



Santiago Padros on the first ascent of Free Tibet 2065, west face of Ama Dablam. At this point he is approaching the long traverse left below seracs, leading to the site of the 6,200m camp. *Francisco Fazzi*

*Editor's note: Fazzi and Padros started up the initial snow slopes between the American Direct and the 1985 Japanese route, before slanting left to join the latter at the first steep section. They then followed the Japanese route to above the second steep section, where they moved left to camp on top of a serac, close to where in 2001 Jules Cartwright and Rich Cross started up the final part of the west face during their first ascent of the northwest ridge. The British pair slanted left to join the 1980 Japanese route, which exits onto the north ridge 100m below the top. Fazzi and Padros climbed more directly up the 600m face above their camp, weaving through difficult mixed sections to reach the summit slopes.*

*Ama Dablam, state of the Dablam.* The huge high serac known as “the Dablam” has remained active since November 2006, when a huge mass of ice falling from this large serac barrier hit Camp 3 and swept six climbers off the mountain. During the night of November 17, 2008 another part of the Dablam fell off, and the next day an additional huge section dropped, setting off an avalanche that cleaned a section of the normal route, leaving hard blue ice. These falls almost halved the size of the Dablam. In late November the route above Camp 3 was plagued by many more crevasses than in previous years, when it had been covered by snow. The climbing is now more difficult and considerably more time consuming. A Canadian leader of a commercial expedition predicts that the whole Dablam is going to come down. He has been on Ama Dablam twice but now says, “I really don’t want to go back again.”

ELIZABETH HAWLEY, AAC Honorary Member, Nepal

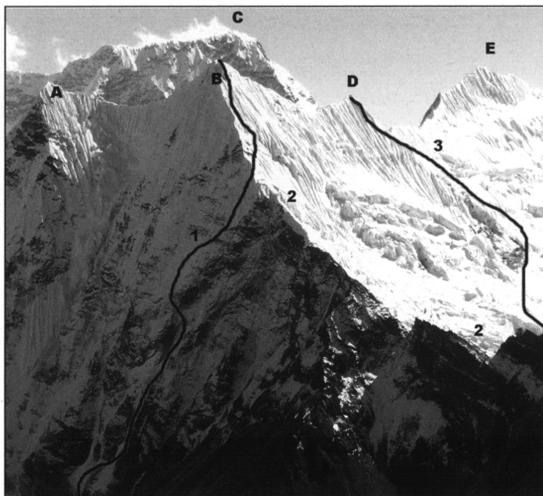
*Amphu South (6,146m), west face; Amphu Middle (6,238m), north face and northwest ridge; Nuptse East (7,795m), south face, attempt; Lhotse (8,516m), south face, attempt.* Before going to Nepal I read about the climbers who had dared to try the south face of Lhotse. Then I had to

find out if I was ready to try it myself. I climbed Lafaille's routes, looked at Babanov's style, Humar, and finally tried to understand the style of Steck. But above all I concentrated on Cesen. In 2007 I tried Jannu to overcome my doubts about his style. It was perfect. I don't know if he was honest or not, but to climb like he did at that time was like talking about relativity in Newton's day. I wasn't trying to copy another climber, just trying to understand what was in his mind.

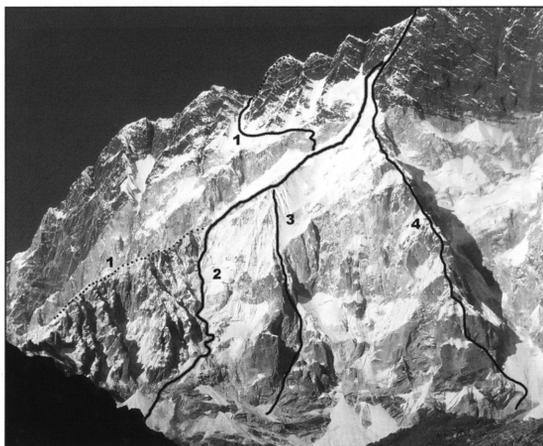
You are never sure if you are ready for a climb, and during my first week at Chhukhung I was not able to look at the face. I was afraid I might have doubts, thinking about returning home to my wife and two sons. From a lodge in Chhukhung I first made ascents of two 6,000m peaks. On November 6 I climbed Amphu South via the Chhukhung Glacier and the glaciated west face. On the 9th I climbed Amphu Middle via the north face and upper northwest ridge. This gave an excellent route, almost 1,200m high, and with an overall grade of TD. There was ice climbing up to 80° and mixed ground to M4.

After the Amphu peaks I went to Nuptse, possibly to convince myself I could climb Lhotse. Based on my Jannu experiences, I had opted for November, because in 2007 the monsoon finished late and the colder weather covered the mixed ground with a good layer of snow, allowing me to climb faster. However, 2008 was different; dry conditions on the south-facing walls would make climbing difficult.

