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UNITED KINGDOM  
TIEN SHAN  
KAIYNDY EXPEDITION

1995

Kaiyndy Valley  
Central Tien Shan Range  
Kyrgizia State  
CIS

23rd July ~ 28th August

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# SUMMARY

1st ascent of- Angel Peak 5300m  
1st ascent of- Point of Damocles 5200m  
1st ascent of- White Horse Peak 4850m  
1st ascent of- Hunter Peak 5250m  
1st ascent of- Snow dome above Moshnyi Glacier 5050m  
Several glaciers visited for the 'first' time and recorded

The ten member team left the UK on July 23rd and flew to Almaty in Kazakhstan via Riga and Moscow. From Almaty the group travelled by road to the main Inylchek Valley in Kyrgyzia and made the last leg of the journey by helicopter.

The Expedition returned on August 28th having managed to ascend two new peaks, two high points on ridges and a snow dome that led to higher peaks these were all first ascents. A number of glaciated areas were also visited and photographed.

Using ITMC to organise the travel and base camp facilities we were met at the airport by non-English speaking couriers and whisked off to Karakol by an old coach, the journey taking around eight hours. In Karakol we stayed at an old Russian Alpine Centre in the town (cost \$5 per/night). Its facilities for washing and cooking (two gas rings only) were limited and cooking when other groups were also there caused such problems that we dined out.

For no real reason we were delayed here while the final organisation for the journey to Maidaadyr took place. Instead of having things ready for us ITMC seemed only to set things in motion once we had arrived. The equipment for base camp had to be checked and argued for; some tents lacked guys or poles, some were faulty, gas and cooking gear had to be virtually 'stolen' out of the lockups! Their plan, varying from the faxes received and sent since January, was to send us into the mountains with two petrol stoves as the everyday cooking facilities for our group of 10 climbers and cook.

Once at Maidaadyr four of us were helicoptered to a base on the Kaiyndy Glacier, while the others were driven round to start a three day acclimatisation trek into the area. Our base camp was put at a discrete distance from an existing British camp, who had come back up to look for their lost companion. (Mick Davie fell to his death in July a few days before we arrived while ascending the mountain which overlooked the moraine on which we camped.)

On the day of our arrival at base camp two Russian rescuers on the same ridge also fell to their deaths while descending at the end of the day with Joanna Newton. David Suddes one of our members watched in horror through binoculars as three climbers descending the ridge, were led by the first in the rope out onto a large cornice. The lead climber successfully crossed the danger but then the cornice gave way and the two others fell through, the rope breaking and causing their deaths.

The lone climber (which turned out to be Joanna Newton) started descending and later was met and brought down by two other Russians who had returned from a days effort on the eastern slopes looking for the lost body. Our team took some time to settle after these events and made us wary, perhaps overly so, of the other peaks in the area.

After a couple of days, Paul Hudson, Ken Findlay, John Hudson and Ashley Hardwell set off up the Moshnyi Glacier to establish 'ABC south'. On a snow shelf overlooking the valley they set up two Phoenix tents. From here on August 2nd the team ascended the col at the end of the glacier and apart from Paul who felt ill continued the climb to top-out on a Snow Dome at about 5,050m. The ridge ahead looked very inviting, but bad weather and Ashley beginning to cough up blood, caused the team to retreat in worsening conditions. The plan was to go back up the following day, unfortunately it snowed heavily overnight and that ended of the efforts on this ridge.

The first fully successful excursion was to a wonderfully pointed peak south of base (Angel Peak) which was ascended on August 6th by Paul Hudson, Philip Kendon, Ken Findlay and Ashley Hardwell (all from Yorkshire)

It was assessed at 5300m and required a high Bivvy 200ft below its summit. Fortunately as darkness fell and temperatures dropped well below freezing Philip Kendon ascended the last ice slope and managed to fight his way onto a more level area of 30° which held some deep snow. Here a bivvy ledge was dug and the night spent in fitful sleep. The morning came and after ascending the final slopes the four climbers felt it wise to descend. Slowly in mixed weather conditions the team descended its ascent route instead of looking for ways to continue along the ridge to other objectives. The ascent was on hard ice slopes covered occasionally by sugary snow 1 to 2 inches deep. The descent was completed by 3 abseil pitches as the slopes became dangerous in the sun. Even when the bottom of the mountain was reached the team still had to cross a small glacier basin which took 4 hours due to its condition with the climbers having to crawl and 'swim' across some areas of snow. They reached base camp again 45 hours after departing.

The team split up and other attempts at peaks as well as exploration of the area took place. Illness was a problem and during our stay at least two of the group were ill most days.

On August 12th Paul Hudson and Ken Findlay ascended a high point on a ridge in 'Glacier Bay 5 north', after a bivvy below the climb, while four others climbing on the opposite side to the valley were turned back 100ft below a rock peak due to the dangerous condition of the ridge itself. Paul and Ken made a zig-zag ascent after being repulsed by a small break in the long and high cornice due to its unstable nature. After a long traverse, under 30 foot long icicles, they mounted a col from which an ascent to the first high point along the ridge was made. The lateness in the day prevented them from progressing further and descent was their only real option as the snow had become soft and dangerous. From the col they descended south into an avalanche chute, crossed it and down climbed safely to the glacier floor.

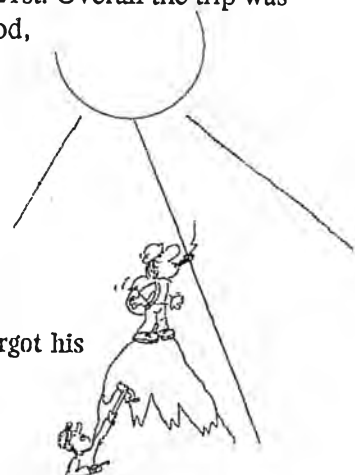
On August 13th a team consisting of Dave Penlington, John Hudson and Graham Treacher climbed a mountain to the South of the Kaiyndy Glacier system. The team measured the mountain as being at about 4,700m, they found the snow conditions much better than on the main glacier system. It was hoped that the team would return once more to this glacier to climb more mountains during their stay, unfortunately illness and then a violent snow storm prevented this happening.

The last ascent by Ken Findlay and Paul Hudson on August 16th, like the first, was affected by bad weather which drove them down after ascending a rock and ice high point when their plan was to have traversed a ridge to gain the peak which lay north along the ridge. Moving in the afternoon to 'ABC east' from base camp Paul and Ken set off around 4am and ascended towards the 'Pass of the 30 day victory' but turned east to the mountain mass before reaching it. By sunrise they were on the lower reaches of the Ice slope that led to a rock outcrop and the ridge. The route was again ice sometimes overlaid with an inch or two of granular snow, sometimes bare ice and in one or two places it had deep and unconsolidated snow overlying crevasses. At 4pm a storm blew in giving high winds a drastic drop in temperature and snow, spindrift affected vision. An hour later the pair decided that a bivvy was their only option as the wind and snow fall increased. Hoping to find deep soft snow at the top of the ridge they reached the summit to find hard ice the only option being a small rock ledge 24 x 35 inches just below the top. The night was spent sitting up or pushing the other off this perch inadvertently and some how Ken got his head sat upon by Paul (though this was never proved).

The snow fell all night but during this time the pair were able to make a hot chocolate and Horlicks drink when Paul woke to find stillness. In the morning, mist, snow and high winds forced them to abandon other ideas for a retreat down their ascent route. Small powder snow avalanches fell down past and onto them as they descended and on reaching the main Bergschrund they found that where the day before it had been between 6 to 12 feet high it was now completely covered. They reached 'ABC east' at around 5pm to find Philip and David Suddes (Newcastle) preparing for their own last attempt but not before hot drinks and food were supplied.

The last attempt at a peak by David Suddes and Philip Kendon had to be aborted due to the earlier heavy snowfall and continuing unsettled weather. The team were airlifted out on August 21st. Overall the trip was enjoyable and apart from the poor organisation of the base camp equipment and food, the quality of the cook and an occasional misunderstanding the ITMC managed to provide us with the support we required.

Now we know why Stuart was ahead of us all, he forgot his matches!










# Patrons: Chris Bonington CBE.

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**Also**

Andy Kemp for food and gear  
Yuri for the competent driving  
Pilots for getting us back alive  
Moscow airport staff  
Couriers 'we don't deal with people in the street'  
The staff at the Museum of Musical Instruments  
Sergai for the Base Camp hygiene

Nick Williams for the information and slide show  
Tony Park for the information, photos and beers  
Cairngorm Rope Company  
Ken Rawlinson  
Dave Smith at the Yorkshire Evening Post  
Paul Exley for nearly filling in the MEF form  
Richard Jones

## Thanks to all the firms, organisations & people who supported the Expedition

## THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TIEN SHAN KAINGDY EXPEDITION 1995

Paul Hudson, British, 46, Teacher of Art - Leeds

The initiator of this expedition, Paul has climbed in Britain and the Alps. He has a strong interest in the literature of mountaineering and looking smart on the hills. His sheep was sponsored for charity during the expedition and raised money for Tusk Force an animal charity and Mountain Rescue.



Ken Findlay, 36, British, Lecturer at Thomas Danby College - Leeds

In eight Alpine seasons Ken has climbed 17 of the 4000m peaks, he has also climbed in the Pyrenees and Greece. He was on the Karakoram and Bolivian expeditions with Paul Hudson but hopes to get rid of him for the next expedition in 1996. If you are interested in visiting Peru with him get in touch.

David Penlington, British, 64, Retired

David now lives a wonderful life partly in the Lake District and partly in the mountains of the world. He was a moving force in the exploration of the western area of the Kaingdy Glacier and with John and Graham made a first ascent of White Horse Peak.



Ashley Hardwell, British, 34, Lecturer in FE

Ashley has climbed extensively in the Alps and been on expeditions to Maserbrum and the Bolivian Andes. He is a fanatic about 'leaving only footsteps' and in Bolivia carried out not only the expeditions litter but any thing else that had been left around by others. He has an answer phone that you can get to know quite well as it is in a lot more than he is.

Graham Treacher, 63, British, Musician

Graham teamed up with David Penlington on this trip and enjoyed himself thoroughly. His was often the only sane voice amongst a sea of angst, anger and frustration. Graham was a personal friend of Merzbacher who went to the Kaingdy area in 1903.



Stuart Gallagher, British, 52, Teacher of Geography - Durham

Stuart was for much of the time without his partner, Ken Mosley who was ill. He had been to Russia a couple of times before and is already planning to go again. He likes to get to areas that are relatively unexplored and had put up 1st ascents on previous trips. He was jealous of not having things to dangle from himself as Paul always managed to do.

John Hudson, British, 50, Geologist - Nottingham

John had already climbed with Dave Penlington and again they teamed up including Graham in their group. White Horse Peak was a new ascent by John and there would have been more if Dave Penlington had not ben struck down by a nasty illness just at the wrong moment.



Ken Mosley, British, 55, Retired Early

Ken was on the second attempt at a summit (above Karakol Glacier) and visited most of the glacier areas visited by the group; he was also one of the members who made the walk-in. With Stuart he made an early dump of gear for ABC east and was to try for a peak from ABC south but this was foiled by the weather. All this despite being affected by illness.

Philip Kendon, British, 24, Teacher of Science - Otley

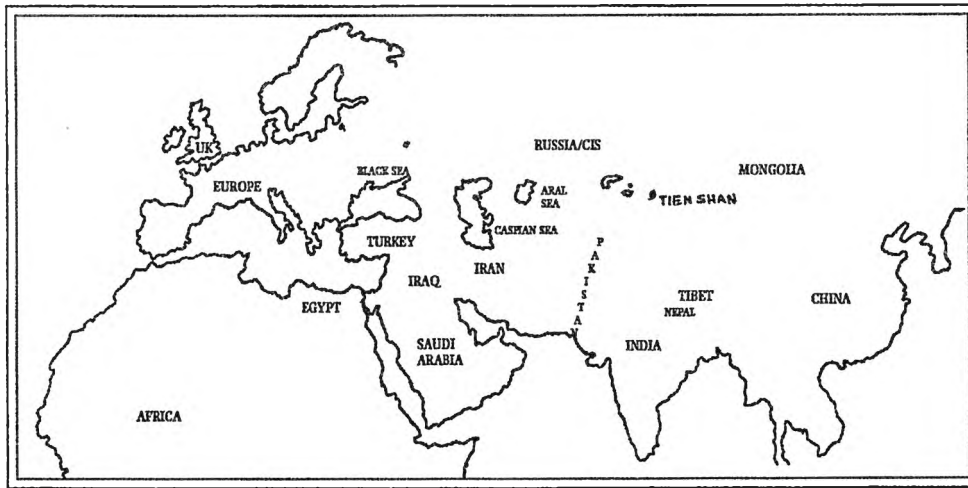
This was Philip's first trip to the wilder areas of the world. He did have some experience of the scale of these mountains though, having already climbed in the Alps. He had a good time being instrumental in the Angel Peak episode. He was struck with stomach pains ascending a new route and so did not make it to the top. He thought the isolation of the area almost alarming.



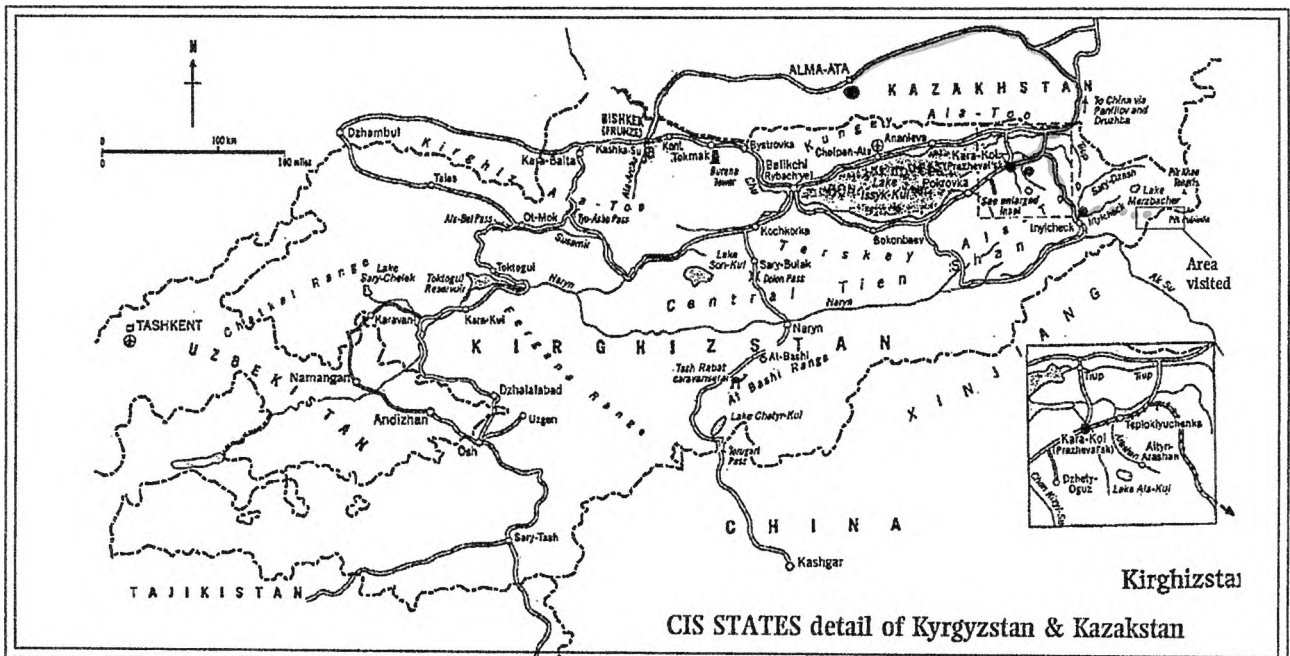
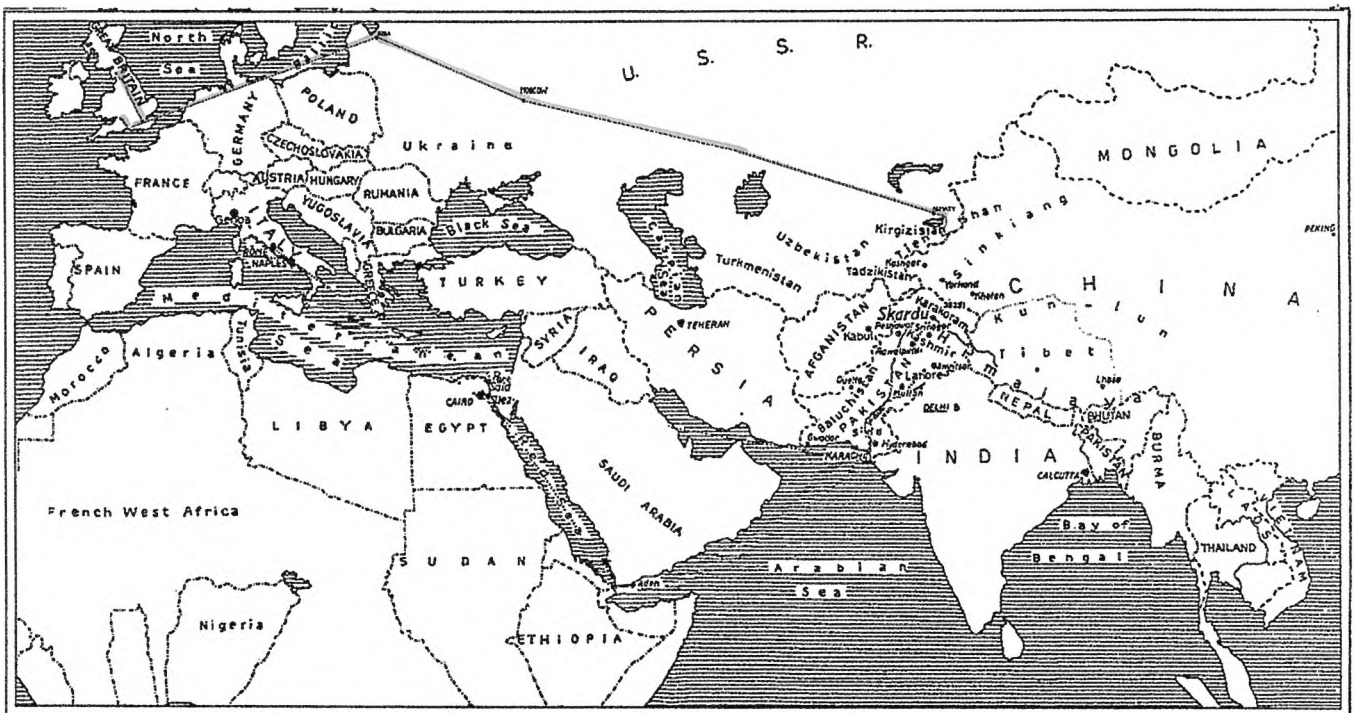
David Suddes, 27, British, Retail Buyer in the outdoor trade - Newcastle

David also known as the Berghaus Boy, was on his first expedition. He was affected by altitude and was out of sorts for the first week in the mountains. He attempted three routes but was foiled on them all. He with Philip did get to the top of the Pass of the Thirty day Victory.

WORLD MAP

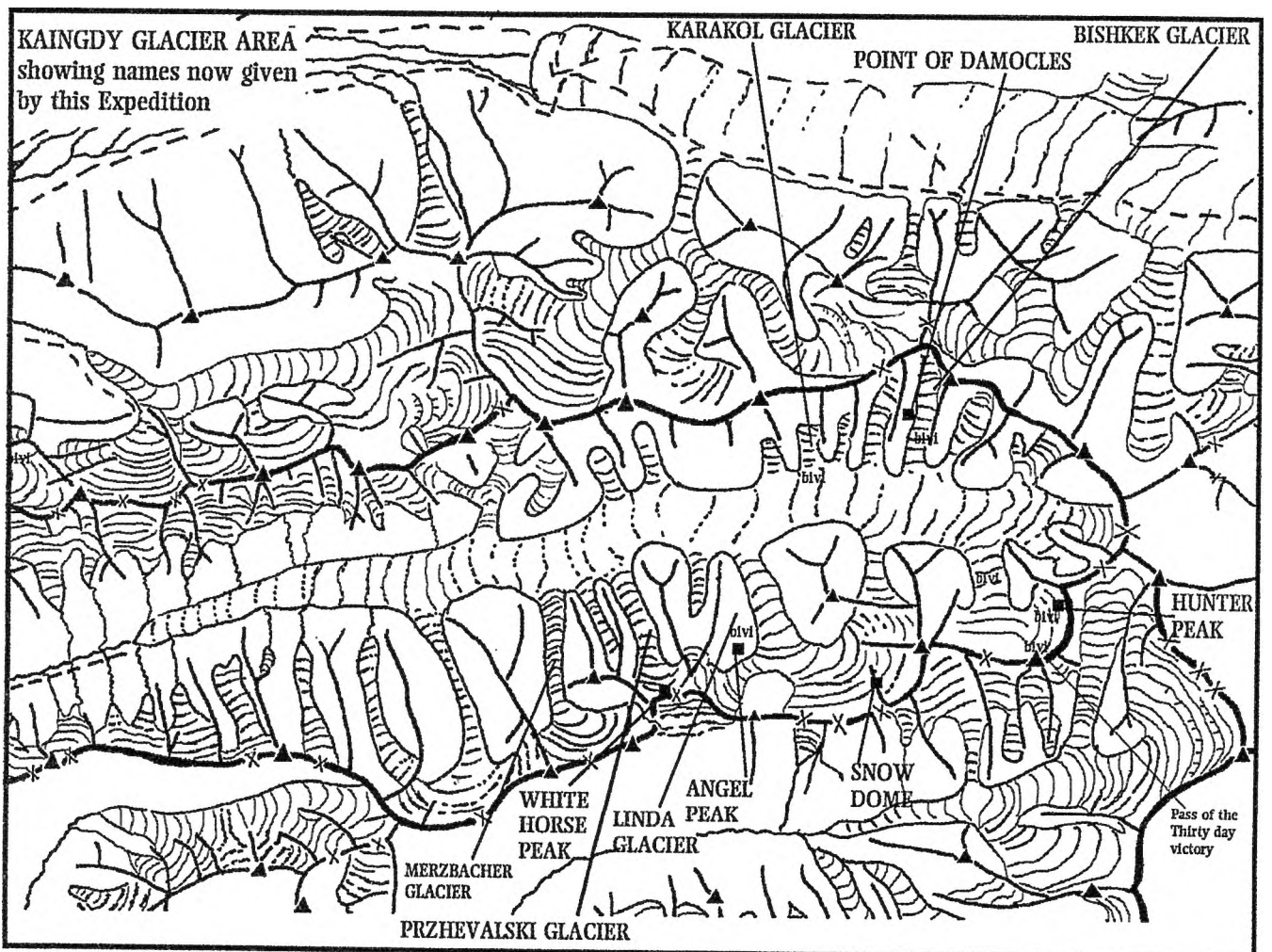
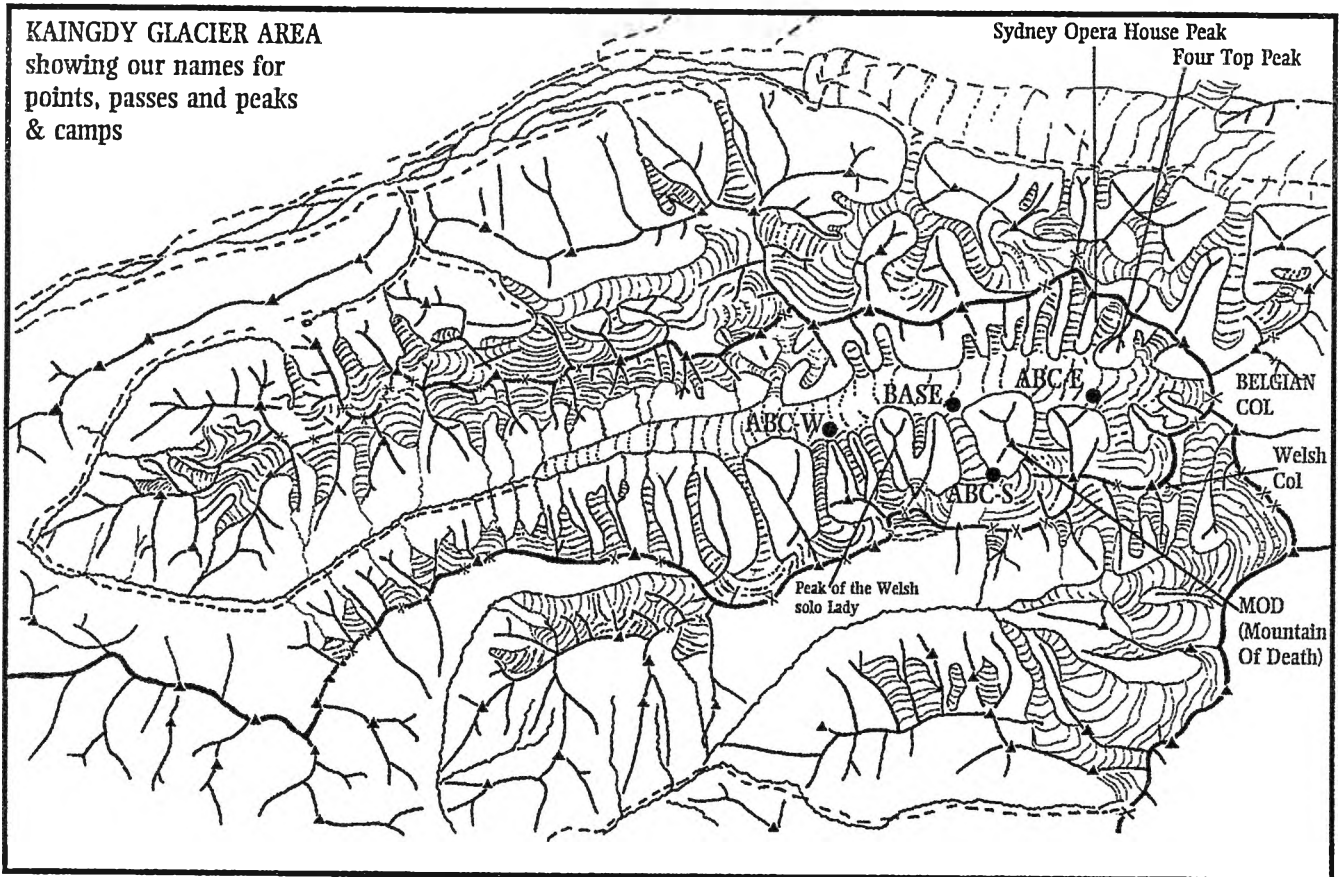


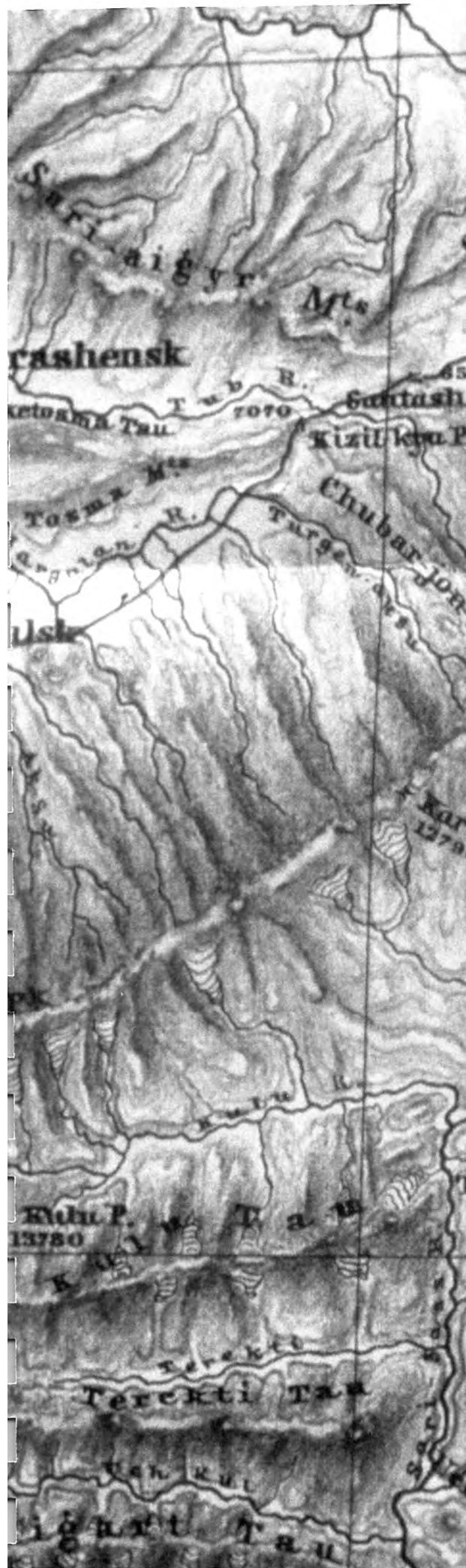
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE showing lines of travel

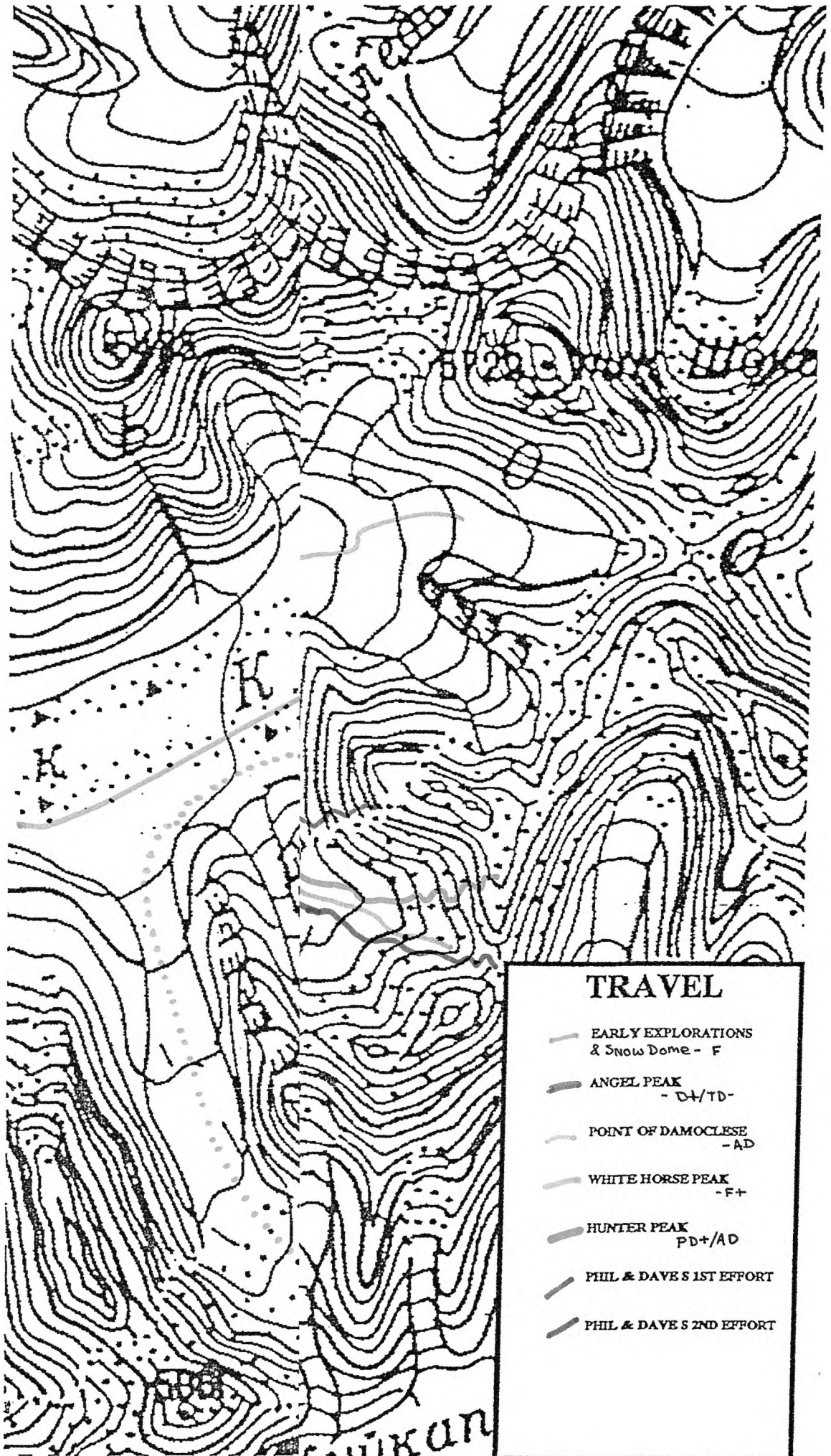


CIS STATES detail of Kyrgyzstan & Kazakhstan









## TRAVEL

- EARLY EXPLORATIONS  
& Snow Dome - F
- ANGEL PEAK  
- D+/TD-
- - - POINT OF DAMOCLESE  
- AD
- WHITE HORSE PEAK  
- F+
- HUNTER PEAK  
PD+/AD
- PHIL & DAVE'S 1ST EFFORT
- PHIL & DAVE'S 2ND EFFORT

# THE EXPEDITION

Introduction

Graham Treacher

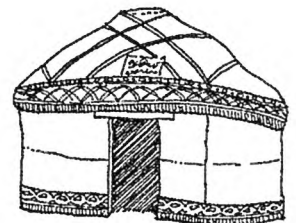
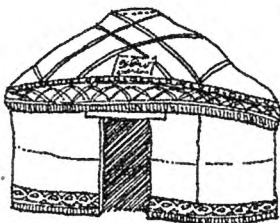
At one time during our visit to the Tien Shan there were reported to be over one hundred visitors in the upper Inylchek Glacier area. It is highly doubtful whether there has been as many visitors in the Kaingdy Valley this century.

Certainly the first was Gottfried Merzbacher and his party who spent some ten days on the glacier in 1903. His photo of the head of the glacier with its distinctive dome shaped mountain in the background, was taken from a point high up in what we called the 'Welsh Valley' (this is in fact the last turn of the Kaingdy Glacier south to its source) after our immediate predecessors who in July crossed the steep col at its head into the great parallel valley south of the Kaingdy.

That valley with a 6000m peak at its head is called Koi-Kaf by Merzbacher, the peak Mount Kirov. Merzbacher made strenuous efforts to enter that valley from its south west end. In his book 'The Central Tien Shan Mountains', John Murry 1905, he describes the pastures used by the Kirghiz nomads for summer grazing, and his account of a deep and difficult gorge beyond is gripping. Bad weather and a shortage of time prevented his exploration of the upper valley, 'this most mysterious region of the Tien Shan'.

Graham knew Merzbacher and would have been on that first trip if a cold had not kept him confined to bed. It does show the truth in the saying that all comes to he who waits, though this was a very long wait indeed.

David Penlington and I made it our first task from base camp to look into the Koi-Kaf area and accordingly ascended the southern cwm immediately by our camp. From the high col at its far end we gazed at a profusion of peaks and glacial valleys stretching towards the Chinese border. Descent into this valley from this col would not appear to be possible. On August 12th however we, in the company of John Hudson, discovered what appears to be the lowest col access from the Kaingdy to the Koi-Kaf.



# КЫРГЫЗСТАН

# TEN GO TREKKING IN THE TIEN-SHAN

The story of ten chaps on the loose and occasionally tying on!

## A Brief Itinerary

### Sunday 23rd July

Depart to London, fly from Gatwick Airport on Transaero Airlines to Moscow via Riga in Lithuania. At Moscow we have to pay \$117 for excess baggage.

### Monday 24th July

Change flights at Moscow with a tight schedule and fly by Transaero to Almaty. Travelled by bus (left Almaty at 9.40) to Karakol with reps from ITMC. Arrive in Karakol at 7pm. Flights are of a high standard. Raining lightly at airport, downpour in Karakol.

### Tuesday 25th July

The team spends the day walking around Karakol visiting the Bank, Post Office etc. and waiting to find out what is planned. We meet the British team who have lost a team member and who are now mounting a rescue to attempt to find the body. Dave & John sort out tents. Late in the evening a Slovak group arrive. Warm sunny day

### Wednesday 26th July

The truck is not ready for us, so another day spent around Karakol. A Slovak group heading for Pobeda passes through flying to Maidaadyr from Karakol with the British group and some Russian rescuers. Warm and sunny but storm overnight. John and Dave start checking cooking equipment. Belgian group pass through.

