



AAC Publications

Lamo-she, Southeast Face and Northeast Ridge

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IN RECENT TIMES I have realized that what really makes me happy is visiting new regions, particularly if they are little explored. My latest adventure was perhaps more intense than usual, but the mountain didn't let me down, the ascent giving me great satisfaction.

The east side of Lamo-she (6,070m, 29°56'57.97"N, 102°3'2.26"E) had only been visited by local herb collectors. Pietro Picco and I found little information beforehand, and, to complicate things, once we arrived the weather was bad. We established base camp at 3,400m, then managed to make a gear cache at 4,400m and identify a line on the southeast face. We then waited days for good weather, until Pietro, with whom I got on very well, gave up and decided to head home.

I found myself alone in the middle of nowhere, isolated and totally wild. However, that same day, May 14, it was sunny and I set off to seek a more direct route to the start of the face. Having found it, I now had a difficult decision. After some thought I decided to continue immediately, but to go light and climb as fast as possible. I took axes and crampons and a light down jacket but left the rest of my gear, including harness and rope, at the foot of the face.

I started climbing up the southeast face of Lamo-she a little after midday, reached the crest of the northeast ridge, and followed this to the summit, arriving at 7 p.m. The ascent had not been easy, and it had been long: maybe 1,500m of height gain. I reversed my route, getting lost near the bottom of the wall when mist arrived. I rested a few hours and regained base camp 21 hours after leaving. I named the route Wild Blood (1,500m, WI5 M5+ V 90°). [The only previous known ascent of Lamo-she took place in 1993, when an American team came up the glacier below the northwest face, then followed the steep west-northwest ridge to the top (AAJ 1994).]

Over subsequent days I made two more ascents of unclimbed peaks on subsidiary spurs off the long northeast ridge Lamo-she. On May 17, I climbed the southeast ridge of a rocky 5,000m peak that I named Pietro's Picco (29°57'33.00"N, 102°04'56.86"E), after my climbing partner. (Without his help in the early stages, I couldn't have achieved any of my climbs.) The ascent was around 600m with difficulties to VI. Then, on the 25th, I climbed the north face of a smaller rock peak, which I named Jiyue Shan (4,200m, 29°57'27.88"N, 102°07'08.83"E), after my friend and agent, Jiyue Zhang, who helped organize the expedition. The route was 400m high and D+.

– Tomas Franchini, Italy

Images



One of the steep ice pitches on the route up the southeast face of Lamo-she.



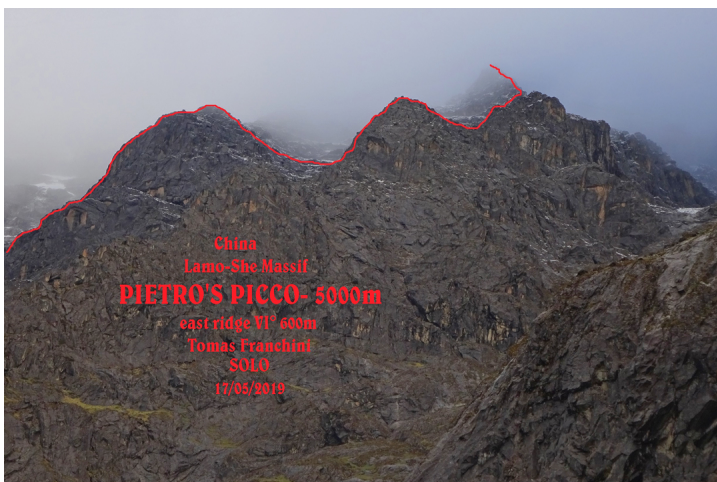
Jiyue Shan, showing the Franchini route on the north face.



Lamo-she from the approach valley to the east, showing the line of Wild Blood (2019).



Tomas Franchini in front of Lamo-she and his route Wild Blood up the southeast face and northeast ridge.



Pietro's Picco and the Franchini route along the southeast ridge.



Looking back (northeast) along the summit ridge toward the lower northeast top of Lamo-she.



Duncan Francis on the summit of Wupingfeng in December 2012 with the impressive north-northwest face of Lamo-she in the background. The upper section of the northeast ridge, which descends left from the summit, was followed by Tomas Franchini on his solo ascent from the opposite side. The only previous known ascent of Lamo-she took place in 1993, when it was climbed by Americans who came up the glacier below the northwest face, then followed the steep west-northwest ridge (right skyline in this photo).

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