



Dhaulagiri I, Southwest Pillar, Attempt

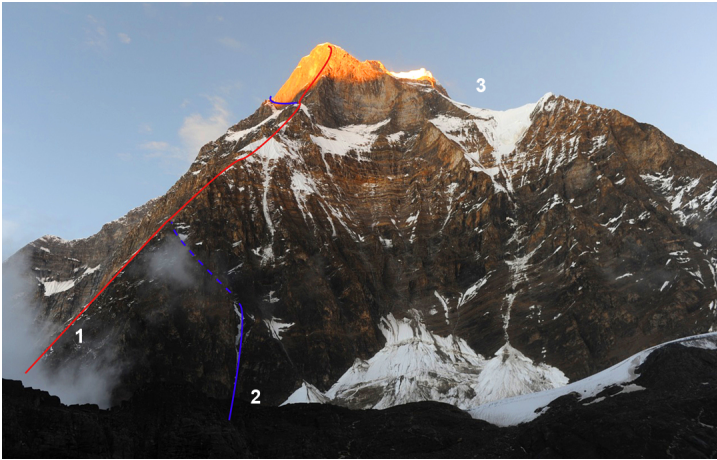
Nepal, Dhaulagiri Himal

The southwest ridge of Dhaulagiri (8,167m) descends 3km from the summit to a point where it divides into the south-southwest ridge and southwest pillar. The south-southwest ridge and southwest ridge were climbed in 1978 by Japanese, while the steep southwest pillar was attempted twice by French teams, in 1978 and 1980. On the latter attempt the climbers reached ca 7,500m, at the top of the steep pillar and at the junction with the southwest ridge, but did not continue to the summit—the technical difficulties below had prevented loads from being carried for a summit push. It was left to Zoltan Demjan (Czech) and Yuri Moiseev and Kasbek Valiev (Kazakhstan) to complete the route in 1988, in a magnificent alpine-style ascent (16 days round-trip from base camp) with climbing up to UIAA VI+ A2 on the 450m crux section above 7,000m. Immediately prior to the expedition, these three had been climbing 7,000m peaks in the Tien Shan.

In October, Yannick Graziani and Patrick Wagon (France) attempted to repeat the route, also in alpine style. They didn't follow the ridge from its base, but climbed a variation start via a couloir on the south flank to reach the crest at 5,900m (mainly 50° with sections of 70–80°). From here they fixed ca 350m of rope on the next section of pillar (V) and installed a bivouac at 6,100m. Further bivouacs were made at 6,600m and 6,900m before the pair attempted to outflank the steep upper pillar on the west side, to that point having overcome terrain “comparable with the north face of the Eiger.” They were hit by a storm at 7,100m, and after a difficult bivouac at 7,050m managed to make an equally difficult retreat. Wagon was full of praise for the exceptional performance of the 1988 trio.

Rodolphe Popier, France

Images



Dhaulagiri from the south-southwest. The summit is not visible—the high point in this image is 7,400–7,500m. (1) Southwest Pillar, original line (French in 1980 to the top of the pillar; Czech-Kazakh in 1988 to summit). (2) Graziani-Wagnon attempt. This pair made many variants on the route to avoid some of the technical difficulties. (3) South-southwest ridge (Japanese, 1978).



Yannick Graziani on a fine pitch of UIAA V at ca 6,000m on the southwest pillar of Dhaulagiri.

Article Details

Author	Rodolphe Popier
Publication	AAJ
Volume	58
Issue	90
Page	333
Copyright Date	2016
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions