



AAC Publications

Ambareen Sar, Southwest Ridge

Pakistan, Karakoram, Hispar Muztagh

After returning home from my August expedition to the Chashkin Group (see report here), I organized another trip to Shimshal from November 7 to December 4. David Langanke, my companion from Germany, and I reached Shimshal village on November 10 and spent three days giving ice climbing training to local guides and climbers, mostly on the snout of the Malangutti Glacier. This program was supported by the Pakistan Youth Outreach Foundation, my travel company SummitClimb, and Black Yak Global.

After David and I had spent time acclimatizing, which included a two-pitch new route at WI3, we joined six Shimshali trainees for an attempt on Yeer gha Tag (a.k.a. Shimshal Sunrise Peak, ca 5,750m), which is east of the village, on the opposite side of the river, at 36°24'38.01"N, 75°27'2.09"E. On the 18th we placed a high camp at 4,830m, but called off the ascent due to deteriorating weather. Later, I climbed alone to a triple-summitted tooth of around 5,280m on the ridge left of Yeer gha Tag's summit. While there was relatively little snowfall, I was surprised by the high avalanche risk. In continuing snowfall, David and I returned to the village, where we spent a week ice climbing, running, and drinking large quantities of tea. The temperature here generally dropped to -15°C at night and was never higher than -5°C during the day.

Toward the end of the month, we received a forecast for clear weather and decided to explore the Momhil Glacier. We left the village on the 25th and by the night of the 26th had reached the superbly comfortable huts at Chikorin (36°26'27.90"N, 75°4'33.77"E, ca 3,650m). On the 27th, David and I continued up valley with two porters, passed the Ambareen (Ambarin) Hut, which was in poor condition, and turned up left into the side valley (Ambareen Cwm), south of Ambareen Sar (6,171m, Polish Wala map), where we camped at around 4,600m. In summertime this spot is probably a green meadow.

At 2 a.m. on the 28th we set off for an easy-looking snow dome on the north side of the valley, slanting up the south face to reach its southwest ridge. Due to the poor snow conditions, we stayed on rock ridges (50° UIAA III) and reached the top (ca 5,900m) at midday. Here, we discovered the actual summit was a bit further. We continued unroped along the ridge until, some distance in front of David, I reached a corniced high point. It was 2 p.m. and strong winds made the actual temperature of -25°C feel very much colder. I snapped a few pictures and immediately descended. I met David about 80m lower, and we both continued down, at first on the easier southern slopes below the dome, then along our ascent route. We regained camp a few hours after dark, and in a round trip of 15 hours.

— Felix Berg, Germany

Editor's Note: Berg reached the summit labeled on maps as Ambareen Sar (6,171m, 36°25'54.40"N, 75°7'20.05"E). The only previously known ascent was on July 17, 1987, by Austrians Robert Gruber, Kurt Lapuch, and Christine Schmid (who most likely gave the peak its name). These three moved higher up the cwm and climbed the south face/ south spur to the top section of the southwest ridge.

Images



High camp at around 4,600m in the Ambareen Cwm during quasi-winter conditions of November 2020. Behind is Peak ca 6,600m.



Felix Berg climbing close to Shimshal village



The Dome on the southwest ridge of Ambareen Sar seen from the Ambareen Cwm.



Ice climbing training for Shimshal residents on the snout of the Malangutti Glacier.



Yeer gha Tag during the quasi-winter conditions of November 2020.

Article Details

Author	Felix Berg
Publication	AAJ
Volume	63
Issue	95
Page	179
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions