



AAC Publications

Bhilingna Valley, Satling peaks, first ascents.

India, Uttarakhand, Garhwal Himal

In the post-monsoon a team of eight German females made first ascents in the Satling group south of impressive Thalay Sagar. The Satling Valley had been visited by Martin Moran (AAJ 2003) and Tom Dauer (AAJ 2005), but while both described the high potential for first ascents, no subsequent expedition had come here.

After a four-day approach following the Bhilingna River, we established base camp at 3,700m, then after acclimatization and load carrying made two advanced bases. Charlotte Gild and Dörte Pietron went to the Dudhganga Glacier on the south side of the Satling range, planning to climb the triple-headed peak Brahmasar from the south [the south, but not the highest, summit was reached from the south in 2002]. They climbed the south couloir (50° snow) between Brahmasar and Cream Topping, but then decided to retreat. Later, they made the first ascent of a 5,360m peak opposite Brahmasar, which they called Pala Devi. The pair climbed the east ridge at UIAA II, 40° (snow).

Meanwhile, the rest of the team operated from an advanced base at 5,050m on the Satling Glacier. Yvonne Koch, Ursula Wolfgruber, and I made the first ascent of the west summit of Ice Wave (5,618m) via north-facing couloirs (450m, nine pitches, M5 70°). Caroline North, Ursula, and I also climbed 5,180m Point Lilliput (200m, M2 and three pitches of III–V), a small peak southwest of the Cathedral.

Caroline and Christina Huber made the first ascent of Left Rabbit Ear (5,500m, 50° snow and two pitches of M2). [The Right Ear was climbed in 2002.] The same two repeated the original 2002 route to the north summit of the double-headed Cathedral. They also climbed the south summit, suggesting this top, at 5,292m, was around five meters higher than the north summit. Later, with our team doctor Julia Thiele, they reached a small summit southeast of the Cathedral, moving simultaneously up three pitches of easy rock and mixed, and naming the peak Punta Alaja (5,222m).

Satling means "seven phalluses," and Caroline, Christina, Ursula, and I went off to look for the eighth. A rock tower east of the Satling glacier plateau seemed to fit the bill, and so for the final ascent of the expedition we climbed The 8th Phallus (5,500m, VI M3 50° snow).

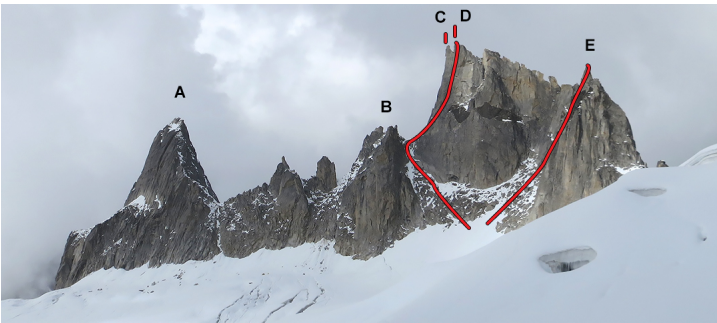
More information can be found at <http://davexpedfrauenteam.wordpress.com/>, or by writing to me at mirjam.limmer@gmx.de

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Images



The north couloir of Ice Wave West.



On the north side of the Satling Glacier. (A) Point Walker, climbed in 2004. (B) Point Lilliput. (C) Cathedral north summit. (D) Cathedral south summit with 2013 route. (E) Point Alaja with 2013 route.



Charlotte Gild climbing on Pala Devi. The view behind is to the northeast, with Kedernath (6,940m) on the left.



Christina Huber climbing on Point Alaja.



Caroline North on the final section of the Cathedral.



Mirjam Limmer, belayed by Ursula Wolfgruber, on Ice Wave West.

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