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Cambridge University Mountaineering Club Pamirs Expedition 1998

Korzhenievskovo Valley
Pamirs
Southern Kyrgyzstan
CIS



2nd of July to 22nd of August 1998



L to R : Steve, Lassie, Rowland, Mark and Hamish ...

and the bus

Editor : Hamish Downer

MEF Ref. : 98/33

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Summary

The expedition went to the Korzhenievskovo valley of the Pamirs, which is in the south of Kyrgyzstan, near the border with Tajikistan (both former Soviet Union) in Central Asia. This valley has never been visited by British climbers before, to the best of our knowledge. We attempted ten peaks, and reached the summit on seven. We believe that six of our successes have never been attempted before by British climbers, so we have made first British ascents of six mountains from 4810m to 6624m. This was done during seven weeks in the field in July and August

We climbed in a lightweight Alpine style, generally in pairs. There were only the four of us in the mountains while we were climbing, but we did use the services of the International Travel and Mountaineering Centre, Tien-Shan (ITMC) in arranging permissions, transport within Kyrgyzstan and hire of a two way radio. Apart from the radio, we were happy with their services.

Introduction

During the Soviet era the Trans Alai range of the Pamirs was extensively explored and climbed. Since the break up of the Soviet Union far fewer Central Asians or Russians have been able to afford the luxury of mountaineering, and almost all climbing in this area is now focused on one mountain, Pic Lenina, about 20 km west of our base camp. This is widely regarded as the easiest 7000m peak in the world, so it attracts a lot of attention from western commercial expeditions.

As far as we have been able to discover, no British climbers have previously visited the valley of the Korzhenievskovo glacier, surrounded by 5000 and 6000m peaks, situated at the eastern end of the Trans Alai range. The remoteness of the area, and the necessarily exploratory nature of the climbing, attracted us. Three of us were graduating this year, and wanted to move beyond the Alps, while Lassie was keen to climb with friends in the greater ranges. Steve came along for the ride.

We applied the mountaineering techniques we have practiced in the Alps to climb higher and more remote mountains in a similarly lightweight style, without compromising our safety. In this spirit (and for reasons of economy) we decided to be totally self reliant while in the field, and not to hire guides, cooks or similar. We made contact with the International Travel and Mountaineering Centre, Tien-Shan (ITMC), a local travel company specialising in mountaineering to deal with other arrangements at that end.

Personnel

There were five of us, of whom four have been active members of Cambridge University Mountaineering Club. Three of us (Mark, Rowland and Hamish) finished our courses at Cambridge just before we came out.

Rowland Barker, 23 years old, Leader and Medical Officer. Rowland was the driving force behind the expedition, and did the lion's share of the organising. He

was one of the pair to summit on Pic Lenina. Immediately after the expedition he went on to China to teach English. He had two Alpine seasons; Scottish IV, E1 rock. He also attended a wilderness medicine course.

Steven Carter, 23 years old. Steven is a friend of Rowland, and had no climbing experience before this expedition. However he had been living in Moscow for the previous year, and is fluent in Russian, and was very useful. He was the one person who was reasonably healthy after we had first set off for base camp, the rest of us suffering from altitude and stomach bugs. He came out with us, and left after a week and a half, having done a little basic climbing.

Hamish Downer, 23 years old, Report Writer. Hamish graduated about 14 hours before flying to Moscow. He did not cope too well with the altitude, and was often slower than the others, but made it over 6000m nonetheless. Having finished the report he left to travel to Australia, overland. He has three Alpine seasons; Scottish IV, VS rock. Hamish is also a dual national (British and Australian) and so can claim first Australian ascents.

James Lassetter (Lassie), 24 years old. Lassie was the most experienced climber among us, and was very pleased to conquer Pic Lenina. He somehow managed to get nine weeks off his job as a trainee accountant to join the expedition. He has three Alpine seasons; Scottish IV, HVS rock. He has also spent a season in the Bolivian Andes.

Mark Stevenson, 23 years old, Treasurer. Mark disappeared shortly before the expedition to become a commissioned officer in the Territorial Army, causing a lot of hassle for those of us left in Cambridge, but it was all sorted out in time. His highest summit was 6624m. He has one Alpine season; Scottish IV, HVS rock. He has climbed in the Canadian Rockies with the Army.

There were also meant to be some Russian climbers, who were in touch with Steve, but as the start approached they were not heard from again.

Contact Details

Rowland Barker travelled to China immediately after the expedition, to teach English in a college for eleven months. He will finish at the end of July 1999. His father's address is

Mr Barker
Repton Vicarage
Derbyshire
DE65 6EH
(01283) 828549

In the meantime, the best contact is James Lassetter, at

James Lassetter
169A, West End Lane
West Hampstead
London
(0171) 372 5051
email james.lassetter@westendlane.demon.co.uk

Climbing

General Character

The region is heavily glaciated and the peaks very eroded; at lower altitudes being characterised by scree slopes. The main glaciers were covered for quite a lot of their length in boulders, which was somewhat tedious to walk across. Elsewhere the glaciers, were often very crevassed and broken - we saw quite a lot of icefalls.

The rock on the mountains was very broken, and all major rock lines on *relatively* reasonable rock were threatened by serac fall. Snow conditions were generally firm (and the snow shoes we had bought came back to the UK unused).

The **weather** was less good. There were rarely periods of good weather of more than half a week, and the bad weather lasted up to three days. There was often a pattern of the weather closing in during the late afternoon and rain, hail or snow in the evening. This would *often* clear by midnight, and the morning would present good climbing conditions. However this pattern could not be relied upon. The Pamirs are supposed to be wetter the further north and east you go. We were in the north-east of the Pamirs, so the weather could well be better in the Tajik Pamirs (though the political situation is not as good at present).

We climbed almost exclusively on the south side of the main valley. This was due to a large river below the glacier, and nasty large steep scree slopes at the entrances to the valleys on the north side, which looked less than inviting. The faces coming directly down to the north side of the main glacier were, if anything, worse than the start of the valleys.

We used **very little protection**. A deadman was placed once, and spikes were slinged on ridges a few times. That was all the gear we used. This was partly due to the climbs being far less technical than expected, and partly due to the lack of any protection worth the name. We never saw any rock we would trust to hold nuts or cams. On the few occasions we would have considered using ice screws, but the ice was not deep enough, and was brittle.

Gear Taken

Each pair had

nuts (inc. 1 racking karabiner)	5
cams	1 or 2
extenders (inc. 2 straight-gates)	4
slings (inc. 2 screw-gates)	5 x 8' sling
ice screws	6
deadmen	2
snow stakes	1
abseil tat/tape	20 m

Routes Attempted

Most, if not all of the mountains have already been climbed by Russians and named. However we were not able to discover all the names in our research, so we have simply named them by the height of the summit according to our maps.

Pic 4810 (north ridge)

This was the mountain directly behind our base camp. Rowland and Lassie climbed it on 20.7.98, starting at base camp. The route time was 5 hours to the summit. The route went up the north ridge, which was very loose and broken. (They had intended to go up the snow field to the left, but lost their way slightly in the dark). From there, the NE ridge was gained, and followed to the summit. The descent was by a snow field on the west side. The grade was **PD**, but the objective danger was high, due to the state of the rock.

Pic 4931 (west face)

Map ref. - T8

This peak was the middle peak on the east side of the first glacier on the south side of the main glacier. It was climbed by Lassie and Hamish on 25.7.98, starting from a bivi beneath the west face. It took three hours to the summit from there. The route started up an obvious snow gully, which split further up. They took the right branch, which progressively steepened to about 50 degrees. They passed through a narrow (one metre) gap between two rock buttresses, and then climbed less steep snow to the ridge, which they followed north to the summit. They descended by the left branch of the snow gully, which is not quite so steep. The grade was about **AD**, and the steep snow sections would not have taken any protection worth placing. There was a thin (20 cm) layer of snow, over a similar thickness layer of brittle ice, over broken rock.

Pic 5015 (north ridge)

Map ref. - Q8

This peak lies at the north end of the ridge separating the first and second glaciers to the south of the main valley. It was climbed by Lassie and Mark on 19.9.98, starting from a camp at the foot of the north face. Starting up the right most of the three main gullies and branching right they gained the ridge at edge of the right most snow patch. The gullies were steep, loose and slightly iced up. A step in the main gully, low down, was passed on the left. Easy angled snow lead to the top of the snowfields. Then an easy ridge was followed to the summit. They descended via a snow gully, starting 200m down the ridge from the summit. The grade was **PD**.

Pic 5147 (north ridge)

Map ref. - O8

This is the main peak on the west side of the second glacier on the south side of the glacier. Two attempts were aborted at the bivi site due to bad weather, but there was one good attempt by Lassie, Hamish and Mark on 14.7.98. They took 3 hours and 45 minutes to get to above 5100m, but had to turn back due to deteriorating snow conditions. They ascended the snow field on the north face, which was no more than 30 degrees most of the way. The ridge on the right side of the field was gained and followed towards the top of the snow field. Near the top, the snow field steepened a lot, and was not consolidated. Then there was some scrambling over steep loose broken rock, on to the summit ridge (at about 4750m). This ridge was then followed south for about one kilometre towards the summit. The grade was about **PD**. The descent followed the ridge back, and then descended a snow field on the west, with easy angled snow.

Pt. 5441 (east face)

Map ref. - L6

This is a shoulder on the ridge up to Pic 6624. It was climbed as an acclimatisation route by Hamish and Rowland on 28.7.98 and took just over four hours from the bivi to the summit. The route follows a broad glacier towards a col to the north of the shoulder. They branched off below the col, and stayed on the face and passed between two rock bands

above the col, and attained the ridge just above this. This bypassed a steep, nasty looking section of the ridge below. It was then a short ridge walk to the shoulder. They descended by a crevassed ridge to the east. The grade was **PD/AD**.

Pic 5525 (south ridge)

Map ref. - M8

This peak is south of the col used for Pic 6624. It was climbed solo by Lassie on 18.7.98, and repeated by Rowland and Mark on 25.7.98. The col was gained by snow slopes above the glacier. It would also have been possible to ascend to the ridge further south, also on snow slopes. The ridge was then followed south to the summit, and the descent was similar. The grade was about **AD**.

19th Party Conference Pic, 5945m (south ridge)

Map ref. - C8

This peak is at the end of the valley, and is also accessible from the Pic Lenina base camp. It has had previous ascents by British climbers. The south summit (5845m) was climbed by Hamish and Mark on 10.8.98 from a bivi below the south ridge, during our time spent at the high camp. The south ridge was very easy and straightforward (grade **F**). However there was a late start, and Hamish felt the altitude a lot, making the going rather slow, so they turned back after reaching the south summit.

Pic Korzhenievskovo, 6008m (north ridge)

Map ref. - Q4

This peak is at the head of the first glacier branching off to the south of the main valley. It was climbed by Lassie and Mark on 28.7.98 and by Hamish and Rowland on 30.7.98. The route started up the west side of the col on the north ridge, on snow going to about 30 degrees. Then the ridge was followed up, and had several short (up to 30m) steep steps of poor snow or ice. We found one or two little rock patches. The walkable sections of the ridge were often very narrow. Eventually it widened out and joined a snow field a few hundred metres below the summit. Wading up thigh deep snow, and crossing the bergshroud, they followed the final steepish (40 degrees) slopes to the summit. Mark and Lassie bivied just above the col (about 4600m), and took 17 hours to get from there to the summit and back again. Hamish and Rowland bivied beyond most of the steep steps, and were able to use the trail previously broken. Only one axe was necessary, and ice axe belays were used where required. The grade is **PD/AD**.

Pic 6624 (north ridge)

Map ref. - L3

This peak is at the head of the second glacier branching off to the south of the main glacier. It was climbed by Lassie and Mark on 31.7.98. First, they climbed to a shoulder on the ridge (see pt. 5441 above), where they bivied (though it would have been possible to bivi higher). The ridge was followed to the top, taking eight hours. The true summit is at the end of a plateau reached at the top of the ridge. Most of it was straightforward, but there was a short steeper section lower down on the ridge. Only one axe was necessary, and ice axe belays were used where required. The grade is **PD/AD**.

Edinstva, 6673m (north ridge)

Map ref. - C1

This peak is at the head of the main glacier. The attempt, by all of us on 6.8.98, from the high camp, did not get much higher than a snow hole at about 5600m. The snow was very powdery and deep, and the weather conditions deteriorated, with low visibility and heavy snow by late afternoon. Also, only one of the two stoves was working at the time. The

grade was only **F** to where we decided to snowhole, but the ridge looked quite serious further up.

Pic Lenina, 7134m (east ridge)

Pic Lenina is beyond the end of our valley, on a ridge line carrying on from Pic Edinstva. It is widely considered to be the easiest 7000m mountain in the world, and is climbed many times each year, although nearly always by the west ridge. We were not originally intending to climb it. However, having done well on smaller mountains, Rowland and Lassie decided to climb it from our high camp. They started on 9.8.98, summited on 11.8.98 and returned to the high camp the next day.

On the first day they returned to the snow hole used in the attempt on Edinstva (4950m to 5600m). They had intended to go further, but visibility was poor, and they could not see the way ahead. On the second day they climbed to 6400m, taking 8 and a half hours. The climbing was a bit harder (about **PD**) and there was significant avalanche risk on the traverse from the Edinstva ridge to the col on the east ridge of Lenina at 5850m. On the third day they climbed from their bivi to the south summit (7127m) in just under eight hours, taking a little over two hours to return to the bivi. Again this was about **PD**, but there was no objective danger on that day. On the final day, they took five hours to return to the high camp.

Future Climbing in the Area

In the Korzhenievskovo valley there are still a few peaks we didn't climb on the south side, including **Kyzylagin** (6683m), **Estonia** (6202m) and **Latvia** (6220m). These do appear more serious in terms of approach or the climb itself. The north side of the valley was a lot less promising. As mentioned above, this was due to a large river below the glacier, and nasty large steep scree slopes at the entrances to the valleys on the north side, which looked less than inviting. The faces coming directly down to the north side of the main glacier were, if anything, worse than the start of the valleys.

The local Kyrgyz people were most helpful and Osh provides a good staging post for expeditions, both to Aschik Tash, our area, and possibly to valleys further south. ITMC were competent and efficient in arranging our visas, permits and transport although we would recommend future expeditions consider a satellite telephone rather than HF radio for communications. If you are looking for a valley to yourself for a season, the Korzhenievskovo valley and the ranges to both the east of Bah-Doba and the west of Pic Lenina are excellent candidates. All offer the chance to experience exploratory mountaineering on peaks of easy to moderate difficulty.

The climbing potential over the border in Tajikistan itself, is much greater, offering many opportunities, including some unclimbed peaks and unrepeated ascents. At time of writing, the low level civil war in Tajikistan continues and Foreign Office advise is not to go there. However the north of Tajikistan is sparsely populated and has seen virtually none of the trouble which has been centred on the Afghan border and the capital. Rowland did meet somebody who climbs often in Tajikistan, and said that it wasn't actually too hard. We didn't follow this up.

The objective danger is low but the problems foreign mountaineers would face in obtaining visas, permits and navigating the numerous, Kyrgyz, Russian and Tajik checkpoints along the border road would be severe. When the political situation improves, the Pamirs in Tajikistan will be an excellent destination for Western climbers.

Logistics and Administration

I apologise in advance for the lack of detail in some sections here. This is because Rowland (who did the lion's share of organisation while we were in Britain) was in China while the report was being written. While he passed on most of the details necessary, there have, inevitably, been some omissions which I have not been able to fill.

Maps

We ended up with a variety of maps. The best ones we had were Soviet military maps, with a scale of 1:50 000, although these had some inaccuracies. These are actually illegal in the CIS, and, strictly, in the UK. We obtained them by mail order from the USA, from **Eastview** (see contacts, p41). There are two codes on each map. On one there is 10-43-014-4 and J-43-14-Γ and the other has 10-43-015-3 and J-43-15-B. While in the field we used laminated A3 colour photocopies of the relevant sections. The main section is reproduced at the end of the report. There were some minor inaccuracies concerning the lengths of glaciers and which parts were snow or scree covered.

We also had two maps at 1:100 000, which had an overlap in the area we were climbing in. There was a 1:200 000 map of the whole of the Pamirs. We also obtained a tactical pilotage chart. Unfortunately, I have no record of the costs or sources of these maps. The tactical pilotage chart may have come from Stamfords map and book shop in London, and the 1:100 000 maps were obtained from the military survey, but only after we had bought them from other sources.

We also obtained a little information about the earlier Soviet climbs. Some of the ridges and faces have been given difficulty grades by Soviet climbers. Unfortunately the problems of translation and an unfamiliar grading system limit the usefulness of the information. Also, many of the peaks are labelled only by their spot height on our maps, so matching the grade to the mountain was not easy either.

Training

The only group training we did was half a week of walking in Knoydart around Easter, though Lassie could not make it. Apart from that, we did our own fitness training (mainly running).

Permissions

The various permissions required are visas, border zone permits, "tourist area" permits (for climbing near Pic Lenina) and police registration.

Kyrgyzstan **visas** are reasonably easy to obtain from the Embassy in London. We had invitations from ITMC (see useful addresses, appendix C). Unfortunately I do not have a record of the price, the procedures or the length of time taken. It is possible to obtain visas without invitations, but we did not investigate this option. The visa also acts as a Russian transit visa. You can spend up to 48 hours in Russia each way, provided you have an onward ticket when you arrive in Russia. Unfortunately the person who obtained the visas did not leave many details for the report writer, so consult the Kyrgyz consulate and the Lonely Planet guide for details.

The **border zone permits** were required to go near the Tajik border, where we were climbing. They cost US\$10 per person, for a two month period, and were obtained for us by ITMC.

Tourist area permits are required to climb on or near Pic Lenina, and cost US\$35 per person. We did not obtain them in advance as we did not originally intend to climb there. However, since two members did summit on Lenina, the appropriate fees were forwarded to ITMC on our return to Osh.

Police registration is required if you are staying for longer than three days. You can do it yourself for about US\$3 and some hassle, but we let ITMC handle it, and they charged us US\$10 a head.

We also had a permit for using the radio which we had hired from ITMC. The permit came with the radio, and there was no separate charge from that. No one ever asked to see it.

Finance and Fundraising

We received money from the **BMC**, the **Mount Everest Foundation** and the **Cambridge Expeditions Fund**. Some individuals also received travel grants from their colleges. **Sainsburys** kindly donated 15 kg of their tortellini - which is great route food with instant soup. We also bought jackets and sleeping bags from **Rab** at expedition prices. We are grateful to all these people.

Insurance

The **BMC** individual insurance scheme was used. This costs £186 per person for two months cover (though most of us extended it to a year for £235). You have to be a member of the BMC, or a BMC affiliated club to use this insurance. We also investigated insuring the expedition as a whole, but this option was significantly more expensive.

ITMC

ITMC is the International Travel and Mountaineering Centre Tien-Shan. They provide services to mountaineering trips in Kyrgyzstan and run the mountain rescue service in the country. They are worth being in touch with for this reason if no other. We used them to arrange permissions (visas, border permits, etc.), transport within Kyrgyzstan and to hire a two way radio for communication with the outside world in case of emergencies. We were happy with the service provided, apart from the radio. See the relevant sections for the details.

Most of our correspondence was by email, and there is at least one person there who can speak English. Most of the services were paid for while we were in Osh (the first time). This meant that they had to arrange (and pay for) the services they were providing before they received money from us. They were willing (if not totally happy) to do this. There was a deposit on the radio, which we used to pay for most of the transport back. The balance was paid before leaving Osh. All these payments were in US dollars - cash.

Language Difficulties

It is very difficult to travel without having a translator who can speak reasonable Russian. Having Steven with us on the way to the valley was invaluable. Apart from all the practical issues it is nice to be able to chat to the local people, and make friends with them. When we were leaving we did not have the benefit of bilingual people most of the time. We managed OK, but it was not as enjoyable as it could have been, and various misunderstandings and problems would have been much easier to deal with if we had had a Russian speaker with us.

Travel, Transport and Freight Arrangements

Flights

We flew from **London Gatwick to Moscow Sheremetevo-2** with British Airways. The tickets cost £247 return per person, which was a very good deal. The food was sent ahead with the **Excess Baggage Company**, but see the note in Customs. We sent about 100kg ahead, which cost us around £300. We spent two nights in Moscow, staying with Steven Carter's family.

We then flew **Moscow Domodedovo to Osh** with Kyrgyzstan Airlines. The tickets cost US\$160 each way per person. We now had all our kit with us, and had to pay US\$300 for the excess baggage. Note that tickets cannot be purchased in the UK. As far as we are aware, they can only be bought at the airports. This is obviously quite hard to do if you do not have a friend in Moscow, although ITMC may be able to help. Also the flights are only once a week (on Tuesdays). We did hear from a friendly member of staff at Osh airport that they are planning to introduce another flight to Moscow every week soon (the extra flight being on Fridays I think), once they have finished building work on the runway (which should be completed by the end of the year). Other options include flying direct to Bishkek or Tashkent (in Uzbekistan).

Road Section

We then spent two nights in Osh, staying with a family (arranged by the ITMC rep on arrival). While there we bought supplies in Osh bazaar. Then we had a "bus", arranged by ITMC, to take us **to Bah-Doba** (the nearest bit of road to the Korzhenievskovo valley). The bus was a four wheel drive truck (GAZ-66), with a big box bolted to the back, with a few seats in it. It was slow, but it got there, and there was no shortage of space. ITMC charged us US\$282 each way, for the whole group.

As we found out, it would be quite possible to arrange your own transport out there for much less money, though carrying a lot of kit would be rather difficult. Using ITMC to do the job for us gave us very good transport, and the cost was reasonable.

On the way back we were in a much smaller jeep type vehicle (UAS-452 or UAZ-462), but by then there were only three of us, and no food left. (Steve Carter was only with us for a week and a half, while Rowland Barker made his own way to China, where he was going to teach English in a college).

Horses

Once in Bah-Doba we had to arrange **horses** to carry our kit **up the valley** - all 400 kg or so of it. We spoke to the border police, and after a bit of bargaining, arranged four horses to carry our kit. This cost us US\$130 which, with hindsight, was probably too expensive. The horsemen the border guard found for us were told it was only 10-12 km, and no more than three hours, while in fact it was more like 16 km and four hours. They also told us they were doing this as a favour to the border guard, and weren't being paid for it. This was all done in Russian, with Steve as our translator.

This led to the horsemen being unwilling to go on as the day went by, and eventually they dropped all our stuff, and left us a lot lower in the valley than we had wanted to get. Fortunately, Steve persuaded one of them to come back the following day, and that horse carried most of our kit up to where we established base camp in three trips, the rest being

carried by us. Ideally our base camp would have been higher in the valley, but it would not have been possible to carry stuff there other than by foot. The only other possibility would have been a helicopter, but the safety record in the area is poor to appalling. We heard (second hand and unconfirmed) that 30 climbers had died in a helicopter crash during the summer.

The walk up the valley is mainly over scree and includes some river crossings, which can be knee high near Bah-Doba, though the water level is generally lower earlier in the day.

This was all done on the day we arrived at Bah-Doba, and there were some **acclimatisation** problems due to this. It would have been better to spend a night at Bah-Doba (about 3550m altitude) to acclimatise a bit. This would also have meant that we would have been crossing the rivers at the lowest time of day. Also, the valley has a shallow gradient, so if there are acclimatisation problems, it is hard work to lose altitude. Hamish and Rowland tried walking down to lose altitude on the first night, and after walking (slowly) for an hour, had lost a maximum of only 100m altitude.

Lugging to the High Camp

After several weeks we came to the conclusion that if we were to climb in the upper reaches of the valley we would need to establish an advance base camp. To establish this **high camp** (map ref. E5), where we stayed for two weeks at about 4950m, we had to carry everything ourselves. We first carried two weeks worth of food to a point about 3h30 from the base camp. We also had fuel, in plastic Coke, Fanta and Sprite bottles (all easily obtainable, even in Sary-Tash). This was 26.7.98. It was stored in a dry bag and bin bags. The next day we went up with four days food, a tent and other items. Non climbing stuff was left at a dump in a bivi bag at a point about two hours from base camp, and we went and did four days climbing in that part of the valley, including Korzhenievskovo (6008m) and Pic 6624. We met again on 31.7.98 at the large food dump. It was here we found that marmots had eaten 9kg of our chocolate. We were less than totally pleased with this.

The next day Mark returned to base camp to pick up more chocolate, and a few other bits we decided would be handy. Meanwhile Rowland and Hamish carried most of the food and a bit of climbing gear further up the glacier. It was the first time we had been that far up the glacier, and some of our initial route finding was rather poor - the glacier is very broken. We left the food in the dry bag after nearly six hours on the go and returned to the temporary camp.

On the next day we carried the rest of the kit up the glacier. The packs were 25 - 30kg each. We travelled 13km and gained about 700m. This took eleven hours, and Lassie was very light headed at the end (he had the heaviest pack). We camped on a subsidiary glacier which joined the main glacier below the major ice fall, which was far from ideal, and there was no water available by the time we arrived there.

The next day Lassie and Hamish found an excellent campsite on the scree above the ice fall on the main glacier, about half an hour above the previous night's camp, and carried all the kit up, while Mark and Rowland went down the glacier to collect the food left by Hamish and Rowland two days previous. The high camp was next to a small lake, sheltered, and safe from stone fall. We then had a rest day.

The route used was along the left side (when facing up the glacier) of the glacier until under the snow field at the end of the north ridge of Pic 5525. Then come into the centre of the glacier until it starts to become very broken again, at which point head for the right side, but

beware of rock fall. This is followed until a glacier crosses the side. We camped on this bit of glacier, and found a way off it a bit further up. The main glacier has icefalls at this point.

On the way out, we carried everything in one go, and spent a night below Pic 5525. Rowland suffered a bit on the way, as he had not fully recovered from climbing Pic Lenina.

Leaving

On **the way out**, we had pre-arranged for two horses to come up to us at base camp. We had forgotten this at the time, and were very pleased when they appeared. We gave them our spare food, some plasters, and some tat (which they were particularly pleased about), and 100 som each (about US\$5 at the time). They seemed happy with the deal.

Customs and Immigration Procedures

This is still suffering a bit from the old Soviet days. They are, to say the least, thorough. At **passport control** the woman (and it is generally a woman) will spend several minutes looking at each passport and filling in bits of paper. They will take their own good time about it, but provided your visas are in order you should be fine. See the Permissions section (page 10) for details of obtaining the visas.

The **border area checkpoint** at Sary-Tash in Kyrgyzstan was similar, needing to see all passports and the border area permit. Carry several photocopies of the permit so they can keep one if they want.

Customs are also slow. Each time you enter or leave a CIS country (and especially Russia), you should fill in a customs declaration form. If you have anything to declare (e.g. more than US\$500) then you should go through the red channel and get it stamped. If you don't, then the next customs people may not be too happy about it. Make sure it's stamped by someone, and **DON'T LOSE IT**.

However, all other bureaucracy pales when compared to what we had to go through when trying to collect the baggage we sent ahead (about 100 kg, mostly food). We tried on the day we arrived in Moscow, having eventually worked out where to look (terminal 2 of Sheremetevo Airport). We had all our paperwork in order, but they wanted US\$1000 (yes, a thousand) for us to have our boxes. The contents of the boxes were worth somewhat less than that. So we came back the next day with Steve as our translator. We did eventually get our boxes without paying any extra money, but we did have to go through **TWENTY FOUR** stages of going to various desks, and it took the best part of a day. So if you are going to send stuff ahead, try finding a carrier who will deal with customs for you.

Base Camp Arrangements

With only 4 (or 5) of us at Base Camp, the organisation and logistics were quite straightforward. The **toilet** was a pit dug about 100 m from the tents, away from streams. We had a plastic bowl of water and some soap to wash our hands. The toilet paper would not burn easily, so it had to be stored, and periodically burnt using petrol.

The **water supply** was not the nearest stream. There was a stream about one hundred metres away which was clear, but that did not always run. It was a few hundred metres further to another stream which did always run. This stream was clearest in the morning, but still drinkable in the afternoon, despite a little silt. Watch out for little black squiggly things which live in the water. They can be filtered out by pouring through some cloth (e.g. a t-shirt). If this was done the water was clean, and we did not suffer from giardia or other

stomach problems due to the water (though the local food eaten while travelling through Kyrgyzstan may be another matter).

The stream nearby was always some shade of red. In the morning the flow was quite low, and not very silty. In the afternoon the flow increased quite a lot, and nothing submerged (e.g. sock or other clothing) could be seen. Also, there was a general trend for flows to decrease as the summer went on.

We built a **food store** comprising a U-shaped dry stone wall with a roof of cardboard and waterproofed with bin bags. This was less than ideal. A tarp would have made a better roof, and a cheap tent used purely for storing stuff would have been even better. We could also have used a lot more packaging materials. We had half a roll of bin bags, which was not enough. We could also have used more string, freezer bags and the like.

Note that **marmots like chocolate**. We left about nine kilograms of chocolate at a food dump for five days and returned to find practically all of it gone. The chocolate was in one hundred gram bars, with paper wrappers, inside cardboard boxes, which were in a thick gauge rucksack liner to keep water out.

Medical Arrangements

Accident Management

We hired a **two way radio** from ITMC. The plan was to check in ITMC every day, and let them know when our next call in would be. If they did not hear from us for a week, they would come and look for us (ITMC run the local mountain rescue services). Also, if one pair did not return when expected, the other pair could call for help. Finally, if an accident occurred, and was seen, or escaped from, the alarm could be raised by using the radio. ITMC said that there would be English speaking people available at the other end of the line, in Bishkek (where ITMC is based) and at Aschik-Tash (the main Pic Lenina base camp, which was quite near to us).

Having alerted the mountain rescue, the casualties would be evacuated - by helicopter if possible, or on foot/horse/4WD hired from the people in the valley. The nearest hospitals with decent sterile operating conditions are in Moscow, so the evacuation would be to the nearest airport (Osh), where a chartered air ambulance would take the casualty to Western Europe. This would all be covered by our insurance. For urgent surgery, the nearest operating theatre is in Tashkent (the capital of Uzbekistan).

Unfortunately the radio was next to useless. HF radios are not particularly reliable at the best of times, and when all the other stations are talking in a foreign language (Russian) the problems are even greater. Reception was poor to non-existent, especially so in the evenings. We think we got through occasionally, but we were never sure, and we never heard a word of English sent to us. Given these conditions, the frequency of trying to use the radio soon dropped to nearer once a week than once a day. ITMC said that most expeditions they work with take a radio operator with them, and that this would have made our lives much easier (and they would also have acted as a cook and/or guide). However we have heard from other expeditions that "cooks" in these parts are actually pretty bad at preparing food, and it would also have made our expedition a lot more expensive.

Plan B was to try the radio anyway, but presuming it didn't work, to walk out to Bah-Doba, get a lift to Sary-Tash, and use the phone at the border post to alert mountain rescue. This is obviously somewhat less than satisfactory. (There was also a plan C while at our high

camp, which was to go over the col at the end of the valley, and descend to Aschik-Tash, where help could be contacted).

Our recommendation would be to look into hiring satellite phones, such as the Iridium system launched while we were out in the mountains, as these should be much more reliable and lighter. They may, however, be very expensive (but then hiring a radio *and* an operator wouldn't exactly be cheap).

Medical Kit

We took a comprehensive medical kit, the contents of which were chosen based on advice from the Cambridge Expeditions Committee, the University Medical Scheme, what Rowland had learned on his Wilderness Medicine Course and from referring to appropriate first aid texts.

We had a selection of antibiotics, a prescription analgesic and drugs for treating cerebral and pulmonary oedema, none of which were needed. The items that were used were:

- diamox (for altitude)(which was useful for one of the members)
- throat lozenges *
- plasters
- betadine (used as antiseptic paint)
- rehydration solution sachets (for diarrhoea)
- indigestion tablets
- ibuprofen and paracetamol
- lip salve *

* very important at altitude

The antibiotics, powerful painkillers, and the drugs for high altitude oedemas were all burnt using quite a lot of petrol, before we left base camp. The only item we might have taken with hindsight is Dettol, for cleaning containers like water bottles, and to put in the toilet hand washing bowl.

There were no accidents or illnesses of note, though there were some problems with acclimatisation. When we first arrived at Bah-Doba (over 3500m) we decided to walk in immediately, rather than spending a night there first. Rowland and Hamish both suffered from vomiting and headaches, and retreated down the valley to lose a little altitude (less than 100m). Mark suffered from headaches, but stayed put. With some rest we all recovered and acclimatised to base camp level.

We then spent had a walk in the valley, and started climbing smaller mountains to acclimatise, aiming to increase summit heights by around 500m a climb to 6000m and maybe beyond. This worked quite well. Hamish used diamox (a drug that suppresses the symptoms of acute mountain sickness, AMS) when climbing to point 5441 and Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m) and felt that it helped. He did suffer occasionally from loss of appetite, and often found the going much harder than the others did when at altitude, but he did not have to retreat from bivis at night. The other members acclimatised well, especially Rowland, who went from Pic Korzhenievskovo to Pic Lenina, a jump of over 1000m, without feeling the effects.

Rowland and Lassie suffered a little frostnip and frostbite after climbing Pic Lenina. It was all on their fingertips, where there were holes in their gloves. They had planned to use

mitts over gloves, and so did not think that the holes would matter, but it was while doing things like cooking, laces, putting on crampons, where mitts are too clumsy, that the damage was done. So don't economise by taking an old pair of gloves with holes in them.

The only other medical thing that was noted was that occasionally the stools we produced were green. This was generally coincidental with having recently drunk water with a large amount of red silt in it. We think this may have been due to red iron oxide changing to green iron oxide in the gut. (We couldn't remember the chemistry involved, but the acid in the stomach may have reduced the iron ions).

Special Hazards

The only hazard of note is the political instability in Tajikistan, which basically has a low intensity civil war in progress, along with occasional conflict with Afghanistan to the south. At the time we were out there, there was nothing dangerous near our area, and we did hear rumours of people going down into Tajikistan to climb. Check the latest Foreign Office travel advice before planning too much, and recheck occasionally in case of changes.

Waste Disposal

Paper, card, fabrics and plastic packaging (unless rigid) were burnt with petrol. Biodegradable (food) waste was dumped discreetly, and left to rot or be eaten. The remainder (rigid plastics and metal mainly) was collected and carried out. We also carried out a lot (about 10 kg) of rusty tins and glass containers that we found in the valley. There was too much for us to carry out all of it. We would recommend that future expeditions carry out a reasonable amount of what they find, but do not attempt to carry all of it out.

We dismantled all stone structures that we had made at base camp before leaving. We also noted that any structures made for bivis on scree covered glaciers deteriorated in a matter of weeks, to being almost unrecognisable, so these do not need to be taken apart by hand.

Summary Diary

See appendix A (page 19) for a full diary.

Sunday **June** 28th : Flight to Moscow, fail to obtain freight from customs.
 29th : Obtain freight from customs, and buy 40 kg of chocolate.
 30th : Fly to Osh (with Kyrgyzstan Air)
July 1st : Buy more supplies in Osh bazaar.
 2nd : Drive to Bah-Doba and walk most of the way to base camp. HD & RB ill.
 3rd : JL & SC move base camp higher. Others rest.
 4th : HD, RB & MS move up to base camp.
 5th : Investigative walk up the valley.
 6th : RB, JL & SC walk in. MS & HD rest.
 7th : **RB, JL & SC climb col.** MS & HD walk in.
 8th : MS & HD fail to climb. RB, JL & SC rest.
 9th : SC leaves, HD & RB accompany him to Sary-Tash
 10th : MS & JL walk in.
 11th : Rain, MS & JL walk out.
 12th : Snow.

13th : All walk in. RB notices crack in toe of plastics.
 14th : **JL, HD & MS attempt Pic 5147.** Turn back v. near summit. Walk out.
 15th : MS & RB leave to try and find new boots for RB.
 16th : Bad weather.
 17th : Walk in.
 18th : **JL solos Pic 5525.** Walk out.
 19th : MS & RB return.
 20th : **RB & JL do Pic 4810** & go to Sary-Tash. HD & MS walk in.
 21st : HD & MS attempt Pic 5525 (but fail).
 22nd : Rain
 23rd : More rain.
 24th : Walk ins.
 25th : **MS & RB climb Pic 5525, HD & JL climb Pic 4931.**
 26th : Rain. MS, JL & RB carry food up the valley.
 27th : More carrying in, and walk ins.

28th : **HD & RB reach pt. 5441 JL & MS climb Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m).**
 29th : Walk ins.
 30th : **HD & RB climb Korzhenievskovo, JL & MS start Pic 6624.**
 31st : **JL & MS climb Pic 6624** All meet at main food dump.
August 1st : HD & RB carry up the glacier. MS fetches chocolate from base camp.
 2nd : All carry up. Camp on glacier.
 3rd : HD & JL establish high camp. MS & RB fetch food.
 4th : Rest at high camp. Meet Russian trekkers.
 5th : Walk in to Edinstva, snow hole.
 6th : V. bad weather, walk out.
 7th : Snow.
 8th : More snow.
 9th : Walk ins.

10th : **HD & MS climb the S summit of 19th Party Conference Pic, JL & RB go to 2nd bivi on Lenina.**
 11th : **JL & RB summit Lenina (7127m), HD ill overnight.**
 12th : RB & JL return to high camp.
 13th : Do first half of walk to base camp.
 14th : Back to base camp.
 15th : Rain.
 16th : Rest and fettle gear.
 17th : RB leaves for China.
 18th : MS & JL walk in.
 19th : **MS & JL climb Pic 5015**
 20th : Rain, JL & MS walk out.
 21st : Horses carry most of our kit out.
 22nd : Go to headland near Bah-Doba for final night.
 23rd : Travel to Osh.
 24th : Visit Osh bazaar.
 25th : Flight to Moscow
 26th : Flight to London.

Conclusions

The expedition was successful in summiting on seven mountains, six being first British ascents up to 6624m. There were no major incidents and it was a good trip to a rarely visited greater range. There is much potential for more climbing in the Pamirs, especially if Tajikistan opens up.

Acknowledgements

This expedition could not have gone ahead without the help of many people. We are grateful for the help of the **British Mountaineering Council**, the **Mount Everest Foundation** and the **Cambridge Expeditions Fund** for their financial help. To the **Cambridge Expeditions Committee** and the **Cambridge University Explorers and Travellers Club** for their advice and help. **ITMC** were invaluable with their help in the field. **Sainsburys** and **Avilton Foods** gave us our much appreciated bivi rations of tortellini. The **Rab** gear we had was also greatly appreciated on the cold mountains. Andy Fagg of the **Military Survey** gave us valuable help with finding maps of the region. **Nick Megoran** gave us information about what we could find in Osh. **Mrs. L Perrill** of the University Medical Scheme helped us with preparing our medical kit. **Olga Pobedinskaya** was invaluable in doing translations for us and pointing out useful resources on the web and elsewhere.

Appendices

A - Detailed Diary

Unless otherwise stated, this is written by Hamish, and Lassie is James Lassetter.

June

Sunday June 28th : Flight to Moscow, fail to obtain freight from customs.

We met up at Gatwick at some ungodly hour. I've graduated from University all of twelve hours ago, and we're not very awake really. Having spent ages trying to get the weight limits right the check in staff don't weigh the bags anyway. The flight is relatively empty, so we have space to spread out.

After landing, we try to get the boxes of food we sent ahead out of customs. It takes quite a long time to get anywhere, and we end up being asked for US\$1000 before they will let us have our boxes, so we give up on that for the day.

The roads in Moscow are crazy - about four lanes each way (marked on the road, five or six lanes of actual cars), and instead of a central reservation and barrier, sometimes there is just an extra lane which is used by traffic in both direction. But we survive and eventually roll up at Steve's place.

Monday June 29th : Obtain freight from customs, and buy 40 kg of chocolate.

Rowland and Steve head back to the airport to try and obtain our boxes. They succeed eventually, without paying any money, but they did have to go through twenty four stages to get the boxes. That took them most of the day.

Meanwhile Lassie and I went chocolate shopping with a friend of Steve's as our guide. We went to a market somewhere in Moscow, and bought 40 kg of chocolate from a variety of stalls, for about US\$3 per kilogram. It's great fun carrying it back across the underground (honest).

In the evening we went for a wander around Red Square and the Kremlin, and then came back to meet some friends of Steve's, two of whom are Kyrgyz. They give us some advice, saying there is normally a month of good weather in the summer and that local currency should give us a better deal than dollars. They also supply the tea bags.

Tuesday June 30th : Fly to Osh (with Kyrgyzstan Airlines)

We leave early, and go to Moscow Domodedovo] airport, which is nearly an hours drive from the town centre by road. We're running slightly late, but we still have an hour and a half to take off when we arrive. The first problem is not having stamps on our customs declarations form from entry into Russia. Steve sorts that out. Then we go to check in, and have to pay large amounts of money for all our excess baggage. The plane is due to leave very soon by now, so we leg it, have our boarding cards looked at, and then have to wait ten minutes until someone comes along to look at our passports (sigh). She takes her own good time about it. Then there was the plane.

It had lovely seventies decor, there were no doors on the overhead lockers, you grab whatever seat is free and someone appeared to be holding the end of the wing (which had a bit of cable sprouting out of the end) as we moved off (an hour late). All very confidence inspiring. The food is pretty bad, but we appear to fly safely enough. On the way we chat to some Russian climbers (spotted due to wearing plastic boots) and a border guard. He

tells us what sort of fee to expect to go from the airport to the centre of Osh (about US\$5-10). As we touch down again, a light fitting falls off.

Then we all file off the plane, and walk across the tarmac, through a gate, and that was it (apart from the small matter of getting our baggage from the adjacent wooden hut). Rowland and I take photos of the airport, which means we lose our passports, oops. However we get them back again soon enough, after a firm handshake with the official who took them off us. We weren't really into the swing of things yet.

Then we went off to the Hotel Osh, where we had arranged to meet our man from ITMC (Alexi). We were about to check in for US\$16 per night, when he turned up, and offered to take us to the place he was staying for US\$7 per night (Various taxi drivers had offered similar deals, but we had to meet Alexi). We agreed and found taxis to take us there.

The house was lovely, and we were very well looked after. Dinner was soup and bread (lots of bread) with the obligatory chai. Later we ended up watching Argentina knock England out of the World Cup (at our host's insistence).

July

Wednesday July 1st : Buy more supplies in Osh bazaar.

In the morning we were shown the radio that we were hiring from ITMC. It had a huge mast, about ten metres high. We didn't do very well, but we were in the courtyard, so setting up the mast was difficult, and could not be done properly.

Steve had to go and sort out flights as he was leaving early, so we made a shopping list with translations, and headed to Osh bazaar with our host as guide and haggler. Osh bazaar is supposed to be the oldest bazaar in central Asia, at 3000 years old. It was pretty amazing, and covered a huge area. There tended to be clusters of stalls selling the same product (e.g. rice or melons). The shopping took quite a long time. For some reason most of the plastic bags were yellow, with "THE PET SHOP 992 Pollokshaws Road Glasgow G41 2HA" printed on them, with a silhouette of a parrot. We have no idea why.

About half way round, I was left with the purchases so far, and everyone else continued. While waiting I was approached by some of the locals, and we had a chat (or the nearest approximation to it given that I knew about five words of Russian, and they knew a similar number of English words). I also had to sing along to "We shall overcome" for a bit as one of them wanted to show their knowledge of western culture. It was quite fun, but hard work.

The we returned to the house, and were presented with our banquet (for US\$4 a head). We had lots of fresh fruit (including some delicious yellow cherries) for a start, and then a main course of a mound of rice, with bits of mutton, stuffed peppers and boiled bulbs of garlic (NOT cloves). Beautiful. There was also a bit of beer and vodka, but not excessive amounts.

Then we see our "bus" - an ex army truck, with a box on the back which had windows and a few old seats. Excellent. Later we finished packing our purchases, and went to bed, planning to get up at 4 am.

Thursday July 2nd : Drive to Bah-Doba and walk most of the way to base camp. Hamish & Rowland ill.

We set off at 5:30 am in the end. The journey is quite fun, though slow due to it being mostly uphill and the engine not performing very well. We pass through the grassy steppes and see people still living nomadically in traditional yurts. We go over a high pass (over

3500m) and descend to Sary-Tash. We pass through a check point, and then reach Bah-Doba at about 1:30. It is basically a check point, and there are about five buildings altogether. There are also some trenches in case of invasion from Tajikistan.

To arrange horses we speak to one of the border guards. Before the negotiations started we all had to have a pint of cummis, the local drink. Cummis is fermented sour horses milk. It tastes *worse* than it sounds. The stuff we had had been in the sun all day as well, and there are these little black bits floating in it - I have no wish to find out what they were. We all manage to drink our share without throwing up, which is quite good going really. We had previously been told by ITMC to expect horses to be US\$10 - 20 each and to carry 50kg each. We were offered four horses at \$100 each which would carry 100kg each. We bargained him down to a total of \$130.

So we set off after 4pm. With hindsight this was a bit late, but hindsight is rather good like that. First off was some river crossings. They came up to our knees, and we all got wet feet. Those with sandals on were a bit smug. Then there was the endless scree to go across.

After three hours, the horsemen were becoming restless. They wanted to return before night fell. Steve managed to coax them a bit further along the valley, but eventually they just unloaded the horses where we were. They told us that they had been told that it was two or three hours up the valley and that they were just doing this as a favour for the border guard, and not actually being paid for it. We managed to persuade one of them to return the next day.

We set up camp for the night where we were. I was feeling a bit bad, and the feeling worsened. I threw up, and Rowland followed me. We decided to go down as soon as there was some boiled water available (it was all very silty in the local area). We walked for about an hour, and I retched a few more times on the way down. We lost less than 100m altitude, and had a poor night's sleep.

Friday July 3rd : Lassie & Steve move base camp higher. Others rest.

In the morning I was still a bit bad, but at least the headache had gone. We returned to our camp. I tried a bit of chocolate on the way back, but it bounced. We arrived at the tents to find Steve had already headed off with one load with a horse, to find a better base camp. I rested. Rowland had very bad diarrhoea, and Lassie wasn't too healthy either.

The horseman did a second trip alone, and on the third trip, everyone except me went with the horseman. Mark and Rowland returned later.

Saturday July 4th : Hamish, Rowland & Mark move up to base camp.

In the morning, the three of us go up to base camp, with the bit of stuff we had kept for the night. The radio we hired from ITMC is set up, and Lassie has built a food store. We dig a pit and a trench for the toilet, about a hundred metres from the camp, and decide on a closer area for more urgent emergencies. We also explore the local area, and find some streams which have clear water. During the afternoon we are visited by two German travellers who are looking for birds, but they disappear again before too long.

Sunday July 5th : Investigative walk up the valley.

We get up early in the morning and head up the valley at about 6am. It is full of chossy scree, piled up to make walking along rather tedious and hard work. We follow the main river for a while, which makes work easier, though the banks are steep in places which

creates a risk there. After starting up the actual glacier (still covered in scree) we find a high point on one of the piles of scree and start surveying the options - it looks good.

We head back at this point (about 4200m, which took over four hours to get to). Mark and Rowland go off to teach Steve some basic ice axe and crampon techniques on a nearby snow patch. Lassie and I carry on - I am really knackered. We all make it down and rest. Lassie and I don't eat much food that night. The radio is tried, and Steve makes a little bit of contact.

Monday July 6th : Rowland, Lassie & Steve walk in. Mark & Hamish rest.

Rowland, Lassie and Steve walk up to try a route in the first glacier that branches to the south. They are planning some nice easy snow slopes for Steve's first route. They plan to bivi at about 4400m (at map ref. R6). Meanwhile me and Mark rest for the day. I explore the grassy area above base camp. It is quite a nice place, with huge amounts of wild onions to munch on (eat the leaf bits).

Tuesday July 7th : Rowland, Lassie & Steve climb col. Mark & Hamish walk in.

Me and Mark prepare for our first walk in. Shortly before we were ready to leave, the others reappear, having climbed to the col on the east of the glacier (their original route being blocked by a series of ice falls). They had then gone north towards Pic 4931, but the way had been blocked by a rock step, which they were not confident of doing with Steve.

After finding this out, me and Mark walked up the same glacier, to try the other ridge from the col, which led towards Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m). I feel the effects of the altitude a lot, and we don't make it as far as we planned (which was to the bivi site used by the other three). This is partly due to leaving after three, and we didn't get to the bivi site until about nine. I don't manage much food that night and the weather is not too good that night.

Wednesday July 8th : Mark & Hamish fail to climb. Rowland, Lassie & Steve rest.

We ignore the alarm and get up later. We wander up to the bivi site used by the other three and look at the icefalls further up the glacier. There may be a way around the first two icefalls, but the third and fourth look much worse.. Mark is suffering from severe diarrhoea (he goes three times in under an hour).

We return to base camp and cook chipatti style breads and some sosmix sausages - lovely. We move the radio up to the grassy area just above base camp, but we don't have much luck in improving the reception, though it does seem a little better.

Thursday July 9th : Steve leaves, Hamish & Rowland accompany him to Sary-Tash

Steve is leaving today and Rowland and I go with him, and also plan to go to Sary-Tash to buy some coke (to use the bottles for fuel carrying), soap and matches. We get up at 4-ish and walk down the valley. It takes a little over three hours. When we get there Steve tells a border guard what we want and it is arranged. Getting a lift to Sary-Tash isn't very hard (on the basis of paying money towards petrol) so eight of us cram into a little jeep type thing. It was going to Osh, so Steve just stayed with it the whole way.

Me and Rowland buy the goods from a table in Sary-Tash which seems to be about the only shop in Sary-Tash. We go back to the border point in the jeep (only about a mile) and the driver speaks to the border guards to arrange a lift for us back to Bah-Doba. We have to wait for the lunch break to happen, but eventually we are waved over by a guard and we climb into a truck and go back. It overheats on the way, but we make it in reasonable time.

Walking up the valley, my old sandals disintegrate a bit, so I have to go back to my heavy plastics. I manage to fix the sandal straps back to the sandals again with superglue, which survives until we leave. Tent space is now a lot easier as there are only four of us between a Quasar and a Super Nova.

We pack in preparation for climbing the mountain behind base camp (Pic 4810), for acclimatisation.

Friday July 10th : Mark & Lassie walk in.

Both alarms fail to wake anyone up, despite tried and tested techniques from the Alps of strapping watched to your ear. We get up a lot later. Mark and Lassie pack for a two night bivi (at map ref. O10) to try Pic 5147 and Pic 5525. I'm still going to the toilet rather frequently.

We burn the first batch of burnable waste in a pit, before Mark and Lassie leave. Later a thunderstorm moves in and there is lots of rain. We feel sorry for Lassie and mark while snug in our tents.

Saturday July 11th : Rain, Mark & Lassie walk out.

Lots and lots of rain. Rowland has bad indigestion, so I do the radio in the morning, but don't have any luck. There are signs of improvement so we are still considering following Mark and Lassie up the valley. When they return we give up on that. We also consider doing Pic 4810 if the weather clears by the evening, but it doesn't.

Sunday July 12th : Snow.

We wake up to find snow covering the ground at base camp. Later the snow turns into rain. Not an eventful day.

Monday July 13th : All walk in. Rowland notices crack in toe of plastics.

The weather looks reasonable when we get up, so we fettle our kit and prepare to head up to 5147 and 5525 again. We're just about ready to go when the weather turns bad. Fortunately it is only temporary so we get going.

I'm slowest as usual, but it's not too far (about four hours). The bivi site at the foot of 5147 is excellent (map ref. O10). The area is flat and made up of small stones, and there are big boulders to provide a bit of shade. The icing on the cake is a nice clear stream about five metres away, which runs throughout the night.

While we are sitting about in the evening, after cooking, Lassie notices a crack in the toe of Rowland's left Koflach plastic boot outer. It was about two centimetres long. Rowland tried standing on a rock on the end of his boots and the crack flared, so he wasn't going to do any climbing the next day. It also explained his feet feeling a bit cold on the ascent of the col previously.

Tuesday July 14th : Lassie, Hamish & Mark attempt Pic 5147. Turn back v. near summit. Walk out.

We're up at two, and leave at three for the snow field and north ridge of Pic 5147. We head up the right side of the snow field, trying to avoid obvious rock fall lines. We gain the edge of the snow field and continue on a mix of frozen scree patches and snow. Near the top there is a very steep step of unconsolidated snow, followed by some steep scrambling over more frozen snow.

The ridge is generally reasonable. Near the end, there are two steep steps to go up in *very* soft loose snow. Shortly after the second step, Lassie puts his foot through a hole in the snow and found a big gap between the rock and snow. So, despite being over 5100m and a few hundred metres from the summit, we decide to turn back and descend. We thought that if we had started earlier it might have worked.

The descent was quite easy, though I ran out of water on the way down, and developed a headache (probably due to dehydration). Where the rock started on the ridge, we descended on a snow field to the west on good snow and easy slopes. The glacier below has steep slopes and ice falls towards its north end (where there is a col between 5147 and 5525). The glacier was very crevassed and snow covered, but crevasses were easily spotted due to scree patches, and could be stepped over.

We are back at the bivi site about noon, and rest for a while. We decide to walk out that day, and leave about 4:30, arriving at base camp at about 7.

Wednesday July 15th : Mark & Rowland leave to try and find new boots for Rowland.

Me and Lassie have a full rest day and are up first. Rowland is walking out to try and find new boots, and Mark drew the short straw (well, short piece of string) to accompany him. The main options are obtaining some in Osh or Bishkek from ITMC or another company. The final option is to phone Rowland's sister in London, and ask her to buy a pair in London and UPS (or similar) to Bishkek (where there is an office according to the Lonely Planet guide).

I decided to do some washing, so I put my socks, used underwear and thermal top in the stream, weighed by rocks. When I return to the stream in the afternoon, the level has risen, and the clothes are submerged. It takes quite a bit of fishing around to find the clothing, and I completely fail to find my undies. (I find them in the morning, around thirty metres downstream).

Thursday July 16th : Bad weather.

We plan to attempt 5515 from the south this time, and start to prepare, despite the weather looking a bit threatening. It breaks before we leave, with a *very* heavy hail storm, which hail stones bouncing under the tent outer and through the doors in the inner.

The weather clears up later, so we decide to try Pic 4810 (behind base camp) in the morning. We get up at 1am and head towards the mountain, but clouds start to cover the sky, so we jack and return to the tents.

Friday July 17th : Walk in.

We wake to lovely weather, and kick ourselves for not persevering the previous night. It starts to cloud over, but we decide we're going to walk in anyway. We're headed for the south ridge of Pic 5525. We're on the way by 2pm. I get really tired and left behind, and the terrain is very hard going. We decide to bivi by a large boulder (map ref. P7) as the weather closes in and it starts hailing. The wind is changeable to say the least, so we move around the boulder a few times. After a bit, Lassie heads off to look at the route (the view from the bivi site is blocked by a ridge) and returns before too long. We get ready to do the route anyway.

Saturday July 18th : Lassie solos Pic 5525. Walk out.

We wake up at 1am to a clear sky. We slog over scree covered glaciers, and weave between the crevasses in the area and join the side glacier leading to the col. At about 3:30am we decide to gear up. At this point I realise I have no crampons with me.

AAARRGH! Lassie decides to continue anyway, so I descend alone. I find my crampons on the other side of the rock, in my nice home made crampon bag (cut off jeans legs from faded black jeans) which look remarkably like the rocks around it.

Lassie summits on 5525, and returns to say "That was the hardest climb I have done in my life". He summited at 8:30, scooted down a snow gully and was back at the bivi for 10:30. We're back at base camp by 3:30 having rested a bit at the bivi.

Sunday July 19th : Mark & Rowland return.

We rest for the day. Mark and Rowland return after lunch time. They have had some fun. They got to Osh on the Wednesday as hoped. On the Thursday they tried AlpTrekSport, who are based in Osh and do a lot of trips to Pic Lenina and can speak English. They couldn't help, unfortunately. So they phoned ITMC (in Bishkek) and were told to ring back the next day.

They phoned ITMC a few more times on Friday and they were eventually told that they had found a spare pair which Rowland could hire for US\$75. They had a client passing through Sary-Tash in a few days, and the boots would be sent with them. So they arranged to meet at Sary-Tash on the Monday (or possibly the Tuesday or Wednesday). While in Osh they had a haircut for about 45p each, and Mark bought a new watch for about 75p. They also found a good tea shop and brought back more coke/sprite/fanta bottles for fuel transport.

On Saturday Rowland and Mark got a bus to Sary-Tash. The bus broke down quite a bit, so they didn't get to Sary-Tash until the evening. They were befriended by some locals, and stayed with them for the night for US\$5 each. In the morning they walked to the border post and got a lift back to Bah-Doba and walked back to base camp.

Monday July 20th : Rowland & Lassie do Pic 4810 & go to Sary-Tash. Hamish & Mark walk in.

Rowland borrowed my boots and climbed Pic 4810 with Lassie. They went up a scree buttress instead of the planned snow field by mistake, but manage it anyway. Apart from the excessive scree it was quite a nice climb. After that, they walk out to go to Sary-Tash and meet the ITMC client with the boots at 3pm. Unfortunately he fails to show, so they return later (about 9pm at base camp).

Meanwhile me and Mark walk in to try 5525's south ridge (again, for me). We try the right side (as facing up) of the valley and it is much easier than the route on the left side I tried with Lassie, but still not much fun. It hailed a bit while we were in the valley, but not too much. Later it started to snow ... lots. There was a bit of a headwind, and the spindrift quickly made it miserable. We were somewhere near the start of the crevassed area and decided to bivi where we were (map ref. O7). There was no water supply so we had to melt snow and ice. I had no appetite.

Tuesday July 21st : Hamish & Mark attempt Pic 5525 (but fail).

We wake up at 1am and it is freezing. I'm feeling quite bad, and we take nearly an hour before we manage to get out of our pits. We don't get going until 3am. We pick our way through the crevasses and eventually find a way across to the side glacier we will follow up. I've remembered my crampons this time, so we start to plod up the glacier. I was very tired - walking along with my eyes closed and taking frequent rests - and it was bitterly cold.

We were taking too long, and given the time we were unlikely to make it and return before the snow started melting, so we turned around and had a few extra hours kip at the bivi

site. I found the catch holding the back of my camera closed had fallen apart, so I spent a while getting it back together, not helped by the little spring trying to escape all the time.

We returned to base camp to find Lassie enjoying a well earned rest after the last few days, while Rowland had gone to Sary-Tash again to try and get his boots. He succeeded this time, and returned with a pair of bright green expedition Koflachs. They have square holes on both sides of both ankles, but otherwise seem reasonable. We plan more routes to do setting off tomorrow.

Wednesday July 22nd : Rain

It rains a lot, so routes are off. We spend the day fettling our kit, making repairs and Rowland uses the repair kit to the full with his new boots. He ends up using his old inners, and the new outers. The weather clears late in the day.

Thursday July 23rd : More rain.

More rain, a bit of snow and lots of low level cloud. Lethargy and boredom set in and nobody managed to escape from sleeping bags until lunch time. We decide to experiment with cooking. Lassie and Rowland set about making breads, while I have a stab at apricot jam - a mug full of dried apricots, a mug full of sugar and two mugs of water boiled for an hour or two until the sugar starts to burn on the bottom. It is not like any jam I have had before, but it went quite well with the breads.

Friday July 24th : Walk ins.

Mark and Rowland pack up early and head for 5525, leaving about 11am (bivi at map ref. O7). Me and Lassie leave later, heading for Pic 4931 (on the east side of the first glacier to the south). We find a good line on the west face, and set up a bivi by 5pm (map ref. S8). Things are looking up.

Saturday July 25th : Mark & Rowland climb Pic 5525, Hamish & Lassie climb Pic 4931.

We miss the alarm at 2am, despite it being attached to my sleeping bag about 5cm from my ear. Fortunately Lassie notices the time at 2:30am so we get up and go for it. The route starts about 100m from our bivi. The snow slopes started at about thirty degrees, and gradually steepened to fifty or sixty degrees. There is a slightly tricky section going through a gap between two rock patches with no protection worth the name in sight below it. Above Lassie had an ice axe belay for me. Then more steep snow to gain the ridge, and follow it to the summit.

We summit at 7am and are down again at about 8:30. We have a bit of a rest and then return to base camp by 12:30. Mark and Rowland don't reappear until after 7pm. They were successful, doing a similar route to Lassie.

We start to plan a big excursion up the valley, leaving tomorrow. We will carry enough food for two and a half weeks up to a dump. Then we will split and me and Rowland will go to climb a shoulder on the ridge of Pic 6624 - pt. 5441 - as an acclimatisation route, followed by Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m). Meanwhile Lassie and Mark will have climbed that and will go and climb Pic 6624. After that we will meet up and head to the head of the valley for two weeks and do some climbing up there. I kind of wonder about the weights involved ...

Sunday July 26th : Rain. Mark, Lassie & Rowland carry food up the valley.

Mark does the radio in the morning after a little persuasion, with the normal result of not knowing if we got through to anyone. Then the rain starts. During a break in the rain we

sort out 14 days worth of food and fuel. Mark, Lassie and Rowland carry the food up, to dump it near where we bivied for our attempt on Pic 5147 (map ref. O10).

I am left behind, and spend the day repairing my goretex jacket and sewing a tent guy rope on again, do some sewing on my inner boot, etc. I break a few needles in the course of this, especially on the boots.

The others returned, and after dinner, Rowland decided to start modifying his bivi bag. He is using his old bivi bag which is now a bit leaky, and was used by Steve while he was with us. He wants to extend the zip on his bivi bag so he can look out at night. It is a diagonal zip, and only comes up to his neck. It is a job that will not be finished for a week or so.

Monday July 27th : More carrying in, and walk ins.

Good weather at last. We pack our bags with route gear, four days of food, fuel and the Super Nova (but, unfortunately, no toilet roll. We had lots at the food dump, but we would not get there until Friday. In the mean time chocolate wrappers and pages from my diary were used). We were at the place where we split (map ref. R10) at 3:30, two hours after leaving. We stashed all the kit we didn't need for our routes in a bivi bag and carried on to our respective mountains.

Again the walk in is a killer for me, while Rowland appears to be just strolling along. We bivi at the bottom of the side glacier leading to our pt. 5441, arriving at about 7:30. We are about five metres from the nose of the glacier, and five metres from a glacial stream (map ref. O7). We are on noodles for these few days, to preserve the tortellini for later.

Meanwhile, Lassie and Mark climb the col and find a scree patch near the col on the north ridge of Korzhenievskovo to bivi on (map ref. S6). It was quite late by this stage, otherwise they would have gone further up the ridge.

Tuesday July 28th : Hamish & Rowland reach pt. 5441 Lassie & Mark climb Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m).

Rowland and I start up the glacier at 2:50am. It is a long chog towards the col we will attain first. The going is pretty easy really, a typical glacier plod. As we approach the col we see avalanche debris on the steep section we must go up, but it hasn't snowed much recently. We traversed up and left of the col and passed between two rock bands on the way. The last fifty metres before the ridge were pretty steep (at least forty five degrees) and the snow was less than wonderful, but we quickly completed that section and walked up the short section on to the shoulder that is pt. 5441. It felt good to be up there.

We decided to try descending by a ridge that went east of us. It was quite fun, with some big crevasses to cross on snow bridges. The sun was quite warm by now so we decided to descend on to the glacier by the relatively easy slopes that presented themselves. At one stop on the glacier the map (which was laminated) fell off my rucksack and accelerated down the glacier (which was less than ten degrees at this point). It fell into a crevasse. Fortunately the crevasse was snow choked a few feet down so we were able to recover it.

At about 1pm we set off from our bivi and headed for the tent we had dumped yesterday (at map ref. R10). We set it up and relaxed for the afternoon. It was during the afternoon that the missing loo roll became apparent.

Lassie and Mark climbed Korzhenievskovo from the col with Lassie leading all the way. They had deep snow to contend with which slowed them down so they took seventeen hours to climb it and return to the bivi site, where they stayed for a second night.

Wednesday July 29th : Walk ins.

We leave the tent at about 11:30 and head up the glacier towards the col on the north ridge of Korzhenievskovo. We have seen no sign of Mark and Lassie yet which is somewhat worrying, but when we get to the col there are three sets of tracks - one up and two down - so they must have come down under their own steam. We presume we have simply missed them on the glacier (we turn out to be right) and carry on.

We climb the col and head along the ridge. There are a series of steep sections - mostly snow, but a few are ice, and not very good quality at that. Six hours from the bottom of the col we find a good flat area and set up our bivi for the night (map ref. R5). We're at about 5100m. The bivi is all snow and seems solid, which is good after a few times where there was a "whoomph" sound as I stepped on to a flat section. The sun had nicely disappeared behind cloud when we arrived, so the temperature plunged. We had to melt snow and it took quite a while. It was 11 before we'd finished our food, and we were due to be up at 2am. Goody.

Lassie and Mark came down from the col in the morning and walked around to a bivi below the col on the north ridge of 6624 (the same bivi site we had used two nights previously - map ref. O7).

Thursday July 30th : Hamish & Rowland climb Korzhenievskovo, Lassie & Mark start Pic 6624.

We got going before 3am, which wasn't too bad. The ridge is thin, less than one metre wide in some parts. There is a little rock bit, and we are quite often below the ridge on a bit of a slope, stepping carefully. We have a break where the ridge broadens and joins the face. The face has lots of deep snow, but there is a nice frozen track from where Lassie and Mark had crossed before us. This made life a lot easier. There was a fun bergshrund and a seemingly endless steep snow slope. Then we came to a slight false summit before finding the real summit. It's 9am, and the first time either of us have been above 6000m under our own steam.

The descent is easy, and we're back at our bivi by noon. Two hours later we set off for the col with all our kit, and have to negotiate the steep steps again before attaining the col. The col is fun to descend, and we bumslide the lower section which makes it a pretty quick operation really. Here we feast on the running water which is available at last. Later at the tent we lay out our stuff to dry, and find a note from Mark and Lassie saying what they had done on Korzhenievskovo, and saying they might not make the main food dump before Saturday.

Mark and Lassie have spent the day getting to pt 5441 (map ref. L6), where they decided to stop, as they weren't sure if there would be other places as good further along the ridge. They used the same route as me and Rowland had used.

Friday July 31st : Lassie & Mark climb Pic 6624 All meet at main food dump.

We leave our temporary camp and head for the main food dump. After crossing the river of the second valley, we spot two figures coming down the valley. They turn out to be Mark and Lassie (not very surprisingly) who have summited on Pic 6624. Again Lassie had done all the trail breaking. They did see some good bivi sites higher than the one they used, and would have used them if they had known they were there. They also had the only real accident of the trip when a cornice collapsed while Lassie was standing on it (a good ten metres from the visible edge of the snow). However Mark stopped him going too far, and Lassie climbed back on to the ridge and carried on.

They had a rest with us by the river before we carried on to find the food dump (map ref. O10), which didn't take too long. We found it a bit messier than we left it, due to marmots eating almost all the chocolate we had left there - about 9kg. This was a major bugger. We cleared up the mess and got on with the evening.

August

Saturday August 1st : Hamish & Rowland carry up the glacier. Mark fetches chocolate from base camp.

Mark was sent back to base camp to pick up more chocolate (and anti-marmot mines) along with lots of sugar and the edible powders (chilli, garlic and pepper). Lassie has a well earned rest day while Rowland and me pack up most of the food and bit of gear, and set off to dump it all half way to our high camp.

We start by descending to the glacier and rapidly losing our way among the mess of crevasses until we hit a huge lateral one with no possibility of crossing it. So we head back towards the left side of the glacier by another torturous route, which includes a few slips down which would be almost impossible to reverse (certainly with these packs on). Then we're back to our old friend - large scree slopes.

Soon we come across a small river and follow it along the edge of the glacier until the snow field at the end of the north ridge of Pic 5525 meets the glacier and covers the river. Here we move on to the glacier, slipping a few times as the scree we stand on decides to move down the underlying ice. We make it over to the centre of the glacier, and it is relatively unbroken. The crevasses can mostly be stepped over, along with a few little jumps, and it is quite easy to pick a path so as to make progress up the valley.

We dump the food at the top of a rise (map ref. J9), and return. We follow our path as far as the river, before ascending the path of a stream. We break out of it to find ourselves in a large flat area which could easily accommodate a hundred happy campers, and has obviously had a few along the way. It also has nice running water. The way back to the tent is reasonable from here, including a bit of scree running.

Sunday August 2nd : All carry up. Camp on glacier.

We get up at 7, eat some food and pack up everything in order to take it up to the head of the valley for our two week stay. We make it to the food dump in four hours at 1:30pm and have lunch there. We swap a bit of food from the dump to the rucksacks and back, with most of them getting heavier if anything. Lassie has a bad deal from this ending up with 8kg of marzipan, and a total sack weight of around 30kg, but we didn't realise this at the time.

We carry on into new territory and the glacier becomes progressively more broken and hard work. There is lots of up and down and we need to use our crampons for safe progress. After a bit of this we decide to try the right side of the glacier, on the scree, and this is much easier. As evening approaches Lassie is becoming increasingly light headed, the weather is closing in and we start to see rocks winging their way down the slopes above us. We get on to a small side glacier and go a little way, but soon decide to set up camp where we are (map ref. E6). We are all very tired after eleven hours of lugging heavy loads, but we still have to cook, and collect lots of snow and ice for water, as there is none available in the vicinity.

Monday August 3rd : Hamish & Lassie establish high camp. Mark & Rowland fetch food.

Lassie and I are still feeling pretty bad in the morning. So despite Rowland and Mark having already done more carrying than me and Lassie, they go down to pick up the food that had been dumped. They set off at about 11:30. Lassie and I are left to find a nice place to live for the next two weeks.

We find a route past the edge of the little glacier we are on, and on to an area of scree above. There we find a little lake, with a large flat area around it. Any possible stonefall will have to bounce across the lake to hit our tents, and we are as sheltered as it gets in this area. We clear an area and put up the tent. We also made a mini food store - Lassie using his dry stone walling skills again. This is map ref. E6 and is marked with an h.

We bring up most of the rest of the kit in one more carry and rest for a short while before going down one more time to wait for Mark and Rowland to reappear and guide them up to our new site. They have made good time, so we have a quick brew, and head up as the weather clags in. They are suitably impressed by the campsite, which is at about 4950m.

Tuesday August 4th : Rest at high camp. Meet Russian trekkers.

We rest for the day having had three hard days of slogging up the glacier. We do some repairs to our kit and plan our time up here. The next two days will be an attempt on Edinstva (6673m). Then there will be a rest day, followed by a four day attempt on Lenina, another rest day and a two day walk out. I don't feel confident about making it up Lenina, and would prefer to try Estonia and/or Latvia and then 19th Party Conference Pic while others go for Lenina. The other three all want to do Lenina. We shall see.

In the evening I glance out the back of the tent and see people wandering about. I do a double take, but they are definitely there. It seems a few Russians have found this nice spot aswell. There turn out to be eight in all. They are doing a trek around a few glaciers, starting from Aschik-Tash, before attempting Lenina. Their equipment seems somewhat more basic than ours, and we do wonder about their feet in single leather boots but they seem happy enough. One bit of gear they have that we don't is a camcorder. We manage to communicate a little by pointing at maps, and one of their number using their rusty English. They only have two tents between the eight of them, and we though we were cramped with four in a Super Nova.

Wednesday August 5th : Walk in to Edinstva, snow hole.

We rise at 6am and leave by 8 for a high bivi on Edinstva. We go over scree for half an hour before finding a feasible route on to the glacier. We use crampons, but they are only needed for a few hundred metres. Then we are on to a wet glacier which is nice and flat - and has huge numbers of crevasses, lots of which aren't obvious. We quite often drop a leg in hidden ones. Apart from that the going isn't too bad, though the snow tends to get deeper as we go further up the glacier.

We approach the col and the slope steepens. The weather is now closing in. We pass below the col at about 2:30. Soon after the visibility drops to about 50 metres and it is a virtual white out. Snow is falling now, and the temperature is plummeting. I am trail breaking at this time and come across a very deep unconsolidated section where progress becomes very difficult. Mark leads off right and finds better ground. Eventually we gain a shoulder (after 5pm). We continue until we find a steep snowy slope, and dig a snow hole. It is hard work even with the snow shovel. We're at about 5600m (map ref. A5).

I try to do some cooking and can't get my stove to work. The diggers are using karrimats to pull out snow which is kind of innovative. I crawl in and have a go for a bit. I start to wish (for about the first time in my climbing career) that I had some waterproof trousers, as my

legs start to get cold. Eventually we complete the snowhole and crawl inside our sleeping bags. The ceilings aren't very high and we keep knocking more snow off which then collects between our bivi bags and karrimats.

Melting all the snow and cooking on one stove is a bit tedious to say the least. Lassie has retreated into his sleeping bag and is complaining about feeling hypothermic. I'm feeling pretty cold and tired myself. We don't finish cooking until about midnight.

Thursday August 6th : V. bad weather, walk out.

Lassie and Rowland wake up at 2am and spend over two hours melting water and getting ready to go. They are back after less than an hour after floundering through unconsolidated snow and not getting very far. The weather was still pretty bad.

We get up much later, and it is still freezing in the snow hole, although it is a bit warmer outside (or should that be not quite so freezing). We retreat back to our tent and have to lose lots of clothing on the way down as the sun beats down and we escape from the windy ridges. We have more fun with legs disappearing down crevasses now and then, and I manage to find one full of water - leading to nice wet feet. I then manage to do it again - but to the same foot.

We meet the Russian trekkers again on the way down. They spent an extra night by the small lake due to one of their number being ill. We swap sugary foods - we give them some marzipan and they give us some nice boiled sweets and fruit flavour water.

After a little while we part, and when we're back at the tents we dry out all the stuff we had in the snow hole and have a welcome brew of tea. I also fettle my stove properly, which takes a little while with nice working conditions. I would have done it in the snow hole if it had been the only stove, but I didn't have the energy to do a full strip down and clean in the snow hole.

Mark has now decided that he is not going to do Lenina, so that leaves Rowland and Lassie as a strong team to go for that one. Mark and I will look at the options on Estonia/Latvia and 19th Party Conference Pic. We decide to try leaving in the morning.

Friday August 7th : Snow.

Rowland and Lassie plan to get up at 6:30am. The alarm goes off and nobody moves much. There is a lot of cloud cover and I decide it's not worth doing anything unless things get much better. We eventually get up at about 10. It starts to snow after lunch, and it becomes really heavy. Lassie and I read our books, while the other two play cards and doze.

Saturday August 8th : More snow.

There is a little sun on the tent in the morning but that soon goes. The snow starts early today and there is no let up all day. The day consists mainly of reading, playing patience, drinking tea and dozing. We discuss the option of going home early, as we may have seen the last of the good weather. There is only one flight a week from Osh to Moscow, and we would need to allow extra time to arrange changing flights and returning kit to ITMC. We would have to leave the high camp tomorrow. On that basis the idea is thrown out, and we decide to walk in tomorrow unless the weather is *really* bad.

Sunday August 9th : Walk ins.

The weather looks reasonable so we go for it. We split the remainder of the marzipan ration we have with us - six days worth. Rowland and Lassie leave early to try Lenina. They plan to summit on Tuesday, and may bivi again on the return.

Meanwhile me and Mark are going for the wonderfully named 19th Party Conference Pic. We make good time and find a suitable bivi site by 4pm, at the foot of the south ridge (map ref. C5), having crossed some large crevasses with less than wonderful snow bridges. I have a poke around with my walking pole and don't find any crevasses so we dig a slight dip as our shelter for the night. We make a brew and decide to leave food until a bit later. Mark leaves the lighter by the stove.

Snow starts to fall and we retreat into the safety of our bivi bags. We emerge again at 6 to find the stove covered and the lighter buried, wet and useless. We manage to light it with matches. It goes out every now and then as snow melts and drips over the edges, but we cook our food and get some water before we run out of matches.

Lassie and Rowland are in white out conditions again, and come across the snow hole we used for Edinstva. As they cannot see the way ahead they sleep there for the night, though they had planned to go higher that day.

Monday August 10th : Hamish & Mark climb the S summit of 19th Party Conference Pic, Lassie & Rowland go to 2nd bivi on Lenina.

4am. It's too cold. We'll wait for daylight and the sun. The lighter hasn't decided to work overnight, so there is no brew. We're in the shade when we get up, but the sun hits us as we start to climb (8-ish). We walk straight up a fairly steep slope and ascend 200-300m fairly quickly. I slow down a lot after this. We make it to the south summit (5885m, the true summit is 5945m) shortly before noon. I am quite tired, and when we find the snow conditions deteriorate after this place, we decide to go back from here.

We are quite quick going to the bivi site and have a rest before packing and moving off. I put my leg into a crevasse about two metres from where we were sleeping, oops. We negotiate the other crevasses and head for the tent. It starts to snow as we leave the glacier and sets in big time. For the first time it starts to settle on the scree.

Rowland and Mark negotiate the traverse to the col on the east ridge of Lenina, across a snow slope which may be a little unstable and avalanche prone, though technically easy. They gain the ridge and carry on, bivviing at about 6400m. They have a very cold night, with spindrift finding its way into the bivi bags and settling between them. (See separate map for their route.

Meanwhile I have some sort of bug. I don't feel entirely well and end up vomiting out the front of the tent. I also needed a dump so I put some clothes on, and vomited again while leaving the tent. I try drinking a little water, but that bounces. The night is bitterly cold.

Tuesday August 11th : Lassie & Rowland summit Lenina (7127m), Hamish ill overnight.

I feel a little better in the morning, but I decide to not eat for a day anyway. Water is OK now, fortunately. We don't do much that day.

Lassie and Rowland, on the other hand, have a hard days climbing. It takes eight hours to reach the south summit of Lenina (7127m) and another two to get back to the bivi.

Wednesday August 12th : Rowland & Lassie return to high camp.

I'm able to eat again. Me and Mark have another lazy morning. Then Rowland and Lassie appear in the early afternoon. No one has any energy to do anything that afternoon.

Thursday August 13th : Do first half of walk to base camp.

We're off back down the valley today. We pack all the gear up, and burn waste (with over two litres of spare petrol). We leave around noon. Rowland is rather slow, and obviously hasn't fully recovered from climbing Lenina. We pass an area of scree slopes which has a lot of rocks falling down. We cross one at a time, with the others trying to spot falling rocks which may hit the person moving. We all make it across without incident though.

We have to take some gear off Rowland, to speed the party up as a whole. We reach the nice large campsite below 5525 about 7pm, and we are very glad to see it (map ref. N10). Rowland and Lassie consider having a rest day tomorrow, while me and Mark are planning to get down sooner rather than later.

Friday August 14th : Back to base camp.

We get up a bit later than usual, and eventually get going after 1pm. The snow bridge we have been using over the "white river" (flowing from the first glacier to the south) has almost completely disintegrated, so we have to do quite a long jump to avoid wet feet. We were down by 4:30 and relaxed for the afternoon. At night we luxuriate in the comfort of only having two people in each tent.

Saturday August 15th : Rain.

It rains most of the day. We don't bother getting up until midday. We decide to make lots of breads (26) along with lots of apricot jam and sosmix sausages (10). That's about all we manage really.

Sunday August 16th : Rest and fettle gear.

Rowland decides he's going to leave tomorrow to try and get to China early, and allow lots of time. Lots of fettling has to happen first though. We split up group gear including the maps and some of the medical kit (but not the serious drugs). Then we get out the beers, and we each have our one beer for the seven weeks. We spend the rest of the day eating chocolate, slop, veggie sausages, tortellini and lots of tea.

Monday August 17th : Rowland leaves for China.

Rowland is up early and says his goodbyes, before walking off into the distance to find a way to China to do teaching English in a college for the next eleven months. The remainder of us don't have much energy, and then the skies started to darken. The rain sets in for the day.

We talk about doing one or two more climbs. Lassie wants to do Pic 5147 and get to the top this time. Mark wants to try Pic 5015, which is on the ridge which is between the first and second glaciers to the south.

Tuesday August 18th : Mark & Lassie walk in.

The day starts slowly again. Eventually Lassie says "Are we doing these climbs or not?". Mark replies "Yes", so they start fettling. I ponder for a while and decide I can't actually be bothered. They take the Quasar with them, as we've finally decided that bivis are a bad idea. They camp at map ref. Q10.

Wednesday August 19th : Mark & Lassie climb Pic 5015

I fester all day at base camp, not managing to do much more than wash some of my clothes. I have very little motivation. Meanwhile Lassie and Mark climb Pic 5015 by the north ridge and move along to camp below 5147 again (map ref. O10).

Thursday August 20th : Rain, Lassie & Mark walk out.

It rains *all* day which is just a little tedious. Lassie and Mark returned - two or three inches of snow had fallen overnight where they were, so they didn't attempt 5147. They were glad of the Quasar (which was now soaked). We had lots of tea, and then Lassie tried making toffee. We couldn't remember the way it was meant to be made, so he boiled some water and put a huge amount of sugar in it. He then left it to cool and (hopefully) set. It sort of worked. It stayed clear, and didn't look much like toffee, but as we had now run out of chocolate and marzipan any sugary stuff was welcome.

We had an hour or so without rain during which we put up the Quasar and Mark and Lassie dried some of their kit. When it started to rain again the Quasar was dry enough to store lots of kit in, which made life in the Super Nova more comfortable. We made some nice hot dogs in the evening.

Tomorrow we will start carrying kit down the valley, and dump it about half an hour from Bah-Doba. We will have one more night here, a night near Bah-Doba and then go to Bah-Doba on Sunday to meet our transport to Osh.

Friday August 21st : Horses carry most of our kit out.

It snowed a lot overnight. When we first woke up everything was very well covered with snow. It melted quickly once the sun was out though. Then we start to pack up stuff, leaving just enough for one more night here. We take down the radio mast and start filling our bags.

Half way through our packing, two horses appeared. It was the people who had carried our stuff up the valley. Steve had arranged for them to come and collect us, but we had doubted they would remember. We were glad to be proved wrong. We give them some lunch, which we have with some of their bread. We also let them have our spare food, and give the older man a few plasters and some antiseptic wipes for an infected sore on his face (having had to do some guessing and miming to work out what they were asking for. I also gave them ten metres of 6mm tat which I had not used. They were very pleased with that one - we think rope is generally in quite short supply around here and my tat was nice and colourful.

We decide that trying to explain our plans and reasoning will be a bit hard, as we guess they will be expecting all three of us to go down with them, with all of our kit. Anyway, we manage to load up the horses and me and Mark head off down the valley, leaving Lassie to clear up the camp site. We unload the stuff on a head land about half an hour from Bah-Doba. We give the horsemen 100 som each (about US\$5) and the empty jerrycan. The older one gives us both a hug and they ride off for the night.

We leave all our stuff in the tent and head back up the valley. We look out for drinkable water supplies on the way back up but the nearest stuff is nearly an hour from the headland. We also pass a small, unattended herd of yak, but we don't approach them.

Saturday August 22nd : Go to headland near Bah-Doba for final night.

We pack up and do the final burning of rubbish. Mark and Lassie put some socks and tshirts on the fire and we used the last five litres of petrol, which meant a good fire. We left about 3pm, and within half an hour we came across a jeep type vehicle appeared. One of

the people was the older horseman who had been with us yesterday. The other was a Russian who we understood to be a border guard.

We start off pretty slowly on very rough terrain, but pick up speed as the terrain levels off. We're at the Quasar by 4pm having had some bread and sausage on the way. When there, the horseman gets out a melon and we tuck in, along with more bread and some tomatoes. We unload, and the driver says he'll come back at 7am to take us to Bah-Doba.

Lassie heads back up the valley to collect water while I put up the tent. We sort out our kit so things we don't need while travelling are packed away and have an early night.

Sunday August 23rd : Travel to Osh.

We wake at 6:30. It's cold. We make tea and take the tents down. The jeep arrives when we're nearly ready. We drive across the rivers, and are taken to the yurt where the horseman lives. We try to keep a look out for our bus, but it wasn't in Bah-Doba when we drove through. We have breakfast type stuff - bread and nice cream cheese type stuff, boiled spuds with bits of mutton, lots of chai and a boiled sweet or two. I really wish I could speak at least pidgin Russian. There is cummis of course, which me and Lassie manage, but Mark cannot face it. When we leave Lassie gives his penknife to the horseman as a gift in return for their hospitality.

Then we're on the road again, and we think we might just be taken to the border point at Sary-Tash. While there we tried to explain that we had transport arranged which we had to meet, but the driver didn't seem to understand, and we carried on towards Osh. We kept a look out for our bus, planning to shout at the driver if we saw it, and sort it all out. We don't see it, and decide that getting to Osh is the main thing and we can sort out the mess when we get there, as long as we get to the flight on Tuesday.

We drive through Osh, and we start to realise that we are heading towards the same house we stayed in when we came through Osh on the way out. At this point it dawns on us that the driver is in fact the ITMC driver. The day would have been a little less stressful if we could have spoken Russian.

So we arrive at 12 and immediately have some food. Bread and chai and melon and other fruit and other stuff. Wonderful. Three Americans turn up. They're staying as well, and are doing a grand tour of central Asia - Pakistan, the Karakoram highway into eastern China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakstan. Nice folk.

Lassie, me and Mark go for a little wander and buy chocolate and some beers from stalls that are about. Then we return and have a meal with the Americans. It is another feast. The Americans are all professors now. One used to be an under secretary of state under Reagan, and another used to be in the oil industry. After they retired for the night, we talked to Edward, their guide. He was bilingual (possibly more) and so was a very useful person to know.

Monday August 24th : Visit Osh bazaar.

We're up early and head for the bazaar, this time with all day to play with. First we wanted to confirm our seats on the flight, so we found the airline booking office and went in. The woman said OK having looked at our tickets and wrote 8am on our tickets. From this we inferred that the flight hadn't been cancelled, and that latest check in would be 8am. I'm not sure confirming your seat is a relevant concept.

We wander down to the bazaar and find a lot of it is still being set up. Mark goes off to find a watch and have a haircut. Lassie and I wander at random, and buy a few Kyrgyz hats (the first time I've seen ethnic hats which can't be bought in shops in the UK, though that is probably just a matter of time).

We spend a little time at a chai house before catching a bus back out of town (2 som per person per trip, about 6 pence). We have lots more food at the house and have an afternoon nap. Then we have dinner (it's a hard life). Mark feels ill, and goes to lie down for a while. The old man comes to have a chat (as much as we can through the language barrier) and show us some photos of previous guests and him trekking around Aschik-Tash and the Ak-Su range of mountains. We arrange an early breakfast. Edward is coming to pick us up in the morning and be a translator for us through customs, so even that should be easy.

Tuesday August 25th : Flight to Moscow

We have a lovely breakfast and we're all set. What could possibly go wrong?

Edward fails to show. Our host calls a taxi which does arrive before 7. In the meantime, he shows us his garden - a lot of the fruit we have been eating during our stay has been from here. Then we get the taxi to the airport.

While waiting in the queue, the old man finds another ITMC bloke, a young man this time, who speaks English. He is at the airport with a group of Canadians who have been climbing big walls in the Ak-Su. He is willing to help us, so that's cool. So we get to the front of the queue only to find we are in the wrong building. We go to the international departures lounge and have to pay departure tax.

