



AAC Publications

Livingston Island, Falsa Aguja and Sofia Peak

Antarctica, Antarctic Peninsula

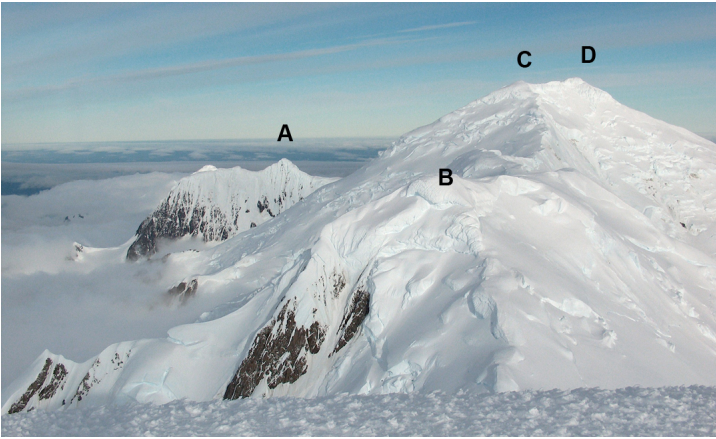
The goal of the 23rd Bulgarian Antarctic Expedition was to take differential GPS measurements of certain prominent landmarks in the mountains and reach previously unclimbed summits in the Tangra Range. We first established an “advanced base”—Camp Sofia—near Worner Gap on the north side of the range at 429m. The weather was generally unhelpful, but on New Year’s Day 2015, Doychin Boyanov and I reached the col between Presian’s Ridge and Lyaskovets, then continued up the south ridge of the latter, negotiating a 50m pitch of 70°, to reach the summit, which we measured as 1,470m, 62°39'42.378"S, 60°08'34.951"W. This was the second ascent, the first in December 2004 by Ivanov and Vasilev.

On January 8, in less than perfect weather, we took our last chance to make another ascent. Doychin, Alexandar Shopov, and I left the main Bulgarian base of St. Kliment Ohridski on the west coast, and were taken by snowmobile to Camp Sofia. At 10 a.m. we took a tent, sleeping bags, food, and equipment, and by 3:40 p.m. had reached Plana Peak (ca 740m) on a ridge running southeast, then south, towards the main ridge of the Tangra Mountains, heading for Falsa Aguja. (This is the official name, but it is written as the Great Needle on some Bulgarian maps.) We continued up this subsidiary crest to below a large serac, where we left the camping gear, and climbed (55°) up to the main ridge at 900m, arriving at 7 p.m. on what we had thought was the highest point, until we saw Falsa Aguja 400m distant. We followed the main ridge to the southeast and reached the summit at 8 p.m. We took DGPS measurements until 9:15 p.m., recording the height and position as 1,680m, 62°40'13.403"N, 60°03'28.590"W, making Falsa Aguja the second-highest summit on the island. [The highest summit, Friesland, which was first climbed in 1991 by Catalans, was GPS measured at 1,700m during the 2003 Omega Foundation expedition by the second ascensionists, John Bath, Damien Gildea, and Rodrigo Fica]. On the way back we decided to measure the first high point reached on the ridge, as we considered it worthy of independent summit status. We named it Sofia Peak (1,654m, 62°40'04.202"S, 60°03'44.097"W). At midnight we regained our camping equipment, and we rested one hour before heading down to Sofia Camp.

[Click here to download a complete expedition report.](#)

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Images



Looking more or less east from Lyaskovets along the main Tangra ridge. (A) Helmet Peak (1,254m). (B) Levski (1,430m). (C) Sofia Peak (1,654m, though with seemingly little prominence). (D) Falsa Aguja (1,680m). The route of ascent on Falsa Aguja climbed the left skyline slope. Lyubomir Ivanov/Apcbg at the English language Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=919>

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