

## Kyrgyzstan

### TIEN SHAN

### INYLCHEK REGION

*Tien Shan Mountains, mapping expedition.* In August and September, 13 of us, mostly students from Dresden University of Technology, conducted a mapping expedition to the central Tien Shan Mountains. The objective of this university project (the Institute of Cartography) was to create a new 1:100,000 scale map of central Tien Shan in the style and quality of European mountaineering maps. This new map will probably be available in two or three years. We received support from, and worked with, Tien Shan Travel—the biggest Travel Agency in Kyrgyzstan—and from The Geodetic and Cartographic Service of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Useful maps at a large scale are not currently available—a universal problem in Russia and its former member states. The best available maps are of 1:200,000 scale, which are not very useful for mountaineering. There is also a map of central Tien Shan at 1:150,000, but this map only shows the major mountains and ridges, and is not a topographic map.

We worked in three teams: two in non-glacier areas and one on the glaciers or at higher altitudes. During this mapping, the “glacier team” probably did two first ascents, one on a previously unclimbed mountain. But it is difficult to know for sure if they were in fact first ascents—the best information about this still comes from local guides.



Khan Tengri (6,995m) from base camp on the southern Inylchek Glacier. Sebastian Wolf

Two of us reached the top of Khan Tengri at the end of August. Along with two Russian climbers, we removed about 20kg of garbage from the upper camps (except Camp 4) on the south side. We were shocked to see how much trash had been left behind, mostly by Americans.

Surveyors from Kyrgyzstan made a new survey of Khan Tengri this summer, showing that the summit is 6,995m—definitely below the magical 7,000m mark. Consequently, Pik Pobeda (7,439m), several kilometers to the south, is still the northernmost 7,000m peak in the world.

The weather was good in August, and we collected more data than we had planned. The expedition was very successful, and revealed a lot of potential for mountaineers in Tien Shan. However, most people seem to want to climb Khan Tengri or Pik Pobeda, and are not interested in the surrounding, less famous, peaks.

Further details about the expedition, including the first ascents and photos are available in the expedition report, which is online in a PDF-file at [www.inf.tu-dresden.de/~sw760654/Tienschan](http://www.inf.tu-dresden.de/~sw760654/Tienschan) (in English and German).

SEBASTIAN WOLF, *Deutsche Alpenverein*

## KUILU RANGE

Peak Milo (pik 4,800) and Peak Misha (pik 4,750), ski descents. Martin Strasser and I went to the Kuilu range, travelling to the site of Pat Littlejohn's base camp (ca 3,300m) in a surplus Soviet military vehicle (2001 AAJ, Pat Littlejohn, p. 341–2). But shortly after our arrival, I came down with strep throat. While I recovered, Martin made a solo ascent and descent of Pik 4,375, just southwest of our camp. Then we followed the Karator River east to the next drainage, which we followed south to the base of a large glacier, and set up Advanced Base Camp I (AB-I) at ca 3,800m.

From AB-I we climbed and skied two peaks—both first ascents, we believe. We climbed the first of these, located on the west side of the glacier and due south of AB-I, on June 16. Starting at 4:30 a.m., we skied up the glacier to the base of a 40° slope leading to the south ridge, then cramponed up firm snow that, unfortunately, gave way to post-holing. But conditions improved when we gained the top of the ridge, where a series of steps (up to 50°) with alternating ice and deep snow lead us to the summit (ca 4,800m) by noon.

We skied down the ridge that we had climbed up. Initially we enjoyed cold, dry snow, but half-way down the ridge we dropped onto the east face and threaded through seracs, where the snow became atrocious. Although each turn on the east face triggered a wet avalanche, we made it to the base without mishap.

On June 17, we climbed the peak on the east side of the glacier.



Peak Milo, showing the line of the complete descent, and Martin Strasser's second shorter descent. Kyle Amstader