

EASTERN GARHWAL

Kalanka, northeast face and central spur, Bushido; history. Kazuaki Amano, Fumitaka Ichimura, and Yusuke Sato made the first ascent since 1982 of 6,931m Kalanka. Their new 1,800m route, Bushido, started up the northeast face following a line attempted by Nick Bullock and Kenton Cool in 2007, before traversing right to the crest of the central spur, reaching the summit on September 22. An account by Yusuke Sato appears in the features section of this *Journal*. The central spur on the north face had become one of the most sought-after lines in the Garhwal. In 1977 a 14-member Czechoslovakian team led by Frantisek Grunt inspected the line before climbing the right side of the north face. From the top camp, Ladislav Jon and Josef Rakoncaj reached the summit via the upper section of the west ridge (1975 Japanese Route), making the second ascent of the mountain. Despite the use of fixed ropes, this route remains one of the most underrated achievements in the Himalaya. In 2001 Americans Carlos Buhler and Jack Roberts made an unsuccessful attempt on the elegant central (north) spur. Two years later another American team, Sue Nott and John Varco, climbed the lower part of the spur, then used a portaledge to fix ropes through the vertical to overhanging central barrier (M6), completing all the technical difficulties and bivouacking at 6,550m before being forced down by storm. Buhler returned in 2004 with Sandy Allan and John Lyall, but the attempt failed at around 6,000m. In 2007 Nick Bullock and Kenton Cool tried another tact, climbing the big snow and ice slopes of the northeast face left of the spur, only to be defeated on the crest of the east ridge at over 6,300m.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*

SIKKIM

West Sikkim, Jopuno, west ridge. After 12 days of unstable March weather in the Thangsing Valley and an unsuccessful attempt on the northwest ridge of Tichenkang (6,010m), Sarah DeMay, Sam Gardner, Josh Smith, and I turned to the aesthetic unclimbed west ridge of Jopuno, a 5,936m peak just south of Tichenkang. From our 4,200m base camp the ridge appeared to start with a short rocky section to gain the glaciated lower crest, which quickly turned into a steep, sharp snow ridge leading to broken yet gorgeous golden granite. Above, the rock appeared black and loose before reaching the snow-capped summit. As best we could surmise, Jopuno had been climbed only once, in April 2002 via the south ridge, by Kunzang Bhutia and Sagar Rai (*AAJ 2008, p. 120*).



Jopuno (5,936m) with the ca 900m new route up the west ridge marked. The only previous known ascent of this peak was made in 2002 by the right skyline (south ridge). *Jason Halladay*

Leaving camp at 3:30 a.m. under a nearly full moon, we four moved quickly up snow-covered grass and talus to the base of the west ridge at 5,100m. We there broke into teams of two and began wandering up the lower glacier to the first major obstacle, a 12m WI3 pitch on the ridge's north side. This led to the upper glacier, where steep snow, followed by a well-defined



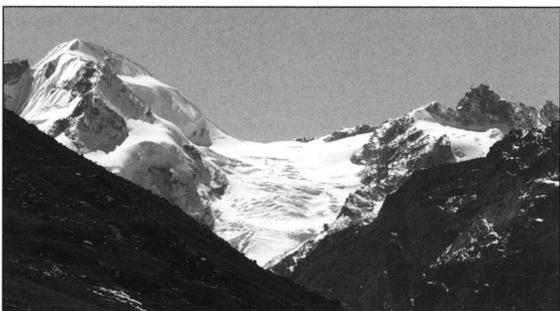
Josh Smith on the first ascent of Jopuno's West Ridge. *Jason Halladay*

icy and exposed ridge, led toward the band of golden granite. Josh and I roped up for the last 30m—a rightward traverse on solid water ice above an exposed face. We reached the rock at 5,600m and unroped.

The golden granite was more challenging than it had appeared from below, but the rock was solid. For the most part we stayed below and to the right (south) of the crest. At 11:30 a.m. we reached the start of the rotten, unpleasant black shale at 5,800m. The wind had picked up, and it was snowing lightly. We

radioed Sam and Sarah, who informed us they had just reached the golden granite, but because the weather was worsening, were opting to sit and wait for us to return.

Josh and I continued cautiously through the black shale, treacherous because of the poor rock quality and lack of previous traffic. It was not uncommon for chunks of rock to slough off under hands and feet, and progress slowed as we tested and retested each hold before committing full weight to it. In addition, the new snow made the surface slick and forced us to keep crampons on. With 70 vertical meters to go, we reached solid snow and ice and eventually gained the summit at 12:45 p.m. in a near whiteout. Seven hours were required to reverse the route to base camp. The west ridge gives a sustained and direct route to the summit of Jopuno at around AD+. The team wishes to thank Barap Namgyal Bhutia and www.sikkim-holidays.com for help with trip logistics and base camp support.



Brumkhangshe (5,635m, left). The peak has only one recorded ascent, by the northwest ridge (right skyline). The small summit immediately right of the col is Brumkhangshe North (ca 5,450m, three or four ascents). The higher peak to the right, with the precarious pinnacle, is unclimbed. *Roger Payne*