



AAC Publications

Nanga Parbat, Diamir Face, Mummery Rib, winter attempt

Pakistan, Western Himalaya

The idea of climbing the Mummery Rib accompanied me to Nanga Parbat in 2008. Retracing the line attempted by the British legend Alfred Mummery would have been unsporting in anything but alpine style, and in 2008 this was not possible. Instead I climbed the Kinshofer.

Elizabeth Revol (France) and I left Rome on December 30, 2012. We acclimatized on Ganalo Peak, climbing a couloir above base camp to 5,700m, but gave up on the summit because of a forecast for a weather window for Nanga Parbat. Our first attempt on the Mummery Rib lasted three days. We stopped the first night at 5,100m, and the second at 6,000m. The route from base camp (4,200m) in the Diamir Valley to Camp 1 is not difficult, but it is very dangerous due to crevasses and exposure to large avalanches from snow slopes and seracs high on the face. We left at 9 the following morning and climbed up and left toward the Mummery Rib. We climbed a gully up the middle of the spur forming the crest of the rib, and hacked out a site for Camp 2 on an icy crest. On the third day we crossed back right, outflanking a rocky spur, to reach an ice couloir that was most likely used by Gunter and Reinhold Messner during their descent. The angle was 50-60°, the ice of the hard winter sort, and there were several mixed sections and delicate traverses. We reached an altitude of ca 6,400m, from where we hoped to reach a snow ridge on the left and follow it to the upper plateau leading to the summit pyramid. However, we discovered the spur is constantly exposed to spindrift falling from the plateau, and we were exposed to the effects of a jet stream originating from a weather system some distance from Nanga Parbat. We failed to reach our proposed Camp 3 at 6,700m.

We spent two nights at Camp 2 waiting for better weather. In fact it got worse, and we had to descend and abandon further attempts.

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Images



Diamir Face of Nanga Parbat in winter. (1) Normal (Kinshofer) Route. (2) Mummery Rib attempted in 2013 to 6,400m. Mummery and his Gurkha companion Rajobir reached 6,100m in 1895. (3) 1978 Messner Route. (4) Line used by Sandy Allen and Rick Allan on July 14-15, 2012 to reach the summit. (5) Line attempted by Sandy Allen, Rick Allan, Lhakpa Rangdu and Lhakpa Zarok on July 12. Other routes and variants on this face are not shown.



Daniele Nardi climbing hard winter ice during a 2013 attempt on the Mummery Rib.



Daniele Nardi descending toward the Diamir Valley after the first attempt on the Mummery Spur.

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