### Thursday 27th July

Meet small 'American' group that has arrived from China. Set off to Maidaadyr by truck at 1pm. The journey took five and a half hours through changing countryside. Six of the team chose to walk into Base Camp, while the other four stay to ride in the helicopter the next day and set up the base camp. A warm, sunny day.

### Friday 28th July

David, Ashley, Ken and Paul helicopter in to the Kaingdy Glacier, set up Base Camp and at around 4pm. witness accident involving two Russian climbers. A lone climber is seen descending, two of the Russian rescue team set off to meet the figure. Rest of the team up at 7am. for drive round to Kaingdy Valley and start walk-in at 9.30 by a damaged bridge. They camp 2.5 miles short of the glacier snout. Beautiful day.

### Saturday 29th July

Ken and Paul walk up Moshnyi Glacier to look at potential climbs. Ashley and David walk up the Kaingdy Glacier. Ashley builds a toilet while others put up the remaining tents. David is unwell and has a sleepless night. Walkers pass impressive mountains while walking on moraine, camp at 7pm. A cloudy but dry morning with rain in the afternoon.

### Sunday 30th July

David decides to walk down the glacier in an effort to clear his head. Ashley and Paul climb a small face on the opposite side of the valley. Rest of the team arrive at Base Camp after an easier day's walking at 4.30pm. A lovely day.

### Monday 31st July

Paul is unwell, Stuart and Philip walk up the Moshnyi Glacier, David arrives back at camp feeling better. A fine day

### Tuesday 1st August

Graham and Dave walk up the Moshnyi Glacier up to the col. Ken M, Stuart, Philip and David walk up the Kaingdy Glacier and dump gear. Paul, Ken, Ashley and John set up "ABC south" on Moshnyi Glacier. Paul ill during the night.

### Wednesday 2nd August

2.30am. Ashley, Ken and John and Paul set off for the col (4800m) from 'ABC south' where Paul turns back, the others ascend a snow dome gauged at around 5050m. Storm and snow overnight.

### Thursday 3rd August

Ashley, Ken and John return to Base Camp in increasingly bad weather Dave and Graham walk up the Kaingdy Glacier from 'ABC east' to the col.

### Friday 4th August

John, Dave and Graham walk down the glacier to visit another glacier system on a day walk. Paul, David, Ken M and Stuart go across the Kaingdy and visit 'No 2 north' of the glacier bays. They ascend an ice slope but turn left too early, before reaching the ridge and reach impassible rock. The climb is aborted. Ashley, Ken and Philip go up to 'ABC south' on the Moshnyi Glacier, Philip returns to Base Camp. Beautiful day, with heavy cloud later and snow flurries around 7pm.

### Saturday 5th August

Snowed all night, 7/8ths cloud cover in morning. Ken and Ashley descend to Base Camp from 'ABC south'. Inspired by Philip's enthusiasm Paul, Ken, Ashley and Philip decide to climb Pointy Peak on the morrow. Graham, John and Dave walk up the Kaingdy Glacier to check on location of dumped tents and leave further supplies.

Sunday 6th August

The four Pointy Peakers set off around 2am. it proves difficult even to reach the foot of the climb. As darkness sets in a snow bivvy is found 200ft below the summit. The day consisted of sustained snow and ice climbing with much front pointing and no good resting points. Graham, John David and Dave walk to establish 'ABC east'. Poor weather today, heavy snow by 7.30pm.

Monday 7th August

In poor weather the Pointy Peakers top out, it has taken the team 22 hours to reach the summit (Angel peak 5300m). The team arrive back at Base Camp at 11pm. after a horrendous re-crossing of the high (Linda) glacier basin! Forty five hours since leaving camp. At 'ABC east' poor weather in morning but brighter later, Graham, John David and Dave explore the area.

Tuesday 8th August

Stuart and Ken M go up to ABC on Moshnyi Glacier to pack everything up. John, Dave, David and Graham explore towards the col east of 'ABC east'. Graham, John and Dave stay up, David returns to base. Reasonable weather most of the day.

Wednesday 9th August

Stuart, Philip, Ashley, David, Paul and Ken F go up to "ABC east" on the Kaingdy Glacier. John, Dave and Graham have an early start and walk to base of 'Welsh' col return to 'ABC east' and then to Base Camp.

Thursday 10th August

The "ABC east" team visit a glacier bay on the left hand side of the glacier and dump a small amount of gear. Snowing during the night. Mixed weather, snow in night.

Friday 11th August

Stuart, Philip, Ashley, David, Paul and Ken F venture through the glacier system of 'Bay No.5 north' and bivvy on an upper glacier bay at about 4410m. Graham, John and Dave leave base at 3pm., camp at 4.45pm. Some cloud.

Saturday 12th August

Ken F and Paul ascend a snow ridge on the west of the bay and climb a zig zag route to a summit at 5200m (Point of Damocles 1st ascent). The rest of the team climb a face on the opposite side to just below the ridge but turn back due to dangerous snow conditions. Graham, John and Dave climb a new peak (Whitehorse Peak 1st ascent 4850m) further down the valley from "ABC East".

Sunday 13th August

Stuart, Ashley, Paul and Ken F go down to Base Camp. Philip and David stay. Graham, John and Dave explore in 'Happy Valley'. Fine.

Monday 14th August

David and Philip arrive back at camp suffering from the runs. Graham, John and Dave arrive back from 'Happy Valley' having run out of food '. Another lovely day.

Tuesday 15th August

David and Philip were both sick during the night, Dave has the runs. Ken F and Paul go back up to "ABC east" Kaingdy. A wonderful day but cloud and snow in evening.

Wednesday 16th August

Paul and Ken F climb another route reaching 5250m (Hunter Peak 1st ascent) near the 'Pass of the 30 day Victory' and have to bivvy on a rock ledge just below the summit amid worsening conditions. They hope for better conditions tomorrow in order to continue along the ridge. At base there is snow then heavy rain, driving snow in evening.

Thursday 17th August

Paul and Ken F descend in poor weather and trudge back to "ABC east" in winter conditions. Base camp experiences sleet and snow during the day. About 7pm, having visited ABC east on the way down. 4 Belgians & 3 Russians acting as guides arrive in base camp. The 'visitors' are fed and housed by us.

Friday 18th August

3 inches of snow fall at base camp. The Belgian group are unable to get their 'guides' to move before 1.30pm. Weather worsening so Paul and Ken descend to Base Camp bringing as much as they can. Philip and David stay up at "ABC east" to try for a summit. More snow all day and during the night.

Saturday 19th August

Weather still not settled, the heavy clouds give snow by 10am. During a sunny afternoon the group begin to pack for the flight out on Monday 21st. Rain & snow at 6pm

Sunday 20th August

Ashley, Stuart and Ken M go up to ABC to meet Philip and David who are slightly overdue. Dave, John and Graham walk up the glacier and visit some glacier bays. Wonderful early morning, then changeable weather in afternoon; by 6pm there is thunder, heavy rain and snow.

Monday 21st August

Final pack-up, up very early. Cloud by 7am, clearing by 9. Helicopter flies in to the base area. We load up quickly then fly back to Maidaadyr. After a meal and a game of football a truck takes us back to Karakol.

Tuesday 22nd August

Group in Karakol. John goes for a local walk into the hills. Thunder heard in the hills around Karakol.

Wednesday 23rd August

The group visit the Przhivalski Museum and then go onto Lake Issyk - Kul for a swim and ice-cream. John stays at hostel - unwell.

Thursday 24th August

Everyone visited a canyon of bright red sandstone before Paul, Ashley, John, Dave and the two Holandish travellers venture into the hills west of Karakol. The mountains here have great potential for all sorts of activities.

Friday 25th August

Last minute 'shopping' around Karakol.

Saturday 26th August

Left Karakol at 8.30 am in truck. On journey to Almaty pass some fantastic scenery with cameras poised at every opportunity; most people avoid being shaken to death but only just. Arrive at Almaty around 5pm. and book in to a posh looking hotel. \$15 p/person p/night.

Sunday 27th August

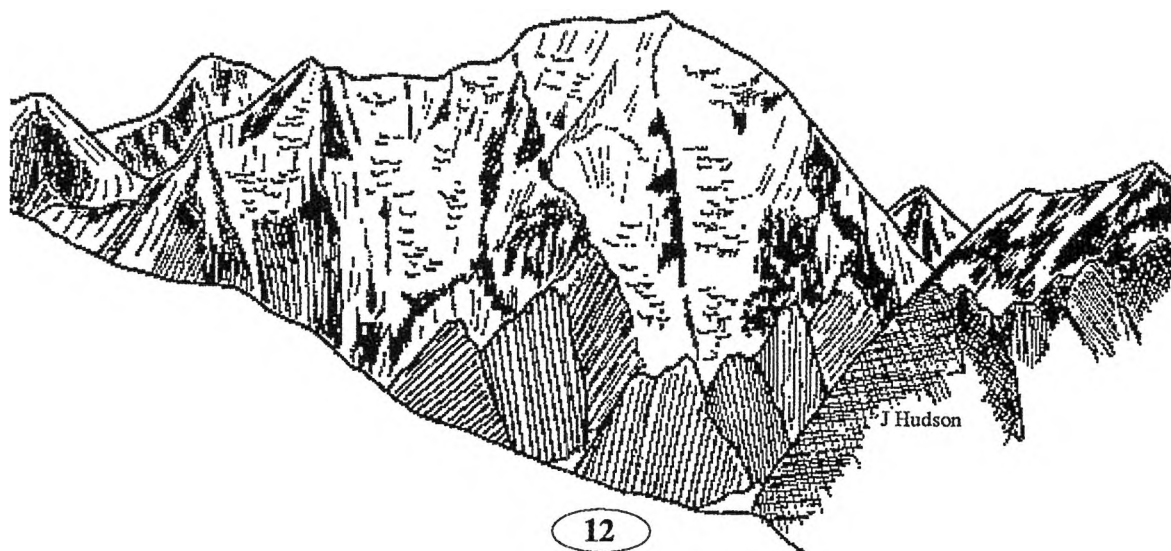
We are tourists today visiting Panfilov Park, Kazakstan Museum of Musical Instruments, National Museum of Kazakstan. Dave and John check out buses to airport. Last minute packing for tomorrow.

Monday 28th August

Up at 5am. and after a worrying departure to the airport, fly from Almaty to Moscow-Moscow to Gatwick via Riga in Lithuania. Everyone departs the airport to find their way home.

We take our leave from the solitary valley  
That has become our friend  
We have walked amongst you  
Touched the summits and ridges  
Crawled across snow bridges  
On hands and knees  
We fought up slopes  
Clipping ice screws  
With frozen ropes  
Sight of Base Camp brings relief  
Heavy sacks eased off the back  
Clean the boots , store the rack  
Pack the tents and all the gear  
We leave Kaingdy for another year.

Ken Findlay



# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### EARLY STAGES

No-one is sure whose idea this area was but in the end the finger has been pointed at Les Holbert who in the end had his wife give birth to a baby girl just so he could have an excuse not to go. The Tien Shan it was to be then, but where; this Tien Shan place is quite a big place as it turns out. I managed to get a map of the central area from America and noticed that there was a nice looking valley marked on that lay just to the south of the Inylchek valley. A party including Dan Cousens had climbed near it but had failed to get in due to broken bridges. There were no really high peaks associated with the valley except Shokalski Peak 5738m, that I think had been climbed from the other side. So there it was a nice looking valley that held few interesting objectives for those seeking only after height. Perhaps it has been left pretty much alone I thought, I hoped.

The team then was just **Ken Findlay** and I, two seem too small a group; the quest began.

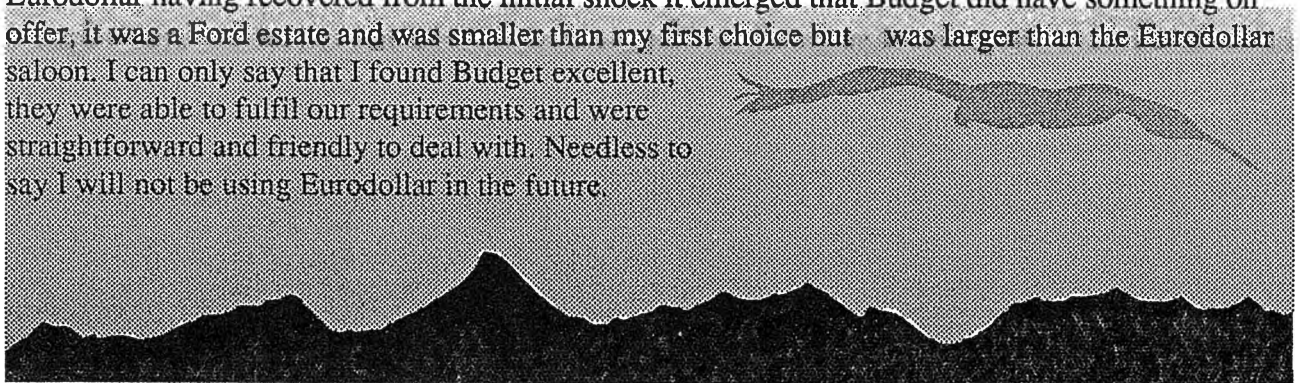
The Leeds Mountaineering Club brought no-one forward, with the expected costs around £1500 and the requirement of 5 to 6 weeks holiday it was not really surprising.

Ken asked around and found two interested people, but in the end personal or work difficulties counted them out. Then **Ashley Hardwell**, who was on the Bolivian trip with Ken and I in 1993, joined as a third member.

Ken and I went down to the Alpine Club symposium on mountains in the CIS and met **Stuart Gallagher** and **Ken Mosley**. They were seasoned CIS travellers having made two previous trips to the CIS for a Ski Mountaineering and a climbing trip. They too were interested and decided to accompany us, later they brought in **David Suddes** all three of them came from the North-East. Then we were joined by **Graham Treacher**, **John Hudson** and **Dave Penlington**, members of the Alpine Club who responded to an advert placed by Ken in the Alpine Newsletter.

Some people who had wanted to go and had joined the group were forced to withdraw near the leaving date of the expedition and at the very last moment **Philip Kendon** a member of Leeds Mountaineering Club came on board to make the group a round ten.

The Leeds group had decided that the best way to travel to Gatwick was by a hired car and after some initial difficulties Philip found Eurodollar who could offer a car for the dates we wanted, so I went to their local office to see what estate cars were on offer and to confirm the dates we required. So it was a surprise when on Saturday morning I received a phone call from Eurodollar saying that they were unable to supply the estate and would a saloon be acceptable? With three members travelling from Leeds and picking up a fourth at Nottingham, with all our gear it was not. They had rung round to see if they could hire one from another firm but with little success. When I rang back Eurodollar having recovered from the initial shock it emerged that Budget did have something on offer, it was a Ford estate and was smaller than my first choice but was larger than the Eurodollar saloon. I can only say that I found Budget excellent, they were able to fulfil our requirements and were straightforward and friendly to deal with. Needless to say I will not be using Eurodollar in the future.





# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### GETTING TO KARAKOL

Sunday 23rd July

The journey down went well and we arrived in good time to find the Newcastle Three already there. Soon others arrived and eventually we assembled in the departure area where I looked around for the Transaero Desk. At first it was nowhere to be seen but on asking I found that it would be opened shortly at the end of the row of desks. While I waited in a queue, Philip went off to find a photocopying machine to get copies of our English/Russian members sheet.

The photocopy of the letter from IMS Travel, signed by Mr. Gourtevoy vice president of Transaero, worked the trick and the 30k allowance was accepted. The first of the Photocopies of the letter was left with the operatives. Another climbing group also heading for the Tien Shan were charged £1000.00 for excess baggage apparently having been told by a 'friend' that airlines never charged for excess weight. Some friend! As we queued the Russian travellers were putting rolls and rolls of parcel tape all over their cases, across zips and round anything that was being entrusted to the aeroplanes hold, we began to worry.

The flight was now nearly underway and we passed through the passenger check where our hand baggage was checked by x-ray. My bag was checked for a suspicious item, a spring balance. Then Philip was held back in his sack that he was to carry on the plane were his two axes! The security chaps did not think too much of this and Philip and his bag were escorted to the final check by the plane and his sack confined to the hold. (advice-don't try to take large lethal weapons onto the plane)

Riga in Lithuania came and went in a short half an hour stop. Moscow. Here we had one and a half hour change over so we left the plane hoping for a quick check through. Just getting the passports checked to get into Russia took twenty minutes then we had to wait for the baggage, this was complicated when I had forgotten to inform Ken that some of us had placed his sack into a larger one at Heathrow. We waited for it to arrive on the carrousel, nothing came of course. We asked a worker who phoned to check if there was anything left on the plane, on the tarmac, in the baggage area nothing of course. Then I remembered; we had had everything all the time! Now of course the ninety minutes were nearly up and we had not even got out of the arrival area. We and the other group of four climbers were bound for the same flight to Almaty and with fourteen passengers missing it was fortunately noticed and one of the main officers had come to find out where we were. Once we had located the 'missing' bag we were whisked through to another room 100 yards along the pavement, our bags re-weighed, a charge for excess levied (\$117), personal baggage re--x-rayed and twenty minutes late we boarded the plane. Graham spent the whole of the flight Moscow to Almaty thinking that he had left his new Phoenix jacket on the bus that had brought us the 50 yards journey from the terminal to the plane, in which was also a pack of \$600 as group funds. When we got up to leave the plane there at the back of the locker was, safe and sound, was the jacket and the cash. The rush certainly caused some of us an amount of confusion and worry.

Monday 24th July

Almaty was in its early morning attire when we arrived and the remains of overnight rain lay on the streets. The coolness of the night persisted fortunately and the forecast 100°C by Stuart never materialised. While we waited for the baggage to arrive John Hudson found two reps from ITMC who were to organise our journey to Karakol. Unfortunately they did not speak any English so trying to find out what was happening exactly was difficult. Eventually the luggage arrived in an adjacent room and we moved in to collect it, then we noticed that an officer was checking the baggage label against the ticket given out at the check-in in Moscow. I rifled through my pockets finding a fistful of cards. Between us we got the bags, found the correct ticket and removed the baggage to a guarded pile outside. I do not remember this but some of the team said that once the majority of the baggage was gone the officer stopped checking.

Outside with our luggage all accounted for we moved it without the help of the 'porters' to the parking area just outside where a large coach awaited. The baggage loaded we were ready to depart except that now many of us were thirsty and the prospect of a 6 to 8 hour journey with out liquid was daunting. It became obvious how ridiculous the idea of sending couriers who we could not talk to when we tried to ask them to take us to a place where we could get drinks; a simple request but even that could not successfully be conveyed. I can only hope that ITMC will think more carefully about its customers in the future. As a last resort we got a cup of tea in the airport deafened by constant announcements.

The bus journey to Karakol did take a long time but was comfortable as we had a seat each on which to stretch out. The highlights of the journey apart from the landscape itself, included a lunch stop which came unexpectedly and the more welcome for that where the couriers provided a picnic; locals changing a main fuse on an electric pylon with a long stick to throw the switch; horses; the back window of the bus falling out and a really good storm. We arrived in Karakol at about 7pm.

The place we were taken to was an ex-USSR alpine climbing centre now run as a private centre. It offered clean rooms on several levels; very limited cooking facilities, two gas rings for however many groups/people were there at the time; cold water and a sink and one toilet. Later we were to find out that the cost was \$5 per/person/day. As soon as the luggage was unloaded and beds were allocated we bundled back into the bus for a short journey into the centre of Karakol in search of a meal. We were joined by Sergai a chap from Bishkek who was to be our cook at base camp. A 'restaurant' found I watched the others tuck into various types of meat based courses, filling up myself on the salad bit which accompanied them. *If you are a vegetarian you should think twice before setting foot in Kazakhstan and Kyrghizstan as meat seems an inseparable part of any meal.* The journey back to the alpine hut was interesting to say the least, we exited the restaurant it was raining lightly and quite chilly. We had not appreciated that Sergai was not a local and the drink that he had consumed did not help his route finding. At the old church it began to pour down and ten minutes later we stood by a small empty market with the only lamplight I recall in the whole of Karakol. Sergai said the we could get a bus at a cost of \$5 or perhaps I got it wrong anyway as the daytime cost was one Som (\$1 = 10.4 Som) I got affronted and said we would walk!

One might have two views of the events which followed. Sergai seemed to wander first one way then another and all in torrential rain. Most of the group seemed to take this inconvenience in good part though John Hudson 'cracked' and first began to complain to everyone, to me particularly, then suddenly shouted out at the top of his voice 'Paul, tell this man he is sacked! If he cannot find our hotel he will be no good in the mountains' Rather a short temper I thought. Shortly after the outburst we were on familiar territory and than back at the 'Alpine hut'.

Tuesday 25th July

When we woke the morning was grey but soon the sun burned through the cloud and it was easy to dry the wet gear in its strong rays. We spent the day visiting the centre of Karakol, the Bank, Post Office, shops, markets were all located by various members. This was the first day of a frustrating

time, waiting to find out what was planned and when we should be off to the hills. When we got up we met three members, Andy Kemp, Joanna Newton and Neil Kemp, of a British team who were in the process of mounting a rescue group to look for the body of Mick Davie who had fallen through a cornice on the first climb in the area. Their tale of what had happened and how they got the message out was told to Ken and Ashley over early morning tea. They were all affected by what had happened and what they would have to do over the next week.

After breakfast bought from a nearby market some of us were shown which bus to get for the town centre by Andy Kemp, Joanna Newton and Neil Kemp. Ken, Ashley and Philip found the Istanbul cafe in the centre, it is at the left hand side of the main building in the centre of the town. They were impressed by their hamburgers, chips, kebabs, orange and lemon drinks, cakes, ice-cream, breakfasts enjoying a selection with their coffee and tea. It had a good atmosphere and attractive waitresses (a fact which drew Ken back whenever he could make it) David Penlington helped by John Hudson spent the morning checking the tents that were being supplied for the base camp. This turned out to be essential as instead of tents that were suitable and effective we were being allocated ones without guys, poles that did not go together let alone fit the tents and few pegs.

Returning in the afternoon I hoped to get information about us moving on. I recall that Vladimir seemed busy talking to the other British team, ringing round and generally organising the rescue. The problem was that Vladimir was the only person there who took decisions, and the only person who could speak good English. Thus if he was dealing with one group or problem everyone else was held in limbo, getting more and more frustrated. We were anxious to get moving as we did not feel that there was any real organisation and that things happened almost by chance or good fortune. The morning had had its surprises when Vladimir suddenly appeared and asked what food we wanted him to buy. Hurriedly with a few of the others we put a list together. I had expected that ITMC would, using their knowledge of groups in the hills and the availability of food in assemble enough food of a suitable variety for us, especially as they were supplying the cook. Later a small selection of food appeared, it was nowhere near enough for ten climbers for twenty days, and we could not believe that it was really for us. Eventually Vladimir was found and it turned out that he had bought these bits so we could see and taste, then order the amounts we wanted.

Wednesday 26th July

Today there was no truck available but this was not made clear so we again felt unsure of what to expect. A couple of sentences would have made all the difference, thus the group were unsure of how long to be away and the day was 'wasted'. The morning had been spent waiting for the food and we had sent Ken Mosley with Vladimir and a copy of yesterdays list to help get the food. Around 11am. they had returned loaded down with various fresh, tinned and dried foodstuffs. The cooking gear we were being allocated was even worse than the tents! In all the faxes that had been exchanged between myself and ITMC referring to base camp gear it had been agreed that we would be using gas, suddenly we were being offered two petrol primus stoves. This was exacerbated by the fact that we had only been given the amount of petrol we had asked for as mountain fuel. It seemed ridiculous and stupid! Again Dave Penlington had to get arguing in order to get things sorted. After much argument with Anatoli whose centre it was Dave obtained a two ring gas stove and two instead of three 'balloons' of gas. *We ran out of gas after 14 days at base camp and only just managed to continue cooking by a continual servicing of the MSR stoves we had taken for mountain use. The two petrol primus stoves from the ITMC had also given up the ghost.*

Vladimir had left earlier with the Slovak group heading for Pobeda. They had passed in and out of the centre quickly arriving late the previous day they flew on in the helicopter taking the UK group back to the mountain. Some people at least could organise the people here. We had been told by Vladimir that the truck taking himself, the UK and Slovak group to the helicopter would return and take us to Maidaadyr. It did not return, something had broken down.

# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Thursday 27th July

Overnight there was a violent storm and rain lashed loudly overhead. Winds, it seemed, threatened to lift sections off the roof.

When the previous afternoon no truck had materialised we began to wonder what sort of organisation we had become involved in and if we would in fact ever reach the mountains at all, I could not now speak to Vladimir so I left him a note of our concern with his un-kept promises. Also with him gone it was impossible to find out what was happening or what was supposed to happen. Early next morning we looked out over an empty courtyard, despondency set in. At around 9 or 10 am a truck pulled in with three unkempt people aboard. They, two Americans and a Belgian, and the truck had apparently come from the Chinese border; was this 'our' truck we tried to ask, yes this was it! We were unconvinced especially as the driver had opened up the engine cover and began to fiddle with various bits. We chatted to the three new arrivals who were negotiating about the cost of staying at the hut. Suddenly at one o'clock we were told to load up, everything became a rush. Some carried to the lorry while others stacked and stored the gear and food into the front of the passenger cabin. The space began all too quickly to fill up, the three newcomers bet that we would run out of space and that either the gear or ourselves could be taken, not both. The packers did a good job and eventually we and the luggage could be squeezed in together. As we left at one thirty, two other people tried to get on much to our consternation, we almost refused them access to the van that we were paying for but in the end we relented and they too squeezed in by sitting on the floor.

The journey was great with the road following a wide valley towards the mountains and the passes we had to cross. As we drove a range of hills which were absolutely Alpine kept us company, occasional views gave glimpses of higher whiter peaks. The road and the lorry rose up from the plain and we entered a land of fast flowing rivers, pine trees and steep sided hills. More people on horse back. More sheep, more views, more and more excitement. It took five and a half hours through changing countryside to reach Maidaadyr, it was dusk when we at last stopped by some erected tents. During the journey from Karakol Ashley's idea of walking into base camp had taken root so much so that in the end he made a decision to helicopter in as six others wanted to walk in and he thought that three climbers and Sergai would not be enough people to transport the gear and erect base camp. So while four of us tried to sort out what we needed for the night there were six others rushing round trying to establish their needs for the three day walk and then ensure that the needs were met. Locating gear and food and sorting it out took a while and the six worked quicker when Vladimir said they were to leave in thirty minutes to spend the night at Inylchek. With all the base camp gear unloaded near the helicopter we waved goodbye to the walkers as they and the truck headed back towards Inylchek for an early start next day. The walkers spent the night in an abandoned house. Stuart recalls his memories of the walkers arrangements;

"Eventually after much indecision six of the team decided to walk into the base camp. The reasons for this I'm sure varied from fear of flying in M18 helicopters to a desire to acclimatise gradually. We arrived in Maidaadyr and had just put our gear in one of the Russian tents when the walkers were told to be ready in an hour. There followed a hurried search through mountains of gear for personal equipment, food, stoves etc. in the gathering dusk. Soon we were given a bowl of pasta and left immediately afterwards for the 15km drive back down the valley to Inylchek. At Inylchek we were shown to a bungalow with several rooms but no kitchen or bathroom. Vladimir brought us a bucket of water from the house he was staying in. We cooked a meal and got to bed about midnight."

## BASE CAMP

Friday 28th July

David, Ashley, Ken and I woke the next morning to a clear day and after tea and breakfast we were loading the helicopter with the help of a number of others. The gear packed we got inside and the engines were started. First we taxied a short distance then turned moved forward gaining speed and lifted off. The flight was in fact quite short, around twenty minutes, but the views were great and the effect on Ken and David particularly noticeable. Mountains, glaciers, rock, ice and snow passed below, viewed with four pairs of excited eyes. As with the journey from Karakol we were giving a lift to the two porters as well another two who were dropped off lower down the valley.

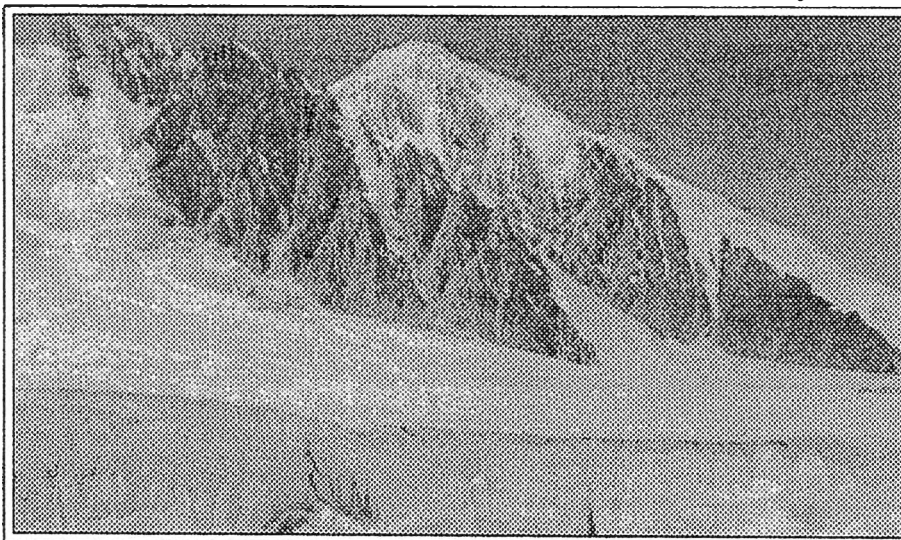
We began a circle round prior to landing, below the small tents of the UK team and the Russian support group. We landed on a smooth area of ice to the right (south) of a moraine tongue being pulled from a high peak immediately above us.

With the gear and food unloaded and the helicopter off down the valley, only silence and the mountains remained. As we had been asked not to camp too close to the other group as they wanted peace to accept the loss of their friend, we looked around for a good site that could accommodate the eleven members of our team. Just across from where we landed the moraine formed a steep slope on the other side of this was a flattish area big enough for everyone. Two hours of heavy worked followed as we carried everything from the landing site to the base camp. The tents were erected gear and food sorted and put away and a rest taken so that by 2pm we were all enjoying a well earned rest and a cup of

## THE TREKKING GROUP

Friday 28th July

We woke at six to a cloudless sky and after breakfast loaded our gear into the Zil. Yuri appeared about 7am and with brief instructions from Vladimir about the best way up the glacier, we left. Our transport, as on the journey from Karakol, was a six wheel drive Zil truck, in front was Yuri, our driver. The road was extremely rough even for the off-road lorry we were using; after leaving the village the road swung south and followed the Inylchek river to its confluence with the river descending from the Kaiyndy glacier and then followed this river to a point where a bridge over the river had collapsed. The journey took a couple of hours at an average speed of about 8 m.p.h. Progress was so slow because of the track. The scenery was arid at first but became less so as we drove up the Kaiyndy valley. On the track here we slowed even more, but at least we were not carrying anything yet so we could enjoy the views. From time to time we passed some Yurts, the local housing. The Yurt is so important to this area and its nomadic history that Kyrgyzstan has one on its flag. Yuri dropped us at the collapsed bridge. To the south of us was a striking mountain mass of about 4500m with an extensive north face. I would imagine this mountain is unclimbed and by itself would have provided our team with enough entertainment for a month. After Yuri left we adjusted our dress, adjusted our sacs and



An early sight of Mountain Of Death (MOD), as I called it, from the east. From near its top Mick had fallen through a cornice to disappear down its north-east face. Later, on the day of our arrival Ken and David were to watch helpless as a further two climbers fell to their death while descending from a days rescue efforts. I saw the avalanche as I walked back down the Kaiyndy Glacier from a short afternoon excursion, not daring to think of its possible cause.

## BASE CAMP

Friday 28th July

tea. Never one to sit still I decided to go for a short walk along the Kaingdy Glacier.

### *Ken's report of the accident*

"We spotted the Russian Rescue team coming down the summit ridge of the Mountain of Death in the late afternoon. I got a strange felling that something wasn't right, the more I watched the group descending, the more uncomfortable I became. I passed the binoculars to David Suddes and retired to my tent. No sooner had I got into my sleeping bag, than I heard David screaming at the top of his voice ' that they've gone over the edge '. Quickly I looked up to where there had been three climbers only minutes before, and now alone on the ridge spread-eagled was one lone figure, desperately holding on to the mountain for dear life.

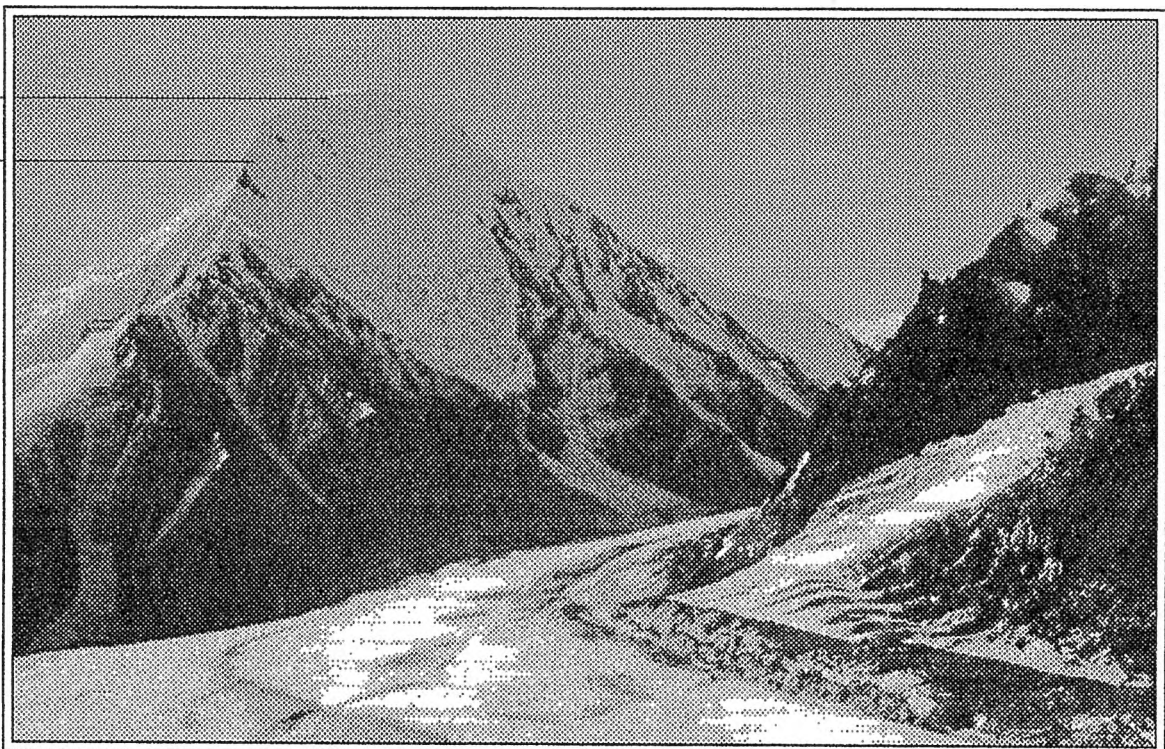
I felt so helpless in those minutes, totally transfixed and horrified that we were witnessing a major disaster. The first person had gone too near the giant cornice which overhung the North Face, as the second followed, the whole cornice broke off taking with it the second and third climbers. The leader managed to secure themselves on the ridge, and within minutes the rope had been shredded, probably by the ice and rock. The two climbers disappeared from view down the North face accompanied by tons of ice.

## THE TREKKING GROUP

Friday 28th July

then sat down to adjust our minds to our new surroundings and the walk ahead of us. It was around 9.30am. A quick photo call then the sacs were hoisted onto shoulders and we set off across the remains of the bridge and a Kyrgyz homestead. Within a short distance the scenery became more alpine; green and full of alpine meadows with carpets of flowers giving the air that distinctive Alpine taste. Secretly, I am sure, some members thought about just camping here among the green alpine fields and setting about exploring the wealth of white mountain peaks that surrounded us. It was hard to realise that wherever we trod off the path, we were likely to be the first! The walking was very pleasant, following the continuation of the track, mainly on the valley side, but in places across the gravel plain deposited by the river. During the spring melt the river must be over half a mile wide. We all looked enviously at the mountains rising to the north, studying their easy lines. There were few side streams and we made good progress. Even if it rained a lot, I thought, there would be little difficulty in making progress here. At one point a

Accident sites  
MICK  
TWO RUSSIAN CLIMBERS



Mountain of Death, showing the ridge from which Mick Davie and then the two Russian rescuers fell. Ken F and David watched as the **19** second accident happened.

## BASE CAMP

Friday 28th July

The mood was subdued at Base Camp as we watched the lone figure begin a slow and careful descent. We tried to alert the other UK team but there was no-one there. "

On my way back from the walk an avalanche fell from the peak above base and thought crowded my mind, though I dismissed them in fear. At base I learned the horrible truth. After some discussion we went to check if the other camp were back, they were and we told Andy the horrible story. He went to talk to two Russian climbers who had also returned and they began to prepare to set off to rescue the survivor. We loaned them an extra head torch and some other bits and pieces, within an hour they were off walking quickly towards the 'Mountain of Death'.

*Ken* "While Ashley and Paul were seeing the Russian climbers, David and myself were listening to radio calls, praying that the two fallen climbers were by some miracle still alive. It was a confused and philosophical night."

Later that evening Ashley, Andy and I decided to walk up the glacier to see where the climbers had ascended/descended to. We reached a point below the route to see a faint light from the descending climber come and go high up on the mountain, then after much eye straining we also became aware of the lights of the rescuers much to the left of the descent route. We trusted that the two courses would converge as the climbers neared each other. It was obvious that it would take hours for the climbers to reach the glacier again so we gave up waiting and left some sweets and chocolate on a rock next to a flashing red signalling light. We were told the next day that our small gift was welcomed and appreciated by the weary climbers.

BASE CAMP  
Saturday 29th July

In the morning we found out that the survivor was Joanna and therefore the two fallen climbers were two Russians from the rescue party. Ken and I took a walk up the Moshnyi Glacier to look at potential climbs. We looked again at MOD as we passed below its easy looking ridge. Unroped climbing, that was something to think about. With all the real climbing behind them Joanna and Mick Davie nearing the top would have been in good spirits, then one false step!

## THE TREKKING GROUP

Friday 28th July

local helped by carrying a sack. As we moved up the valley the track became feint. In late afternoon we rounded a bend in the valley and got our first view of the glacier snout about five miles away. At this point the track became much less obvious and we were walking over alpine meadows full of Edelweiss, Gentians, Alpine Asters, Potentilla, mushrooms and wild rhubarb. A Kyrgyz shepherd grazed his sheep above us. Some of the tributary streams had carved deep steep sided valleys that became more difficult to cross. At about 7pm. Ken and I, who were in the lead, decided to call a halt and find a campsite. We chose a spot as level as possible beside a very small stream above the gravel plain of the river. We spent a comfortable night.

THE TREKKING GROUP  
Saturday 29th July

After a leisurely breakfast we packed the tents and left shortly after 10.00. The morning was cloudy but it was set fair. The short distance to the glacier snout begun well over grassy slopes but in the end took a couple of hours because the track ascended and then traversed the steep valley side and then disappeared altogether. A return to the gravel deposits of the river made progress much easier. Vladimir had told us to keep to the true left bank of the glacier snout and indeed this was the only obvious route. Progress again became very slow as we picked our way up the snout, sometimes on the moraine, sometimes on the valley side, crossing melt water streams and at one point a large recent landslide. As well as the difficult going the weather deteriorated with rain and sleet showers in the afternoon. By 7pm we were above the snout and on the glacier proper though at this point it was entirely covered by moraine. We levelled some moraine debris and pitched the tents. Unfortunately the site wasn't ideal as there was no running water in the vicinity, so we had to make do with what we had left in the water bottles. It had been a hard day.





## BASE CAMP

Sunday 30th July

### BASE CAMP

Sunday 30th July

David woke with his continuing headache, during the night he had managed only a little sleep and he decided that the best thing to do was to walk down the glacier for some distance and by losing height he hoped that that would help him get rid of his altitude problem. At around 10am David, Ashley and I left base and began to walk west down the glacier. While David was aiming to lose height Ashley and I were aiming for an easy snow slope to see how we fared going up hill. The slope we had chosen was an easy one and I only took one ice tool, fortunately as it turned out Ashley had both already strapped to his sack. The three of us walked down the glacier for about 45 minutes where we turned left and David continued. I was unhappy about David going on alone and kept looking back to check on his progress. He seemed to make slow progress and take frequent rests but he kept going and in the end disappeared from view. He was on his own! I hoped that he would meet the others coming up the glacier.

Ashley and I made our way to the foot of our climb and geared up, though we had a number of snow stakes we had only brought three ice screws, well it was a snow plod. Setting off from the rock the truth dawned we were not dealing with a nice snow slope but one composed of hard ice with a crust of snow lying over it. The going was not too bad to begin with and we moved independently, but as we gained height the slope steepened enough to make my progress with only one ice-tool feel precarious. Ashley had already been using both tools and noticed my hesitation from above, "Do you want to rope up and pitch this bit?" he called down. I accepted and we began to move one at a time, first Ashley led then I would take his ice-hammer and lead through when I reached his stance. We made progress but it was now much slower, looking down over the glacier to see if David was in sight we spied not one but four figures and they were moving up the glacier. It was the walking group making their way towards the camp. From our vantage point we could appreciate the size of the glacier, it must have been about half a mile wide below us. It will be easy for them to completely miss the camp we thought but were too high and too far away to contact them.

## THE TREKKING GROUP

Sunday 30th July

### THE TREKKING GROUP

Sunday 30th July

In the morning the weather had improved greatly and we left at about 9.30am promising ourselves another brew at the first water we came to. There were many small trickles of water that were still frozen but after twenty minutes we came across a small clear lake in the moraine. More brews were consumed and water bottles filled. The rest of the day was quite easy walking with a steady height gain. One small problem was that we didn't know where we were going because we had no idea where the rest of the team had decided to establish base camp. Progress was slowed by having to find crossing points over the many rivers that meandered at some speed and volume down the surface of the glacier. By mid afternoon we were beginning to wonder if we had passed the base camp - a feat that would have been very easy in view of the size of the moraines and the ice ridges. At about 16.00 we spotted two people down climbing an ice face to the south of us, and as ours was the only team operating in the area, it was a fair assumption that they were ours and that we weren't too far from base camp. In fact it took us another hour to locate it on the medial moraine between the Moshnyi and Kaiyndy glaciers. On looking at the maps, our progress over the three days had been less than impressive. On the first day, despite what at the time had seemed easy walking, we only covered eight miles and on the second day, because of the complexity of the glacier snout only two to three miles and on the third day about five miles.

The walkers were;

Stuart Gallagher ~ Reporter

John Hudson

Philip Kendon

Ken Mosley

Dave Penlington

Graham Treacher

## BASE CAMP

Sunday 30th July

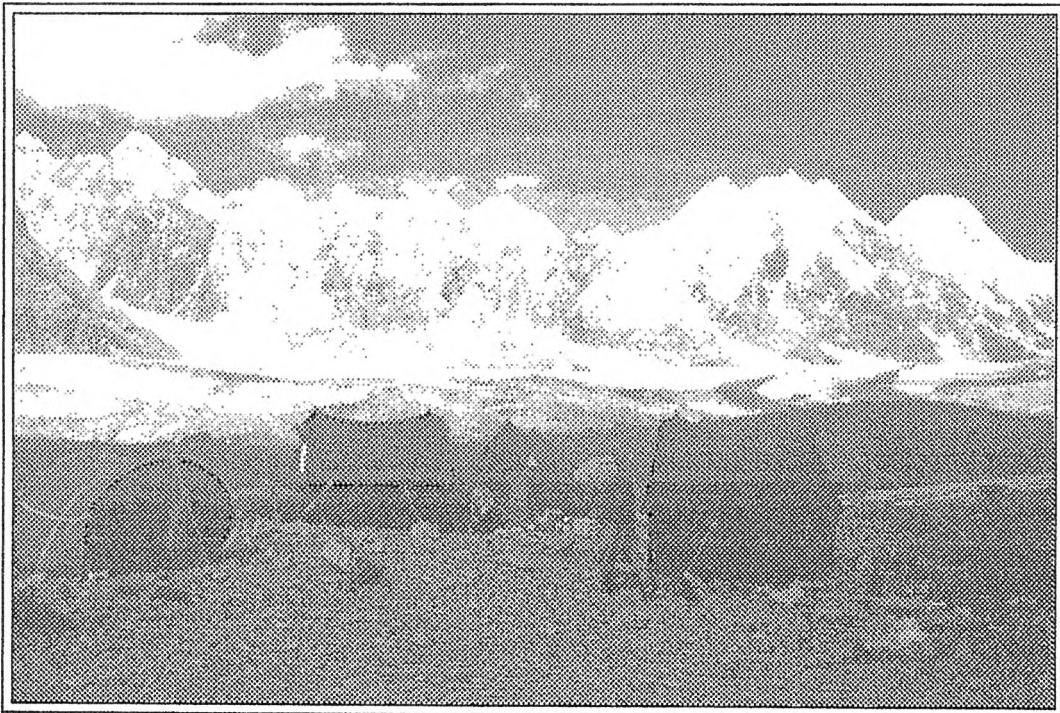
The slope went on and Ashley and I continued to lead in turns, it was good to be gaining height but I found it tiring. We had thought that we might make it to a small summit but when we reached the first shoulder the time we had taken, our tiredness and the time of day made us change our minds. At some rock we untied, ate some chocolate and rested. From this vantage point we could see the mountains opposite from a new perspective, I always wish it would be possible to get instant prints at times like these, it would be great to be able to study the views we could see now in the comfort of our tents as I always forget the detail of what I have been looking at.

The descent gave us something to think about and in the end we took turns at 'abseiling' and belaying and down climbing. Always take both ice tools I kept repeating to myself under my exhausted breath. The sun had moved quite low in the sky by the time we reached the base of the steeper snow/ice and were able to solo across to the starting place where Ashley had left his running shoes, used on the walk down the glacier.

The journey back to base camp was a quiet one, mainly because we got separated so there was no one to talk to. Ashley had got in front as usual and was off across the hills and dales of the ice when I chose a variant route back to base. It was really pleasant going for most of the time just trudging along as the light changed to a lesser intensity and shadows collected in hollows in front of me.

My lone perambulations caused Ken a little concern, for as I neared base he was watching for our return and when he saw a lone figure his mind jumped to the conclusion that something had happened, It was the sort of frame of mind we were all in after the dual accidents.

The trekking team had arrived in Base Camp at 4.30pm. to be greeted only by Ken and Sergai.



Base camp on the Kaingdy glacier, on Sunday 30th July everyone except David Suddes was there. This was the first time the group were assembled at base camp.



# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### EXPLORATION BEGINS

Tuesday 1st August

Graham and Dave left base camp early and managed to reach the col at the head of the Moshnyi Glacier. They reported great views from the col's edge and Graham took a complete panorama of the hills across the next valley. On the way back we greeted them at the new 'ABC south' with a cup of tea, though the MSR stoves were very troublesome to get going. Ken, Ashley, John and myself had walked up later in the day to establish this advanced camp 'ABC south'.

The lower part of the glacier provided easy walking and though Ashley was always ahead and to be found sunbathing from time to time the other three of us kept together. This was the first journey along the Moshnyi for John and Ashley and they too were impressed at the mountains on either side as Ken and I had been earlier. From my previous high point we split up, I took what looked like an interesting high traverse while the other three dropped down a slope to climb up again the other side of a small snow ridge. As the three below me made good progress, I too was able to keep in line. That was until the colour of the snow changed and I began to sink. First it was just down to my ankles but soon it was to my knees! I found it impossible to make progress, with my sack weighing me down I could not gain any ground. My only option was to remove the sack and drag it behind me, easier said than done. So it was with relief that I saw Ashley come back over the ridge above to offer help.

Ashley, John and Ken had found a snow bump on which to pitch the two Phoenix tents. It was by some running water but also near a sort of slush lake and it was with a wet foot that I eventually crawled into my tent later that evening. I had the runs during the night and was up a few times depositing nasty substances around the camp area, it was not easy to make it to the 'toilet' area!

Wednesday 2nd August

Ashley, Ken and John and I woke at 2.30am and after a warming drink and some chocolate set off for the col (4800m) at first light. John and Ashley got further and further away from Ken and I as my pace became slower and slower. Eventually with the front two disappearing fast over the rises in front of us I told Ken to go it alone so we untied and while I moved ever slower to the next rise, Ken began to catch the other two up. I did get to the col and the views were great, the next valley south was again bordered by a long ridge of difficult peaks culminating in Kirov Peak which is just over 6000m.

I sat down and rested, behind me Ken caught the two front runners and all three disappeared up a long snow slope behind a bulge of ice.

John, "The snow slopes in front of us led up at 40°, soon it was thin snow over ice and the going became harder. For a while it was Ashley and I in front, the Ken took over and reached the ridge. As we climbed higher it became clear that our summit was no more than the prow of a subsidiary ridge, the summit being somewhat higher and a way off. At 8.30 we were resting on this prow and looking at what was ahead of us. We had been going quite well but Ashley had developed a cough and was now coughing blood marked sputum. Behind us the weather was developing for the worse with clouds now cutting the tops off the mountains around us, including the summit we were aiming for. After a short discussion accompanied by gathering cloud we decided to go back. Our plan was to rest at 'ABC south' and then make a faster ascent tomorrow. As we descended to the col the weather seemed to brighten for a while but before long it was snowing. We quickly made it back to the camp and by 2.30 were struggling with the MSR stoves, trying to get something warm and refreshing into our bodies. In the night there was a storm and a deal of snow fell."

### "My First Success; Ken Findlay comments

It was hard work going up to the col, Paul was weak due to being up all night with the runs. At the col Paul went back down to ABC, while I continued to try and catch up Ashley and John. The climbing was straight forward up a snow slope ( about 45 degrees ) across a couple of crevasses. We hit a magnificent snow ridge which led up to a prominent snow dome. The ridge ahead of us looked superb with a good snow ridge winding up to a face of about 10 rope lengths to a summit. Ashley at this time was feeling bad and began to cough up blood, along with the onset of bad weather we decided to retreat back down the way we came, having reached a height of 5200m. So thoughts of a massive traverse were shelved for the time being. The unsettled weather lasted for about four days."

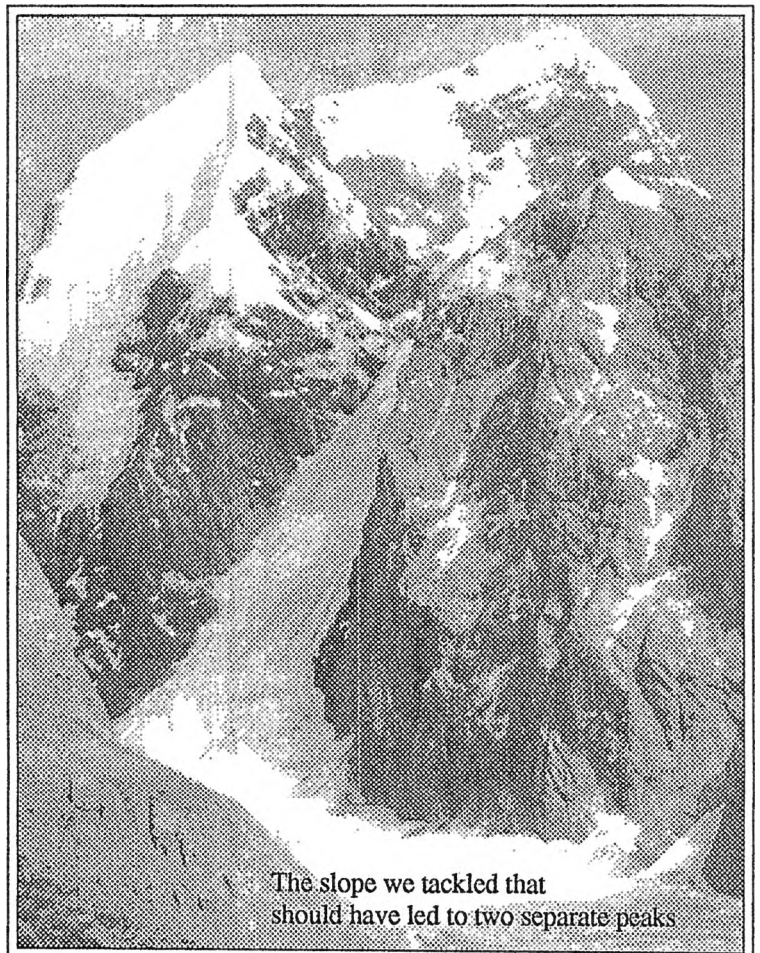
Thursday 3rd August

After the stormy night the weather had improved in the morning and by 8.30am the day was great. Ashley, John and Ken at 'ABC south' slowly surfaced from the comfort of their sleeping bags and the weather having made the decision for them against trying yesterday's route again, they made preparations to descend to base. At 11.20am they set off down the slopes and they entered base at 12.15pm. In the afternoon cloud again returned bringing snow by 2pm. Paul took the chance to rest and felt better by the end of the afternoon. Dave and Graham walk up the Kaingdy Glacier from 'ABC east' to the col.

Friday 4th August

Another great day dawned on the 4th August and little cloud was in evidence. John, Dave and Graham left at 9.15am for a walk down the glacier to visit another glacier system. They found the route an easy one, better than the one used on the walk in. They followed a shale moraine then an icy ridge. At the second glacier on the left we entered an untrodden land, the access was easy and no crevasses barred our progress. At 12.15pm they had passed a flat snow basin and reached a point below an ice fall. As the venture was intended to be a day's exploratory effort that was as far as they went and at 1.45pm the three travellers began their return to base which they reached at around 4.30.

While John, Dave and Graham were exploring the area to the west of the base camp David, Ken , Stuart and I were across the other side of the valley north of base. It was an early start across the Kaingdy glacier and we headed for the second bay opposite base camp. I was in this team as Philip had become unwell and I now made up the second pair with Dave . It was a straight forward crossing of the main glacier and we soon made the entrance to the glacier bay number two (Karakol Glacier). As we ascended the slight slope gaining height crevasses began to show, though they were small and very easy to cross. As we moved further into the bay the layer of snow became deeper, but being mostly frozen the going was still quite easy. Always the last I watched the others move further away from me as we mover higher into the small valley. Soon it was time to rope up for safety and I tied on with David in case of hidden crevasses.



The slope we tackled that should have led to two separate peaks

The slope above us looked inviting, it split two ribs of shattered rock running down on either side of us. First Ken M and Stuart set off and soon we followed; while they moved up near the left rock rib and used slings and pitons as running belays, David and I used a line further out on the ice using ice-screws. The ascent was easy enough though I found it tiring on the hard ice where we had to kick every step to ensure the crampons bit into the ice. Sometimes David and I would move together sometimes in pitches it took a lot longer than I had anticipated to reach the landmarks seen from the start.

Ken M and Stuart had moved in front of us as we gained height and had reached a rock ledge below a shattered rock outcrop where they could sit. The slope David and I were on became difficult as deep soft snow alternated with bare ice. As Stuart and Ken M looked comfortable David was enticed to join them on their stance instead of continuing on up the slope to its crest. (*This was the mistake that cost us any further progress .*) As I reached the ledge Ken M was already setting off up a difficult looking rock chimney in the hope of finding a way to the upper slopes of the mountain, after a struggle and some excellent rock work Stuart followed. The ledge was in the shade and icicles hung around us, some thick enough to offer belay points. I began to feel cold. Time passed and then it was David turn to follow the other two, I don't know why I did not try to get David to try the alternative option but I did not.

Above me now I could hear David grunting as he made progress over the difficult rock and further off a conversation between Ken M and Stuart. I felt colder.

It seemed to take a while for an exploration of the upper rock area and when David had reached the top stance there was already concern in the air. Ken M had tried to follow a snow ramp onto higher ground only to find that it was slabby rock with a dusting of snow, just for show. The message was called down that they three above me were having difficulty in finding a way forward and would I hang on to see if it was in fact worth me following on as they might have to return. I waited. Occasional snatches of conversation indicated that the exploration was not progressing well. It was extremely cold on the ledge now and it contrasted with the warm looking sun just a few feet above me where all the action was.

There was no way forward and thus the three explorers had to rejoin me on the ledge, and by the time they had over two hours had passed. The two hours lost in exploration meant that we had missed our chance! It was decided that we would return to base the way we had come.

Ashley, Ken and Philip had an easy morning but in the afternoon went up to 'ABC south' on the Moshnyi Glacier, Philip still not feeling 100% returned to Base Camp leaving Ken F and Ashley in place for a further attempt at the peak above the col.

The day's brilliance early on disappeared in the evening and heavy cloud moved in around 5pm, it was followed by light snow at 7. In the night it snowed heavily depositing around 4 inches at base camp and more higher up.

Saturday 5th August

As it had snowed all night, Ken and Ashley woke to find a world too dangerous to climb in and decided to descend to Base Camp. Dave, Graham and John left base at 10.30am. to locate the earlier dump of tents etc. higher on the Kaingdy glacier. The sky was thick with cloud as they made their way over the first ice valleys before reaching the flatness of the glacier itself. As they followed the moraine strip that conveniently ran up the right (south) side. The views of possible routes from camp became clearer, impressive and were then ruled out as too dangerous, too serious, too difficult!

As the three moved along the glacier mist and cloud fell providing difficult conditions for finding particular rocks on an ice-field. At about 12.15pm they found the dump, seeing it from only 150m It continued to be misty and started snowing soon after finding the dump. By 2.45 after a fast decent the three were almost back in base camp, with heavy snow hampering their progress.

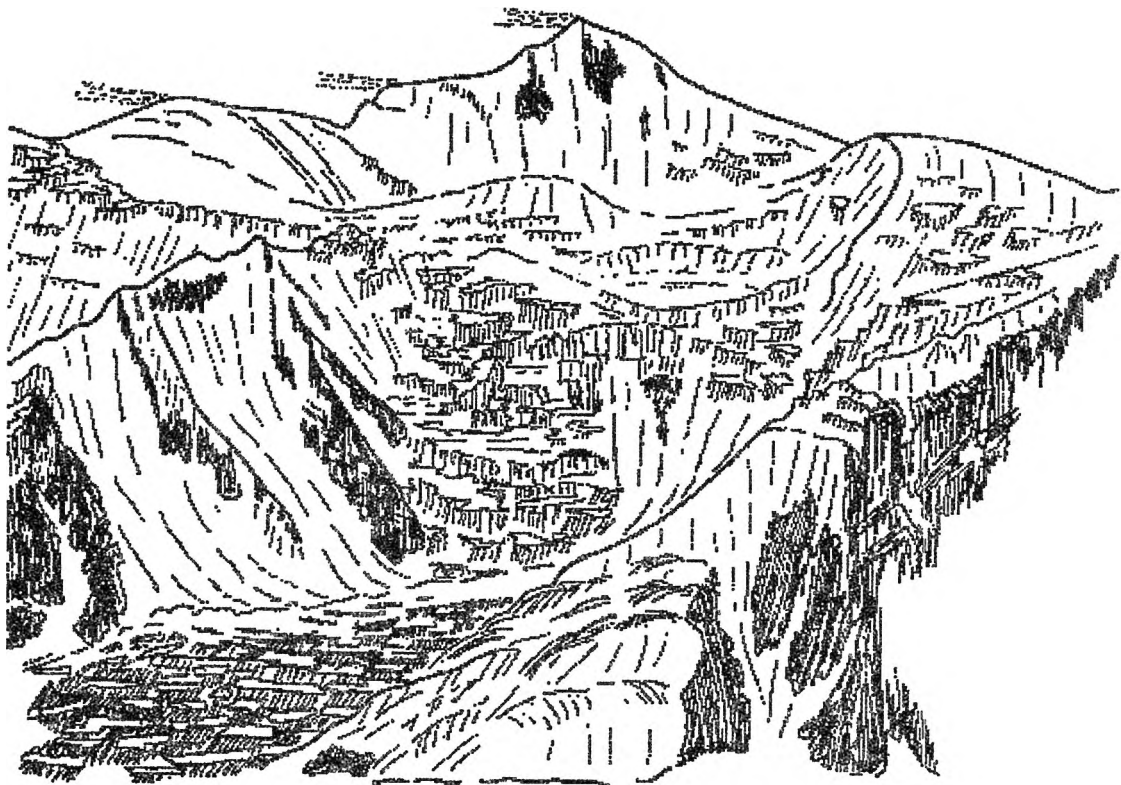
This was however a day of mountaineering inactivity for most and perhaps because of this the idea of trying Pointy peak the next day first crossed Philip's mind. He brought this idea to me and I agreed that it was one worth pursuing. Then we told Ken F and Ashley of our plan hoping that they would join in with us. After an amount of negative argument mainly from Ashley they agree to come as well, fortunately as it turned out!

## WISHES

Cotton wool on blue  
Treading softly across the sky  
Like a snake creeping  
Unveil the monster sleeping  
Gathering up speed  
Launching its wings  
Blocking out the heat  
Freezing our feet  
Changing the atmosphere  
Changing our minds

Gazing upwards  
Picking out lines  
Sensing the dangers  
Fascinated by the colours  
By the sheer size  
Pray for good weather  
As we sharpen our tools  
Sort out our rack  
Fill our rucksack  
And wait, wait, wait.

What will become of us  
Treading amongst the giants  
Making our way through the ice  
Lungs fit to burst  
Upwards we venture  
Into the clouds we fly  
Fighting the fear  
That passes us by  
Through snow we go  
To reach our summit high





THE TOP SECTION  
OF ANGEL PEAK  
SHOWING FOOTPRINT:  
THE BIVVY SITE  
WAS ON THE  
SHOULDER TO THE  
LEFT OF THE TOP  
OVERHANG.

# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### THE FIRST SUCCESS

Second according to some

Sunday 6th August

Here is Philip's account of our first successful venture. This was his first major expedition and I recall him saying how the isolation of our group and the seclusion of our situation made a great impression upon him.

"Cairn Toul, Angel's Ridge. That was the first thought that entered my mind after setting eyes on a sharp peak staring at us, enticing us from the back of a glacial basin seemingly only a stone's throw away from the security of base camp. It had to be done: a superb and feasible looking line surrounded by a seething mass of huge seracs, cornices and steep ice walls. Earlier it had been given the name of Pointy Peak by the others.

It was 1.30am, black and cold. This is always the toughest part of an Alpine route-getting out of your pit. A small helping of Readybrek and a brew set the wheels in motion, though somewhat slowly. Eventually we were off, across the moraine and onto the Moshnyi glacier. Pointy Peak showed bright in a good moon as it sailed in and out of cloud. As we walked on gaining a little height the stars blinked brilliantly across the mantle of the night and shooting stars, so rarely seen in town, darted overhead.

At the edge of the glacier we followed a route that Ashley had reconnoitred the day before, it took us to the edge of the ice field over a scree path. The cold bit into our fingers as we uncoiled ropes and attached crampons. In front of us was a highly seraced area with gaping holes lurking unseen in the early morning gloom. A short distance into this area we came across a set of tracks a cat, a fairly small cat. We all wondered what the animal would be doing in a place like this, with no food for herbivores what would it find? Ken warily crossed a snow bridge leading us we hoped, to flatter and more stable ground. An hour later however, the foot of Pointy Peak was barely any closer; we were still ploughing through soft knee, sometimes thigh, deep snow. It was about this time that we discussed the option of giving up. Ashley, Ken and I thought that if we were not significantly closer in an hours time we would go back to base. Somehow Paul was not privy to this discussion, perhaps he was crawling off somewhere at the time, anyway he was genuinely surprised at when it came up in conversation later back at base camp.

We continued walking, crawling and cursing, always drawn magnetically to the mountain and at 6:30am we miraculously stood at the foot of our route.

Ken quickly led off and Ashley followed. Ken waded light work of a huge but well covered bergschrund, above, a slope of ice at 50°-55° led up. There were good conditions here with frozen snow over lying the hard ice, good screw placements were found with ease. Clouds had now billowed and blown-in over head, producing light flurries of snow. Doubts entered my mind but soon evaporated recalling the pattern of weather we had so far experienced; such cloud never having produced any serious snowfall.

Behind me was Paul, the mountaineering scarecrow! A jangling, dangling figure, with snow-stakes, stove, Sheep in a chalk bag and perhaps the kitchen sink swinging around him.

After around two or three hundred meters the slope eased to 45° and the layer of sugary snow deepened. Ken continued to trend right aiming to reach the ridge itself. Now there followed an endless and tiring plod, time sped by as we had to rest after every few steps of effort in deep and unstable snow. Finally we were there on the ridge, there was no cornice here to cause alarm just a nice sharp crest with both slopes of the mountain running down away from us. The angle had again eased and we sat in deep swarths of sun drenched snow, it made a change from the cold shadows of the north facing slope. It was now approaching midday and I felt my strength and energies being sapped by the powerful, draining heat. Yet no-one suggested a break for food or water. Our minds seemed fixed upon the next difficulty; how to gain the next leftward curve of the ridge: what sort of ground would we find up there?



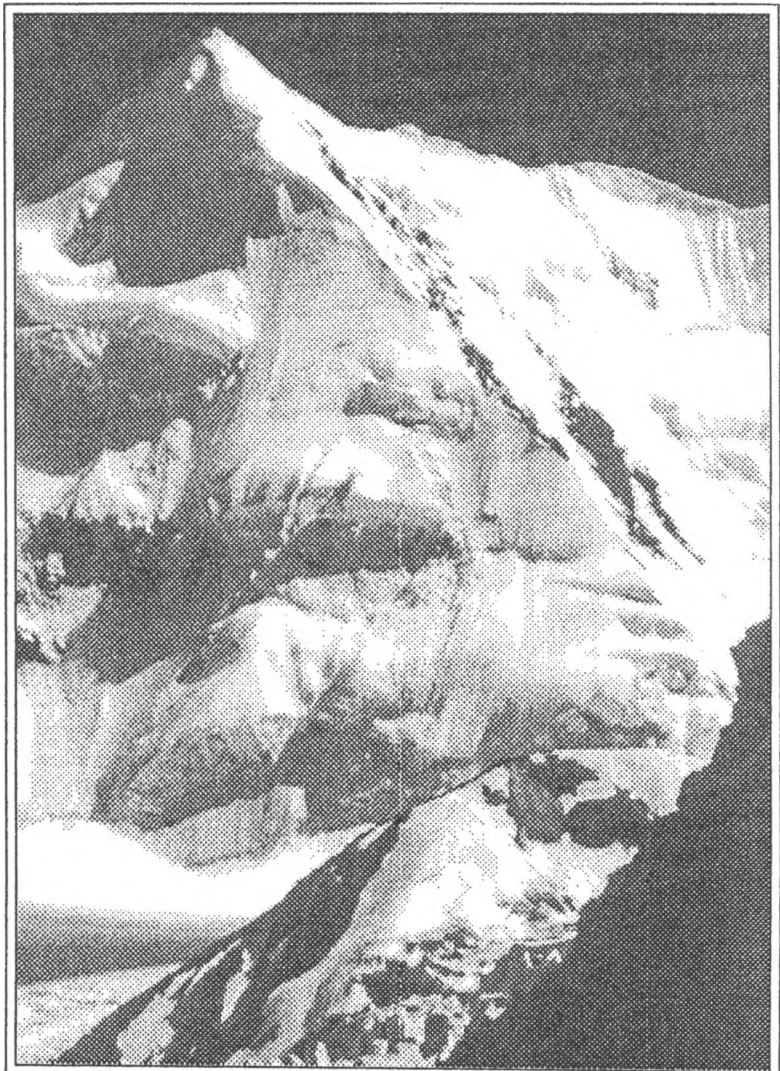
It looked straightforward enough, 70m or so of reasonably angled snow rising a little more steeply to another leftward curving arete. Ashley though was clearly having problems. He had made good progress and was now almost at the end of the rope, then he came to an abrupt stop. "It's impossible to go up here", he called down. "It is just mush with no holding power at all, it gets steeper here! I am going to go right and up this wall." Here he indicated the area of ice which led up to the next easily angled area of snow.

We sorted out the rope and gave him as much free line as we could. Then he descended rightward and down, out of our view. There followed a desperate traverse and ascent which was enough of a strain to watch let alone climb; Ashley balancing on his points and pecking with his axes slowly made progress up the wall. At one point his left boot slipped and our hearts were in our mouths, at another he lengthened his axe slings so that he could step into them, it was appalling to watch! Finally after a lot of effort he surmounted the last section of ice and disappeared over the top, we cheered! A loud yelp of delight echoed round the mountain. While Ashley had been struggling with the ice we had had to untie and join two ropes together otherwise Ashley would have been stranded twenty feet below the crest. Paul was on the other end of the rope so we let him follow on, hoping we could avoid the climb and be hauled up the steep soft snow from above once the gear had been removed from the wall.

Paul went up with another rope from my sack now joining us to him. He was held from above by Ashley so we just relaxed in the sun and waited. He too made slow progress on the steep brittle ice but soon enough was nearing the top. Then all of a sudden he stopped, he then made a move up but came down again. Our attention drifted in and out of focus, "What the hell are you two doing down there?" Paul's voice seemed a bit on the sharp side. Another pull from Paul and we realise, he was tied to us and could make no more progress! We remedied the situation and he struggled the last few feet up the slope to reach Ashley.

The rope from us was then reorganised by Ashley and Paul so that we got a direct pull from above and with this support made our way up the steep soft snow. The chest-deep powder gave us a lot of problems but with a top-rope we eventually joined the other two in more deep soft snow. The crest was now a no-go area it did not support any weight and to try to continue on it would be suicidal.

We continued to keep moving, though in hindsight we should have taken more fluid and a decent amount of food. In the tangle of ropes around me I decided to lead off, it looked only a short distance to the summit ridge now and a pleasant, flat, bowling green of a bivvy site. That will provide us with a well earned rest, I thought as I set off across deep snow towards an icy looking slope. It was not to be! This was the start of a six hour episode which I found absolutely draining. I had just crossed a steep icy section and began to climb past some small rock outcrops when I began to feel very strange. I needed to rest, stop, sit-down, yes rest that was it. Rest, but that was impossible in this world of sloping ice.....



Then I heard someone's voice breaking into my thoughts, I could not focus on it so I let it drift away. Again it was there, louder now, "Secure yourself Philip. Can you get an ice-screw in there? Get an ice-screw in there Philip and tie yourself onto it." It was Paul shouting at me, he had noticed that something was wrong and began to try to get me safe. I managed two good placements, clipped in and sagged down onto them. Paul quickly followed and began to check to see if I was alright. I did feel better now and it was good to rest even in this uncomfortable position. Below Paul and I, Ken was following independently, he began to call out comments about his tiredness and the difficulty of the ice he was coming to. He hesitated then stepped back off the ice where an amount of snow gave better footing. "I'm absolutely tired, you'll have to throw me down a rope", he called across.

As Ken was almost opposite our position it was difficult for us to reach him and time and again we saw the rope end fall short and slither past him just out of reach. I felt that the failure of our rope throwing, summed up our situation. Nothing was going right and it was obvious that we were in a near desperate situation. I could envisage one mishap occurring with dire consequences; while we might be seen from base camp it would be impossible for them to effect any realistic rescue. Eventually after much wasted effort Paul's throw did reach Ken and he tied on and came across. They were just below me on a protruding rock, Paul sat Ken down on its edge and secured him to an ice screw. Ashley followed and as he arrived indicated how drained he was. This came as a shock to everyone as we had always thought of him as our 'strong man'. I think Ashley was in fact as shocked as anyone, "I have never felt like this before", was how he put it.

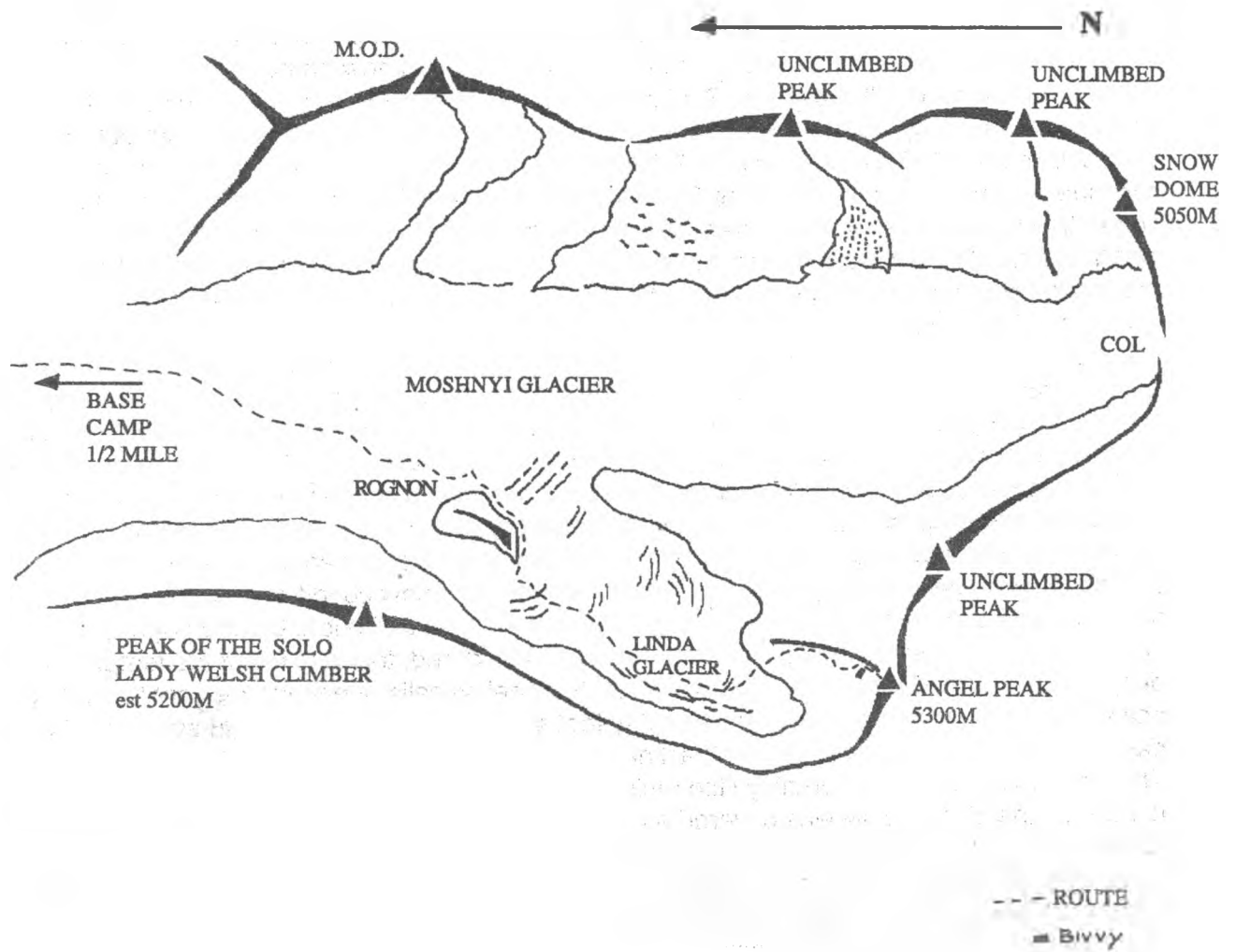
While the three of us felt really low, Paul indicated that he was OK and after seeing that everyone was secure he set off up the slope. Three steep ice pitches later and several hours at that, scant progress seemed to have been made. With Ashley, Ken and I feeling so tired we had elected to continue as a rope of four, this made for really slow progress Dusk was approaching and clouds began to collect above us in the evening light. Occasionally they were low enough to envelop us and they brought poor visibility and a real drop in temperature and when the sun fell behind a mountain ridge the air became freezing. All our thoughts were now concentrating on the night and finding a suitable bivvy.

Having brought the three of us up for the third time Paul too succumbed to tiredness, the last three pitches had represented a bold effort sapping the leaders mental as well as physical energy. Ashley came up last but was still in no fit state to lead through. Ken and I had a silent conversation, exchanging looks then I heard myself offering to lead off. There was a little more snow here but as I moved across to some rock to explore them for a potential bivvy bare ice returned. I frightened myself by traversing too far on the sloping and slippery rock, nearly ending up taking a tumble down the sheer face below. Back towards the others now before heading off upwards. Paul moved across to pass some more gear to me before I moved up. Snow conditions worsened as I struggled upwards in the gloom. The bulge above me eased to the left, but the edge and the cornice was over there! Should I venture that way I wondered, trying to resist the temptation. Waist deep snow hindered progress, exhausting me; from below calls of encouragement floated up, scale was gone now and what I saw as a fifty foot slope was seen by the others as ten! Then it was dark. Me, the slope of snow and the blackness was all my world consisted of.

That final bulge put up remarkably little resistance, falling away in front of me as I plunged through it. Paul on the slope below was covered as I pushed vast quantities of it down behind me. Fifteen feet from the edge I put in a snow stake and the others followed, glad when they arrived to find a slope of only 30° deep with soft digable snow. Ken was the last to arrive having been literally frozen to his stance at one point, before Ashley had chipped his boot free.

Some of the tension was easing now, this was our bivvy site and above us against the black sky we could make out a summit, just a few minutes away and an easy start for tomorrow's effort. Exhaustion smothered us all as we struggled to dig a pit and secure ourselves to the mountain using our trusty Mountain Technology snow stakes. I partook of a cold 'M3' which was most welcome together with a few nuts, dried fruit and chocolate. Cold feet would be a problem tonight I thought. Icy blasts of spindrift did their best to penetrate the Phoenix bivvy-bag zips and openings, this brought a rush of activity as everyone moved to cut out any potential cold-spots. Cramped together in our small ditch we managed to maintain a small degree of warmth.

# ANGEL PEAK MAP





'POINTY PEAK' - ANGEL PEAK WAS CLIMBED OVER TWO DAYS. THE ROUTE CLIMBED FOLLOWED THE RIDGELINE IN FRONT OF THE ROCK BANDS. NEAR THE TOP SECTION THE ROUTE MOVED ACROSS THE FACE.

Monday 7th August

By 6am Ashley was 'up' and encouraging the rest of us to follow suit. My feet had not shown much sign of life all night which was worrying. Time passed quickly as we made slow progress at getting up, sorting gear and getting ready for the off. There was a thought about not even going to the summit as we all felt rather disappointed in the poor weather we were experiencing. The cold was biting and with the wind blowing spindrift around us and cloud firmly clamped down there was little enthusiasm in the group. No panorama to lift our spirits, no views of the east and west ridges that wound away from our peak somewhere below, nothing to encourage us. Yesterdays plans to continue along one of the ridges to explore other peaks was put on hold. But, Yes, we would go to the summit.

The few minutes climb of last night, lengthened into an hour but eventually we were there. I was the first, belayed by Ashley just below me with Ken and Paul 50 feet below him. I hesitated for a moment then took the last step to the summit, here I was at last the first person ever to stand on this little patch of snow and rock; I was exhilarated.

Descending the mountain was not something to which we had given much thought: yesterday it had been battle enough to reach the comparative safety of the upper slopes. Now that the traverse round neighbouring peaks had been ruled out we had to consider how to descend. Directly below us as we moved back towards the bivvy there was a ice face of 60° which led directly back to the basin, we decided this was an option to think again about, first we would look for other alternatives. From the bivvy we could look directly down the ridge, it looked a safer alternative, thus it was chosen. We could see that a line slightly closer to the true ridge would be possible and looked less steep. The descent was straight

forward but moving through the deep soft snow was wearing and needed care, it was certain that we could not have made it up this way. Before long we had reached the deep snow which overlooked the ridge that had thwarted Ashley during the ascent. Now of course the weather had taken a change and the earlier wind and cloud had given way to strong sun, the heat increased minute by minute. The views across the range was fantastic; peaks came and went, glistening white in sun the hidden again in cloud. We wondered if we could see Khan Tengri as sat and ate some of the Nesles chocolate we had been donated and drank what liquid we had. I began to reflect.....but this was far to premature. We probably sat far too long and now the midday sun had affected the slopes below us, where earlier there might have been crisp snow now there was mush. Mush over ice! After a number of pitches where we took turns at being top-roped/down climbing Ashley volunteered to lower the rest of us on two rope lengths and then abseil himself. I thought this a

selfless gesture and it was much appreciated. Though it meant leaving a couple of ice screws we considered it worthwhile. Eventually we were below the bergschrund and descending in really deep to a big basin, this was the start of the journey home and we allowed ourselves some early congratulations; there was however one further , interesting phase to go! We waited as the sun left the snow in front of us, we hoped that the shadow would give a little more substance to the snow



**Ken Findlay tops out on  
Angel Peak, A 1st ascent**

we had to cross, certainly the temperature dropped dramatically as soon as the sun was gone. The trudge back across the basin turned from the trial that we expected to a nightmare. We started well enough finding our old footprints, but somehow and at some point we lost them. From then on route-finding became more and more difficult and somehow we blundered into a horrendous area of crystalline snow which could support no weight at all. First it was ankle deep, then knee, followed by thigh and waist. Soon even crawling on all fours was not possible as one limb after another disappeared to its full extent. As dusk fell and we seemed surrounded by gaping holes, flimsy snow bridges and dangerous crevasses. In the dropping temperature even the Cairngorm ropes that had served so well began to stiffen. Our torches were not really strong enough to give us the information we would have liked and our progress slowed again. At last the last ice hump had been crossed and the rock we had been aiming for, for so long was in sight; it was 10 o'clock at night. As we tried to remove our gear we found that everything was completely frozen and it took fifteen minutes to get everything undone. I think I heard everyone breath a big sigh of relief. I was now exhausted beyond belief and horribly dehydrated; a small stream half way down the rock was pounced on by Ken and myself, and sucking up its wonderful refreshingness sat back contented. The final trudge down the Moshnyi Glacier to base was not to bad and Ken and I were in the lead when a lone figure came towards us out of the gloom. Stuart and Ken M had been keeping an eye out for our return and with a tooth ache keeping him awake Stuart had taken another walk to the vantage point when we were near enough to make out. Ashley and Paul, who is always the slowest, were ten minutes behind. It was now forty-five hours since leaving camp. Tea, tea, and soup, chat and story telling preceded our last journey, from mess tent to sleeping bag!

Ken Findlay also wrote an account of our efforts on this mountain, here is his shorter, more concise version;

"Steep and sustained~ Awake at 1.15a.m. and after some Ready brek and a cup of tea we left Base Camp at 2a.m.

Our plan was to get through the glacier system while it was still frozen, but also light enough to see all the crevasses. We seemed to be going well but we were abruptly stopped by the icefall. After crossing a seventy foot snow bridge we reached the upper glacier basin. Before we knew it we were wallowing up to our thighs in deep powder snow. On hands and knees we ploughed through the energy sapping snow and eventually reached the bottom of the face of Pointy Peak. It was a strange feeling to be the first team to venture in to this glacier basin, with our own footprints snaking back along the glacier.

The first part of the route was a 500ft ice slope at about 60 degrees, I led up as both teams of two climbed together with the leader putting in protection as they climbed. It was hard on the calves and feet as all concentration was on the task in hand. Once on the ridge Ashley took over, after having difficulty in progressing up the ridge, he chose to drop over the edge and traverse across to gain an ice wall and then regain the ridge. It was scary to see him doing this manoeuvre and I had to turn away and look elsewhere. Once he got up, Paul followed but he did not have enough rope to continue, so both myself and Philip had to move along the ridge some 30 feet for Paul to finish climbing. Next it was a traverse across an ice wall, on we traversed as the team grew weaker. We had not stopped at all on the route due to the lack of any decent ledge to rest on. Due to tiredness we joined the ropes together and proceeded to climb this way. Darkness was approaching and we were still at least three full rope lengths from the ridge above. In the darkness Philip led out across the face in hope of getting a good bivvy ledge amongst some rocks, he drew a blank, so we aimed for the ridge above. After what seemed hours Philip finally made it to the ridge above. I had been so long on my stance that my left boot was frozen to the face. I was the last to climb and I found it difficult to take some of the gear out due to complete darkness and the drop in temperature had frozen some of the gear. Tired and hungry I reached the ridge as the snow began to fall. As soon as I had stopped the exertion of climbing the hours of effort took their toll and I vomited where I sat, exhausted ! We dug into the ridge and settled down for an uncomfortable night. It was midnight. Next morning everything was frozen, low cloud and windy we set off for the summit. It took us about an hour to reach the top and the snow was still quite soft. The descent was fairly straight forward in that we tried to stick close to the ridge to get some views of the way off. We were back in two pairs and this tactic seemed to work as we alternated leads down the mountain. After about

seven rope lengths we reached a steep wall, here Ashley lowered the rest of the team off before he abseiled down. We eventually reached the bottom of the face at 6pm. After some welcome food we set off across the glacier. Again the snow was appalling and we had to crawl on our hands and knees in an effort to stop ourselves sinking in the snow. In fading light we found the rognon we had passed in the morning, and contoured down on to the glacier. We finally reached Base camp at 11am. forty five hours since we had left to climb Pionty Peak.

It was a superb route in which each person had been strong at different times. It was a demanding, committing route that tested our endurance, character, physical and mental ability. A brilliant experience."

Sunday 6th August - Base Camp Mountaineers

The morning drifted by slowly as there was no rush for anyone to get out of their sleeping bags. There was a plan but it was one for afternoon activity so the poor weather in the morning was no worry. After lunch at 1.15pm and in total cloud cover Dave, Graham, David and John left base camp and returned to their route of the previous day, this time with food for a number of days stay. Now knowing the way better progress was made and soon they had collected the gear dumped on the two previous occasions, selected a great camp site and pitched camp. At 3.30pm they were emptying gear into the tents and by 5pm were enjoying an evening meal. As they ate this a weak sun filtered through the cloud which still clung to the mountain tops. The cloud drifted in again however and two hours later it was snowing heavily.

During the day Ashley, Ken F, Philip and I talked over the route we had managed on the previous days and confirmed that 'Angel Peak' would be a good name for the summit we had climbed; Ashley suggested that we call the small glacier we had crossed at such effort 'Linda Glacier' again it was agreed.

Monday 7th August - 'ABC east'

Dave, Graham, David and John woke to a bad morning of low cloud, snow and wind. However it did brighten later and at 11.15am. the four explorers left 'ABC east' for the top region of the Kaingdy glacier which culminated in the pass of the 30 day victory but which we called Welsh col. Named after the exploits on the Welsh pair who used it to gain access to the next valley south. As they moved along the glacier its nature changed from that of dry to wet. Now the snow became deeper and impassable so we decided to return. The sides of this part of the Kaingdy glacier are quite close together and rise up impressively in steep faces, overhung with the usual snow and ice bulges. On the way down they noted a huge volume of meltwater as it carved its way down the glacier, at one point though they came across a sort of ice marsh. This was where a sort of slush had developed over a wide area making an extensive shallow lake.

Tuesday 8th August

From the advanced position the four explorers set off at 8.15 in improving weather to try to reach the col which lay due east. They passed numerous glacial lakes full of ice blue water, somehow by underground streams they were linked in some sort of 'beads on a necklace' chain. The route through the ice fall took the left hand (north) side, and started well enough but before long large holes hidden by a covering of snow, deep soft snow and danger made them wary. At a height of 4350m with more broken ground in front of them they called a halt. The slopes of the col were smooth and rose at around 50°-60° (this was confirmed later by the Belgian trekkers who stayed the night at our base camp after crossing this col). They started back at midday and by 2.15pm. were back at 'ABC east'. A short time after they reached camp Sergai arrived with some extra food and fuel and David took the opportunity to return to base camp with him. David found the descent incredibly fast with Sergai leading all the way. Later in the evening bad weather crept slowly up the valley.

Philip recalls his thoughts on the rest day, "It was endlessly sunny and I gave it up for reflection, disbelief and appreciation. The flat even ground of base camp was wonderful. We had really pushed the boat out on this one, a little too far in my opinion but pin-pointing the where-and-if we made the wrong decision was difficult. Indeed every decision that had been made in those 45 hours on the mountain felt, at the time, crucial: sometimes I would find myself thinking, 'If this is the wrong decision - how high will the price be?'"

Stuart and Ken M go up to 'ABC south' on Moshnyi Glacier to pack everything up. John, Dave and Graham camp at 'ABC east' on the Kaingdy glacier.

Wednesday 9th August

'ABC east' - The ABC team rose later than planned and were not away until 6.30am, heading again into the upper reaches of the Kaingdy glacier. Their plan was to reach and climb the col at its head. The cold had given the snow a good crust and walking was better than our first visit, above us the sky was clear. After an easy but longish walk the three reached the face leading to the col, now high above them. It was now 10am. and the group assessed that the climb above them would take too long, they wished they had managed to get up those few hours earlier. As always the descent took only a short time and by 1.30pm. they were back at camp. The day was now very hot and after refreshments they packed and were on their way down to base by 4pm, reaching base at 5.15. They noticed how the camp had changed its appearance over the three days with tents seeming to rise out of the glacier surface.

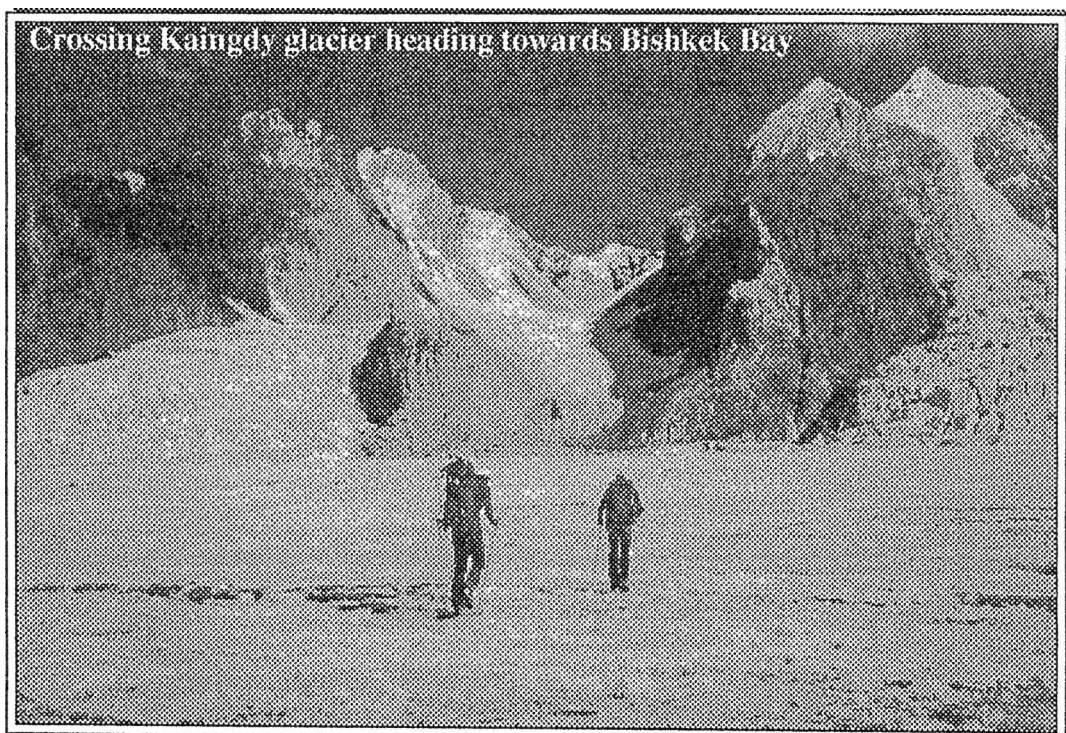
Around 4.30pm. Stuart, Ken M, Ashley, David, Philip, Ken F and I head off up to 'ABC east' on the Kaingdy Glacier.

Thursday 10th August

The day dawned well and Stuart, Philip, Ashley, Ken F, David and I slowly mad it up!, bed was too warm a place and it encouraged indolence in some members. Eventually we got our things together and set off for a route finding mission to the other side of the Kaingdy glacier. Where we were camped the glacier was reasonably flat and travel was easy but looking across, it was obvious that there would be some difficulty in choosing the best route to glacier bay 5 where we intended to go the following day.

Up the first rise and away from camp, soon the tents were completely hidden as ice ridges intervened. Our first 500yards were straightforward enough but soon we were entering a world of dips and

hollows, where one had to use ice ridges to connect one level to the next. Sometimes these ridges were wide sometimes narrow, fortune seemed to be with us and few retreats had to be made, all the same it was slow going. After two hours we were nearing the cliffs which separated





one bay from another, they varied a great deal with some being totally shattered while others seemed to have climbable lines. We rested below one cliff and tried to see where we could gain access to the 5th bay now lying just to our left (west). Ashley and Philip explored and decided that we would have to travel over the ice at this level and try again to find the 'path' we sought.

A short distance on and a little more exploratory work and Stuart had located an easy descent to the foot of the glacier we intended to visit. Everyone had a good look at the ice fall which we have to climb and saw their own routes up it. Some areas looked easy while others offered a little more challenge. Most of what we could see however seemed straightforward enough.

We dumped some gear on and under a large rock and the return leg was soon underway. This was slower than the outward - route-finding journey as we not only tried to get the best option at each problem we also built cairns to show us the way back. 'ABC east' offered food and warmth and people prepared their own gear and food for tomorrow's effort.

Back at base camp the others rested in mixed weather and after lunch talked a lot about their plans, for other visits, in the afternoon it was fine and photographs of the locality were taken. Overnight there was a fall of snow.

Friday 11th August

Stuart, Philip, Ashley, David, Ken F and I set off about 10.30 to make our way to bay 5. Stuart and Ashley were first away and just as the rest of us were closing up the tents a figure was seen making their way towards us from base. On the chance it was Ken Mosley we waited, as the figure got nearer we could see it was Sergai, he was obviously getting bored now and had taken to bringing items up from base that he thought useful, some were others were not. On this occasion he brought egg-rice, vegetables, fuel and tins of fish and milk. It must have seemed rather impolite of us for as soon as he arrived we set off. We had already delayed our start and now wanted to be on our way, we tried to get him to make himself a drink on one of the MSR stoves but I think he just had a smoke of his pipe and went back down the glacier.

We made good progress following the cairns we had left and in one quarter of the time the first journey had taken we stood by the rock where we had dumped the gear yesterday. I had brought the egg-rice and this was eaten as a snack just before we set off. There was quite a lot left over so we left it in the pot against our return with a stone on it .

Slowly we moved up the ice fall, this was in fact quite a friendly one with smooth runnels running from one level to another and not the slightest hint of nasty falling bits. As always I ended up last but managed to get not too far behind. It turned out a most pleasant climb and the views across the glacier opened up as we gained height. Near the top of the first steep climb we had to negotiate a couple of tricky sections but they caused no problems and soon we were on the plateau that stretched back to the head wall of the ridge, someone commented on its similarity to the walls around the Argentiére glacier in the Mont Blanc range.

Ahead of us now was an undulating snow covered plateau, our plan was to walk into the bay and bivvy below the climb. From the main glacier we had identified an interesting



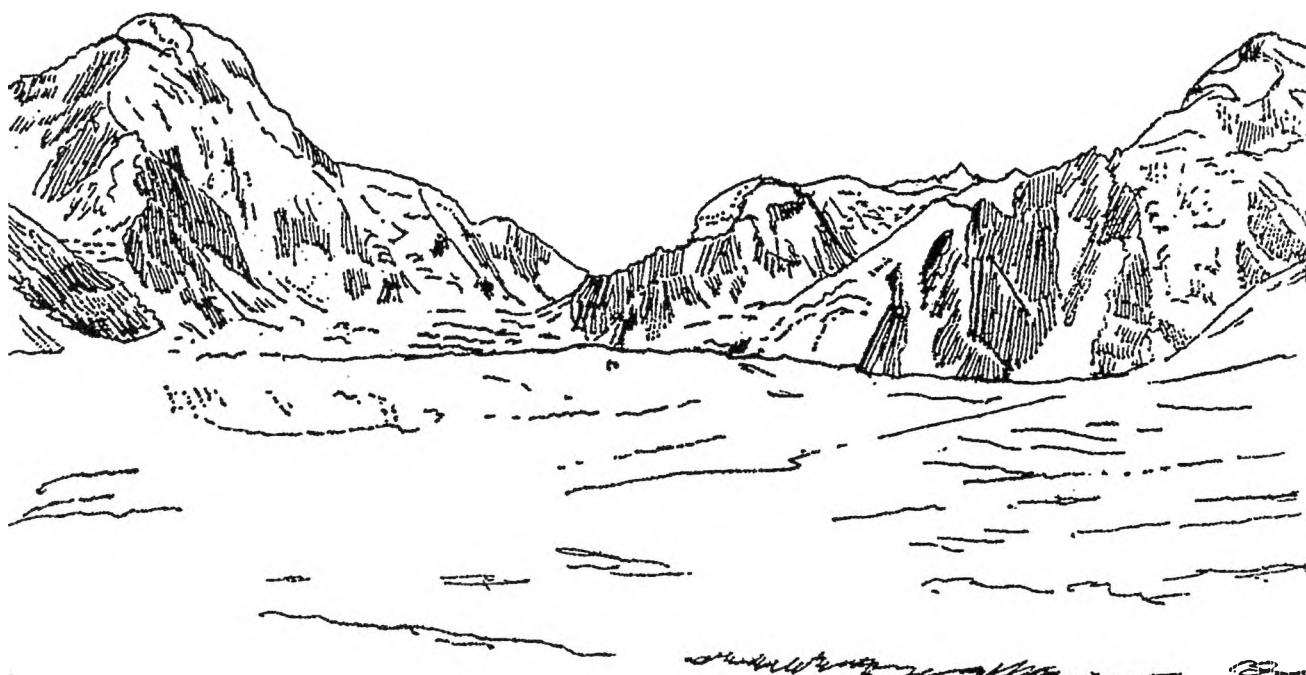
Looking up at Point of Damocles above the Bishkek Glacier

slope that led to the ridge at the rear of the bay, so we needed to get quite a long way back. We were in fact surprised at the length of this bay as we topped the crest of the ice fall.

A short distance in, the snow began to get deeper so we roped up as there were concealed crevasses. Ken led off and made slow progress along the centre of the bay, he used his axe to probe every step, often finding holes! If we had continued at this pace it would have take forever to get anyway into the bay, so it was fortunate that Stuart took the challenge and chose a different way forward. He took a line to the right of the bay and there seemed to be less crevasses so the progress improved. It was still tiring however as the snow was often more that knee deep. It was getting cold now as the sun had set and the shadows deepened. The valley in front of us still stretched away, it was a long way to the head wall even now. We decided that we would bivvy at the first opportunity, even though we were short of our intended aim.

We found a rise and dug an open pit for our bivvy. Philip was at one end and took charge of the stoves for the next morning. As we started to bed down Ken F suggested an alternative route for the morning, it was on the left side of the valley. The impressive plan was to join the ridge on the left then follow it round to the other side. So we went to sleep with that plan in mind. It was a reasonable night, and apart from one cold spot at my hip I slept well.

Ken M had been in base camp for most of the trip and he never recovered enough to join in any of the excursions. He did have company on quite a few days though and this was so on this occasion. Dave , Graham and John used the morning to prepare themselves for their next visit to the valleys to the west of the base. At 3pm. they set off down the main glacier with gear and food for a short stay and one tent. At 5pm they set up camp.



Looking east from 'ABC east' towards the col from which the Belgian group descended - to their and their guides surprise! Shokalski Peak is on the left.

# THE EXPEDITION

## TRAVELOGUE

### SWORD OF DAMOCLES

Saturday 12th August

Ken recall his impression of the route, "The glacier had been fairly straight forward and we had bivvied in the

centre of the upper glacier bay. After crossing the snow valley in the dark we began to climb the slope in front of us. At first it was consolidated snow that had obviously fallen from above and boulders of snow and ice littered our way. It was firm going however and we made good progress. Before long however the snow had given

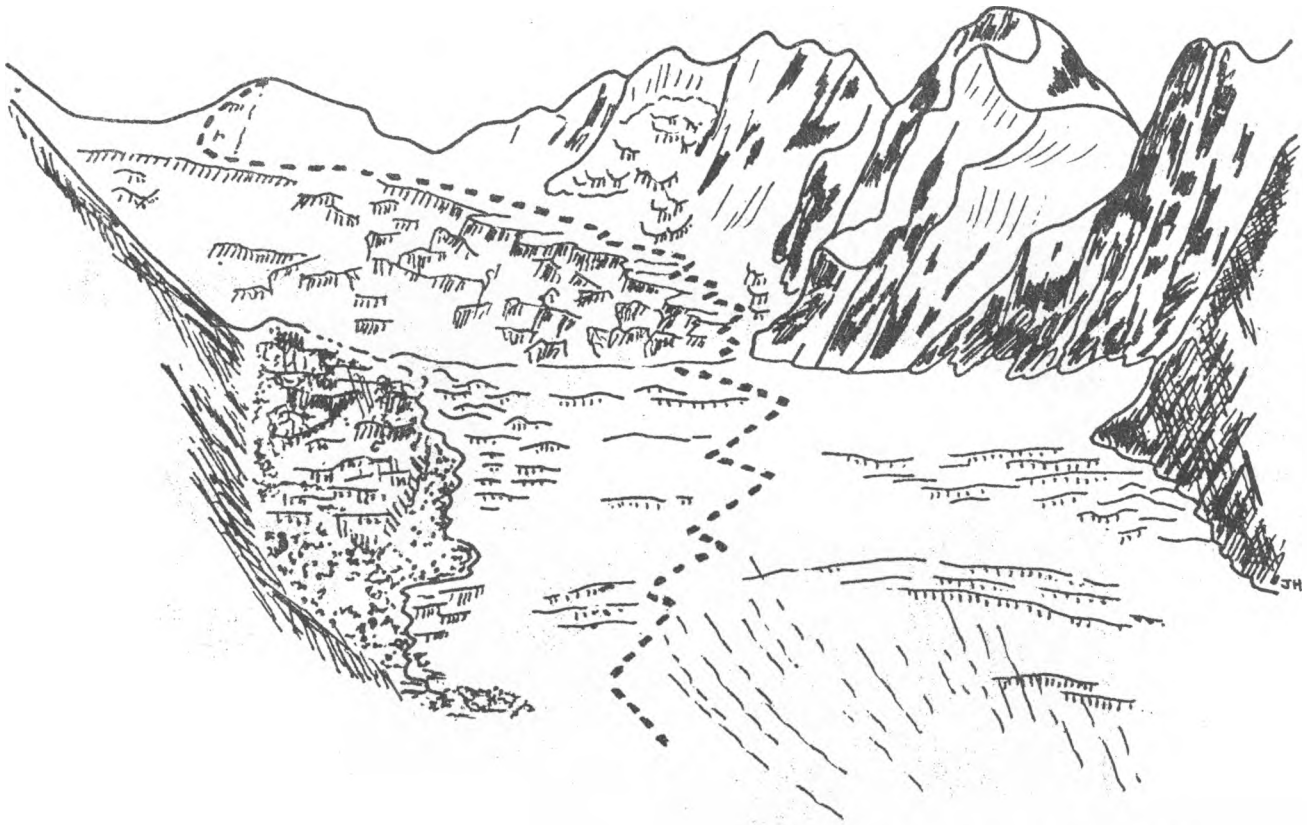


Ken leads up the 'false' summit, it will hours before we manage to traverse and then climb to its top.

way to the ubiquitous ice and now we tied on together and placed running belays. As we neared the top of this section we decided to leave the ice and the avalanche funnel that it was for a snow ridge to our right. I led off, the snow ridge was reasonably consolidated and we quickly climbed it just before the sun came up. On reaching the ridge I found massive icicles blocking the way to the ridge. They were just like organ pipes and were waiting for the sun to melt them, I felt uneasy being in this situation. From here Paul traversed left to a place where the cornice was at its smallest and where we anticipated being able to ascend onto the ridge. This proved impossible even with me just below him offering support, the snow was overhanging a little but was too insubstantial for him to get any our chase on it. He moved off again across the slope, past more of the icicles, they were in fact quite dangerous and I watched as his rope or sometimes his helmet would brush against one icicle only to have it and a couple of others come crashing down. I was not looking forward to my own traverse. After more adventures he managed to get on to the ridge and I followed not feeling very happy about the situation especially when the rope began to trail around my feet. For some unknown reason it was not being taken in, I called out again and again but there was no reply I began to worry. As I neared the col we were aiming at I saw why I was not being belayed properly, the rope had been snagged on an ice bollard and Paul was under the impression that I was not moving at all and also worrying about me.

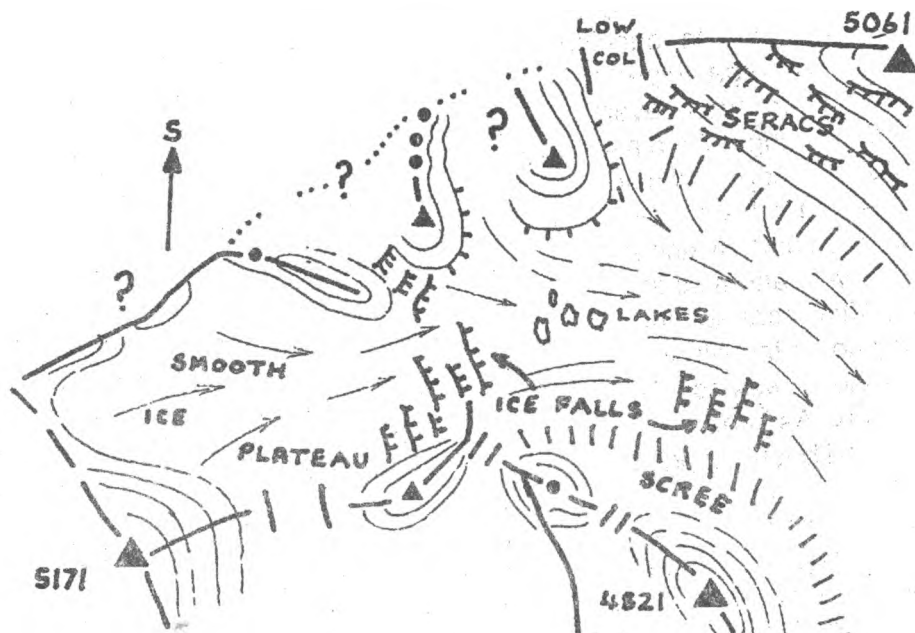
At the col we rested, drank the longed for orange squash and had a bite to eat. Then we followed a snow ridge and after eight rope lengths we topped out on our second summit.

The weather was changing and it began to snow. The ridge in front of us stretched away in an 'interesting' serpentine. It looked an excellent challenge but both of us were secretly relieved that it was too late and impracticable to continue. We traversed back to the col. Following instructions shouted from the others at the bottom of the valley we traversed across the slope to our left (south)



The route to White Horse Peak.

1st Ascent 12th August 1995: Dave Penlington,  
John Hudson,  
Graham Treacher.



and down climbed deep snow slopes before cutting across an avalanche chute and finishing down a steep ice slope. On the valley floor we saw all but one of the other group set off for 'ABC east'. It took us some time to get back to the bivvy but when we arrived Ashley had a brew waiting for us. Thanks Ashley! After a brief rest we made our way through the icefall with Ashley thankfully leading. As we gained the top of the ice fall we came across evidence of other visitors, there was a number of tins, burnt paper and other remains. Not every one it would seem had the same attitude to the environment that we had. The biggest puzzle was why none of the six of us did not notice it on the way up.

We were greeted briefly by sunshine at this point before a snow storm blew up the valley and began to give the metal objects a 'zing'."

## WHITE HORSE PEAK

While we were making our early start, Dave, Graham and John were off on their own adventure. During their walk-in they had passed this valley and noted the fine looking peak, they had decided then that it would be one of their objectives. They were up at 3.20am. and with a full moon to guide their steps set off at 4.30. They were following their earlier exploration path at first, up the flattish basin below the icefall. After some distance on new ground they roped up as holes and crevasses became more numerous. At the icefall they took a route to the left climbing a shorter but steeper slope. At the top it eased back.

In front of them now the summit rose beautifully and they headed straight for it. There was some step kicking to be done at first followed by an easy slope to the summit ridge. The ridge was in fact knife edged! At its highest point they had to sit astride it, this being the only way to safely stay there. It was 10am, the summit was reached. It was their first virgin peak.

They descended back to their tent by the same route as they ascended, with the views of other peaks fresh in their minds. They had seen more peaks to the south and a snow plateau. It was named "White Horse Peak", from an altimeter reading it was assessed at 4850m. Reaching their tent at 2.45 they brewed up rested in preparation for the next day.

Sunday 13th August

It was a beautiful morning and we woke and rose slowly, I was certainly still tired from yesterdays efforts and in the end decided to return to base. I am not sure why I made this decision as it would have probably been better to stay up, rest and then gone for another peak on the Tuesday. Anyway after a lot of delay through inaction, Ken F, Stuart, Ashley and I set off down the ice at around 4pm. Philip and David decided to stay up as they wanted to try a peak the following day.

Here is Philip's account of the events regarding himself and David that followed;

"It is Sunday 13th August, just one week to go before we leave this valley and return to civilisation. I had just returned from the attempt on the slopes above the Karakol glacier with five other members. It had been an exhilarating and exhausting outing. While four of the group had decided to return to Base David and I had made the choice to stay up and attempt an inspiring looking peak that loomed above the camp where the Kaingdy Glacier took a distinct right turn. There was an awesome looking snow ridge at a relatively easy angle that ran from the glacier right to the top, that was our target.

Just after Paul, Ken F, Stuart and Ashley had set off down the glacier and Sergai had also departed David and I began our journey up the glacier. The deep snow of two weeks ago had gone and our going was easy.

We made good progress even when we reached more snow over the ice. At the bend in the glacier the remarkable North east face of the mountain mass to our right emerged; a highly complex and lethal looking mass of endlessly overhanging seracs. At 8pm we reached a good bivvy spot and dug ourselves a hollow. We cooked up a meal of Noodles and Beanfeast and followed that by an excellent Boil in the bag sweet.

Then it was 11.30pm; very late or hideously early, I did not know. The moon was bright and cast its eerie glow all around. The snow was still not firm as we set off. The ice creaked and groaned around us as we skirted the seracs and moved up the slope of ice. It was uneven and gaping holes had to be avoided lest they steal a limb and not return it.

As we climbed the views around us began to open up, the bright moon giving us no need for head torches. Our progress had been good and we were pleased at what we had accomplished, already looking forward to a new summit by the two youngest climbers in the group. Then, pains! Almost at the same moment David and I were afflicted by serious stomach pains. We began to pitch the route where movement should have been possible at a quicker pace. Dave at the bottom of a rope was forced in a most inconvenient squat in order to relieve himself!

Our pace was slowing badly now and the pains were always there, nagging at our insides. The slope eased a little but enough to allow us to coil the rope and move together, a little cheered we began to move on.

Then there was another problem, wind slab! We dug a put to check the condition of the snow and it was clear that 18 inches of new crust was poised to slide. In the sun this would definitely not be the place to be climbing or descending. Our decision to abort the climb was now made easy.

We descended back down the slope and were back at the bivvy by 7.30am. It was a sickening disappointment and we trudged back to 'ABC east' with heavy thoughts. Our failure was only compounded as we completed our return to base in brilliant sunshine, behind us our peak glaring menacingly down as we descended to Base Camp."

Following their success on White Horse Peak, Dave, Graham and John woke at a reasonable hour and were away by 7.45am, heading for the next glacier down the Kaingdy valley. This valley was much the largest in the area and the angle of the glacier was very gentle, a veritable highway of ice. To their right rose an impressive wall of ice. They gazed at jagged peaks of snow and rock on the right which culminated in a 5000m peak. Graham imagined how many 'classic' routes the wall would have had upon it were it in the Alps, here in the Tien Shan there were none. Perhaps no-one had been here to even see it before. After several miles the valley bent south-eastward, to their left, and there lay an impressive hump-backed mountain of snow. Its icy northern slope standing at the very head of the glacier, glistening in the sun. The topography of this area was different to that portrayed on the map. Ahead and to the right of the 'Tour Ronde' like peak lay a gentle U-shaped col which would seem to offer an invitingly easy approach to the Koi-Kaf. The col would also offer a good starting point for the 'Tour Ronde' and the other 5000m peak. Further back, behind the "Tour Ronde" rose another peak with a big ice face at its head, a mixture of rock and snow. This ice face, the three decided, ran up onto the high snow plateau seen the previous day. Sitting high up on the final slopes of the glacier they admired two turquoise lakes below and planned other doubtful deeds in this valley intending to return with fresh supplies of food in a few days time. They felt this was a happy place and they were happy just to be there. They would have reached the col and another view of the Koi-Kaf but for the sugary snow, the curse of the Tien Shan, which prevented reasonable progress.

Thus they took the decision that it was too late to continue and reached their camp by 3.20pm. They had explored yet another valley and mapped out plans for a future visit, they were well pleased with their efforts.

Monday 14th August

We had been wondering how Philip and David had fared when at about 2pm they came slowly into camp. Their story was of one of a near success defeated by illness. Certainly David looked unwell and Philip very tired. They suffered from diarrhoea for the next two days, putting it down to some food they had eaten.

Graham, John and Dave arrived back from 'Happy Valley' at 11am it had taken them just an hour and a half to walk from 'ABC west'. They had been sorry to leave their camp and its attractive potential but with food running out they had taken the decision to return. Another lovely day.

Tuesday 15th August

David and Philip were both sick during the night. Dave Penlington developed the runs overnight and stayed in bed all day, he is quite ill. The whole team were together for the first time in a week and everyone who could sat about resting.

At about 4pm Ken F and Paul go back up to 'ABC east' Kaingdy, their plan is to climb in the 'Welsh col' area, perhaps on the peak that Philip and David had nearly climbed earlier. A wonderful day but cloud and snow in evening.

## Hunter Peak

Wednesday 16th August

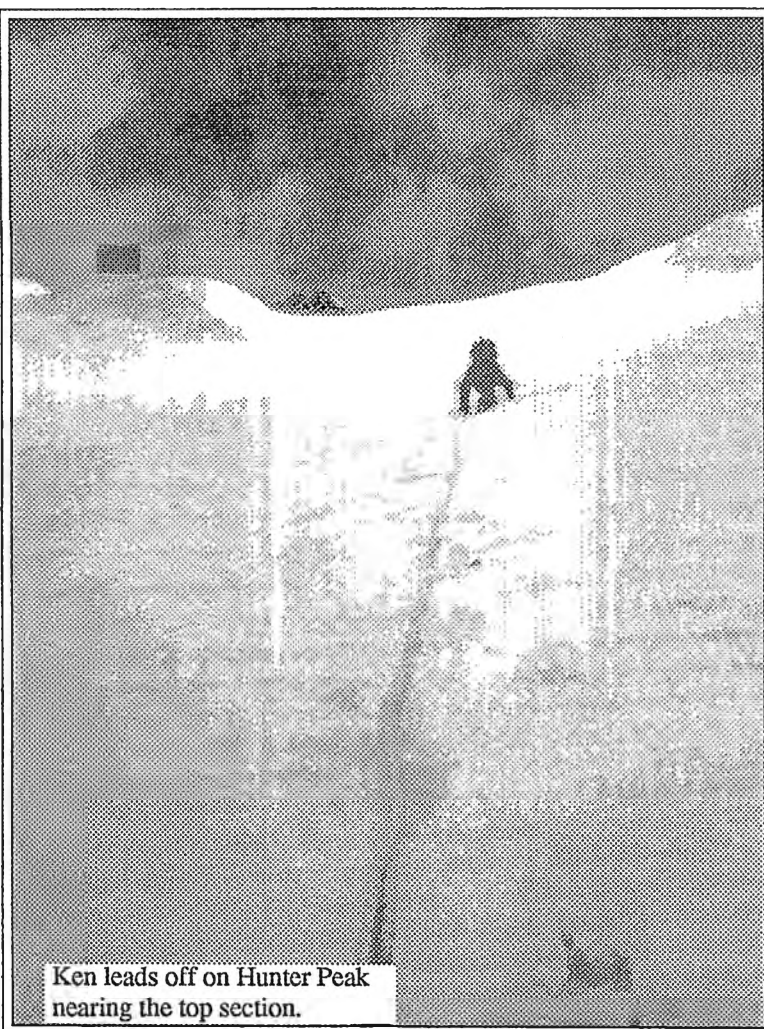
Ken and I started early, perhaps not early enough, or was it too early! We never knew as neither of us had a watch. It was certainly dark when we left the couple of tents that constituted 'ABC east' and Ken led off over the higher ice meaning that we had to negotiate crevasses quite often.

Gradually we made progress and turned into the upper Kaingdy, heading towards the Pass of the 30 day Victory. The snow was OK and we made reasonable progress; in front of us was the snow cut that David and Philip had dug the few days before. From here footprints led off in two directions, one set left straight towards the mountain and another ran straight up the valley. I was not clear in what Philip had said and in the end chose the footprints that led towards the col, it was the others in fact that led to the Philip & David route.

As we progressed up the valley the going became harder and Ken F did a stirring job making much of the lead. It began to lighten and dawn was obviously on its way as we turned left and headed towards a ridgeline set well back from the valley across a large basin. Around the edge of this amphitheatre avalanche debris lay in various amounts, sometimes we were amongst it sometimes avoiding it. Once when leading I stopped and then made a right angles turn at 90°, Ken F was puzzled until he stood where I had been

. In front of him was a hole 100ft deep and 40 foot wide! It was not the only diversion we had to make.

The weather looked threatening as we gained height towards a bergschrund bedecked with icicles and running the entire length of the slope; it ranged in height from 3 to 6 meters. It was at the bergschrund we had our first rest since the bivvy trench. Ken attached himself to one of the icicles and I to him, then we sat perched on the ice and munched and drank some refreshments. The view from here was great and with mountain crests all around looking much greater than our goal we made ready to be off.



Ken leads off on Hunter Peak  
nearing the top section.

Ken traversed a short distance to a place where snow had reduced the vertical height of the break and gingerly climbed up and on to the main slope. After a short while I followed and at the belay took over the lead which I was to keep until we were within three rope lengths of the summit. To our right ice cliffs rose from the slope in elegant steepness, their fractured faces looking very delicate in the early light and shadow. From behind them avalanche runnels made sweeping curves towards and onto our slope. Above on the right was the point we were aiming for a rock outcrop which seemed to occupy the high point here.

The slope we were on, swept clear by previous avalanches was ice. This made the going just that bit more wearing and we became gradually slower as we gained height. I found the going hard but exhilarating and when I was taking in the rope as Ken F climbed up the views were even more wonderful. The weather had shown a bit of brightness further down the mountain but that was soon replaced with heavier cloud and stronger wind. When Ken took over the lead the weather was about to deteriorate even further when he had climbed half a rope from my stance it started to snow and the stronger winds brought the temperature down to below freezing.

The three rope lengths to the ridge took a while for Ken F to lead as the ice had given way to deep soft snow. This made it a case of one step up two down in some places, the ridge was really soft and it took a monumental effort to make progress. When Ken F and I are together on a route he always leads this sort of stuff, and I recalled his lead on the upper slopes of a wonderful head-wall in the Karakoram below Straker Sar. He is lighter than I and manages to make progress where I just cannot.

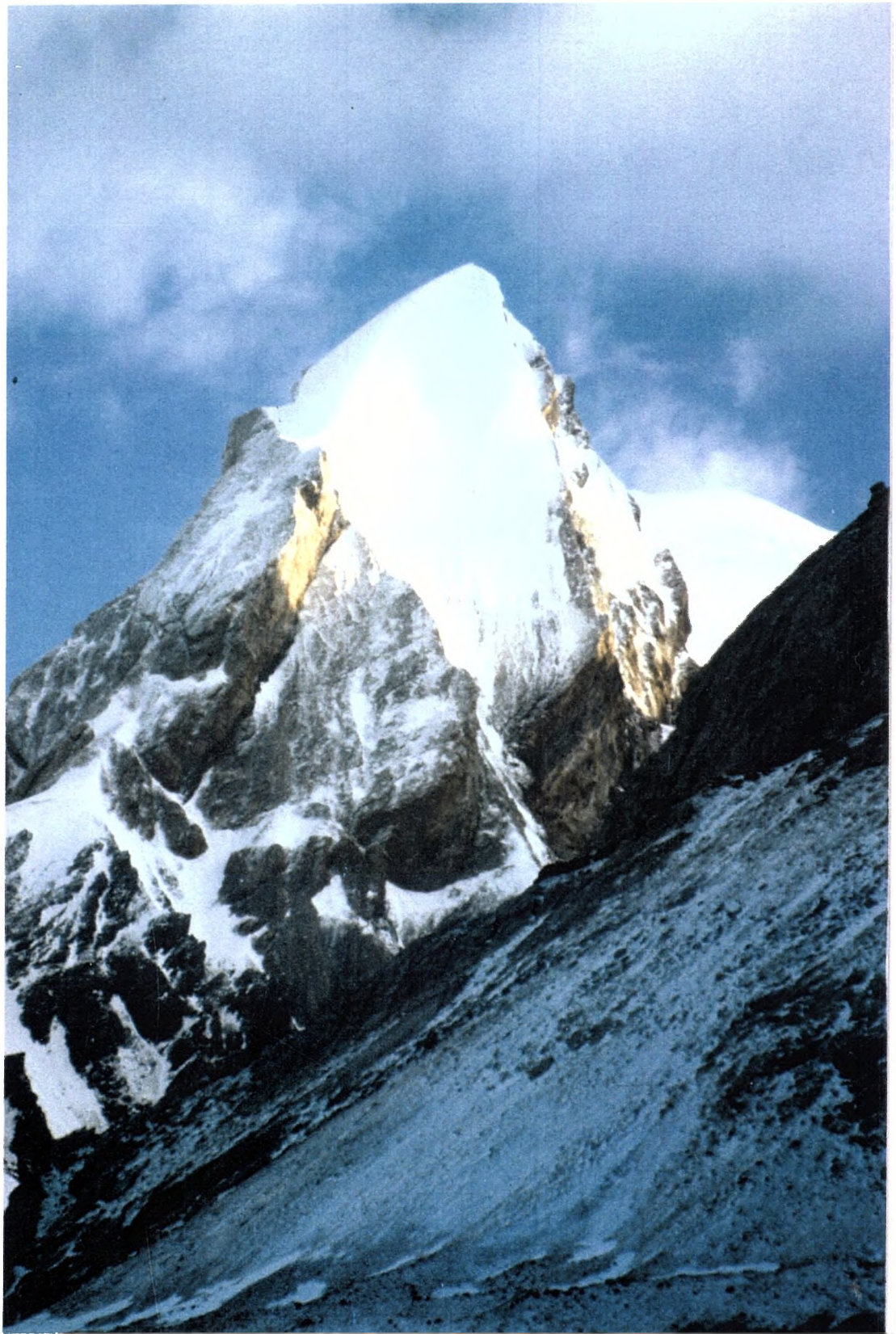
Now we were level with the rock we were aiming for but too far to its right, so I led off towards it. The rope was not long enough so when Ken had reached me I tried again only to end up 40 feet short. It was really cold now with the wind buffeting us both, manipulating the ropes became more difficult as they stiffened and removing gloves was a risky business. Ken reached me for the second time and went on, the slope was steeper now and the new snow was falling fast enough to cause new hazards. "It's getting rather cold here", I called out after some time had elapsed. The wind took the words but Ken looked up, looked worried. The rock he had traversed onto was loose, was slipping all the time he stood upon it, was awful. He shouted back to me something like "Crikey Paul this is a tad dodgy ol' chap" and proceeded to continue. I got colder and decide not to wait any longer so I started across the remaining slope. Ken F alarmed at my independent and potentially dangerous decision tried to secure himself onto a mass of loose boulders. We met on the rocks, me slightly warmer with the exertion Ken relieved we were not on our way down the slope in a beautiful but deadly slide.

Earlier in the proceedings we had examined the possibility of a snow hole but with only six inches of snow at most over the solid ice of the slope it did not seem practical. Ken moved further onto the rock and found a large slab sitting behind a small ledge of near horizontal rock, this was our only option. It was 6pm and the ledge was 30" x 20". Ken cleared a runnel around the edge of the slab and we passed the rope round it, I placed two screws on the right and we tied on.

Wind, snow, snow, wind. First I tried a lower ledge but it pushed me off too quickly and the wind was coming straight up from below, I was concerned about frost bite in my feet. I looked pitifully at Ken and he allowed me to join him on his ledge. Here I could dangle the rucksacks around my legs which offered a small amount of protection. Being tied on by our harnesses made it difficult to successfully enclose ourselves in the Phoenix Bivvy bags (a friend in deed). We could not get anything warm inside of us as the wind was too strong so we consumed some Foxs' glacier fruits and chocolate and cocooned ourselves against the storm.

I woke and darkness enclosed the sky, it was still; the wind was gone and a few stars dared to glimpse through high cloud. Quickly I got a brew on and we made a couple of hot choc Options to warm ourselves, waking ken I passed him over his drink. Then we went back to our fitful sleep.





'SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE' PEAK .

AT EVERY TURN LAY WONDERFUL FORMS OF ROCK AND ICE  
BUT NOTHING WAS EASY....

At Base camp John Hudson Made the following notes in his diary. "Bright, sunny start but by 9.15am 8/8 of heavy storm cloud cover over peaks. Snow flurries all afternoon followed by heavy rain. Played cards. A really poor evening with driving snow, team cooked again - a failure due to lack of cooking power."

Thursday 17th August

After the terrible night we woke to another storm, the wind had returned and like yesterday blew spindrift into any opening in our clothes. Overhead cloud rushed past and to the west we could see ever blacker banks being blown towards us. Our plan to climb along the ridge to the summit and descend in a traverse of the main peak were gone, now we just had to descend

After a slow and stiff start we eventually had everything packed and were ready for the off, the wind and spindrift had not relented and we were grateful for the activity of movement bringing warmth into our cold muscles. It was either Ken or I that led off and we descended amongst a series of fortuitously small powder snow avalanches that purred their way down the slope; sometimes their progress was to our side but some thought it interesting to cover us in a coating of icing.

Ken was descending first as we reached the Bergschrund area but did not know he had passed it until I too had arrived and in a break in the cloud we saw that where yesterday there had been a 10 to 20 foot high crevasse step, this morning it was all covered by new snow from the slopes above. The amount of snow that had fallen overnight must have been massive. A short distance off the steeper slopes we stopped for a brew-up and ate the remaining items we had, Ken had an B1 boil in the bag meal and relished every mouthful. It was later back at Base Camp that Ken said he had felt like he was being chased all the time on the route, hence his name of 'Hunter Peak'.

Every where the snow was a foot deeper and in some places more, occasionally the slopes would creak as we stepped upon them such noises made me shudder and tense up in case the snow avalanched. We took a different line on the descent but it was 7pm when we eventually reached 'ABC east'. The bivvy had disappeared completely when we passed it on the way down. We spent a very cold night in the Phunnel tent as it had become waterlogged when the stones holding the guys had given way when no-one was at the camp. David and Philip greeted us upon our arrival and gave us warming drinks and told us about a Belgian party that had passed by descending the Kaingdy Glacier having come over the high col above the camp.

At base camp there had been snow then heavy rain, followed by driving snow in evening. About 7pm four Belgians and three Russians guides arrive in base camp. The 'visitors' were fed by Ashley and John and then housed by the members there using the empty tents. The following day they left to continue their journey down the Kaingdy Glacier

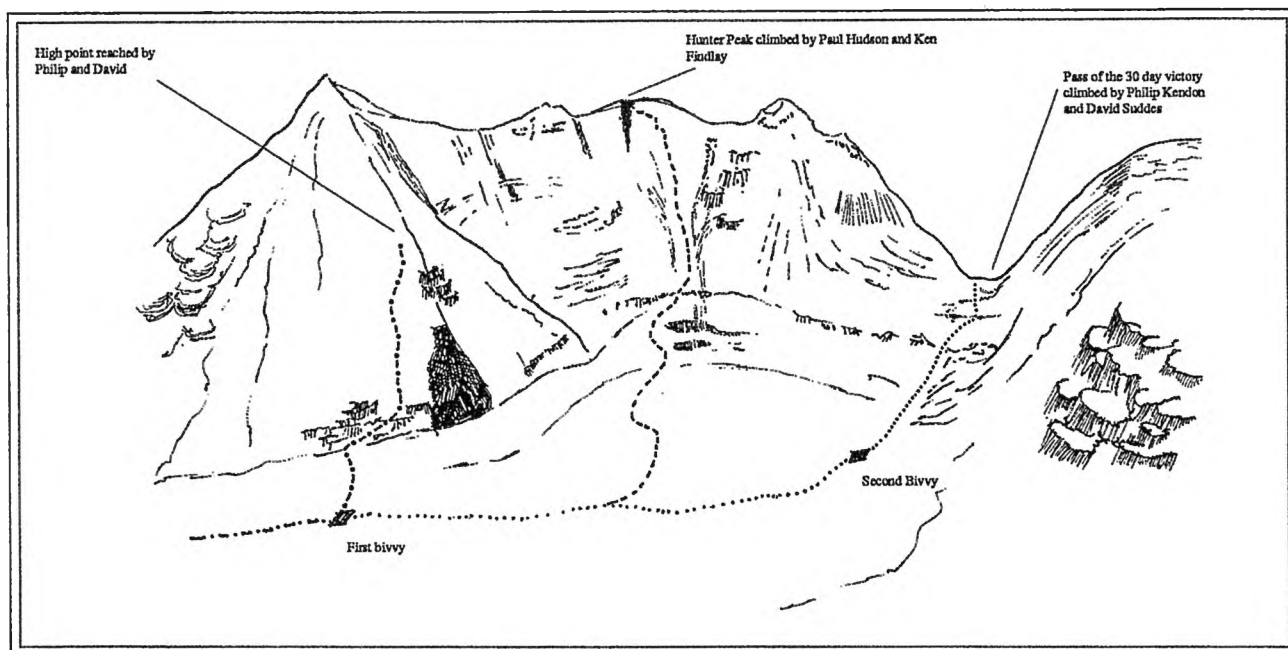
Here is Philip's account of the last efforts of any of the team to attain another summit;

"It is now Thursday the 17th August: I don't know if we passed it on or not but within a few days of our own stomach ailment, a number of other members had also succumbed. Dave Penlington particularly had suffered and Ken Findlay had not shaken his trotting off. David and I had first set the blame for our problem upon a Beanfeast meal and this still seems a real possibility but perhaps it may have been something passed on by or from Sergai, we will never know!

Since our return, bad weather had also hampered everyone's progress and Ken F and Paul were the only two members out on the hills. The weather had at last made a positive move and ~David and I felt we should make use of this window of opportunity. It really was our last chance, a final invitation to make an attempt on one of the unclimbed peaks that surrounded 'ABC east'.

At 3pm David and I set out on our journey to 'ABC east', conditions underfoot even at this level had changed substantially. Fresh snow had fallen in vast swathes and the mountains took on a new, beautiful but far more serious aura.

At 6pm, with horrendous looking storm clouds all around we decided to stay put and made ourselves in one of the Phoenix tents. Voices came from across the ice, Ken and Paul we thought, but no, it was a group of somewhat bedraggled looking climbers; there were four Belgians and three Russian guides and porters. The Belgians speaking excellent English unfolded an unbelievable story of terrifying dangers of their, and possibly the only, crossing of the col at the base of Shokalski peak. Relief spread across their faces upon hearing that our base was a mere hour and a half away down the glacier. News that they had seen two climbers about a mile further up the glacier was a relief; Ken F and Paul had now been away from base for three days without sleeping bags. It was an hour later



that two exhausted climbers fell into camp, they were in good spirits though having attained a new route to a high point on a ridge high up to the left of the col ( Pass of the Thirty Day Victory). This was a ridge which ran away south from the peak we had attempted earlier.

Overnight the snow increased and without a break had deposited 18 inches of new snow by the morning. This was a daunting prospect in terms of us making much progress and highly dangerous in terms of avalanche risk. After a fun filled morning when David built a snowman and we decorated it with various clothes and other assorted items, Paul and Ken F left for base.

David and I set off in mid-afternoon, re-ascending the route we had made on the 13th we reached our previous bivvy spot only to find it completely buried. The slope that surrounded us on the left and right had avalanched in dramatic fashion forming grey streaks down the slopes and piles of rubble strewn across the glacier. The snow was beginning to fall heavily again and flakes melting on contact with our waterproofs began to soak them. Visibility became worse and worse as we made progress and was reduced to almost nil; eventually we made the decision to dig in for the night.

As we began to dig, out of nowhere a sight to feast on; the snow stopped, the cloud cleared away and suddenly the mountains returned. From a muggy atmosphere one minute it was now below freezing and my cagoule which was soaked became as stiff as a board. I stood it to one side as we made ready to continue. We decided to make our way to the col and hope we could also attempt one of the peaks which rose on either side. It too came into view as we moved off revealing frightening depths of snow all around. Was our perseverance in this area of the glacier about to pay off.

It was 3am. on Saturday 19th August. Good clear conditions greeted our emergence from our luxurious hiding place in the ice. My stomach was proving persistently awkward, but the maximum dosage of imodium was to help maintain my sanity for the day. The route to the top of the col was an awful slog, with the snow reaching three and a half feet deep, hindering progress to a desperately slow speed.

Eventually, after many swaps of the lead we had ploughed our way to the bergschrund, now well filled with powder. David breached this difficulty and proceeded on up over a good 55° of choss, perhaps the worse conditions yet encountered. It seemed to consist of several feet of decaying ice which offered scant resistance, let alone the possibility of placing protection. At 1pm we reached the top of the slope, staying a reasonable distance back from the cornice which overhung the other side of the col.

Our efforts were now rewarded with a wonderful vista. A fantastic panorama lay in front of us to the south-east; views over Kirov Peak lead our eyes further on and into China. Inspirational spin drift blew over the col in swathes, curling back under the cornice, ever enlarging it. The views tempted us to linger, but time pressed on and the sun began to swing round onto the line of our descent. Two more of our donated snow stakes were left behind as we made our descent back to the bergschrund. The descent continued.

Needless to say the plod back to 'ABC east' was far less time consuming than our ascent, but we felt tired as the last couple of days took their toll. It was in an exhausted state that we eventually reached 'ABC east' once again. On the way down we had come across the most extraordinary sight; a duck was sitting in the snow apparently soaking up the evening sun. A strange place to live, I thought, given the choice.....

Sleep was not a problem in the luxury of our sleeping bags which we left in camp. Sunday came and it was an extremely pleasant sight to see three figurers plodding towards us on the glacier; we had just begun our descent with truly frightening volume of baggage.

Back at base the predictable bowl of watery soup and time to reflect on four weeks of successes, frustrations, moments of utter exhaustion, the quality of catering, extraordinary tales from the Belgians and perhaps above all the feeling of privilege of having been able to explore an area so remote, almost untouched and awesome in the challenge that it presented. A successful expedition - ten of us left the UK and ten of us were to return..... "

Friday 18th August

Three more inches of snow fell at base camp during the day. The Belgian group were unable to get their 'guides' to move before 1.30pm and there was much unnecessary delay. With the weather worsening Ken and I decided to descend to Base Camp. We were tired and could not see how we would have managed a further excursion, joining in with the plans of Philip and David . It was after midday however that we eventually decided to descend and then the packing took quite a while. We decided to take down as much as we could manage Philip and David would need to be able to bring down the rest unaided.

The journey down the glacier for ken and I was a slow one, though I felt more full of energy when walking down with a full sack than sitting around at 'ABC east'. The weather was reasonable at the start but deteriorated as we descended until near base camp the snow became a storm. We crept into base under the cover of thick snow and were greeted warmly by the gang sitting in the mess tent

There was more snow during the night.

Saturday 19th August

The weather was still not settled, and the heavy clouds gave snow by 10am. During a sunny afternoon we began to pack for the flight out on Monday 21st. There was more rain and snow at 6pm. Everyone was at base now except David and Philip, the weather seemed to me too harsh to enable them to succeed.

Sunday 20th August

The day was wonderful with the sun bringing warmth at its earliest opportunity. At midday Ashley, Stuart and Ken M decided to go up to 'ABC east' to meet Philip and David who were expected earlier in the day. They reached 'ABC east' to find David and Philip still resting so the loads to carry down are shared between five instead of two. The five arrive 'home' around 4.30pm. Dave , John and Graham decided to go across the Kaingdy and have a look at the bays opposite the base camp. They had not been there before and were interested to see what they had to offer, so they were off by 8.30am. The wonderful morning gave way to more changeable weather in afternoon; by 6pm there was thunder with heavy rain and snow



TO THE NORTH OF THE KAINADY GLACIER LIE MANY UNCLIMBED PEAKS.  
THIS ATTRACTIVE PROSPECT WE NICKNAMED '4TOP'. OUR EFFORTS ON THIS PEAK ONLY  
AMOUNTED TO PHOTOGRAPHING IT.

With everyone together again we broke out the last bottle of Whiskey and celebrated that everyone was fit and safe.

Monday 21st August

I woke in the night and again had the runs, there followed a few more excursions into the magnificent and brilliant night and at 6.30 my body decided to go for a double barrelled purge, copying Les Holbert in Rawalpindi Airport 1991.

Everyone was up by 7am and the final pack-up began. Tents that had fixed themselves to the glacier had to be prised a way, poles that had sunk over a foot into the ice had to be melted out and stiff cloth had to be folded. The cloud kept the temperature below freezing but it was clearing by 9am.

The helicopter flew in just a little late and much to our disbelief landed where Sergai said it would. We loaded up quickly and soon waved goodbye to our little home of three weeks. The journey in the helicopter was again amazing, we saw through the windows all the unclimbed peaks that the trekkers had seen on their way up. There was a crate of beer on board which most of the group greeted with joy. At Maidaadyr we unloaded and the helicopter was soon on its way again. After a snack and a game of football against the local military the truck arrives and we load up in readiness to return to Karakol. At the meal tent in Maidaadyr we met a German who was advising the government on its tourism policies, various stories were related and points raised. A few items were lost while we were at Maidaadyr, including Stuart's knife that he had lent to John. You need to be wary of your belongings in this area it would seem. Leaving the airfield at 2pm we arrived in Karakol in the late afternoon with the sun still strong in the sky.

Tuesday 22nd August

While most of went into Karakol, John took himself off for a local walk into the hills. Thunder is heard in the hills around Karakol.

Wednesday 23rd August

Today we hired a minibus for \$80 and on Graham's instigation visit the Przhevalski Museum before going on to Lake Issyk - Kul for lunch, a swim and an ice-cream. John who was ill stayed at hostel.

Thursday 24th August

Again we hire the minibus and go to a local tourist attraction. After a drive of about an hour we arrived at a canyon of bright red sandstone. We explored the area on foot and had lunch by the stream. In the afternoon Ashley, John, Dave, the two Holandish travellers and I ventured into the hills west of Karakol and climbed a viewpoint hill in the heat of the afternoon. The mountains we saw from our high point have great potential for all sorts of activities.

Friday 25th August

Last minute 'shopping' around Karakol.

Saturday 26th August

We left Karakol at 8.30 am in truck that was without suspension. On the journey to Almaty we passed some fantastic scenery and cameras were poised at every opportunity; most people avoid being shaken to death but only just. Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan roads are not designed to be used in vehicles without suspension if the travellers are not to be buried at the roadside. We arrived at Almaty around 5pm and after a couple of phone calls the driver is told where we have been booked in. On first sight it looks rather posh and possibly expensive but on enquiring the cost turns out to be \$15 p/person p/night. Graham, Dave and I got caught in a lift when it does not quite make it to our floor and it takes 30 minutes for us to be let out by the engineer. The rooms here were excellent, clean sheets, hot water and a bath.

Sunday 27th August

On our only day in the capital everyone visited Panfilov Park and the Kazakstan Museum of Musical Instruments in the morning, where we were treated to the sounds of all the instruments and a solo performance of a two stringed instrument by one of the female attendants. In the afternoon while Graham, John and Dave attempt to smooth our way to the airport early tomorrow morning Ken F, Ashley and I walk off to find the National Museum of Kazakstan. It was wonderful, room after room of exhibits from all areas and times of the history of Kazahkstan. Both on our walk out and back to the hotel we found that Almaty is a city of parks.

Upon looking for somewhere that i can have something to eat we stumble upon a wonderful place where they serve great pizzas and are helped by a young lady to understand the menu. She made a great impression on Ashley and Ken F. Back at the Hotel we organise a 5 o'clock call and complete the last minute packing for tomorrow.

Monday 28th August

At 5am. I was woken by my alarm, set in case the Hotel forgot, and after getting everyone else ready we set off from the Hotel to the Kazahk Airlines building to get on a coach to the airport. It was not to be! We waited around for too long before it was obvious that we would get no help even though it had been promised yesterday. In a state of anxiety we trudged back to the road behind our hotel and wait for a public bus. A lot of buses came and a lot of buses went, none though were heading towards the airport. We began the activity when the darkness of night was all around us, now early morning light was seeping through the trees and we had made no progress. More buses, still none that suited our needs; just as we were giving up and thinking about the extra costs of buying another ticket Philip asks the driver of the latest bus to pull in if he is off to the airport. Despite the number wrong we find that it is and ten climbers and twenty sacks are squeezed on board. Spirits are raised as we make progress through the streets to the airport.

At the airport everything goes well even though we arrived less than one hour before takeoff. We boarded easily and with no extra costs for weight. Again at Moscow we had to be escorted through the two lounges and were pushed in front of Russians queuing for their flights. The flights from Almaty to Moscow-Moscow to Gatwick were excellent, with the aircraft looking almost new. Again we stopped at Riga in Lithuania before we were finally on the last leg to Gatwick. Flying over the country around the South of England we noted how brown many of the areas were.

It was all goodbyes at the airport and the completion of another adventure. 'Just the report to write', I thought as I drove along the M1, and then, 'and another place to choose for 1997!'



# THE EXPEDITION

## CONCLUSION

### A PERSONAL THOUGHT

This area is very challenging, the mountains are very serious propositions. From what we did I felt that none of the mountains in the area offered easy routes. On every mountain we attempted we had to down climb the descent, there were no easy ways off. The potential the valley offers is immense, there are literally hundreds of lines to climb but access means that bivouacs will be necessary. The group in general got on with each other, the accident at the start did have an effect on the group. My only regret is that we did not stay longer in the mountains, but maybe we could have arrived earlier. The weather throughout the expedition was very unsettled, with weather systems sometimes changing daily. It was noticeable how local some of the weather effects were with storms on one mountain and light cloud in another. Stuart remarked just recently that while we were freezing on Angel Peak, he and Ken M were baking at 'ABC south' and had weather that made the snow around them quite unsafe. The winds seemed to come from any direction and changed from one day to another. Most of the snow had cleared off the faces and only bare ice remained by the middle to end of August. The temperature in general had dropped and you could tell that winter was on its way.

Ken Findlay, Paul Hudson





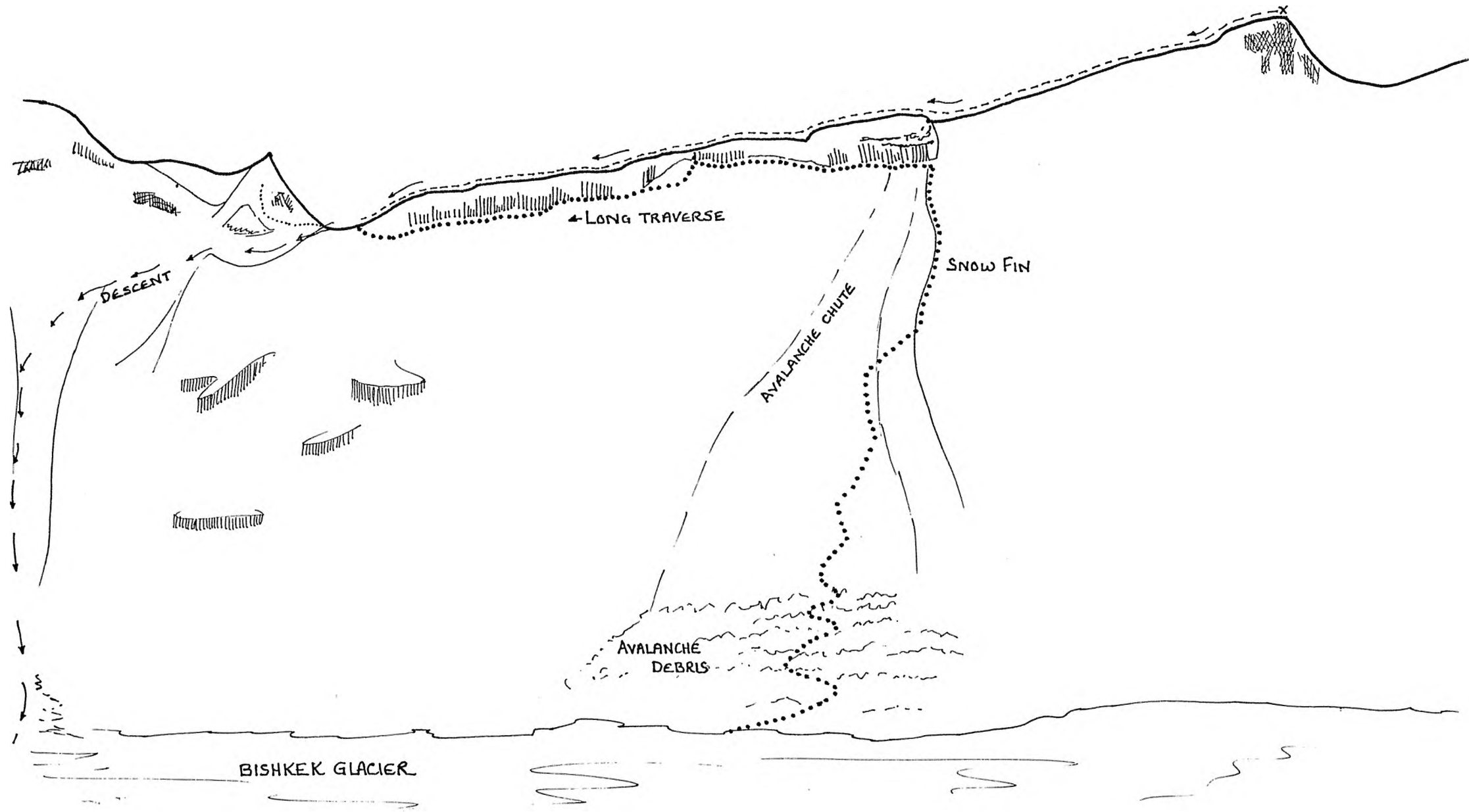
ANGEL PEAK  
Graded D+/TD-

--- DAY 1 ASCENT  
... DAY 2 ASCENT

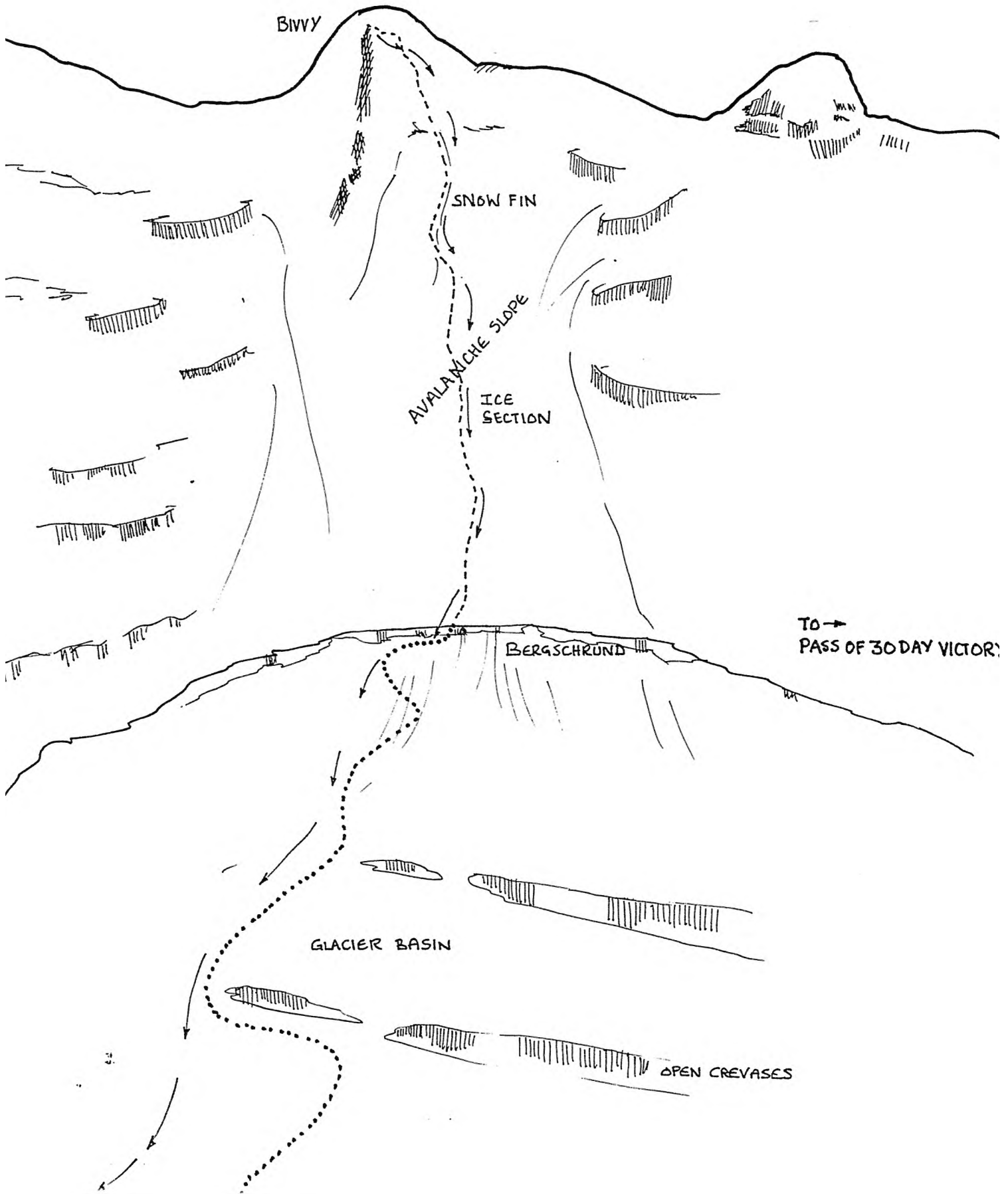
DESCENT ALMOST AS ASCENT \*\*



ROUTE ON 'POINT OF DAMOCLES'  
Graded AD



ROUTE ON 'HUNTER PEAK'  
Graded PD+/AD-



ATTEMPTED PEAK

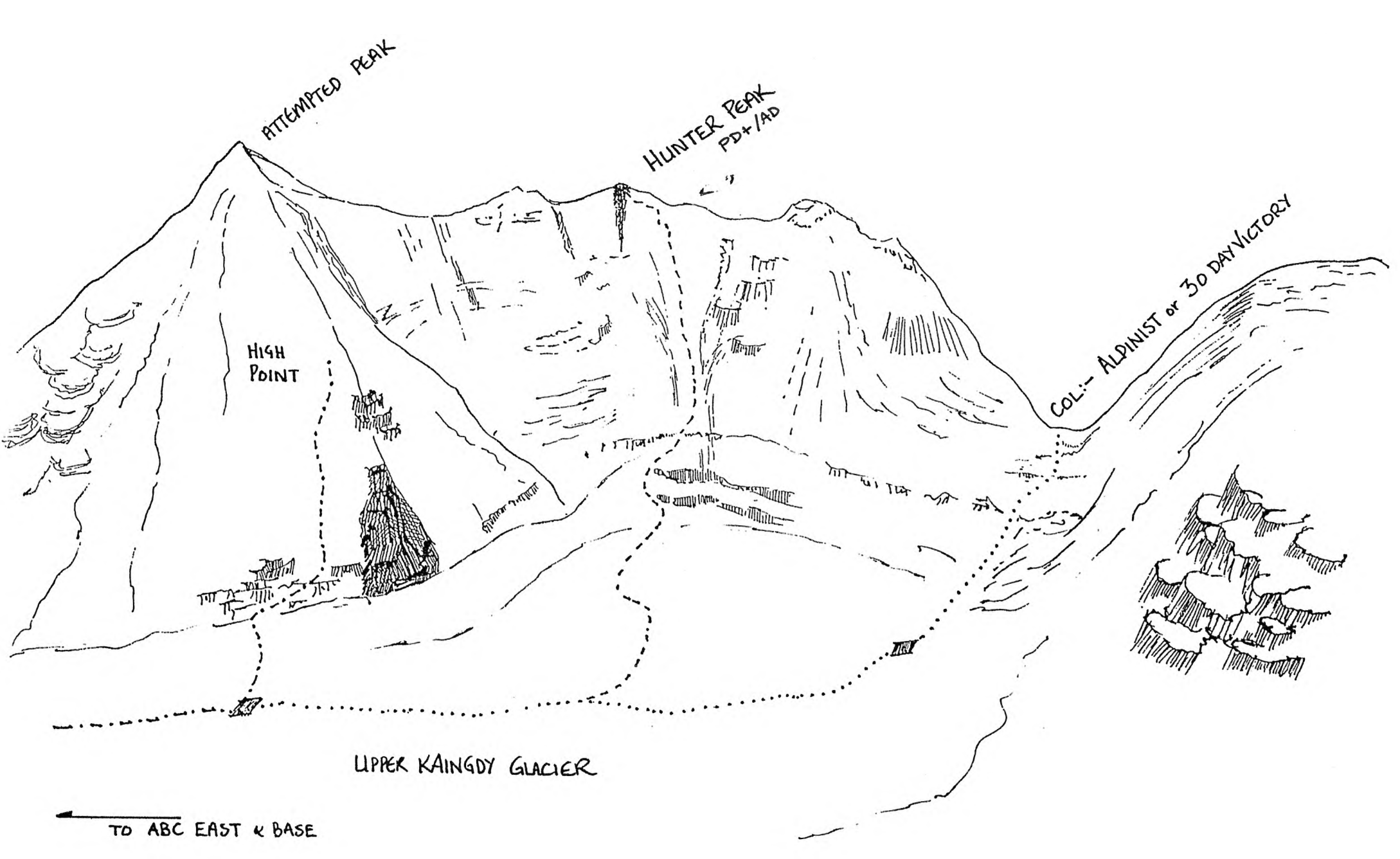
HUNTER PEAK  
PD+AD

HIGH  
POINT

COL:- ALPINIST or 30 DAY VICTORY

UPPER KAINGDY GLACIER

← TO ABC EAST & BASE



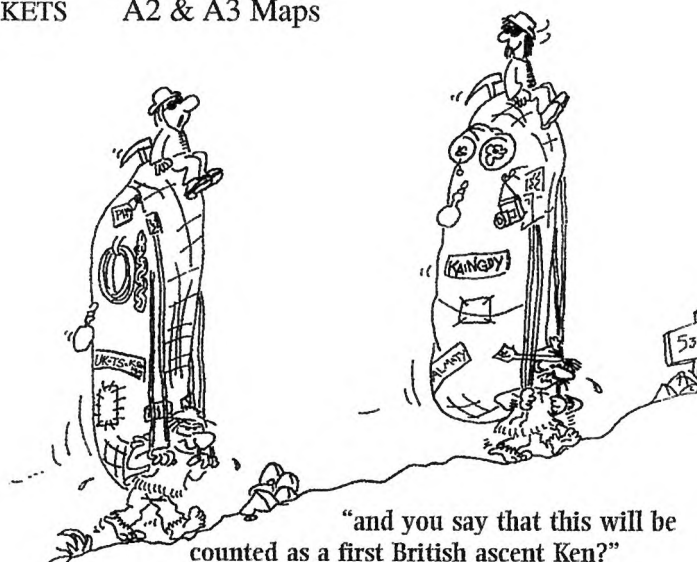
# APPENDICES

## UNITED KINGDOM TIEN SHAN KAINGDY EXPEDITION

1995

23rd July ~ 28th August

II	Visas
	Members information sheet
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V	Travel
Va	Info sheets
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VII	ITMC
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IX	Medicine
X	Insurance & Tool Kit
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END POCKETS	A2 & A3 Maps



# Visas

Adjacent to the teeming streets of Notting Hill lies the more exclusive district of Kensington Palace Gardens. From early in the morning on most days of the week, a curious sight may be observed outside the heavily shuttered and barred doors of the Russian Embassy. Two lengthening queues of assorted, travel eager customers face each other by an entrance gate. To the right is the far longer queue of people wanting visas. These we will call the Desperadoes. To the left are the Ever Hopefuls, whose application forms for Travel Visas will have been scrutinised and possibly processed, and for whom the Long Wait with Bated Breath should soon be over. Yet a third category must be described. At the head of both ranks are the Professionals, life-saving and journey-solving couriers who “know the ropes”, and who for a consideration will absolve the would be traveller from a bureaucratic nightmare.

Forms, photographs, stapled photo copies of Passport pages must be in the hands of the Desperadoes. No deviation from the printed rules, no dot or missing tick will be tolerated. They must realise that to travel hopefully is suspicious. To travel to Kyrgyzstan for example is to imply that you don't want to go to Russia, in fact you're probably anti-Russian. After all, the Kyrgyz preferred to break away from their former rulers in 1991, and deserve to be taught a lesson.

At least one thing unites both the Desperadoes and the Ever Hopefuls, and it is my opinion that the Russian Officials are not aware of it. Many of us come a long way to queue and to suffer. From Bristol for example, or from Leeds or Newcastle, cities that resound to rumours and speculation about the tortuous Getting a Visa process. So to make sure, we take the trouble and go to the expense of a visit to the London representatives of the Russian authorities.

As 10' o' clock approaches, tension begins to mount. From time to time at the head of the queue, the Professionals have been augmented by yet more of their fellows (“fellows” being the correct word in this case). Woe betide any Desperado however well intentioned who attempts to do likewise, even to ask a question. A murderous atmosphere engulfs the queue, or rather descends on to the head of the would be interloper who, more often than not, rapidly retires in confusion and embarrassment towards the distant end of the queue.

Then, eventually, the atmosphere changes. A figure approaches the gate from inside to admit a select few. Smiles from the Professionals who lead off at a great pace for the front door followed by a handful of Desperadoes. The gate slams shut. The privileged are admitted into a largish room with three or four windows behind which sit the waiting officials. The Professionals are already well away. “Good morning Tatiana, I'd like the first two today, and the rest at the end of the week”. This surprises some of the rest of us. At the head of our line, a nervous American girl is being told by Olga in no uncertain terms that it is quite impossible to process her Visa for Russia in under three days. She is already a victim of her uncaring travel agent and now she faces a cancelled trip to Moscow without any hope of a refund, and she leaves in tears. I approach the counter with some trepidation. I hand Olga the forms, and fixing her firmly in my eyes, I smile.

No response as Olga is sifting through the documents.

There are ten of us going to Kyrgyzstan, and what is more, I have handed Olga our copy of an official invitation to climb in the Tien-Shan mountains. I feel that all will be lost if I divulge that this invitation is for only nine of us, the tenth member having joined up subsequently. Will I be cast out of the building? Will I have to go right back to the beginning of the whole wretched business?

Olga consults a colleague.

I hold my breath.

“Ready in ten days” she snaps, handing me a receipt.

“But....”

I hesitate, and begin to think of the hassle and anxiety ahead.

I decide on Damage Limitation.



“Thank you very much”.

Never had I been more relieved to escape into the pollution of Notting Hill.

The journey back to Bristol was ecstatic. The knowledge that later on I would have to return and re-join the Ever Hopefuls filled me with pride. I felt that nothing the mountains of Tien-Shan might thrust in my way would equal the ordeal I had been through.

Ten days later, the M4 was heavily crevassed with road works and congested with fellow commuters. I approached the Embassy with a glowing sense of belonging. I knew what had to be done. I had to hand Olga’s colleague £100, in exchange for the Visas that would admit us all into the Promised Land. This time I joined the Ever Hopefuls, and waited.....

At half past ten, no apparent reason for the delay, the gate opened.

I ran in behind the Professionals, going straight to the collection window. To hand Olga’s colleague the well guarded receipt was effortless. She turned away and searched a pile of documents on a table behind.

Was I minutes, seconds, away from Visadom?

By now Vera’s eyes had narrowed.

I held my breath.

“Vun photo missing” she hissed.

“Pardon me?”

“Vun photo missing” she repeated considerably louder.

“But...but they were all there” I stammered.

“No!” she snapped, handing me a Passport page minus the photograph I had stapled to it.

“But...Olg....your colleague checked each one” I insisted.

Vera was ready for that one.

“No photo, no Visa. You bring photo, vee giff you Visas”.

I had lost.

Behind me fellow Ever Hopefuls were beginning to turn ugly.

Rapidly I left the building for the street, still an Ever Hopeful and still a Waiter with Bated Breath.

In my mind the Mountains of Tien-Shan were receding. Would I even manage the return journey to Bristol? Did I need a Visa?

Seven days later we were all on our way to the Celestial Mountains.

The Visas felt wonderful. I made a special point of smiling at our Russian cabin crew who after all, knew nothing of what had led up to our joining their flight. Somehow I had expected that we would be barred from flying for not having the correct documentation to travel on the air-bus taking us over the tarmac from the Boarding Lounge to the plane.

From time to time on the Kaingdy Glacier I wondered how the Desperadoes and the Ever Hopefuls were faring back in London. But by then we too were heavily involved with problems of our own. We had ourselves become Desperadoes and Ever Hopefuls as we tackled the forbidding ice slopes and ridges.

Perhaps Tatiana, Olga, Vera and their colleagues had merely been being cruel to be kind. Perhaps they knew what perilous challenges were in store for us and had wanted us to remain in England.? Perhaps they wanted us to become Couriers?

Graham Treacher.

FULL NAME	Имя, отчество (имена) . Фамилия	PHILIP SAMUEL KENDON	JAMES STUART GALLAGHER	KENNETH CHARLES FINDLAY	WILLIAM KENNETH MOSLEY	DAVID ROBERT SUDDER	GRAHAM MARTIN TREACHER	PAUL EDWARD HUDSON	ASHLEY GEORGE HARDWELL	JOHN MICHAEL HUDSON	DAVID FREDERICK PENLINGTON
ADDRESS	Адрес постоянного местожительства,  номер телефона	51 VESPERGATE MOUNT KIRKSTALL LEEDS LS5 3NL	RAG PATH COTTAGE BROADGATE LANE ESH WINNING DURHAM DH7 9QE	124 QUEENSWOOD DRIVE LEEDS LS6 3LJ	30 HEATHER LANE BLACKFELL WASHINGTON TYNE & WEAR NE37 1JX	12 KINGS WALK CHAPPEL PARK NEWCASTLE NE5 1UD	33 ROYAL YORK CRES BRISTOL BS8 4JU	88 ASH ROAD HEADINGLEY LEEDS LS6 3HD	2 LAYTHORPE TERRACE EAST MORTON KEIGHLEY YORKSHIRE BD20 5TC	12 CLUMBER DRIVE RADCLIFFE ON TRENT NOTT'S NG12 1DB	HIGH PARK PARKSIDE ROAD KENDAL CUMBRIA LA9 7LG
DATE/PLACE OF BIRTH	Дата рождения	11.4.71 LEICESTER	26.10.44 SEAHAM	20.1.195 LEEDS	1.5.1939 JARROW	18.3.68 WALLSEND	15.8.32 WESTCLIFFE ON SEA	8.2.1949 PORTSMOUTH	10.5.61 BODMIN	20.4.45 BELPER	1.12.31 BURTON-ON-TRENT
NATIONALITY	Национальность	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH	BRITISH
PASSPORT No PLACE OF ISSUE	Категория, вид и кратность визы	UK PASSPORT AGENCY	LIVERPOOL	LIVERPOOL	LIVERPOOL	UK PASSPORT AGENCY	LONDON	LIVERPOOL	LIVERPOOL		LIVERPOOL
EXPIRY DATE		7-2-2005	1-5-2000	10-5-2005	7-11-2001	4-4-2005	12-6-1999	27-1-1996	24-7-2000	11-11-2003	25-1-2003
NEXT OF KIN ADDRESS	ближайшие родственники  Адрес местожительства										
TELEPHONE	номер телефона										
BLOOD GROUP	группа крови		O RH POS	----	-----	O RH POS	-----	A RH POS	----	----	-----
ALLERGIES REACTION	аллергии	HAY FEVER	NONE			HAY FEVER	NONE	NONE	NONE		NONE
INSURANCE DETAILS COMPANY POLICY NO. CONTACT	подробности страхования	<p style="text-align: center;">ALL MEMBERS INSURED WITH SNOWCARD 01327 262 805 CLAIMS - BISHOPGATE 01703 312 323 INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE UK- 1703 644 633 HEAD OFFICE BISHOPGATE HOUSE, TOLLGATE, EASTLEIGH, HAMPSHIRE SO53 3YA</p>									
OCCUPATION	должность.	TEACHER	TEACHER	FE LECTURER	RETIRED	RETAIL BUYER	MUSICIAN	TEACHER	FE LECTURER	GEOLOGIST	RETIRED
	<i>Our information sheet used at checkpoints etc</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE UNDER SNOWCARD TEL.- SOUTHAMPTON 1703 644 633 : TELEX - UK 477 429 Answerback - RESCUE-G : FAX - 1703 644 616 YOU NEED TO QUOTE; CERTIFICATE No., THAT YOU ARE A SNOECARD INSURANCE CLIENT, THE NUMBER YOU ARE SPEAKING FROM YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION; FULL NAME AND AGE OF PATIENT, NATURE OF THE ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS, NAME &amp; TEL No. OF HOSPITAL &amp;/OR ATTENDING DOCTOR IF HOSPITAL ADMISSION IS LIKELY TO BE MORE THAN 48 HOURS FOR A PATIENT - CONTACT SNOWCARD IMMEDIATELY</p>									



# CHARITIES

Each time we have mounted an expedition we have tried to raise some small amount of money for one or two charitable causes. This time Ken Findlay and I chose two very different ones to get sponsorship for. One was TUSK FORCE a charity who take action to save or improve the lot of various animals around the world. The other we decided was to be one of the Mountain rescue teams that make our own mountains a very much safer place.

## TUSK FORCE

This is a U.K. based charity which is currently involved in many conservation issues including protecting the Siberian Tiger from extinction. They hope to help fund the building of a sanctuary near Vladivostok to protect these animals from poachers

The carcass of a tiger is worth about £80, but once butchered and sold to pharmacies from Korea to Taiwan for use in hundreds of forms of Chinese medicines and home remedies, it could make as much as £80,000.

In Chinese folklore, if you take tiger parts, you inherit all the animal's characteristics, the Siberian tiger is the most prized.

Because our expedition would be visiting that part of the world we decided to raise money for this charity.

For more information on this charity you can contact them at

Tusk Force, 4 Spencer Court, 140 - 142 Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 4JJ Tel. 0181 870 4122 Fax. 0181 870 4711

The money raised has been donated from three main sources Pudsey Grangefield School, Prince Henry's and Leeds Mountaineering Club, thanks goes to all the people who supported the charities by sponsoring us to climb mountains.

One other source that we gained cash for the charities was from a couple of slide shows that we gave, charging a small amount or asking for donations.

The total raised for the two charities combined was £242.00

# Travel

I tried to locate a reasonable way to get from the UK to Kyrgyzstan and rang round a number of airlines. the most fortunate contact at this point was with British Airways who put me onto IMS Travel who are consolidators for CIS flights.

Comparing the options of flying via Germany for over a twelvehundred pounds the offer from IMS of Gatwick-Moscow-Almaty for £ was obviously very attractive. This fact was underlined when I began dealing with IMS themselves. My contact was Malcolm Tinning who proved most helpful in accommodating all the changes of group that any trip I organise seems to entail. Malcolm was also instrumental in getting us a group price, available if there were ten members. The prices for the trips were as follows London-Moscow £234.00 return; Moscow-Almaty £237.00 return. The baggage weight was 20k normal + 10k special & 5k hand-baggage.

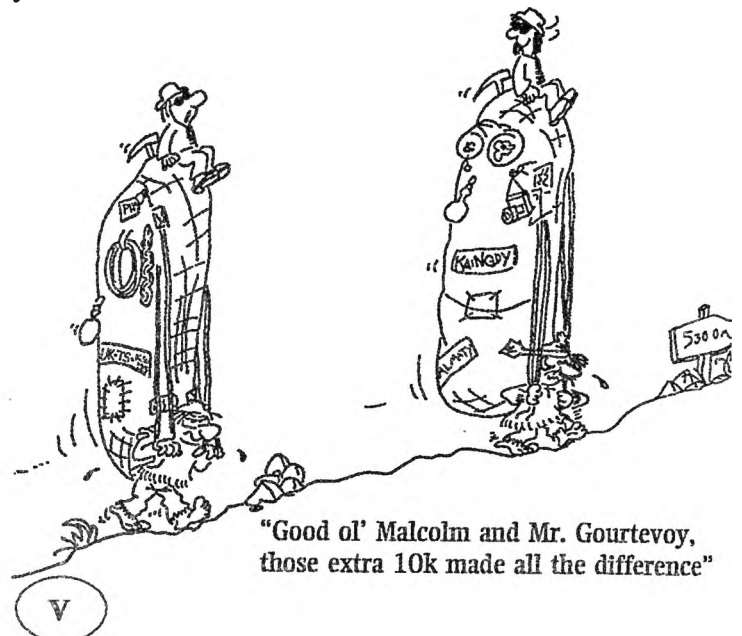
One of the difficulties of mountaineering trips is getting enough gear to the mountain and thus on the aeroplane. IMS on our behalf asked Transaero, the airline we were to travel on, for some extra weight after some worrying delay they came up trumps and sent a letter signed by Mr. Gourtevoy the airlines Vice-President. This allowed each member an additional 10k over the normal 20k, photocopies of this letter proved invaluable as we left copies at various airline desks. Fortunately everyone accepted the letter and there was no problem.

With all the UK organization out of the way we arrived at Gatwick ready to go. Our Mr. Gourtevoy letter made all the difference and we sailed through the weigh-in, this was unlike another group who for some reason were told by a 'friend' that airline never worried about excess weight. They had to stump up around £1000.00 for their extras! If you ever get a friend like theirs get rid of them.

Just before we were to set off there was a programme on the Television about Aeroflot and its faults, so we were in a state of concern as we boarded the plane. There was no need to worry though as the quality of the planes and service was excellent. All the members of the group were impressed by Transaero.

There was one difficulty we encountered during the trip, that was the change over at Moscow. At Gatwick I passed over the first set of tickets, Gatwick to Moscow; what I should have done was to show them the tickets for the second leg as well. As a result we were delayed by waiting for our baggage from the plane instead of it being passed from one plane to the next directly. Some members thought it may have been safer to have it in our hands during the changeover. The other group mentioned earlier did suffer a loss of equipment, apparently, before they arrived in Almaty.

There you have it then; great service, good air-stock, good price and help courtesy of IMS Travel & Transaero, Malcolm Tinning and Mr. Gourtevoy.



Mr. G. Gourtevoy  
Vice-President  
Transaero Airlines



10th July 1995

Dear Mr. Gourtevoy,

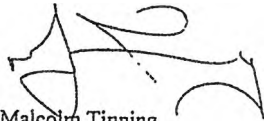
We have an expedition group of 10 passengers travelling from London to Almaty on Transaero Airlines on 23 July.

This group - the United Kingdom Tien Shan Kaiyndy Expedition 1995 - have previously been granted an additional 10 Kgs checked baggage allowance by the airlines carrying them to/from their destination due to the nature of their visit and the specialised equipment they need to carry in connection with the expedition.

We would be grateful if you could therefore authorise an additional 10 Kgs excess baggage for each member of this group on Transaero Airlines over their booked itinerary - London/Moscow/Almaty/Moscow/London.

Many thanks for your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Malcolm Tinning  
SALES & MARKETING MANAGER

### Emergency/Insurance info

International emergency call UK 1703 644633  
Snow Card 01327 262805 \*Snowcard, Freepost 4135, Lower Boddington, Daventry Northants, NN11 6BR  
Claims Bishopgate 01703 312323

### Addresses

- \*British Embassy Kazakhstan, Ul Furmanova 173, Alma Ata Tel 506 191
- \*David Hepburn, Honorary British Consul-Bishkek, Suite 206, Goscominvest, 58a Eekindik Blvd., Bishkek 720874, Kyrgyz Republic. Tel 007 3312 22 12 49; Fax 007 3312 62 01 88
- \*Vladimir Komissarov, ITMC, 105 Panfilov St., Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, 720035, CIS. Tel/Fax 007 3312-42 98 25
- \*IMS Travel, Malcolm Tinning, 21 Woodstock Street, London W1R 1HF 0171-409 77 74 Fax 0171-629 12 76
- \*Mr G Gourtevoy, Vice president, Transaero Airlines see signed letter about 30k weight

### Flight information

#### TRANSAERO

Flights: Gatwick 14.25 Sunday 23rd July arrive Moscow/Sheremetyevo 1- 22.20 GV402/23JUL

Moscow 23.30 Sunday 23rd July arrive Alma Aty 06.45 Monday 4J205/23JUL

Return: Alma Aty 08.30 Monday 28th August arrive Moscow 10.15

Moscow 11.40 Monday 28th August arrive Gatwick 13.25 4J206/28AUG  
4JGV207/28AUG

#### TICKET ref. NUMBERS

FINDLAY	OUT:670 4400 156 649 0	IN:670 4200 352 267 6
GALLAGHER	OUT:670 4400 156 650 1	IN:670 4200 352 268 0
HARDWELL	OUT:670 4400 156 651 2	IN:670 4200 352 269 1
HUDSON J	OUT:670 4400 156 652 3	IN:670 4200 352 270 2
HUDSON P	OUT:670 4400 156 653 4	IN:670 4200 352 271 3
KENDON	OUT:670 4400 156 654 5	IN:670 4200 352 272 4
MOSLEY	OUT:670 4400 156 655 6	IN:670 4200 352 273 5
PENLINGTON	OUT:670 4400 156 656 0	IN:670 4200 352 274 6
SUDES	OUT:670 4400 156 657 1	IN:670 4200 352 275 0
TREACHER	OUT:670 4400 156 658 2	IN:670 4200 352 276 1

Group allowed 300 k plus 5k cabin baggage (size 50cm x 40cm x 20cm)

### ITMC Information

Fly UK-(Riga) Moscow-Alma-ata

Alma-ata-drive Karakol; 5hours drive to Maidaadyr-Fly Helicopter to base camp

Costing according to ITMC 12/12/94

Alma-ata/Karakol/Alma-ata \$423,

Karakol/Maidaadyr/Karakol \$270,

Maidaadyr/Kaiyndy/Maidaadyr by flight \$890

Food @ \$6/day/person (60% of time in camp?)

Radio operator/cook @ \$9/day, Radio @ \$4/day, Fuel \$50

Base camp tentage \$10/day (Kitchen-dining tent-6 tents sleeping)

Cooking at base £190

Permits \$40/person

In addition costs of staying on way, at end of trip; add 15%

MEF ref 95/25 : Foundation ack/JB/SSC0098

\$US must be post 1990 new notes-small denominations best (1,2,5,10)

*The information sheet we took & the letter giving us the extra weight.*



# Food

We took quite a lot of food from the UK, perhaps too much in the end. Ashley got a really good offer from Wayfarer Foods who sent a selection of their boil in the bag meals. The main courses were unfortunately for me all based on meat but those who ate them though them wonderful and there developed a black market amongst the others in the group trying to get more of their favourites. One member renowned by the size of his appetite remarked on the size of the portions, it is worth thinking about though.

Their weight meant that it was impossible for us to take enough of the main meals and sweets to provide for all the possible mountain needs so we also took a number of other dried products. These were bought after a couple of us had scoured the local supermarkets for possibilities. In the end most were based around pasta and proved an excellent choice especially for me. Sweets were taken in the form of Safeway Supreme you mix it with water/milk, we used them both as a sweet and as a drink. Drinks are an important aspect of high altitude living and we took UK teabags, Chocolate and Horlicks instants as well as the savoury marmite. We also took dried soups, both instant and 15/20 minute packets all items went down well.

We were given an amount of chocolate by Nestles in Newcastle, this meant that we had great snack and energy food for the hills. UK chocolate is often worth taking if you can 'afford' the weight. We also looked around for those powdered drinks but to no avail.

From the U.K. we took or were left (by Andy Kemp et al) the following items:

Chocolate bars, Soups, Chocolate drinks, Tea, Coffee, Marmite, Safeway Supreme Delight, Custard, Mousse, Powered Milk, Oxo Cubes, Sweets, Boil in the bag meals, Beanfeasts, Pasta Choice, Smash, Herbal Teas, Tortellini, Ovaltine, Ready Brek, Horlicks, Jelly,

The amounts we took were in the end confused as three people were involved in amassing the food and consultation was a little lacking. It was something like: 130 main meals, 100 cup-a-soups, 75 big-soups, 130 breakfasts, 120 hot drink sachets, 2kg coffee, 750gms Marmite, 5k dried potato, 130 sweets.

In Kyrgyzstan we were able to get a number of reasonable items but were not impressed by the fact that all of it had to be bought in Karakol, not the most extensive market place. I would have expected to have been able to get food from Bishkek or Almaty where I would think the variety would be more extensive. Because we used ITMC we were not directly involved in the purchases, other reports carry better information than we have here.... copied sheets follow.

Tinned Fish	Variable but eaten by the group and enjoyed
Cheese	Whole cheeses lasted through the trip quite well
Jam	Came in glass jars and was more like fruit compote little sugar. Lovely, especially on rice pudding
Honey	Also glass jars - BEAUTIFUL
Tined Milk	Condensed Milk - delicious but expensive
Fresh fruit	Apples & apricots
Dried fruit	Apricots were variable quality in the market - Vladimir got us the best we saw Currants and sultanas
Vegetables	Potatoes, carrots, sweet peppers, onions, spring onions, aubergine, cabbage, cucumbers, courgettes, tomatoes, Garlic, Radishes
Nuts	Peanuts, almonds - Wall nuts in their shells
Dried items	Rice, good an excellent morning meal at base; Spagetti and Noodles; spices Many others were bought but few were used by our 'cook' Gretchka a sort of grain - Ashley used this for a good meal Other grains and dried peas/beans were bought but never cooked
Flour & Sugar	
Bread	We took 50 loaves believe it or not, they lasted at base camp quite well for two weeks
Margarine	A bit plastic but OK
Oil	Good quality
Biscuits	Poor, we got a variety but none were great - most were edible except the Turkish ones
Eggs	Excellent
Chocolate	'Local' was OK, but not as good as UK stuff
Meat/fresh	Might have been OK had it been prepared properly, ours was not
Tinned meat	Asked for but was unable to be supplied
Peanut butter	Asked for but was unable to be supplied
Ground rice	Asked for but was unable to be supplied
Porridge oats	Asked for but was unable to be supplied

Due to the accident concerning the other UK team in the area they left early and gave us a large amount of supplies, snowstakes and fuel.

# ITMC

## Evaluation & comments

Vladimir Komissarov is the key to the ITMC, he is also it seemed to us the lock and their door. This is a little unfortunate because the excellent service offered by the ITMC is sometimes affected adversely as Vladimir come under pressure at certain times. We arrived in Karakol at such a time and as a result our view of the organisation was coloured negatively.

I contacted three possible groups to help us get from the airport to the mountains, obtain food, and hire base camp equipment, these were ITMC, Dostuck Trekking and Megatest Service. The offers of assistance from all the travel groups were similar but the costs were less for the ITMC that Dostuck and more importantly much more flexible. Having listened to some advice I decided to use one of the groups based in Kyrgyzstan, Megatest were based in Moscow. They did show a real interest about the trio and may well have offered a good service I will never know now.

Where Dostuck Trekking were unable to reduce the requirement to supply, at our cost, two guides a doctor and two cooks, ITMC immediately came back to me indicating their ability to adapt and with each part of the service itemised. At this point I would have no hesitation in recommending the ITMC as the group to employ. It was difficult to contact them directly as Vladimir was the only one who spoke English so I decided that it would be wise to invest in a fax machine, this did make it a lot easier.

The difficulty in speaking directly though may have some effect on the subsequent attitudes to Vladimir and some aspects of his organisation. An example in point was the fact that I thought I had employed the ITMC to purchase for us suitable types and amounts of Kyrgyzstan food suitable for use at base camp. I was thus surprised when on the second day there Vladimir asked for a list of what we wanted to take to the mountains. My concern was about the availability of various items in Karakol compared with Almaty or Bishkek, which are much larger centres. One result was that the team was unable to obtain any tinned meat, something that would have made base-camp meals much more palatable.

One poor decision made by Vladimir was to allocate us a cook /wireless operator who in fact could not cook. This resulted in poor moral at base and had an affect on the whole team. When challenged about the quality of the cook Vladimir answered by saying that he decided to give us someone who was a good alpinist in case of trouble, this decision was not a good one.

To enter the Central Tien Shan area to climb you need a special pass and Vladimir obtained this for us without trouble. It was checked most carefully at Maidaadyr by the army personnel there, each one of us having to present our passport against the details on the pass (Propusk).

In Karakol we were housed for \$5 per/person/night in an "alpine hut". It had apparently been built by the USSR for training Alpinists in the surrounding mountains. We thought that it was becoming rather run down. While the bedrooms were good and the sheets were changed regularly, the washing facilities were poor. For the whole place there was only one toilet, one wash basin and a shower that was questionable to say the least and cold. The cooking facilities were also poor, being only two gas rings even when there were up to 25 people in three groups staying there.

Another fact that gave us concern was the unit that the ITMC used in Karakol, this was run by Anatoli. None of the team found Anatoli trustworthy, or helpful. One instance was when we were given the tentage from the stores at Karakol, as indicated in the main text, it was unacceptable just a pile of unchecked and unrelated items really. If they had not been checked we would have been in real difficulty on the glacier. Also because we could not obtain the third bottle of propane gas from Anatoli we ran out of it a week before we were due to leave. We then had to rely of our MSR stoves which needed constant servicing to keep them going and made cooking very difficult. We were not trying to get something for nothing here as we paid for each gas unit we used, they was not part of a total price.

Even the allocation of base camp pots, pans, eating and serving equipment were inadequate until we made some fuss.

At Karakol we did feel left behind as other events and groups took all the attention of Vladimir and there was no-one else for us to turn to. This was redressed a little upon our return but attention to us left another group frustrated waiting for information regarding their own transport difficulties.

This level of service will need to be addressed by the ITMC as it will make people think twice before recommending them, when in fact with a small amount of adjustment and care they could be excellent. Most of the team wondered if Vladimir really knew of the attitude shown by Anatoli when he was not there. Perhaps some other person might be found for the ITMC to liaise with in Karakol.

The team's wariness of Anatoli was finally shown to be valid at the end of the trip when he charged us for some passes to a particular part of the local valleys but it would seem never actually bought them. The day after the trip Ashley wondered if the passes had been paid for as we had not been given any paperwork to take on the visit so he decided to visit the tourist department housed in the Karakol Hotel to check this out. When he got there he found that no passes had been bought, thus Anatoli had \$80 for free. Ashley was told that the tourist office would take this up on the Monday, if no money was forthcoming. We do not know the outcome.

Overleaf are the prices quoted and kept to by the ITMC. The only change was for additional travel costs, Almaty to Karakol etc. - due to the group size increasing from six to ten. Vladimir seems to be honest, and reliable but can fall down on the care of his organisation. You need to grab him and get him to sort out your requirements and not just expect it to be done. I was not pushy enough,





**ITMC**  
**TIEN - SHAN** ltd.

105 PANFILOV ST. BISHKEK  
KYRGHYZ REPUBLIC 720035 CIS  
TEL / FAX 3312 - 42 98 25

СНГ Киргизская Республика 720035, Бишкек, ул. Панфилова 105

Исх. № \_\_\_\_\_ "12" 12 1994г.

Fax : 011 32 782 531

32 362 322

To : Paul Hudson  
88 Ash Road,  
Leeds LS 6 3HD  
UK

From: Vladimir Komissarov,  
ITMC Tien-Shan, Bishkek.

Dear Paul !

Thank you for fax of 8th of December 1994. Unfortunately it was uncomplete, map scheme is missing.

I sent our brochures and pendant when I stayed at Pat's place after the World London Travel Market in November 1994.

As for mountaineer aspect the region of the Kaiyndy glacier you chose for expedition presents a great interest. It abounds in virgin summits of 4000-6000 m hight. But technicaly their routes are not difficult. I have slides of this region and could sent them to you.

To our mind the most convinient and chip itinary looks like this:

The best start point is Alma-Ata not Tashkent in spite of the fact that there exists a through flight London-Tashkent. You can get to Alma-Ata flying via Frankfurt by Luftganza or via Moscow by BA or Transairo companies. You will have 7 hours between flights in Moscow to reach the other airport. Why it is more convinient ? The distance between Tashkent and Karakol is 650 km longer than that between Alma-Ata and Karakol - the start point for the Kaiyndy glacier. You are likely to cover this distance by autotransport. Besides, in case of arrival to Alma-Ata you would not have to go to Bishkek, but directly to Karakol, that would be 350 km shorter.

Then we have two variants:

1. To ride 10 hours by car from Karakol to Kaindy glacier, where you may set up the base camp. The upper part of the glacier is within a day of walk from this place.

2. To ride 5 hours by car to our intermediate camp Maidaadyr that is in a close gorge Inylchek. The camp serves as a base for helicopter in summer. It takes 20 min of pure flight and 10 min for taking off and landing. The cost of a flight hour in summer 1995 will make up 670 USD.

The expenditure for expedition will approximately be as follows:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1) Alma-Ata - Karakol - Alma-Ata<br>360 km x 2 ends x 2 times = 1440 km x 0,3 USD/km | 423 USD |
| 2) Alma-Ata - Maidaadyr - Alma-Ata<br>(150 km x 2 x 2) = 600 x 0,45 USD/km           | 270 USD |
| 3) Maidaadyr - Kaiyndy - Maidaadyr   |         |

- 2 -

by helicopter: 20 min x 2 x 2 = 80 min	890 USD
by autotransport: (80 km x 2 x 2) = 320 km x 0,9 USD/km	288 USD
4) Feeding as you will prefer, (usually we charge 5-6 USD/day reflecting 60 % of your time spent in the camp ) 6 persons x 3 x 18 days	324 USD
5) Radio operator - cook 9 USD x/day x 30 days	370 USD
6) Rent of distant connection radio station 2 USD /day x 30	60 USD
7) Petrol power station 2 KW 2 USD/ day x 30	60 USD
8) Petrol 100 lt x 0,5 USD/lt	50 USD
9) Tents : kitchen - 1 USD/day x 30 days dining tent - 3 USD/day x 30 days tents for accomodation - 1 USD/day x 4 tents x 30 days	30 USD 90 USD 120 USD
10) Kitchen: set of dishes - 2 USD/day x 30 days	60 USD
11) Gas stove + 2 ballons	30 USD
12) Viza support 10 USD/pp x 6 persons.	60 USD
13) Registration 3 USD/pp x 6 persons	18 USD
14) Permit 25 USD/pp x 6 persons	150 USD

This is minimum of required trip expenditure . Other expenditure concerned with accomodation in towns or at Issyk-Kul lake is likely to appear not to mention unexpected expences that make up 10-15 % of the total sum of expenditure. You can bring your equipment along with you but as practice has shown it will be cheaper to lease ours.

We can recommend our constant partners in Moscow such as:

Soyuz Alpinistov Rossii

- 3 -

Fax: (095) 261 52 24  
Directors: Anatoliy Bychkov & Juriy Prima.

Alpprofsport  
Fax: (095) 231 07 65  
Director : Victor Shulgha

If any questions will arise - fill free to ask.

Sincerely yours,

To: Mr. Paul Hudson  
England  
Fax: 0532-306202  
From: Nikolai Chetchnikov  
Dostuck-Trekking.

2.12.1994

Dear Paul!

I read your fax of the 5th of November with great interest. The chosen by you area presents real interest for climbing and treks. It is rarely visited by alpinists and has many virgin summits over 5000 metres nearby. I offer following scheme to you:

- 1-2 - Night flight London - Tashkent. Arrival to Tashkent in the morning time. Breakfast, bus transfer to Bishkek (11 h.). Overnight in hotel.
- 3 - Transfer Bishkek - Issyk-Kul lake (8 h.). Overnight in shale.
- 4 - Trasfer Issyk-Kul lake -- base camp in the region of the Kayndy glacier (8 h.).

5-34 - Climblings, trekkings.

- 35 - Transfer the Kayndy glacier - Issyk-Kul lake.
- 36 - Transfer Issyk-Kul lake - Bishkek. Hotel.
- 37 - Transfer Bishkek - Tashkent. Overnight in hotel.
- 38 - Flight Tashkent - London (departure in the afternoon).

1. We propose you to fly via Tashkent, because these is a through flight London - Tashkent - London and if you have deslre to visit Tashkent and Almaty we can easily change the initial and final points of your program.

2. We belived that save cook we must have in base camp radio-operator as an interpreter or worker. That would be difficult for cook to keep the base camp during 30 days. For purposes of giving urgent aid and coordination it is necessary to have radio of remote conection.

3. We offer the following equipment:

- dining tent;
- tent for cooking and stocking provision;
- tent for cook and radio-operator-rinterpreter;
- base kitchen facilities(gas stove, dishes, tables, chairs, etc.)

- walkie-falkie set(portable radio transmithter).

4. All the necessary documents(visas and permit from frontier - guard authorities will be registered will be registered by our firm). You will have to send your passport data as soon as possible. If they will fill in your airtickets without visas, than we have possiblity to register your visas in Tashkent within 1-2 days, that will cost \$50 per person.

5. Region maps a additional information will be provided on the spot.

6. The price of the program from Tashkent to Tashkent makes up \$1520 or \$1370 from Almaty to Almaty per person including all the services (except visa registration in Bishkek), mentioned above. Remember that all the payments should be made in cash.

We must foresee all possible rescue works. That will cause additional expenditures to our firm. Who will pay them? (Which insurance company?).

You must prepare an aproprate document.

With best regards, sincerely

МЕГАТЕСТ  
СЕРВИС



MEGATEST  
SERVICE

Москва, Ленинский пр.,36  
Для ищем: 117296, Москва, п/я 425  
тел.(095)126-9119, т/факс(095)126-1136

Leninsky pr., Moscow, Russia  
For letters: box 425, Moscow, 117296, Russia  
tel.(095)126-9119, t/fax(095), 126-1136

Fax. 10-44-532 306202

Att. PAUL HUDSON

Москва 5.12.94

Sorry for long delay with our reply. We had to contact our partners in Almaty (Kazakhstan). They gave their estimated costs for this project and informed about their ideas:

1. Valley КОЯНДЫ located between 2 ridges ИНЫЛЬЧЕКТАУ (Injltcektau) and КАЯНДЫКАТТА (Kajndjkatta) (79 00 -80 00 E, 42 00'-42 20') could it be correct?

2. Our partners have base camp in camp АККОЛЬ (Akkol) in the valley БАЯНКОЛ (Bajankol), so they suggest to arrange transportation as follows: a) Almaty - camp АККОЛЬ (Akkol) (microbus) - 670 \$, b) АККОЛЬ (Akkol) - КОЯНДЫ (Kojandj) base camp (helicopter) return flight - 1680 \$.

3. It is possible to arrange trek and climbing but we need more details: a) How many days, how difficult? do you need porters? Give us a rough idea. Please inform us about your program in Moscow: transfers, accommodation, excursions.

4. Visas: We can send you invitations for Russia - 15\$ p.p., for Kazakhstan - 35 \$ p.p. pers., for Kirgizstan - 13 \$ p.p. On your way back you need another invitation to Russia which we will give on your arrival from U.K. using this invitation our friends in Almaty will arrange second visa for Russia. (It is more difficult and expensive to obtain double entry visa than the first one. Advise you to use our two invitations).

5. Permits to the area 50 \$ trekking, 75 \$ climbing.

6. Large tent for hire - 50 \$ for the whole period  
cook - 12 \$ per day  
guide - 20 \$ per day  
porter - 12 \$ per day

After you give us additional information we'll send you more daited estimation of our costs.

Best regards,  
general manager

Bergei Ginzburg

D:\MEGATEST\PARTNER\ENGLAND\Hudson



# Medicine

Here is a list of the items taken and how / if they were used. Stuart Gallagher put the medical kit together and was unfortunate enough to seek two not items taken, it would be worth considering them especially the first.

## Not taken but asked for;

Oil of Cloves -	Needed for a persistent tooth ache
Laxative -	While others could not keep it in, one member had difficulty in getting it out!
Cough Medicine -	Worth considering though on this trip was not needed

## Taken and usage;

Temgistic -	Main pain killers, they were never used thankgoodness
Codeine phosphate	Moderate pain killers, some of these were used to alleviate toothache
Paracetamol -	Quite a few of these were used, mostly for headaches
Erythromycin -	Antibiotic, only a few used for a tooth abscess/pain
Frusimide -	Pulmonary Oedema
Dexamethasone -	Cerebral Oedema
Bruffen -	Eases pain and ante-inflammatory, a few were used for back pain
Immodium -	Used to stop diarrhoea, at the end they were all gone!
Diorilite -	Replacement salts used to treat diarrhoea, only a few left at end

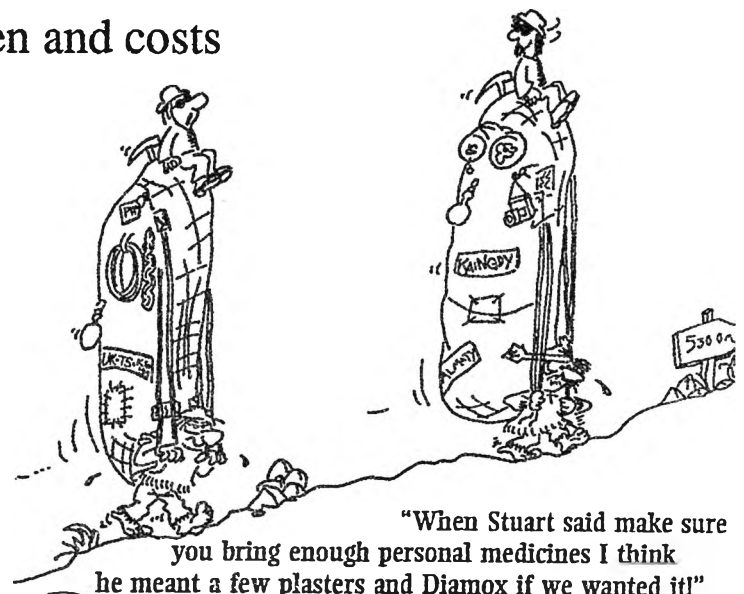
We took Peter Steel's book on mountain medicine which was consulted a couple of times and proved useful to have along. [Peter Steel Medical handbook for mountaineers. A Constable Guide ISBN 0 09 468570 3 Also worth considering is; Medicine For Mountaineering Ed JA Wilkerson Mountaineers ISBN 0 89886 086 5]

All members took their own mountain medical kit, which was able to be bolstered from the above. Individuals took their favourite plasters, pain killers, bandages, throat pastels, anti-septic cream etc. in some small container. Ashley suggested tampons as an absorbent dressing.

Diamox was taken by some of the group who say that they would not be without their help, this was an individual decision and others have never used them on any trip. David Suddes who suffered most with acclimatisation problems did take some in the end and thought them useful. Again consider taking a few in the group medicines to help alleviate altitude headaches etc. Ideally they are taken prior to the trip and continued through to the end.

## A list of some of the items taken and costs

Buprenorphine	£10.20
Codeine Phosphate	£5.50
Ibuprofen	£5.53
Diamox SR	£8.25
Erythromycin	£8.03
Frusimide	£3.62
Dexamethasone	£9.77
Portex Airway PVC No 4	£21.38
Bactigras 10x10cm	£7.40
Paracetamol 500mg	£0.86
Imodium Capsules	£8.00
Strepsil Lozenges various (5)	£8.75
Savlon Antiseptic Cream	£2.09
Dentanurse 1st aid kit (2)	£14.20
Melolin dressing (10)	£6.80
Dioralyte Sachets (2)	£14.70
Steri-strip 3x75mm 12's (3)	£3.18
Steri-strip 6x75mm 12's (2)	£2.12



# Insurance

We took out our insurance, or at least Stuart Gallagher did on our behalf, with SNOW CARD. Stuart had used this company before and knew someone who had unfortunately had cause to call upon its services. They had no problems in doing so. Their costs were very competitive undercutting everyone else that we found.

Snow Card Free Post 4135 Lower Boddington Daventry Northants NN11 6BR Snow Card T.01327 262805

# Tool Kit

John Hudson bought the items for the toolkit here are his observations;

- Wire - Used one or two times, fixing crampons, rucksacks
- Saw - Used
- Pliers - Used quite a lot for all sorts of jobs for gear and around camp
- Tape - Minimal use
- Screw Driver - Watch Screw driver  
Used on various projects from repairing glasses to tightening crampons
- File - Used throughout the trip to finesse the axes & crampons

Some items were taken and not used, they included; tent repair kit, glues, heavy duty needles and thread

# Refs.

Get by in Russian - BBC ISBN 0-563-36474-2

Medical handbook for Mountaineers Peter Steele - Constable ISBN 0-09-468570-3

Medicine for Mountaineers JAWilkerson MD - The Mountaineers ISBN 0-89886-086-5

Central Asia - The Practical Handbook GWhittell - Cadogan - ISBN 1-56440-227-4



# Gear

There was such a diversity of styles in the group that it would be impossible to indicate which clothing and general gear came out tops. Within the group, Stuart swore by his **Buffalo** items and certainly they were light. While he never put them to the test of a high bivvy on the occasions when we bivvied on the glacier before a climb he always said how warm they were. Two definite recommendations he would like me to pass on are (i) the use of plastic bags and an extra pair of socks as a vapour barrier system and (ii) **Rab** bivvy bootees, they were lightweight and really did make the difference.

For myself I opted as I have always done for the more traditional layers of clothing that I can peel off put back on. A **Duofold** base layer of top and if necessary long pants was overlaid by a **North Cape** shirt and **North Cape** salopants. This was often adequate but in colder conditions I added a **Northcape** thermastretch shirt and reversible Windjac. Then when the going got too rough for that I had a set of **Phoenix** Diamond gortex outer jacket and o/trs to add. Ken used a **Serak** jumper which proved to be windproof and formed an extra barrier of protection when used with a pair of **Dalesware** XP technique salopettes.

Everyone had a **Phoenix** bivvy bag and they formed an important items in many of the peak attempts.

The mountain tents we used were **Phoenix**, they were of three types to give us some flexibility with numbers. Most of the time they were good forming a warm, safe environment to recover in or to hide from the storms. Ken and I did have one very cold night in the Phunnel at ABC east when the Phunnel had become waterlogged due to the stones holding the guys giving way and the tent collapsing; we had no sleeping bags. The best thought of tent in use was the Phree/Phor.

Hardware caused a lot of problems in the UK as no-one could agree what should be taken. In the end five members took a rack of their own choice and this was enhanced by snowstakes, tapes and carabiners and dead men taken by others. In the field we were left a large number of lightweight snowstakes and I mean lightweight stakes by the other UK group and they proved invaluable. On all my climbs I found placements for ice-screws and used them often. The stakes could not always be used but where the snow was soft and deep they proved the only method of belaying, I also used a couple slotted into mini crevasses as running belays on the way down some slopes. Rock gear was used hardly at all, only by Stuart and Ken M I think, on the slope we tried above the Karakol Glacier.

Ken Findlay who co-ordinated gear, lists below his personal rack;

2 small rocks on wires (3 & 5)  
Chock on rope (7)  
Hexs on rope (8 & 10)  
Two rock pitons  
Three large slings  
One small sling  
Six extenders  
Three screwgate carabiners  
Twelve snap carabiners  
Six ice screws ( 4 drive in & 2 screws)

Also each member of the group took;

Three icescrews and quick draws  
Three slings and crabs  
Six metres of abseil Tape

Thus we had with us around 45 ice screws but this seemed to be too few at times, especially when some had to be left behind in descent.

**Cairngorm** ropes were again used for the expedition and despite awful conditions performed well. The group took ten 9mm ropes, one each and this was more than adequate. We experienced some difficulty and fun when at the end of the Angel Peak climb the ropes had been dragged across wet snow in the afternoon the began to resemble wire hawsers as the temperature dropped to -10°C.

Stoves were a problem and only David Suddes, new Whisperlight **MSR** worked properly during the expedition. The rest all five of them and all **MSR** multifuel stoves needed constant attention and were most disappointing. I am afraid that our thoughts about the **MSR** multifuel system stoves gained in Bolivia were only underlined on this trip. We will definitely look around for some alternative system in 1997. Stuart had a brand new **MSR** which never worded at all well from day one. I suppose Russian fuel will have caused some of the problem for the stoves but obviously they were not up to the job asked of them. We all wondered about the old **Primus** stoves during the trip; in Bolivia that was certainly the best working stove we had with us.

My personal gear included;

Sleeping bag & silk liner  
Bivvy bag  
Therma Rest  
1 Duvet Jacket  
3 pairs socks  
Duofold long top & bottom  
1 T-shirt  
3 pants  
1 Woollen Scarf  
1 Woollen hat  
1 Woollen mitts  
2 inner gloves  
1 Woollen gloves  
1 Silk Balaclava  
3 North Cape Field Shirts  
2 Thermal North Cape tops  
1 Salopettes  
1 North Cape Cotton Trousers  
1 Shorts  
1 North Cape Fleece Jacket

Phoenix Diamond Waterproofs  
2 Head torches & 3 flat batteries  
Climbing Helmet  
Full Harness & belay device  
Prussic loops  
Crampons  
Plastic Boots  
1 Gaiters  
2 Axes  
Trainers  
1 ordinary socks  
Ski sticks  
Pen Knife, Whistle, Compass, Sun Glasses  
Altimeter, Flashing light  
Cup, spoon, Washing gear, Sun stuff  
1 Olympus OM1 SLR camera  
1 Olympus Muji camera  
30 rolls film 50 to 400 ASA  
Personal Tape player & 4 tapes  
Passport & visa  
And for the UK.....  
Drivers Licence, Visa Card, cash, Budget Hire info

# Notes

By Ken Findlay

## **Karakol**

This is a town where everything closed at 8p.m. we found it difficult to get a meal after this time anywhere in the centre. The place was definitely not geared up to tourism, the markets only sold basic foodstuffs. There was poor street lighting and horse and carts were the main method of transport. Lake Issyk - Kul is a good place to visit. It is one of the longest lakes in the world with quite a nice beach to sunbathe on. It is easy to find privacy along the massive edge of the lake. there are pedal boats to hire and ice cream is available from roadside stalls. Fishing can be done in peace at the Eastern end, while gazing at the wonderful views of the mountains surrounding Karakol.

The Wild West Canyon, Dzhetty-Oguz, is worth a visit for a half day; it is 25k from Karakol. Apparently the cliffs were once wild bulls that terrorised the locality, the Gods immobilised them to stop them attacking the local Yurt-dwellers. I also found the Przhevalski Museum ( \$2 )interesting which featured the explorations of Comrade Przhevalskis' journeys' in Central Asia. The gardens surrounding the Museum are worth looking at.

The Istanbul cafe worth visiting even though it has a limited selection of food. They sell hamburgers, chips, kebabs, orange, lemon, cakes, breakfast, coffee, tea. Its good value with a pleasant atmosphere and decent service, it closes at 6p.m. The Karakol hotel has a limited menu but serves good goulash and soups but unfortunately closes at 8p.m.

We found a lively place that served food and drink and to our surprise played Western rock music, this stayed open till midnight. Good Chinese beer and Vodka at \$5, good waitress service, recommended. You will find along the road at the top of the big square bounded by the Post office and the Karakol Hotel on its left. A park occupies the centre of the square. Just follow the road right, away from the Karakol Hotel, the entrance to the restaurant is not obvious and is up some steps on your left.

The Alpine hut accommodation was fairly basic. Rooms housed between 2 - 4 people. The rooms were comfortable along with a fairly basic kitchen. There was a dining area which could house 12 people comfortably. Beware of the cook using your teams' food supplies to feed other groups, also check the hygiene of the kitchen on a regular basis. (\$5 per/person/night)

The number 1 bus passes the hostel every 10 minutes during the day and it takes you into the centre of Karakol, it usually terminates near the Black Market ( Bazaar ) , the journey costs 1 to 3 Som and takes about 10 minutes.

There are two Banks in Karakol both offering slightly different exchange rates. The one nearest the telephone exchange usually has the better exchange rate.

Traditional farming methods are still employed in this region of Kyrgyzstan.

## **Almaty**

Almaty is a large city and the capital of Kazakhstan. There are many hotels here and a lot of roadside stalls selling a vast variety of goods.

Maestros is worth eating at , it has a very good menu including superb pizzas, ice cream ,steaks, chips and great rock music.

Places worth visiting are The museum of Musical Instruments, The National Museum of Kazakhstan, Panfilov Park with its breathtaking war memorials.

The airport lies 15km from the centre.

Our hotel rooms were equipped with TV, shower, bath, toilet, and worth the price of \$15 each per night.

# Addresses

We used the people highlighted, the others are for your interest.

## TRAVEL

Malcolm Tinning  
IMS Travel  
21 Woodstock Street  
London  
W1R 1HF  
Tel. 0171 409-7774  
Fax. 0171 629-1276

Mrs. S Gill  
Uzbekistan Airways  
72 Wigmore Street  
London  
Tel. 0171 935-1899  
Fax. 0171 935-9554  
(GSA HY Travel  
t.. 0171 935-4775)

British Airways  
Speedbird House  
Heathrow Airport  
Hounslow  
TW6 2JA  
Tel. 0181 562-1738

Aeroflot  
Tel. 0171 355-2233

Budget Car Hire  
Most UK Airports  
Free Phone 0800 181181

## SERVICES

Vladimir Komissarov  
ITMC  
105 Panfilov Street  
Bishkek  
Kyrgyz Republic  
720035 CIS

Dostuck Trekking  
72053  
18th Line  
42-1  
Bishkek  
Kyrgyzstan  
Tel. 3312-427471  
Fax 3312-419129

Megatest Service  
Leninsky pr.  
Moscow  
Russia  
Write to:- Box 425  
Moscow 117296  
Russia  
Tel. 095 126-9119  
Fax. 095 126-1136

A UK Group offering  
services is;  
EWP  
32 Seamill Park Crescent  
Worthing  
BN11 2PN  
Tel. 01903 237-565

## CONTACTS

British Embassy  
Kazakstan  
Ul Furmanova 173  
Almaty  
Tel. 506-191

Bishkek  
David Hepburn  
Hon. Brit consul  
Suite 206  
Goscominvest  
58a Eekindik Blvd  
Bishkek 720874  
Kyrgyz Republic  
Tel. 007 3312 22-12-49  
Fax. 007 3312 62-01-88

Mount Everest Foundation  
Mr. WH Ruthven  
Gowrie  
Cardwell Close  
Warton  
Preston  
PR4 1SH

British Mountaineering Council  
177-179 Burton Road  
West Didsbury  
Manchester  
M20 2BB  
T. 0161 445-4747

## + Contacts In the CIS

- Anatoli  
Alpbase Alatau  
119 Fuchika Str  
Karakol  
Kyrgyzstan  
CIS
- ROOSLAN Moosine  
Ulitsa Vastova 14  
Oblast  
Essuek Kulskiuu  
Garod Karakol  
Kyrgystan.  
- Driver & van Hire -
- HOTEL SHETYSU,  
Prospect Komunistchekee  
55,  
Almaty, Kazakstan.

## INFORMATION

regarding CIS mountains

Stuart Gallagher  
FRCC Member  
Several trips to Russia  
Rag Path Cottage  
Broadgate Lane  
Esh Winning  
Durham  
DH7 9QE

Dan Cousens  
Cambell House East  
5-10 Taviton Street  
London  
WC1H 0BX

Rick Allen  
29 St Swithin Street  
Aberdeen  
AB1 6XB

Anthony Park  
58 Edge Dale Road  
Nether Edge  
Sheffield  
S7 2BR

Roger Payne  
BMC

Nick Williams  
Leeds

Pat Littlejohn  
Bryn Gwynant Lodge  
Nant Gwynant  
Gwynedd  
LL55 4NW

also  
Paul Knott

Andy Kemp

Phil Wickens

# Accounts

		£9,733.48
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>FLIGHTS</b>		
IMS flights	£4710.00	
<b>UK ACCOMMODATION</b>		
FRCC hut 1	£ 48.50	
FRCC hut 2	£ 48.50	
<b>GEAR</b>		
DS 3 ropes	£ 127.83	
DS 3 stakes	£ 21.11	
DS 3 stakes	£ 25.66	
SG Tape	£ 68.53	
SG Medicine	£ 140.33	
JH Tools	£ 10.00	
PH YHA	£ 11.96	
PH Russian map	£ 14.10	
SG Travel/tents	£ 15.00	
<b>VISAS</b>		
UK visa costs	£ 100.00	
GT Travel to London	£ 40.00	
<b>FOOD</b>		
PH Food A	£ 50.08	
PH Food B	£ 2.60	
PH Food C	£ 65.32	
PH Food D	£ 69.50	
AH Food	£ 75.00	
<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>		
KF expenses	£ 10.20	
PH expenses	£ 137.13	
x-change	£ 2.00	
\$ exc loss	£ 143.18	
refunds no/go	£ 90.00	
<b>ITMC COSTS</b>		
ITMC	£1227.16	
ITMC balance	£1157.56	
<b>RUSSIA</b>		
Anatoli Karakol	£ 286.17	
3 main meals	£ 118.97	
Sergei	£ 12.86	
Hotel Almaty	£ 192.93	
refunds	£ 321.55	
Kyrgyzia	£ 64.50	
excess weight	£ 75.25	
<b>COPYING</b>		
Various (inc Rports)	£ 250.00	
		<b>INCOME</b>
		<b>GRANTS</b>
		Mount Everest Foundation
		£ 600.00
		British mountaineering Council/ Sports council
		£ 600.00
		Foundation for sports & the arts
		£ 450.00
		Leeds City Council Sports Fund
		Grant to PH & KF £125.00 each
		£ 250.00
		<b>MEMBERS FUNDING</b>
		8 Members @ £ 808.40
		£6467.20
		2 Members @ £ 683.40
		£1366.80
		<hr/>
		£9734.00
		<b>CHARITABLE FUND RAISING</b>
		approx
		Sponsorship
		£ 210.00
		Slide Shows
		£ 32.00
		-
		for UK Mountain Rescue & Tusk Force

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£9733.48

# Further Opportunities

This area is the hardest that I have visited, the weather is uncertain and most changeable. You will have noted that our plans were continually wrecked by the vagaries of the snowfall and storms that blew across. There did seem to be a pattern at one time of three good days then a storm but even that was changeable.

The slopes of these mountains are indeed spectacular to look at with their glaciers hanging out at 160°, but they are ice and need some care. Avalanches were quite rare though more frequent after a snowfall. Cornices as you will have gathered are a cause for concern.

The main Kaingdy Glacier is relatively friendly, but once off it, the bays offer deep snow and concealed crevasses. The peaks surrounding the Kaingdy Glacier will offer some good sport, but will need thought and mountain awareness if they are to be completed without accident.

The group has a comprehensive collection of slides of the area.

If you do decide to visit the central Tien Shan mountains the whole group would suggest you consider the use of snow shoes. Once off the main glacier we experienced much deep soft snow.

Speak soft for yet we need untrodden lands  
for future generations to hold within their hands.  
Too soon with careless word of mouth, or map  
once pristine snows, lie underneath a ton of man-made c...  
Where we have trod and left a footprint there  
will others go and give it the same care?



# United Kingdom Tien Shan Kaiyndy Expedition 1995



This is a report of an based on the notes of Ashley Hardwell from a conversation with a trekking group that 'called in' to our base camp 17/8/95. It is recorded here for the interest of others who might wish to venture into the area.

It was about 8pm on Thursday 17th August that base camp experienced its one-and-only visit from another party in the Kaingdy Valley. This was a party trekking through 'our' valley from the Inylchek area. This group of seven members were easy to see as they made their way towards our camp, the whites of their eyes shinning out in the dusk.

Four Finnish clients, a Russian 'Guide' and two porters made up this far-from-happy band of trekkers, and it was obvious from the state of them all that a rather harrowing day had preceded their arrival. We were all keen to listen to their tales from genuine interest, a chance to meet other travellers and real entertainment. What we learned about their journey went far beyond the limits of all these and engendered real concern.

The story of their journey over the col between the Inylchek Glacier and the Kaingdy valley horrified us all as we listened in disbelief. It seemed as if we were hearing of an imaginary nightmare rather than the story of a guided group!

The col which they came over is reputed to be 5200m though from observation this seems too high. Seen from 'ABC east' this col rises some 270m from the glacier at its base with an average gradient of some 50° - not your normal trekking terrain. Yet the visitors had been guided over this col as a grade 2 trekking col buy the guide from the ITMC. Questioning Vladimir Komissarov later in the trip he continued to assert the trekking grade attributed to the col, even though he I feel he had only ever seen it from the Inylchek side. On that side from the report of the Finnish trekkers it had a 180m slope rising at an angle of 40-45°. It would also seem obvious that no-one from the ITMC had in fact been over the col prior to this crossing! In the tale that unfolded we listened to the trekkers account of the time estimations given to them at the start and we had to agree, even from our limited experience of the area, that they were probably plucked from the air.

The Fins set off on their journey expecting, as they should, that the guide and the porters would be in control, know the way and be able to 'look after' the group on the journey. It was not until the journey was well under way and the technical difficulties menaced that the real situation became clear. The tradition of 'Mountain Guide' is held in high esteem throughout the world, but in these events Ashley was forced to question whether or not it was properly used to describe the Russian appointed to lead this trekking group. This person, called Anatol, had very poor mountain skills and it would seem had never been on this route before; while two 45m ropes were taken his other equipment consisted of one pair of broken crampons, the porters had nothing at all.

The groups first attempt at the col was thwarted when Anatol seemed to have no idea of the best approach and delayed far too long allowing the early morning sun to loose stones and other debris upon them. They were forced to retreat. After discussion the next attempt was made with a night time approach and this was successful. The group having only two ice screws between the six of them had to endure 90 m unprotected run-outs with no running protection. Each screw had to safeguard six climbers in turn!

## United Kingdom Tien Shan Kaiyndy Expedition 1995



When the crest of the col was reached the party of three fins were assured by Anatol that after two rope lengths they would reach a level glacier and that 'trekking' would again commence. The porters seemed at this point to become more and more concerned and the one who had taken the lead to the col carrying a full load was now physically and mentally exhausted. As was normal for all the cols in this area this one was heavily corniced excepting, fortunately, for the middle section; thus this area was chosen for the descent route.

The group began the descent as a reverse of their climb, this time one screw secured them as they in turn were lowered down the face for 90m where the second screw was placed to collect them, the last man down climbed the 90m route. The last man down was, during his descent, above the main group attached to the one screw so one needs little imagination to see the probabilities of fatalities had there been a slip. It was during this descent that the Fins realised the guide and the porters had lost control of the situation and that they rather than be helped had themselves to assist!

The porters became visibly panic stricken at one belay point and the 'guide' spent much of the time slumped over, it would seem, not knowing what to do. At one point in the descent the last Fin down was under the impression that a real catastrophe had befallen the group somewhere below him and for some time he imagined the worse. When after a traverse he again spied his friends his elation at their safety was tempered by the fear struck faces that looked up at him. The situation was obviously beyond the experience and the expectations of the guide and porters alike.

So it was that the Fins with scant mountaineering knowledge had to take control of the situation for themselves and for the three men they had hired to help them. The little knowledge was boosted by their level headedness, friendship and cooperative spirit. Even so at one point a porter, with no axe or crampons, was only saved by the fact that the rope had been wrapped round his arm. Full harnesses had been shared between the group to afford some protection on the descent but would probably have proved inadequate had they been called into real use. As they held him the Fins screamed at him to drop his load which he managed to do and was then pulled back to the safety ( a relative safety) of the ice screw.

While Ashley listened to this tale he could see real fear return to the tellers eyes at what might have been just five hours before on an easy grade two trek in to the Kaingdy Valley.

You must reach your own conclusion about these events but the group of our team who met them had no doubt about the accuracy of the telling of the events and the real danger that a group of 'clients' were put in by their 'guide' and porters hired to assist their holiday trek in the area.

Ashley's own thoughts, made an hour after the Fins had left to reach Inylchek were;

- This Mountain Guide, Anatol hired from the ITMC, either failed completely or was in fact only a young man given that title to impress the clients.**
- The guide and porters as employees of the ITMC were disastrously under equipped for such a technical route, this it would seem includes knowledge, experience, clothing as well as technical equipment**
- The ITMC seems not to have had any real knowledge of the route.**
- The ITMC put at risk both its employees and its clients by misrepresenting routes and people**

## Compass

## Tragedy in the mountains of heaven

AS THE GUIDE Rob Collister and John Cousins of the Mountain Leader Training Board walked down the Kaindy Valley at the end of July in Kyrgystan's Tien Shan mountains they were completely unprepared for the tragedy that had been unfolding for the previous ten days.

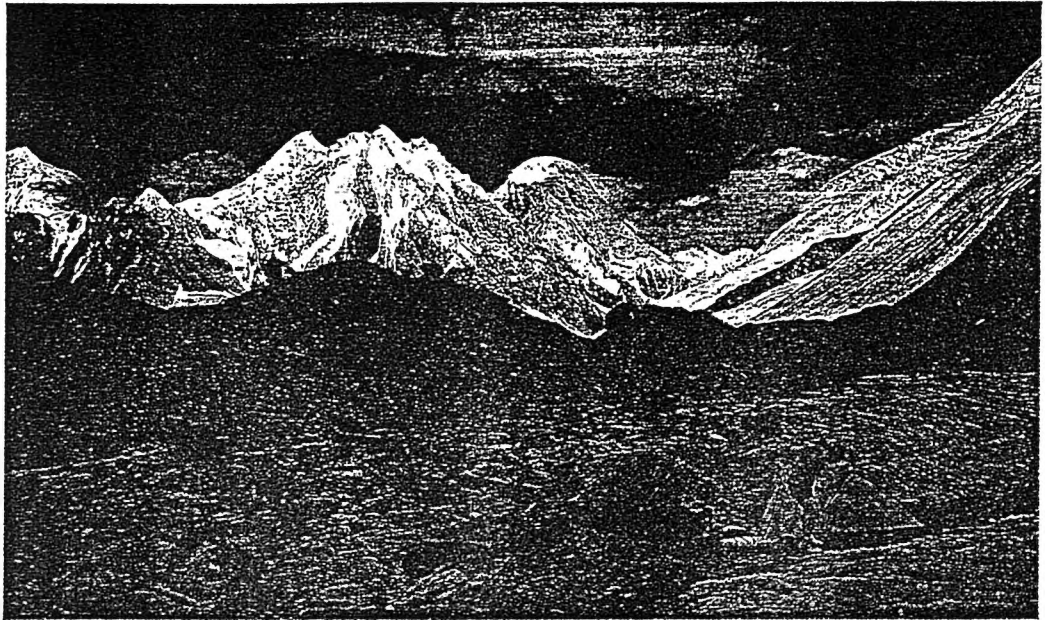
The two men were returning from an attempt on Khiro (6075m) which ended when a massive cornice collapse stopped them just short of the summit.

"We'd had some tea and biscuits and were feeling pretty mellow," Cousins said, "just looking forward to walking out of the mountains." Instead they discovered the aftermath of a horrific sequence of events that left one British climber and two Russian guides who went looking for him dead and the dreams of a bright, adventurous woman in pieces.

Joanna Newton, a 28-year-old chemical engineer, had given up her job at ICI's Wilton plant on Teeside to go travelling and climbing with her boyfriend Mick Davie, a 31-year-old computer programmer working in Watford. The two had been together for four years and were planning to buy a house together on their return from a trip that would take them halfway round the world.

After climbing first in the Ala Archa range west of the Tien Shan, they travelled to Bischkek to meet two friends, Neil and Andy Kemp. Together they drove and trekked into the Tien Shan, a phrase that translates as the mountains of heaven. The area they chose close to the border with China was little visited and few of the mountains there have been climbed.

They established base camp and while Neil and Andy Kemp stayed behind to acclimatise Davie and Newton set off at 1am on July 18th to attempt the east ridge of a previously unclimbed and unnamed mountain of 5,445 metres. At 8am and near the summit they paused to consider a route around a step in the ridge.



Looking up the Kaindy glacier, the unnamed peak at 5445 metres extends rightwards.

Davie, who had been following Newton unroped, seems to have moved out of the steps she had made in the snow towards the edge of the ridge. Without warning a cornice collapsed under his weight and he fell.

"I was ten feet ahead when I felt the snow give way," said Newton. "I threw myself to the right and got my axe shaft in. When I turned around Mick just wasn't there."

Joanna retreated down the ridge to get help, reaching base camp three hours later. Her two friends returned from a walk up the glacier soon after and while Neil Kemp returned to a gear cache to collect the team's first aid kit, Andy Kemp and Newton retraced her steps up the ridge.

By the time they reached the scene of the accident it was late in the evening and the weather had closed in forcing the two climbers to abandon their search and bivouac in blizzard conditions. Next morning as they descended in soft snow Kemp fell 200 metres but escaped with only minor injuries. When they reached base camp they sent their cook to a military station two days' walk away to radio for help.

After a helicopter search revealed no trace of Davie, the remaining climbers sought

permission from the British Mountaineering Council's insurance scheme to institute a search on the ground for Davie's body. Eight Russian guides were despatched from the nearby camp on the Inylchik Glacier.

On July 28th, two of the guides returned to the unnamed mountain with Joanna Newton and climbed the ridge on which Davie had died. They examined the area where he disappeared and then decided to continue to the summit. As the afternoon wore on they realised that completing the route – partly as a mark of respect for Davie – was not possible.

They descended but another cornice, close to where Davie fell, collapsed beneath the two Russians and they fell hundreds of metres down the mountain's North Face. This time the climbers had been roped and Neil Kemp recalls that "Joanna felt the rope go tight and she was dragged towards the edge. Then she suddenly stopped."

Thinking that the Russians had managed to arrest their fall, Newton pulled on the rope only to discover that it had been frayed and then cut on a rock exposed by the collapse of the cornice. For the second time in a week she was left on her own to descend in harrowing circumstances.

The following day, as John Cousins and Rob Collister came down the Kaindy Glacier, the bodies of the two Russians were retrieved by the six remaining guides and all the climbers were evacuated. "The helicopter was so heavy," said Cousins, "that it had to sit on the ground with the rotors turning to use sufficient fuel to allow it to take off."

Joanna Newton, distraught at the loss of her boyfriend and the tragic aftermath, remained in Central Asia to continue travelling. "She wanted time on her own," Neil Kemp said. "She was much calmer and had begun to accept things." Kemp, who is no relation to Andy Kemp, said of his friend of five years: "Mick was a really bright guy, he worked hard, climbed hard at the weekend, partied whenever he could. He was larger than life and enthusiastic about everything."

No trace of Davie was found and it is assumed he fell into a crevasse on the mountain. Martin Newton, Joanna's father, is concerned for his daughter and mourns the loss of a man he had grown to love. "Joanna said it was a wonderful place and that if Mick was going to die he'd rather it was there," he said. "It's some consolation, but only a faint one."

## *A Review of CIS Activity 1995 - from 'HIGH' Jan '96 No 158*



### **Tien Shan**

A proportionally high number of British expeditions visited the Tien Shan last summer, with the majority attempting to explore unfrequented side glaciers of the South Inlychek, rather than join the hordes at the popular sites near the head of the valley which are used to access the big peaks of Khan Tengri (6,995m) and Pobeda (7,439m). The region, which now borders Chinese territory, became very sensitive in 1945 when a Russian survey showed the highest peak in the Tien Shan to be Pobeda

rather than Khan Tengri. The Soviet Union unilaterally decided to redraw the Sino-Soviet frontier and as a result took over the whole of the Inlychek Glacier and its feeders to the south.

Access can be relatively straightforward via a scheduled flight to Almaty followed by a truck drive and a helicopter ride to Base Camp. In the past, Soviet activity has concentrated on ascents of the highest peaks, leaving considerable scope for exploration at lower altitudes but unfortunately the region is well-known for its totally unpredictable weather and poor snow conditions. The experiences of last summer's expeditions, reported below, only appear to reinforce this fact.

### **Kayyndy Valley**

A four person team from the UK originally planned an ambitious multi-stage expedition in Kyrgyzstan which would last from mid-June to the end of September, after which they anticipated travelling in Tibet and China until the end of the year. Mick Davie and Joanna Newton arrived in the former USSR around the 10th June then transferred to Bishkek from where they headed in to the AlaArcha range, an Alpine area of peaks up to c4,800m with reportedly good weather, rock and ice faces. The couple climbed there until the 6th July.



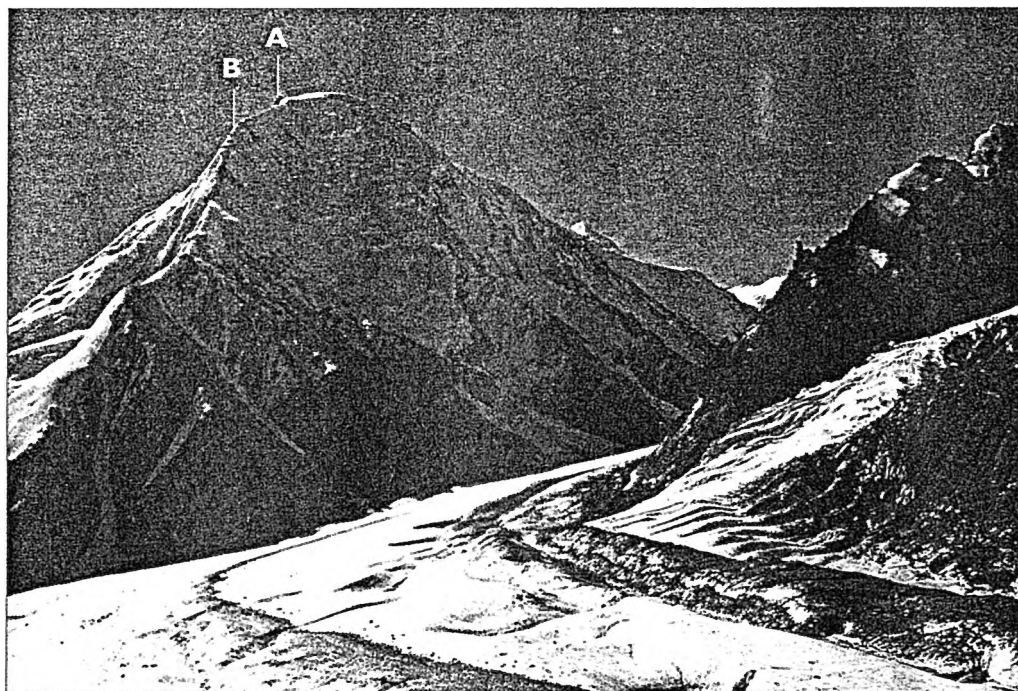
## Multiple epic above the Kayyndy Glacier

Returning to Bishkek they met the remaining pair, Andy and Neil Kemp (no relation), and all four travelled to the Kayyndy Valley, establishing Base Camp towards the head of the glacier on the 17th July. Unacclimatized, the Kemps remained at Base but very early the next morning Davie and Newton set off to attempt the East Ridge of an unclimbed 5,445m peak close to the camp. Their route involved front pointing a snow/ice slope on the north side of the ridge to reach the crest, which they followed towards the summit. Not far from the top, with Newton in the lead and both climbers unroped, the cornice on which Davie unknowingly stood collapsed. Thirty years old Davie, who had made some impressive Alpine winter ascents, climbed many of the established lines on Iran's Alum Kuh and made a solo ascent of the North Face Direct on Kusum Kangru in the Khumbu, fell to his death down the North Face.

Newton now had to reverse the route alone, down climbing the steep slope below the ridge and returning to Base where she met up with the Kemps. Ironically, in 1991 Davie had been forced to reverse a hard new route on Pukarashta Este in Peru's Cordillera Blanca when his partner fell to his death in a rappelling accident close to the summit.

After a short rest at Base Camp, Newton began to re-ascend the route with Andy Kemp to see if they could locate Davie and/or possibly make a rappel inspection of the top part of the North Face from the site of the accident. It was getting dark by the time they reached the site and the deteriorating weather had now turned in to blizzard conditions, forcing the pair to bivouac for the night. The next morning they descended. As they were starting back down the slope below the ridge, now in much poorer condition after the night's storm, Kemp slipped, falling over 200m. Fortunately, he only received minor cuts and bruises but left Newton to make a solo descent of the face for the second time in two days.

On arrival at Base Camp they sent their cook to a military post two days away to radio for help. A subsequent helicopter survey of the face provided no clues as to the whereabouts of Davie's body and on the 27th July a large team of Russian guides, based on the Inylchek Glacier, arrived to perform a search of the mountain. The following day Newton and two of the guides re-climbed the route to the site of the accident. From there they transmitted information concerning its location to the main party on the lower section of the



Above: The unclimbed Pik 5,445m in the Kayyndy Glacier basin of the Tien Shan as seen from the north east. (A) marks the site of the accident to the British climber, Mick Davie, on the 18th July and (B) the site of the subsequent accident to the two members of the Russian rescue party on the 28th July.

North Face and glacier below, who were then able to localise their search.

An eye witness at Base Camp then watched the three begin their descent and was horrified to see the first on the rope lead the group out on to a large cornice a little distance below the original accident site. The leader had successfully crossed the danger area when the cornice gave way, precipitating the two climbers down the North Face. The leader was in fact Joanna Newton who, dragged by the two falling Russians, was about to follow them over the edge when the rope broke.

For a third time Newton was left alone to climb down the route. Later she was met by two other members of the rescue team and escorted down to Base Camp. The next day the bodies of the Russians were retrieved by their compatriots but there was still no sign of Davie who, it is surmised, must have ended up in a bergshroud. The Russians were helicoptered out that same day and the British climbers on the 30th.

Also flying out with the subdued Russians were two other British mountaineers, Rob Collister and John Cousins. This pair had just returned from a spirited and committing attempt on one of the three remaining unclimbed 6,000m peaks in the Tien Shan.

Kirov (6,073m) lies on the Chinese border at the head of the Terekli Glacier immediately south of Kayyndy. The original aim had been to approach this remote peak via the Terekli Valley which

it was thought had possibly never been visited before by climbers. However, on arrival in the country they learned from their agent that an approach up the lower valley was impossible in summer and they would have to reach the upper glacier from the Kayyndy.

After a two day march, Base Camp was established at 3,600m on the 7th July. Following some time spent in reconnaissance it was decided that the Pass of the 30 Days Victory offered the best chance of crossing the Kayyndy watershed south to the Terekli Glacier and the pair ferried loads up to this 5,000m col through deep soft snow.

On the 14th July, they pitched a tent on the Pass and climbed Point 5,315m to the east. In poor weather they returned to the Kayyndy Glacier to pick up food and fuel for 12 days and on the 17th descended the far side of the col, traversing into a bowl below the South Spur of the unclimbed Point 5,784m, the highest peak in the Kayyndy basin and situated on the main watershed just west of the col. Next day they climbed the South Spur on to the East Ridge of the mountain, which they were later to christen *Pik Moelwyn*, and so reached the summit. The route was rated Alpine AD and was mostly deep loose snow lying on ice, though there was some interesting mixed ground and an exciting ice pitch through seracs. The final ridge was double corniced.

Next day the pair descended on to the Terekli Glacier, down climbing typi-

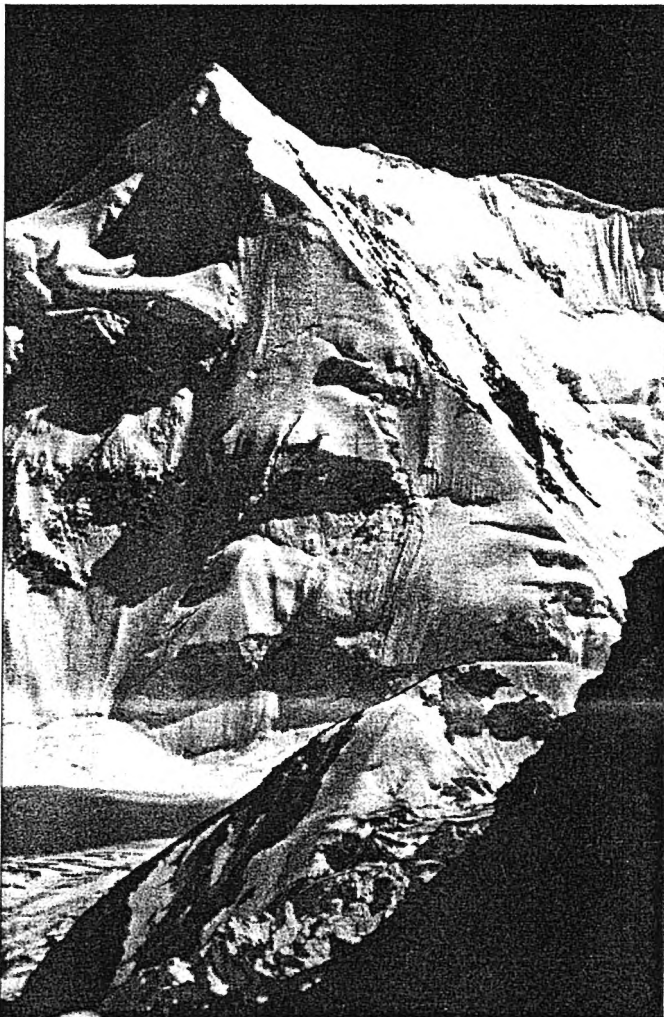
cal Tien Shan snow slopes which generally feature a combination of thin, breakable crust over two feet of huge, totally unconsolidated melt-freeze grains. Opting for the South West Ridge of Kirov, the climbers reached the crest on the 22nd via the West Spur and were pinned down by a storm the following day. On the 24th they left for the summit, making long traverses over steep slopes in poor condition. On an apparent flat section of the ridge a huge segment 10m deep and 50m long suddenly broke away. Cousins had passed this spot and was able to hold the rope tight on Collister who was now dangling from his axe. Amazingly, a small section of the cornice, which had fallen but failed to break off completely, suddenly sprang back and imprisoned Collister from the legs down. It took 10 minutes to dig himself out.

Shortly after, the pair turned back in deteriorating weather still some 600m below the summit. Retracing their steps, they finally reached the Kayyndy Base Camp on the 29th and were helicoptered out with the bodies of the two Russian guides on the same day.

Whilst the South West Ridge of Kirov is feasible, easier access to the peak could be achieved from the Komsomol Glacier to the north, the venue for at least two previous attempts. Another expedition was reportedly attempting the peak from this direction during the summer but the outcome is not yet known.

Paul Hudson

## First ascent of Angel Peak



Paul Hudson

Above: Tien Shan. Angel Peak (c5,200m) in the Kayyndy Glacier basin showing the line followed by the British party.

A third British team, this time of 10 members, visited the same valley in August. Whilst the rest preferred a more leisurely three day trek to the Kayyndy Glacier, four of the team were helicoptered into Base Camp from the border outpost of Maida Ayr (reached after a day's drive from Karakol on the shores of Lake Issyk Kul), arriving just in time to witness the accident to the Russian rescuers.

For their first foray Ken Findlay, Ashley Hardwell, John and Paul Hudson reached a col at the head of the Mashnyi Glacier on the 2nd August, from where the first three climbed up to the summit of a 5,100m snow dome. The ridge ahead looked very inviting, leading to higher unclimbed peaks but the onset of bad weather drove them back to Base.

On the 6th August the first of two new mountains was climbed, a wonderfully pointed summit south of Base called Angel Peak. Findlay, Hardwell, Paul Hudson and Philip Kendon were forced to bivouac just 60m below the

5,200m summit after climbing hard ice slopes occasionally covered by several centimetres of sugary snow. They descended the following day in poor weather and worsening snow conditions, arriving back at Base Camp 45 hours after leaving.

The 12th of August saw Findlay and Paul Hudson reach a high point on a ridge in 'Glacier Bay 5 North' which they christened **The Point of Damocles** (5,050m) and on the 13th John Hudson, Dave Penlington and Graham Treatcher made the first ascent of **Whitehorse Peak**, estimated at 4,700m, to the south of the Kayyndy Glacier system. They found the snow conditions here to be much better than on the peaks of the main glacier system and hoped to make a return visit. However, illness that dogged a number of members of the expedition throughout the trip, plus the characteristic unstable weather in this region, prevented it.

Another rock and ice high point (Hunter Point: 5,150m) was gained by the Findlay/Hudson partnership on the

16th but again bad weather stopped them traversing north along the crest to gain the main summit. This previously unclimbed massif lies close to and north east of the 5,000m Pass of the 30 Days Victory visited earlier by Collister and Cousins. Findlay and Hudson made a bivouac fractionally below the top and sat out the night in a snowstorm. Descending the route the next day in the company of small powder avalanches, they found the bergshund, which the previous morning had sported an ice wall up to nearly 4m in height, now completely obliterated.

The team used a local agency to organize travel and Base Camp facilities but like several expeditions to the Tien Shan in the last few years, were far from happy with the service.

### Shokalski

The expedition organised by EWP for *High* magazine readers was successful in climbing three virgin summits. Its aim was to explore and ascend unclimbed peaks in the cirque of mountains drained by the Shokalski Glacier, itself a nine kilometre long southern feeder of the 60km long, well-known, South Inylchek Glacier.

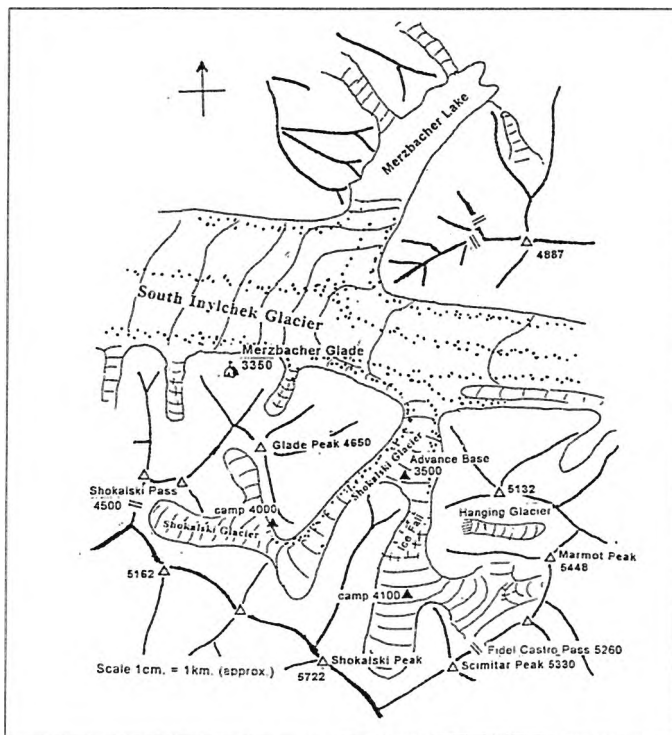
There are nine major summits in this region but only the highest, Pic Shokalski (5,722m), a serious and impressive mountain with serac-torn 1,500m faces and heavily corniced crests, has a recorded ascent. This peak actually lies on the watershed between the Shokalski and Kayyndy Glaciers. Several of the passes out of this area

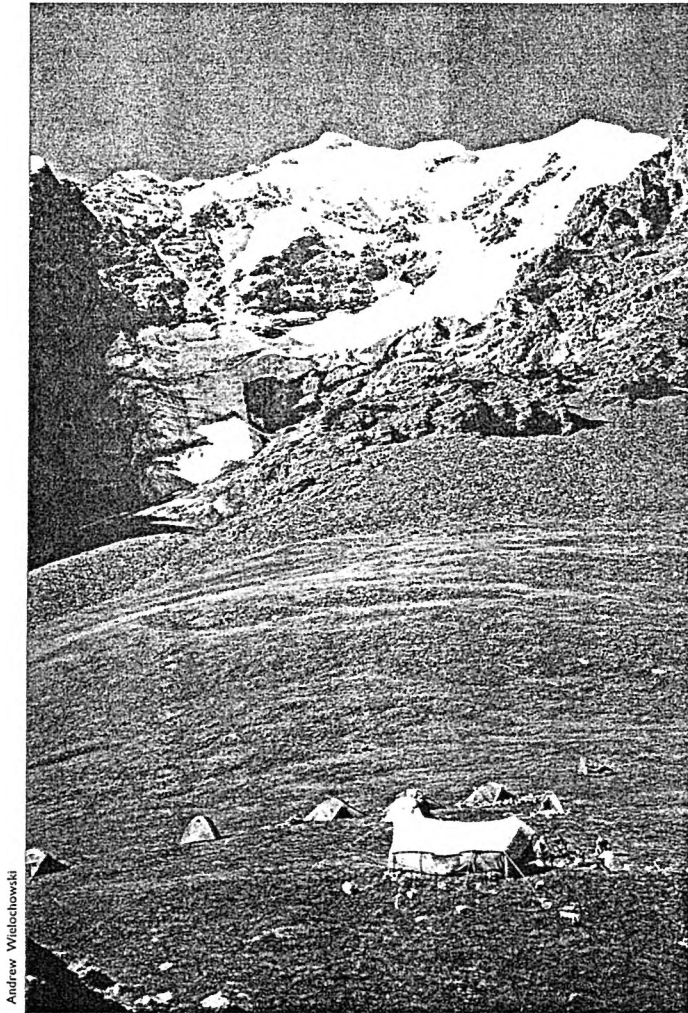
have been traversed by geologists and topographers in the past and found to be difficult (all were awarded the highest Russian grade given to a pass, 3B).

The EWP team (led by Andrew Wielochowski with two Russian guides and comprising Paul Davis, Geoff Haigh, Chris Mockett, Colin Sprange, Graham Steele and Jo Waters from the UK, plus Ric Jones and John O'Conner from the Republic of Ireland) also used the facilities of the helicopter based throughout the summer at Maida Ayr for transporting climbers up the Inylchek, making a 60km flight to a Base Camp at the Merzbacher Glade (3,350m and named after a great pioneer of this region at the turn of the century), overlooking the south bank of the Inylchek Glacier.

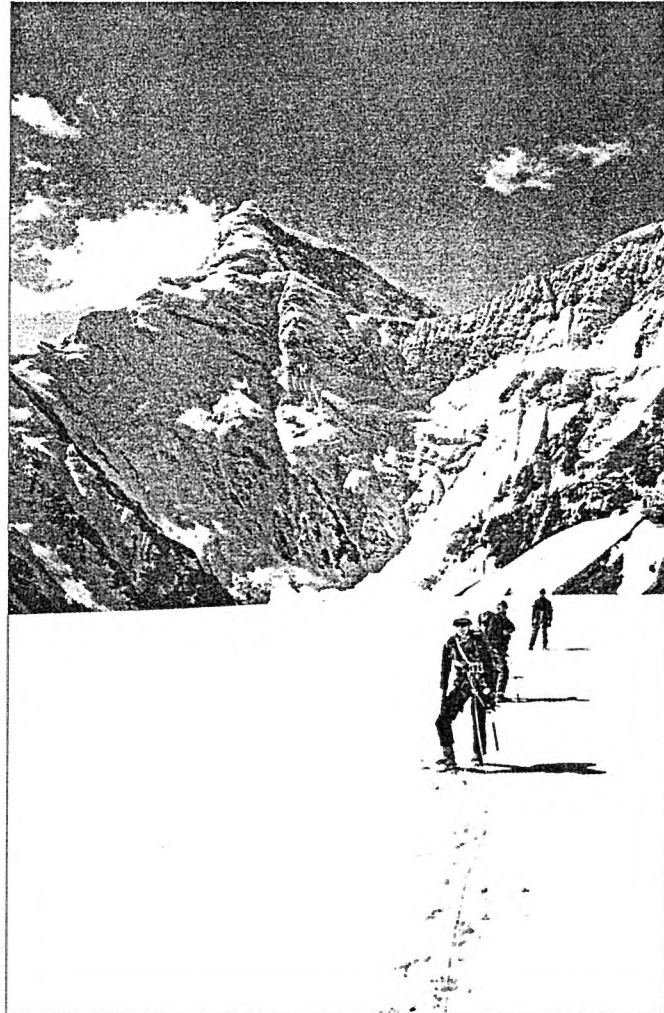
Many summits in the cirque sported long corniced ridges but three were singled out as providing suitable targets. The first, **Glade Peak** (4,650m) was attempted three times. The second attempt, up the *South Ridge*, was successful (PD with six pitches of 45° snow covered ice up the east flank of the ridge to gain it close to the summit and likewise the third several days later by a shorter route to the upper section of the South Ridge from the west flank: also PD). It proved a superb viewpoint for the entire region including the highest peaks of Khan Tengri and Pobeda some 14 or so kilometres distant.

In their last week the group ascended the icefall east of the Shokalski Glacier and established a camp at c4,100m below two 5,000m peaks. **Marmot Peak** (5,448m and so named





Andrew Wielochowski



Andrew Wielochowski



Andrew Wielochowski

*Above left: Base Camp at the Merzbacher Glade. Behind is the unclimbed North Face of Glade Peak (4,650m). The EWP team made the first ascent of this peak from the south. Above right: Approaching the South Ridge of Glade Peak with the impressive c1,500m North Face of Pic Shokalski (5,722m) in the background. Below left: On the summit of Marmot Peak (5,448m) with the Komsomol Glacier (also visited by a British team last summer) and the giant mass of Pic Pobeda (7,439m), the highest summit in the Tien Shan, in the background.*

due to the live marmot found in a bergschrund at 5,100m) involved a long but relatively uncomplicated glacier approach to its South West Face. The group then climbed this face on to the South West Ridge at c5,300m and followed the crest to the summit (Alpine AD).

To the south west, **Scimitar Peak** (5,330m) was climbed by its *North Ridge*. At first this proved well-defined but had a steep ice pitch and ice arête. Higher the angled eased but the terrain was complicated by huge crevasses. The route was awarded a Russian grade of 4B (about Alpine D).

The party concluded that this was a region of outstanding beauty with many unclimbed mountains on offer but that most ascents would undoubtedly be serious propositions.

**Ala Archa and South Inylchek**  
Another British team of young climbers (Emma Garrett, Fiona Hatchell, James O'Keefe, Neil Sambridge and Guy Willett) made a number of interesting ascents during a productive trip of two weeks in the Ala Archa range. Contrary to the unsettled weather experienced in the main group of peaks around the Inylchek Glacier further to the east, that in the Ala Archa proved very stable.

Based on the Ak-Sai Glacier the team climbed a number of peaks including **Teke Tor** (4,470m), **Izyskotel** (4,570m), **Korona** (4,860m) and **Tien Shansky** (4,890m). New routes appear to have been climbed on Izyskotel (a 300m rock pillar by Sambridge and Willett) and also up a 600m ice face between Teke Tor and the 6,181m Ak Too (O'Keefe and Willett).

The team were subsequently helicoptered in to the South Inylchek where they visited the Komsomol Glacier. Peaks in this basin, which lies immediately east of Kayyndy on the south side of the Inylchek, are thought to have been explored only once previously, by a group of Russians in the 1970s.

Seven virgin c5,000m peaks were attempted and five climbed: **Piks 4,905m, 5,235m, 5,045, 5,300m** (unmarked), **5,000m** (also unmarked). During an attempt on Pik 5,736m, Willett fell around 30m through a cornice at c5,550m and beat a hasty retreat. Part of the group then walked up the main glacier to the Inylchek Base Camp, from where Hatchell, O'Keefe and Willett made an attempt at the standard route on Khan Tengri from the south, reaching a height of 6,600m.

#### Khan Tengri

The frequently attempted 6,995m peak (or more controversially often boosted to 7,010m) on the watershed between the two main branches of the Inylchek Glacier maintained its popularity this summer. Out of the many expeditions on the mountain a number were commercially organized including two from

the UK. Parties were still attempting the highly dangerous southern approach to the West Ridge, the traditional Voie Normale. However, as this is seriously threatened by massive serac fall from the flanks of the narrow trough of the Semenovski Glacier which killed a number of climbers in 1993, including one of Russia's foremost mountaineers, Valeri Khrischaty, most teams now concentrate on a northern approach via the North Inylchek Glacier. Although safer, this is steeper and longer, involving an ascent of the Chapayev Shoulder at c6,200m, followed by a descent to the West Col at 5,900m, before starting up the final ridge. Nowadays, at the beginning of each season the route is fixed by Russian guides, though in a pristine condition was originally considered 5B.

Of the 15 ascents from the north this year two were made by British parties. Steve Findlay and Tom Mavilia, the latter from the USA, reached the summit on the 11th August. They were members of an Himalayan Kingdoms expedition which placed three camps up to the West Col. From there the two climbers made a 12 hour round trip to the summit, finding the climbing relatively sustained with short steep steps

## South Chuisky revisited



Andrew Wielochowski

Above: Approaching the summit of Glade Peak (4,650m) in the Shokalski Glacier basin of the Tien Shan.

and probably made more interesting by the heavy snowfall on the previous day. The second successful group was also commercial, a Himalayan Guides expedition led by Simon Yates, who in 1991 was the first British climber to summit the mountain.

One of the successful ascents came from Ales Cvahte's Slovenian expedition. This team not only appears to have used the southern approach but also climbed to the summit during the strong winds and driving snow that occurred the day prior to the Findlay/Mavilia ascent. After excavating a snow hole on the West Col, which was used for both acclimatization and the final assault, Cvahte, Peter Meznar and Igor Kopse

climbed to the summit in eight and a half hours on the 10th August.

### Pik Troglav

Of far more significance was a hard new route made by three members of the Slovenian team mentioned above. On the 14th August Thomas Jakofcic, Peter Meznar and Blaz Stres, made the first ascent of the North Face of the North East Summit of Pik Troglav (5,100m). The new Slovenian Route is 1,000m in height and ED with technical difficulties of VI and 90° in the first half of the climb. The trio took 15½ hours for the ascent.

In the 20 days that the Slovenian team was at or above the standard Inylchek Base Camp, they report that nine were fine and on the rest, snow fell for all or part of the day.

### Altai

An eight member team (John Stockdale, Michael Pettipher, Cathy Pettipher, Helen Geddes, Peter Brooks, Pete Nelson and Christine Kell from the UK and Brian Delahunty from New Zealand) made an interesting and highly exploratory trip in to Russia's Altai region during August. The first range visited (49°58'N: 89°20'E) lay some 46km east of Kosh-Agach and was not dissimilar to the more barren fells of the English Lake District. However, although on first acquaintance it was easy to underestimate these mountains, fantastic ridges, permanent névé, plus 1,500m steep scree slopes or ice fields soon let the climbers know that they were on more

serious ground. The main peak, *Talduair* (3,463m), is the focal point of a two sided crescent which provided the team with several horseshoe excursions, the longest taking 14 hours and crossing six peaks of c3,400m. Summit cairns showed evidence of Hungarian ascents from the mid-80s and at least one Russian tour company is currently trying to develop this area. Set above a rich golden steppe, with tantalizing views towards Mongolia just to the south and the high peak of Belukha to the west, it is an excellent region in summer for trekkers and fell-walkers with Scottish winter experience, whilst in the winter season the Russians report good climbing.

The second region visited was the *South Chuisky*, situated between the town of Kosh-Agach and the 4,506m Belukha. It is very unlikely that any British team has penetrated this area previously and indeed a Russian climber accompanying the expedition did not know of any team that had climbed in the South Chuisky since 1937. The British party entered an isolated valley on the Takdypa River some 20km from the North Chuisky group, a slightly higher range (the highest peak is Ak-tru; c4,177m) that has been visited more recently by western mountaineers.

Iyktu, the highest peak of the South Chuisky, strains to dominate a stunning chaos of icy peaks, most of which would appear to be unclimbed. One of the highlights of the time spent there was an ascent of Sophia (3,745m) on the 16th August. This resembled New Zea-

land's Mount Aspiring and was climbed via the *North West Ridge*, pitching only two sections of verglassed broken rock and then continuing over the summit to descend the East Ridge. No trace of a previous ascent was discovered.

Bad weather thwarted two attempts on the twin snow peaks of *Olga* (c4,000m), though *Piks 3,170m, 3,205m, 3,534m, 3,620m, 3,678m* and a point estimated as 3,840m were successfully climbed.

The region apparently has very little precipitation and the snow and ice conditions were near perfect. The glaciers were dry and the crevasses obvious until winter arrived at the end of August. Apart from the lack of solid rock, the situation was similar to the French Alps, though the area has a relatively long approach march and tricky river crossings. The north flanks of peaks hold snow or glaciers, while the south sides are generally dry. Most mountains appeared to be climbable at around AD, though the Russian grading of Iyktu is 3B, which generally equates to AD+. It looked harder.

As with many of these more esoteric areas, a Russian speaker is essential to organize food and the three to four days transport from the airport at Novosibirsk to Base Camp (bus and all-terrain lorry).

INFO: Steve Bell/BMC/John Cousins/Paul Hudson/MEF/John Stockdale/Matjaz Wiegele/Andrew Wielochowski.

Below: The Altai. The snowy peak in the background is Olga while the peak far right is Iyktu.



John Stockdale









*TWO VIEWS OF MOUNT KIROV + SURROUNDING PEAKS.*

*The panorama was taken from the col at the head of the Moshnyi Glacier early in the morning*

*The picture to the left was taken from the 'Pass of the 30 Day Victory' again in Morning light*

*Mount Kirov 6073m. holds its head over Kyrgyzstan and China and remains unclimbed in September '95.*