



AAC Publications

Khane Valley, Levski (5,733m, GPS), west face; Grey Tower (5,435m), east ridge.

Pakistan, Karakoram, Masherbrum Range, Tagas Group

In September 2011, Doychin Boyanov, Mihail Mihaylov, and I explored the Khane Valley immediately south of Nangma Valley [AAJ 2012]. In August 2012 we three, together with Tervel Kerelov, returned. We reached base camp (Boulder Camp) on the First Terrace at 4,080m on the 7th. From here Kerelov decided to attempt Peak 23, solo, while the remaining members of the expedition chose Levski Peak. This summit, difficult on all sides, is situated on the main ridge dividing the Khane and Nangma valleys, and is immediately southeast of the well-known Shingu Charpa (5,910m). In two days, August 13-14, we climbed the 650m west face at 6a M6 AI4, completing the route in 14 50m pitches with a bivouac high on wall. We reached the summit via mixed terrain, then snow, at 10 a.m., and then made 10 rappels to the base, returning to our high camp at 5,050m in late afternoon.

On the 17th we explored access to the Grey Tower, which lies on the south side of the valley, above a col (Bulgarian Saddle, 5,107m) south of Meligo Peak. Access to the col, a 300m couloir that is seriously exposed to stonefall, had to be completed before 8 a.m. On the 19th Boyanov and I climbed for five hours to reach the Saddle. We pitched a tent and rested there until 2:30 p.m., after which we inspected the first 300m of Grey Tower's east face. Next day, in perfect weather, we started climbing at 6 a.m., and reached the summit after 13 pitches between 5 and 6b (predominately 5b/c). While only nuts and cams were used for protection, each belay was equipped with two pitons, which provided anchors for the rappel descent (11 rappels and 80m of downclimbing). We stayed in the camp overnight, so that we could descend the dangerous couloir very early next morning. During this descent we abandoned 200m of rope.

There are altitude corrections to the photographs that appear in the AAJ 2012 report. Meligo is ca 5,750m, and we felt this peak would be better attempted from the next valley south via easier slopes. Grey Tower is 5,435m GPS. In the picture on page 277, the route of ascent is the left skyline. The col between Grey Tower and Meligo is the Bulgarian Saddle. Sofia is ca 5,720m, Rila ca 5,800m, Tangra Tower ca 5,820m, Agil ca 5,880m, and Hidden Tower ca 6,030m.

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Images

Article Details

Author	Nikolay Petkov
Publication	AAJ
Volume	55
Issue	87
Page	303
Copyright Date	2013
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions