



Shuangqiao Valley: Eagle Peak (ca. 5,300m), Southwest Face, Golden Eagle; New Dry Tooling Routes

China, Sichuan, Qionglai Shan – Siguniang National Park

My main goal for the 2014-'15 winter was to complete the Great Wall of China Project, a link-up of the three most iconic peaks of the Shuangqiao Valley. This would involve making the first ascent of Queen's Peak (Nuwang Shan, 5,404m), the second ascent of Seerdengpu (5,592m), and then finishing on Putala Shan (Potala, 5,428m), before descending to Baihaizi Lake. Visiting Frenchman Enzo Oddo and I were not expecting the cold to be so severe. After difficult climbing in a deep, narrow couloir, we reached the col on Queen's Peak's northeast ridge but then retreated, both of us nearly frostbitten. This plan remains in the forefront of my mind.

Eagle Peak has one of the most striking granite walls in the Shuangqiao Valley: completely overhanging for 300m, covered in beautiful golden streaks, and in sun almost all day—a perfect winter big-wall location. Enzo and I took six days to complete a line to the left of my own route Invisible Hand Sit Start (AAJ 2014), sleeping in a portaledge. Most pitches were A2+ to A3+, and the cracks were grassy, making progress slow. The last pitch had 15 beak, Pecker, and micro-nut placements in a row. We named the route Golden Eagle (300m, A3+)

Enzo and I also opened about 25 new pitches of mixed climbing or dry-tooling in the Shuangqiao. The two areas on which we mostly focused were Xianxiandong, a new area developed specifically for the Kailash Dry Tooling event, and the Bar, the next cliff up-valley. Grades range from M13 to M11/12.

Marcos Costa, China

Images



The lower southwest face of Eagle Peak. (1) Hagoroamo (2013, 8 pitches, 5.11). (2) Golden Eagle (2015, 300m, A3+). (3) Invisible Hand Sit Start (2013, 330m, A2+ 5.12-).

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