

**LAHUL 1973-2008
MKT EXPEDITION
POLAND**

**Report
for
Indian Mountaineering Foundation**

Expedition members

- Paweł Krawczyk – leader
- Piotr Paprzycki - team physician
- Mariusz Baskurzyński
- Emilian Klimek
- Michał Gryglicki
- Rafał Dmowski
- Dharmender Kapoor – liaisons officer
- Mani Kumar – expedition cook

Goals

- The main goal of our expedition was to climb the CB13A peak located in CB Range (Lahul, Himachal Pradesh, close to Batal village). We intended to climb the CB13A peak by the route of its first climbers: Z.J. Czarnecki, J. Kubit, A. Kucyper. These climbers were the members of the first Polish Himalayan Expedition in 1973.

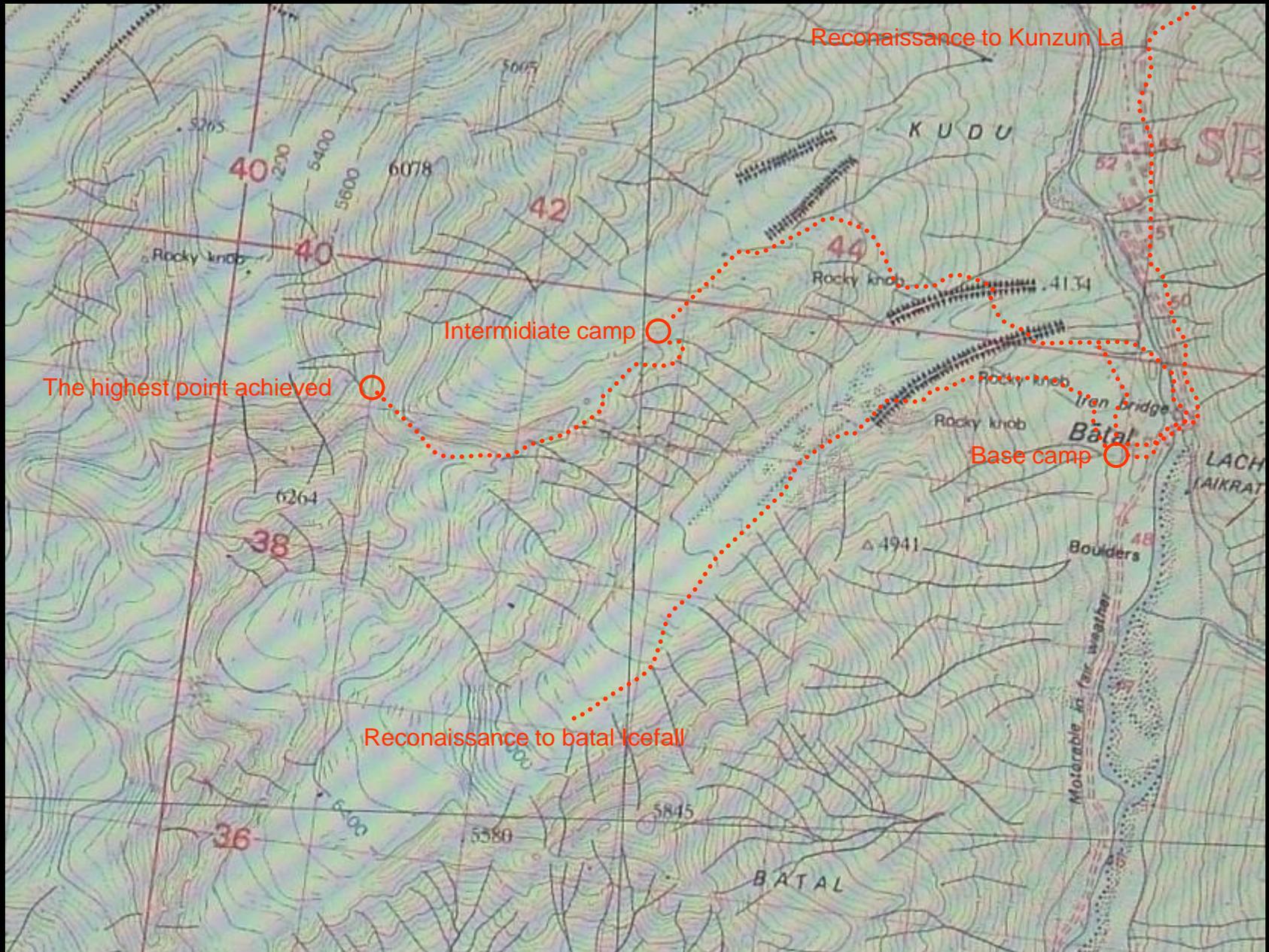
Goals

- Our second goal was to celebrate the 35th anniversary of this expedition, especially we wanted to honour Zbigniew Stepek (expedition leader) and Andrzej Grzązek (team physician) died in avalanche in Batal Icefall in 1973.
- The members of West Himalayan Institute climbing course with other members of the Polish Expedition had prepared the rescue expedition, but the bodies were never found. Symbolic tombstone of polish climbers is localised in Batal, near the bank of Chandra River.

What did we know about the polish route on CB13A?

- There is no detailed description of the polish route in 1973.
- Our sources depicted the route as a very easy one to ascent, in the rocky and finally mixt terrain. From Batal camp the route should follow along the right moraine of Batal Glacier and across the glacier to advanced base-camp. Next from the camp via clearly visible pillar of left orographic valley wall to the estern CB13A ridge and to the top.
- The Survey of India map do not show clearly CB13A position (no peak name). Hamberger (1960) does not point at all CB13A. Czarnecki (1973) depicts it as CB13(?) – 200 meters away from ridges jonction to CB14. Accordind to IMF website CB13A peak is 6240 meters above sea level high the position of peak is 77° 33' long. , 32° 21' lat.

Expedition area on Survey of India map



Road to head

- Expedition arrived to New Delhi on the 15th of August 2008.
- At the 19th of August we leaved Delhi and go by bus to Manali. First we met Mr Dharmender Kapoor – our Laissons Officer.
- We spent one day at Manali. We hired expedition cook there and made supply/equipment complete.
- We arrived to Batal in Chandra Valley on the 22nd of August and immediatelly started to establish base camp.

**Base camp near Batal (4000 m above sea level).
South view far into Chandra River Valley**



Reconnaissance I

- Our group performed the first reconnaissance in Batal Valley on the 23rd of August. We crossed the south moraine of Batal Glacier and climbed the glacier, near the icefall. The weather was bad. It was raining and visibility was poor.
- We tried to identify the route from 1973. There was no easy way to reach the south-east ridge of CB13A from glacier without using climbing equipment.

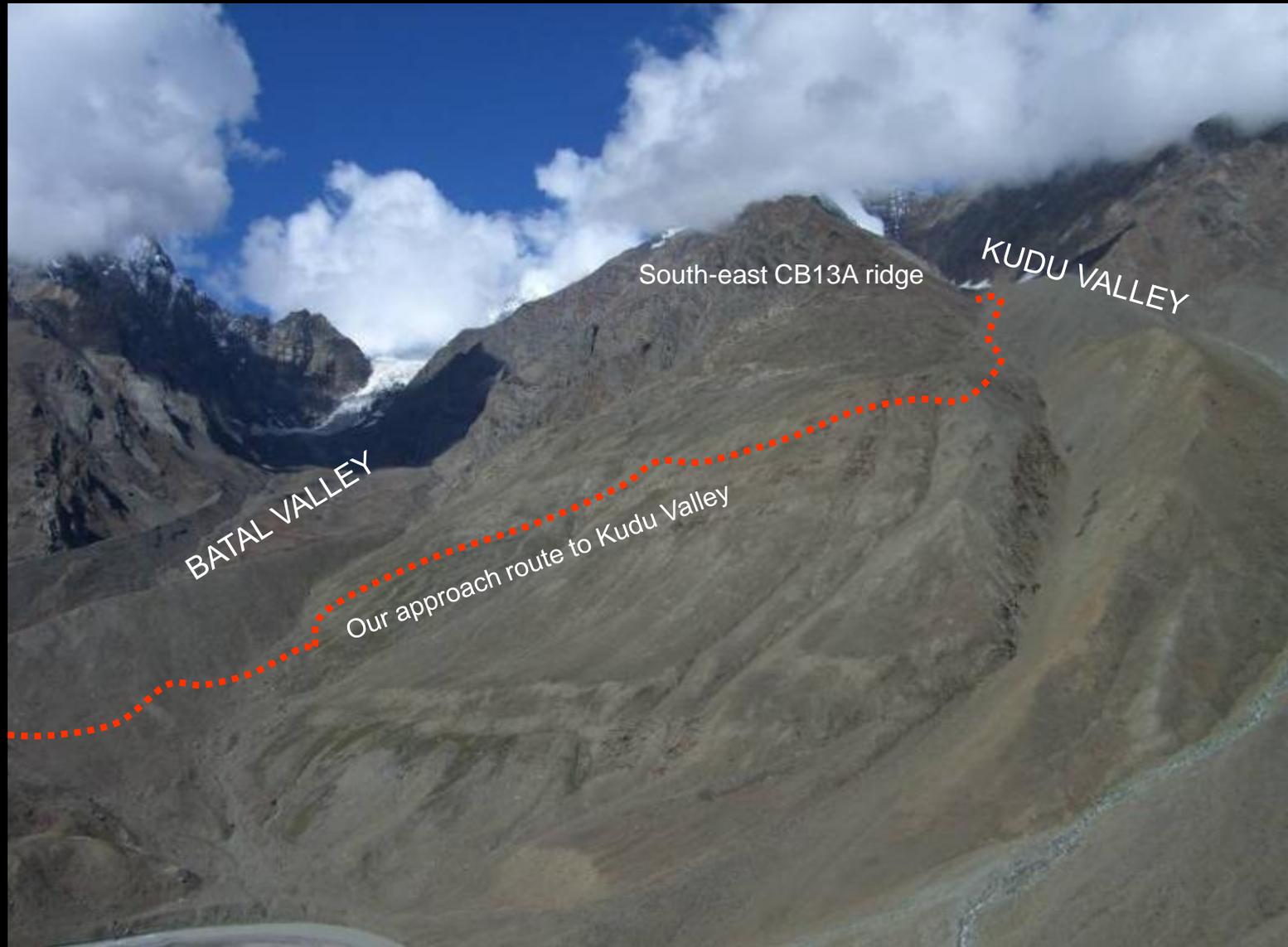
East ridge from Batal Valley with icefall to the left and waterrefall in the center



Reconnaissance II

- Next day (24st of August) second reconnaissance was carried out simultaneously to Kunzum La with South Kunzum Peak (P. Krawczyk, R. Dmowski, M. Gryglicki) and to Kudu Valley beyond east ridge (P. Paprzycki, E. Klimek, M. Baskurzyński). The weather was good and the sun was shining brightly .
- Finally we recognized the way to Kudu Valley along the Chandra River and next the left side moraine of Batal Glacier to the central part of Kudu Glacier. We also found two snowfields on glacier border for our tents. The route to the ridge from the north seemed easy, but we had to pass the strenuous scree.

Batal and Kudu Valleys, view from Kunzun La



Intermediate camp establishing

- During three days (from the 26th to the 28th of August) we transferred our equipment to the deposit in Kudu Valley and then set up our intermediate camp in there.
- On the 29st of August, P. Krawczyk and R. Dmowski passed the glacier below the CB13A wall and unsuccessfully tried to climb to the ridge via glacier lobe with glacier equipment. They resigned because of increasing slope degree after 3 hours of climbing.
- The same day E. Klimek, M. Gryglicki and M. Baskurzyński recognised the ridge through the scree above intermediate camp. They assessed the route as long but not difficult. We made decision to use scree route to climb the peak another day.

View to CB13A from intermediate camp in Kudu Valley



Peak attack

- On the 30th of August, at five a.m., the team Krawczyk, Gryglicki, Baskurzyński, Dmowski and Klimek begun the peak attack. P. Paprzycki stayed at the intermidiate camp. We communicated with intermidiate camp with walkie-talkie. The weather was good, no wind.
- We did not use the asecuration on the route, but there were steep scree slopes and the navigation was difficult because of very crumbly slate rocks.

CB12, CB13 and CB13A from Kunzun La



Peak attack

- Because of it Gryglicki, Krawczyk and Dmowski stopped climbing about ten o'clock and retreated to the intermediate camp. Klimek decided also to retreat an hour later. However, he past most difficult part of the rocky ridge.
- M. Baskurzyński continued climbing by icefield and about 3 p.m. He reported by radio the ascension of ridges jonction over 6000m above sea level. He was very tired, the weather worsened so he decided not to climb the rest of the peak route.

The view from the route along south-east ridge



Kunzum La

Our final route to CB13A

CHANDRA VALLEY

Intermediate camp

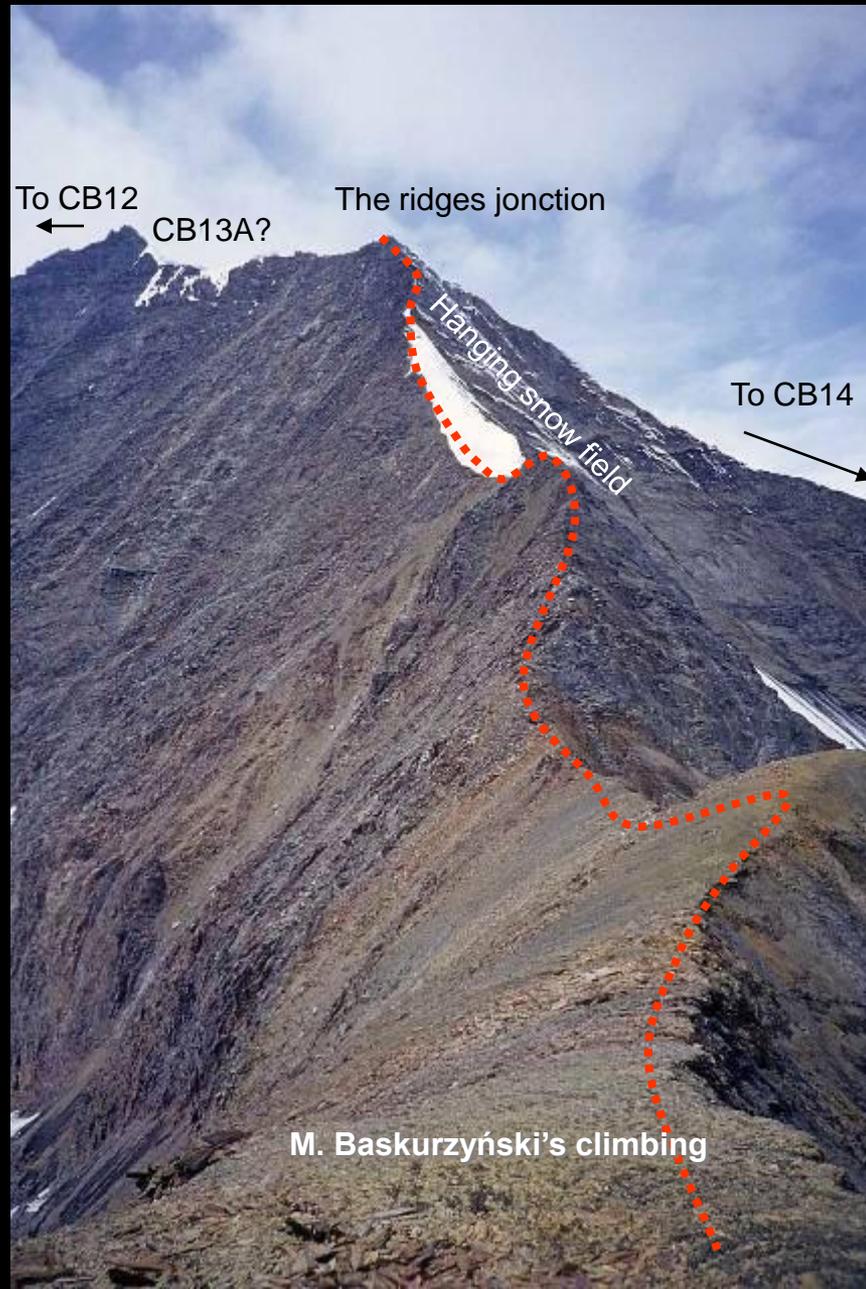
KUDU VALLEY



Descension and the return

- In the descent M. Baskurzyński was forced by nightfall to bivouac on the ridge. It was very hard. He reached the intermediate camp next day at ten o'clock. The rescue team (Gryglicki and LO - D. Kapoor) established vocal and visual contact with him on the ridge at night.

The final part of the route from the ridge



Descension and the return

- On the 31st of August 2008, after some rest, we remove the intermidiate camp and go down due to weather worsening (snowfall and fog).
- On the 2nd of September 2008, we dissolved the base camp and by jeep returned to Manali via Spiti Valley.
- On the 7th of September, the expedition was transferred to New Delhi by bus. On the 8th of September, during the brefing in IMF, the expedition was officially closed.
- On the 17th of Sep, all expedition members leaved India to Poland.