

snow fall, and almost constant high wind, which prevented them setting up a higher camp or making much progress on the mountain. Finally, on the 17th, all three set out at 4 a.m. in strong winds and poor snow conditions for a summit attempt. Brugger turned back, but the remaining two pressed on until they reached a point estimated to be 600m below the summit. Here they judged the avalanche danger to be extreme. They retreated and gave up any further attempt. To date the mountain, renamed to commemorate the first Nepalese women to climb Everest, has only four recorded ascents.

*Adapted from the web site of HANS KAMMERLANDER*

*Gyachung Kang, fourth ascent from Nepal, via variants to southwest spur.* On October 17 Hiroshi Hanada, Eisuke Shigekawa, and Tamting Sherpa from a seven-member Japanese expedition (Fukuoka University) led by Mitsuo Uematsu, reached the summit of Gyachung Kang (7,952m) for the sixth overall ascent and fourth from Nepal. In 1988 an expedition that included Hanada and Uematsu attempted the southwest couloir, joining the 1986 French Route on the southwest spur at a height of 7,200m. Three members pushed this line to 7,800m but while descending to Camp 4 at 7,300m, one of the climbers fell to his death, and the expedition was abandoned. Last year the Japanese followed a similar route but, when close to the top, traversed right for several pitches over new ground before reaching the summit. It would appear the 1986 French Route has not been repeated in its entirety. The Korean expedition making the third ascent of the mountain in 1988 mostly climbed the southwest face between the French Route and the original 1964 Japanese Route on the northwest ridge.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO, CLIMB Magazine*

*Kyajo Ri, first recorded ascent of southeast ridge.* On October 24 Seth Hobby and I established base camp at 4,600m below the east face of Kyajo Ri (6,186m). Our plan was to climb the mountain from the northeast. Photos provided by our friend and trekking agent, Ang Karma, seemed to show a series of runnels and smears up the northeast buttress that led to the upper north ridge. Whether those runnels ever existed, or perhaps this was just a dry year, is not clear, but closer inspection proved there were no obvious lines.

The best option appeared to be the southeast ridge, which we knew to have been climbed to 5,600m in autumn 2002 by the team that eventually made the first official ascent of the mountain. [Kyajo Ri was first brought onto the permitted list in 2002, and in that year was ascended via the southwest ridge; *AAJ 2003*, pp. 394-396. The mountain is believed to have received unauthorized ascents before that—Ed.] On the 29th we left our camp around 6:00 a.m. and traversed under the east face to reach the glacier leading to the col at the foot of the ridge. Gaining the glacier turned out to be one of the cruxes of the climb, with a 40m section of 85° snowy, mixed terrain. Seth then led up through another delicate mixed band to the start of the ridge, where we found a cairn left by the 2002 party. Here we dumped the stove, second rope, and our second tools, in order to move as fast as possible on the technical rock above.

The first several hundred meters were mostly easy climbing on generally good rock, with difficulties never more than 5.7-5.8. Wild towers on the first half of the ridge forced us onto the east flank, and in bypassing the second tower we had to climb into a slabby gully that led to several hundred meters of absolute choss. We regained the crest via a pitch of 5.8 X and

arrived below the final rock tower. There was no easy way to avoid this tower, so I downclimbed a little, then traversed to a series of good-looking holds that led round a corner. The holds were positive but the moves a few degrees beyond vertical; the sack and big boots, combined with the altitude of 5,900m, made it all feel serious. From a stance, a short pendulum got me to a ledge and easier climbing. From here we simul-climbed over easy rock and mixed terrain all the way to the summit ridge, which proved to be one of the most aesthetic mountain features either of us had climbed.

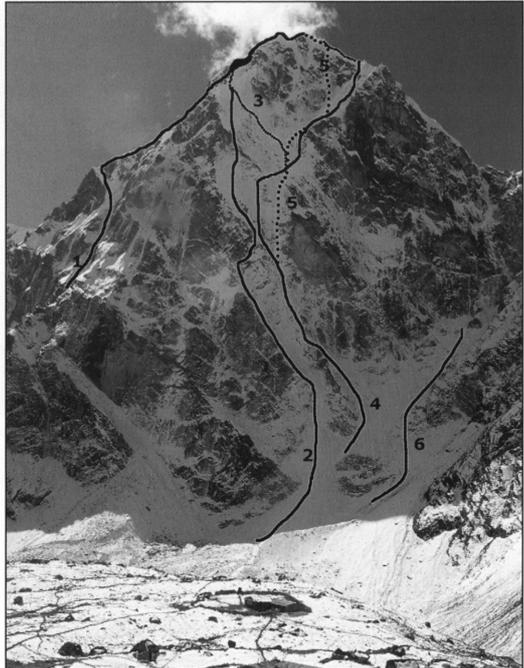
We didn't linger on the summit, approaching darkness and a cold wind prompting a hasty descent. We rappelled the southwest ridge and continued all the way down to the Kyajo Ri Glacier, below the south face. The only problem was that our camp was on the other side of the mountain. Tired, hungry, and out of water, we reached it by quality alpine suffering, with the biggest hurdle being climbing 600m of frozen kitty litter to regain the col at the foot of the southeast ridge. A few rappels and a glacier slog led us to our camp, 21 hours after leaving. We graded our route V 5.9 AI3.

JOHN KEAR, AAC

*Cholatse, first winter ascent of north face, by new variants to French Route.* Koreans Park Jung-hun and Choi Kang-sik reached the summit of 6,440m Cholatse at midday on January 16, having made the first winter ascent of the north face. The two arrived at base camp (4,200m) on January 2 and climbed East Lobuje to acclimatize. Due to the onset of poor



Kyajo Ri (6,187m) from a base camp at 4,600m to the east. The route followed by Americans Hobby and Kear, to make the first recorded ascent of the southeast ridge, is marked. *John Kear*



The 1,400m north face of Cholatse (6,440m) in winter. (1) Slovenian variant to 1984 American Route (northeast face to southeast ridge) (M6 6a 90°, Humar-Kozelj-Opresnik, 2005). (2) 2003 Korean attempt to 6,000m (110° mixed and aid sections, high point reached on October 30 by Kim Chae-ho and Hwang Young-soon). (3) Swiss direct finish (F5 M6 90°, Steck, 2005). (4) French Route (90°, Badaroux-Batoux-Challamel-Mora-Robach, 1995). (5) Korean first winter ascent (90° mixed and some aid, Park Jung-hun-Choi Kang-sik, 2005). (6) 2002 Korean attempt to 5,200m. *Peter Jensen-Choi*