



198. Sławomir Kawecki on the ridge between M3 and M3b. On the far side of the glacier lies the 1500m mixed north face of Koh-e-Mandaras (M8, 6331m) one of the great ascents of the Hindu Kush. It was climbed in 1977 by Poles Piotr Jasinski, Marek Kowalczyk, and Andrzej Zawada, and Terry King (UK). (Klaudiusz Duda)

and had already made an unsuccessful attempt on an unclimbed Tajikistan 6000er by the time they arrived in the Wakhan's Jurm valley. After studying a report by an Italian expedition that visited the valley in 1972, they felt there was still great potential for first ascents. However, unbeknown to them more Italians had climbed there in 1973, and Poles in 1977. Also, the 1972 report underestimated the height of the peaks summited by the expedition, and proved misleading as to the location of these summits. They ascended what they thought at the time was an unclimbed peak, but on returning home discovered that they had made the second ascent of **Koh-e-Sauze** (c5730m) by the west ridge at PD+. This was the same route as used by the Italians in 1972.

Like other visitors to the Wakhan, Coles and Kitson were surprised at the ease by which logistics could be organised, and how accommodating local people were to mountaineers. They also were gratified to employ locals who were dignified, honest and generous.

Much further up the Corridor, New Zealand sisters Christine Byrch and Pat Deavoll made the second ascent of **Koh-e-Baba Tangi** (6516m), the most easterly high peak of the Wakhan. The two made the first ascent of the north-west ridge and then descended the original route (Italians in 1963) on the west ridge in a seven-day round trip from the glacier. Full details are recorded in Pat Deavoll's article in this *AJ*, pages 16-26.

DICK ISHERWOOD

Pakistan 2011

Thanks are due to Lindsay Griffin, Anna Piumova, Christine Kyungmee Pae, and the climbers mentioned in this report for their help with information

Fifty expeditions had permits for climbing in Pakistan in 2011, though some may not have actually got there. This of course does not include trips to peaks below 6500m, for which permits are generally not needed.

For the third year in succession no one reached the summit of **K2** from Pakistan, a fairly remarkable fact in today's climbing world. Several parties climbed Broad Peak, Hidden Peak and Gasherbrum II. A large Czech party was successful on Spantik. Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner climbed K2 by the *North Ridge route* (i.e. from Xinjiang), reaching the summit on 23 August, to become the first woman to climb K2 without oxygen. She was accompanied by Vassily Pivtsov, Maxut Zumayev and Darek Zaluski. She, Pivtsov and Zumayev have now joined the short list of 10 previous climbers who have done all fourteen 8000m peaks without oxygen. Pivtsov and Zumayev were making respectively their seventh and sixth attempts on K2. A Pakistan army helicopter carrying a team of Irish filmmakers set what is apparently a record for high altitude helicopter filming, reaching 7162m while working on a film of the 2008 K2 disaster in which 11 climbers died.

Simone Moro, Cory Richards and Denis Urubko completed the first winter ascent of **Gasherbrum II** on 2 February in a three-day push from their base camp. They were helicoptered into their base camp. This is the first successful winter ascent of an 8000m peak in Pakistan. (*See Moro's account in this AJ, pages 59-62*)

Another party, Louis Rousseau (Canadian), Gerfried Goschl (Austrian) and Alex Txikon (Spanish) attempted the first winter ascent of **Gasherbrum I** (Hidden Peak). They walked into their base camp in seven days from Askole – not much longer than the standard summer time, though they had cached most of their gear there in the previous summer. They attempted a partial new route, starting up the SSW face of 7069m Gasherbrum South, with the intention of crossing over the shoulder of this peak to join the original *American 1958 route* up the south-east ridge. At 6650m they encountered very hard steep ice and could not finish the face. They retreated and subsequently tried the *Japanese couloir* on the north side of the mountain above the Gasherbrum La (now the standard route) but retreated from 7050m in high winds.

At the time of writing, January 2012, winter expeditions are attempting K2 (Russian), Gasherbrum I (Polish) and Nanga Parbat (Urubko/Moro). This seems to be the new frontier, in Karakoram climbing in particular.



199. The 2011 Russian route on the W face of Latok III (6949m), showing portaledge camps. (2011 Russian Latok III Expedition)

Four members of a Russian expedition, Alexander Odintsov, Evgeny Dmitrienko, Ivan Dozhdev and Alex Lonchinsky completed the first ascent of the west face of 6949m **Latok III** (in the Panmah Mustagh), in capsule style and using eight portaledge camps over two weeks, nearly 20 years after this route was first attempted. They followed a line attempted by two previous Russian expeditions, in 2000 and 2001; during the latter, Igor Barihin died when falling rocks severed the fixed rope he was jumaring on. The 2011 party recovered a bolt from that trip as a memento for his widow. They again experienced significant rockfall and avalanche danger, and one climber suffered a broken arm, but four climbers reached the summit on 25 June. This is clearly a route with significant objective dangers, at least in its lower part.

A five member Korean party attempted the north face of **Latok I** (7145m) from the Choktoi glacier. They spent five days on the face but had to retreat from 5800m in bad weather and avalanche conditions. A Japanese team



200. North face of Latok I, showing the high point of the 2011 Korean attempt.

of three, the 'Giri Giri Boys', attempted a line to the left of the Korean one of 2010 but also retreated in falling ice, snow and rock. Several strong parties have attempted this still unclimbed side of Latok I over the last 35 years – an American team of Michael Kennedy, Jim Donini, Jeff Lowe and George Lowe reached 7000m on the obviously difficult but perhaps much safer north ridge in 1978. The summit of Latok I was first reached in 1979 by a Japanese expedition from the south-east (Biafo glacier) side, finishing up the east ridge.

Slovenians Nejc Marcic and Luka Strazar climbed a new route on the south-west flank of **K7 West** (6858m) in the Charakusa Valley, Pakistan. They completed the alpine-style ascent of *Dreamers of Golden Caves* (VI A2 M5, 1600m) in four days, between 6 and 9 September. This is probably the second route to reach the summit and the third ascent overall of K7 West. It was not a bad effort as their first climb in the Karakoram and earned the pair a Piolet d'Or. The name is translated from Slovenian – the 22-year-old Strazar explained 'We young guys are often without money, and thus often dream of golden caves.' Another party led by Rainer Treppte was unsuccessful due to avalanche danger on their proposed line. The big rock spike between K7 West and K7 itself remains unclimbed.

Two American parties also went to attempt K7 West this year, but both had to settle for difficult new routes on lower peaks. Kyle Dempster and Hayden Kennedy made the first ascent of **Hassan Peak** (6300m) just north of K6. The pair climbed the peak via its previously attempted west face, overcoming difficulties of W15, M5 on their two-day ascent. Pat Goodman, Matt McCormick and Will Meinen climbed a 1050m new route on a previ-



201. The 2011 Slovenian route *Dreamers of Golden Caves* on K7 West, showing bivouac sites. (Dick Isherwood)

ously unclimbed pillar, **Fida Brakk** (c5350m), which they named the *Jenga Spur* (V+, 5.11R, A0). The Charakusa valley continues to be a hot area for hard Alpine-style rock and mixed climbing.

In August a four-man Russian team established a new route on the north-west face of the **Trango Tower** (6251m). *No Fear* (VII 6B+ A3, 1120m), put up by Dmitry Golovchenko, Sergey Nilov, Viktor Volodin and Alexander Yurkin, is the first largely independent route established on the Trango Tower in more than a decade. They used three portaledge camps and much of the climbing was pegging.

A Russian/Ukrainian ladies team of Marina Kopteva, Galina Chibitok and Anna Yasinskaya spent 38 days establishing a new route on the north-west face of **Great Trango Tower** (6238m), *Parallelniy Mir* (VI+ 6b A3). They used nine camps on their route, which is at least the fourth line on this mile-high granite face.

HARISH KAPADIA

India 2010

I am grateful to the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, Lindsay Griffin, Rajesh Gadgil and several individual contributors, as mentioned, for information and reports.

If you'll pardon the cliché, whenever God closes a door he opens a window. This adage truly applied to the Indian Himalaya in 2010. There were not many expeditions to high peaks, perhaps reflecting higher peak fees and above all bureaucratic hindrance. However, there was much activity around small peaks, new regions and smaller teams. This may be an indicator for the future, as these expeditions are cost effective. Many did not mind meeting serious challenges below the height of 5500m, as peak fees are payable above this height. There were 40 foreign expeditions to India – a steep drop from the normal figure of around 65. Indian expeditions were 63, but unfortunately many were either to normal peaks or washed out due to bad weather. A flash flood hit the lower areas of Ladakh near Leh and elsewhere in remote valleys in early August. Rivers of mud destroyed houses, roads and fields. Aid from the army and government agencies poured in but it is never sufficient. Various organisations, including the Himalayan Club, raised funds to help.

Two new books were published in India. *The Siachen Glacier – The Battle of Roses* by Harish Kapadia covers the history of the glacier that has been the scene of conflict for the last 26 years. The history of the glacier, based on the author's several visits to trek and climb, is covered. *Himalayan Wonderland*, an earlier publication on Lahaul and Spiti by Dr M. S. Gill, was thoroughly revised and re-published with several additional maps and pictures.

The following were the major expeditions to the Indian Himalaya in 2010.

UTTARAKHAND

Arwa Tower (6352m)

Expedition: Dutch; leader, Sebastiaan Van der Smeede. The team approached the mountain from Ghastoli and entered the Arwa valley. They established base camp at around 4700m and placed two more high camps at 5350m and 5775m. They attempted the north-west buttress. Ice and snow on rock repulsed both the attempts made during the end of May and first week of June. They reached around 6000m.

Vasuki Parvat (6792m)

Expedition: British-New Zealand; leader, Malcolm Bass. This peak