



## AAC Publications

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### **Cholatse, Brothers in Arms; Nare Ri Shar, Sugar Ridge; Omoga Ri Chang, Attempt and Tragedy**

Nepal, Mahalangur Himal, Khumbu Section

**Autumn 2021 marked the culmination of a two-year program for the Groupe Excellence d'Alpinisme National (GEAN), a team of young French alpinists chosen by the Fédération Française des Clubs Alpins et de Montagne (FFCAM), under the overall guidance of Stéphane Benoist.**

As part of acclimatization, the guide Thomas Arfi and Anouk Felix-Faure, Gabriel Miloche, and Louis Pachoud ascended the southwest ridge of Cholatse (6,440m). At the same time, Benoist, Pauline Champon, Pierrick Fine, and Pierrick Giffard climbed the northeast ridge of Nare Ri Shar (6,005m), above the Nare Glacier. This peak is south of Ama Dablam and immediately northwest of Melanphulan (6,573m). The four reached the crest of the ridge via the east flank and followed it to the summit, bivouacking at 5,900m. Large amounts of snow led to the route being named Sugar Ridge (700m, D). Although there is no known prior climb of this route, a previous ascent is plausible, given its location.

From October 25–29, Benoist, Champon, Felix-Faure, Fine, and Giffard climbed a new route on the north side of Cholatse (6,423m). The five weaved a line between the 2003 attempt by Korean climbers on the left side of the north face (ending at 6,000m) and the 1984 route on the northeast face (Bibler-Freer-Jackson-Stewart). After three bivouacs, the five French climbers moved back onto the north face, where they followed the upper Korean line and the Steck finish to the original French route on the north face, bivouacking once more before reaching the top at sunset on the 29th. They descended the southwest ridge the following day. They later named their route Brothers in Arms (1,600m, ED M5+ AI5) due to the incident that unfolded while they were on the mountain.

Arfi, Miloche, and Pachoud had gone to the Nare Glacier to attempt Omoga Ri Chang (6,070m), perhaps better known as the Mingbo Eiger due to the appearance of its northeast face, which is clearly seen from Ama Dablam. Omoga Ri Chang is a short distance west along the watershed ridge from Nare Ri Shar.

On October 26 they climbed a couloir on the left side of the northwest face and that evening communicated from their bivouac that site they were in good shape. They were never heard from again. Helicopter searches revealed tracks on the upper north ridge, which suggested the climbers had turned around at 5,900m and during their descent were swept away by an avalanche. Equipment was spotted in the debris below the face, and later, after an extensive search, the three bodies were excavated and repatriated to France.

— Lindsay Griffin, AAJ, and Rodolphe Popier, *La Chronique Alpine*, *La Montagne et Alpinisme*

## Images



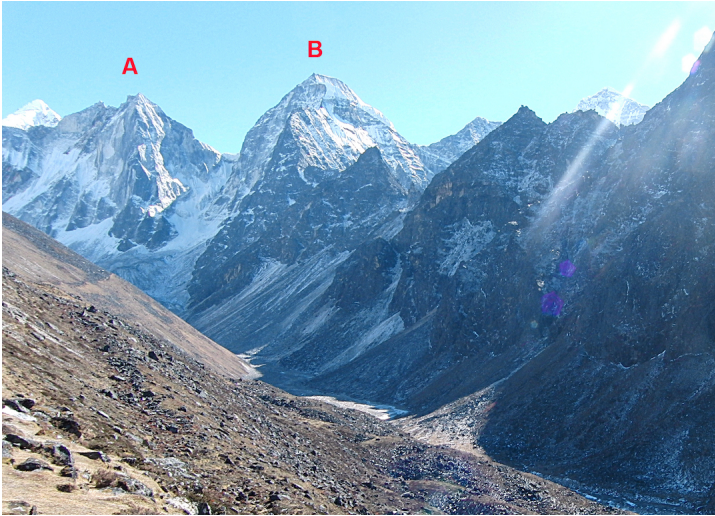
Cholatse from the east with (1) American route (1984), (2) Brothers in Arms (2021), and (3) French route (1995). The 2003 attempt by Korean climbers is largely hidden to the left of the French line. The peak on the left is Tawoche Northwest (6,367m).



Cholatse from the north with (1) Brothers in Arms, (2) the 2003 Korean attempt to 6,000m, and (3) the 1995 French Route. For other lines on this face see AAJs 2004 and 2011.



Looking south from Ama Dablam at (A) part of Melanphulan (6,573m), (B) Peak 6,464m, (C) Nare Ri Shar (6,005m) with the 2022 French route marked, (D) Peak 6,004m, (E) Peak 6,335m, (F) Kyashar (6,770m), (G) Omoga Ri Chang (a.k.a. Mingbo Eiger), and (H) Kangtega (6,783m). The 2022 attempt on Omoga Ri Chang is on the northwest face, hidden around to the right.



A) Peak 6,004m and (B) Omoga Ri Chang from the northwest. The 2022 attempt on Omoga Ri Chang climbed toward the left side of the northwest face to reach the north ridge (facing the camera).

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