



AAC Publications

Mnich and Other Ascents

Pakistan, Karakoram, Spantik-Sosbun Range

Looking northwest in 2011 from the dividing ridge between the North and South Sosbun glaciers at the snow crest of Sokha Brakk. In front is the east face of Nameless Peak. Photo: Joanna Nowosadzka.

On September 4, 2011, an all-women team of Polish mountaineers—Paulina Janczar, Anna Kładzińska, Irena Kładzińska-Wituska, Joanna Nowosadzka, Danuta Przybylska, Bernadeta Szczepańska, Danuta Wach, and photographer Danuta Piotrowska—established base camp at 4,000m at the entrance to the South Sosbun Glacier.

On the 6th, as part of their acclimatization, Janczar, Nowosadzka, Przybylska, and Szczepańska left to climb three tops of around 5,000m at the southern end of the long ridge that divides the South Sosbun and North Sosbun glaciers. They were successful and returned to base camp on the 8th.

Two days later, Janczar and Nowosadzka climbed a previously unvisited rock peak a little to the northwest of base camp at approximately 35°52'7.51"N, 75°33'2.67"E. The pair climbed the southeast face in six hours and rappelled their route in another six hours. They named the summit Mnich ("Monk," also a famous tower in the Polish Tatra) and the route Very Lucky Ladies. The lower half was generally loose or crumbly but moderate in difficulty, while the headwall was solid and steeper, giving difficulties to VI A1.

On the same day, Wach set up camp below unclimbed Nameless Peak, while Przybylska and Szczepańska went into the first glacial side valley immediately northwest of Mnich and followed it southwest to near its head, where they camped for the night. Tragically, that evening, Szczepańska died in the tent, and the expedition was abandoned.

—Janusz Majer, Poland, based on an account by Danuta Wach

Images



Pamshe Peak (6,123m), situated on the Sosbun-Biafo divide to the southeast of Sosbun Brakk, first climbed in 1975 from the Biafo side by Ted Howard and Don Morrison (U.K.). Visible at the left end of this divide is a small rock tower: an unnamed peak climbed by a Japanese team in 1999. The view is to the northeast from below Mnich. The end of the long ridge that separates the North and South Sosbun glaciers is visible on the left.



Sokha Brakk (far right) and Sosbun Spires I–VI near the head of the South Sosbun Glacier. Spire I was climbed in 1988, while III was climbed in 2024.



Looking northwest from the 2011 base camp. Pamshe Peak, on the Sosbun-Biafo divide, is on the far right. At center is the end of the long ridge that separates the South from North Sosbun glaciers. The small tops climbed by the Polish expedition in 2011 lie at the near end of this ridge. Left of this ridge and at the back of the South Sosbun Glacier are the Sosbun Spires.



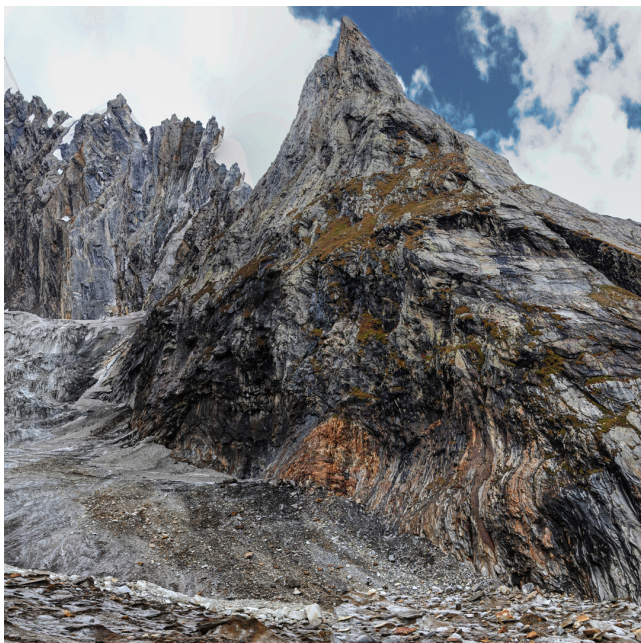
Sospun Spires IV, III, and the spectacular II (from left to right), seen from approximately to the south. Spire III was climbed in 2024; the others are believed to be unattempted.



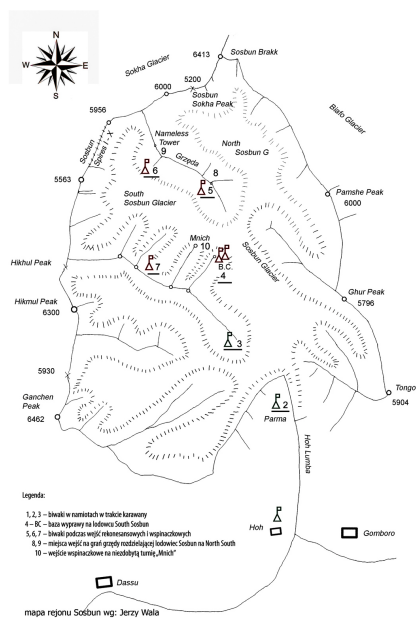
Nameless Peak from the South Sospun Glacier. As far as is known, this peak is unclimbed and has an impressive rock wall on its east side.



Paulina Janczar and Joanna Nowosadzka approaching the headwall of Mnich at around pitch nine on Very Lucky Ladies. The 2011 route continued just left of the hanging snow formation.



Mnich from the south. Very Lucky Ladies (2011) ascended just inside the right-hand skyline.



Jerzy Wala's sketch map of the upper Sosbun Glacier. (8) is the location of the three ca 5,000m tops and Mnich (10) climbed by the 2011 Polish expedition.



Looking northwest from the dividing ridge between the North and South Sosbun glaciers at the snow crest of Sokha Brakk. In front is the east face of Nameless Peak.

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