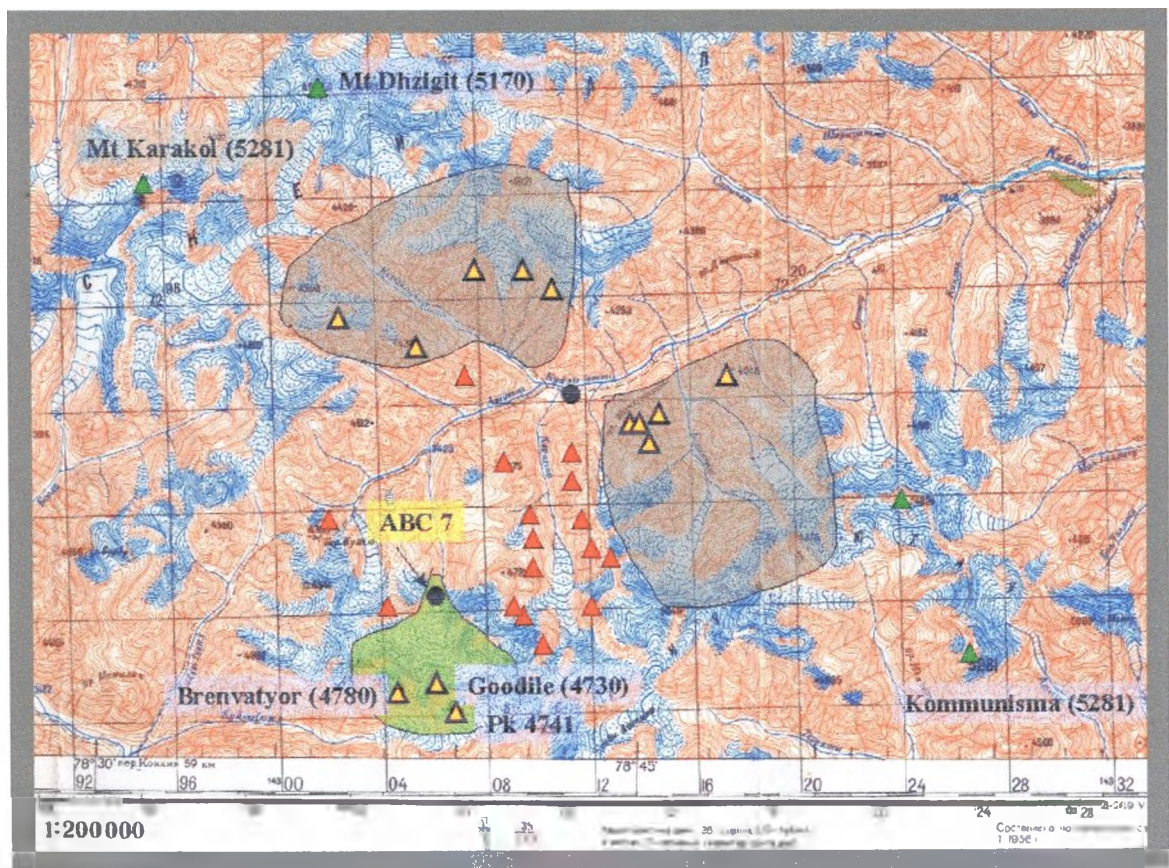


Figure 17. Overview of ascents in the Eralma valley

The main protagonists in the story of the Eralma valley are Astley, Cole and Eldridge, joined at times by Buckle, Ingman and Gibson. The Eralma valley (local name supplied by Kuilu farmer) is a typical steep sided glacial valley running in parallel to the Karator valley. The main glacier forms from the western slopes of Karator peak running west for several kilometers then turns north for some 3km before petering out. The valley itself continues for a further 5km before meeting the main Ashutor valley. All forays into the Eralma valley were based out of ABC 7 at around 3900m on the medial moraine of the Eralma glacier around 11km from BC. On entering the valley from the Ashutor, three peaks are immediately visible and these are Pk 4741, Goodile (4730m) and Brenvatyor (4780m) all of which were climbed during our visit.

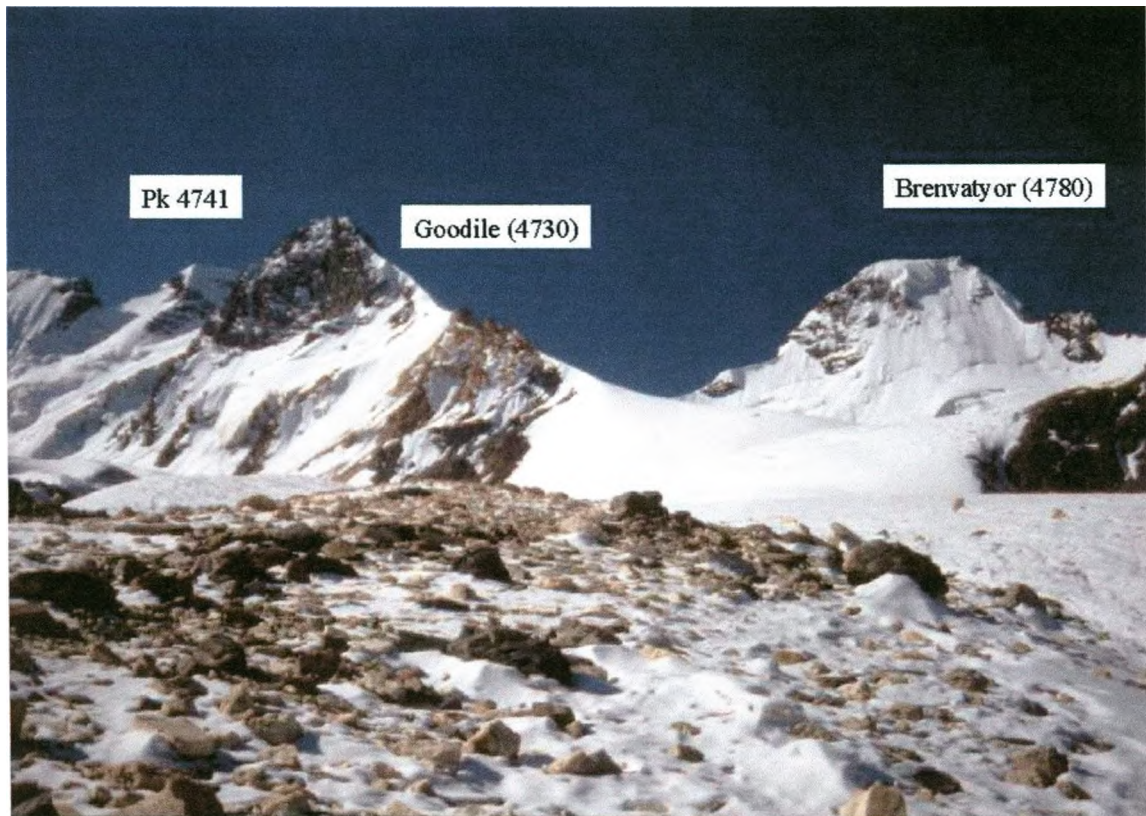


Figure 18. The three ascents in the Eralma Valley

The Goodile (Pk 4730) was the first to fall and was seiged by two teams in one day (fig 19). The trio of Astley, Cole and Eldridge made an early start up the badly crevassed but straightforward glacier from ABC 7 to make an attempt on the western skyline ridge. The access across the glacier was made easier when it was noticed that a line of yellow rock on the medial moraine pointed the way (hereafter the "Yellow Brick Road"). Buckle and Ingman also joined the team however their objective was to ascend by the 50° ice slope on the N face that joined the skyline W ridge at half height. Excellent weather and snow conditions found the teams on independent AD snow slopes with some mixed climbing in the last three pitches. As with all rock in this area, it was very loose. Summit success was muted when a structure resembling a cairn was found on the top. As a result the team only claims the first British ascent. Descent was achieved by down climbing on the S face to reach a col between Pk 4741 and Brenvatyor (PD).

The following day, the duo of Astley and Cole made an early start on Pk 4855 (the western most in the Eralma (directly west of Brenvatyor) however poor conditions and uncertain glacier conditions forced a retreat early in the attempt. No further attempts were made on this peak.

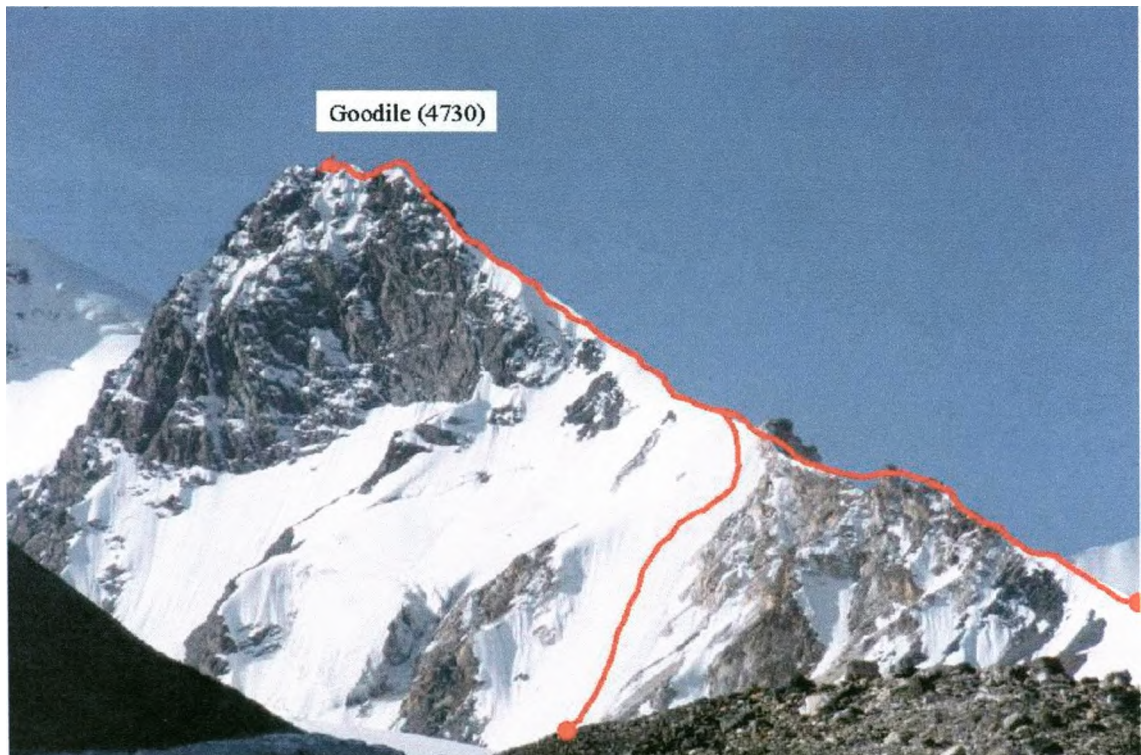


Figure 19. Ascent of the Goodile. W Ridge of Astley, Cole and Eldridge on RH skyline. N Face access of Buckle and Ingman also shown

Following a brief return to BC, the quartet of Astley, Cole, Eldridge and Gibson made a return trip to the Eralma ABC 7 to attempt the remaining peaks at 4741 and 4780m. A 02.00 start from ABC 7 saw the group follow the Yellow Brick road to the col between pks 4741 and 4780, reaching this by 06.30. The team divided here with Astley and Gibson heading up the W face of Pk 4741 and Cole and Eldridge heading E up the E ridge of Pk 4780 (to become Brenvatyor).

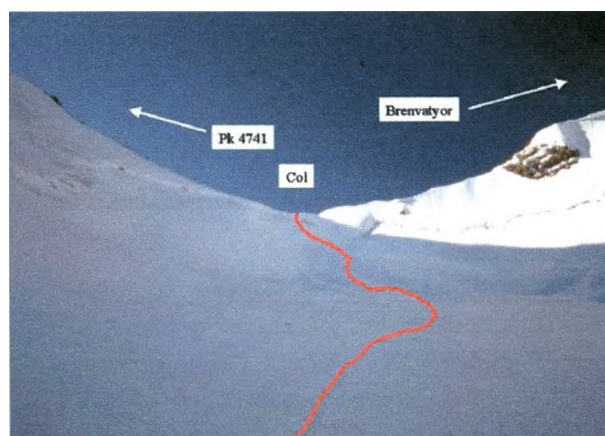


Figure 20. Col above ABC 7

Astley and Gibson found near perfect conditions on the PD 500m ascent on 40 to 50° slopes (fig 21), reaching the top at around 08.00. A quick descent to ABC 7 found them back in time for lunch.



Figure 21. Cole gears up at the Col. Astley and Gibson are just visible in the background as dots on the route.

Cole and Eldridge found their route to be mixed at around D. Loose rock and poorer snow (E facing) made the going slow with the pair reaching the top around 12.00 (figs 22 & 23). The poor ascent conditions forced the descent by another route, the W ridge. A slip by Cole on the first part of the descent gave him an ankle injury that slowed the pair's descent. Several full length abseils and potentially tricky glacier crossing found the pair in ABC 7 for around 16.30 after a tiring 14 hr day. The injury to Cole effectively stopped him from climbing further on this expedition.



Figure 22. View from Pk 4741 up the E Ridge of Brenvatyor (red = ascent line, green = descent line)

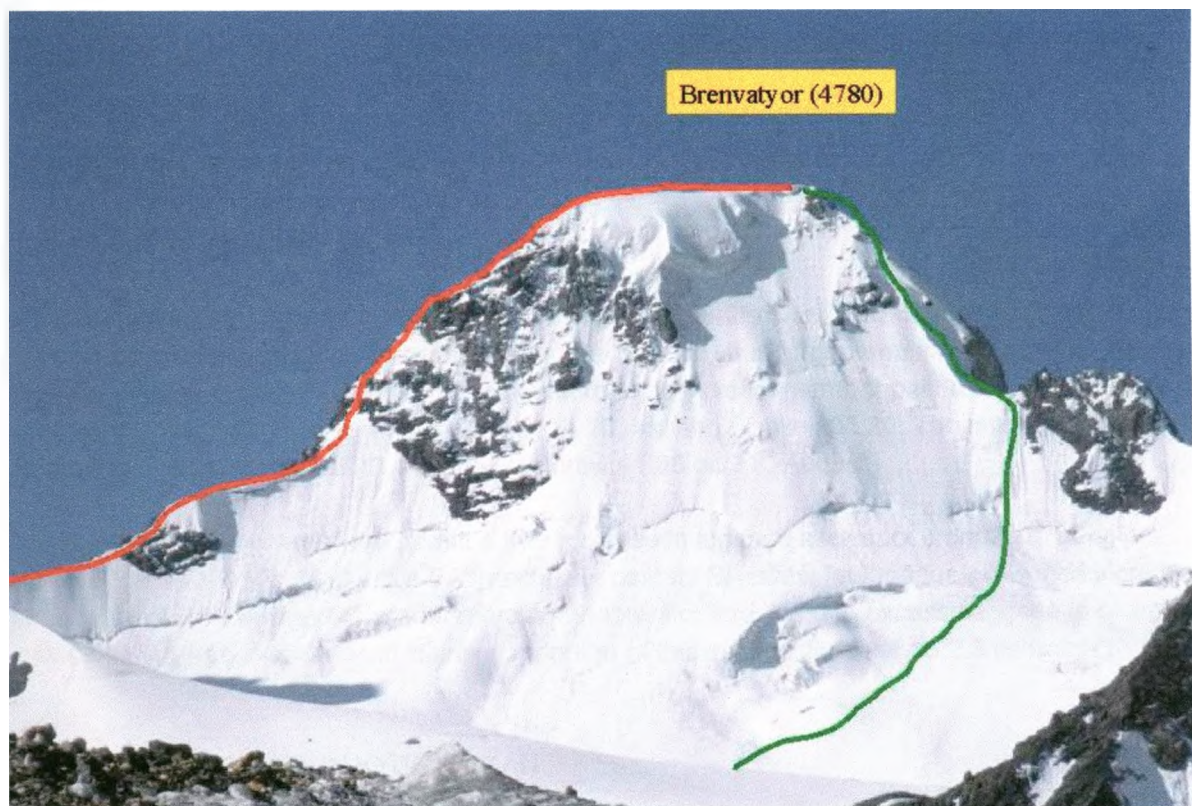


Figure 23. The North Face of Brenvatyor (red = ascent and green = descent)

5. ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

5.1. WEATHER AND TEMPERATURE

The weather for the region is dictated by the location of Kyrgyzstan, towards the middle of the Asian landmass. Permanent high pressure in the period from autumn to late spring gives very cold winters with little precipitation. Precipitation is apparently at its greatest in late spring when the effects of the monsoon are felt as rain-bearing clouds manage to penetrate from the Gulf of Arabia. There are local effects caused by the Issyk-Kul lake (120 x 70 km) which is the second largest inland lake in the world. This lake is large enough to dictate local precipitation driven by the prevailing westerlies at this latitude.

During the period of the expedition, the weather was excellent with the period from 9th to 22nd August being most stable. From 22nd August onward, it was clear that there was a shift in weather towards generally colder conditions. A steady diurnal pattern was evident with clear dry weather in the night/mornings that turned windy with rain by mid-afternoon giving generally poorer conditions between 14.00 and 16.00. It was clear that this precipitation came from both Issyk-Kul (North West) and the South West.

Base camp temperatures ranged from a comfortable daytime max of 17 to 20°C to a typical; nighttime temperature of –2°C with lows reaching –8°C. At advanced base camps, generally up to 700m higher than BC, temperature could be expected to be on average 5°C lower.

5.2. ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

5.2.1. FLIGHTS AND EXCESS BAGGAGE

Direct flights to Bishkek from Heathrow were operated by British Mediterranean. This direct service, via Baku in Azerbaijan, runs three times a week at the time of writing from terminal 4 Heathrow. The group fare per person was £494.00 return based on 13 people (1 team member paid using BA aimiles). Our outbound service left Heathrow 9th August at 14.20, arriving Bishkek 05.20. The inbound service left Bishkek 30th August, dep 02.20, arriving Heathrow 11.00 on 31st August.

British Mediterranean would not permit a free increase in luggage allowance from 23 to 30kg per person. TIP – as British Med are a BA franchisee, contact BA direct for luggage allowance increase requests (not Brit Med) as BA are far more amenable. For info, in 2003 excess baggage is charged at £18.00 per kg with check-in staff claiming a portion of this as incentive. (see 5.2.3 on freight)

5.2.2. LOCAL SUPPORT IN KYRGYZSTAN

The expedition employed ITMC Ltd, a travel company based in Bishkek who specialise in the support of mountaineers to the Tien-Shan with Kyrgyzstan. The company is run by Vladimir Kommissarov, a well known Kyrgyz mountaineer and former geography academic. ITMC was contracted to supply the necessary AWD ex military (1 x 6WD personnel carrier and 1 x 4WD cargo carrier) vehicles to transport the team from Bishkek to the Kuilu, 2 x drivers, cook, 1 x camp manager (also acted as porter), 1 x porter, all base camp food (3 meals per day), all base camp tents (14 in total), 1 x base mess tent, 1 x base toilet tent, misc accommodation en route, visa application assistance, provision of local access permits and finally search/rescue back up including radio contact with RTM Ltd, Bishkek who have access to the Kyrgyz government helicopter for evacuation and mountain rescue volunteers.

ITMC are highly recommended having provided excellent support the team for almost three weeks at £362 per person. Their contact details are

ITMC Tien-Shan
1A Molodaya Gvardia St.,
Bishkek, 720010, Kyrgyz Republic
Tel.: +996 312 651404, 651221
Fax: +996 312 650747
E-mail: itmc@elcat.kg

The key personnel are Vladimir Komissarov (Owner) and Ayana Khamisova (organiser)



Figure 24. ITMC (Ayana on left standing, Vladimir is sitting !)

ITMC supplied the base camp team who consisted of Vitaly Zakutailo (camp manager), Iliya Kainov (porter), Tania Chemishova (cook), Nikolai Budarin and Vladimir Chemetsov (drivers). This team were very competent and a large part of the success of the trip is due to their support efforts (Fig 25).



Figure 25. Iliya, Vladimir, Tania, Nikolai and Vitaly - The ITMC base camp team.

5.2.3. AIR FREIGHT

Given the limited time available for climbing, it was prudent to take more spare gear than may be taken on a trip of this nature to avoid loss of climbing time due to lack of gear. This necessitated sending around 300kg of gear by airfreight. This gear included snow shoes, group 8mm rope, group 20mm tape, water purification equipment plus misc personal gear.

This route is not recommended for those looking for an easy life. However for the persistent, the following are salient points

Documents Required to Send Freight either to Kyrgyzstan or UK

- a. Proforma-invoice + packing list of the cargo (list must include description and owners name). *Proforma invoice must contain info on the nominal value of equipment being sent e.g EUR 200. DO NOT list as replacement cost or you will be liable for VAT on entry to Kyrgyzstan as the authorities will not believe that the equipment will be shipped out again*
- b. Notary authorised power of attorney from the owner of the shipment. *This document should be signed by all team members who have sent equipment giving power of attorney to one or two nominated members of the team – called consignees. It must be independently witnessed. In Kyrgyzstan, the witness must have a recognised legal status and a nominal fee is payable – ask ARI for details)*
- c. Passport photocopy(ies) + photocopies of Kyrgyz visa(s) of the consignee(s).
- d. Letter from the company that invites you to Bishkek.

Outward Freight Contact

Pan-Ex Services Ltd.,
Suite 2, Global House
Poyle Road
Colnbrook
Berkshire. SL3 0AY
Tel: 01753 684840
Fax: 01753 689780

Cost – 300kg freight = £3.67 per kg in total. This cost included pick up of 12 drums at 300 kg total from an address in Cheshire and delivery to Bishkek airport goods warehouse. (for delivery from Bishkek airport to ITMC, see ARI below)

Inbound Freight Contact

ARI Cargo
35, Erkindik Ave.
720040, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Tel: +996 312 660077
Fax: +996 312 661311
www.aricargo.com

Cost – 300kg freight = £3.58 per kg in total. This cost included clearance and pick up of 12 drums at 300 kg total from Bishkek airport goods warehouse and delivery to ITMC (outbound). Inbound included transport of goods from ARI office, Bishkek centre to Bishkek airport, freight to UK, UK clearance and delivery to UK address in Cheshire.

5.2.4. SPONSORSHIP

5.2.4.1. MOUNT EVEREST FOUNDATION

As the result of our application (Robin Gibson and Malcolm Eldridge) to the MEF (and BMC), the screening committee gave our project an unofficial B+ rating which led to a financial grant of

£675.00

5.2.4.2. BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL (UK SPORT)

As the result of the twinned application in 3.5.1, the BMC donated a total of

£1600.00

5.2.4.3. HARCOURT DRUMS LTD

Harcourt Drums Ltd (UK) kindly provided 8 x 60 litre polyethylene mauser kegs free of charge for the safe shipment of airfreight

5.2.4.4. CAMP AND CLIMB, CHESTER

Camp and Climb, the only independent outdoor shop in Chester, allowed a 30% discount against the group and personal gear purchased as a single bulk order – order value £2547 (saving of £1091 against RRP)

5.2.4.5. STARGATE 3

The expedition hired an Iridium Satellite phone from Stargate 3 (UK). In return for images of the phone in use, Stargate 3 permitted a 20% discount (or £70 saving).

Stargate3 Satellite Communications (Chris Stewart-Moffitt)
Eweny House, Upper Mayland, Chelmsford,
Essex, CM3 6EE, United Kingdom
StarGate3@btinternet.com
Direct Line 01621 774030
Tel: 44 (0)1621 773755
Fax: 44 (0) 1621 773838

The Iridium system worked very well and was supported by a solar charger plus other accessories. The Iridium system seems to have many satellites however they are not geostationary so signal windows could be short in steep sided valleys. Call clarity was very good.

5.3. ACCOUNTS

2003 British Kyrgyz Kuilu Accounts

Funds Received		Funds Spent	
Individual Contributions	£15,510.00	British Airways	£6,600.00
MEF Contribution	£660.00	ITMC Ltd	£5,060.00
BMC/Sports Council	£1,500.00	Freight	£2,250.00
		Group Gear	£1,600.00
		Coach (UK)	£750.00
		Visas	£560.00
		Expenses/Incidental cash	£450.00
		High Altitude Food	£300.00
		Report Production	£100.00
Totals	£17,670.00		£17,670.00

Details of group gear and expenses/incidentals are given in Appendix J. High altitude food is food purchased in Kyrgyzstan for consumption outside of base camp.

APPENDIX A

The History of Developing of Alpinism in Kyrgyzstan (By Eropunov A).

Tien-Shan is the most continental glacier area. Investigations of Tien-Shan began in the middle of the past century. The first investigator was P.P. Semionov. He reached snow ice of Sary-Djaz river during his 1856-1857 travels and made description of Khan-Tengri massive and Khan-Tengri peak itself with its altitude 6995m above sea level. In 1902-1903 this area was investigated by G. Merzbacher and in 1929 - by A. Letovet's expedition.

Conception and development of alpinism in Kyrgyz republic in 1927-1941.

Enthusiast and mountain-lover dental technician I. Grechishkin organized in Karakol group (section) of mountain tourism in 1927. During this time mountaineers from Pishpek (Bishkek) were gathered in group by mathematics teacher K. Studenkov, and travelers from Talas - by P. Piatuh. Official conception of alpinism as a kind of sport in Kyrgyz Republic date to 5 of August 1936. Group of leading mountaineers from our republic (I. Oksenets, K. Baigaziev, K. Chaibekov, I. Titarenko and V Ratcek) was sent to school of alpinism (director Pogrebetskii) by order of Kirghiz Sport Committee. Also in this year group under the leadership of V. Ozorovskii made the first ascent of the peak that was named Komsomolets (4140 m.)

In May 1937 Mountaineer's club was created in Committee of physical culture and sport. This year was finished by ascents of Karakolskii peak (5251), Manas (4370), Kompartii (4200) under the leadership of N. Popov. In 1938 in January ski ride from Frunze (Bishkek) to Dzgalal-Abad (1000km) was conducted in honour of First Session of Supreme Soviet of the USSR and Supreme Soviet of Kirghizia. Also in July V.V. Ozorovskii organized alpinada and first ascent of Uchitel peak (4526m). In 1939 186 people have got title "Mountaineer of USSR-I degree" on the second alpinad. Expedition under the leadership of V. Ratcek subjugated Dzgigit peak. Logvinenko (4200) and Toktogula (4250) peaks were subjugated by B. Mihailov's and B. Marichek's expeditions.

In 1940 more and more mountaineers from other regions of our state began to climb. Mountaineers from Issyk-Kul area stirred to greater activity. During alpinada 120 mountaineers ascended of GTO peak (4050). In Frunze area there were some mass ascents (Medik, Electro peaks and other). In December the first State school of instructors was created. 24 person have graduated from it. In February 1941 massive Baubesh-Ata area in Fergana range was explored for the III State alpinad, but it was repeated because of the Great Patriotic War.

Alpinism in Kirghizia during Great Patriotic War (1941-1945).

During the war people were going for alpinism only in Issyk-Kul (Prjevalsk) and Keminskii (Ak-Tuz) areas. Vsevoluch trained Mountain Shots and public instructors of alpinism. Students ascended of Ak-Tuz Alpinist peak and summits of Terskey-Alatau range. B. Marichek and A. Petrovich after their coming back from the war carried on the work with youth in Prjevalsk. They organized ascents of Prjevalskogo (4273), Gastello (4070) and Jukov (4250) peaks. Instructor of alpinism A.I. Bondarenko carried on a great amount of work during the war. She trained more than 400 Mountain Shots and organized first ascent of 4200 peak in Terkey-Alatau range.

Development of alpinism after the War (1945-1951).

After 1945 began the restoration of mountaineer's sections, especially in schools, institutes and special schools. In April 1946 school of instructors began to work and 15 people have graduated from it. On the

30th of August it was IV State alpinad. During the 1946 season there were 20 ascents, were trained 352 sportsmen with title of "Mountaineer of the USSR-I degree" and 27 instructors. 1947 was marked by V State alpinad. There were 17 ascents of different peaks and 35 first ascents. These ascents were under the leadership of young instructors I. Semenenko, A. Riabuhin, P. Korkin. VI alpinad opened the 1948 season in May. School of instructors worked in Ala-Archa canyon in Kyrgyz range. Among those who have graduated from it are A. Aitbaev, A. Emyshkin, A. Shubin, P. Chervonyh.

There were several ascents on the hardest routes this year. The group under the leadership of B. Marechek subjugated Tashtambek-Tor-Bashi (4716), 30-years of VLKSM (4150m), Ak-Tor (4620m) peaks in Terskei-Alatau range. First ascent of West Alamedin Wall (4650m) in Kirghiz range was organized by P. Kenarskii.

In 1949 some instructors and leading sportsmen visited Kazakhstan (B. Marechek, A. Bondarenko, A. Shubin, N. Emyshkin); Kaukaz (A. Litvinov, V. Prigoda, Z. Naurbiev, A. Moskalev). 1950 was the year of subjugating new peaks and routes. Expeditions under the leadership of B. Marechek, A. Eropunov, N. Emyshkin, A. Shubin ascended of Bailian-Bashi (4700), Skriabina (4667), Semenova-Tien-Shanskogo (4874m) peaks. Mountaineers from sport society "Nauka" subjugated Svobodnaia Koreia peak (4740m). Kyrgyzstan (4840m) and Mao-Dze-Dun (4300m) peaks in Kyrgyz range were subjugated by mountaineers from sport society "Iskra". This year A. Bondarenko, N. Emyshkin, B. Marechek became Masters of Sport of the USSR. On the Championship of VCSPS (rock-climbing) A. Eropunov won the second prize.

APPENDIX B

ISM Kuilu Expedition (Sept 2000)

Background

The Terskey Alatau range extends along the southern shore of Lake Issyk Kul. During Soviet times it was one of the most popular climbing venues in the Tien Shan, having three mountaineering camps based in high valleys on its northern side.

Tucked away to the south of the Terskey range and west of the Inilchek Valley / Central Tien Shan is the compact and distinct range known as Kuilu. Its highest peak, Constitution Peak (5281m), dominates the eastern part of the range and has several demanding routes on it as a result of a Soviet competition event. Several other peaks accessible from the same Base Camp were also climbed in the Soviet era. There were no records of any climbing in the Western part of Kuilu prior to the ISM expedition.

ISM Expedition 2000

In early September a team consisting of Pat Littlejohn, Victor Saunders, Vladimir Komissarov (guides) with David Bowden, Ingrid Crossland, Morrie Erickson, Tony Gold, Diarmid Hearn, Ursula Mulcahy, James Stephenson, Jane Whitmore and Andrew Wilkinson approached Western Kuilu from the North by 6-wd vehicle along the Kuilu River valley.

After an exciting river crossing which left the vehicle damaged and immobilised for 2 weeks, Base Camp was established at Karator (Black Rock) on a grassy site at c.3300m.

In poor weather two Advance Base Camps were then established – one at the snout of the Karator Glacier at 3700m and one on a lateral moraine at 4000m. The bad weather dumped 30cm of snow and made conditions difficult for a while, then the weather cleared and was perfect for ten days. Teams led by Komissarov and Littlejohn made ascents of seven moderate summits running along each side of the valley (heights c.4200m to 4860m) culminating in the pointed spire of Tsarevitch (4920m), while Saunders' team climbed the interesting Humani peak (4800m. AD-) and discovered a route to Karator Peak (5203m) highest of the group. Eight climbers then reached the summit of Karator Peak via a fine snow climb of PD standard.

Littlejohn, Crossland and Hearn then made an attempt on the impressive Pk 5088m, gaining its N Ridge via a 400m wall of 50-degree ice. Conditions on the ridge were too poor to continue, forcing a long and tricky descent of the face. Saunders then led a reconnaissance to the south side of the peak and discovered an easy couloir line leading to the more straightforward South Ridge, which eventually provided the route of ascent for Littlejohn's team. In honour of its female member the peak was named Matarshinitza (which translates as 'woman who uses bad language', the nickname given to her by camp staff!).

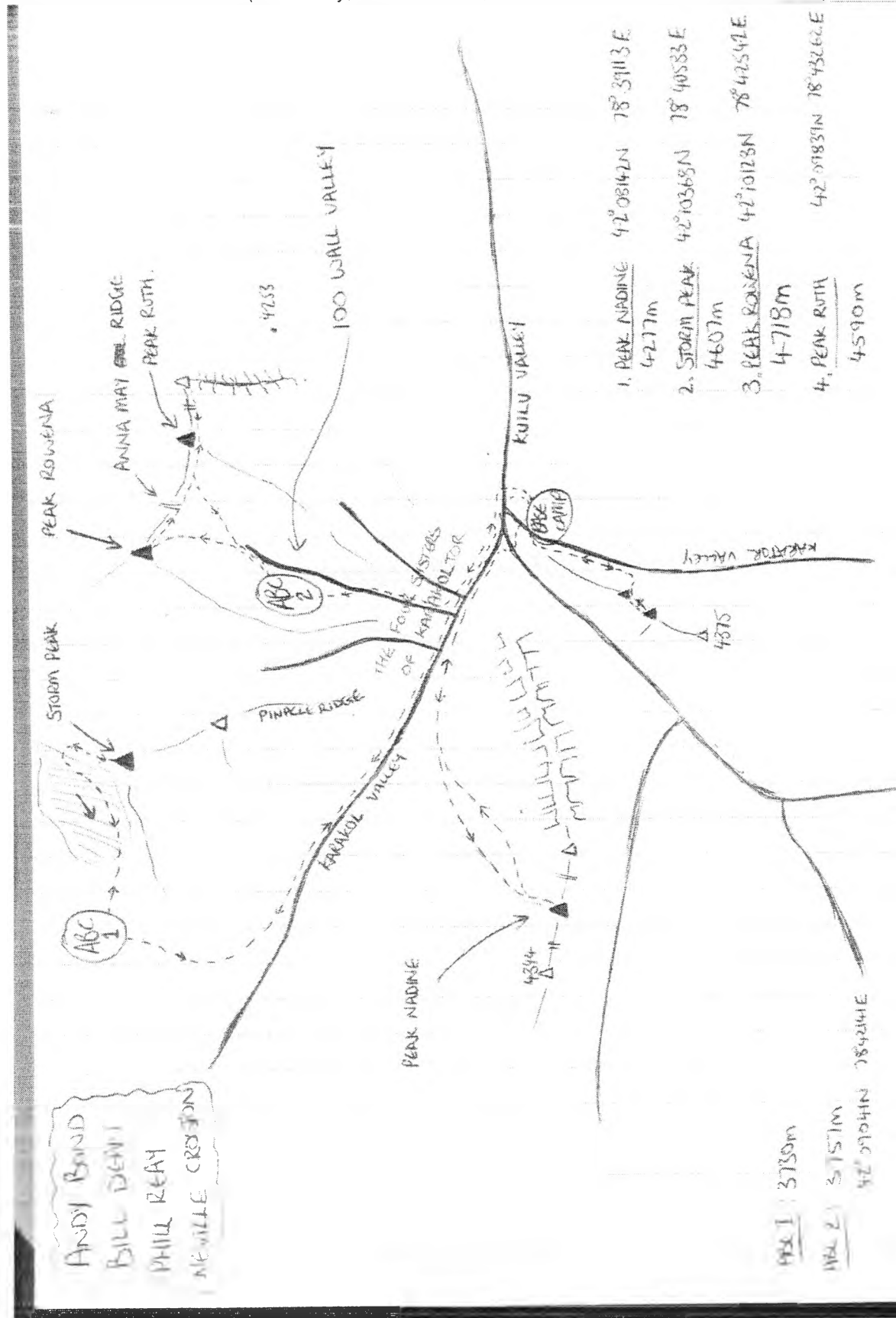
With the major Karator peaks having been climbed, attention was turned to the glacier systems immediately to the west in the Ashutor valley. Three peaks were climbed including Krenintor (4732m), and many other more technical possibilities noted.

The area has much to offer for climbers seeking exploratory mountaineering in a range not much higher than the Alps but with a remote and pristine ambience. The Ashutor glaciers are surrounded by easily-accessed and appealing objectives, and the region of peaks and glaciers south of Karator Peak are apparently untouched and could be approached from the south.

Pat Littlejohn

APPENDIX C

Efforts of the PAWNStars (Phill Reay, Andrew Bond, William "Bill" Dean and Nev Croston)



APPENDIX D

In search of Pk 5041 – Angie and Nobby Wright

Base camp to Sgurr Nobby

An easy walk of 40 minutes along grassy valley floor with an easy stream crossing. Ascend steeply on grass slopes close to stream passing several small boulder fields and one 30 foot steep rock band via easy gully. More boulder fields then rock changes to very loose and shattered slate. Traversed leftwards on scree and climb direct for 200/300 feet to gain pleasant ridge. Follow ridge easily to Sgurr Nobby 3750m. Ridge continues to rise and deteriorates becoming much looser. We turned back at 4040m approx. The weather was unstable and a rock dyke crossed the ridge just ahead. The ridge turns leftward and slowly and steadily rises to a snowy dome estimated to be about 4200m.

Base camp to Angelas Peak via Pyramid Point and Eagle Ridge.

An advanced base camp was established on the banks of a glacier fed stream some two hours easy walk from base camp at 3100m approx. This stream proved to be easy to cross before about 9.00am. After this time its flow increased greatly and attempts to cross would be disastrous. Water collected early proved to be clear and pleasant. Pyramid Point 3800m is the triangular peak behind ABC 1 and was climbed by the easy grassy ridge which became a pleasant scree ridge half way up. Eagle Ridge which rises behind Pyramid Point proved to be straight forward but deteriorates with altitude and leads on to Angelas Peak 4080m. The final pull to the summit is on a very loose rocky slope. The descent was made via a secondary ridge which was followed with ease to about 3700m at which point we dropped down a scree slope into the small comb.

The ridge behind Angelas Peak continued on at length to meet up with the snowy dome mentioned in the ascent of Sgurr Nobby.

The horse-shoe route climbed was very enjoyable throughout.

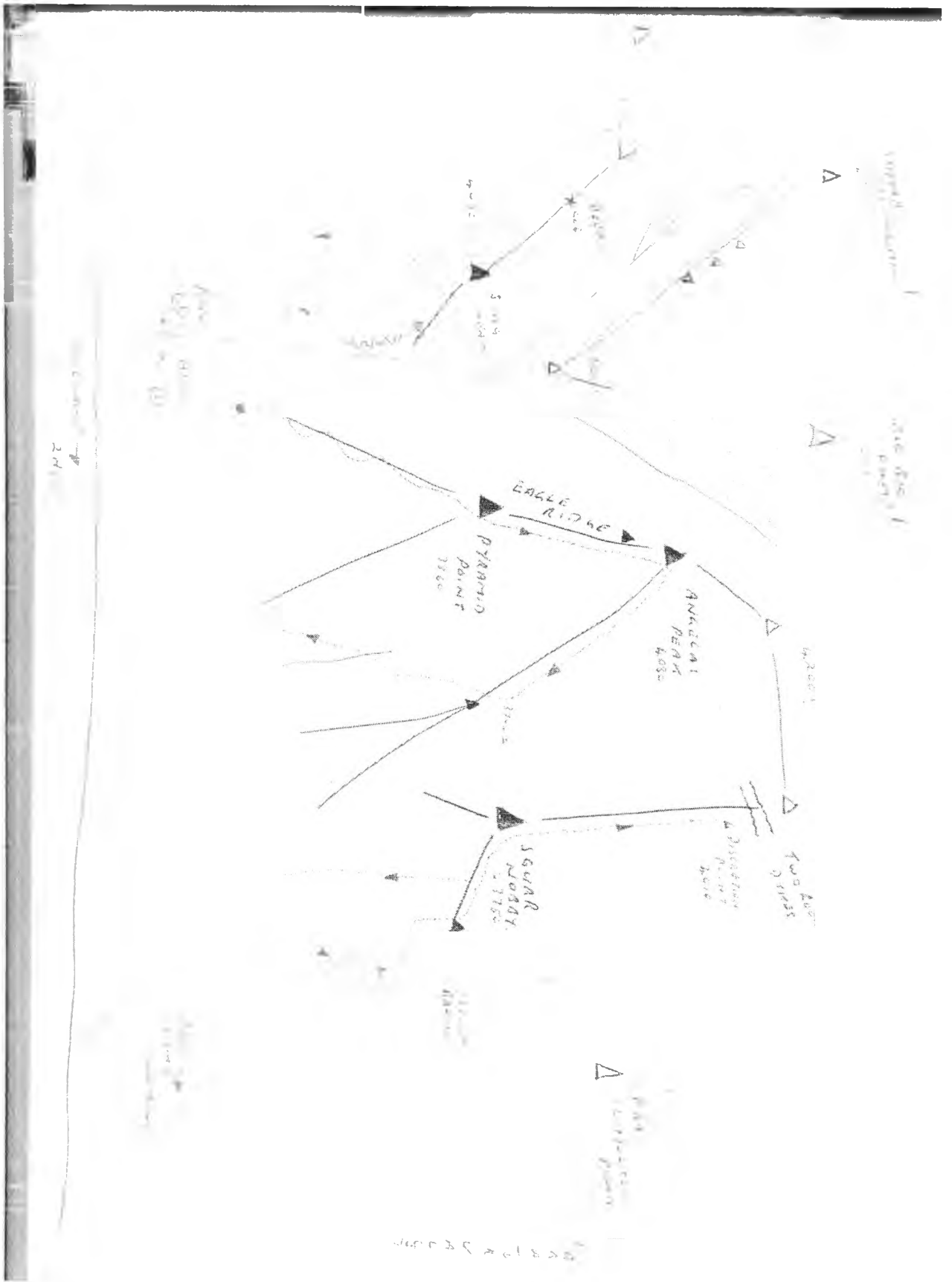
Base Camp to Slag Heap 4080m.

An advance base camp was established on the opposite side on the stream mentioned above by leaving base camp to give plenty of time to cross the stream before it rose. ABC 2 was only necessary because of the nature of the stream.

The mountain has few grassy slopes and is a large pile of scree and the ascent was mostly on this terrain. The summit ridge is shattered and narrow and was surprisingly longer than expected gains little height. The views into the two glacier system which feed the stream make it worth climbing and if not depressed or worn out by the scree the route could be continued to take in a second mountain behind via a deep col. The ascent which took five and a half hours was on loose scree for most of the way. The descent directly down was done in one hour and could easily be done much quicker.

The summit was measured at 4080m and yet towered over Angels Peak which was also measured at 4080m.

All ascents were done by Angela Wright and Rob Wright and are believed to be first ascents and were done as part of the BKKE 2003. Slag Heap does however has a metal structure which is believed to be placed by helicopter.



APPENDIX E

Efforts of John Tranter and Mike Evans

CMC 2003 BRITISH KYRGYZ-KULU EXPEDITION

Experienced by John Tranter, Michael Evans, and pt Robbie & Amyr Wright, John Buckle

The Chester Mountaineering Club decided to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its formation by forming an expedition team to explore the mountainous region of Kyrgyzstan known as the Tien Shan range. The mountains we visited lie south of the second largest inland lake in the world and are called Lake Issyk-Kul.

There were fourteen of us in the team and we arrived at our destination three and a half days after setting out from Chester. We had a comfortable flight from Heathrow to the capital town of Bishkek followed soon after by an overland journey of two and a half days to our base camp.

Two young local children met us as we crossed the river in our vehicles. One was a girl riding a horse and the other, a boy riding a yak. We found later that they were staying with a tenant farmer who lived in a farm building just over the brow of the hill. The farmer looked after livestock, of various kinds but grew no crops that we could see.

The base camp was set up at the confluence of three rivers at a height of 3200m. Our latitude was 42deg 7.5min and longitude 78deg 43min. The camp site pasture had been grazed by Marmots and probably by the local farmers animals and so was ideal for camping except that there were considerable number of holes in the ground made by Marmots for their dwelling.

Our first task, after settling in, was to set up means of crossing the rivers. One of the rivers was shallow enough in the mornings to be crossed by wading or by stepping-stones but the others needed bridging. By the afternoon, the rivers were twice the depth and faster flowing. We set up Tyrolean type rope crossings on two rivers.

August 13 (JT, JB & MGE)

The first day out was to reconnoitre the Karakoltor valley and also to acclimatise. The walk started with a little excitement crossing a river via a small unstable bridge made from an pole about 3 meters long which had a plank attached. On climbing up to the meadow this was followed by more excitement caused by the movements towards us of a bull, which was guarding its cows and young calves. We decided to walk up the bed of the river out of sight of the bull!

The valley walk was gradual in gaining height and was straight in a northwesterly direction. We noticed the effects of altitude when walking. After walking several kilometres we decided to cross the main river and climb one of the tributary valleys. The river proved just too deep and there were fears of being marooned on the wrong side when the water rose during the day. The mountains to the north and northeast showed strata that had been folded and there were syncline formations visible. There was a great deal of scree on the lower slopes. We were above the tree line and so we had only grassy scrub and rocky outcrops to contend with whilst walking.

The valley continued on to a glacier which could be seen in the distance but time had passed us by and we decided to return by the same route but a little higher. We found the suggestion of a faint path possibly made by the farmer on horseback.

On returning to the small bridge we found the water had risen a lot and was much faster flowing. The folk at the farm were there to watch the crossing of the bridge and it gave some amusement

to the young boy when I faltered. He came running across the bridge in a pair black brogue shoes one size too big for him.

We were invited in to the farmhouse to sit and have tea and a bite to eat. There were no chairs and we sat on the floor, legs crossed. I think it was polite that we took our boots off on entering their home. The children showed us some of their schoolwork, which included the learning of the English language.

August 14 (JT, MGE, AR, & NW)

The next morning was spent consolidating our position at the campsite followed by a rock climbing on a local crag in the afternoon.

August 15 (JT, MGE)

The weather continued to be pleasantly warm and dry and so we made another reconnoitre up the Asnutor valley. This was similar to our previous outing but differed in that the valley split in to two after about 9km. One way would have taken us over a pass 4304m, the other, southwards up another straight long valley to a glacier just in sight. We chose to go towards the glacier knowing that we did not have the time to reach it before it was time to return. We could see some interesting mountains ahead maybe 8km away. The map showed that where we were would have been the snout of a glacier 40 years ago.

We returned the same way without incident passing a herd of yak and later a group of horses both without any human attendance.

August 16

Rest day.

August 17 (JT & MGE)

This was the day of our first attempt on what was to become known as South Peak being due south of our campsite. It was to be a day excursion. The initial walk up the approaches was grassy turning fairly quickly to loose steep scree. This made progress slower than should have been. Never the less we attained good height and good views of where we had been on our previous two walks. The scree turned to a rocky ridge, which was not difficult, but we were suddenly faced with some serious rock and a chasm to cross, which we were not prepared for. The rock was very fractious and reduced our confidence. We retreated the way we had come.

August 18

Rest day

August 19 (JT, MGE, AR, & NW)

There were four of us and two porters. We set off up the Karator valley with sufficient food and equipment for three nights out. The intention was that we would camp on the Karator Glacier and climb a 5060m peak. The weather was fine when we set out but as the day went by it became more threatening. We found that the best way up the valley was to follow the riverbed. The river and its valley ran due south, the river issuing from the end of the Karator glacier. The ground higher up the side of the valley was unstable and covered in disagreeable thorn bushes. We covered about 7km and climbed to about 3800m before camping. The porters left us and went back to base camp. We decided to camp on the top of a lateral moraine which left us with no

threat from falling rocks or collapsing glacier. There was a small stream of melt water running off the mountain and this was just sufficient for our general requirements. I noticed on occasions, when taking water from the stream with a cup, that a small organism about 2mm long, would come out from under a stone in the stream bed, and swim about, looking to see what caused the disturbance. It was deemed to be a fresh water shrimp. No other creatures were seen.

The first night at advanced base camp, it snowed considerably and we spent time knocking snow off the tent walls in between fitful sleeping. The following day, Nobby and Angie decided to return to base camp and leave their food supplies for us. We were most grateful for and this enabled us to plan to do some reconnoitering that day and do the climb the next day, which would be the 22 Aug 2003.

We walked on to the main glacier and were able to get a better view of a way up a tributary glacier. This would hopefully take us up to a main ridge and on to the summit of Matershineska. We rehearsed the initial part of the climbing so that we would be more confident when negotiating the awkward territory in the dark the next day.

We rose at 3:00am the next day to a frosty start and no more snow. The tributary glacier was negotiated with no problem to a good height, say 4700m, and found ourselves in a couloir with the summit ridge in sight. We were already roped together and proceeded to climb an easy slope of soft snow. There was unease about the quality of the snow and on climbing further we found avalanche debris. This reinforced our doubt as to safety and we tried other parts of the couloir to find more consolidated snow. Excavation showed that there was soft new snow on top of wind slab and this was on top of what looked like a thick layer of hailstone: none of the layers would afford good purchase.

On trying the extreme left hand side of the couloir next to a rock buttress, we found hard ice. It was at this point that John shouted to me, 'below' and on looking upwards, I could see no problem, only to find that a large boulder had already passed me by. John shouted again and this time three more large boulders were approaching at high speed. This convinced me and maybe John that it was time to move on and probably down to retreat off the mountain. The sun had just hit the summit ridge and things were not going to get better.

In good conditions this would have been nothing more than PD snow slope of say 300m.

We went down to abc without incident, broke camp and headed down to base camp with rather more than we had carried up, there being no porters to help us this time.

We arrived back at base camp to a large welcome back from the other members of the expedition.

August 23
Rest Day

August 24 (JT & MGE)

We attempted South Peak again via a different route this time from a more easterly direction. The bulk of the scrambling was straightforward and gave excellent views down the Kuitu valley and up the Karakolter valley. The last part gave us a high worry factor, because again, as might be expected when the broad ridge narrowed, we were forced to climb on rock which was never solid or remotely reliable. The thought of coming down the by the way of ascent was becoming a bad idea.

We gained the summit eventually and found an erection, which looked rather like a beacon that you might expect to find in England to warn of an impending Armada. We were to learn that this was probably a weather or 'snow measuring' device dropped down onto the summit by helicopter. It was made of wood and metal about 2.5m high and securely buried in the rocks. The summit area was large and relatively flat shattered rock. The views were very rewarding and we were able to see just about everywhere we had been on previous outings.

The descent was made, by going down the backside of the mountain using scree run. This resulted in a lengthy walk to get back round to our side of the hill. During the descent we notice another glacier quite close to, which we could have used to gain access to more snow peaks and maybe the other side of Matershmeska.

August 25 (JT & MGE)
Rock climbing on local crag; Diff

August 26
Packing up and the next three days travelling back home.

Mike Evans
Jan 2004

South Peak and Matershineska

Mike Evans and John Tranter

Unsuccessful attempt
on South Peak

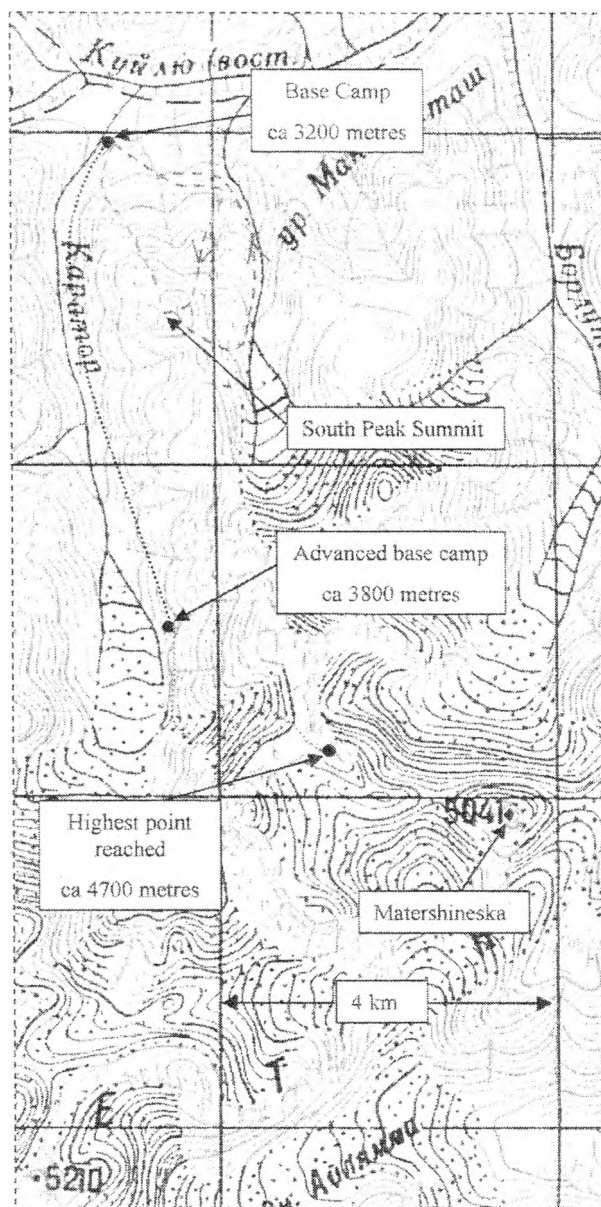
17/08/03

Successful ascent of
South Peak

24/08/03

Route to and from
base camp

Attempt on Matershineska
22/08/03



APPENDIX F

Efforts of Andy Cole, Malcolm Eldridge and Martin Astley (occasionally accompanied by Robin Gibson, John Buckle and Gwyn Ingman)

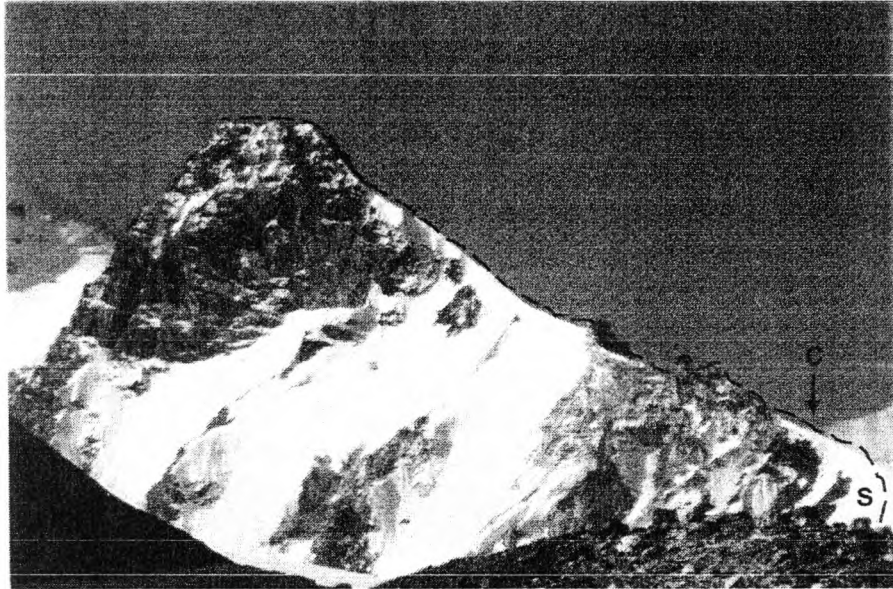
Peaks at the head of the Eralma Valley

Andy Cole

An Advanced Base Camp was set up on the medial moraine of the Eralma valley at a height of 3900m and approximately 11 km from base. From this point 4 main peaks are visible at the head of the valley, all around the 4700–4900 height mark, though more are apparent as one goes further up. From ABC to the foot of the climbing on all the peaks was an hour's walk up a gentle glacier, badly crevassed in places but simple once the best route had been discovered.



Site of ABC



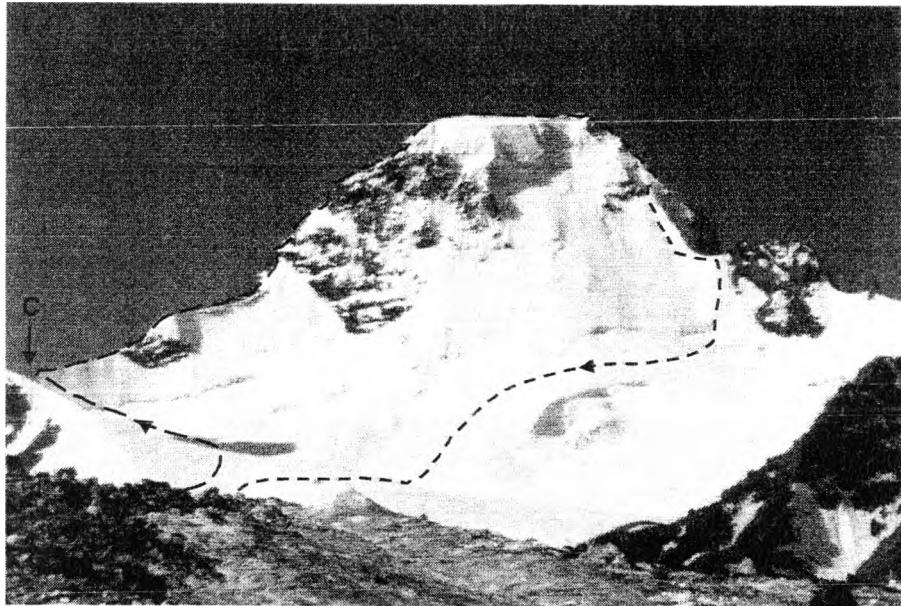
Peak 2 was climbed by Malcolm Eldridge, Martin Astley and Andy Cole, closely followed by John Buckle and Gwyn Ingman, by the right skyline ridge which was accessed from the top of the glacier by a 100m snowslope ending at point S.

The ridge was fairly easy-angled snow/ice with some mixed climbing over the pinnacles low down, and some steeper mixed ground for the last 3 pitches to the summit ridge. A small rock cairn was found on the true (further) summit. Descent was by easy downclimbing over very broken rock to the col between Peaks 1 and 2, then easy snow slopes on the far side of the mountain to the col C between Peaks 2 and 3, thence back to ABC. Ascent AD, descent PD. Snow conditions were good on the ascent (excellent for the summit pitches) but rapidly softening on descent. Both teams left ABC at 2am and returned by midday. The weather was clear throughout.

The following day Peak 4 (mainly snow) was attempted by Astley and Cole, after some overnight snow, but they were turned back by difficult glacier conditions (large hidden crevasses) before dawn. The route up this peak should probably be reconnoitred in daylight, but then an early ascent will be needed to avoid the bad snow late in a typical day.

During a second visit to the ABC, Astley with Robin Gibson, and Eldridge with Cole set out for Peaks 1 and 3 respectively. Climbing together to Col C, they were delayed for an hour at the top of the glacier by a snowstorm, but fortunately pressed on as it appeared to be clearing, and were rewarded with a near-perfect day. Finding good conditions, the Astley-Gibson team climbed rapidly up continuous snowslopes to the top of Peak 1, and returned to ABC via their ascent route in time for lunch.

Eldridge and Cole tackled Peak 3 via the left skyline (east facing) ridge, and found already soft snow interspersed with loose rock steps (a move or two of IV), but eventually a summit with rocks but no cairn, so assumed a first ascent.



The ridge was time-consuming and the summit not reached until late morning. Reasoning that the ascent route was now too soft to downclimb and too dangerous to abseil because of the loose rocks, the pair elected to descend the right-hand (north) ridge in the hope of finding better conditions. They downclimbed two pitches on fairly steep mixed ground, on the second of which Cole slipped on a loose rock near the top and fell down a rock-studded ice slope for about 25m. He was held by Eldridge on an ice-screw runner, and escaped with cuts and a mild ankle sprain.

However, from this point they were able to carry on descending by four 60m abseils directly down slopes of loose snow over hard ice, which got them to the bergshrunn and thence back to ABC in the late afternoon, to the evident relief of Gibson and Astley. Ascent and descent D in the (probably normal) conditions.

Andy Cole

APPENDIX G

BKKE 2003 Tues 19th August – John Buckle

Crag Astley

Crag situated on south side of Kuilu valley near its head and c.600m east of the outflow of the river draining the Karator valley. The cliff is the natural termination of the ridge bounding the eastern side of this valley and has a northwesterly aspect providing a good venue for late afternoon climbing. Rock is generally sound with some suspect holds. Lat. 78° 42' E 42° 08'N.



Gwyn Ingman on 1st ascent of CIA Plot

CIA Plot,

Route starts on the centre right of the crag about 15m right of the true foot of the cliff. Follow the obvious crack line splitting the face towards the left hand end of a bulging overhang (15m). Move up to the overhang and turn it on its left where it diminishes. Move up and back right and take a belay on the right (10m) – wire runners.



Move up a few metres and reach a small vegetated area (the grassy knowl). Cross this aiming for a natural groove in the cliff face higher up. Near the foot of the groove make an easier exit to the right hand skyline (20m). The natural route line would continue in the line of the groove and requires a couple of bold moves to enter it. Time was pressing so we descended the vegetated runnel on the right hand side of the cliff.

CIA Plot – an unsolved mystery with a grassy knowl at its centre, 45m V.Diff.



Thurs 21st August **Mynydd Buckle**

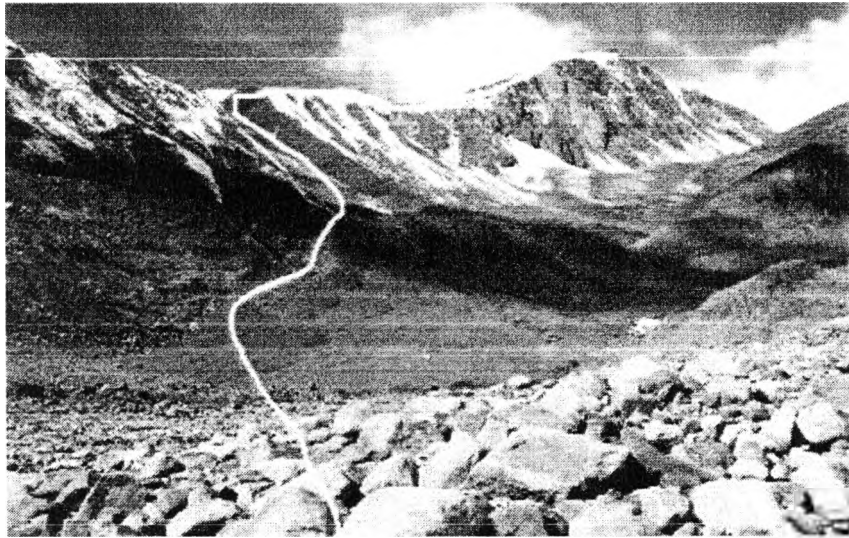
Proceeded up the south side of the Karakoltor valley to point 78° 38' E 42° 10' N, camping at the foot of a scree fan from the hanging valley to the south east.



This is before the large hanging valley on the right hand side that gives access to the glaciers and peaks to the north in the Storm Peak area (q.v.).



There are 2 main streams draining this hanging valley. We followed the true left bank of the furthest most stream (that higher up the Karakoltor valley draining the left side of the scree fan) and were able to make height on grass covered slopes up until the stream enters an incised rocky area. Steady progress is then made on scree covered terrain until the foot of the spur and ridge that eventually lead to Pt 4556 is reached.



Mynydd Buckle

This is passed on the right and the upper corrie is entered and Mynydd Buckle comes into view on a SW bearing. A slight descent to the valley floor is made and the opposite side ascended to reach the crest of the long spur that descends in a north-easterly direction from the summit.

The spur is followed to the summit and is mostly loose scree interspersed with large loose blocks, some involving a bit of delicacy to circumnavigate but nowhere harder than an odd moderate move. The summit itself is really a subsidiary peak to the surrounding mountains lying on offshoot ridge (not apparent from below). Estimated height 4410m and position 78° 36' 30" E 42° 09' 12" N.



Summit panoramic view at Mynydd Buckle with Gwyn Ingman at the Summit.
Sat 23rd August **Pinnacle Ridge**



Pinnacle ridge from the base of the Karakoltor valley. The Pinnacles are best viewed from this side.

Follow the north side of the Karakoltor valley crossing the outflow of three hanging valley systems, the last of which has the most conspicuous stream with an incised gorge in its lower reaches. Cross this stream near the outlet of the gorge and ascend the slope opposite. Follow the edge round overlooking the top of the gorge to attain the base of Pinnacle ridge itself (scrambling, loose ground). The ridge itself is quite broad and initially much of the rock is rather loose and friable. Higher up the consistency does improve and the rock becomes firmer although never of outstanding quality. It is generally better nearer the crest of the ridge.



Apart from the initial couple of pitches on the looser ground we moved without the assistance of a rope, the terrain offering good scrambling opportunities and variable exposure depending upon the line taken.



John Buckle climbing one of the Pinnacles of Pinnacle Ridge.

The ridge develops into a series of pinnacles – about 10 in all – which vary in height and difficulty. They are generally easily traversed as their angle is in the climber's favour on ascent and can be turned if necessary, although the higher ones would require an abseil if the true ridge crest is strictly maintained. After the pinnacles there are a series of false summits and subsequent difficulties can be avoided on the right although this can be on loose ground. The ridge continues on to a peak south of Storm Peak at $78^{\circ} 40' 30'' \text{ E } 42^{\circ} 10' 05'' \text{ N}$ and Storm Peak itself could eventually be reached via this way although the ridge was becoming progressively more broken and difficult prolonging the traverse. At point $78^{\circ} 40' 45'' \text{ E } 42^{\circ} 09' 45'' \text{ N}$ and c. 4750m we descended into the corrie on the south east side and were able to scree run virtually to the base of the Karakoltor valley.

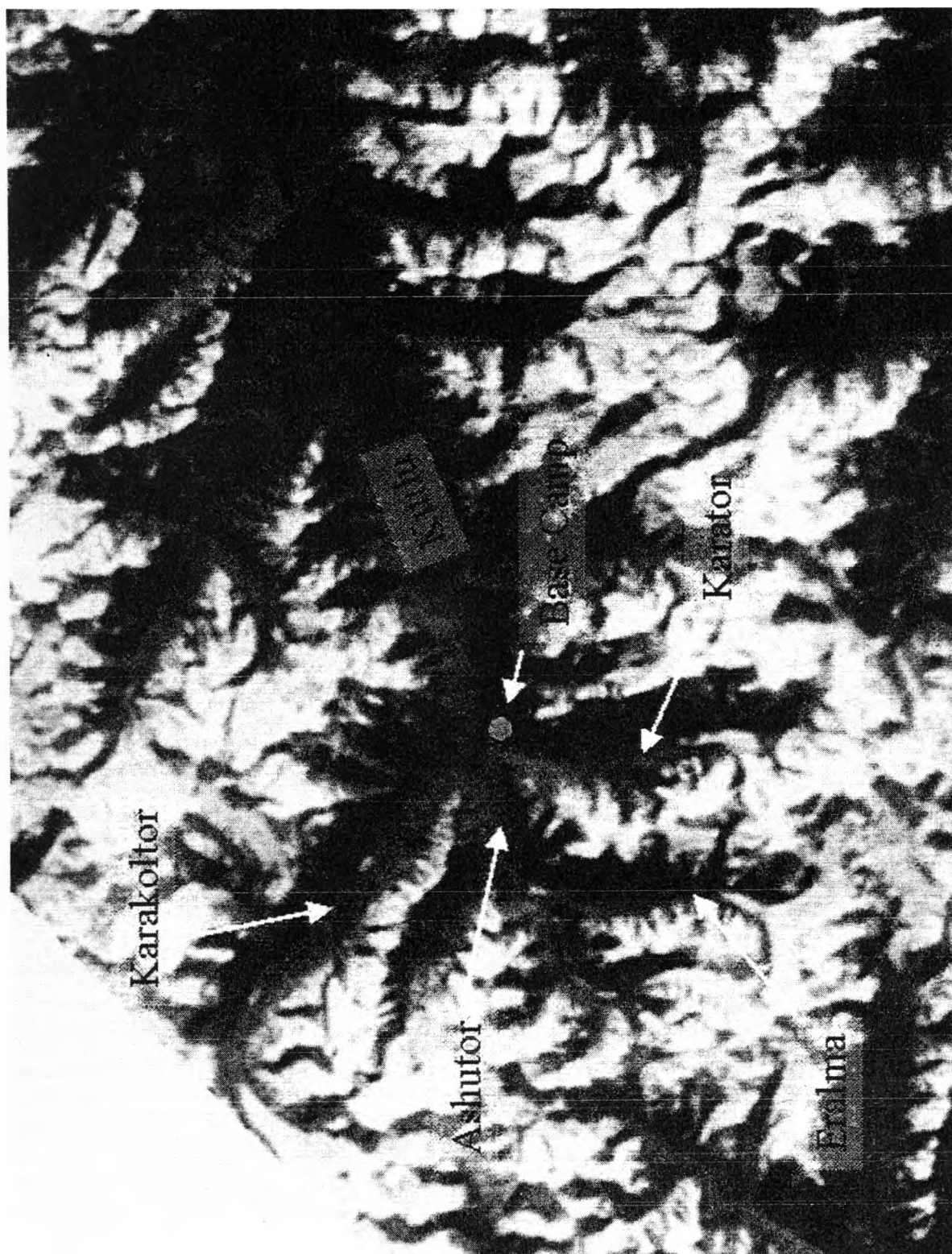


Summit panoramic view on top of Pinnacle Ridge

John Buckle

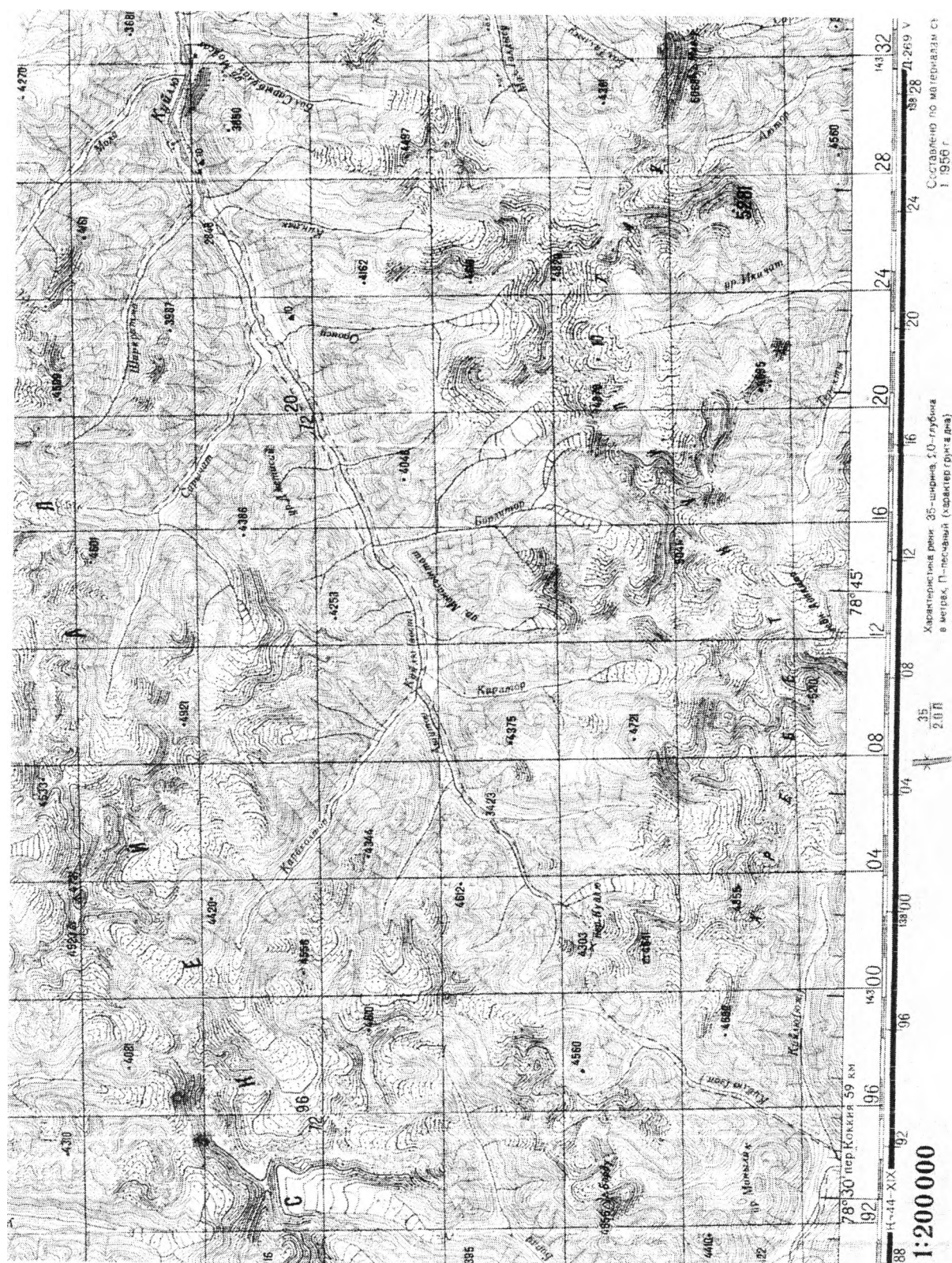
APPENDIX H

Satellite Map of the Teresky and Kuilu-Tau Ranges (approx 1:200,000)



APPENDIX I

1:200,000 Russian Military Map of the Kuilu Valley



APPENDIX J

J.1. Group Gear

2003 BKKE Group Gear Purchases

Equipment Item	Make and Model	Items required	
Steriles Pack	Life System Expedition	2	£27.00
Emergency Dental Pack	Life System	2	£14.00
General First Aid Pack	Life System	1	£28.00
Water Purification Unit	MSR Waterworks II	1	£110.00
Fixed Static Rope (8 mm x 2)	Millet	1	£100.00
Tape (19mm x 100m)	Millet	1	£62.00
Snowstakes	e.g. Charlet Moser snowtube 45cm	15	£217.50
Snowpegs for tents	Mountain Hardwear Long Y Peg (pack of 4)	40	£60.00
Water Treatment Tablets	iodine	2	£7.20
Neutralisation Tablets		7	£18.20
GPS		1	£181.00
Plastic Water Carriers		2	£9.98
Snowshoes		13 pairs	£493.43
Suunto Altimeter		1	£100.00
Fuel Bottles		3	£22.85
Satellite Phone		1	£158.00
Ibuprofen		30	
Aspirin		200	
Antihistimine		25	£39.60
Loperimide		100	
Throat Lozenges		300	
		Total	£1,648.76

J.2. Expenses and Incidentals

Postage	£35.00
Photocopying	£60.00
Map Purchases	£60.00
Book purchases	£15.00
Cholpon Ata Holiday Camp Chalets	£180.00 ^{*1}
Video and DVD production costs	£42.00
Repatriation of good left in Kyrgyzstan	£60.00 ^{*2}
Total	£452.00

^{*1} unplanned overnight accommodation between Karakol and Bishkek on 28th August 2003

^{*2} medical supplies accidentally left in Kyrgyzstan. Goods however lost in transit on repatriation