

## Expedition Report

### British Slovenian Gasherbrum Expedition 2022

BMC Reference: British Slovenian Gasherbrum Expedition 2022

MEF Reference: 22-16



Photo: Gasherbrum 3 from the north west, showing the original objective (SW ridge) on the right hand side of the photo. Red line indicates the attempt (changed objective due to bad weather) on the north face/ridge and high point at 7800m. The snow slope on the left of our high point doesn't exist!

## **Expedition Members**

Tom Livingstone (UK)

Aleš Česen (Slovenia)

**Dates:** 5 July - 23 August 2022

**Location:** Gasherbrum Group, Baltoro Glacier, Karakoram, Pakistan

**Summary:** Gasherbrum 3 new route attempt (7952m). Our original idea of the SW ridge was aborted due to very strong prevailing SW winds. We therefore attempted G3 from the north face/ridge to seek more shelter from the winds/weather.

Our high point was around 7800 metres but we retreated due to a large (~100m) tower which was much harder than we could feasibly climb under the circumstances, and couldn't easily be bypassed. I'd like to go back to the SW ridge of G3 as the rock looks pretty good (granite), as opposed to the rest of the Gasherbrum group which is junk marble/limestone.

The poor rock caused us to dismiss another idea (the west face of G4).

## **Approach**

Each new line is a new day:

-DAY 1 -Tuesday 5 July Home to Istanbul. Plane delayed

-Travel delayed

-Arrive Islamabad, internal flight to Skardu. Meet Aleš, plus Villa and Siggie (two friends from Iceland who shared our BC. Ales and I secure permits for G3 and G2)

-Prepare gear in Skardu

-Skardu to Askole drive in jeep

-Approach day 1 - Askole to Jola camp

-Monday 11 July Approach day 2 - Jola to Paju

-Approach day 3 - Paju to Urdukas

-Approach day 4 - Urdukas to Gore 2

-Approach day 5 - Gore 2 to Shaqring

-Approach day 6 - Shaqring to Gasherbrum BC (5000m) on S.Gasherbrum glacier

-BC rest day

-BC rest day

-Monday 18 July -BC, packed for acclimatisation round 1

-BC to Camp 1 (via the normal route for G1/G2). C1 is 6000m. 6 hours ish via broken glacier

-C1 rest day

-C1 to C2 (6660m) on G2 normal route then back to C1

-C1 to BC, good travel, about 3 hours

-BC rest day

-DAY 20 -BC rest day

-Monday 25 July -BC, packed for acclimatisation round 2

-BC to C1

-C1 to C3 (7000m)

-C3 to C1

-C1 to BC

-BC rest, bad weather

-BC rest, bad weather

-Monday 1 August - BC rest, bad weather

-BC rest

DAY 30 -BC rest, packed for route

-BC to C1. very windy at altitude

-C1 to ice slope on south of G3, around 6800m, windy and snowing

-6800m bivy to 7100m bivy beneath SW ridge G3. Windy and snowing

-Change to north face of G3 to avoid SW strong winds. Climb to 7600m and bivy. Windy and snowing.

-Climb to 7800m but blocked by big tower on north ridge. Bail. Return to 7100m camp beneath SW ridge. Windy and snowing.

- Back to C1. Very tired. Leave climbing gear at C1 for another attempt.
- C1 to BC
- BC rest
- BC rest. Forecast calls for worse weather for the next 14 days. Bad weather. Decide to go home.

DAY 40 -BC to C1. Consider attempting single push on G2 normal route but too tired.

- Pack up C1 and go back to BC. Then start walk out but due to Liaison Officer's incompetence/lack of fitness, walk only about 1km down the moraine!
- Half of team (Tom and Sigg) walk to camp beneath Gondo Goro La pass.
- Tom and Sigg go over Gondo Goro La pass and to Hushe, then get jeep to Skardu in afternoon
- All team meet again in Skardu. Rest
- Skardu rest
- Skardu rest
- Bags from BC arrive in Skardu
- Fly from Skardu to Islamabad

DAY 49 -International flight from Islamabad to Home.

