

ing his paraglider, but he couldn't fly. Antoine reached the top at 10 a.m. Two days later, the snow came back. Nobody could try again. On October 15th, we were trekking back to the monastery. Only eight expeditions have reached that summit from two ridges (northwest and northeast), for a total of 20 climbers since 1932. The main difficulties are situated after 7,100m with 45°/50° slopes.

Team members were: Jérôme Blaise (Doctor), Laurent Carrier, Antoine De Choudens, Thomas Faucheur, Laurent Miston, Grégory Muffat-Joly, Emmanuel Pellissier, Philippe Renard, François Savary. (See "Minya Konka" in *AAJ* 2002 for the story of the first ascent—*Ed.*)

ANTOINE DE CHOUDENS, *French High Mountain Military Group (GMHM)*

Siguniang, first ascent of north face. Taking 6 days, Mick Fowler and Paul Ramsden made the first ascent of the north face of Siguniang, in April, 2002. Then, they made a two-day descent of the unclimbed north ridge. Most of days they endured snow, but they were rewarded with a glorious, clear summit day. Difficulties ranged from grade VI rock to poor quality, nearly vertical ice (Scottish VI). The ice choked dike was 750m long, with several long vertical pitches and two overhanging sections. The climb was made using only natural protection; bolts were not carried. See the "Siguniang" lead article earlier in this Journal.

Jarjinjabo Mountains, Kham Region, various first ascents. In October Peter Athans, Robert Mackinlay, Hilaree Nelson, Jared Ogden, Kasha Rigby, and Mark Synnott made various first ascents on the Zhopu Spires and the first ascent of the northern Jarjinjabo Massif. See the "Jarjinjabo" lead article earlier in this Journal for an account.

Dangchezhengla (5,833m), first ascent. Two climbers from the Hengduan Mountains Club (HMC)—Kiyooki Miyagawa and Junta Murayama—made the first ascent of this beautiful, hidden snow peak, reaching a foggy summit at noon on June 17. Dangchezhengla is in the Shaluli Shan Range, about 12km northeast of Batang, near the Tibetan border.

Our team—myself, Kimikazu Sakamoto (leader, 62), Kiyooki Miyagawa (61), Shojiro Tanaka (61), and Junta Murayama (35)—originally applied to the Mountaineering Association of Sichuan (MAS) for permission to climb three peaks: Dangchezhengla (6,060m), Central Peak (6,033m), and West Peak (5,833m). But the MAS named our expedition the "2002 Japan Yangmolong Expedition," and we received a permit for Mt. Yangmolong (not Dangchezhengla). Our "Letter of Invitation" from the China Mountain Association (CMA) also said Yangmolong, so to avoid confusion we decided to call the 6,060m peak Yangmolong.

But after we entered the area, we talked to 30 villagers in Zhongba who go up to the high pastures with their yaks and gather caterpillar fungus for Chinese traditional medicine. They told us that the 5,833m peak, which is visible from their village along the Ichu River, is called Dangchezhengla—and they call the 6,033m peak Makara, and the 6,060m peak is Bongongzhong. They said that Yangmolong is not the name of a mountain, but is the name of a pasture about 2km south of Bongongzhong. In the end, the MAS gave Miyagawa and Murayama climbing certificates for Dangchezhengla.

Our team departed from Chengdu on May 28, arriving in two cars at Batang on May 30 (via Kangding and Yajiang). The village chief of Dongba arranged for 16 horses and yaks, and 6 horsemen from Zhongba. We went to Zhongba (3,835m) and stayed for three nights to

acclimatize, and visited an exquisite Tibetan temple called Sandens, where we prayed for success and drank butter tea and ate yak cheese with the lama.

From Zhongba, it was a day's hike to our base camp (4,500m) below a rocky cliff of Peak 5,148m, in a beautiful green meadow that looked just like a valley in the Alps, the Sierra, or the Rockies. On June 5, with three horses and three horsemen, we ferried 160 kg loads of food and equipment to a meadow at 4,900m, just below the southeast ridge of West Peak, which would become C1. At the eastern end of frozen Yamou Lake, we could see our three peaks.

Yangmolong looked almost impossible to climb from the south, with a rock cliff at the bottom, a hanging glacier in the middle, and a large cornice on the summit ridge. But it looked like West Glacier would allow us to reach a col between West Peak and Central Peak.

On June 7, after two nights of rest at BC, we set up C1. That same afternoon, we made a reconnaissance and found that West Glacier does not lead to the col between West Peak and Central Peak, because it falls directly from the south snow face of West Peak and is blocked by the rocky southeast ridge. But we found that Central Glacier does lead to a col between the two peaks, so we spent three days climbing the left side of its lower icefall. We fixed four pitches on the lower icefall, and reached the site of C2 (5,335m) on a plateau below the upper icefall. While Tanaka and I ferried the loads to C2, Miyagawa and Murayama fixed three ropes through the upper icefall, to a col (5,565m) between West Peak and Central Peak. The next day (June 11), we went down to BC for two days of rest. We decided to forget about Yangmolong, which seemed too risky for our elderly party, and to concentrate on West Peak—Dangchezhengla.

We ferried additional loads to C2, then started our final attack on the virgin peak at 4 a.m., June 17. Miyagawa and Murayama climbed at a fast pace, while Tanaka and I followed along behind. When Miyagawa and Murayama reached the col (5,565m) at 7 a.m., Tanaka and I had become exhausted climbing the ice cliff in the upper icefall. Three pitches behind, we decided to give up the summit. Miyagawa and Murayama continued up, and traversed right at a big crevasse resembling a shark's mouth on the shoulder of the ridge. The right side of the ridge was a 500-meter-high steep ice face, which they climbed using double ice axes. The knife-edge ridge was an unstable mixture of hard ice and soft snow, with a treacherous cornice. They proceeded along this tricky ridge cautiously, and reached the summit of West Peak at 12:10. They had climbed 11 pitches between the col and the summit. On top, they found themselves in a dense mist, so for evidence they photographed their wristwatch and GPS together, showing an altitude of 5,870m. They returned to C2 at 5 p.m. We spent three days carrying all of our equipment and garbage down to C1, and then down to BC on June 21.

Although we were unable to climb Yangmolong and Central Peak, we were very satisfied with our expedition. We are proud of our clean mountaineering and safe climbing, and hope that the beauty of this mountain area will be preserved forever.

KIMIKAZU SAKAMOTO, *Hengduan Mountains Club* (translated by Tamotsu Nakamura)

NORTHWEST YUNNAN PROVINCE

Yunnan Province, Hengduan Shan, ascent of Peak 4,750, attempt on Baimang Shan, and reconnaissance of Meilixueshan and Habaxueshan areas. During April and May Paul Macleman and I visited the Hengduan mountains of northwestern Yunnan Province. This was my second journey to the area (AAJ 1999), which is still not popular with foreign expeditions but is becoming