



AAC Publications

Menlanphulan, Northwest Ridge, Attempt

Nepal, Mahalangur Himal, Khumbu Section

Prakash Sherpa, Riten Sherpa (both IFMGA guides), Luigi Santini (Italy), and I attempted the unclimbed northwest ridge of Melanphulan (6,573m) in early November. With porter assistance, we established a high camp at 5,100m on the moraine north of the mountain, where global warming has dramatically changed the condition and size of the Nare Glacier.

We climbed the slope up to the northwest ridge of Melanphulan and made our Camp 1 at 5,800m, just below and right of the col at the base of the ridge. Up to this point, the climbing was mostly easy 5th class, with some mixed ground on low-angled, unconsolidated snow. The rock was loose, but around 120m below the camp there was one pitch of 5.9 where the rock was sounder.

Our summit bid began at 10 p.m. on November 3. We climbed 100m up to the crest of the ridge, then descended it southeast to the col. Above, the ground was steeper, with 60°–70° snow slopes, mixed in consistency. The rock encountered was loose. At 4 a.m. on the 4th, having reached 6,200m, we turned around due to the bad snow and rock. Retracing our route back to Camp 1 involved downclimbing and a few rappels; from there we made nine rappels. We regained our high camp in 20 hours from our high point.

Melanphulan has received a number of attempts from various directions, and some of these have come very close to the summit. However, perhaps only one party has ever reached the top, via the west face (see AAJ 2001).

— Jay Mathers, USA

Images



The northwest ridge of Melanphulan seen from close to the high point of the 2023 attempt. (1) The north face, which has received several attempts, one stopping just 50m below the summit ridge (Kurtuka-Loretan, 2000). (2) The west face, where the first known ascent of the peak was made in 2000 (AAJ 2001).



Melanphulan from Camp 1 on Ama Dablam. The attempted route on the northwest ridge is marked.



The unclimbed northwest ridge of Melanphulan seen from the vicinity of Camp 1 on the northeast flank.

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