

was established at 3,680m, and an advanced base later established at 4,012m, near the Kashkaratash Glacier. After eight days climbing in the central range, we relocated to the western part of the At Bashi, establishing a new base camp (3,762m) at 40°50'50.1"N, 75°36'01.8"E).

We were delighted to summit 11 peaks between 4,000m and 4,801m. Ten of these are believed to have been previously unclimbed. Our most captivating first known ascent was Pik Rhianydd (4,801m). This involved a long approach up the Kashkaratash Glacier, followed by a snow climb up the east face to about 4,600m. Our route then went up steep snow and ice (up to 60°) on the north-east ridge to gain the summit (AD). Prior to our ascent, the highest summit in the entire At Bashi Range had been thought to be a 4,788m peak at the southern end of a 2km ridge leading to Pik Rhianydd. Our ascent of Rhianydd confirmed that it is the highest known summit in the At Bashi.

The coordinates and climbers of each peak we ascended are detailed at the AAJ website. [☰](#) [📷](#)

— MARK AITKEN AND ADRIAN NELHAMS, U.K.

## AT BASHI SKI MOUNTAINEERING

THE AT BASHI Range is particularly suitable for ski mountaineering and still has around 60 peaks above 4,000m that remain unclimbed. In 2016 our team explored the potential in the heart of the massif, which contains the highest peaks, and learned that it is too far to reach in one-day trips from a base at At Bashi town (AAJ 2017). For our next trip, therefore, we planned to operate from a yurt camp in one of the side valleys, and we chose the Tuyuk Bogoshti, which flows north down to the village of Birinchi May (“May 1”).

We arrived in At Bashi on April 3 and the next day went to examine snow conditions. They were bad: lots of wet snow with no crust, due to a few weeks of uninterrupted cloudy weather. On the 6th we visited our yurt camp and were disappointed to find it located at 2,400m, about 5km down valley from our proposed site. But it was comfortable, with beds, mattresses, blankets, and the yurts heated by coal stoves.

The weather improved and over the next four days we climbed and skied three peaks. On April 8 we moved south up the Tuyuk Bogoshti and then took an eastern tributary, eventually reaching the high glacial valley of Kok-Moinok, which allows access to a dozen summits over 4,000m. We opted for the closest top, which we reached via its west slopes and south ridge. We named it Choku Bocia (4,135m). We then made a fine ski descent of more than 1,700m, reaching the yurts at 5:30 p.m.

On the 9th we headed up a ridge on the western side of the Tuyuk Bogoshti and eventually reached a previously climbed top of 3,750m that the locals call Choku Kuumamy.

Next day we set off at 4 a.m. and again reached the Kok-Moinok Glacier and continued to its head. From there we climbed up to the watershed ridge and, moving west, reached a narrow summit of 4,256m, our highest during the expedition. We named it Choku Sonja, after our friend Sonja Brambati. It was a full 12km descent on skis to our camp. [☰](#) [📷](#) [🔍](#) [▶](#)



Approaching the head of the Kok-Moinok Glacier basin. Choku Bocia (4,135m) is the summit at far right. The obvious rock tower to the left is likely unclimbed. *Ruggero Vaia*

— RUGGERO VAIA, ITALY, SUPPLIED BY PAOLO VITALI