North face of Dingjung Ri/Rima Mancho. *Andy Parkin*

been confusing. A Sherpa pointed to the peak, calling it Dingjung Ri, though another Sherpa later said it was referred to locally as Rima Mancho.

After time spent acclimatizing, Parkin returned to his tent one afternoon to find clothing had been stolen. That night he was attacked: rocks, some as large as half a kilogram, were thrown through his tent. He scared off the assailant and moved down to a yak herder's house closer to Chhule, where he had no further problems.

He made an advanced camp below the face at 5,300m, but heavy snowfall at the end of the month made moving around difficult, so it wasn't until mid-January that he set off for an attempt.

The north face is steep, rather like the Grandes Jorasses but with vertical rock walls. However, to the left a steep névé line runs up the face before curving back to the central (main) summit. While access to the base proved difficult due to heavy snow, once he was on the face conditions improved.

His line gave brilliant climbing up to 85°. After two cold, windy bivouacs (5,700m and 6,050m), he traveled light to the summit—an amazing dollop of névé on pure ice that he reached early in the afternoon of January 17. Parkin made it down through the night, with frost-nipped fingers, to his lower bivouac site, where he had left a gas cylinder. Next day he reached the base of the mountain after three and a half chilly days on the face. He walked out to Namche after "one of the hardest trips I can remember." This was Parkin's fourth consecutive winter in the Khumbu, and he reports that prices continue to escalate.

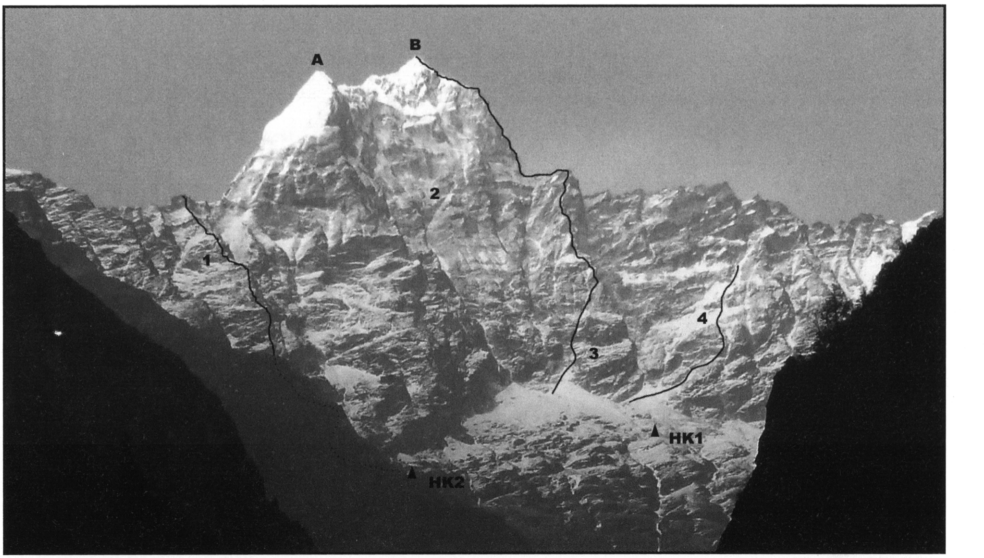
Rima Mancho had been climbed at least four times before, as it presents an easy southwest flank/ridge from the upper Drolambau Glacier. During the 1952 British-New Zealand Cho Oyu expedition, Charles Evans, Alf Gregory, and Eric Shiption became the first climbers known to explore the Drolambau, from the head of which they climbed Rima Mancho, though they named it Trident. Gregory climbed it again in 1955 with Ted Courtenay during the Merseyside Himalayan expedition, as well as the higher Peak 6,293m immediately south, while other members climbed Pimu (6,344m), south of that, by the impressive southeast ridge. In 1960 Robert Sandoz's French party also repeated Rima Mancho's southwest ridge, as did two members of a German expedition in 1972.

In April 2010 a commercially organized British expedition led by Simon Yates approached from the southeast, placing an advanced base camp at 5,400m on the Chhuitingpo Glacier. A two-man reconnaissance up a couloir above the head of the glacier reached the crest of the southwest ridge at 6,000m. A later attempt by most of the members stopped when several were hit by falling stones in the couloir.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO, from information provided by Andy Parkin, Richard Salisbury/Himalayan Database, and the Alpine Club Himalayan Index*

MAHALANGUR HIMAL - KHUMBU SECTION

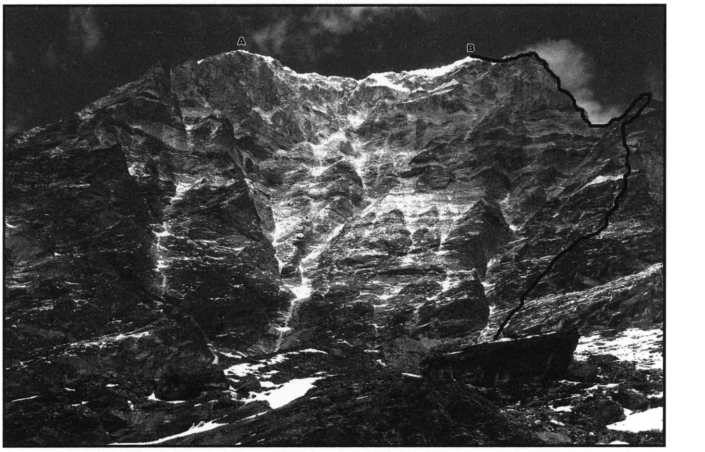
Kyajo Ri (6,186m), northeast face, attempt; Kusum Kanguru (6,370m), southwest rib and northwest ridge, attempt. In March Steven Fortune, Mike Rowe, and I arrived in the Solu Khumbu and established base camp at 5,050m, below our first objective, the northeast face of Kyajo Ri. Initially



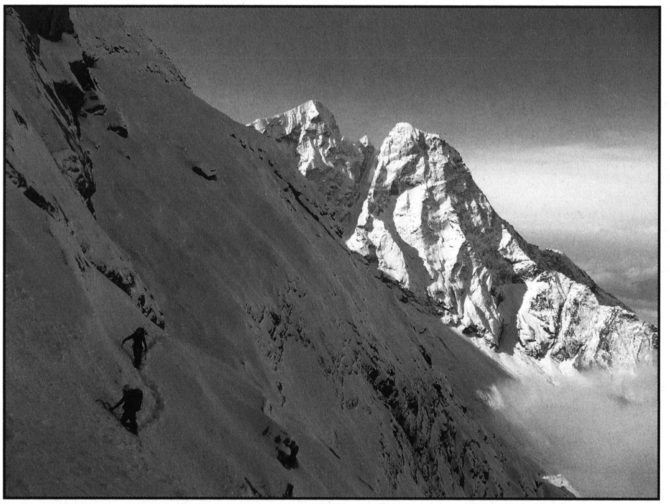
Southwest face of Kusum Kanguru from Thado Khoshi. (A) West peak. (B) Southwest peak. (1) 2011 New Zealand line to northwest ridge at 5,500m (and bivouac site). (2) Unclimbed southwest face. (3) 1991 British Route. In 2000 Bart Paul and Freddie Wilkinson climbed different line on 900m lower buttress, then followed 1991 route to summit ridge, where at 6,100m they retreated. (4) 2004 Alaskan attempt, which failed to gain south ridge. (HK1) New Zealand first high camp. (HK2) New Zealand second high camp. In autumn 2001 Czechs were on this side of mountain. Pavel Chiznak, Ivan Foltyn and Petr Strnadel climbed Birthday Cake (5.8 M5 80°) to Pt. 5,805m on south ridge; Roman Kamler and Slavek Vomacko put up West Buttress (5.9 90°), which leads to Pt. 5,579m on west ridge (well left of New Zealand high point). Lines taken by these two routes are uncertain. *Steven Fortune*

we attempted the standard route up the southwest ridge, starting from a high camp at 5,500m below the unclimbed south face. We retreated at just over 6,000m in deteriorating weather, when I was struck on the hand by falling ice and unable to continue climbing.

There followed a rest period at base camp, where we waited in vain for the weather and my injured hand to improve, ultimately leaving Steven and Mike to attempt our proposed new direct line up the northeast face. Early on the morning of April 15, when conditions eventually improved, the pair climbed steep ice below the hanging glacier, before making a rising traverse left on moderately angled snow to gain the glacier itself. They then tackled the upper face via the major ice gully followed in 2009 by an Italian team, gaining a



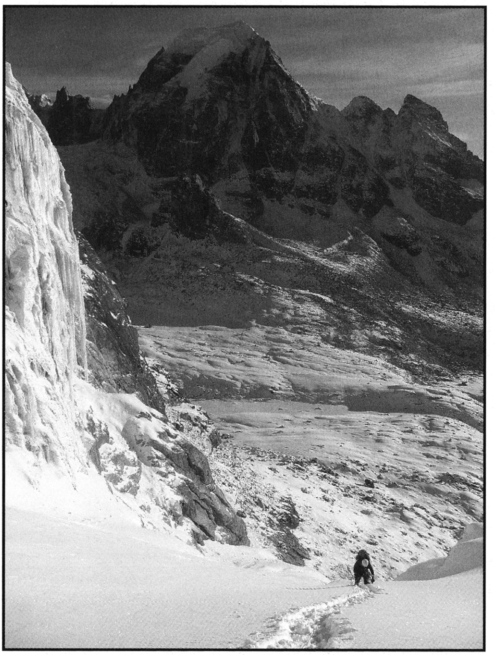
Unclimbed southwest face of Kusum Kanguru, with 1991 British route marked. (A) West peak. (B) Southwest or Main peak. *Mike Rowe*



Ben Dare and Mike Rowe traversing lower slopes of southwest face of Kusum Kanguru to reach the rib eventually climbed. Twin summits of Gonglha (5,813m, left; 5,666m) behind. *Steven Fortune*

maximum height of 5,700m before continuous spindrift avalanches forced them to abandon the climb.

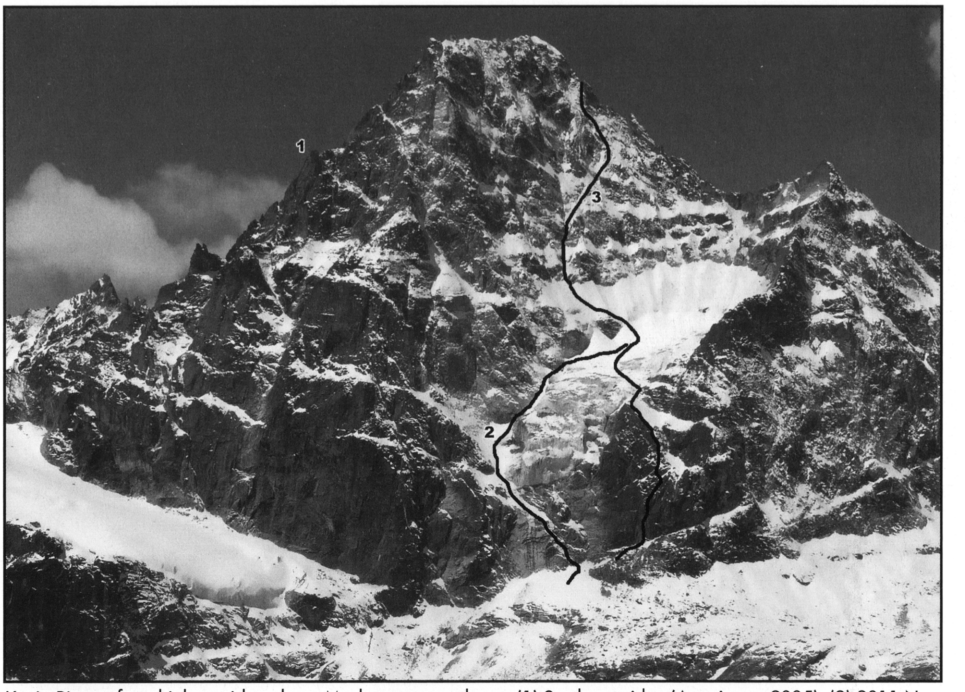
[Editor's note: In December 2009 Enrico Bonino and Nicolas Meli tried to climb directly through the lower serac barrier on the northeast face but retreated when an axe broke. They returned and climbed the rock buttress to the right at 6b with a little A1. Crossing the hanging glacier they climbed the upper face, with a section reminiscent of the Ginat on Les Droites, to reach the northeast ridge 120m below the top. Here they abandoned the climb, as it was getting late. The upper section had presented difficulties of M6+, WI5+, and A2.]



Mike Rowe climbing under base of hanging glacier on northeast face of Kyajo Ri, with south faces of Pharilapcha (6,017m, left) and Machermo (5,766m) behind. *Steven Fortune*

Despite our lack of success, we remained quietly optimistic as we retraced our steps down the Gokyo Valley to attempt our second objective, a new direct route on the southwest face of Kusum Kanguru. Leaving the main Namche-Lukla trail at Thado Khoshi, we struck up the lower reaches of the Thado Khoshi Khola (Kusum Drangka) by a series of well-defined logging trails, camping for the night at the first major fork in the river. Above, all evidence of an established trail quickly faded, and it was only with the assistance of a local guide that we made good progress through dense bamboo forests on the true right bank of the river, to reach our proposed base camp at 3,850m.

Here we were greeted with our first close view of the face, which although largely bare of snow, still held potential in the form of an appealing gully just left of center. This contained significant ice and looked to provide access to the upper face. However, conditions quickly deteriorated, and we were again plagued by the daily snow storms

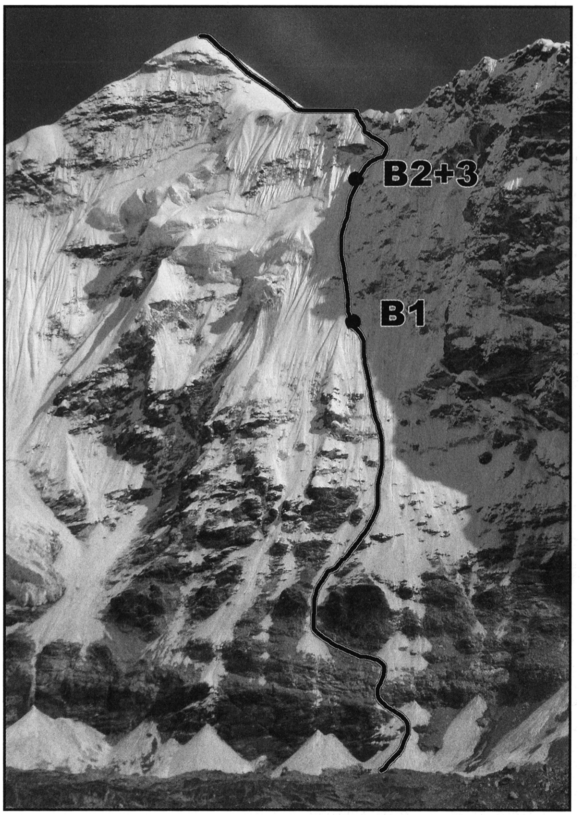


Kyajo Ri seen from high on ridge above Machermo to northeast. (1) Southeast ridge (Americans, 2005). (2) 2011 New Zealand attempt. (3) 2009 Italian attempt. *Ben Dare*

that had hampered us on Kyajo Ri. They covered the entire face in a thick layer of unconsolidated powder, triggering widespread avalanches and all but rendering our intended route unclimbable. After waiting over a week for weather and conditions to improve, during which time we made three separate climbs to our high camp at 4,900m, we abandoned our attempt and shifted focus to an alternative objective.

On April 28 we climbed a possible new line up a rock rib on the far left of the face, reaching the col on the northwest ridge where the crest begins to rise toward the west peak. We think this is left of the line climbed in 1981 by Bill Denz on the first ascent of the mountain. [*Editor's note: During early October 1981, in what is now acknowledged to be one of the most remarkable first ascents on lower Himalayan peaks, New Zealander Bill Denz spent one and a half days soloing a mixed buttress on the left of the southwest face to reach the west peak, where he bivouacked while waiting for the ridge ahead to stabilize. The following day he made a trying ascent to the main summit. He bivouacked on the summit and next day traversed the narrow connecting ridge to the 6,350m northeast summit, before descending the northwest flank and then spending a further two days bushwhacking to the standard Everest approach trail.*] We gained the base of the rib at 4,800m by a series of interlinked snow and ice fields, and then climbed 1,000m of mixed ground to the ridge, encountering difficulties up to M5.

The abundance of fresh snow insured that we progressed slowly, and on reaching the ridge, with dwindling food supplies, early on the afternoon of the second day, we opted not to continue over the west peak to the main summit as initially planned. We returned to our bivouac site



Spanish route on west face and southwest ridge of Cho Polu. Bivouac sites marked. *Jordi Corominas*

of the previous night, on a narrow snow arête just below 5,300m. Early next morning we continued down, rappelling a wide gully left of our ascent route.

We believe that, given the right conditions, the proposed direct line on the southwest face would be climbable. It remains a great challenge. There is also potential for an appealing line up the prominent prow of the left (west) buttress, directly to the west peak. We extend thanks to all our supporters and sponsors, in particular the Mount Everest Foundation, New Zealand Alpine Club, and Sport and Recreation New Zealand.

BEN DARE, *New Zealand*

Cho Polu (6,700m), west face and southwest ridge. Elena Parga and I spent a week in Kathmandu, waiting for the plane to Lukla. As far as Island Peak base camp the trail was full of tents and people, but then it was another world—nobody, only mountains. Beyond Lhotse Shar base camp we were forced by loose blocks on the lateral moraine to make a roped descent to the glacier. We then crossed the entire rubble-covered glacier and pitched our tent below the west face of Cho Polu, at 5,300m. The previous year we'd attempted this face, but exhaustion proved stronger than our willpower. We thought we'd find some of our gear but only came across two rappel anchors.

After a day's reconnaissance we woke in the middle of the night and set foot on the face at dawn. There was more ice than in 2010, making for faster progress, but the worst part of an ascent is always the pack, which crushes you little by little. Toward the end of the day, we arrived at some rocks, but to our disappointment they offered no shelter. We had to chop out a small ledge and, half sitting and half reclining, we held the stove between our legs.

Toward the end of November it's cold at 6,000m, and we found it hard getting moving in the morning. At first the slope was icy, but as we gained height it became unstable snow, without decreasing in angle, forcing us to make a taxing traverse. Later we cut a tent platform into a snow ridge, as the face above did not seem to offer any suitable campsite. It's a shame we were unable to photograph this site—a real eagle's nest. Despite the cold we slept and recuperated.

The following day we climbed as quickly as possible to get past the remaining difficulties and reach the col at 6,400m on the southwest ridge. We arrived at 1 p.m. From there to the summit seemed easier, so