

Pakistan

HINDU KUSH

Saraghrar Southeast, first ascent. In July a Neuchatel Swiss Alpine Club expedition, which comprised nine members led by Jean-Michel Zweiacker, made the first ascent of Saraghrar Southeast (7,208m) in the High Hindu Kush. On June 22 the expedition, with assistance from 120 porters from Zondangram village, established base camp at 3,930m (GPS; N 36° 29.32' E 72° 07.43') in the Rosh Gol Valley. Our initial plan was to attempt a direct route to the Southeast summit but this was rapidly abandoned, when we saw how threatened it would be from ice fall. Our decision was confirmed on July 1 when a huge ice avalanche, initiated by an earthquake, swept the approach up the Warsin Glacier. Instead the team chose a safer route to the



Looking up the Warsin Glacier from a base camp below the south face of Saraghrar. Saraghrar Southeast (7,208m) is the summit in the center of the picture above the avalanche cloud, initiated by an earthquake on July 1. Saraghrar South (7,307m) is the summit to the left, and the route of ascent to Saraghrar SE is a face/ridge off-picture to the left and around the back of Saraghrar South. *Yves-Alain Peter*



west on the south face of Saraghrar, passing close to Saraghrar South (7,307m). This summit was climbed by a Japanese expedition in 1967 [Saraghrar South had been climbed only once before 2005. Hara and Satoh reached the top via the south face from the glacier immediately west of the Warsin. It appears that the Swiss team followed a very similar route—Ed.].

On June 27 Camp 1 was set up at 5,076m (N 36° 30.66' E 72° 06.70') on a secondary ridge running west off the main south spur of Saraghrar South. The route above lay over glacier with rocky sections. On the 8th Camp 2 was established at 6,147m (N 36° 31.58' E 72° 06.96'). Above, steep ice gullies (50°) led to more gentle slopes and Camp 3 at 7,007m (July 19; N 36° 32.09' E 72° 06.95'), which was placed to the south of Saraghrar South.



On the south face of Saraghrar South (7,307m) during its second ascent and the first of Saraghrar Southeast (7,208m). The view west into the high peaks of the Hindu Kush includes (A) Istor-o-Nal Northeast (7,276m), (B) Istor-o-Nal North (7,373m), (C) Nobaism Zom (7,070m), (D) Shingeik Zom (7,294m), (E) Noshaq (7,492m), (F) Darban Zom (7,219m) and (G) Gumbaz-I-Safed (6,800m). Below the climber the dry Nohbaiznon Glacier rises to (H) the Udren col at 5,300m. *Yves-Alain Peter*

On July 24, Mazal Chevallier, Sébastien Grosjean and myself reached the summit of Saraghrar Southeast (N 36° 32.26' E 72° 07.69'), opening a route through a pass at 7,224m (N 36° 32.33' E 72° 06.85') west of Saraghrar South. This pass led to the Saraghrar plateau from where another pass at 7,210m (N 36° 32.43' E 72° 07.23') north of the South peak allowed us to reach the base of the Southeast peak. The final section was composed of steep rock and ice slopes with a narrow ridge leading to the highest point. From the top there were excellent views of base camp 3,300m below. The same day Fred Morthier, climbing alone, reached the South summit for the second overall ascent, following a rocky ridge directly from the pass to the west. He then snowboarded down very steep slopes from camp 3 to the top of the rocky section above camp 1.

On July 27, Corinne Lerch, Martin Liberek and Jean-Michel Zwiackler repeated the route to the South summit. Finally, on the 29th, Marc Bélanger and Jean-Michel Zwiackler reached the Southeast peak and South peak on the same day.

During the expedition we made the first ascent of a much lower unnamed peak. With a height of 4,950m and situation south of the Saraghrar massif, it offered a perfect observation point for Saraghrar route identification. Bélanger and Morthier reached the top on June 25, and over a month later, on July 29, it was climbed again by Grosjean. Morthier made a snowboard descent via the north gullies.

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NANGA PARBAT RANGE

Nanga Parbat, southeast (Rupal) face. From September 1 to 6 Vince Anderson and Steve House made an alpine-style ascent of Nanga Parbat's Rupal Face, via a new line up the central pillar between the south-southeast spur (a.k.a. Messner Route, 1970) and the southeast pillar (climbed to the top of the face and foresummit in 1982 by Ueli Buhler, completed to the main summit by the 1985 Polish expedition). Over 4,000m high, this face is often described as the biggest wall in the world.

Following the line of House's 2004 attempt, the pair moved steadily up the lower section, passing the route's crux, a pitch of poorly protected dry-tooling up loose 5.9 granite. On the third day they moved right from known ground and climbed the more elegant central pillar to the huge hanging glacier in the middle of the face. An icy ramp through the lower headwall led up left to their final bivouac at 7,400m, near the 2004 high point and directly above the Merkl Icefield. They joined the Messner Route at 7,900m and continued to the 8,125m summit. They rated the difficulty VII 5.9 M5 WI4. The pair used the Messner Route for their descent. Anderson's account of the climb, which was awarded this year's Piolet d'Or, appears earlier in this *Journal*.

Nanga Parbat, Rupal Face, second ascent of Messner Route and traverse of mountain. The Korean Nanga Parbat Rupal Expedition arrived in base camp on April 20, shortly after a storm had deposited a meter of snow, making access difficult. In the next 12 days members established

Camp 1 at 5,280m and Camp 2 at 6,090m, on a line close to the 1970 Messner Route.

However, at the start of May the weather began to deteriorate, with snow every day. On June 14, 43 days after the team began climbing, they sited Camp 3 at 6,850m. By this time seven tents had been destroyed, no more than three were left at Camp 1, and all at Camp 2 had disappeared under fresh snow.

Toward the end of the month the team was set for a summit bid. Four members started their attempt on the 26th, but at 7,550m, while climbing the Merkl Icefield, Kim Mi-gon was hit on the leg by a rock. The injury was bad enough to prevent further climbing, and the next four days were spent evacuating the casualty to base camp. From there Kim was able to ride out on a horse to the nearest hospital.

Kim Chang-ho and Lee Hyun-jo made a second summit bid on July 13. They left Camp 4 (7,125m) at 10:30 p.m. and climbed to the base of an objectively hazardous ice gully in the Merkl Icefield, using ropes previously fixed to 7,550m. They continued with a single 6mm rope, 50m long. At 9:00 a.m. on the 14th they narrowly missed being hit by a big fall of rock and ice but by 5:00 p.m. reached the summit snowfield at 7,850m. They had originally planned to bivouac but, as night approached, discussed their options and decided to continue.

At 9:00 p.m. they reached the ridge connecting the south and central peaks, and at 10:41 p.m. the first of the two reached the summit. They had been climbing for 24 hours.

Because it was dark the two were unable to take any convincing summit photographs and were a little concerned that their success might subsequently be doubted. They left their rope and sponsor's flag but also discovered a small container holding a note left by Reinhold Messner after his successful ascent (it is not completely clear whether this is from his 1970 Rupal ascent or the 1978 solo of the Diamir face). They decided to take this container as proof of their climb.

At 11:10 p.m. Kim Chang-ho and Lee Hyun-jo began descending the Diamir Face unroped, following the standard Kinshofer Route. Somewhere in the middle section of the face they set off a windslab avalanche. Lee was buried and Kim, who was on a boulder, was swept 50m downhill, scratching his face and losing his head torch. Extracting themselves, the



Gu Hyeong-jun climbing to Camp 1 (5,280m) on the lower section of the Messner Route, Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat. Lee Young-jun collection