



## AAC Publications

---

### **Xiao Gongga, Northwest Ridge, Long's Route (Variation)**

China, Sichuan, Daxue Shan, Minya Konka Range

**ON NOVEMBER 28, four members of Summit Experience Mountain Co.—Sun Bin, Liu Hai Chuan, Zhang Bao Long, and I—made the sixth known ascent of Xiao Gongga (5,928m, a.k.a. Little Konka, Ruiche Gongga, or Tshiburongi).** It was the first time most of us had gone together to the mountains, without clients, for the purposes of training.

We arrived at base camp (4,000m) on the 24th and the next day established Camp 1 below the north side of the mountain at 4,600m. On the 26th we walked for two hours to the bottom of the glacier, from which an icy line led in 600m to the crest of the northwest ridge. With Zhang Bao Long in the lead, this took around 10 hours to ascend, belaying 10 pitches up to AI3+. We reached the crest in the dark, in a temperature of -10°C and winds gusting 50km/h. We were forced to descend the ridge a short distance to find a comfortable campsite at around 5,350m.

On the 27th we fixed two pitches at the start of the upper ridge. We set off shortly after 6 a.m. on the 28th, and with Zhang still taking the lead, climbed for eight hours to reach the summit (around 14 pitches), encountering 60° snow. In cold, snowy weather, the descent was dangerous, as constructing reliable rappel anchors proved difficult. Thirteen hours after leaving, we returned to high camp, where we thawed out and ate the remaining food. The following day we descended the lower section of our route, trekked all the way out to the road, and drove back to Chengdu, where we arrived at 3 a.m. on the 30th to hot food and beds.

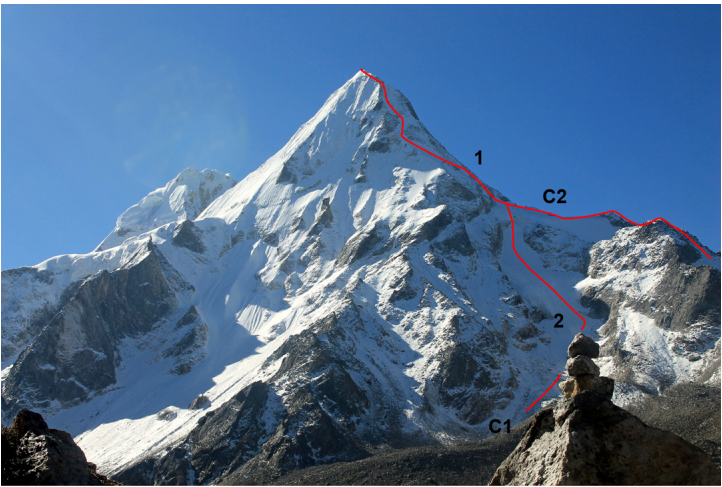
– Tom Connelly, Supplied by Xia Zhongming

Editor's note: On October 18, 2014, Simon Gietl, Vittorio Messini, and Daniel Tavernini left a 4,600m high camp below the north flank of Xiao Gongga and climbed to the northwest ridge, at a point much further right (west) than that reached by the 2017 party. They followed steepening ground, eventually rising to 60°, to reach the summit at 1 p.m. Their 1,300m ascent was rated 60° M5 (**AJ 2015**), and they saw evidence of a previous attempt or ascent.

## Images



The upper section of the northwest ridge of Xiao Gongga, climbed by both the 2014 and 2017 parties.



Xiao Gongga from the north. (1) Northwest ridge, 2014 ascent. (2) Variation start (Long's Route) with Camps 1 and 2 shown.

Article Details

Author	Tom Connelly
Publication	AAJ
Volume	60
Issue	92
Page	350
Copyright Date	2018
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions