

Kyashar from the Hinku Valley to the southwest. (1) West ridge (Broderik-Frank-Normand, 2003; the team moved left at ca 6,400m and reached the summit via the west face). (2) Southwest face, Ramro Chaina (Doudlebsky-Holecek, 2005; the climbers stopped on joining the west ridge). (3) South Pillar attempt (Doudlebsky-Holecek, 2008). (4) South Pillar attempt (Houseman-Stone, 2010). *Andy Houseman*

led to the final rock band and snow slopes at 5,500m, where we bivouacked. Next day we climbed a small glacier to reach the snow ridge leading to the upper pillar. Unfortunately, Tony was still struggling to acclimatize and did not feel up to continuing, so we bailed at 5,700m, 100m below the start of the upper pillar. We descended by down-climbing and five rappels and were back in Tangnag at 3 p.m.

We organized our expedition through Loben Expeditions (lobenexpeditions.com). They provide a

first-class and personal service, and we would recommend them highly to anyone planning a trip to the Himalaya, trekking or climbing. We are also grateful to the financial support provided by the BMC and Alpine Club Climbing Fund.

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MAHALANGUR HIMAL MAKALU-BARUN SECTION

Makalu, partial new route, southwest face and west pillar. A large expedition from Ukraine, using fixed rope but no bottled oxygen and no high-altitude Sherpa support, climbed new ground on the left side of Makalu's southwest face. Led by Mstislav Gorbenko, the team divided into three groups to work on the route in shifts of five–seven days. While one group was pushing out the fixed ropes, the other two would carry loads to high camps. Each group had two–three days of rest in base camp after its working shift on the face.

Base camp at the Hillary site (4,850m) was established on April 7, and advanced base (5,850m) two days later. Above, the line of ascent can be divided into three sections. Up to Camp 2 at 6,600m the team followed the 1975 Slovenian Route. At this point the Slovenians had slanted right on a rocky rib toward the center of the face, whereas the Ukrainians now worked up left through snow fields and mixed ground, placing Camp 3 on April 21 at 7,000m. Camp 4 (7,500m), close to the crest of the west pillar, was established on the 30th. From here to the summit they followed the 1971 French route.

The main technical challenge lay on the new ground between Camps 2 and 4. The rock above 6,600m was slabby, polished, and generally offered little in the way of protection. There were no ledges suitable for camping except the tiny shelf used for Camp 3. The average standard of this section was UIAA IV–V, with one pitch of A1/2. Only one bolt was placed, and this at the site of Camp 3. The crux of the French Route is a 30m rock wall of A1/2 at 7,700m.

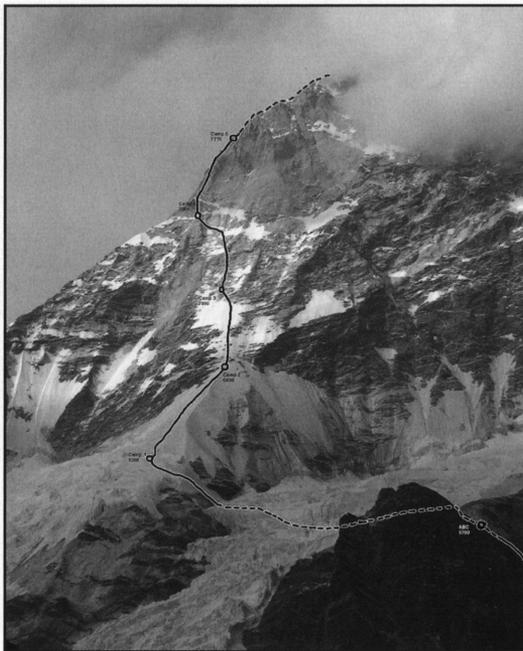
On May 1, having reached 7,600m on the crest of the pillar, the climbers were forced down by high winds (up to 140 km/hour), which confined everyone to base camp for 11 days. When they eventually managed to get back onto the face, they were forced to re-establish most of the high camps. One tent was blown out at advanced base; Camp 1 was partially destroyed; Camp 3 was partially destroyed; and Camp 4 completely destroyed.

On May 17 Camp 5 was established above the pillar crux at 7,750m, after which three teams made summit attempts. Only one got a suitable weather window. Sergey Bublik, Vladimir Roshko, and Dmitry Venslavovsky reached the top on May 23, after a total of 3,000m of rope had been fixed from 6,000–7,800m.

Arriving on the summit in the dark, not wanting to reverse their route, and finding that climbers from other expeditions had reached the top via the Normal Route from the north, the three Ukrainians chose to follow tracks down toward the

Makalu La, reaching at tent at 7,700m with a lot of assistance from Marty Schmidt from New Zealand. Schmidt was alone and had placed the tent for a night's rest prior to a summit bid the following day. He had to climb through the night to 8,100m to assist the third and final Ukrainian down to his tent but was then able to turn around, climb back up, and reach the top by 3 p.m. on the 24th.

The French (west) pillar has still received few ascents. On the last, in 2004, American Jay Sieger and Ukrainian Vladimir Terzyul reached the summit but were killed on the descent. Sieger's body was discovered at 8,300m by two Kazakhs on the same expedition, but Terzyul, who had climbed 13 of the 8,000m peaks, some by new routes, was never found. During their summit push Bublik, Roshko, and Venslavovsky found equipment belonging to Terzyul at Camp 5 and passed Sieger's body on their way to the top.



The new Ukrainian Route on the southwest face of Makalu. The left skyline is the French (West) Ridge. Camps marked are ABC (5,700m), Camp 1 (6,200m), Camp 2 (6,600m), Camp 3 (7,000m), Camp 4 (7,500m), and Camp 5 (7,770m). Supplied by Anna Piunova, mountain.ru

ANNA PIUNOVA, mountain.ru

OMI KANGRI HIMAL

Pabuk Kang (a.k.a. Yangma, 6,244m) southwest ridge. Far East Nepal is best known for being crowned by the Kanchenjunga massif. Between there and Makalu the Himalayan crest makes an uncommon drop in altitude. Perhaps that is why climbers have not given peaks west of the Ghunsa Valley much attention. However, there are plenty of interesting summits between 5,500m and 6,500m.