



## AAC Publications

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### **Pik Korzhenevskaya, South Face, Ol'cha**

Tajikistan, Western Pamir

**In January a four-man Kyrgyz-Russian team climbed a new route up the middle of the south face of Korzhenevskaya (7,105m) in the Academy of Sciences Range.** The main difficulties of this line are associated with icefalls that in summer often produce huge avalanches, the blast from which will reach the Moskvina Glade Base Camp (4,200m). In the depths of winter it was anticipated the icefalls should be more stable, and in fact only a few small breaks occurred during the ascent, and those were always a safe distance from the group.

Roman Abildaev, Alexey Usatykh (both Russian), Semen Dvornichenko, and team leader Sergey Seliverstov (both Kyrgyzstan) left Moskvina Glade on January 17 and moved up the crevassed Moskvina Glacier, in temperatures down to -30°C and winds up to 60 kilometers per hour, to make camp at 5,030m. Next day they continued up the broken icefall, experiencing gusts up to 80–90 kilometers per hour, to reach their next camp at 5,560m. In similar conditions they progressed to 5,800m on the 19th, and the next day climbed past a shoulder at 5,900m toward the center of the face. Then, after five pitches across crumbling rock (60–80°, with a few small overhangs), followed by an ice wall and a horizontal traverse at 60°, they reached the base of the large hanging glacier that descends from the summit. That night was spent on a flat terrace among crevasses.

On January 21 they made their way with difficulty through four ice steps on this glacier slope, camping for the night at 6,450m. The next day, their sixth on the route, they left the tents and headed for the summit, negotiating large crevasses and then avalanche-prone slopes between 6,650m and 6,800m. At 12:30 p.m. they were on the summit in a wind of 50 kilometers per hour and temperature between -35° and -40°C.

They were back at camp at 4:30 p.m., and the next day made it down to 5,400m, using a self-releasing ice screw system for rappel anchors when V-threads failed due to crumbling ice. (This system involves rappelling from a cord wrapped around the shaft of a screw; when the rope is pulled sharply from below, it unwinds the cord and reverses the screw out of the ice.) The team was safely back in base camp by midday on the 24th. The route has been named Ol'cha in memory of a friend, Olga Goroganina.

The team then attempted Pik Communism (7,492m), which would have given most of them winter ascents of all five of the Snow Leopard peaks (the four 7,000m peaks of the former Soviet Union plus Khan Tengri). On February 4 they reached a height of 6,200m, but the wind, now at around 110 kilometers per hour, was just too strong.

– Information supplied by **Anna Piunova**, Mountain.ru, Russia

## Images



The wind-blasted south face of Pik Korzhenevskaya seen from Pik Communism. (1) Northwest ridge (Ugarov team, 1953, first ascent of the peak, rarely repeated). (2) Southwest spur to south ridge (Dobrovolsky team, 1966, 5B). (3) Southwest face to south ridge (Tsetlin team, 1966, 5A, today's normal route). (4) Variation to normal route. (5) South face (Ol'Cha, 2018). (6) South Spur (Romanov team, 1961, 5B). (7) South Rib (Bozhukov team, 1966, 5B). Not all routes are shown.



Reaching the summit of Pik Korzhenevskaya on January 22, via the south face, with the rounded upper section of the northwest ridge below.



In the initial icefall below camp 2 at 5,560m during the first ascent of Ol'cha on Pik Korzhenevskaya. The weather improved after this, though it remained windy and very cold.



Climbing through seracs on the first section of the hanging glacier on the upper south face of Korzhenevskaya, heading for the top camp at 6,450m.



On the hanging glacier on the south face of Pik Korzhenevskaya, heading for high camp at 6,450m, with the north face of Pik Communism (7,492m) behind.

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