



AAC Publications

Bamyan skiing and ice climbing

Afghanistan, Central Hindu Kush, Koh-e-Baba Mountains

In late February and March, John Trousdale, Elliott Woods, and I traveled to Bamyan to check out the potential for backcountry skiing, snowboarding, and ice climbing. I was also hoping to kite-ski on some frozen lakes in the region. I had been in the area on two previous expeditions [AAJ 2010 and 2011], but those trips were in the summer. In late winter, the lakes were frozen, as suspected, and there were several inches of old, creamy snow on top the ice. Great 20 to 30 mph gusts provided enjoyable kite-skiing. Frozen waterfalls formed from the overflow of the lakes, and though I sampled a couple different route possibilities, it was too warm to climb safely. Ice climbing and kite-skiing in this area are probably fantastic in January or early February.

We then went to Bamyan village and into the Koh-e-Baba, finding first ski descents in the Dukani Valley, near the villages of Yeti Mak, Jawkar, and Kushkak. Approaches were easy and our maximum altitudes came close to 4,000m. These mountains are beautiful, and the potential for quality skiing enormous, but we experienced mostly less than ideal conditions. I would expect much better conditions in a normal year.

Mike Libecki, AAC

Images



Mike Libeck climbing on the outflow from a lake at Band-e-Amir.



Mike Libeck kite skiing on the lakes at Band-e-Amir.

Article Details

Author	Mike Libecki, AAC
Publication	AAJ
Volume	55
Issue	87
Page	274
Copyright Date	2013
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions