



AAC Publications

Tawoche Northwest, Northeast Face, Attempt

Nepal, Mahalangur Himal – Khumbu Section

On October 31, João Garcia (Portugal) and Angel Salamanca (Spain) made the best attempt to date to reach the virgin summit of Tawoche Northwest (6,335m), a marked top on the unclimbed northwest ridge of Tawoche (6,495m). This summit had previously been attempted in 2012 from the Cholatse-Tawoche col (AAJ 2014).

The pair made the first known attempt on the northeast face, hoping to make a nonstop ascent. They had difficulty accessing the bottom of this face at 4,800m, as deep autumn powder snow over hellish moraine forced them to make two gear carries. Then, starting at 4 a.m., they made a rightward-slanting ascent of the face to reach the northwest ridge of Tawoche, at ca 6,100m, left of the summit of Tawoche Northwest. They moved fast, but breakable crust or powder snow on the less steep sections proved tiring. They were continually bombarded by spindrift, and found it impossible to protect the upper 55° snow section. This steepened to a 70° exit onto the ridge via a difficult cornice, also climbed without meaningful protection. They were close to the virgin summit, but the ridge to the top looked extremely dangerous, so the two decided to retreat, using Abalakovs, snow mushrooms, and snow stakes as rappel anchors. They arrived back at their camp at 10 p.m.

The 1,300m ascent was graded TD+ V/5 M5 R, and although the team did not summit or join an existing route, they have named the line Jaime, after a mutual friend who died in a climbing accident.

Information provided by **Angel Salamanca**, Spain

Images



Heading for the narrows in the middle of the northeast face of Tawoche Northwest.



Spindrift on the northeast face of Tawoche Northwest.



(A) Tawoche. (B) Tawoche Northwest. (1) East face direct (American, 1999). (2) Northeast pillar (British, 1995). (3) North face direct (Japanese, 2009) (4) Northeast face attempt (Portuguese-Spanish, 2014).

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