

Expedition Report

British/Slovene Choktoi Expedition 2018

BMC Reference: 18/11

Expedition Members

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Dates: 5th July - 19th August 2018

Location: Choktoi glacier, Karakoram, Pakistan

Summary:

First ascent of Latok I (7145m) from northern (Choktoi) side, via a variation of the North Ridge.

Approach

We drove to Askole, then trekked to BC.
Day 1, Askole 2800m to camp at 3200m
Day 2, to 3800m
Day 3, to 4150m
Day 4, to BC: 4580m

Acclimatisation - See 'Acclimatisation Schedule' further down this document.

1) We day hiked up the ridge above BC, to 5040m.

Then, we made two acclimatisation trips.

2) We spent one night at 5000m, and one night at 5500m, on the glacier immediately to the north/north west of Base Camp. We used the 'upper/Gharfoor' camp, which is located at 4580m. It is on the opposite side of the glacier to the Latok group.

After 2 rest days, we...

3) We then spent one night at 5500m, and then a second night immediately below the summit of Bainta Kabata (6250m). This peak is to the west of BC.

North Ridge Variation - Latok I. 5th to 11th August

Day 1. We left BC at 12.45am on Sunday 5th. We walked to the icy line which lies immediately to the right of the rocky base of the North Ridge. We soloed and simul-climbed about 850m of good ice to reach the true north ridge at 9am. We bivied here, at 5450m.

Day 2. We started early (about 4am?) and together, always chose the easiest and fastest line along the north ridge. We bivied at 6021m this day.

Day 3. We climbed along the north ridge until about 6200m, then turned right and climbed towards the west col, which separates Latok I and II. We found a serac to bivi underneath at about 6400m.

Day 4. We climbed over the col, and then onto the south side of the mountain. We reached a bergschrund bivi at 6800m.

Day 5. Despite snow overnight, the weather improved in the morning and we left about 11am. We climbed for about five hours and reached the summit around 4pm. We descended to our bivi.

Day 6. We down climbed to our third bivi (serac bivi) and rested until about 8pm. Then we rappelled the line of ascent through the night, arriving at our first bivi (5450m) at dawn.

Day 7. We rappelled the true rocky north ridge, arriving at the glacier around 4pm.

Finances

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Agent - Blue Sky Treks & Tours	8000	BMC	750
3 x extra porters, \$95 each	223	Personal contributions	
Permit Total: (Breakdown below)	1140		
Permit 1) - Latok (-50% as shared)	590		
Permit 2) Environment	160		
Permit 3) Extra (??)	160		
Permit 4) Trekking Permit	235		
Liaison Officer (-50% as shared)	1214		
Gas canisters (13 x 8\$, 12 x 9\$)	166		
Total	10736		
Tips for porters and BC staff	400		
Total Total:	11136		
Askari Aviation Deposit for Heli rescue	15000	NB. This is US\$	
Non-refundable part of Deposit	300	NB. This is US\$	
International flights	640	Turkish Airways (free ski bag)	
Insurance	300	Global Rescue and Austrian Alpine	

Notes

All prices were originally in US dollars (and therefore much more rounded).

Permit was shared with a Russian team which made it half price.

However, we then had to get a trekking permit because we weren't with the Russians at any point during our trip.