We go to the baggage check in, and when weighed, we have 121kg of stuff and a limit of 60kg. The official does a few calculations, and asks us for \$25 to reduce our excess baggage to 21kg. So we do, and I return to the cash desk to pay. It has to be in som. The ITMC bloke was invaluable in sorting all of this out. Then we go to the plane and grab some seats.

The stairs are taken away and we should be on our way. But then the stairs are brought back again and I can see the pilots going up and down the stairs, and looking a little concerned. Then I notice that an emergency exit near us has been opened (I think just for ventilation ...). There are a few announcements in Russian, and then everyone starts getting off the plane. We follow them and as we leave we can see the engines being taken apart. One of the flight crew with a little English tells us that there will be a two hour delay.

We wander around to the international departures place again. One of the staff speaks English and chats to us while we wait on some sofas. There is another announcement, and he tells us that the plane won't leave until four or five. We learn that for half of each day, there is work being done on the runway, which is why it is quiet at the minute. When the work is complete, later in the year, there will be more flights, including an extra one to Moscow each week. We are given some free coffee and biscuits, and later go and buy two large breads and lots of grapes with the last of our som.

The plane eventually leaves at 8:15, as apparently the engines are quite affected by the air temperature, so the pilots weren't happy to leave earlier. At Moscow it takes two hours to get through passport control, customs (where our bags are x-rayed *after* the flight) and pick up our bags.

We try to phone Steve's dad in Moscow, but the phones all need tokens or cards and there is nowhere open to buy them now. We eventually manage to make a phone call, and are glad to find the flat occupied. We get a taxi in (for US\$70 - a little steep) and go into the flat. After apologising profusely for the hour of arrival, we promptly go to sleep.

Wednesday August 26th : Flight to London.

We get up late and laze around for the morning. Later Mark and I go for a wander around the town, and spend our remaining roubles on chocolate, ice cream and other food. Our flight is at 9:30, and we have a taxi ordered for 7. It fails to show, so we end up having to find another one on the street. We nearly forget our hand luggage in the rush, and then get stressed in the back of the taxi as we crawl through traffic. We get there at 8:30, pay US\$40 and leg for the check in. Easy.

Then there is passport control. We join the queue, and manage to pick the queue where anybody who needs to be rushed through is taken to. (It is the left most queue, so avoid that one). But we do make it with enough time to run down to our terminal, and into the safe hands of British Airways. From here on, life was easy.

B - Inventory of Stores and Equipment

Equipment

Personal Equipment

Rucksack + kit bag	
Sleeping bag	
Karrimat or Thermarest	
Bivi bag	
Headtorch	
Flatpack batteries x4	about the right number
Mug	
Spoon	
Penknife	
Waterbottle	see note below about Oasis
Waterproofs	
Gaiters	
Mitts/gloves/hat/neck warmer	see note about gloves
Glacier glasses (+ spare pair)	
Down Jacket	
Spare clothes (1 set)	
Wash kit	
Personal (wallet, passport, diary ...)	
Camera + film	
Ice axe and hammer	
Crampons	
Plastic boots	
Helmet	
Harness	
Snow shoes	not used

Bring light (weight and colour) **clothing** for base camp, where it can be pretty hot - the air temperature may not get much above 10 degrees, but the sun makes it feel hot. This is also useful for travelling through Kyrgyzstan, where temperatures are normally near 35

degrees. Black t-shirts and fleecy trousers are a bit hot for that. Also, do not worry too much about Muslim dress codes. We saw quite a few people wandering about in shorts, and women in shortish skirts and vest tops - it seemed quite acceptable in Osh at any rate.

At the other end of the temperature scale, Lassie and Rowland could have done with more clothing on Pic Lenina, where temperatures probably reached around -20 degrees. This is partly as we did not intend to climb Lenina originally, so we had not planned for it. On the summit day they were wearing thermals, t-shirt, fleece, down jacket and goretex and did not overheat. They also did not wear helmets so they could use the hoods of their down jackets. This left them with no additional clothing to wear when they stopped.

Make sure you do not have holes in your **gloves**. Rowland and Lassie suffered frost nip where they had holes in their gloves. They generally wore mitts on top while climbing, but it was when faffing at bivis, where mitts were too clumsy, that the damage occurred. We would now recommend tent use high up, which would have mitigated this by removing the wind chill factor during a lot of the faffing. It would also have meant that Lassie's sleeping bag would not have frozen due to lots of spindrift entering his bivi bag, and that snow would not have built up on the karrimats, leading to a rather cold night or two for Lassie at 6400m.

The Macpac **Oasis** is a water bag that sits in your rucksack, with a little tube coming over your shoulder allowing you to drink on the move - similar to the better known Camelbak. Hamish and Rowland had them, and found them to be quite good generally. However, they could freeze at bivis or on routes if not used for a while, and the tube on Hamish's split, rendering it useless.

Test your plastics before you go. Rowland's Koflach **plastic boots** split early on, and caused a major break in the expedition for him. A way we have heard of is to put your boots in a freezer for a while, and then take them out and hit the toe with a big hammer. If the boots don't survive that, they probably wouldn't have survived long in the mountains.

Group Equipment

Medical kit	see medical section
Radio and mast for antennae	see medical section
9mm rope x 3	one was a spare
Climbing rack x 2	see climbing section
Snow shovel x 2	see note below
Repair kit	see note below
First aid reference books	
Maps (laminated)	
Large (10l) waterbag x 2	
SW radio	
Tents (Quasar and Super Nova)	plus groundsheets
Stoves (MSR XGK II) x 2	see note below
Fuel filter	v. good
Water filter	see note below
Pan x 3	2 small, and 1 v. large

One of the **snow shovels** had a metal head, which meant it was possible to use it for digging the pits for the toilet and burning waste. Without that, we would have needed a trenching tool or similar for this job.

The **repair kit** was used a lot, and we ran out of cotton, so take a lot. We also broke quite a few needles, so don't skimp on them either. The rubber solution (brand name Seam Grip) was also very good.

The **stoves** (MSR XGK II) generally worked well. We had a little Colemans fuel filter, which we suspect helped a lot with the reliability. They did require frequent maintenance, but if that was expected it was fine. We also had a repair/spares kit which we used a few bits from - don't go on a long trip without it, or the fuel filter. We didn't need them this trip, but pliers can be useful if the fuel tube wire becomes jammed. We ran them on local petrol, which was easy to obtain, as were the metal jerrycans we used. We suspect gas canisters would be more expensive, though we think ITMC can obtain them.

The **water filter** we took was a plastic filter, and coffee filter papers, to filter out particulates. This system was very slow, and was only used when the water was *very* silty.

Food

Overall, about two thirds of our calories came from chocolate, marzipan and peanuts. This was generally considered good, and we could have had much more marzipan and eaten it all. It was excellent as a source of sugar on routes. It was obtained in bulk from a bakery supplier.

Our protein came from peanuts, soya and tinned fish, mainly. The tinned fish were not universally loved, to say the least, while the soya was quite liked, despite initial thoughts by the meat eaters.

Don't skimp on nice food, and rely on pasta, rice and noodles to see you through. All the food we brought from the UK and Russia was worth the cost. There is not much nice chocolate available in Kyrgyzstan, so that definitely needs to be taken with you.

In the UK

	Amount	Total Weight	Notes
Soya (mince and chunks)	38 x 150g bags	5.7 kg	very good
Peanuts	40 x 500g bags	20 kg	
Tortellini	40 x 375g	15 kg	very good in paper bags (led to damp onions)
Dried Onions	2 x 680g	1.36 kg	
Dried Peppers	24 x 40g	0.96 kg	very, very good. could have used more
Dried Vegetables	12 x 50g	0.6 kg	
Marzipan	3 x 10 kg	30 kg	
Soups	12 x 66g, 12 x 36g		
Chilli powder	1 bag		
Garlic granules	1 bag		
Black pepper	1 bag		

In Moscow

	Amount	Total Weight	Notes
Chocolate	400 x 100g bars	40 kg	Used 300
Tea bags	600 teabags		

In Osh (Kyrgyzstan)

	Amount	Notes
Rice	10 kg	used 5 kg
Pasta	12 kg	
Noodles	18 kg	used 10 kg
Split peas	5 kg	see below
Boiled sweets	2 kg	wanted more
Sugar	15 kg	
Salt	1 kg	used 200 g
Flour	5 kg	very good
Ketchup	1 litre	
Vegetable oil	1 litre	
Tinned fish	6.4 kg	used 4 kg
Dried apricots	15 kg	
Drink sachets	19	
Coffee	1 jar	unused
Toilet rolls	36	used 12
Jerry cans	2 x 20 litres	
Petrol	35 litres	used 25 l
Plastic washing up bowl	1	

Notes

The **split peas** were meant to be lentils, but translation difficulties meant we didn't obtain what we wanted. The split peas (or whatever they were) were uncooked after 30 minutes boiling, so we didn't use them after that.

The **toilet roll** usage could have been much larger if we had suffered more diarrhoea. As it happened, we had about a week at the start, and some people had a day or two while we were up at the high camp.

We probably would have used more **fuel** if we had spent more time at altitude, and thereby had to melt more snow. At around 6000m, we used over 300 ml of petrol a night (per pair) (using MSR XGK II stoves).

In **Osh**, we also tried (but failed) to find salted pork, tomato paste, milk powder, big sacks and small, stable candles. Generally there was no problem with finding the other supplies in the enormous bazaar, and the prices were pretty good. We changed US dollars (cash) at money changers in the bazaar, who gave good rates.

The **flour** was used to make bread (mix with water, flatten, and fry) similar to chipattis, which were pretty nice. Some of our soya was sosmix, so we had veggie hotdogs, and we also made (sort of) apricot jam (boil dried apricots, sugar and water for an hour or two) which was good for variety.

We found a lot of **wild onions** growing in the area, which added a little bit of variety to the slops, and were also quite nice raw. Rhubarb like plants also grew in the area, though they seemed to have gone to seed by the time we found them, and we didn't try them. (If you do, remember that the leaves are poisonous, but the stalks should be OK).

C - Finances

All prices below are in pounds sterling, and are for the group as a whole, unless otherwise stated. The figures were compiled by Mark.

Income

Personal Contributions	
Steve Carter	447
Rowland Barker	876
Mark Stevenson	1086
Hamish Downer	1086
James Lassetter	1107
British Mountaineering Council	550
Mount Everest Foundation	500
Cambridge Expedition Fund	200
Total	5862

The differences in personal contributions was mainly due to different flights. Steve only flew with us from Moscow to Osh, and was only with us for a week and a half in the field. Rowland did not return with us, so his flight bill was reduced, but he did pay for hire of plastic boots, and peak fees for Lenina. Lassie paid the "standard" cost, and a peak fee for Lenina.

Expenditure

Pre-expedition Expenses	59	
Maps	108	
Translation	80	
CUEX Registration	48	12 per person
Visas	325	65 per person
Permits/registration	138	See Permissions for details (p. 10)
Insurance	794	See Insurance for details (p. 11)
Flights (London-Moscow)	861	^
(Moscow-Osh)	920	
Freight/Excess Baggage	543	
Taxis (to/from airports)	90	See Travel for details (p. 11)
Accommodation (Osh)	140	
Transport (Osh-Bar Doba)	339	
Hire of Horses	110	v
Food	456	
Equipment (snowshoes)	360	
Radio Hire	224	
Hire of plastic boots	45	For Rowland
Miscellaneous	20	
Bank charges	62	For bounced cheque
Post expedition/report expenses	130	
Total	5862	

On top of this was the cost of gear people had to buy for the expedition, which was generally a few hundred pounds. If organising your first expedition, don't forget to allow for this factor. Some members did not fully budget for this.

D - Useful Names and Addresses

Asia Travel

Vladimir Dolgiy
40, Sharif Rashidov Prospekt
Tashkent
Uzbekistan
fax 00 7 3712 662 927
asia@travel.silk.org

*An alternative to ITMC, esp for travel in
Uzbekistan.*

Alpine Club

0171 613 0755
*Useful for journals and route descriptions
etc.*

British Library Maproom

0171 412 7700

British Mountaineering Council (BMC)

177-179 Burton Rd
Manchester
M20 2BB
tel 0161 445 4747
fax 0161 445 4500
info@thebmc.co.uk

Map Curator of the Bodleian Library

Nick Miller
01865 277 013

Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic

119 Crawford St
London
W18 1AF
Consular 0171 224 3935
General 0171 935 1462
fax 0171 935 7449

Excess Baggage Company

Unit 17,
Abbey Rd Industrial Park
Commercial Way
London
NW10 6XF
tel 0181 965 3344
fax 0181 961 2040

Expedition Advisory Centre

Address as the RGS
eac@rgs.org

**International Travel and
Mountaineering Centre Tien-Shan
(ITMC)**

Panfilov St 105
Bishkek
Kyrgyz Republic 720035
CIS
tel +996 3312 541001/541004
tel/fax +996 3312 429825
fax +996 3312 541002
itmc@imfiko.bishkek.su

Websites for maps:

<http://www.eastview.com>
This was where are best maps came from
<http://www.cartographic.com>
<http://www.fourone.com>
<http://www.omnimaps.com>

Mr A D Fagg

Head, Libraries Division

Military Survey

Directorate of Geographic Information
Government Buildings
Block A
Hook Rise South
Tolworth
Surbiton
SURREY
KT6 7AN

Mount Everest Foundation

W H Ruthven
Honorary Secretary
Gowrie
Cardwell Close
Warton
Preston
PR4 1SH

Rab Carrington Ltd

32 Edward St
Sheffield
S3 7GB
tel 0114 275 7544
fax 0114 278 0584

Royal Geographical Society

1 Kensington Gore
London
SW7 2AR
tel 0171 591 3030
fax 0171 591 3031

E - Bibliography

Information on Central Asia and Kyrgyzstan

King, J. Lonely Planet travel survival kit : Central Asia (1996)

Maier, F. Trekking in Russia and Central Asia - A Traveller's Guide (1994)

Expedition Reports

After extensive research, no expedition reports were found for the exact area we were intending to climb in, but we did find the following reports from other parts of the Pamirs.

