



AAC Publications

First Ascents of Limi Koti, Shikan Ri, Steph Himal, and Phasang Peak

Nepal, Far West Nepal, Limi Himal

Looking south up the Nying Glacier to the mountains of Nyalu Lek. (A) Nying Himal (6,140m). (B) A broad summit of around 5,700m. (C) Unnamed peak attempted in 2018 to within 40m of summit. (D) Small tooth climbed in 2018 by French party. (E) Shikhan Ri (ca 5,880m, climbed in 2018). (F) Peak 5,975m. (G) French advanced base camp.

ACTING ON INFORMATION provided by French guide Paulo Grobel, who had photographed this remote area of Nepal, guide Francois Damilano, Ulysse Lefebvre, and two clients, Guy Perazio and Jean-René Talopp, visited the Nying Glacier, setting up base camp at 4,920m. They located a site for advanced base at 5,275m, and from this camp, on October 9 and with Dhan Magar and Karma Sherpa, made the first known ascent of Shikhan Ri (ca 5,880m on the HMG-Finn map, 30°9'56.62"N, 81°50'23.82"E). The route via the northeast face was 700m, F.

After the ascent of Shikhan Ri, Damilano and Lefebvre stayed at advanced base, and were joined on the 10th by Desécures, Lestienne, Miot, and Pugin. The following day these last four attempted a relatively small but spectacular unnamed peak to the east of Shikhan Ri, but were defeated 40m from the top by dangerous snow conditions. They retreated and climbed a smaller sharp summit, Nying Tooth (previously climbed by Damilano and Lefebvre), between the unnamed peak and Shikhan Ri. The climbers descended in a storm and had a hard time navigating to advanced base. On the 12th all descended to base camp and rested.

In the meantime, a second French group comprising two couples, Julien Desécures and Evelyne Miot, and Grégoire Lestienne and Floriane Pugin, had reached a place known as Talung (ca 4,400m) and then trekked first southeast, then east, up the Talung Valley to set up base camp at 4,950m to the west-southwest of Peak 6,194m, which they named Limi Koti. On October 5, all four climbed the southwest face and west ridge of Limi Koti (30°12'11.12"N, 81°47'5.93"E). The 800m route was AD- (snow to 50°). They returned to base camp, walked out of the valley, then north and east to the Nying Valley, arriving at the other French base camp on the 8th.

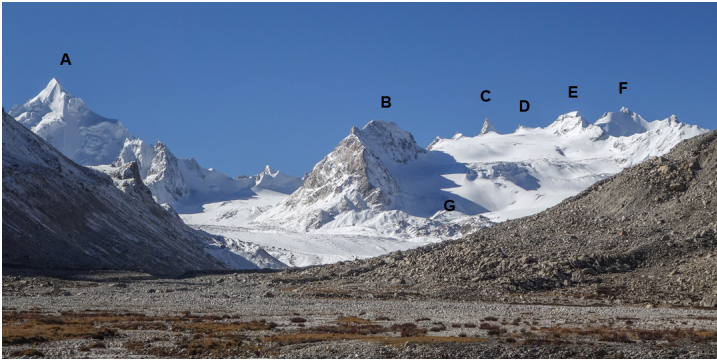
On the 14th the Desécures group walked up a side valley to the east of base camp, spending the night at 5,300m. The following day they climbed the south face of Peak 6,065m. Their route mostly followed a couloir until around 40m below the top, where a section of rotten rock led to the summit. They named the peak Phasang, the route being PD+/AD- 45°.

The previous day Damilano and Lefebvre had established a camp northeast of base camp at around 5,200m, and on the 15th climbed a couloir on the west face of a peak that forms the end of the west ridge of Phasang. They named it Steph Himal (5,878m, 30°12'0.29"N, 81°52'29.17"E) in memory of an old friend of Damilano's, Stéphane Husson [a noted ice climber and guide who died in 2018 after a fall while guiding]. The two descended the south face.

On the 17th all eight climbers left base camp; they returned to Simikot on the 20th. They noted that the area around their Nying base camp appeared to have been visited by previous teams, and some peaks in this glacier basin may have been climbed previously.

– **Lindsay Griffin**, with information from Francois Damilano, Ulysse Lefebvre, and Grégoire Lestienne, France, and Rodolphe Popier, Himalayan Database, France

Images



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The highest summit in the center is Shikhan Ri, climbed in 2018 by the snow slopes descending to the left.



Approaching the summit of Shikhan Ri on the first ascent.



Steph Himal from the Nying Valley. The 2018 route climbed directly up the (west) face pointing toward the camera.



The summit of Steph Himal, looking southeast up the valley to the south, with the far distant snowy summit (through the gap) of Peak 6,084m (unofficially known as Sumdo Himal). The rope sling was left by the French first ascensionists as a discreet legacy of their visit.



Limi Koti (6,194m) and the route of ascent up the southwest face and west ridge.



Unclimbed peaks of the Limi Himal, both close to 6,000m and close to Limi Koti.



An unclimbed mixed face in the Limi Himal.



Climbing rotten rock near the top of the south face of Phasang during the first ascent.

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