

Shispare climbed

The Polish-German Karakoram expedition 1974

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(Translation: Andrzej Kus)

The Polish-German Academic Expedition to the Karakoram was directed towards Shispare in the Batura Mustagh. The expedition numbered 14 members: Leszek Cichy, Mirosław Dąbrowski, Marek Grochowski, Jan Holnicki-Szulc, Piotr Kintopf (doctor), Janusz Kurczab (leader), Ryszard Marcjoniak (truck driver), Andrzej Młynarczyk, Maciej Piątkowski, and Jacek Poręba—all from Poland and Martin Albanus, Hubert Bleicher, Heinz Borchers and Herbert Oberhofer from West Germany. The expedition reached Pasu village in the valley of Hunza, which is situated at the mouth of the Pasu and Batura glaciers, on 16 June 1974 by their own truck transport.

A preliminary reconnaissance revealed that the most convenient way to Shispare would be the E ridge, which one can reach by traversing a vast pillar sloping down to the Pasu glacier. At Pasu 110 local porters were engaged so that in 2 days the whole of the baggage was brought to the ridge called Patundas (4200 m) across the Batura glacier. From that spot the baggage was transferred to the Base Camp, placed by the lateral moraine of the Pasu glacier, partly by expedition members and partly with the help of the porters from Ghulkin village. The Base Camp was set up on 28 June.

Camp 1 was made on 30 June at a height of 4850 m at the foot of some rocky pillars. The terrain between here and the spot where the second camp was planned to be presented great technical difficulties (rock-climbing of IVth degree and abrupt glacial crevasses) and for that reason 1500 m of rope had to be fixed. On 2 July a very dangerous accident took place, however without tragic consequences. H. Borchers fell from the pillar edge about 500 m down to the abrupt glacial slope but fortunately sustained only slight injuries. In spite of very bad weather next day the injured man was brought safely to the Base Camp.

Camp 2 was installed finally on 8 July at a height of 5700 m. On the very next day the crest dividing the Ghulkin and Pasu glaciers was reached. Along the crest was the route to be followed by the expedition. On 10 July Camp 3 was ready at a height of 6250 m. The last 200 m of the trail led across steep ice and fixed ropes had to be provided. After the camps were equipped, a group consisting of 8 members started the assault. They left Camp 3 on 20 July and after passing a few km of ice ridge (to a height of about 6400 m) they climbed the side of Shispare up to 6750 m, where Camp 4 was installed. On 21 July the whole group of 8 men started for the summit and at 12.00 they reached the snow-covered plateau (about 6900 m) between Shispare and the unnamed mountain peak of 7090 m, on the edge leading to Bojohaghur Duanasir (7329 m).



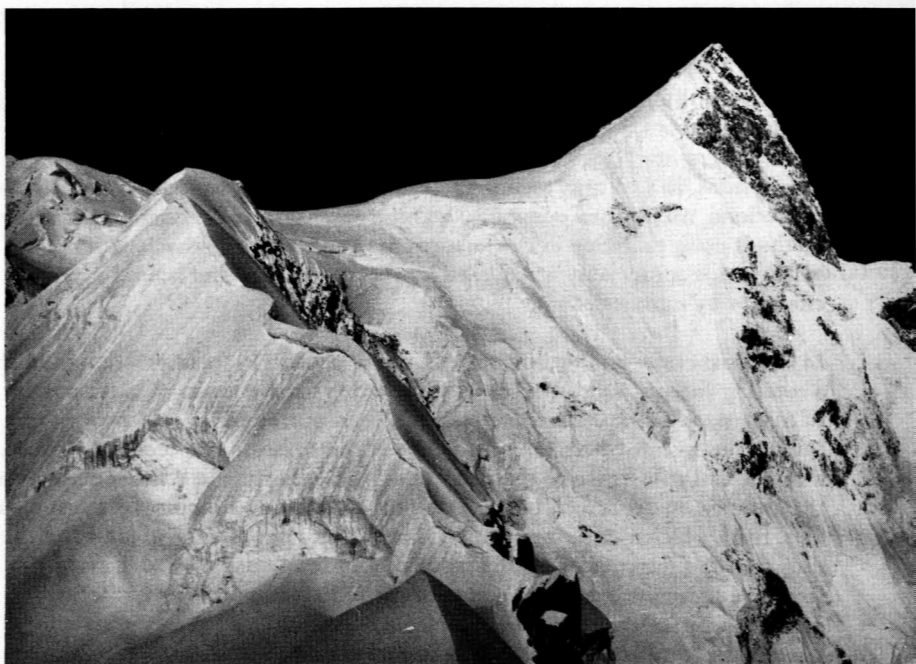
81 Shispare over the Pasu glacier. Photo: M. Dabrowski

Mr J. Kurczab, the leader, left the group and climbing alone, reached at 16.30 the unnamed peak of 7090 m. Whereafter the peak was named Ghenta Peak (in Urdu language and in the local language of Hunza valley the word 'ghenta' means 'bell'). The other 7 reached Shispare summit (7619 m) at 18.30. From the snowy plateau the route led up a 45° slope. The snow conditions were good, only the last metres to the peak had to be protected with rope. The group

members were: H. Bleicher, L. Cichy, M. Grochowski, J. Holnicki-Szulc, A. Młynarczyk, H. Oberhofer and J. Poręba.

An ascent of the peak by a second group was also intended. Those were: M. Albanus, M. Dąbrowski, P. Kintopf and M. Piątkowski who were to be assisted by the now cured H. Borchers. Alas a tragic accident occurred. Just 200 m above Camp 2 an avalanche struck Albanus and Borchers. The latter was buried in a crevasse and his body could not be found.

The Base was wound up on 2 August and with the help of the Ghulkin porters our baggage was brought down to Pasu. The route led across the lower parts of the Pasu glacier and proved to be more convenient than the one leading across the Patundas and Batura glaciers.



82 Shispare from Camp 3. Photo: J. Kurczab