Alpine Club Expedition Reports

Anglo-Soviet Pamirs Expedition,	1990,	MEF Ref. 90-36	ACL Ref. 24840
Imperial College Pamir Expedition,	1992,	MEF Ref. 92-44	ACL Ref. 25356
Yugoslav Pamir Expedition,	1983,		ACL Ref. 23244

On line Reports

Endectt, P. Mountaineering in the Pamirs
<http://www.man.ac.uk/muhc/gallery/pamirs/>

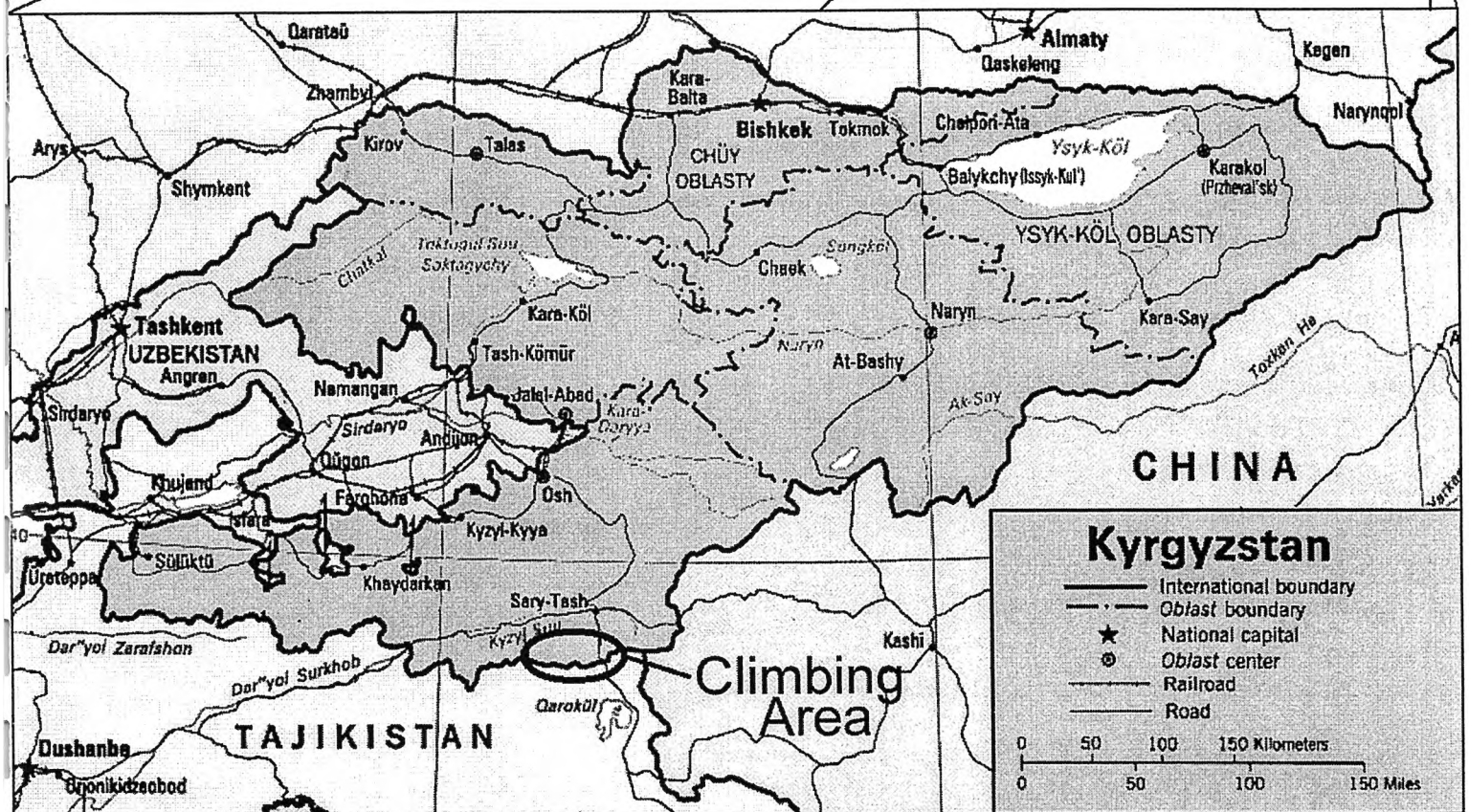
Bartley, D. Climbing Peak Korzhenevskia
<http://www.bal.net/~dbartley/Korzhen.htm>

Bielefeldt, H. Expedition to Peak Lenin 1992
<http://home/Bielefeldt/lenine.htm>

F - Distribution

Each member has a copy of the report, and copies have also been sent to:

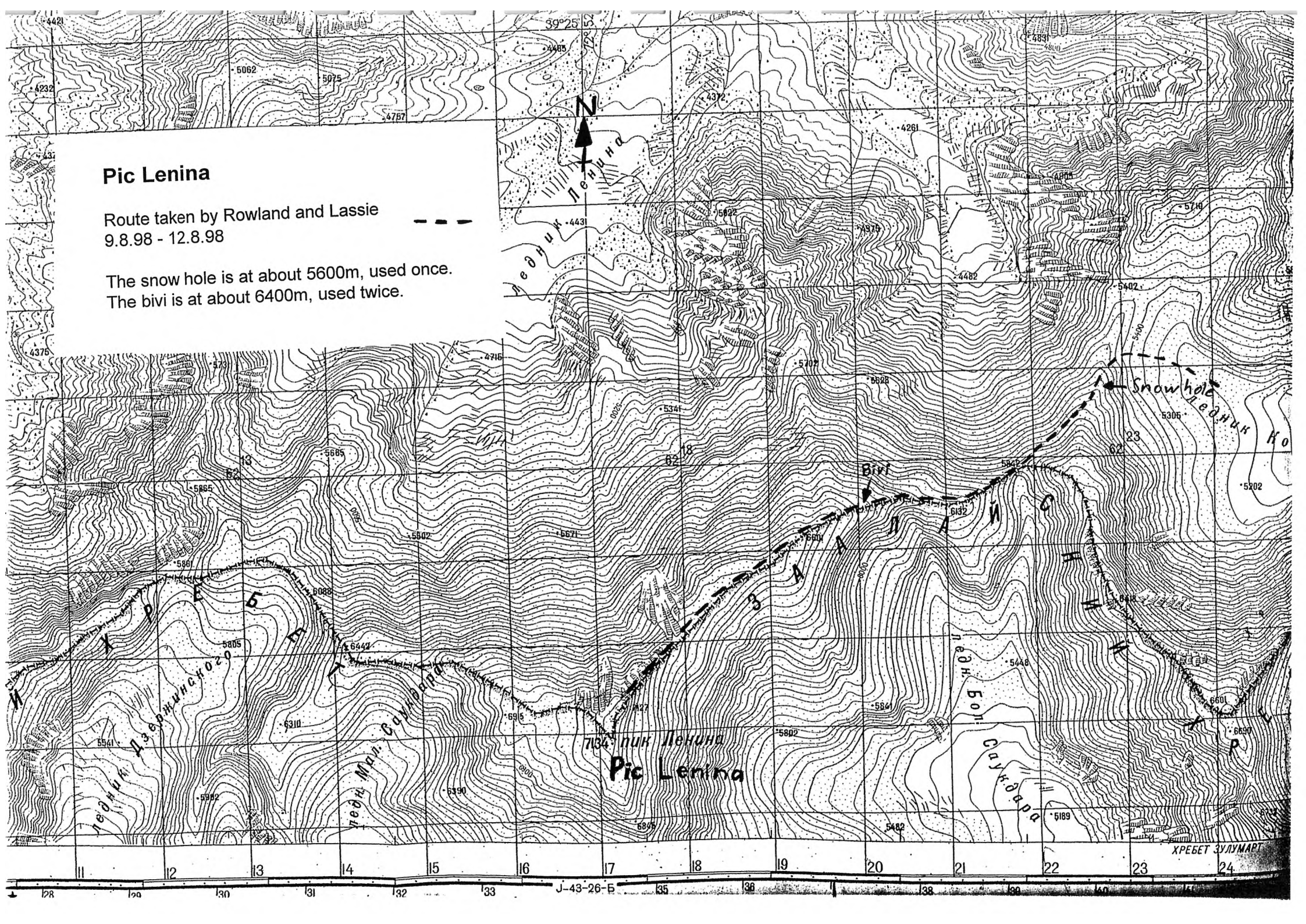
- British Mountaineering Council
- Mount Everest Foundation
- Alpine Club
- Royal Geographical Society
- Expedition Advisory Centre (at the RGS)
- Cambridge University Explorers and Travellers Club
- Cambridge Expeditions Fund
- Rab
- Churchill College
- Wherry Library (run by CUMC)



Pic Lenina

Route taken by Rowland and Lassie
9.8.98 - 12.8.98

The snow hole is at about 5600m, used once.
The bivi is at about 6400m, used twice.



Bivi

Snow hole

7134 пик Ленина
Pic Lenina

ХРЕБЕТ ЗУЛУМАРТ



Some of the scree we had to walk over



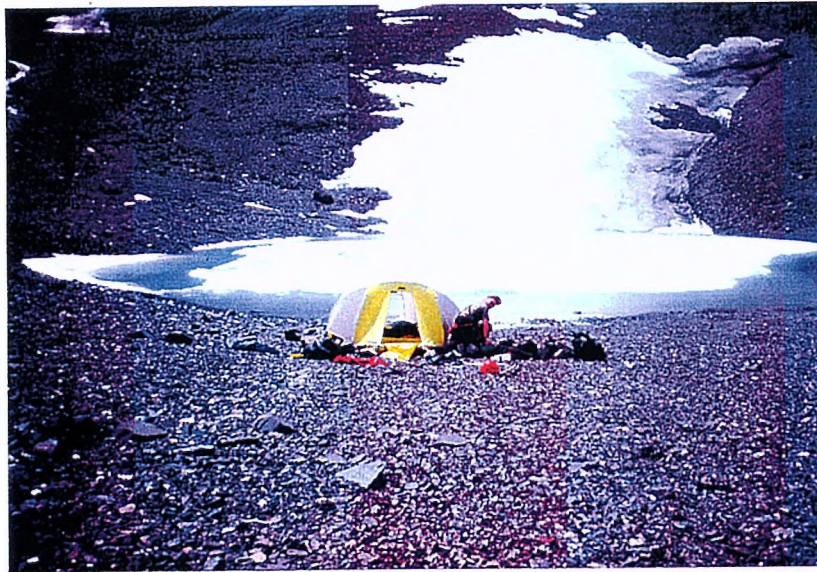
A view down the valley



The ridge of Pic 4931 (with Lassie)



Pic Korzhenievskovo (6008m), showing the south ridge



The high camp by the small lake



Pic Lenina (on the right) with the west ridge coming towards us



Map key

- Routes taken ---
- Camp sites (h is the high camp) X
- Bivi sites =
- Snow hole o
- Food dump □

13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

22 A 23 B 24 C 25 D 26 E 27 F 28 G 29 H

19th Party Conference Pic

Ice falls

Ice falls

Pic Lenina

ледяник Норженевского

Pic Estonia

Pic Edinstva

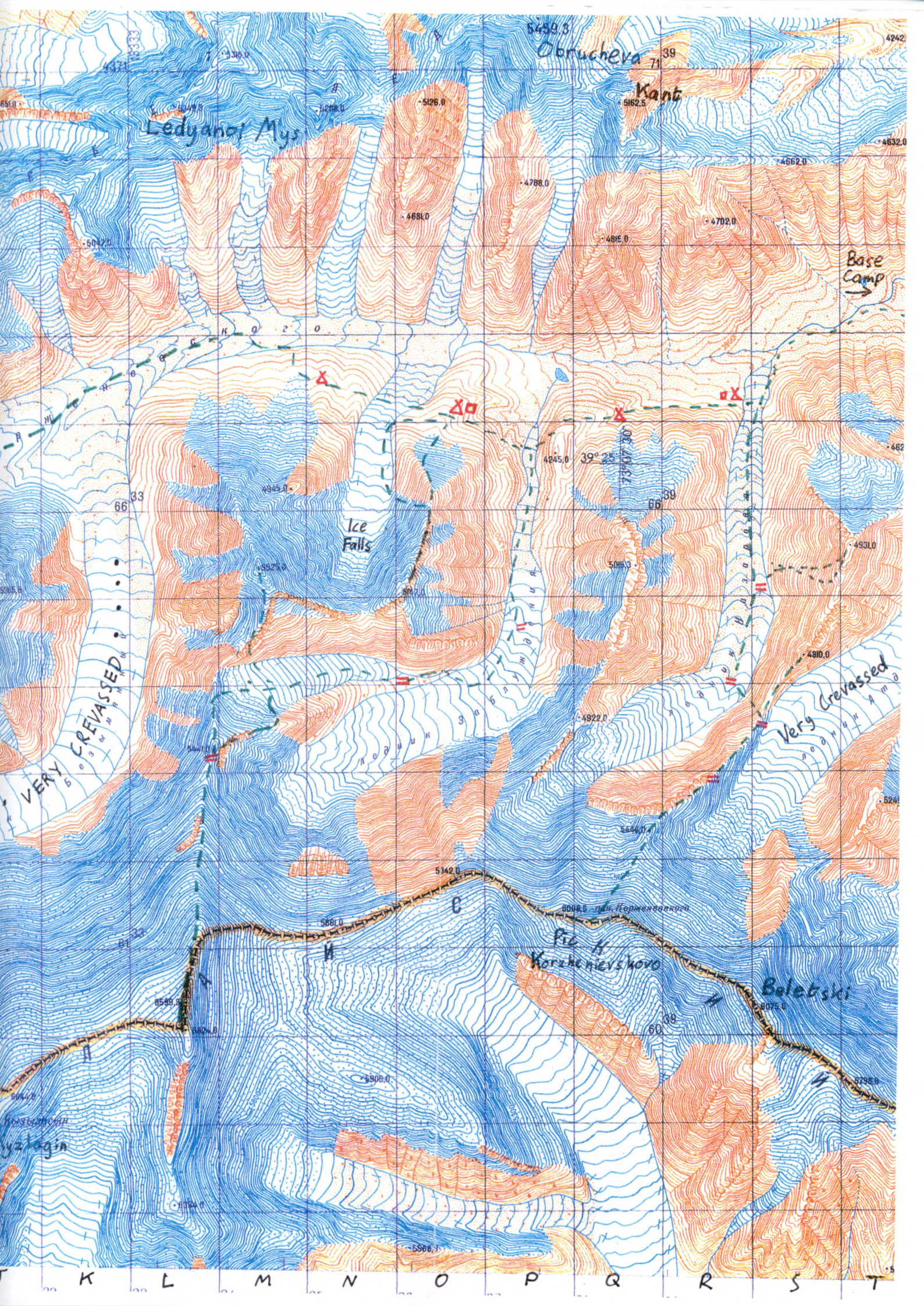
Pic Katvina

HUMPY

Sovietsk

УЛЕТ ЗУЛУМАР





5459.3

Obrucheva

39

Kant

5162.5

Ledyanoy Mys

5126.0

4681.0

4788.0

4815.0

4702.0

Base Camp

4632.0

4662.0

6042.0

X

X

X

X

Ice Falls

4245.0

39° 25'

30

5083.0

462

4931.0

4910.0

524

5444.0

5142.0

5881.0

3008.5

Pik N
Korshenievskovo

Bolebski

3075.0

60

5908.0

5738.0

5966.1

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T