

Marko Lukic on mixed pitches below headwall. *Andrej Grmovsek*

Morning brought sunshine and an easy decision—to go down. We were tired, many things had not gone according to plan, and the hardest part lay above. Our tactic was wrong: we were climbing too fast, we were too heavy, we had unsuitable equipment, we were not acclimatized, and there wasn't enough motivation. With hard and complex climbs like Meru Shark's Fin, these "beginner's" mistakes count.

ANDREJ GRMOVSEK, *Slovenia*

CENTRAL GARHWAL

Mukut Parvat (7,242m). Lionel Albrieux's eight-member French team approached this high mountain from Ghasoli, establishing base camp at 4,800m on the Pachhimi (West) Kamet Glacier. After putting an advanced base at 5,300m, they climbed alpine-style up the south ridge. One member left for home early due to altitude problems, but Albrieux, Sébastien Bohin, Damine Cabane, Sébastien Giacobi, Didier Jourdain, Emmanuel Pellissier, and Marion Poitevin reached the summit on October 2 from a camp at 6,500m.

Mukut Parvat was first climbed in 1951 by Earle Riddiford's New Zealand expedition, via the northwest ridge from the Dakhhini Chamrao Glacier. They had previously reconnoitered the West Kamet Glacier but found it too challenging. Edmund Hillary was a member of this team, and although he did not summit, his involvement was one of the reasons he was selected to join the next Everest expedition. The peak had a second ascent in 1992, by an expedition of the Indo-Tibet Border Police.

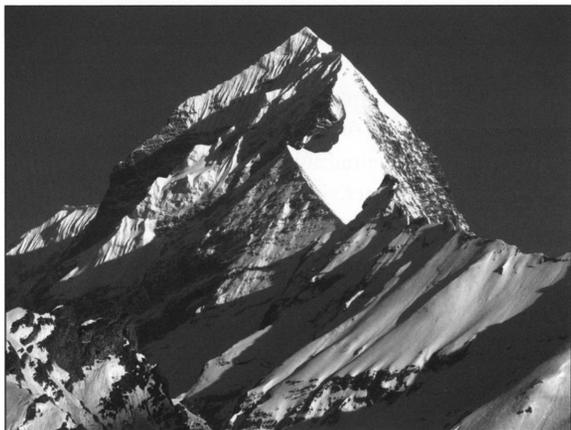
HARISH KAPADIA, *Honorary Editor, The Himalayan Journal*

KUMAON

Changuch (6322m), first ascent. On June 9, an Indo-British team made the first recorded ascent of Changuch, an elegant sharp-edged peak that was one of the last major virgin summits in the region. Changuch lies northwest of Nanda Kot on the divide between the Lawan and Pindar valleys, directly opposite the southeast face of Nanda Devi East. Three previous attempts from the Pindari side had failed, and in 2007 an ice avalanche in the Pindari icefall killed two Sherpas. The northern approach from the Lawan Valley is much easier, and our first ascent team found a line up snowy ramps and couloirs at 45–55° to gain the northwest ridge at a 5,850m col. From here the final ridge rises in several steps, mixed ground giving way to exposed snow/ice slopes of 55–60°. The summit team of Paul Guest, Rob Jarvis, Luder Sain (Liaison Officer), Leon Winchester, and I left the col camp at 12:30 a.m. and summited at 9 a.m. We descended



The north face of Changuch (6,322m) rises above the Lawan Glacier. The first ascensionists climbed from advanced base at (5,150m) to Camp 2 on the col at 5,850m, and from there up the northwest ridge to the summit. *Martin Moran*



The northwest ridge of Changuch (6,322m) seen from the slopes below Longstaff's Col. *Martin Moran*

by the same route. We graded the climb Alpine D.

We had earlier acclimatized by making an ascent of Nanda Lampak (5,782m) via the south ridge at AD (60°). The expedition then turned to its primary target, Nanda Devi East via the south ridge from Longstaff's Col (5,910m). However, lacking resources and manpower for a prolonged attempt, we abandoned our attempt at 6,100m and switched our attention to Changuch. Indian Mountaineering Foundation rules allow a switch of objective in return for an additional 50% peak royalty. In the case of Changuch this was only \$450. As the expedition Liaison Officer was also one of the summit climbers, we faced no bureaucratic hurdles in making the change.

A few days later we crossed Traill's Pass (5,312m), between the Lawan and Pindar valleys. This famous glacier crossing was first made in 1830 in an attempt to forge a trade route direct from Almora to Tibet. The 2009 crossing was only the 6th known repeat and the first for 15 years. Glacial recession has rendered the crossing progressively more difficult, and we avoided the Pindari Glacier icefall altogether in favor

of a mixed route down the west side of the valley (overall grade AD with snow/ice to 60°).

MARTIN MORAN, *Alpine Club*

Editors Note: The first expedition to make a serious inspection of Changuch took place in 1987, when Geoff Hornby's joint Indo-British team, approaching via the Pindari Glacier to the south, decided the southwest face was impractical and turned instead to Laspa Dhura (5,913m), making its first ascent. In 1997 a Northern Ireland team led by Gary Murray climbed part way up a neighboring peak in order to reconnoiter a line on the same southwest face. Snowfall made an attempt on their main objective impossible. Another 10 years would elapse before the next attempt. In 2007 an Indian expedition, jointly organized by the Navy and the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, was led by the accomplished Satya Dam. The expe-