



AAC Publications

Chokko Zemleprohodtsev, Northeast Face, Attempt

Kyrgyzstan, Pamir Alai, Jiptik Valley

Peaks of the Jiptik Valley from the north. (A) Schurovsky (5,490m). (B) Muz Tok (5,066m); two attempts have been made on the aspect facing the camera. (C) Yuzhny. (D) Zemleprohodtsev (5,050m); arrow marks the 2023 attempt. (E) Khergiani. (F) Turkestan (ca 5,200m). Photo by Christopher Elliott.

On June 18, Russell Bate and I headed into the Jiptik Valley with the aim of attempting the north face of Muz Tok (5,066m). Knowing that a previous expedition had attempted it in early July (AAJ 2017), we factored in changing conditions due to climate change and arrived two weeks earlier. Despite this, we still observed a thin snowpack and conditions too warm for the north face of Muz Tok to hold ice.

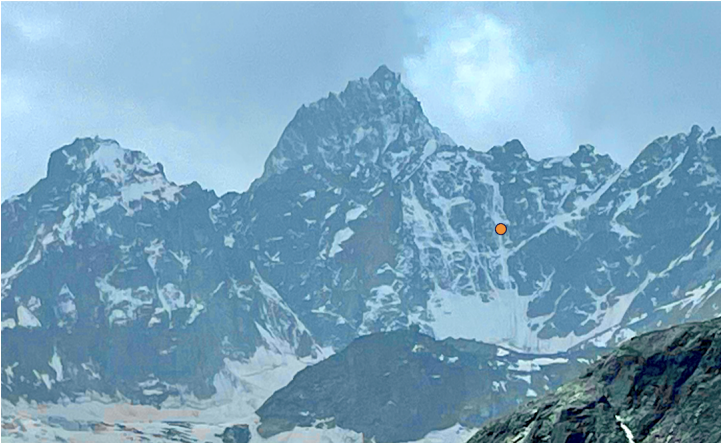
To salvage our trip, we turned our attention to a possibly colder route on the northeast face of Chokko Zemleprohodtsev (Peak Zemleprohodtsev, 5,050m, 39.591803°N, 70.565173°E), whose summit ridge straddles the frontier. (The peak itself is south of the border in Tajikistan.) Based on information available to us, the peak did not appear to have been climbed since the Soviet era, when it was climbed along its east ridge, starting from the south. Studying the northern aspect, we observed a prominent 400m ice line on the right side of the face. We established an advanced base camp at 3,800m and prepared for an alpine-style attempt on the line after a few days of rest.

On the morning of June 24, we woke to rain after an unusually warm night, but set out across the glacier anyway. Crossing the bergschrund at dawn, we progressed up the face, encountering difficulties up to M4 and 70° ice. By afternoon, however, as we approached a near-vertical ice pillar at 4,700m, persistent warm temperatures forced a retreat under intense rock and ice fall. On the final rappel to the glacier, our V-thread—thankfully doubled up—was completely melting out.

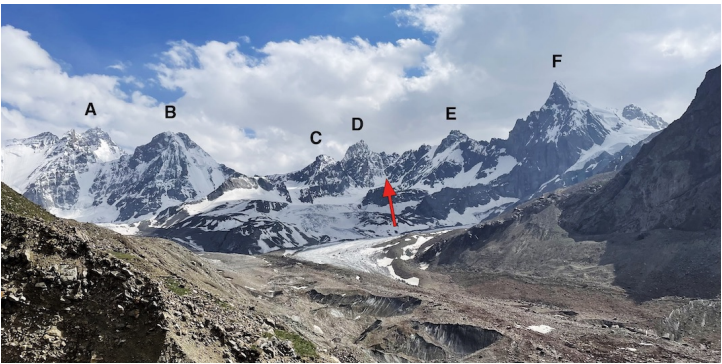
In the following days, rain up to 5,000m stripped the remaining ice from most aspects in the range, forcing a relocation to the Karavshin for alpine rock climbing. The Jiptik area may be more suitable earlier in the season, although the April-May period would likely present its own challenges, because this has traditionally been a period of significant rainfall.

— Christopher Elliott, Canada

Images



High point reached in 2023 during an attempt on the northeast face of Chokko Zemleprohodtsev (Peak Zemleprohodtsev, 5,050m).



Peaks of the Jiptik Valley from the north. (A) Schurovsky (5,490m). (B) Muz Tok (5,066m); two attempts have been made on the aspect facing the camera. (C) Yuzhny. (D) Zemleprohodtsev (5,050m); arrow marks the 2023 attempt. (E) Khergiani. (F) Turkestan (ca 5,200m).



During the attempt on the northeast face of Chokko Zemleprohodtsev (Peak Zemleprohodtsev, 5,050m).



During the June 2023 attempt on the northeast face of Chokko Zemleprohodtsev (Peak Zemleprohodtsev, 5,050m).

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