



AAC Publications

Shuangqiao Valley, Ice and Mixed; Lierenfeng, East Face

China, Qionglai Mountains, Siguniang National Park

I arrived in Siguniang on Christmas Day 2013 with the goal of developing hard dry-tooling and mixed climbing. Ice climbing is a relatively new sport in China, and mixed climbing has only recently picked up traction. There were only three established mixed routes in the Shuangqiao valley, one by French climbers in 2010 and the other two by more French and me (a Brazilian living in China) during the winter of 2012-'13. By the end of the 2014 winter season the valley had 14 modern mixed climbs, nine of which I put up. Highlights include Lepton (M8+), Welcome to SQG (M8), Antimatter (M11), and Dark Matter (M11)—the last two were China's hardest mixed lines as of April 2014.

On January 6, 2014, I repeated Baijiu Hangover (M8 WI5+), a route put up by French climbers the previous winter. As I descended I drilled three bolts on a line a few meters to the left (one on the first pitch and two on the second). I returned on January 23 with Bruce Normand and redpointed it: How to Train Your Dragon (M7 WI5+).

I also joined four other climbers for an attempt on virgin Lierenfeng (5,362m) above the Shuangqiao Valley. We planned an ascent of the east face by two different routes that would intersect in the middle. We walked around three hours from the road, camped, and then at 5 a.m. on January 10 started climbing. Wu Kang (China) and I began in a moderate snow gully, with the occasional ice pitch (AI3) and short sections of mixed. After 350m we traversed left toward the central gully. Wu waited here with Ricky Cheng from the other party while I soloed the remaining 300m of gully and a nerve-wracking 80m of loose rock to the summit, where I met Yann Delavoux, France, and Xiao Liu, China. We all descended together to the rest of our party and then down to camp.

Marcos Costa, China

Images



The east face of Lierenfeng and the Costa-Wu line on the first ascent. The other climbers reached the middle of the face directly.

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