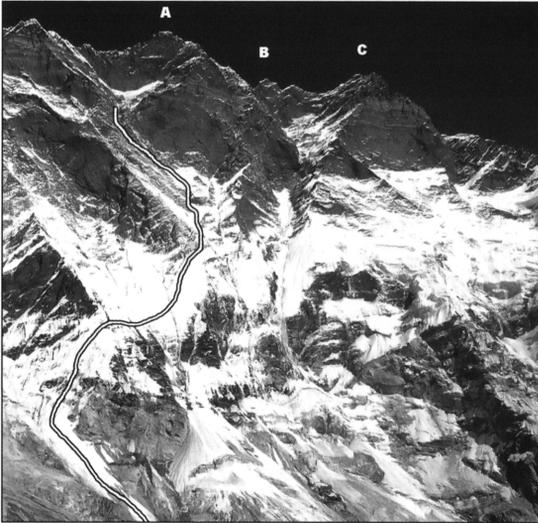
On the 12th I climbed a new variant up a gully and mixed ground on Nuptse's south face, right of the spur taken by the original 1961 British route, joining the latter at 6,300m. From a bivouac at 6,500m, I continued toward Nuptse East via Babanov and Koshelenko's 2003 line.



The Amphu peaks from the north-northwest. (A) Amphu East (6,205m), (B) Amphu Middle (6,238m), (C) Chamlang Main (West summit, 7,321m), (D) Amphu South (6,146m), and (E) Pt. 6,246m. (1) North face and upper northwest ridge (Tozas, 2008), (2) northwest ridge (Graeber-Rieck, 2008), and (3) west face (Tozas, 2008). *Jordi Tozas*



The south face of Nuptse (7,861m). (1) Original 1961 British-Nepali Route to Main summit. (2) Variation start to 1 and continuation to ca 7,600m on Nuptse East (Tozas, solo, 2008). (3) Variant start to 1 and continuation to ca 7,300m on Nuptse East (Blanchard-House-Prezelj, 2002). (4) Southeast pillar of 7,795m Nuptse East-Moonlight Sonata (Babanov-Koshelenko, 2003). *Jordi Tozas*



The south face of Lhotse (8,516m), showing the line taken by Jordi Tozas on his solo attempt. (A) Pt. 8,462m; the main summit is behind. (B) Lhotse Middle (8,414m). (C) Lhotse Shar (8,400m). See also AAJ 2007 p. 396. *Jordi Tozas*

On the final rock buttress, at 7,600m, I realized I wasn't carrying enough rock gear to climb this section safely. I retreated.

On the 18th I set out from Chhukhong for Lhotse. Approaching from the left, I climbed the center of the south face, following the line tried by Slovenians and others and completed to the summit ridge by Japanese. I made my first bivouac at 6,500m and next day climbed increasingly mixed terrain, with runnels of snow and ice to 60°. I arrived at the entry to the big Y-shaped couloir at 7,400m, hoping to continue on snow and ice. Instead, rock blocked it. The ground ahead would be too time-consuming with my minimal equipment, so again I descended, spending another night at 6,500m.

JORDI TOZAS, *Spain*

*Nuptse (7,864m), south face, Are You Experienced? (not to summit).* October 11: Here I am again at the base of the south face of Nuptse. I see the superb line of gullies that cuts through the bottom of the wall for more than 300m, then fades into the unknown. Two years have passed since my first attempt, and my memory remains vivid: the south face of Nuptse is majestic, gigantic. The wall rises more than 2,000m, with huge bastions of rock cutting across the face. You feel reduced to nothingness in front of this wall. I am happy to be here with Stéphane Benoist.

October 15: We leave advanced base camp (5,500m) at 7 p.m. There is a full moon, and we decide to take advantage of it by climbing all night, trying to reach a bivouac site at 6,500m the following day, the place where I bivouacked on my solo attempt in 2006. The cold is intense, and a southwest wind hammers the face. We have never before experienced such brutal conditions on a climb. Stéphane freezes the tip of his nose, and our feet and fingertips are seriously damaged by this night in hell. After many pitches of gully climbing, we gain the 50-60° snow slopes at 6,100m. Dawn arrives, and eventually the sun. However, we have been tested and are now moving slowly. There is a sustained pitch of WI5/5+ at 6,450m, and then at noon we arrive at my 2006 bivouac site. Ironically, we are now almost hot.

Exhausted and dehydrated, we set up the tent. Something is wrong with me: I'm trembling, drained, and have stomach pains. We sleep well, and I think I can continue, but I haven't completely recovered, and we spend the day resting. My condition deteriorates. I have no energy. Stéphane spends the day looking for a bag of clothing that I left here two years ago. He finally digs it out. The night really tests me, and when morning arrives I have only one pressing desire: to descend and recover. Fifteen 70m rappels later, we are on the glacier. On the bright side, two nights at 6,500m were great for acclimatization, and we cached sleeping bags, parkas,