



Nanga Parbat, Rupal Face, Attempted Variation to Messner Route

Pakistan, Himalaya

Climbing in alpine style, Czech climbers Marek Holeček and Tomáš Petreček planned to attempt a new route on the Rupal Face to the right of the 2005 Anderson-House route on the Central Pillar. Bad weather and snowfall made this impractical, and when they finally got a reasonable weather window, the pair turned to the left side of the face. They climbed more or less on the line of the south-southeast spur (a.k.a. Messner Route, 1970) until the Merkl Rinne, the steep gully the Messner brothers followed to exit the face. Here, the Czechs slanted up a natural line of weaknesses through rocky buttresses left of this gully. On September 2, after six days on the face, they reached around 7,800m on the headwall below the crest of the southwest ridge. However, increasingly strong wind forced them to descend 400m to find shelter. The wind only got worse and the forecast did not promise any improvement for the next four days, so they retreated.

The Messner Route has only seen two ascents (neither in alpine style), the second in 2005 by the late Kim Chang-ho and Lee Hyun-Jo (fixed ropes to 7,550m), who traversed the mountain by descending the Kinshofer Route.

– Lindsay Griffin

Images



The upper section of the Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat. (1) Holeček-Petreček attempt to 7,800m (their high point is a little off picture) in 2018. (2) South-southeast spur, a.k.a. Messner Route, 1970. (3) Central Pillar or Anderson-House Route (2005). The far right skyline is the top section of the 1985 Mexican-Polish route.

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