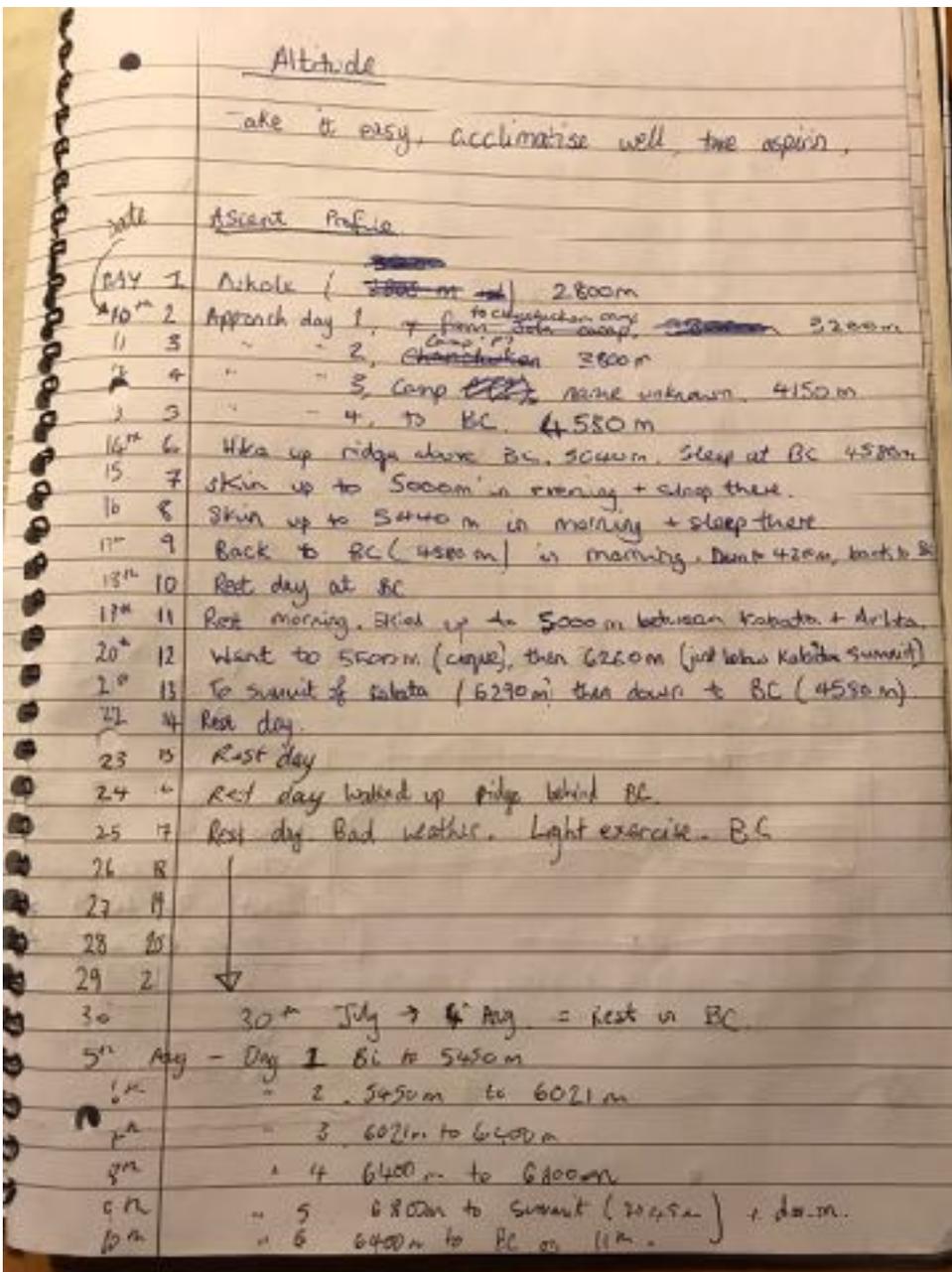
LO fee is normally double, but was also shared with Russian team, so was half price. We didn't see our LO once. Apparently he is: (USD\$) 1500 for equipment, 1000 for wage and 600 just because...?

There are a couple of 'extra' costs which don't seem to be linked to anything... that's just Pakistan, I guess!

Agent

An extra note for our agent, Ghulam Muhammed of Blue Sky Treks and Tours. Ghulam and all his staff were absolutely brilliant. I'd highly recommend him, and would use him again. I was thoroughly impressed with the lengths Ghulam went to help us, and he's been dealing with western climbers for nearly 20 years. He also sorted the Askari Aviation \$15,000 deposit! This was a slight contrast to my India trip, three weeks after I got back from Pakistan. The infamous Indian bureaucracy didn't disappoint.

Acclimatisation Schedule



Daily Schedule

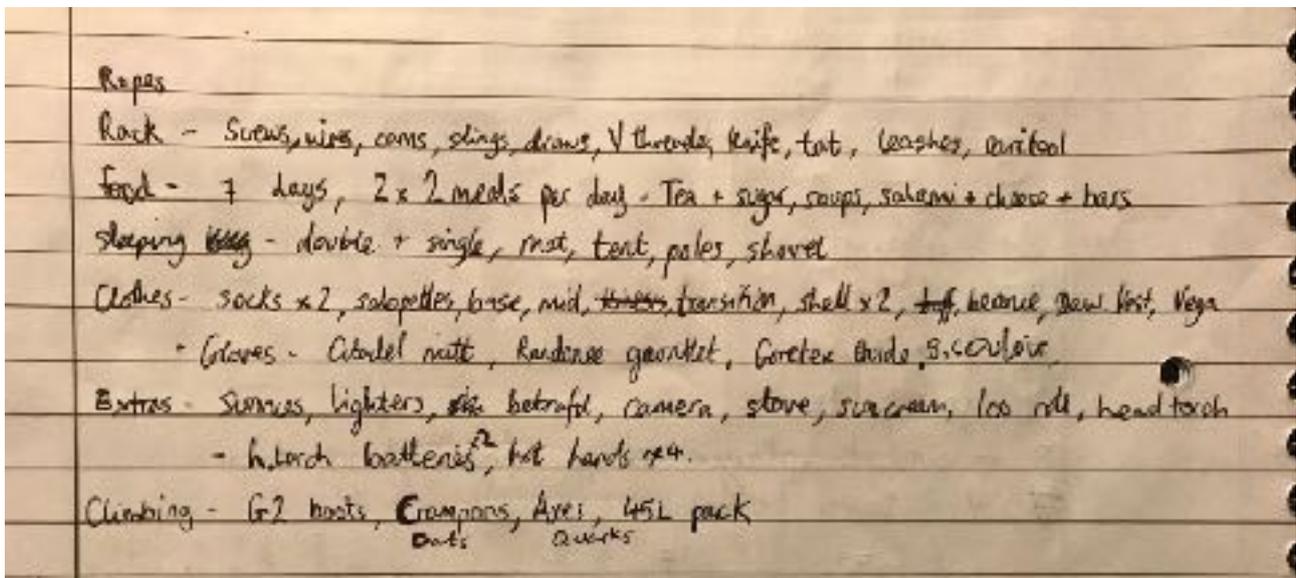
PK

1) Fri 1 24 Flight 100 - 157 - 136. AK arrival about 11:30 + Lunch in 5 ST. Arrive 9 am
 2) Sat 2 Camp in airport until 8:30 am. Fly PIA on Saturday morning to Islamabad
 3) Sun 3 Wait for rest of plane to arrive on K-1 Highway. Rest in hotel. K-1 in evening. (K-1)
 4) Mon 4 Drive a jeep to Askole. Get to Askole. Walk on road, evening hike above Askole.
 5) Tue 5 Equipment day 1. Arrive in Chitral. Camp at 3200m. (Chitral)
 6) Wed 6 " " 2 - to next camp. (Chitral)
 7) Thu 7 " " 3 - to next camp. (Chitral)
 8) Fri 8 " " 4 - Arrive at BC. (Chitral)
 9) Sat 9 Hike up ridge behind BC to 5440 m. Good weather + bounding.
 10) Sun 10 Rest. Then skinned up glacier behind BC to 5000m in evening.
 11) Mon 11 Skinned up to 5440 m. Had a fall. (Chitral)
 12) Tue 12 Up early + skid/walked back to BC. (Chitral)
 13) Wed 13 Rest day. (Chitral)
 14) Thu 14 Rest morning then walked/skied up to 5000 m. (Chitral)
 15) Fri 15 Walked up to camp between Kumbur Sahab + Askole. (Chitral)
 16) Sat 16 Arrived late in evening. (Chitral)
 17) Sun 17 Rest in BC. (Chitral)
 18) Mon 18 Rest in BC. (Chitral)
 19) Tue 19 Rest in BC. (Chitral)
 20) Wed 20 Porters arrive with re-supply. (Chitral)
 21) Thu 21 Helicopters try to rescue Alexander. (Chitral)
 22) Fri 22 Snow on tent in morning - in BC. (Chitral)
 23) Sat 23 More rain! (Chitral)
 24) Sun 24 1/2 mts snow complete. (Chitral)
 25) Mon 25 Weather improving. (Chitral)
 26) Tue 26 Sunshine! (Chitral)
 27) Wed 27 Overcast again. (Chitral)
 28) Thu 28 Sunshine! (Chitral)
 29) Fri 29 Rested in packed. (Chitral)
 30) Sat 30 Left for route at 1 am. (Chitral)
 31) Sun 31 Route day 2. (Chitral)

Route day 3

Tue 7 33 Climbed to Seac bivi in RH Tuv. to col. 6940m bivi.
 Wed 8 34 Climbed to W col then traversed south side. (Chitral)
 Thu 9 35 Route day 5. (Chitral)
 Fri 10 36 " " 6. (Chitral)
 Sat 11 37 " " 7. (Chitral)
 Sun 12 38 Rest. (Chitral)
 Mon 13 39 Rest. (Chitral)
 Tue 14 40 Leave BC. (Chitral)
 Wed 15 41 Another long day of walking. (Chitral)
 Thu 16 42 Walk to Askole! (Chitral)
 Fri 17 43 Skardu to Islamabad flight (just!). (Chitral)
 Sat 18 44 Taxi around 1st. (Chitral)
 Sun 19 45 HOME.

Route Kit (Approximately)



Route Line



Route Summary

Cešen-Livingstone-Stražar, North Ridge Variation. Latok I (7145m), Choktoi, Karakoram, Pakistan.
7 days. 2500m. ED+ (whatever that means!).

Acknowledgements

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Rob Smith and Ben Silvestre for weather updates
Uisdean Hawthorn for the Garmin InReach
TentMeals Expedition Food for the freeze-dried meals.
Ghulam and Blue Sky Treks and Tours
The Pakistan International Airways check-in agent who we bribed.
Alex Huber and Fabi Buhl for finding us beer in a muslim country.

The BMC for the grant. (Next time, I'll get the Slovenians to be BMC members so we get the full grant!)