



AAC Publications

Kara-su Valley, Various Ascents

Kyrgyzstan, Pamir Alai, Karavshin

Gian Luca Cavalli, Pier Luigi Maschietto, Edoardo Polo, and I arrived in Bishkek on July 31, 2015. Giovanni Pagnoncelli joined us at base camp about 10 days later. We flew to Batken, traveled by car to Uzgurush, close to the border with Tajikistan, and on August 4 started our trek to the Karavshin.

Unfortunately, floods the previous spring had destroyed many bridges, and landslides obliterated some paths. Instead of the usual one and a half days, the approach took three. We established base camp in the Kara-su Valley at about 2,800m, finding the river quite wild; we had to install a Tyrolean to ease access to the true left side. We then had generally good weather for more than a couple of weeks, with only one or two days of rain.

On August 7 all four of us climbed the classic Diagonal Route (600m, 6c A1, 1987) on the east face of Yellow Wall (3,800m). Two days later, Cavalli, Maschietto, and I made the probable second ascent of Opposite to Asan (650m plus 150m of ridge, 6a+, AAJ 2007) on Silver Wall (4,000m), the next wall up-valley from Yellow Wall. We made a new variant in the middle section: Bye-bye, Globo de Gas! (200m, 6c A1, natural gear). We bivouacked on the ridge at 3,900m after completing the main difficulties, and the following day reached the summit and rappelled via a different line.

On the 12th all four of us climbed a new line on Little Asan (ca 3,900m), which we named Happy Birthday, Horses! (600m, 6b+). This followed dihedrals, slabs, hand cracks, and offwidths, generally using natural gear, with two pegs and one bolt. We rappelled the line, placing one bolt at each anchor. Later, Maschietto, Pagnoncelli, and Polo climbed a probable new variant to the west ridge of Little Asan, Waiting for Andrea (330m, 6a+), and then a new route on the west face, Italian Corner (150m of approach in a couloir and then 380m to 6b+, with two bolts). They also attempted a new line on a tower between the Yellow and Silver walls.

In the meantime Cavalli and I transferred to the Ak-su by horse and made an ascent of the classic Perestroika Crack (800m, 7a/b) on the Russian Tower (Pik Slesova, 4,240m). On August 24 we left the area for home.

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Images



The Silver Wall, showing Opposite to Asan (2006) and the 2015 variation Bye-bye, Globo de Gas! (straight line near top).



Asan from the Kara-su.



Pier Luigi Maschietto on the Italian Corner, west face of Little Asan.



Little Asan showing (1) West ridge, (2) Waiting for Andrea, (3) Happy Birthday, Horses!, and (4) Italian Corner.



Giovanni Pagnoncelli negotiating an awkward crack during an attempt at a new line on Silver Wall.



Gian Luca Cavalli approaching the long corner system of Happy Birthday, Horses! on Little Asan.



Pier Luigi Maschietto on Happy Birthday, Horses! (600m, 6b+), Little Asan.



Edoardo Polo in the big corner system of Happy Birthday, Horses! (600m, 6b+) on Little Asan.



Silver Wall and Opposite to Asan with the new variant (1) Bye-bye, Globo de Gas!

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