



AAC Publications

Changabang, North Face, Rapid Repeat Ascent (No Summit)

India, Garhwal Himalaya, Gangotri

In mid-May, Léo Billon, Sébastien Moatti, and Sébastien Ratel from the prolific Groupe Militaire de Haute Montagne (GMHM) made the fourth ascent of the north face of Changabang (6,864m) in a scant three days. The French trio followed the line of the 1996 British attempt (Clyma- Murphy-Payne-Perkins) up the bottom half of the face, then moved left and linked with the top half of the 1997 British route, climbed over 10 days by Andy Cave and Brendan Murphy for the first ascent of the face. The second ascent, a new route by a Russian-American team in 1998, was sieged in 20 days of climbing spanning more than a month and a half (AAJ 1999).

The GMHM team had their first bivouac on May 11 near the high point of the 1996 attempt, and their second after reaching the east ridge. They continued up the east ridge to the small peak just north of the main summit, named Changabang Horn by the British (they stopped here because of lack of time and incoming weather), and then descended a line to the side of the 1997 route. They estimated their link-up to be around 40 pitches, up to AI5 M6.

– Damien Gildea, with information from Sébastien Moatti, France

Images



The north face of Changabang and the line climbed by the French in 2018, linking the 1996 British attempt and the top half of the 1997 first-ascent route.



Drone photo of the French team on the north face of Changabang.



Léo Billon, Sébastien Moatti, and Sébastien Ratel on the north face of Changabang.



Climbing toward the headwall on the north face of Changabang.



Thin, ice-covered slabs high on the north face of Changabang.



Steep mixed terrain on the north face of Changabang.



Traversing one of several icefields on the north face of Changabang. The pointed peak in the center background is Saf Minal (6,911m), climbed from the south by Japanese in 1975 and then again by the northwest face, in profile, by Ian Parnell and John Varco in 2005.

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