



AAC Publications

Sokuluk Valley, Chon-tor, Northwest Face, Glazunov Route

Kyrgyzstan, Tien Shan, Kyrgyz Ala-too

In February 2016, just a few weeks after the presumed first ascent of Chon-tor (ca 4,180m) by Egor Suzdaltsov and Ivan Temerev from Russian Siberia (AAJ 2017), a new route was climbed on the northwest face of Chon-tor by the brothers Eugeny and Sergey Glazunov. This 4,165m peak lies in the upper Sokuluk Valley (a.k.a. Belogorka), just 20km west of the Ala Archa. The drive to this valley is relatively simple, making the peaks here attractive for mountaineering.

The Glazunovs had known about the face since 2014 and were also part of the January 2016 Russian Mountaineering Championships, during which they heard that the Siberians had climbed the northwest face. On February 15, after the championships had finished, the two brothers (also from Siberia) left Bishkek and, traveling light, reached base camp at 4 p.m., went up to the base of the approach couloir leading to the right-hand buttress on the northwest face for a closer inspection, and then descended to camp for the night. They left early next morning, and after one bivouac about nine pitches up the rock buttress, they reached the summit around 3 p.m. on February 17.

After the 30° approach couloir of deep, loose snow, there were around 20 pitches on the buttress, with largely enjoyable rock difficulties of V and VI, mixed climbing in crampons, and many sections of aid at A1/A2. The climb was considered similar to the Balezin (6A) on Korona in the Ala Archa. No bolts were placed, no previous trace of passage was found, and the route was left clean. The overall difficulty of the 900m route was 6A.

Fortunately, the brothers were fit after several weeks in the mountains, as a lift back out was not forthcoming. They ended up having to walk 25km down valley before reaching civilization.

The two brothers noted other possibilities on the mountain and said they were surprised this area is so neglected.

– Lindsay Griffin, with information from Elena Dmitrenko, Risk.ru

Images



Eugeny Glazunov starting the descent from the summit.



The new route on the right-hand rock buttress of the northwest face of Chon-tor. The altitude of the base of this buttress, which lies above a broad 30° snow couloir, is approximately 3,250m.



Eugeny Glazunov on the second pitch of the new route on the northwest face of Chon-tor, February 2016.



Eugeny Glazunov on one of the most difficult parts of the new route on the northwest face of Chon-tor, an overhanging section on the sixth pitch.



Photo-topo of the northwest face of Chon-tor.



The northwest face of Chon-tor. (1) Spirit of Adventure. (2) Glazunov Route.

Article Details

Author	Lindsay Griffin
Publication	AAJ
Volume	60
Issue	92
Page	0
Copyright Date	2018
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions