



AAC Publications

Pumari Chhish East, Southeast Ridge, Attempt

Pakistan, Karakoram, Hispar Muztagh

In a trip lasting June 18 to July 23, Mathieu Maynadier (France) and I attempted unclimbed Pumari Chhish East (6,850m, 36°11'59.38"N, 75°16'47.67"E), north of the Hispar Glacier. After around a week of travel from Europe, we arrived at a comfortable base camp at 4,500m on the Yutmaru Glacier, south of the Pumari Chhish massif.

We acclimatized by hiking to 5,500m on peaks immediately north of base camp, but consistently mixed weather prevented sleeping or climbing higher. In fact, we experienced unstable weather throughout our time at base camp—something the three previous parties to visit here also found. The Pumari Chhish peaks seemed to be shrouded in cloud and experiencing snowfall almost constantly, perhaps influenced by the much higher Khunyang Chhish group immediately to the west.

Around July 9 the weather improved. We expected four days of fine weather, so waited a day for Pumari Chhish East to shed some snow before setting out. Previous teams had warned us of the jumbled, deteriorating glacier, but luckily we snuck through via a snow gully.

We slept beneath the south face, then on the following days climbed up the southeast ridge. In the main this was enjoyable, with mixed climbing and steep ice. However, everything was buried under powder, making the ridge time-consuming. We had to climb up, down, and around numerous large mushrooms and cornices. At the end of the second day, we reached flatter, easier snow slopes and camped beneath a serac at around 6,500m (a number of unappealing seracs threaten this line).

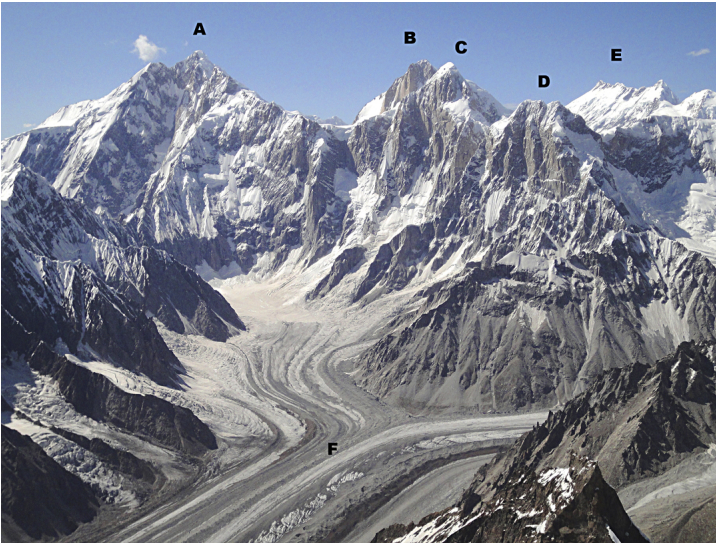
Our forecast had promised one more day of fine weather, but we woke to heavy snow and poor visibility. We started up, but by 11 a.m., at an altitude of approximately 6,700m, we bailed in heavy snowfall, spindrift, strong wind, and poor visibility. Though we were only 100 and 150 vertical meters below the main summit, our ridge would have reached the southeast top, which is still some distance from the summit. We began our rappel descent, eventually reaching base camp around midnight.

Future parties should note that the porters from Hispar, the last village on the approach, were as bad as their reputation, demanding enormous amounts of money for carrying small loads.

— Tom Livingstone, United Kingdom

Pumari Chhish East's Short Climbing History: The first attempt on this peak was probably in 2007, when American climbers reached about 5,900m on the left side of the south face (AAJ 2008). In 2009 came Canadians, who climbed the south face to 5,700m (AAJ 2010). In 2011, another group of Americans arrived with this peak as their goal, but never set foot on the mountain.

Images



Looking northwest from the summit of Hispar Sar. (A) Khunyang Chhish East (7,400m, Austrian-Swiss, 2013). (B) Pumari Chhish Main (7,492m, Japanese, 1979). (C) Pumari Chhish South (7,350m, French, 2007). (D) Pumari Chhish East (6,850m, unclimbed). (E) Disteghil Sar (7,885m, Austrians, 1960). (F) Yutmaru Glacier.



This section of the southeast ridge of Pumari Chhish East was traversed just below the crest. It wasn't pleasant.



Mathieu Maynadier on the southeast ridge of Pumari Chhish East.



The southeast ridge of Pumari Chhish East showing camps and high point around 6,700m.



Tom Livingstone on the southeast ridge of Pumari Chhish East. Below, the Yutmaru Glacier flows down to meet the Hispar, on the far side of which rise peaks of the Haigutum Group. The high peak middle distance, one third in from the left, is Hispar Sar.



Tom Livingstone high on Pumari Chhish East in deteriorating weather.



The south faces of Pumari Chhish South (left) and East. The southeast ridge of Pumari Chhish East forms its right skyline. The French ascent of Pumari Chhish South climbed the left side of the south face (AAJ 2008).

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