



## AAC Publications

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### **Hongu, Northeast Face, First Recorded Ascent**

Nepal, Malahangur Himal – Barun Section

**Pemba Sherpa (Nepal) and Hiroki Nakayama (Japan) approached Hongu (6,764m, a.k.a. Hongku, Honku, or Sura Peak, 27°49'34.7"N, 86°58'37.6"E) in October via the Hinku and Hongu valleys. Base camp and Camp 1 were in identical locations to the camps used to climb nearby Baruntse.** From there, the pair crossed the West Col, south of Baruntse, descended the top section of the West Barun Glacier (a.k.a. Lower Barun Glacier), entered the glacier bay on the right, and made their final camp (Camp 3) at around 6,360m (27°49'43.0"N, 86°58'59.4"E), immediately below the northeast face of Hongu. The final 350m of this face is a steep snow and ice wall with serac barriers.

The pair left their top camp on October 25 with minimal gear. Alternating leads, they climbed nine pitches with a 70m rope. Some of the ground was very steep and the ice was like sugar. In strong wind and snow, they reached the top at 3:15 p.m. and after only 10 minutes began a rappel descent. They used snow stakes for most anchors, but when these ran out they were forced to sacrifice one of Nakayama's ice tools. They regained camp at 8:30 p.m.

The history of climbing on Hongu is not completely clear, as most ascents have been made by parties without permits or with permits for nearby goals. The easiest and most logical way to climb the mountain in good conditions would be the northeast face, but the first known ascent was in October 1983 by Sepp Egarter and Volker Klammer, who climbed the southwest ridge, having first acclimatized with an ascent of Nau Lekh (6,262m). The southwest ridge has been repeated several times and rated around D (1,200m). The mountain was brought onto the permitted list in 2003; it should not be confused with Hongu Chuli (6,833m, originally known as Pyramid Peak) to the east.

– Lindsay Griffin, from information provided by Hiroki Nakayama, Japan

## Images



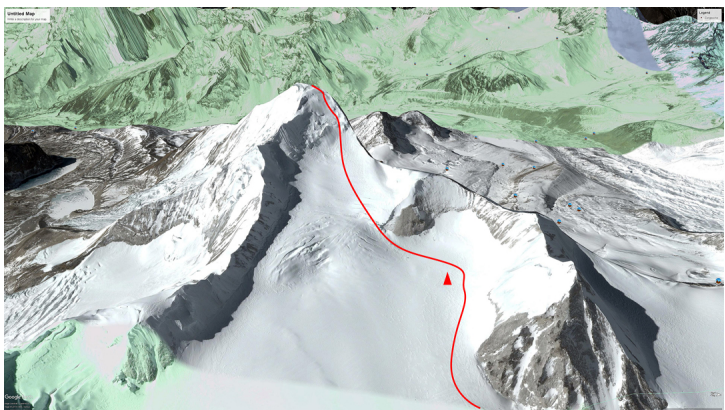
Pemba Sherpa leading pitch one on the northeast face of Hongu.



Hiroki Nakayama leading pitch six in poor weather during an ascent of the northeast face of Hongu.



The northeast face of Hongu (6,764m) from the glacier bay below. The ridge on the left leads off picture to Hongu Chuli.



Approximate line of the 2019 ascent of the northeast face of Hongu, with Camp 3 marked.

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