



AAC Publications

Mt. Pomiu (a.k.a. Celestial Peak, 5,413m), southwest face and south-southwest ridge, The Western; south-southwest ridge, alternative start

China, Qionglai Mountains, Siguniang National Park

In late July, Ye Feng, Zhang Yunping, and I climbed a new line up the southwest face to reach the south-southwest ridge. It was an enjoyable and yet tormenting 52 hours, as we were hit by various calamities. On the approach one of our guides fell into a treacherous river, and once at base camp we had to wait out prolonged rain and sleet before making the ascent. We took two rucksacks, which were carried by the seconds, some basic emergency bivouac gear, seven liters of water, and a stove.

After 16 hours of uninterrupted climbing we had reached the top of the 23rd pitch. It was now 3 a.m. on the 29th, and raining. We sat on a ledge until sunrise, and then climbed three more pitches to the summit, which we reached at 9 a.m. We named our line the Western (1,400m, VI 5.10a). We climbed 14 new pitches on the southwest face, and a further 12 on the south-southwest ridge, more or less following the upper section of the route first put up in 2005 by Luo Erjia, Luo Rijia, and Su La.

On the first rappel a rock the size of a plate hit my leg. The scenes from *Touching the Void* entered my head, but the bone was not broken; I was able to continue, albeit in some pain. We were forced to make a second bivouac near the point where our route left the ridge, and we subsequently had great difficulties rappelling down our line, as the ropes caught repeatedly in cracks.

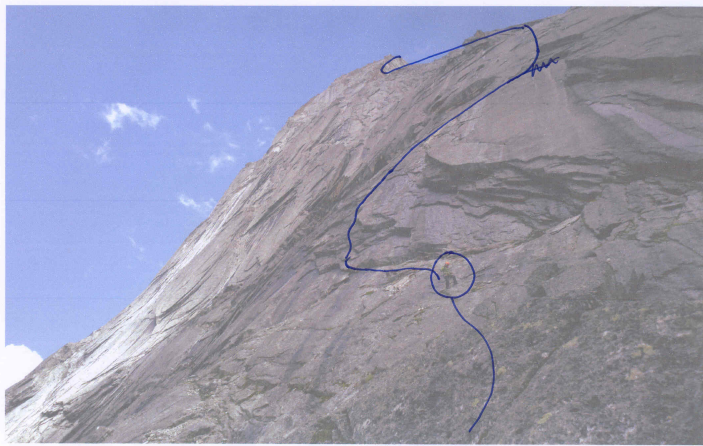
In September, Zheng Chaohui and Li Yuan climbed the mountain via the south-southwest ridge. They followed the ridge more or less directly from its foot, between the 2005 Luo Erjia–Luo Rijia–Su La start up the left flank, and the 2005 Liu Xinan–Qiu Jiang on the right. The two set up base camp (4,500m) on the 5th with the help of two porters, and left next day at 9 a.m. They reached the top at 2 p.m. on September 7, and regained base camp at noon on the 8th, having rappelled Liu Xinan's line in the lower section. The weather was good and Zheng had previous experience on the route, having climbed the ridge to 5,280m in 2009, looking for a missing climber. Zheng and Li Yuan climbed ca 1,600m up to 5.9+. They left one bolt as a rappel anchor.

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Images



Pomiu from the southwest showing the line, and bivouac sites, of the Western. (B1) is on the ascent. (B2) is on the descent, a more direct line being rappelled below this point.



On the lower section of the Western, showing the approximate line of the continuation. The slabby west face on the left remains unclimbed.



Lower section of the Western.

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