



## AAC Publications

---

### **K7 Southwest Summit (Badal Peak)**

Pakistan, Masherbrum Range, Charakusa Valley

**Ryo Masumoto, Takaki Nagato, and I visited the Charakusa Valley for one month, and after acclimatizing on Sulu Peak we made our goal the southeast ridge of a previously unclimbed sub-peak that lies on the ridge extending southwest from K7 West (6,615m).** This peak has a huge rock buttress on its southwest side, first climbed in 2007 by a Belgian-Polish team. Other expeditions completed new lines on the same wall, but nobody had reached the highest point. Some climbers began to call this untouched point Badal Peak (variously reported between ca 6,100m and 6,300m), after the name given to the 2007 route. To us it looked attractive: a chance to reach an unclimbed sub-peak via a new line. Even so, it was obvious that Badal was only part of a bigger massif. We hoped to climb Badal Peak and then continue along the ridge to K7 West.

As we scoped the southeast ridge, we realized it was extremely long, and so decided to fix all six of our ropes on the first section to save the time. On July 25, with light packs, we climbed eight pitches up to 5.11c. We descended, leaving all six ropes fixed. After regaining our high point, we set off on the 30th for a continuous ascent with two ropes and five days of food. Climbing on the ridge was generally fairly moderate, though there were several steep sections and awkward offwidths—complex route-finding was the true difficulty. There were even some pitches we thought would be five-star if they were in Yosemite. On day two we were forced to climb much trickier and looser terrain, and in the late afternoon had to climb a steep, sandy rock slope in rock shoes, as if we were scrambling up an avalanche slope.

When we woke on day three, it was cloudy with wind. Our progress slowed as the ridge became more complicated. Pitch 42 was excellent C1 following a perfect splitter on a very clean face. It led to the top of the most obvious rock pinnacle on the ridge. We then had to rappel the far side and continue on mixed terrain. Even if we reached the summit of Badal that day, we still would be only two-thirds of the way toward our goal, so we decided to stop and camp again on a ledge dug out of snow.

Next morning, after negotiating a couple of pitches of complex, technical mixed climbing, we reached a gentle ice slope leading to the top. After six pitches of simul-climbing, and two rappels, we finally reached the summit area of Badal. It was difficult to determine the true highest point, so we took a quick photo on one of the snowy bumps. To this point we had climbed 58 pitches, but were still a long way from our goal of K7 West. We quickly resumed climbing. However, poor weather, lack of food, unstable conditions on the ridge, and an injury to Masumoto's knee made us reconsider our options, and after seven pitches we decided to retreat. On day five we began the first of 20 rappels down the northwest flank of the ridge. We reached the glacier by nightfall.

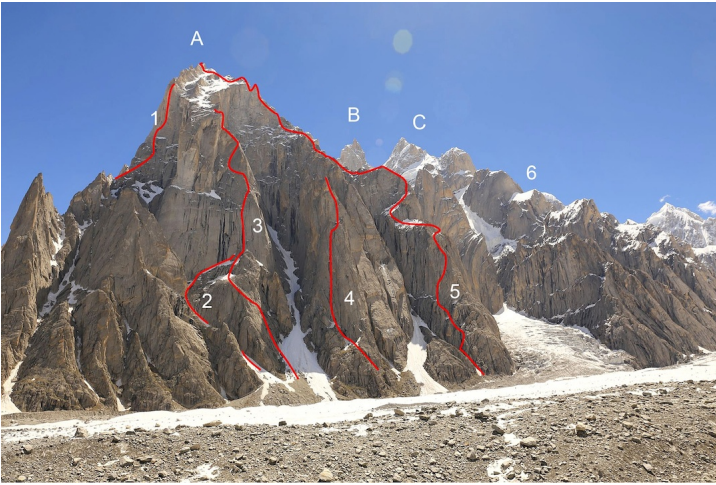
We didn't name our climb, or the summit, but we totally agree with others that it should be called Badal Peak. Our route up the southeast ridge was over 1,600m, VI 5.11c C1 M5 70°, with lots of alpine trickery.

Katsutaka Yokoyama, Japan

[Editor's note: The first attempt to top the southwest buttress of K7 West was made in 2007 by Nico and Olivier Favresse, Adam Pustelnik, and Sean Villanueva, who climbed the westsouthwest face for 1,200m at 5.12+ and five meters of A1 to low-angled rock and snow 300m below the top. They christened their line Badal. In 2009 Italians Cagol, Larcher, Leoni, and Orlandi made a new line to the right, Children of

Hushe (7b A2), finishing at a lower point. In 2008 Slovenians Cesen, Hrastelj, and Sisernik climbed the south face to ca 5,700m, dubbing their line Luna (6c A2), a climb more or less repeated by Spanish climbers in 2010. Several of the lower pillars on the buttress have been climbed over the years. The completion of the full southwest ridge to the summit of K7 West remains one of the prizes of the Charakusa.]

## Images



Looking northeast across the Charakusa Glacier. (A) Badal Peak. (B) K7 Middle (6,858m, unclimbed). (C) K7 (6934m). (1) Very approximate line of Children of Hushe (2009). Badal (2007) is hidden but close to the left skyline. (2) Variante de Sol (2010). (3) Luna (2008). (4) Prezelj-Turgeon (finishes on top a distinct tower). (5) Southeast ridge with bivouacs (2014). The Anderson-House-Prezelj route (2007) up the southeast face to the summit of K7 West begins around the corner to the right. (6) Southwest ridge of K7, which still awaits an integral ascent.



Takaki Nagato leads pitch 19 (5.10c) during the first day's climbing. A section of pure offwidth proved a struggle.



Takaki Masumoto leading pitch 27 (5.10d) on the second day. This was a five-star traverse with cracks of various sizes and a mixed chimney to finish



Ryo Nagato, belayed by Takaki Masumoto, on the third day, leading the superb pitch 42 (C1). The team felt this could go free at around 5.12+.

## Article Details

Author	Katsutaka Ykoyama, Japan
Publication	AAJ
Volume	57
Issue	89
Page	280
Copyright Date	2015
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions