Hunza Peak, southeast face

Pakistan, Karakoram, Batura Muztagh

Hunza Peak (6,270m) had been our goal in 2024 as part of the acclimatization plan before the first ascent of Muchu Chhish (AAJ 2025). Some illness meant we only had time to concentrate on the main target, but our desire to climb Hunza remained.

The southeast face of Hunza Peak with the 2025 route and bivouacs marked. Photo by Zdeněk Hák

In 2025, Radoslav Groh and I laid plans to return and attempt the southeast face, which we had reconnoitered the previous year.

We arrived in Pakistan on May 20 and made our base camp above Karimabad at 3,300 meters. This left 3,000 meters of elevation gain to reach the summit, 2,300 meters of which were proper climbing.

We began the ascent on June 6, shortly after it dumped well over one meter of snow above 4,200 meters. It was a tough fight through the entry couloirs and rock sections of UIAA V+ to reach the glacier, where we camped at 4,500 meters. By 10 a.m. the next morning, we had climbed another 600 meters. Avalanches had already begun to fall as the day warmed; we deemed it too dangerous to continue and made a sheltered bivouac. On June 8, we climbed 700 meters of steep, mostly snowy or mixed terrain to 5,900 meters, where we had to work hard to dig a small tent platform.

On the 9th, we went for the top, leaving our tent at the bivouac site. An initial pitch of M6 certainly warmed us up; this led into a couloir where we negotiated a 20-meter vertical section of ice. We continued, rather tediously, to the final serac, which we climbed directly with sections of vertical ice.

Unable to continue directly above, we rappelled left into a couloir and continued to a shoulder below a spectacular 50-meter snow mushroom on the ridge. Exposed climbing—some of the most beautiful I have ever done—took us to the summit. Our GPS read 6,300 meters.

There was not enough room for both of us on top at the same time, and we were able to cut a hole in the snow and peer through to the other side of the peak. I have never before stood on such an extraordinary summit, like something out of Patagonia. We soon began our descent and were back in base camp the following day. We called our route Eid al-Adha (V+ M6+ WI5 90°).

—Zdeněk Hák, Czech Republic

HISTORICAL NOTES ON HUNZA PEAK: This may only be the third ascent of the mountain. In 1991, Mick Fowler and Crag Jones (U.K.) climbed from the Hasanabad (northwest) side to the col between Hunza Peak and Bublimotin and from there ascended the southwest ridge to the top of Hunza. In 2009, Julian Beermann and Florian Jehle (Germany) climbed toward the col from the east, then up the southeast face to join the southwest ridge below the summit. Both the British and German parties are believed to have reached the southwest top of Hunza Peak, whereas the Czechs reached the northeast top; the snowy tops are of roughly equal height.

In 1982, Patrick and Christine Cordier, François Diaferia, and Jacques Maurin (France) climbed to the col via the east side above Karimabad (generally accepted to be more dangerous) and from there made the first ascent of Bublimotin (5,993m).

Images

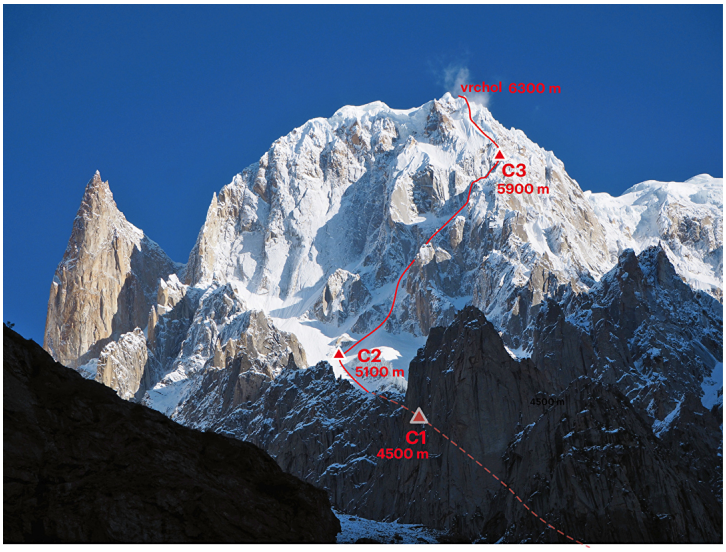
On the lower rock section to reach the glacier on the southeast face of Hunza Peak. The old rope in place originates from 2024, when Jaroslav Bansky and Radoslav Groh (Hák was ill) inspected the route. It was bought in Karimabad and left in place to facilitate access to the glacier. However, while Jaroslav Bansky was rappelling, it broke. Fortunately, he was also secured by a second rope.

Steep ice on the southeast face of Hunza Peak.

Around 100 meters directly below the top of the snow and ice tower on the summit ridge of Hunza Peak.

On the final day of the 2025 route up the southeast face of Hunza Peak.

Climbing hard, textured ice on the final day to reach the top of the southeast face of Hunza Peak.



The southeast face of Hunza Peak (6,270m) with the 2025 route and bivouacs marked. The big granite spire to the left is Bublimotin. The deep notch to the right of Bublimotin is the col reached from the far side by the 1991 British party that then climbed the ridge above to the top of Hunza Peak, making the first ascent.

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