



## **Korada Central, West Face, Kapura and Nurishan Attempts, and Other Routes**

Pakistan, Karakoram, Tagas Mountains

**In August, a Young Alpinist Group supported by the Czech Mountaineering Association reached base camp at 4,300m in the Nangma Valley six days after leaving Prague. We then split into pairs to attempt different projects.**

Jakub Kácha and I made the first ascent of Korada Central (at least 6,000m, Peak 124 on the Jerzy Wala map) via the west face. Korada's south top (5,944m) was climbed in 2004 by a team from Slovenia; the north summit (6,146m) was climbed in 2021 by a trio from the U.K. Like the previous Korada teams, we started from a bivouac in the Southeast Drifika Cwm. We climbed the ca 1,000m face at D+ (60°), with one camp at 6,000m on the sharp south ridge, with the tent attached to rock and V-thread anchors.

Kácha also teamed up with Martin Sankot for a valiant attempt on a new route up the west face of Kapura (6,544m), climbing the 1,500m wall with two bivouacs at a grade of M5 (route 3, green line, in the photo at right). They were stopped on the sharp summit ridge, just northwest of the main top, by dangerous, deep snow. [This point would lie on the final section of the 2004 first ascent route.] At this point, their GPS registered 6,600m, putting the official altitude of this mountain in question.

Over August 12–13, Sankot and Ondřej Mrklavský tried to climb Nurishan (Peak 148 on the Wala map, ca 6,000m, 35°23'38.71"N, 76°25'26.52"E). After forging a devious route on the right side of the southeast face (VI+ M4+ 70°), Sankot got his hands on top of the northwest ridge, still a long way right of the summit. The GPS said 5,850m.

As he was looking over the far side of the ridge, Sankot released a wet snow slide, which swept down the face and hit Mrklavský, who was still simul-climbing. The latter fell and pulled off Sankot. Fortunately, both of their falls were stopped by a micro-cam, the highest of several pieces of protection between them. The two descended a little and bivouacked with no equipment, as they had intended to complete the climb in a day, then continued down to base camp in the morning. Ondra Hašek and Anča Šebestíková, who initially followed some distance behind the other pair, gave up due to rockfall.

František Bulíčka and Šebestíková primarily concentrated on lower-altitude rock routes, where they were successful in making more or less free ascents of existing routes. As Bulíčka wrote, "The entire Nangma Valley is a disco with several floors, where you can have fun and dance in various ways. Each floor has its own dress code and regulations. I really liked the middle, rocky floor, so decided to concentrate my activities there."

The pair first climbed Bloody Mary on the southwest face of Denbor Brakk (4,800m). This route was climbed in 2004 by Czechs Pavel Jonak and Vasek Satava, using fixed ropes (450m, 14 pitches, IX-A2), and then repeated in 2007 by Anne and John Arran, who climbed a variant to one aid pitch at 5.12c, but could only top-rope a variant to the second aid pitch (5.12d). Bulíčka and Šebestíková found much vegetation on the initial pitches and were forced to resort to extreme gardening. They kept to the original line, but despite repeated attempts, the crux pitch five (7b A0), which involves an offwidth crack through a horizontal roof, could not be climbed without a point of aid. The potential

free grade was estimated to be 7c–8a. The two used inflatable portaledge and completed the route in 14 pitches.

The same two free climbed Welcome to Crackistan on the southeast pillar of Zang Brakk (4,800m). This was put up by Anne and John Arran, also in 2007 [after a previous attempt by Austrians Hannes Mair and Much Mayr]. The Arrans climbed the route in 17 pitches with difficulties up to 5.12d (British E6/7) and one pitch of A3 on beaks and knifeblades; John Arran estimated it might go at E7 6b (5.13b), but said it might need a couple of protection bolts.

Bulic ka and S ebestiková climbed the route in 13 pitches, ground-up over two days, largely from 6b/c to 7c. The ninth pitch (A3) was extensively cleaned and then climbed free at 8a without recourse to bolts. The route can be descended in 11 rappels if using 60m ropes.

– **Standa Mitác, Czech Republic**

## Images



(1) The 2021 line, Hot Tang, to Korada North, (2) the 2023 route to the central summit, and (3) the 2004 Slovenian Route to Korada South.



The west face of Kapura showing (1) In the Fire (2021) to the central summit, (2) Wild Wings (2008) to south summit, and (3) the 2023 Czech attempt finishing on the northwest ridge of the main summit.



Martin Sankot on the west face of Kapura in August 2023.



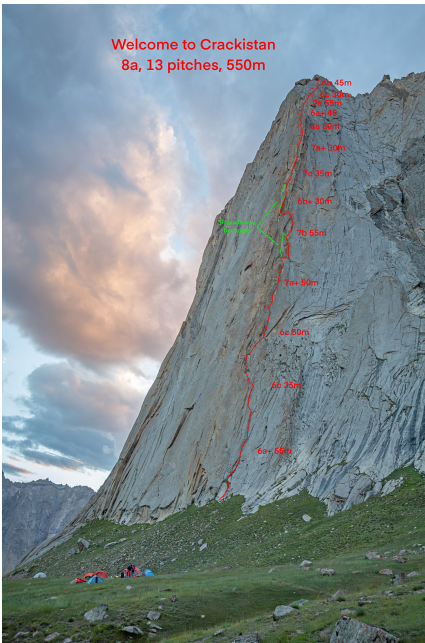
The southeast face of Nurishan and the attempted line by the team from the Czech Republic.



The bivouac at around 6,000m on the Korada ridge during the first ascent of the central summit. In the background is the steep and sombre west face of Amin Brakk.



Jakub Kácha on the west face of Korada during the first ascent of the central summit.



Base camp and the southeast pillar of Zang Brakk with the line Welcome to Crackistan.



František Bulička on pitch four (7b) of Bloody Mary, Denbor Brakk.



František Bulička below the crux pitch (off width roof crack) on Bloody Mary, Denbor Brakk.



Anča Šebestíková on the second pitch (6c) of Welcome to Crackistan.



Anča Šebestíková on the fourth pitch (7a+) of Welcome to Crackistan.



František Bulička and Anča Šebestíková below the crux pitch of Bloody Mary on Denbor Brakk. The dark triangle above them in the large roof split by an off-width. In the background is the west face of Amin Brakk. In 1996, Jon Lazkano, Adolfo Madinabeitia, and José Carlos Tamayo were the first to try

this face. They failed and the route was eventually climbed three years later by Marek Holecek Filip Šilhan, and David Štastný, and named Czech Express. In 2022 Madinabeita returned and completed the route he had first tried 26 years previously.

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