



AAC Publications

First Ascent of Pankar Himal, by Northeast Ridge

Nepal, Manaslu Himal

The Japanese “Himalaya Camp” is a project of Yasuhiro Hanatani, the purpose being “succession and progress in mountaineering culture.” This camp for young alpinists has been held three times: 2015, 2016, and 2018. In the spring of 2018 we reached the summit of previously unclimbed Pankar Himal (6,264m), a peak on the Nepal-Tibet border east-northeast of Samagaon in the Buri Gandaki at 28°36'59.73"N, 84°44'24.76"E. Pankar Himal was first brought onto the permitted list in 2014. It is unnamed on the HMG-Finn map but lies just west of Saula (6,235m).

Reo Chikara (22), Yasuhiro Hanatani (42), Ryosuke Matsuyama (21), Daijo Saito (32), Airi Wanatabe (28), and I (29) left Kathmandu on April 11 by chartered bus and started walking the next day from Soti Khola (700m). We reached the village of Sho (2,880m) on the 20th and base camp at 4,000m on the 22nd.

A large ridge runs south from Pankar Himal. To the west is the Panpoche (Pangpoche) Glacier, while the glacier to the east appears to have no name. We hoped to attempt the peak from the Panpoche Glacier, but the glacier was in a much worse state than we expected, and at 5,000m we realized we would need many more days if we were going to succeed from this side. We decided to retreat and approach the peak from the eastern glacier. We had to change base camp, and on May 3 placed a new camp much lower, at 2,850m, more or less in the main Buri Gandaki Valley.

We now had only three days to climb nearly 4,000m. On May 5 we began our summit push from base camp. We ascended the glacier to the southeast of Pankar Himal to reach the col between this peak and Saula, and then finished up Pankar Himal's northeast ridge. On the 7th we reached our high camp (Camp 3, 5,500m), and a little after noon on the 8th all team members reached the summit. That same day we descended to Camp 1 (4,400m), and on the 9th returned to base camp.

– Tatsuro Sugimoto, Japan

Images



On the northeast ridge of Pankar Himal during the first ascent of the mountain in May 2018.



The southeast face of Pankar Himal. The route of the first ascent (2018) finished up the right skyline (northeast) ridge.



Members of the 2018 Japanese expedition on the summit of Pankar Himal after the first ascent. (A) Saula (6,235m). (B) Saula South (6,199m). (C) Peak 6,224m. Behind lie Chamar and the big peaks of the Ganesh Range.



On the final ascent up the northeast (frontier) ridge to the summit of Pankar Himal (6,264m).



Working up the unnamed glacier southeast of Pankar Himal (6,264m). The long south ridge forms most of the skyline, with the summit directly above the climbers. The Japanese route (2018) finished up the northeast ridge, the skyline running to the right from the summit.

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