### **Acclimatisation**

Round 1) Hike normal route from BC (5000m) to G1/G2 Camp 1 (~6000m). Spend 3 nights there, with some day hikes to G2 C2 (6660m).

Round 2) Hike normal route from BC (5000m) to G1/G2 Camp 1 (~6000m). Spend 1 night there, then 1 night at G2 normal route C3 (~7000m), then 1 night back at C1.

This was a pretty good acclimatisation schedule. BC is quite high and on rocky moraine but 'ok.' No base camp grass or bouldering, unfortunately.

### **Attempt**

Gasherbrum 3 (7952m). Our original idea of the SW ridge was aborted due to very strong prevailing SW winds. We therefore attempted G3 from the north face/ridge to seek more shelter from the winds/weather.

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The poor rock caused us to dismiss another idea (the west face of G4).

We also considered a single push attempt on G2 but we exhausted after our G3 attempt and didn't have enough rest/good weather after it.

## Finances

<b>Expenditure - FOR 2 PEOPLE</b>	\$		
Agent - Blue Sky Treks and Tours	14000	(inc. permits, agent fee, Central Karakoram National Park fee (\$200 pp) Liaison Officer fee (\$2500 total)	
Tips for porters and BC staff	250		
International flights	1600	Turkish (free ski bag).	
Insurance	300	Global Rescue and Austrian Alpine	
Excess baggage fee (internal flight)	100		
Price per person:	8125		
Total for 2:	16250		
		<b>Income</b>	£
		BMC	1250
		MEF	2900
		AC	1725
		Total:	5875
		Income per person	2937
		Thanks to sponsors for contributions	

## Notes

There are lots (30/40) of people in BC trying to climb the normal routes of G2 and G1 (both 8000m peaks). This was a total junk show and really disappointing to see. They left piles of rubbish, didn't care about the mountain and had a very poor 'conquering' attitude, were supported by many sherpas and pakistani high altitude porters, and helicoptered between their 'speed attempts' at walking up all the 8000m peaks. They left fixed ropes on most of the mountain, and would often jummar on really poor anchors melting out of the snow and ice.

I think it was ok to go in July and August, but the glacier between BC and C1 opened up a lot and the consensus for 8000m peaks seems to be more July. I'd like to attempt the SW ridge of G3 again, since it looks like an interesting and technical way to reach a high summit, but would go a few weeks earlier (i.e. leave last week of June, come back middle August). Obviously who knows with the 'usual' weather these days!

Bring a proper first aid book

Having a GPS track of the route between BC and C1 was very useful as the glacier was quite open

Don't bring a generator to BC, it's loud and polluting. Bring a decent-sized solar panel for headtorches, iPods etc.

I took Firepot dehydrated meals in XL size (~700/800kcal) but these were too big. I can usually eat an XL meal but at altitude the appetite is much smaller.

A lightweight snow shovel would have been useful.

I've written more about general useful beta for expeditions in a blog here:  
<https://www.tomlivingstone.com/climbing-blog-1/2022/2/2/expedition-beta>

## Acknowledgements

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Rob Smith and Nejc Cesen for weather updates.

Geoff Cohen for providing his Expedition Report from the Scottish Expedition and attempt on the SW ridge of G3 in 1985.

Bruce Normand for beta.

Mountain Equipment, Petzl, La Sportiva, Julbo and Totem for support

Firepot meals for excellent dehydrated meals

The BMC, Alpine Club and Mount Everest Foundation for grants.



Gasherbrum 4 (L), G3 (middle, small rocky summit in sunshine) and G2 (far R) viewed from the south gasherbrum glacier aka camp 1 on the normal route to G2, 6000m. The left skyline of G3 is the SW ridge and what we wanted to attempt. We approached by the glacier in the front of the shot then up the snow/ice slope just to the right of the col



Ales at 7100m beneath the SW ridge of G3.



The SW ridge of G3 on the right. The north face/ridge of G3 is the left skyline, showing the obvious crux tower near the summit. We turned around at the base of this.