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Raghshur (6,089m), Attempt

Asia, Pakistan, Hindu Kush

Raghshur (Lagh Shar) is an unclimbed mountain east of the Istor-o-Nal group. Theodoros Christopoulos, Ioannis Kovanidis, and I established base camp beside the Raghshur Glacier (4,430m), north of the peak, in early August.

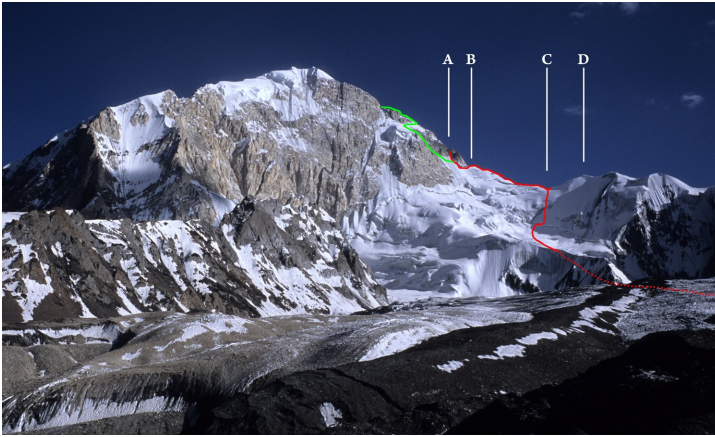
On August 6, after moving equipment up the glacier, we crossed the bergschrund at 5,350m and climbed five pitches of 45°–60° ice and snow to reach a col in the west ridge at 5,530m. Here we found a rusty can from the 1974 Italian expedition that had attempted the peak. We slept at the col and then returned to base camp to rest. On August 9 we returned to the col in 10 hours. The next day we climbed the mixed west ridge to the bottom of a prominent rock tower at 5,630m, the Italian team's high point. The tower had no cracks for anchors, so it was not possible to continue directly up the ridge.

First we tried to traverse onto the south face, but there were no viable routes leading back to the ridge. We then traversed the northwest face along the bottom of the tower for 60m, until we identified a possible route to continue.

On August 11 we started up the couloir left of the tower (60° max). However, at the top of the couloir the snow was unstable and we could not bypass a huge cornice, so we decided to give up our attempt. The only viable route on this side appears to be to traverse two or three more pitches across the northwest face and then climb an exposed, mixed slope (up to 70°), which would gain snow slopes atop a huge serac and allow one to traverse back to the west ridge.

At noon we were back at our high camp, and in the afternoon I climbed the other side of the col to Peak 5,570m, where I had an impressive glimpse of Raghshur and the high Hindu Kush peaks. After returning to Chitral, we visited the Kalash valleys and, since there were no flights to Islamabad, we traveled by car through the troubled areas without a single problem.

Images



The northwest face of unclimbed Ragshur (6,089m). (A) High point (5,700m) in 2009. (B) High point of 1974 Italian expedition. (C) Camp on west ridge. (D) Peak 5,570m. Red line indicates the Greek route in 2009. Green line indicates the only viable route to the summit from this side, according to the Greek expedition.

Article Details

Author	Dr. Nikolaos Krupis, Hellenic Federation of Mountaineering and Climbi
Publication	AAJ
Volume	52
Issue	84
Page	0
Copyright Date	2010
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions