



AAC Publications

Sursun Ri: first known ascent, via northeast ridge

Tibet, Himalaya

After six weeks in base camp and one attempt at the British Route on the southwest face of Xixabangma (a.k.a. Shishapangma), the weather got worse, with a lot of fresh snow at altitude and a strong northerly wind. We could see a one-kilometer horizontal plume stretching from the summit of Xixabangma. There would be a high risk of windslab.

As an alternative, Sebastien Moatti and I looked at the northeast ridge of 6,535-meter Sursun Ri (Triangle Peak in Tibetan; named by the 1982 British team), an unclimbed, shapely peak situated on the Nepalese border and obvious on the approach to base camp. With mostly snow slopes, it looked quite straightforward. Furthermore, after one week of bad weather at our homely base, eating far too many French fries and Snickers fritters, we needed to get some exercise and lose some weight.

After a windy night at our advanced base and a long crossing of the Nyanang Phu moraines, we reached the foot of the peak at 5,200m on October 8. We ascended goat terrain until the beginning of the snow ridge at 5,900m, where we bivouacked.

An early start was rewarded by a wonderful sunrise over the Himalaya. We walked up the snow ridge until the terrain became steeper, reaching the crux at around 6,400m. Two mixed pitches (around M4 with good protection) through a rock barrier gave nice climbing. Snow slopes and exposed ice flutes at 60-70° led to the final mushroom, which we turned on the Langtang side to reach the summit at 3 p.m. The overall standard of the route was about D, and we were able to regain our tent that night.

Max Bonniot, GMHM, France

Images



The rock barrier forming the crux of the route at 6,400m.



The northeast ridge of Sursun Ri. The frontier ridge, rising left, leads toward Pemthang Karpo Ri (a.k.a. Dome Blanc, 6,830m).

Article Details

Author	Max Bonniot
Publication	AAJ
Volume	56
Issue	88
Page	364
Copyright Date	2014
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions