



## AAC Publications

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### **Gasherbrum V (7,147m/7,133m), West Face, Attempt**

Asia, Pakistan, Baltoro Muztagh

Only six Korean teams have successfully put up first ascents on 7,000m peaks. Nearly all of these have been made in either capsule or expedition style. Kim Hyung-il, who in 2009 climbed a new route in alpine style on the northwest face of Spantik (AAJ 2010), planned to attempt the untouched west face of Gasherbrum V. With him were Im Il-jin, Jang Ji-myung, and Lee Sang-woo.

Gasherbrum V has no recorded ascent. In August 1978 three Japanese reached the east summit (7,006m Polish Satellite Map, ca 6,900m on others). The following day the expedition leader, Ryuichi Babaguchi, set off ahead of another pair for a second summit attempt. After reaching the top of the east peak, the pair found Babaguchi had fallen into a crevasse and died. A French team also made an unsuccessful attempt in 1980. Both attempts were made from the South Gasherbrum Glacier.

From a base camp at ca 4,800m on the Baltoro Glacier, all Koreans except Im set off on July 7. A difficult crevassed section took them to their first bivouac, and the following morning more glaciated terrain led them to the rimaye. Deep snow had put them behind schedule, and they climbed the first few hundred meters of the face (50°) without protection. Above, they climbed two pitches of 80° before cutting a tent platform at 6,100m. Continuous front pointing on the 9th exhausted them, and there were sections of delicate thin ice over rock. At 4 p.m. they reached the base of a couloir. The warmth of the sun was melting the upper section and causing rock fall, so the team took shelter until the sun set and then climbed ca 100m to below a steep rock wall, where at 10:30 p.m. they finally settled down for a (barely) sitting bivouac at 6,550m. During the night snow and spindrift covered them, and the gaz stove malfunctioned. At 4 a.m. Kim made the decision to retreat. They had already been on the wall four days, the stove was now faulty, they were low on gaz, and the team had expended much energy on the approach. They also felt the objective danger was higher than they had expected. At around 4:30 a.m. they set their first Abalakov; 15 hours later they arrived safely in base camp.

## Images

## Article Details

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