

# New Zealand North East Face of Harturtay\* Expedition 2008

Location: Jiptik Valley, Pamir Alai, Southwestern Kyrgyzstan

Dates:

Aim: First ascents and new routes in the Jiptik Valley including the North East Face of Harturtay (\*now known as Kyzyl-Muz).

Author: Graham Zimmerman

Year: 2008

## Abstract

Between the dates June 28th and August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 the members of the '2008 New Zealand Northeast Face of Harturtay' Expedition (Graham Zimmerman, Paul Hersey and Yew Jin Tan) traveled to the Jiptik Valley of Southwestern Kyrgyzstan with the goal of opening new routes on the abundant unclimbed faces within the valley.

Access was completed with little hindrance. Upon arrival the Northeast face was found to have very friable sections from which many rock fall events were observed. Because of this, the team sights were changed to the impressive North face. A successful ascent was made of this feature from July 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. The route involved technical rock and ice climbing and the resulting grade was 5.10, AI4, M4, it was 1400m long.

The remainder of the trip was marked by poor weather. Attempts to climb were made but they were thwarted by heavy snowfall and generally disturbed weather.

The Jiptik Valley still contains many impressive first ascent possibilities, as do many of the valleys around it.

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## Introduction

Kyrgyzstan is a country both geographically and politically remote. Within its borders can be found range after range of high mountains. These include the Tien-Shan and The Pamir Alai which branch off the northern tip of the Himalaya. The Pamir Alai runs along Kyrgyzstan's Southern border with Tajikistan and within it can be found the Lylak and Karavshin valleys which are famous for their splendid alpine big walls, good weather and difficult access.

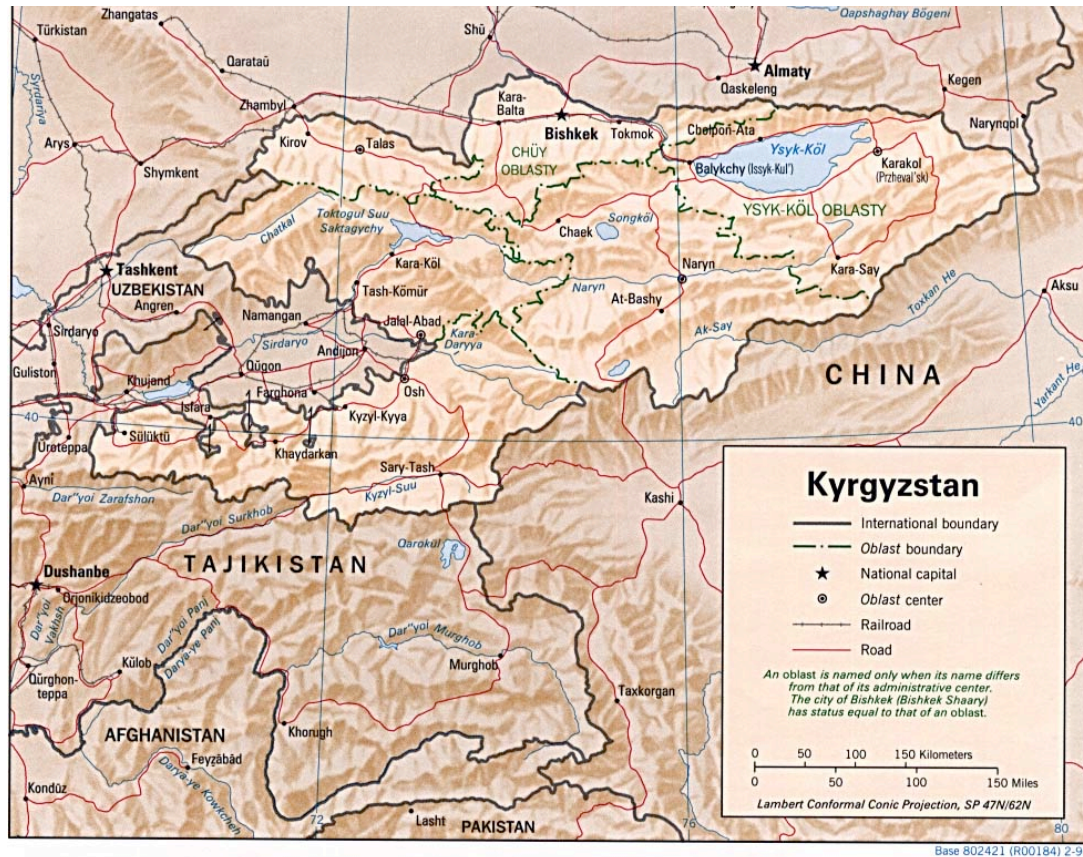
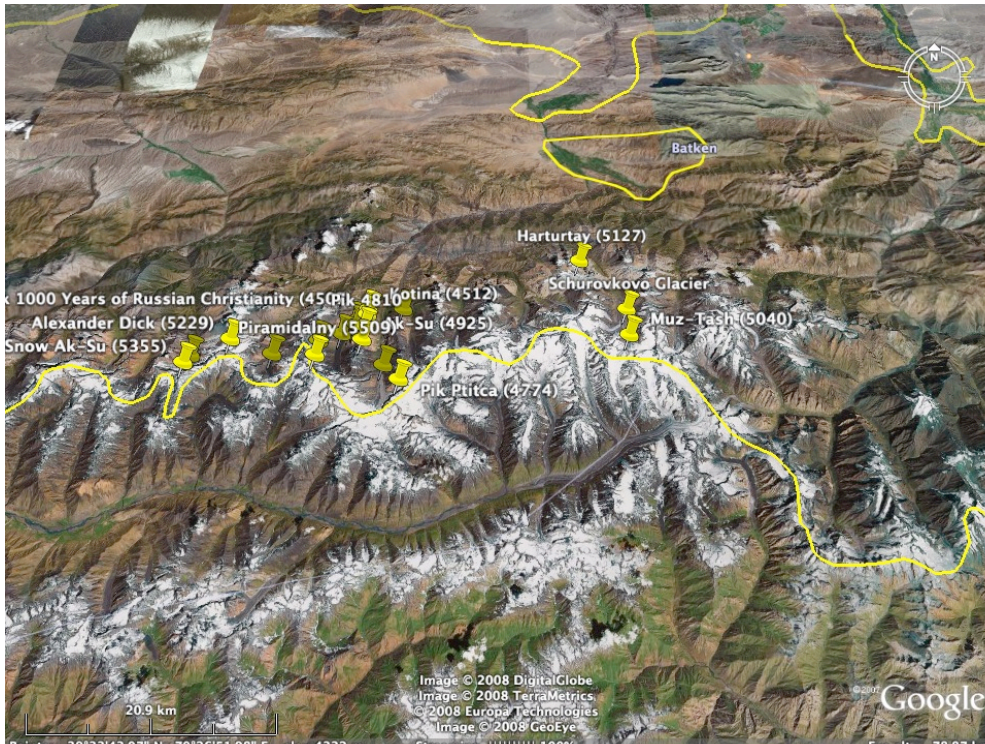


Fig 1 – Map of Kyrgyzstan

The valleys containing these walls such as the Ak-Su and Asan-Usan have been well explored and were in fact the locations of many Soviet alpine climbing competitions. Despite this many of the valleys around them have not been visited by climbers nearly as much. The Jiptik Valley which was visited by this expedition is an example of this.

The first and only Western climbing expedition to the area was a Kiwi expedition which included Paul Hersey and was led by Hugh Nicholson in 1996. This team climbed a number of the 4-5500m peaks in the area but left most of the stunning rock and ice faces untouched. While they did find evidence that Soviet Teams had climbed some of the peaks there was no evidence found that ascents were made of the abundant steeper terrain.

It was the main objective of this expedition which lasted from June 18<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup> to make the first ascent of some of these technical faces, specifically the unclimbed North-East face of Kyzyl-Muz (5127m). It needs to be noted that before the expedition this peak was referred to as Harturtay (this includes this small comment in the 1996 American Alpine Journal and the article in the 1996 New Zealand Alpine Journal). Once in the valley the team was corrected by locals. Harturtay had been the Russian name for the peak while Kyzyl-Muz is the traditional Kyrgyz name. Because of this Kyzyl-Muz will be the name now used when referring to the peak.



**Fig 2 – Google Earth imagery of Karavshin area within Pamir Alai. Harturtay (aka Kyzyl Muz) can be seen in the East above the Schurovkovo Glacier which runs down the Jiptik Valley.**

Another objective in the area was the unclimbed North face of Muz-Tash at the head of the valley. This face was covered in a series of ice couloirs which appeared to link up to reach the summit. A hanging valley to the West also appeared to be of interest and it was the intention of the team to explore within it.

The major obstacle to climbing in the Jiptik and all of Southwestern Kyrgyzstan is access. Getting to these areas involves traveling from the city of Osh to the town of Batken from which a team must travel through Vuroch (part of Tajikistan) before the trek into the mountains can begin. In order to overcome these obstacles this team organized their expedition through an outfitter in Bishkek by the name of Tien-Shan Travel. This proved to be invaluable since we were able to get too and from the mountains with very little hindrance by way of the arrangements made by TS travel.

## Expedition Members



**Fig 3 – Graham Zimmerman**

*Graham Zimmerman*

-Age: 22

-Nationality: New Zealand/American,

-Occupation: Full time climber/EMT in training

-Climbing Experience:

Graham was exposed to climbing at the age of fifteen in Washington State, USA. During high school he learned the basics of traditional rock climbing and alpinism in the Cascades. Later while attending Otago University in Dunedin New Zealand he cut his teeth in the Southern Alps making ascents of many classic test pieces such as 'White Dream' on the South Face of Mt Cook (NZ5), 'New Gunbarrels' on the South Face of Mt Hicks (NZ6) and 'Nosferatu' on the Southeast Face Vampire Peak (NZ6-). He has also opened new routes such as 'Mixed Blood' on the South face of Mount Matenga (NZ4, WI3, M5) and the South face of Taiaha Peak (NZ 4+)..

In May 2008 Graham graduated from the University of Otago and has been climbing nearly full time since, mostly outside of New Zealand. This has included making one day ascents of alpine Grade V walls such as The Thin Red Line on Liberty Bell Spire (V 5.10 A3) (WA, USA), Redpointing 5.11+ rock routes in Southeastern Australia (Arapiles/Grampians) and the Southwestern United States (Indian Creek/Red Rocks) as well climbing ice and mixed routes in the Canadian and Colorado Rockies up to WI5 and M7. Just before leaving for Kyrgyzstan Graham was on an expedition attempting peaks in the Kichatna Spires of the Alaska Range.

In coming months Graham plans to continue climbing full time in North America and Canada while teaching people about sustainable living through example and conversation. He plans to be in Patagonia this coming winter (southern hemisphere summer).



**Fig 4 – Paul Hersey**

*Paul Hersey*

-Age: 40

-Nationality: New Zealand,

-Occupation: Writer

-Climbing Experience:

Paul started rock climbing when on the North Island of New Zealand during his early twenties and has been climbing avidly ever since. While living on the North Island he was very active in development opening many new routes up to 5.12.

After moving to the South Island he became exposed to alpine climbing and in 1996 after an ascent of the Linda Glacier on Mount Cook was invited on an expedition to Kyrgyzstan. On this expedition the team visited the Jiptik Valley and the pictures and stories from that trip were the inspiration for this expedition back to the same valley.

Since 1996 Paul has been putting up many new routes in the Southern Alps of New Zealand, many of which have been rock and ice routes in the Ben Ohau Range. Prime examples are 'Great Dane' on the South Face of Mt Ward (NZ5-) and the stunning North Buttress of Mount Hopkins (NZ5+). To date Paul has completed over 30 first ascents in New Zealand.

Paul has also made ascents in the Italian Dolomites such as the 'Bramani Route' on Punta Allevi and the Southeast ridge of Punta Rasica. He was also part of an expedition to the Garwhal region of India on which he was attempting the first ascent of the S Ridge of Karchakund (6612m).

In the future Paul plans to continue opening new routes in New Zealand as well as climbing the classics. His future expedition plans range from Patagonia to Northern Canada and back Central Asia.



**Fig 5 – Yewjin Tan**

*Yewjin Tan*

-Age: 31

-Nationality: Singapore/New Zealand Resident,

-Occupation: Physiotherapist,

-Climbing Experience:

Yewjin started rock climbing in Singapore while attending University. This led to multiple trips to nearby Thailand where he made many redpoint ascents in the range of mid to hard 5.12. Inspiration towards alpine climbing was obtained during a trekking trip through the Nepalese Himalaya.

His alpine climbing started in earnest when he moved to the South Island of New Zealand. He has spent much time scrambling and climbing in the New Southern Alps including first ascents in the Ben Ohau Range and an attempted new route on the infamous South face of Mount Aspiring.

While in New Zealand he has continued rock climbing, consistently onsighting up to 5.11.

In the future Yewjin plans to keep climbing in the Southern Alps and possibly head back overseas to attempt first ascents and notable repeats in the greater ranges.



## **Adventurous Activities**

The objectives of this expedition were based in alpine climbing and exploration. The Jiptik valley is seldom visited by climbers. Despite extensive research the team found no evidence of any technical alpine climbing taking place in the valley with the exception of the 1996 New Zealand Expedition.

On both expeditions (1996 and 2008) evidence was found of past ascension of non-technical routes. Based on the gear found these appear to have been from the 1960's or 70's. The expedition also encountered a Czech team who was completing an alpine traverse and classic mountaineering ascents along the main divide of the Pamir Alai. So it would seem that the valley does see infrequent visitor beyond the seasonal shepherds. Despite this, since no reports were found on steep alpine climbing taking place and no evidence was found on the steeper terrain which the team moved over, it is thought that few if any of the more technical aspects in the valley have been climbed.

The team came equipped with gear for alpine style ascents. This included a large rock rack which included pitons and hooks and a rack of ice screws. No static rope for fixing was carried and neither was a 'potaledge'. A small bolt kit was brought into the valley but was never carried on route. A specific description of the rack carried on route is included later.

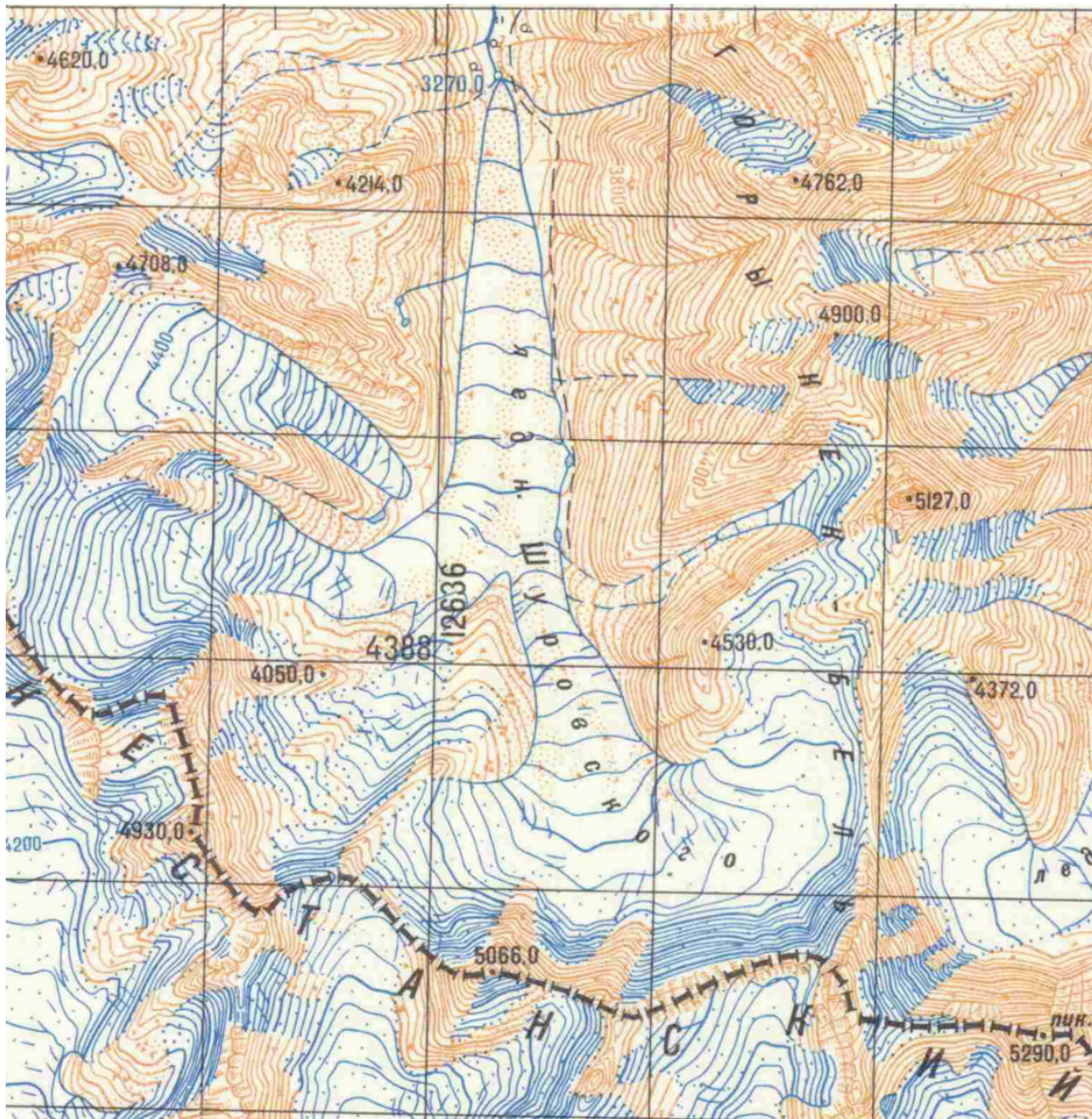
While in the valley the team had one major alpine climbing success. Graham Zimmerman and Yewjin Tan made the first ascent of the North Face of Kyzyl Muz via the central spur. Difficult climbing was encountered up to 5.10 free climbing, AI4 ice climbing and M4 mixed. The route was 1600 meters long. A pitch by pitch description of the route is made later in the report.

Administration and Logistics

Destination Area



Fig 6 –Topographic Map of Lower Jiptik Valley, Kyzyl-Muz is Peak 5127 in lower left.



**Fig 6 – Topographic Map of Upper Jiptik Valley**

The Jiptik valley is located within the Pamir Alai range, approximately twenty kilometers East of the well known AkSu Valley (figure 2 shows them relative to each other). On this expedition different routes were to enter and access the valley. The route marked on figure 6 coming from the East was used on the approach, it takes a full day and crosses over a 3800m pass.

On the exit different route was taken. It continued farther down valley and crossed over the next pass (3696m). The valley on the other side of the pass was followed down to the Karavshin river which was followed East on a washed out road to a settlement where the maintained road began. This route also took a full day, while it was longer than the approach it was easier since the route to the pass was a well marked trail versus a scree slope.

The Jiptik contains many beautiful peaks. The centerpiece of the lower valley is Kyzyl-Muz with it's stunning North face and it's eastern buttresses. The lower reaches are composed of limestone which is generally of good quality, although bands of very loose rock are present. The other peaks of the lower valley are aesthetic but appear to offer few if any quality technical routes. In the upper valley can be found a number of good objectives. This expedition was not able to explore the upper valley as extensively as they would have liked due to poor weather but many beautiful peaks were seen. Access to the upper valley is very easy and good camping sites are available. The upper reaches are glaciated, the main glacier is known as the Schurovko. The rock in the upper valley is mainly composed of granite of a variety of quality, it appeared to be quite compact where strong.

The lower reaches of the valley are used by local shepherds as pastures for their flocks of sheep and goats. The team found these individuals to be kind and sharing. It is their presence though that necessitates the need for a cook in camp who is able to look after the teams kit while they are away from basecamp.

#### *Research materials and Information Sources'*

Extensive research was completed through both the American and New Zealand Alpine Journals. As stated no evidence was found of climbing taking place in the Jiptik other than the 1996 New Zealand Expedition. This was confirmed by conversation with Tien Shan Travel (the team's outfitters in Bishkek) whose records did not show anyone else having visited the valley with goals in technical alpinism.

Information on the Karavshin area of the Pamir Alai was readily available in the American Alpine Journal. There is extensive information on access to the Aksu and Asan-Usen valleys and the routes which have been opened within them before and after the fall of the Soviet Union. Namely in the 1996 edition which provided information on many individual climbs as well as many photographs. A pamphlet was released by the AAJ in 2005 which provided general information along side topographic maps of three major climbing areas within Kyrgyzstan including the Karavshin.

From the maps provided by the American Alpine Journal this team was able to determine the location of the Jiptik utilizing Google Earth, once this had been completed contact was made with Tien Shan Travel in order to organize access to the valley with which they were familiar.

#### *Training*

In order to prepare for the expedition the team members adhered to a rigorous training regime which involved aggressive circuit and cardiovascular training as well as time in climbing gyms. Training in the form of climbing itself was also undertaken by the team. This included ascents in Australia, Canada, Northwestern USA, Alaska and New Zealand.

#### *Permission and Permits*

The team's Visas and Permits were arranged through Tien Shan Travel in conjunction with Karavshin Travel an outfitter based in the town of Batken. The paper work which the team was unable to read checked out with the local military officials who were kind enough to give the team an armed escort through the Tajik town of Vuroch. The travel through this area has proven very difficult for teams in the past and this team was very happy to report that with the military escort none of those difficulties were encountered.

#### *Fund-Raising and Finances*

In order to fund this expedition a number of grants applications were submitted. Support was received from the Mount Everest Foundation and the New Zealand Alpine Club. No equipment sponsors were recruited.

All other funds were provided by the expedition members.

Below is provided an approximate budget from the trip (in NZ\$):

Flight - 3x \$3,500 =	\$10,500
Food =	\$300 (mostly provided by TS Travel)
Hire of Labor,	
Peak Fees & Liaison Officer 3x2500 =	\$7,500
Insurance – 3x \$360 =	\$1,040 (New Zealand Alpine Club Travel Insurance)
Other and contingency =	\$500
Total =	\$19,040

### *Insurance*

Climbing insurance was provided through the New Zealand Alpine Club. Each of the individuals on the expedition also carried individual travel and medical insurance. No incidents took place that required the use of this insurance.

### *Travel Transport and Freighting*

All equipment was carried with the team members on their plane flights. This did incur excess baggage charges but no major issues were had.

### *Food and Accommodation*

Most of the food and all of the accommodation during the expedition were arranged by Tien Shan Travel. In base camp the team members slept in their own tents while cooking and eating was completed in a larger tent which was provided.

The only food brought with the team were specialist items such as energy bars and gels. These were not available within Kyrgyzstan.

The team was able to find butane canisters. These were bought from Tien Shan while in Bishkek.

At base camp water was taken from the river next to camp. The team began by filtering the water which was not boiled but the high suspended sediment level in the river soon clogged the water filter beyond field repair and the team was forced to stop filtering. While this was a risk, no problems were incurred by the water.

### *Communications*

Communication with the outside world was limited during the expedition. No satellite phone was carried, although it would have been a welcome safety net had the need arisen. While in the cities internet cafes and phone booths were readily available which were used to contact family and friends.

### *Risks and hazards*

While the inherent risks of alpine climbing will not be discussed here a few specific notes will be made.

The lower Jiptik Valley is composed mostly of limestone. Significant rockfall events were observed from some of the faces in the area, this should be considered not only in terms of when and where to climb but also in terms of where to establish basecamp and higher bivys. This said, excellent basecamp and bivy locations were abundant.

The upper Jiptik was generally composed of friable granite which appeared to also have potential for large amounts of rockfall although less was observed.

Southwestern Kyrgyzstan does have a history of being a politically volatile area. An example of this was the kidnapping of three American alpinists in 2000 by Tajik rebels. Since 2002 the stability in the area has improved and the team had no problems. This said any team planning on taking an expedition into Southwestern Kyrgyzstan should pay close attention to any travel warnings which have been issued.

### *Medical Arrangements*

Yewjin Tan was the team's medical expert. In New Zealand he works as a Physiotherapist and was therefore the team member with the most medical expertise. Both Paul and Graham also had limited experience in how to deal with medical emergencies.

The team carried a comprehensive first aid kit. This included broad spectrum anti biotics and powerful pain killers

If a major medical emergency had occurred a evacuation would have been very difficult. Due to the teams lack of a satellite phone the 2 day approach would have needed to have been reversed with the victim. It is unclear whether having a sat phone would have allowed for a better safety net.

#### *Environmental and Social Impact Assessment*

In terms of the teams social impact, their presence in the country seemed more than welcome. Kyrgyzstan is currently in the process of developing tourism as their main economic revenue source and climbers are a significant part of that development. The team attempted to maintain a low profile by wearing acceptable clothing. Before the trip the impression was had that wearing shorts was a taboo but correction was made by Kyrgyz individuals whom stated that there was no problem with shorts. It needs to be noted that that expedition was composed of all men, there is quite possibly a different set of standards for women, especially in the southern part of the country which is predominantly more traditional Muslim.

While in the backcountry the team did everything possible to maintain the standards of "Leave No Trace". This included collecting all of their garbage (as well as other garbage found in the area), maintaining an appropriate area to use the bathroom and camping in a high durability low impact site. The only problem was had with the cowboys who did not want to carry out the garbage, an arrangement was made which involved the expedition members carrying out a significant portion of the garbage accumulated on the trip.

All of the cooking on the trip was completed over a wood fire. The wood used was collected deadwood from the local area. It would seem that this is a sustainable resource as long as visits to the Jiptik remain infrequent. If the area becomes more popular this will need to be re evaluated.

Lastly all of the climbing completed was done so in as clean a method as possible. No bolts were placed and only a small amount of cordage was left on the route (from rappelling off of horns and blocks). Pitons were placed on route but this was mandatory in order to keep the climbing safe, they were all removed.

## Diary/log

### *Approach (June 28<sup>th</sup> – July 3<sup>rd</sup>)*

The team met in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. Graham flew from the United States while Yewjin and Paul flew from New Zealand. Due to a mix up by the airline Graham arrived a day later than the other two, they spent this day walking through Bishkek seeing the sights.

As soon as Graham arrived final arrangements were made with Tien Shan Travel and the team left in a van for the 14 hour drive to Osh. The drive was beautiful but long. Arrival in Osh was achieved after dark and the team was taken directly to their hotel. They were provided the next day to explore Osh, the highlight being the local bazaar which is one of the largest in central Asia.

The next morning the team was picked up and driven 6 hours to the town of Batken where they stayed with Juno, the owner of Karavshin travel. He had been sub-hired by Tien Shan to take the team the rest of the way into the Jiptik due to his strong local connections.

A day was spent in Batken before heading off to the mountains, it was also at this time that the team met their cook Tacktoosh and translator Turrat, both of whom proved to be invaluable.

The approach to the mountains involved taking a car through the town of Vuroch which is part of Tajikistan. Through the area Karavshin had organized military transport with the Kyrgyz army. This went with little incident and before they knew it the team was started on the walk into basecamp.

The walk took one and a half days. The lower reaches of the Jiptik were reached on the first night and all that was left the second day was to walk two more hours up valley to where basecamp was to be established. The weather during the walk was very good.

Basecamp was established on the West side of the river just South of an improvised bridge and just North of the expansive East face of Kyzyl-Muz. It needs to be noted for future parties that this face was the scene of significant rock fall events so base camp should not be located directly beneath it.

The team had three tents with them one of which was used for storage and the other two for sleeping. Tien Shan Travel had provided a fourth tent which served as the mess tent and a shelter for Tacktoosh and Turrat. All cooking (other than a few espressos) was completed in a cast iron wok over a fire fueled by dead branches from trees in the vicinity of camp. Water was collected from the river which was less than 100 meters away. In order to maintain accordance with the Leave No Trace philosophy a toilet was established away from the river.

### *Acclimatization (July 3<sup>rd</sup> – July 14<sup>th</sup>)*

The acclimatization process took longer than expected. It was completed by climbing up easy objective around camp. Potential objectives were plentiful.

One of the acclimatization climbs was completed on the South face of Kyzyl-Muz in order to suss out the descent from the North Face. It had been this aspect which Paul had climbed in 1996 when it had been a snow climb. There is now nearly no snow on the aspect showing that global warming is very much having an effect on this area.

During the acclimatization process large amounts of bouldering was also completed on limestone boulders around camp. This allowed the team to stay strong while doing lots of walking.

Through this time the weather was very good, at times clouds would arrive in the afternoon but never amounted to a significant system.

### *Attempt #1 (July 15<sup>th</sup> – July 18<sup>th</sup>)*

The original objective of the expedition had been the East Face of Kyzyl Muz, a large rock face, but upon closer inspection it was found that the rock quality on this face was in fact quite low so the teams

sights were changed to the intimidating central spur of the North Face which was an alpine mixed rock and ice objective.

Once Acclimatization had been completed, Graham and Yewjin headed out for an attempt. Paul was not along due to having aggravated an old back injury.

Graham and Yewjin carried a slim rack consisting of six cams, a half rack of wires, four pitons, 4 ice screws and a small selection of hooks and bashies (which were not needed), between then they had one pair of rock shoes. Each of them had a light sleeping pad, bivy sack and primaloft sleeping bag liner. They carried three days worth of food and two canisters of gas.

The first day they left camp in the mid afternoon reaching the base of the route in 2 hours from basecamp. 300 meters of 4<sup>th</sup> and low 5<sup>th</sup> class scrambling took them to a large scree covered ledge which they planned to bivy on. Upon finding the point where they wanted to attempt the rock wall above they bivied in a hole excavated under a large boulder nearby. That night there were light rain showers and they were thankful for the shelter the boulder provided.

The next morning they climbed halfway up a snowcone to gain a ledge where they pulled out the rope. The first pitch traversed ten feet to the right to a crack (5.8). The second pitch took an easy ramp (5.5) to the base of the crux. Pitch three started in a wet corner which provided little in the way of protection (5.9) and was followed by an overhanging dihedral (5.10) involving intricate stemming and jamming. Pitch four followed another easy ramp to a bouldery 5.10 sequence. This was followed by two pitches of 5.9 face climbing. Above these pitches the terrain mellowed to generally easy fifth class climbing with the exception of a 5.7 corner. After a total of 10 pitches a sloping ledge was reached which provided a descent bivy.

The following day Graham and Yewjin climbed 7 pitches of ice which were sustained at AI3-4. Here the angle eased so that they were able to simul climb to the top of the spur. Due to large amounts of avalanche activity (wet slides caused by radiant heating) they bivied at the top of the spur despite the early hour (2pm). They started climbing again at 2am when the face had cooled sufficiently for safe passage to be had. After a couple hundred meters of steep glacier travel they started pitching. Moderate ice climbing led to the final 'shrund which involved some wild 3-D ice climbing to surpass. From there it was one more pitch to the summit ridge.

Upon reaching the ridge Yewjin and Graham were greeted with the largest weather system yet seen on the trip moving towards them quickly from the South. In light of this and the apparent complexity of the descent route (to the south) they opted to go down versus taking the 2 hour walk to the summit. This turned out to be very good decision as the snow started to fall heavily as they reached the scree slope below the South face. The descent involved 2 rappels and 300 meters unroped down climbing on protectionless slabs and would have been very dangerous covered in snow.

The scree at the base of the face was traversed to the East to reach a col from where pleasant walking down alpine meadows took the team back to the main valley. They were back in camp by mid afternoon.

During Yewjin's and Graham's climb of the North face Paul attempted to solo a route on far right side of the same face. After a few hundred meters of 50 degree ice he was turned around by icefalls which he did not feel comfortable through without a rope.

#### *Attempt #2 (July 21 – July 22)*

The rest of the trip was marked by very bad weather. At one point when it seemed that it might be clearing Paul and Graham headed up valley with the intention of climbing a peak Paul had seen on the 1996 expedition. It was not marked on the map and not named, it was estimate to be around 5200 meters high. The approach to the a good bivy around 500 meters from the base of the peak took 4 hours from base camp. As they arrived at this bivy snow began to fall very hard accumulating in almost 30cm overnight. Since they did not have enough food to spend more than 2 more days in the upper valley Graham and Paul were forced to retreat back to base camp.



The local Shepherds informed the team that during the last two weeks of July the weather is generally poor. While the team was unfortunate to find this out during the expedition it should be considered important information for any other teams planning on heading into the area.

The mountains of the upper Jiptik are beautiful and have lots of potential for first ascents, generally on ice and mixed terrain. While the upper valley is composed of granitic stone it appeared that this stone was quite generally friable unlike the impeccable stone found farther West in the Asan-Usen and Ak-Su valleys.

*Return (July 28<sup>th</sup> – August 2<sup>nd</sup>)*

The return from the mountains was executed as flawlessly as the approach. The horsemen showed up right on schedule and the good weather had returned. A different route was taken out of the valley. The team and the horsemen traveled farther North down the Jiptik to reach the next pass which was taken over to an adjoining valley which led to the Karavshin river which was followed out to the road. At the beginning of the road was a homestead where the team had a late dinner and a night of sleep before continuing on to Batken the next morning in a van. The reason for the different route on the departure was rumor that the Tajik army had found out about our traveling through Vuroch and was waiting for us. By taking a different route we were able to avoid this. This situation could have been avoided by simply obtaining a Tajik visa, which would be recommended.

The next day the team was once again picked up in a van and taken to Osh when they spent the night before flying on Kyrgyzstan Air to Bishkek. The airline charged for baggage over twenty kilos at around twenty Soms per Kilo. A final day was spent wandering Bishkek before the team members went their separate ways from Manas Airport.

## Conclusions

Overall the 'New Zealand North East Face of Harturtay\* Expedition 2008' expedition was a success. While the Northeast face and it's buttresses were deemed to friable, the first ascent was made of the intimidating North Face of the same peak. This ascent completed over 3 ½ days was all on technical terrain with cruxes of 5.10, AI4 and M4 and was 1400m in length.

The fitness of the team was key to the success as well as well as the motivation. Trouble was had with acclimatization but this was overcome by hard work and patience.

While the last two weeks of the expedition were marked by poor weather, attempts were still made. Indication was made by locals that the final two weeks in July generally have poor weather. It would be recommended that future teams may avoid this time or plan to acclimatize within it.

There are abundant possibilities within the Jiptik Valley. Photographs included in the appendices show some of the face available most of which are unclimbed.

In final conclusion the team would like to thank the Mount Everest Foundation and the New Zealand Alpine Club for their generous support. Without it the trip would not have been possible.