

Losar, ascent and possible future permit requirement. On January 10, 2006 Whit Magro and I climbed the stupendous frozen waterfall, Losar, which lies directly opposite Namche Bazaar. After 1½-hour approach, we took nine hours to reach the top, simul-climbing all but the last two crux pitches of the 700m route. The climbing was surprisingly moderate (WI3-4), with a little WI5 pillar at the top. We kept a steady, rather than frantic, pace and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It must be one of the greatest ice routes in the world. Over a dozen V-thread rappels got us back down in time for dinner in Namche.

We were in the region as volunteers for the Khumbu Climbing School, a program organized by the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation (www.alexlowe.org), that strives to increase the safety of Nepali climbers and high-altitude workers through ice climbing, first aid, and English instruction. It seems that the only reason we got permission to climb the route was our affiliation with the ALCF. Jenni Lowe, President of ALCF, accompanied us to the park headquarters in Namche. After several hours of discussion and drafted letters, we received authorization. We learned that, shortly before our arrival, two Canadian climbers had been denied a go-ahead to climb the route, because they lacked a permit. Future parties should research the situation, as it may be that they will need a permit arranged and paid for prior to leaving Kathmandu.

On the 22nd Kris Erickson, Seth Hobby, and Renan Ozturk also climbed Losar. All three were affiliated with the ALCF and only received permission after protracted negotiations with park authorities.

BRADY ROBINSON

Editor's note: this icefall, which cuts through the north-facing pastures below Nupla (5,885m), had its first known ascent over three days in early 1994 by Catherine Destivelle and Erik Decamp, with photographer Beth Wald. They fixed ropes on the initial, thinly iced pitches.

Losar, solo ascent. Sometime after the ascent reported above and after I returned from an attempt on Cholatse's southwest ridge, I found myself back in Namche with a few days to spare. Losar allowed me to ascend and descend in just under six hours, by means of a leashless free solo.

WHIT MAGRO

Ama Dablam, Lagunak Ridge, attempt. Between October 1 and November 2, Tina Di Batista and I were members of a Slovenian Jubilee expedition to Ama Dablam. The expedition was organized to honor the 30th anniversary of the first Slovenian ascent of an 8,000m peak. In 1975 a Slovenian team (though in those days we were still Yugoslavia) climbed a new route on the south face of Makalu. Four of the seven Makalu summiters were on the 2005 Ama Dablam expedition, and all reached the top via the southwest ridge; Janko Azman, Janez Dovzan, Viki Groselj (expedition leader) and Marjan Manfreda. These four climbers were accompanied by Croatian Stipe Bozic, who was making a film.

Tina and I made an attempt on the Lagunak Ridge, which was climbed for the first time in 1985 by a Spanish-American trio, who completed the route using fixed ropes (this is the south ridge of Ama Dablam, which joins the Standard Route up the southwest ridge at ca. 6,500m—Ed.). We tried it in alpine-style. We started early in the morning of October 19. In the lower section we found fixed ropes along a rocky part of the ridge. We bivied below a