



## AAC Publications

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### **Biarchedi I, Attempt From Southeast**

Pakistan, Karakoram, Masherbrum Mountains

**Our trip in June to attempt unclimbed Biarchedi I (6,810m, 35°40'22.22"N, 76°24'20.83"E) can be summed up in two words: bad weather.** One day after Ralf Dujmovits and I reached base camp, after a trek under clear blue skies, the weather turned for the worse, and in the 28 days that followed, only three were without precipitation. Luckily, the frequent snowstorms came without wind, and we had enough visibility between storms to make some progress on our planned route on Biarchedi.

Base camp was on a terrace at 4,550m, halfway between the Dalsampa and Huispang camps on the north side of the Gondogoro (a.k.a. Gondokhoro) Glacier. We placed Camp 1 at a safe site at 5,350m, looking across the Gondogoro Glacier to Laila Peak. Above us were two small cols separated by a rocky outcrop. We hoped that one of these cols would give access to the Biarchedi South Glacier, flowing down from Biarchedi I and II. We first ventured to the left (southwest) col at 5,575m, but found a huge cornice running the length of the entire col, making this option a no-go. We reached the right (northeast) col at 5,650m, but extremely limited visibility did not allow us to see whether we could safely descend the far side. We returned to base camp to wait for a better forecast.

After several days of waiting, six days of good weather were promised. We headed up again with high hopes and heavily laden packs, weaving between many hanging seracs. But after just a few hours the weather deteriorated, and it snowed continuously for the next two days, dumping yet another 40cm. In mostly whiteout conditions, we retraced our route to the right-hand col and waited for visibility. Our rather uncertain impression was that we might have to descend 300m of steep terrain to reach the Biarchedi South Glacier. With much new snow and uncertain weather, we decided continuing would not be smart. As it turned out, we had 2.5 days of mediocre weather and 3.5 days of bad. We left without ever having seen the mountain. I do want to thank the Grit & Rock Award for supporting the trip.

There are other possible options for approaching Biarchedi I. There is an east-facing glacier between the mountain and the Huispang camp on the Gondogoro trek. Crossing the col at its head would land you higher up the Biarchedi South Glacier, but the 300m headwall looks like it would involve mixed climbing. When we were there, the headwall looked quite white after a big dump of snow, but I have seen a photo in drier conditions that shows much rock. The big problem with this approach is that it faces east and will barely freeze in early summer; later, the icefall could be tricky.

A second option is via the Baltoro and Yermanendu glaciers, then over the Masherbrum La. This would have to be done in early season to maximise snow covering and therefore minimize crevasse problems. We met a group that had just trekked from Askole to Hushe over the Masherbrum La, so it is possible early in the season (they finished in early June). However, it is very long. Hard-core alpinists may find other options directly from the Baltoro Glacier.

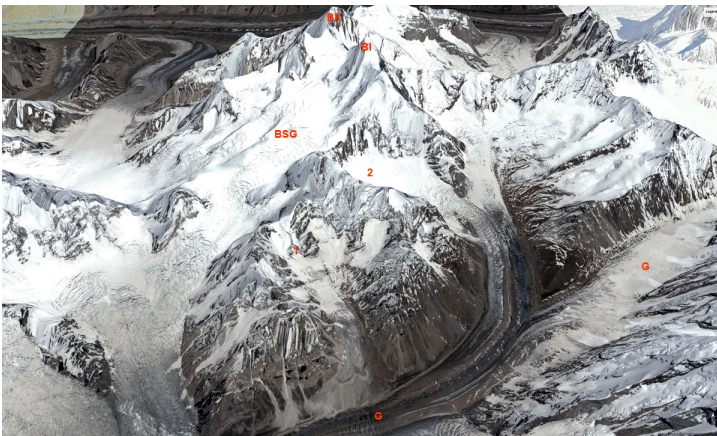
— Nancy Hansen, Canada

**Editor's Note:** Early reports and maps of Biarchedi refer to what is now designated Biarchedi II, the 6,759m summit to the northwest of Biarchedi I. Biarchedi II was probably first climbed in 1984 by Jerzy Kukuczka in a solo push, then again in 1985 via the 2,300m icy northeast face, by Spanish climbers Joaquin Carril and Antonio Martinez. A third route, starting from the west, was added by a three-man multi-national team in the early 2000s.

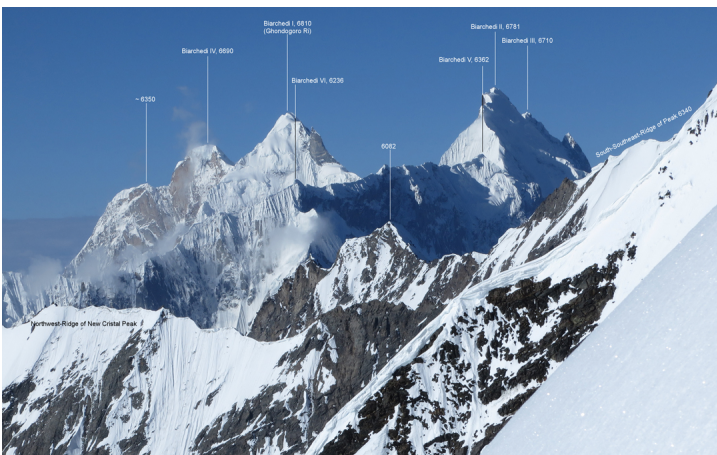
## Images



The Biarchedi group seen from high on Laila Peak to the south- southeast. Ralf Dujmovits and Nancy Hansen followed the route shown in an attempt to reach the Biarchedi South Glacier (hidden), which flows down from (A) Biarchedi I (6,810m) and (B) Biarchedi II. (C) is Biarchedi IV. (D) K2.



Seen from the south: (BII) Biarchedi II, climbed at least three times; (BI) Biarchedi I (unclimbed); (BSG) Biarchedi South Glacier; (1) the glacier arm used in 2021 in an attempt to cross over to the Biarchedi South Glacier; (2) a more northerly glacier arm that could also give access to the upper Biarchedi South Glacier; (G) Gondogoro Glacier.



Ralf Dujmovits and Nancy Hansen obtained their first and only view of the pretty Biarchedi Group in



2016 during an attempt on the still-unclimbed Praqpa Ri (7,156m) to the north.



Seen from the Gondogoro Glacier, the route of ascent to the right-hand col, potentially leading to the Biarchedi South Glacier.



One possible access to the Biarchedi South Glacier would climb this side glacier, which leaves the Gondogoro just north of Huispang Camp. However, the 300m headwall could prove difficult.

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