

Members of the expedition: General leader: Kazuuki Abe (75); leader: Tamotsu Ohnishi (62); climbing leader: Satoshi Kimoto (48), and five climbing members. Academic party: Leader: Toyoji Wada (58) and one member.

*Editor's note: this route involved approximately nine pure rock pitches up to 5.10d, with a short section of A1 on the first. Fixed rope was used and a few bolts placed.*

TAMOTSU OHNISHI, Japanese Alpine Club

*Adapted from Japanese Alpine News, Tamotsu Nakamura, Editor*

## ROLWALING HIMAL

*Shishapangma main summit (8,027m), southwest face, solo in December with new variation.* Over the years I had a simple idea in mind: to climb a big Himalayan route solo in the inhospitable conditions that typify winter in the Himalaya. During all my outings in the Alps and from when I first encountered the high Himalayan summits, I wanted to attempt such a project. Since my start in alpinism I have had one central belief: "Things always seem impossible when you haven't tried them."

The idea is simple on paper but difficult to realize. Even with all my experience at high altitude, I was still full of uncertainty as I flew to Kathmandu. Would I be able to make the needed effort in the cold and rarified air? Would I be able to climb fast enough on such a technical face to get up between windstorms?

I arrived at base camp on November 14, acclimatized until December 8, and left advance base camp (5,700m) on December 9. That day I reached a bivouac at 7,000m. Then I rested on "stand by" mode, climbing only a mixed section of the British route of 1982 until 7,200m, where I bivouacked. I started climbing again at 4:30 a.m. on December 11 and reached the summit (8,027m) at 11:30, Nepalese time. Despite my elation, I had to concentrate on the cold that lived in my feet and my entire body, and on the descent that awaited me. Four hours later I bivouacked at 7,000m. Bad weather hit on the morning of December 12. All the mountains were consumed by heavy black clouds. It snowed intermittently and blew violently. Very tired, I concentrated hard, alternating between rappelling and downclimbing while descending the thousands of vertical meters that plunge to the glacier. Around 6,600m my 7mm rope got stuck; it is still on the route. Finally I regained the security of the glacier and reached base camp that day (December 12). My project ended as it had begun, in infinite solitude. I had proven that I was capable of climbing a grand Himalayan route under winter conditions, alone, with no support, and without artificial oxygen.

JEAN CHRISTOPHE LAFAILLE, France (translated by John Harlin III)

*Shishapangma, notes on the Lafaille ascent and winter season.* When the Nepalese Government established a winter season for the Nepal Himalaya lasting from December 1 to February 15, their rules also stated that while camps could be established above Base during November, they could not be occupied until the start of the following month. Jean Christophe Lafaille began fixing ropes up the first section of the Corredor Girona on November 20. Only 300m of rope were fixed in total