



AAC Publications

Rocky Ak-su, north face, Odessa route, second ascent; Direct North Face, third ascent

Asia, Kyrgyzstan, Pamir Alai, Karavshin, Liayliak Valley

From July 27 to August 5 Eugeny Bashkirtsev and Denis Veretenin, from Irkutsk in Siberia, made the second ascent of the Odessa route (1,700m, 6A/6B, A4, Cheban-Lavrinenko-Mogila-Tsushko, 2006) on the right side of the north face of Rocky Ak-su (Ak-su North, 5,217m). The upper half of this 42-pitch route coincides with the original 1982 Troshchinenko route (6A) on Ak-su (AAJ 2007).

In the meantime, to the left, another team from Irkutsk, B. Handazhapov, M. Krivosheev, and I. Shaposhnikov, was making the third ascent of the difficult Direct North Face (ca 1,500m, 6B, 5.11 A3+, Odintsov-Ruchkin, 1996, eight nights on the face and a ninth on the summit). They completed this line from August 7 to 15. On the first day they crossed the bergshund at 3,700m and followed the icy couloir in the center of the face (first climbed in 1984 by Moshnikov and party), camping at 4,200m. Over the next two days they worked on the wall above, climbing seven pitches, before establishing a camp on a snowy shelf at 4,400m. They spent two nights here while preparing the next seven pitches and on August 11 moved camp to 4,750m. The 12th and 13th were spent equipping the next five pitches, with the night of the 14th spent at 5,060m. Next day they climbed the remaining five or so pitches to the summit. The first ascensionists drilled quite a few holes, for protection and bathooking, but few climbers had thought their line possible.

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Images

Article Details

Author	Anna Piunova
Publication	AAJ
Volume	0
Issue	0
Page	0
Copyright Date	2009
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions