



## AAC Publications

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### **San'ao Snow Mountain**

China, Sichuan, Heishui County

**San'ao Snow Mountain (31°54'44.88"N, 102°51'2.06"E) is around 20km southwest of the town of Luhazhen and comprises three main summits: Ao Tai Ji ("The Father," 5,286m), Ao Tai Mei ("The Mother," 5,257m), and Ao Tai Na ("The Child," 5,210m).** In the summer of 2016, the team of Dongzuo Gexi, Sanji Gexi, Zelang Gexi, Luo Luo, Gu Ming, Cai Qing, Song Yujiang, and Xun Wei made what they believe to be the first ascent of Ao Tai Na.

The development of a hydroelectric station in the valley to the north shortens the walk-in by up to six hours from the previous access. The climbers made a four-hour walk to a base camp in an old cowshed. Next day they headed up the valley separating Ao Tai Mei from Ao Tai Na and made a high camp.

On June 18, they all set off at around 4 a.m., continued up-valley, then started climbing the east flank of the northeast ridge. After around 400m of climbing (45–50° with short steps of 5.7) they reached the ridge and climbed it, at first over relatively firm snow and stable rock (up to 60°). The final 200m, less inclined and over much looser rock, led to the first summit.

The main ridge now bent to the west and they saw that along it was a higher top. While the rest waited, Luo Luo and Dongzuo Gexi continued along the ridge for one hour to the higher top (5,210m), where they built a cairn. It was noon. By 6 p.m. everyone was back at high camp.

— Lindsay Griffin, AAJ

## Images



The 2016 route to Ao Tai Na via the northeast ridge, finishing along the east ridge.

Article Details

Author	Lindsay Griffin
Publication	AAJ
Volume	65
Issue	97
Page	351
Copyright Date	2023
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions