



## AAC Publications

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### **Changla Khang West, first ascent, via southwest ridge**

Nepal, Changla Himal

Alex Hansen on the snow arête of the southwest ridge during the first ascent of Changla Khang West.  
Photo by Benny Lieber

**Alex Hansen and I** arrived in Kathmandu in early October with the dream of going on a big adventure in an area we had not previously seen. We certainly accomplished that. Our goal was climbing above the Lachama Glacier in the southeast part of the Changla Himal. It lies in a remote part of the country and is not straightforward to reach. There had been previous climbing activity in the area (see AAJs 2016, 2020, and 2023), but we had no particular peak in mind.

After some delays, we established a base camp at approximately 30°08'22"N, 82°05'12"E (4,350m). From here, we made forays to look at available objectives, then were forced to wait out unfavorable weather. Ultimately, our climbing opportunity came down to one very short weather window, so we chose Changla Khang West (6,233m, 30°9'38.33"N, 82°10'52.66"E), a summit about two kilometers west of Changla Khang (6,581m), as it looked like it would be feasible in the time we had. [This summit had been attempted by the 2022 Academic Alpine Club of Zurich expedition via the southwest ridge, and also a Polish team in 2018.]

We reached the summit on November 3 during a five-day round trip from base camp. The lower half of the southwest ridge involved scrambly buttresses and steep snow gullies, leading to an incredible, sharp snow and ice crest. The final summit cone was guarded by a few rock bands, which we bypassed via a chimney full of water ice.

The southwest ridge gained 1,200 meters and was rated WI4 M5 with steep snow, following a long, gentle approach alongside the Lachama Glacier that gained 700 meters from base camp. The weather was perfect on summit day, but it quickly turned on November 4 as we returned to camp, with very high winds at altitude.

Although Alex and I had been on many amazing trips to the high mountains over the course of a decade, we had never visited Asia together. It was a special moment to be on top after the many occasions we had suffered together in Alaska.

—Benny Lieber, USA

## Images



A view from the northwest of (A) Peak 6,506m, (B) Lachama Chuli (6,721m), (C) Changla Khang West (6,233m; the southwest ridge, climbed in 2025, is seen in profile, dropping to the right from the summit), and (D) Gave Ding (6,521m).



The southwest ridge of Changla Khang West (6,233m), climbed from the Lachama Glacier.



Changla Khang West (6,233m) from the north. The southwest ridge descends rightward from the summit. The large peak behind is Lachama Chuli (6,721m) while to the right, in shade, is Gave Ding

(6,521m).



Alex Hansen on the snow arête of the southwest ridge during the first ascent of Changla Khang West. Behind are the mountains of West Nepal and Tibet, with the large peak of Saipal (7,030m) on the left and the distant summit of Gurla Mandhata (7,694m) on the far right.



Alex Hansen approaching the middle section of the southwest ridge of Changla Khang West (6,233m). The summit is the pointed peak to the right.

## Article Details

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