

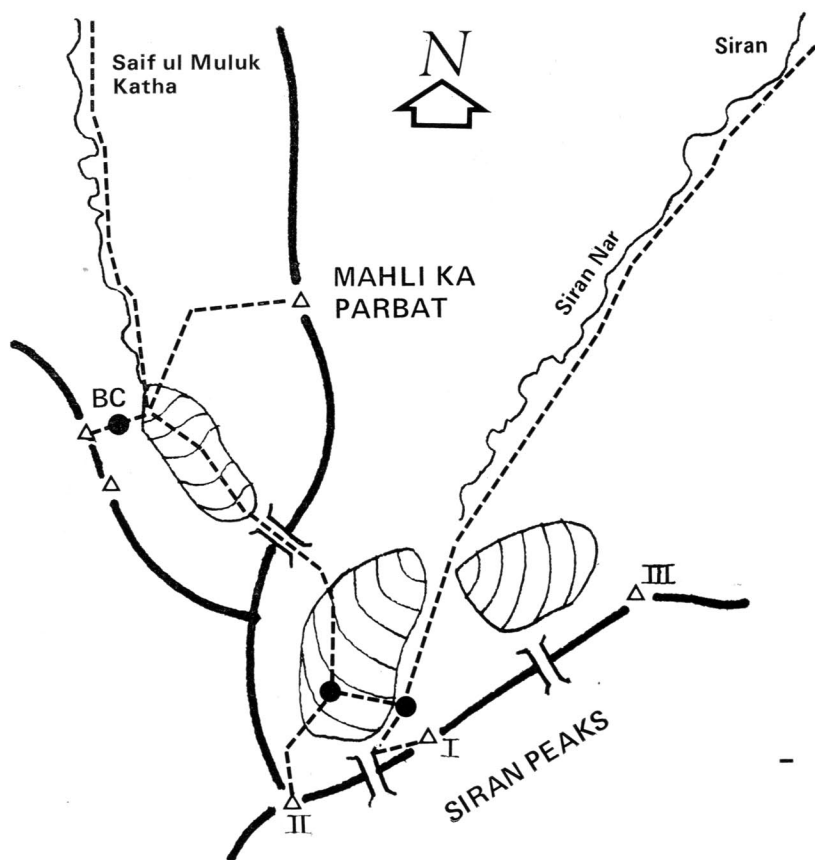
# Kaghan 1972

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Starting from Dunga-Gali, Trevor Braham, Frieder Höflin, my wife and I reached Naran after an adventurous Land-Rover drive in the afternoon of 17 June. Here Norman Norris, with his wife Jean, joined us and our party was complete. Trevor's knowledge of Urdu (Pakistan's official language) and of the area helped a lot in arranging porters. We managed to leave early on the morning of 18 June with two ponies and two porters for the Saif ul Muluk lake.

Trevor and I left before 6am for the first reconnaissance after a night in an empty room of the still closed rest-house. Passing the partly ice-covered lake we followed the Saif ul Muluk Katha (valley) and reached a suitable camping

*Map 8 The Siran Peaks*



site after three hours' walk at *c* 3660 m. We marked the same for our friends and climbed up to the col between the Saif ul Muluk glacier and the West Siran glacier, *c* 4270 m. Back at the camp site we met our friends who had to carry heavy loads as only two porters accompanied them. We decided to put up a camp on the West Siran glacier and to try Siran II from there.

On 20 June we established one camp at the Siran glacier. In the meantime Trevor climbed a small peak above our camp together with Sultan, the only porter who stayed with us for the night. Next day, unfortunately, Norman had trouble with his knee, so he and Jean remained at the Base Camp. We others shifted to the Siran glacier. The sky was partly overcast on 22 June and we were not sure whether the weather would remain good. Not far from the tent a steep snow-face led up to the plateau under the NW slope of the summit. Trevor did not feel well and returned to the tents. After two hours' climb with crampons over steep névé we stood on an open saddle at about 4580 m. The weather seemed to hold out and we followed the NW slope to the top, which we reached at 10am, 5013 m. We found a broken bottle on the last rocks of the SW ridge which was most likely the route taken by the two young British climbers during the first ascent in 1969. At 12.30 we were back at the camp. To our delight Trevor had sent us Sultan to carry down our gear. During a light snowfall we descended to the Base Camp, where Jean, Norman and Trevor waited for us. We sent Sultan down to Naran with instructions to be back with two porters after two days.

23 June should have been a day off, but we all climbed a small peak above our Base Camp about 4420 m high. On 24 June, with heavy rucksacks, Frieder and I left for the Mahli ka Parbat while our friends were packing up. On a spur on the W face we established a camp at about 4260 m, protected against falling stones and ice. Since the first ascent by Willoughby and Price in 1940 Mahli ka Parbat was never climbed again; the N Peak, 5223 m, was climbed in 1967. At 6.15am next day we started from the tent already roped. In the beginning we climbed together but soon we had to belay each length of rope. Steep snow and ice-slopes led us to a rocky barrier over which we reached the upper snow-field at about 4580 m. After a short rest we climbed in two hours to the saddle between Mahli ka Parbat Main and N Peaks. Higher up we found hard ice under the soft snow. From the snowy top we had to climb down to a col and continued over a rocky ridge to the Main Peak, 5290 m, which we reached at 12.45pm. We had a good view in all directions from this steep top, outranging all the other neighbouring peaks by at least 300 m. On the descent we had to take shelter under a projecting rock for a short time due to an electrical storm. Before 6pm we returned to our tent.

On the 26th after a long rest we descended in half an hour about 910 m, partly sliding down through soft snow. Only on the way up to the Base Camp through the Saif ul Muluk Katha did we realise that we were still tired.

Trevor had instructed Sultan to return from Naran to the Base Camp. He arrived early on 27 June and had to carry most of our luggage down. We traversed the col to the Siran glacier and picked up the tent, which we left behind after

our Siran II climb. After a lot of effort we managed to level a small platform for our tent on a rocky island at the foot of the unclimbed Siran I. We left the camp at 5.30am on the 28th. Unfortunately, the weather did not look too promising. In one hour we reached the col between Siran I and II. Climbing a steep couloir covered with hard névé left of the s ridge, followed by a snow-slope, we were already in fog. The orientation was difficult, but we still managed to find an easy route through the rocky face, dividing the lower and the upper part of the ridge. Over a snow-slope and the granite ridge we reached the rocky summit, highest of the Siran peaks, 5031 m, at 8.15am. Clouds partly opened for short moments and we could see Siran II, Mahli ka Parbat and, for a few seconds, also Nanga Parbat in the E. At 11.30am we were back at the tent. Before we managed to pack up our rucksacks, snow-fall started. We had to walk for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours through the Siran Nar (valley) under heavy rain before we reached the shepherds' huts at Siran. On 29 June we visited the Khaba Nar in the morning before descending towards Battakundi. The next day we walked back to Naran, as the road was still blocked through avalanches and landslides.