



Strate Himal (5,323m), east couloir, and also by north ridge; Lambert Himal (5,100m), west ridge; Bijora Hiunchuli (6,111m), north-northwest ridge, attempt

Asia, Nepal, West Nepal, Kanjiroba Himal

Bijora Hiunchuli is a subsidiary summit on the northwest ridge of Kasi Dalpa (6,386m). The small snowy top is clearly visible from Jumla airport, and access is relatively simple. In 2009 Sonia Baillif and I explored the approach to base camp in the Chaudhabise Valley, noting that the north-northwest ridge offered an elegant route to the summit. This time economy of means dictated that we used no fixed rope or high altitude porters, something of an unknown to us. It proved to be the highlight of the expedition, even though success eluded us. Without fixed rope the mountaineering game is different. However, the message is simple: It is possible for even ordinary alpinists to climb "by fair means," particularly on small peaks away from the crowds. Alpine style is not reserved for high-performance athletes, so simply leave your fixed rope at home.

The spring season suffered from the effects of a heavy winter snowfall, which blocked many Himalayan villages. This meant our team's base camp was low. The weather was also unstable, but the main trouble was a case of cerebral edema to one of the party. In the end we climbed several small tops: Strate Himal by the east couloir (5,323m, AD-, François Damilano and Jean-René Talopp); the same peak again, but this time by the north ridge and descent of the southeast flank (F+, Frank Bonhomme, Stephane Castex, Sonia Baillif, Dhane Magyer, Zangbu Sherpa, Yves Exbrayat, and me); Jagdula Peak (see report by François Damilano below); and Lambert Himal by the northeast ridge (F+, Yves Exbrayat and Jean-Louis Perette). We only got a short distance up Bjora Hiunchuli, reaching the 5,272m col at the foot of the ridge and progressing up the crest to ca 5,600m. The beautiful north-northwest ridge of this peak is still there for the taking—by fair means, of course.

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Images



Approaching Bjora Hiunchuli from the northeast. The final approach to the 5,272m col and attempt on the north-northwest ridge is marked. The summit right of the col is Strate Himal, which was traversed from right to left.

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