



AAC Publications

Ghidims Valley, Yawash Sar Middle (5,786m), Panorama Peak (5,350m)

Pakistan, Karakoram, Ghujerab Mountains

In August-September 2012, Frank Gasser (Italy), Detlef Seelig (Germany), and Birgit Walk (Austria) visited the Ghidims Valley. The first people to reach the start of this valley, at a place called Mandi Kushlak, were Henry Montagnier and Captain C.J. Morris in 1927. (They did not enter the valley but instead turned west and went down the Ghujerab Valley.) In 2000 John Mock and Kimberley O'Neill penetrated the South Ghidims Valley and toward the head moved northeast to cross North Ghidims Pass (5,650m), descending the far side to the Akalik Glacier (AAJ 2001). Birgit Walk takes up the story of the 2012 expedition:

"After traveling to Karimabad and acclimatizing on nearby Khor (5,020m), we continued to Shimshal. Leaving here on August 27, in two days we had crossed the Boesan Pass and descended to Mandi Kushlag in the Ghujerab Valley. Next day we crossed the main river and entered the Ghidims Dur (valley), ascending it to where it splits. At this point we finally realized that our guide had no idea as to the location of our primary goal, Yawash Sar (6,258m). The impressive north side of this peak had been photographed by Gasser in 2011, when he was a member of a small Polish expedition to the First Koksil Glacier (AAJ 2012). We decided to make base camp at the junction of what is known as the north and south Ghidims valleys, at an altitude of 4,475m on the Russian map.

On August 30, Detlef Seeling and the Pakistani Ilyas moved a little way down the South Ghidims valley and then climbed south to a point of elevation 5,350m, on a ridge between two side glaciers. They named this Panorama Peak. Seeling was able to take photos that proved vital in the understanding of the region's topography, including views of the southern flanks of high peaks above the First Koksil Glacier.

The next few days were spent resting or in reconnaissance, but we still could not identify Yawash Sar. Instead, we decided to attempt a peak situated at the head of the North Ghidims Glacier. On September 2, Gasser, Ilyas, and I established a high camp below the peak, but the following day bad weather and Ilyas's altitude sickness drove us back to base camp.

Due to consistently unstable weather, Gasser and I again changed objectives, this time opting for a peak west of our previous choice, as it appeared lower and technically easier. On the 6th we moved up to high camp in bad weather, but there seemed to be an improvement by 3 a.m. next morning, so we started up the south face at 4:15 a.m., and, finding good snow conditions (45°), reached the top via the upper southeast ridge at 7 a.m. We descended the ridge and regained our tent at 9 a.m., whereupon it began to snow. We continued down to base camp in poor visibility. We have called this peak Yawash Sar Middle."

– Janusz Majer, Poland, and Birgit Walk, Austria

Images



South face of Yawash Sar Middle, showing route of ascent.



South face of unclimbed Yawash Sar I (6,258m).



Unclimbed Yawash Sar II (6,176m) from the west, looking up the Left Ice Flow of the Ghidims Glacier. The peak at the head lies on the watershed with the Akalik Glacier, while the near peak on the right (summit off picture) is Point 5,883m.

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