



## AAC Publications

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### **Archakanysh Gorge, Ryzhii and Sauk Dzhaylyau West I**

Kyrgyzstan, Pamir Alai, Surmetash Valley

**During July, Eugene and Sergey Glazunov and Alexey Tyulyupo explored peaks in the long-forgotten Surmetash Valley. The expedition was only two weeks, but this was enough time for the team to make two first ascents of primarily rock routes, one on a previously unnamed 4,300m peak and the second on Sauk Dzhaylyau West I (4,866m).**

Exploration of this region culminated in the 1970s and early '80s, when the area was used for the USSR Mountaineering Championships. Since the start of the 1990s, no mountaineer had visited the Sauk Dzhaylyau cirque.

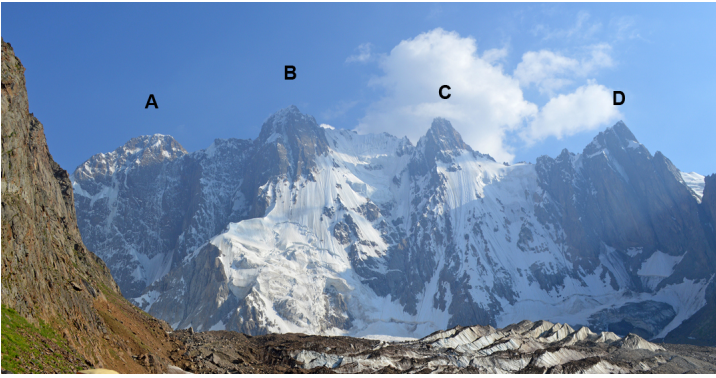
The trio drove south from Uch-Korgon, through Shigay, and then penetrated the Archakanysh Gorge to a base camp at ca 2,300m. They then climbed a new route on a peak they named Ryzhii at the head of a cirque to the north of the main valley. The ascent of the southeast ridge was completed in 6.5 hours on July 14 with an overall difficulty of 4A (600m, V). According to a note found in the summit cairn, the last ascent was made in 1978, when the peak was given 4,160m; the GPS measured 4,300m. As the peak was unnamed they called it Ryzhii ("Ginger") after the reddish color of the rock and also a late friend of that name.

Their second new route was on Sauk Dzhaylyau West I (39°46'0.47"N, 71°56'4.48"E), one of the higher glaciated peaks to the south of the main valley. The three climbed the 900m north ridge at an approximate grade of TD (6A, mainly free climbing at 5b/5c, with maximum 6a, some A2, and sections of WI4). They started at 6 a.m. on July 18, summited at 3:30 p.m. on the 19th, and were back in base camp at 1 p.m. on the 20th. Four bolts were left as rappel anchors. This was only the second recorded ascent of the peak—the first was 38 years earlier, during a complete traverse of the Sauk Dzhaylyau massif.

Editor's note: Although many routes climbed under the official system in the former Soviet Union are documented, at present this information is difficult for non-Russian speakers to access. Climbers wishing to visit lesser-known areas such as the Sauk Dzhaylyau massif are encouraged to contact Russian climbers or outdoor journalists for information. Otherwise, go to the area, have an adventure, and be prepared for the fact that you may be making second or third ascents.

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## Images



Looking southwest into the Sauk Dzhaylyau cirque. (A) Sauk Dzhaylyau Main (5,120m). (B) Central. (C) West II. (D) West I, climbed in 2015 by the north ridge (right skyline).



The route followed on the upper north ridge of Sauk Sauk Dzhaylyau West I.



Steep ice runnel on the north ridge of Sauk Dzhaylyau West I.





On the first ascent of the north ridge of Sauk Dzhaylyau West I.



During the first ascent of the southeast ridge of Ryzhii with Sauk Dzhaylyau West II (left) and West I behind.



The southeast ridge of Ryzhii.



Sauk Dzhaylyau West I from the northeast, showing the ca 900m north ridge. The peak had only been climbed once before, during a traverse of the massif. Other than the ridge, no lines are known to have been completed on this face.

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