



## AAC Publications

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### **Peak 6,210m, Southeast Ridge; Dansam, North Face, Attempt**

Pakistan, Karakoram, Western Saltoro Mountains

**In July I traveled to Pakistan with Eivind Hugaas (Norway) and Nelson Neirinck (Belgium) to attempt the first ascent of Dansam (a.k.a. K13, 6,666m).**

The day before jumping onto a plane, we learned that a French team had climbed our planned line on the north face (see story here). Our moods sank, yet we also knew they had summited the lower western top, already climbed by a Japanese team in the early 1980s. The main summit, 1km to the east, was still untouched.

From Skardu we drove to the village of Khorkondus and hiked to up the Mingling Valley. On July 7 we established base camp. During acclimatization we scouted the north face of Dansam, and it became clear that there were few safe options, as hanging seracs filled almost the entire face. However, we found a relatively safe passage that we felt we could try.

To finish our acclimatization, we made the first ascent of unnamed Peak 6,210m (35°17'22.01"N, 76°48'39.37"E), the most prominent mountain between Dansam and Saltoro Kangri. We first hiked to the glacier south of the peak on July 15, and since we wanted to take it easy and allow the glacier to refreeze during the night, we slept in the open, on top of large, flat boulders at 5,170m. The following morning, we ascended the glacier for a few kilometers before climbing an easy snow couloir that gave access to a higher glacier. We camped at 5,700m and endured the heat of the day.

A little after midnight on the 17th, we began simul-soloing a 60° snow and ice couloir to reach the broad southeast ridge, which we followed to the summit of Peak 6,210m, arriving at 3:40 a.m. We wasted no time in descending, rappelling the icy sections of the couloir. After reaching our camp, we packed and continued down to base camp for an early lunch.

After five days of rest at base camp, we received a forecast for a six-day weather window. On the 23rd we walked to the base of the north face of Dansam, which by this time was plastered with snow. Our idea was again to climb mostly during the night, reaching a spot where we could safely bivouac before the sun hit the face.

We started simul-soloing icefields, roping up when we reached the first difficulties. I led two pitches of almost vertical slush. Poor protection and insecure climbing made the going quite slow. The fact that snow was melting so early in the morning made actual daytime look far from promising.

Nelson led another tricky mixed pitch, and then Eivind took over to aid through a rock barrier. At this point small debris was raining down on us, and it didn't require much discussion to agree to bail. We rapped from our high point at approximately 5,550m and walked back to base camp while huge, wet snow avalanches cascaded down the face. With conditions simply too dangerous, we returned to Skardu.

— Juho Knuuttila, Finland

## Images



The first ascent of Peak 6,210m, northeast of Dansam, finishing on the southeast ridge.



Peak 6,210m, showing the upper section of the 2021 first-ascent route, finishing up the southeast ridge



Juho Knuuttila approaching the first snow couloir leading to the higher glacier that would eventually give access to the southeast ridge of Peak 6,210m.



Descending from the summit of Peak 6,210m. The big peak (left) to the northeast is K12 (7,428m), climbed several times, first in 1974 from the northwest by Japanese.



Juho Knuuttila in the steep "slush" couloir during the 2021 attempt on the north face of Dansam.

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