



AAC Publications

Nanga Parbat, Aosta Valley Express

Pakistan, Western Himalaya

On June 26, during an expedition to the Diamir Face of Nanga Parbat, Francois Cazzanelli and Pietro Picco created a difficult variation start to the standard Kinshofer Route.

The new line climbs the 150m serac between the Kinshofer and the lower Mummery Spur and then, keeping close to the rock buttress on the left, ascends steep snow slopes before arcing back left in a couloir. After some difficult mixed climbing, Cazzanelli and Picco joined the Kinshofer Route at Camp 2 (6,000m). At this point, they met other climbers from their team, who were also in the acclimatization phase, and all descended to base camp.

The 1,400m variant was named Aosta Valley Express (the Italian team all come from the Aosta Valley) and had sections of vertical ice and M6.

On July 4, Cazzanelli set a speed record by climbing from base camp (4,200m) to the 8,126m summit via the Kinshofer Route in a continuous push of 20 hours 20 minutes, including a four-hour rest in a pre-placed tent at Camp 3 (6,850m). Up to that point, the route had been fixed, but there were no ropes above.

Cazzanelli left base camp at 11:30 a.m. on the 3rd, reached the summit at 7:50 a.m. on the 4th, and returned to base camp the same day. The previous fastest time on Nanga Parbat had been set 35 years ago to the day, when Benoit Chamoux climbed the Kinshofer Route to the summit in 23 hours. The route was almost fully equipped at that time.

— Lindsay Griffin, AAJ

Images



The Diamir Face of Nanga Parbat, showing (1) Kinshofer Route (1962, the normal route up the mountain), and (2) Aosta Valley Express (2022). Not shown but further right on the face are the Messner 1978 descent route, ascended to the summit in 1999 by Zsolt Eross (Hungary); the Mrak-Svajger route (2011) to the upper southwest ridge, and the Messner 1978 ascent route.

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