



AAC Publications

Dayantianwo (5,240m), southwest face, Three Sheep Bring Prosperity

China, Sichuan, Qionglai Shan, Siguniang National Park

On September 15 a multi-national expedition completed the first ascent of Dayantianwo, above the Shuangqiao Valley. This granite pyramid lies south-southeast of Baihaizi Lake and is the first summit southwest of Peak 5,180m. Chaohui Zheng of China, Szu-ting Yi of Taiwan, and I climbed the ca 600m southwest face at 5.10 R/X 60°. We were part of a larger expedition, organized by Zheng, that attempted the peak earlier in the month. At that time a series of storms covered the mountain in heavy snow. After a week of good weather that melted most of it, we three, along with the Tibetan climber Laoyao Xu, returned to our high camp at the base of Dayantianwo, and the following day started up two separate routes on the southwest face.

After seven pitches the two routes intersected, Xu decided to descend, and Zheng joined Yi and me. After reaching the summit we rappelled during the night, returning to camp after a 16-hour round trip. Yi and I named our route Three Sheep Bring Prosperity, after the Bharal mountain sheep that ran past us across fifth-class terrain close to the summit. Zheng named his variation Top of a Dream.

Prior to this, on August 25, Yunching Li (China), Yi, and I established Playing with Fire, a ca 450m, nine-pitch route (5.10-) on the south ridge of Seerdengpu. The route ends at a saddle on the ridge, probably 1,000m below the summit, and was completed with one bivouac during the descent.

The Shuangqiao is 38km long and has a paved road that allows relatively easy access throughout the year. A shuttle bus provides access to the base of the mountains, and there is a small rafting school and local artisans selling their handmade products. During the winter the valley is one of the best areas in China for icefall climbing. Although alpinists have visited the area for decades, there are still many unclimbed mountains and big walls. Permit requirements for climbing, and prices, are constantly evolving—the bureaucracy can be as challenging as the climb itself.

Images



Dayantianwo from the south, showing (1) Three Sheep Bring Prosperity and (2) Top of a Dream. Behind and right lie the Three Baihaizi Mountains and Potala Shan.



Seerdenpu from the west showing Playing with Fire on the south ridge.



Anderson leading on the southwest ridge of Dayantianwo.



Behind is the pointed summit of Wargrusei (ca 5,300m, far left) and the taller Seerdengpu (5,592m).

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