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Koksil Sar V (5,830m, GPS), west face and southwest rib

Pakistan, Karakoram, Ghujerab Mountains

Our all-Pakistan expedition to the Fourth Koksil Glacier took place from August 17–28 and comprised Kamal Haider, Sa'ad Mohamed, Ahmed Mujtaba, Syed Jawad Tashfeen, and me from Islamabad, and Arif Baig and Mohammad Yahya from Shimshal. Koksil Sar V was first climbed on June 16, 2000, by Karim Hayat, Ishfaq Karim, and Safdar Karim. They climbed the south face from the Fourth Koksil Glacier to the upper southwest rib, which they followed to the summit. They also made the first ascent of Koksil Sar IV on the watershed ridge to the south. We aimed to complete a new route on the peak.

We travelled the Karakoram Highway to Koksil Check Post (4,100m), 12km before the Khunjerab Pass, then walked south along the Koksil Valley for only two hours to establish base camp by a shepherd's hut at 4,200m. On August 23 we made advanced base at 4,800m, just below the Fourth Koksil Glacier snow line. High camp was made at 5,230m on the glacier, below the west face of Koksil Sar V.

In order to avoid rockfall danger on the southwest rib, we opted for the icy west face. On the 25th we began climbing in the dark. After a few pitches a large falling rock detached narrowly missed members of the team. We therefore moved further left to avoid any rock above us. After a total of around a dozen pitches (generally soft but supportive snow over ice), and eight hours on the face, we reached the upper southwest rib at ca 5,650m.

Moderate mixed ground led to the long summit ridge, where cornices and crevasses on adjoining faces required careful negotiation. After two hours all seven of us managed to crowd onto the small summit, which we measured by GPS as 5,830m (36°44.565' N, 75°20.864' E). Koksil Sar IV, south along an extended, corniced ridge, appeared much the same height. We downclimbed and rappelled our route, reaching high camp just before sunset.

Images



Koksil Sar I (6,176m) and Koksil Sar V (with unclimbed Pt. ca 5,450m in front) from the Karakoram Highway. The 2013 ascent of Koksil Sar V climbed the snow/ice face just this side of the right skyline.



On the upper section of the southwest rib, looking down onto the Fourth Koksil Glacier and Chapchingol Valley beyond.

Article Details

Author	Ahmed Naveed, Pakistan
Publication	AAJ
Volume	56
Issue	88
Page	282
Copyright Date	2014
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions