

other summit, the northeast ear, had been climbed twice, by lines totally different from ours. It's a complex formation, and I would say we did the third ascent of the formation and the first to the southwest ear.

We named our climb the Epica Direct (V 5.11+ C2). Epica was the nickname of our good friend Erica Kutcher, who was buried in an icefall collapse just above Shipton base camp. Erica was one of the most promising female Yosemite climbers ever to roll through the scene. She earned the nickname Epica because she was never afraid to go for it and often the results were epic. I think Erica would appreciate the sarcastic "Direct" name for our route.

RENAN OZTURK, *Yosemite, California*

*Hainabrakk East Tower, alpine-style link-up.* Ko Imai and Hiroki Suzuki made the probable second alpine-style ascent of this ca 5,650m formation, linking the American route (Copp-Pennings, 2000) and the Slovak route (Kolarik-Rabatin, 2005) on July 11-12. Their climb was 1,100m (31 pitches) and 5.10 A2.

TAMOTSU NAKAMURA, *Japanese Alpine News*

*La Reina Roja, southwest face.* I first visited the Trango group in 2000 to try the Slovenian route on Nameless Tower. Our expedition was unsuccessful, and it took me seven years to return to Pakistan. There are not many big-wall climbers in Mexico, and fewer who share the goals and could afford the expense of climbing in Pakistan. So I traveled alone and asked my friend Ali Muhammad to be my partner and guide for this expedition. I had met him as a guide and cook for our expedition in 2000. He was interested in learning the techniques of big-wall climbing. I taught him the basics, and we chose a wall 300m up from the Nameless Tower base camp on the Trango Glacier, by the trail to Shipton base camp. After studying the line with a telescope, we started up the left skyline and fixed the first two pitches. Over four days of bad weather we carried everything we'd need to the base of the wall and hauled one bag up the first two pitches.

On June 19 we started up, prepared to head to the top. We bivouacked at the end of the fifth and eighth pitches, with two pitches fixed above our second bivy. On June 21 we left the pig atop the eighth pitch, thinking it would only be four more pitches from the top of our fixed lines to the summit. After seven pitches we reached the top just before sunset. We'd forgotten headlamps, so the descent was epic. The rope got stuck three times. We reached our bivy gear at 1 a.m. on June 22, and then continued down the next morning after some sleep.

We called our route Estrella de la Mañana (or Morning Star or Skarchan): 936m, 5.10b A1, 17 pitches.

LUIS CARLOS GARCÍA AYALA, *Mexico*

*Editor's note:* At the beginning of their route, Luis Carlos García Ayala and Ali Muhammad followed portions of an existing climb called Sadu (350m, 6b+ A1, Antoine and Sandrine de Choudens, 2003). Above the small point at 4,400m (Sadu Peak), where the de Choudens ended their climb, García Ayala and Muhammad continued for nine pitches to another summit, which they called La Reina Roja. Sadu was repeated in 2005 by a Slovenian expedition, which also added a route (Piyar, Piyar, 6b+ A0) left of the original line.