



## AAC Publications

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### **Gimmigela Chuli East, Northwest Face**

Nepal, Kangchenjunga Himal

**In October, Alex Blümel and I trekked to the north side of Kangchenjunga and established base camp at 5,200m, a little higher than the classic Pangpema site. We acclimatized on Drohmo's southeast ridge, spending three nights at 5,900m. I was amazed by the remoteness of the Kangchenjunga area.** There are still great lines to do here, especially along the border with Sikkim extending northward from Gimmigela Chuli.

Our goal was the northwest face of Gimmigela Chuli East (7,007m). I was unable to understand why this face had not been attempted: It's a king line. Maybe it is the long approach or because this area sees few visits by teams focused on alpine-style ascents.

Due to a wet monsoon, with high precipitation, the face was in perfect condition. Our main concerns were wind and the lack of obvious bivouac sites on the face. Our tactic of going as light and quickly as possible proved to be the right decision.

We left base camp on November 8 and bivouacked at 6,000m, at the upper bergschrund, above a large serac barrier. The next day we climbed the face to an exit leftward onto the final section of the north ridge, where we bivouacked at 6,850m. The difficulties were 85° ice and one rock section of M4. On the 10th we reached the summit at 7:30 a.m.

We descended our route by rappelling from Abalakov ice anchors. It took about six hours to reach 6,000m, after which it was faster to downclimb. The height of the face was 1,200m, and we were the first to climb the mountain from Nepal.

Hansjörg Auer, Austria

**Editor's note:** Gimmigela Chuli East was first climbed from Sikkim, in September 1993, by a large Japanese expedition that was attempting to reach the main (west) summit of Gimmigela Chuli via the east ridge. It was climbed again by the same route in October the following year, also by Japanese, who this time successfully continued west to the 7,350m main summit of Gimmigela Chuli.

## Images



Hansjörg Auer approaching mixed ground on the northwest face of Gimmigela Chuli East.



Hansjörg Auer approaching a hidden couloir leading to the bottleneck on the northwest face of Gimmigela Chuli East.



Alex Blümel on the final moves of a short mixed section at around 6,650m on the northwest face of Gimmigela Chuli East.





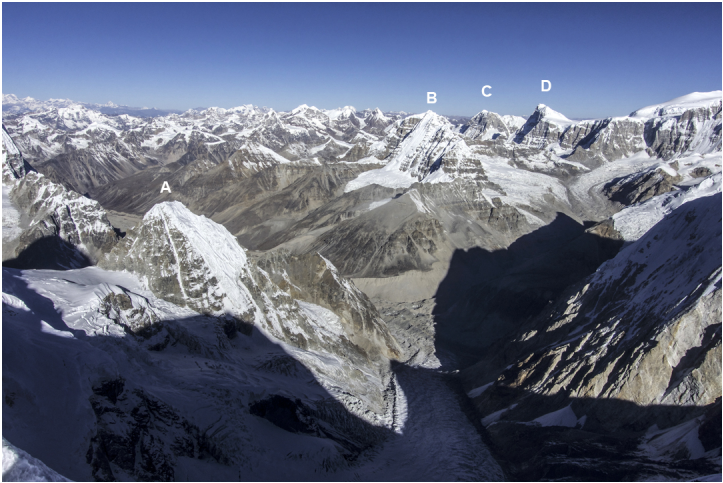
The northwest face of Gimmigela Chuli East and the Austrian Route (2016), with their two bivouacs marked.



The sunlit and mostly unexplored eastern flanks of Kangchenjunga (8,586m) from Gimmigela Chuli East. The long north ridge, climbed in 1979 by Boardman, Scott, and Tasker to make the third ascent of the mountain, slants down right from the summit and marks the boundary with the shaded north face.



The view north from Gimmigela Chuli East along the frontier ridge (Nepal-Sikkim), over the Nepal Gap (6,194m), to Nepal Peak (7,177m), and then on to Kirat Chuli (Tent Peak, 7,362m, far right). On the left is the broad-topped Jongsang (7,462m), and on the extreme left Janak (7,041m).



Looking northwest from Gimmigela Chuli East with the moraines of the Kangchenjunga Glacier and Pangpema base camp far below. (A) Taple Shikhar (6,447m). (B) Drohmo (6,881m). (C) Lashar (6,842m). (D) Janak (7,041m). At far right are the broad snow slopes leading toward the summit of Jongsang (7,462m).

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