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Pangi Region, Shakkar Peak (5,500m), northwest face and east ridge

India, Himachal Pradesh

Ian Cartwright and I made a one-day approach from Shiva basecamp at 3,850m in the Tarundi Valley into the high subsidiary valley to the east. Our goal, the pyramidal peak at the head of this valley, while not particularly high, is the highest in the group east of the Tarundi. The peak had a big feel to it and offered great views.

Leaving the tent around 5:30 a.m., we made an easy climb onto the glacier and followed it up to the northwest face. There was no problem crossing the bergschrund, and the first half of the face was reasonable snow-ice at 45°. Above, it steepened and we used rocks on the left to belay two pitches. The upper section was 50-55°. Here, the snow deteriorated to deep powder, and we moved together as there were no worthwhile belays, plowing a precarious path to the east ridge 100m short of the summit.

On the crest above, we managed to bypass a 60° step of completely unconsolidated snow by following a sort of trough on the south flank, which featured some rock and ice. The final 50m to the summit were reasonable, and we reached the highest point at around 10 a.m. Our climb had been ca 500m and AD under the conditions. Our altimeter read 5,500m on top. We named the mountain Shakkar Peak, as a tribute to all the sugary snow.

Steve Burns, Alpine Club, U.K.

Images



Steve Burns bypassing the steep snow step on the upper east ridge of Shakkar Peak.



Ian Cartwright during an attempt on the east ridge of Shiva. In the distance are the peaks of the Miyar Valley, e.g. (1) Devil's Horns - Jangpar Glacier, and (2) Mahindra. (3) is the Baheli Jot massif (5,600m). Shakkar Peak just off picture left.



Shakkar Peak from the east ridge of Shiva, showing (1) route of ascent, and (2) descent. (C) marks the high camp.

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