



AAC Publications

Korona Fifth Tower, Arirang

Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz Ala-Too, Ala Archa

Instructors of the Extreme Rider Climbing School of Korea made plans to climb Korona Peak's Fifth Tower in July. Since the purpose was in part to make new lecture material with the help of the Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS), the expedition divided into a climbing Team A and a shooting Team B. Team A comprised Kim Se-joon, Byun Sung-ho, and Kwon Oh-young, and Team B comprised Park Myung-won, Kim Sung-doo, Jung Weon-jo, and Wang Jun-ho.

After two pitches were fixed, the bulk of the climbing began on July 16 but moved slowly because of the filming. We spent four days climbing the first eight pitches, climbing parallel lines to improve the angles for filming, and sleeping in portaledge. The crux came on pitch seven. On the overhanging wall I took a lead fall, popping out an Alien cam and finally being caught 10m lower. When I started up again, my loosely laced shoe fell off. My belayer managed to retrieve my shoe after some rappelling.

After the eighth pitch the angle lessened and we followed the same line, with Team B in the lead. During the nights of July 19 and 20, we could not sleep much due to the flapping of our portaledges in high wind. July 21 was supposed to be summit day, but heavy snow and strong winds forced us to wait until early that afternoon, and after one moderate pitch and a 10m whipper off a slippery slab on pitch 12, we retreated to the portaledges atop pitch eight, where Team A also had sought shelter. We all stayed put there until the next morning.

On July 22, at roughly 11 a.m., all the climbers reached the top of the tower (4,850m). The route was named **Arirang (13 pitches, VI 5.9 A3)**. [Editor's note: The Korean route starts in the middle of a triangular buttress to the right of the Sadowski Route (5B, 1968) and stays largely independent of that route until reaching easier terrain in the upper third of the face.]

Park Myung-won, Korea, translated by Peter Jensen-Choi

Images



Korean route (2014) on Korona Fifth Tower. The black and green lines represent the two Korean teams' routes, which merged partway up the face.

Article Details

Author	Park Myung-won
Publication	AAJ
Volume	57
Issue	89
Page	261
Copyright Date	2015
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions