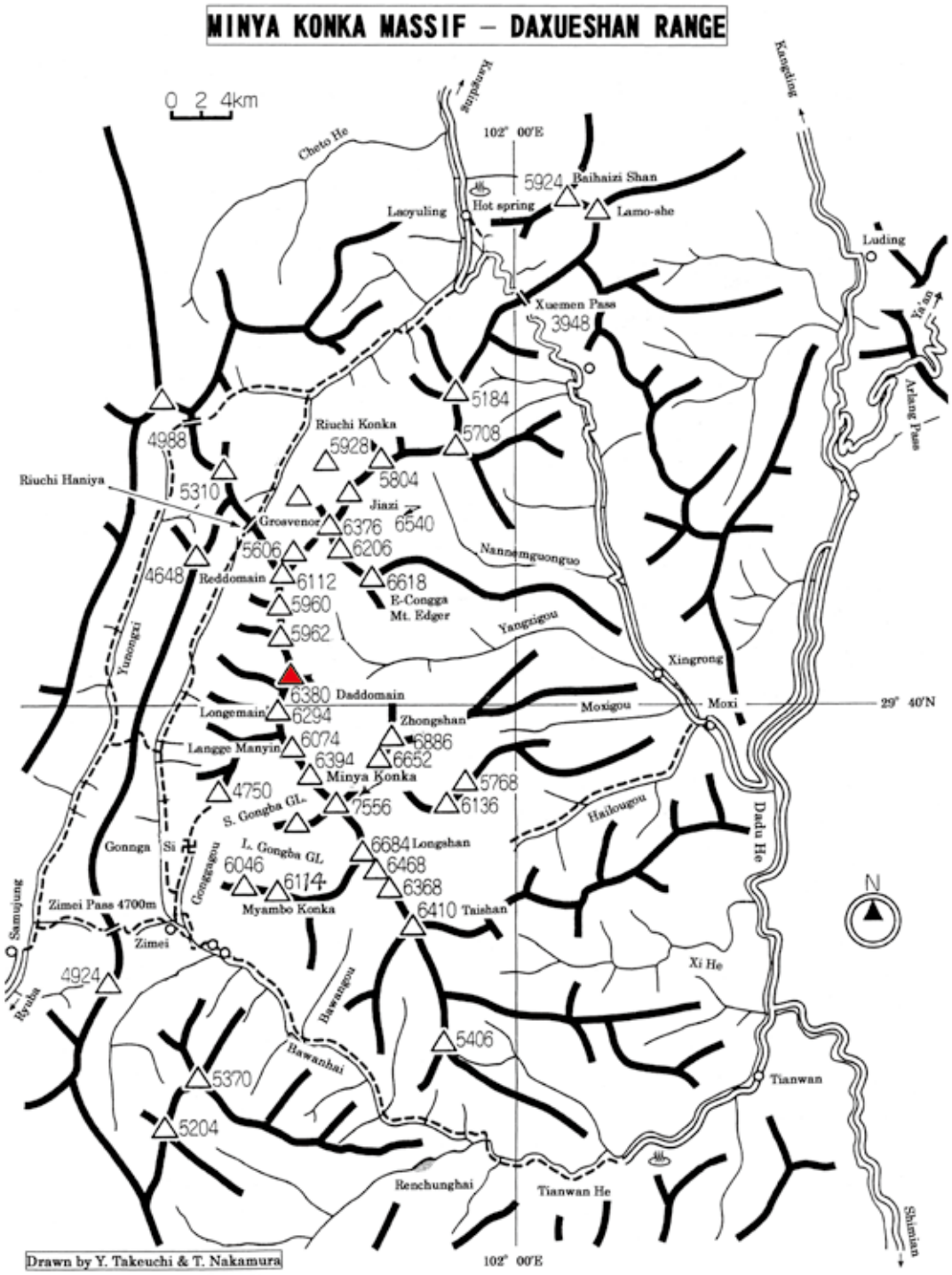
TAMOTSU NAKAMURA

Daddomain 6,380m-New Route on East Face, Sichuan

Daddomain 6,380m is one of the fascinating peaks of Minya Konka massif in Daxue Shan mountain range which is located in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in western Sichuan, China.

The Daxue Shan range runs more or less north-south. The highest peak is the giant Minya Konka (Gongga Shan 7,552m), while the main valley lie between about 3,000m and the main passes at around 4,950m. Minya Konka is the only peak above 7,000m with many peaks lying around the mid-6,000m mark, among which there are several outstanding summits such as formidable Mt. Edgar (E-Gongga 6,618m). A record of the first ascent of the southeast face of Mt. Edgar is described elsewhere in the other article. The range marks the eastern edge of the West Sichuan Highlands which is an extension of the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau to the east. A brief climbing chronicle of Minya Konka massif is described below.

1932: 1st ascent of Minya Konka 7,556m by American via NW ridge
1957: 2nd ascent of Minya Konka by Chinese via NW ridge (6 were lost)
1981: 1st ascent of Tsiburongri Konka 5,928m by British
1st ascent of Zhongshan 6,886m, Tai Shan 6,410, Pt 6,652 by Swiss
1982: 3rd ascent of Minya Konka by Swiss via NW ridge
4th ascent of Minya Konka by American via NW ridge
1st ascent of Jiazi 6,540m by American
1st ascent of Nochma 5,588n by American
1984: 5th ascent of Minya Konka by German via NW ridge
1997: 6th ascent of Minya Konka by Japanese via NW ridge
1998: 7th ascent of Minya Konka by Korean via new route on NE ridge
1999: 1st ascent of Reddomain 6,112m by Japanese
2001: 1st ascent of Mt. Edgar 6,618m by Korean via W ridge
2002: 8th ascent of Minya Konka by French via NW ridge
2003: 1st ascent of Grosvenor 6,367m by British via N face – W ridge
2004: 1st ascent of Daddomain 6,380m by New Zealand via W ridge
1st ascent of Longemain 6,294m by New Zealand
2008: 1st ascent of Donogomba 5,960m by American
2009: 1st ski descent of Reddomain 6,112m by American
1st ascent of Pt 6,134m by Russian
2010: 2nd ascent of Donogomba 5,960 by New Zealand
2nd ascent of Mt. Edgar 6,618m by British via SE face (new route)
2nd ascent of Grosvenor 6,367m by British via N face (direct-new route)
2011: 2nd ascent of Daddomain 6,380 by Japanese via E face (new route)



First Ascent by New Zealand party

Daddomain (N 29 deg 40. 504 min. E 101 deg 50.241 min.) was first climbed by two New Zealand climbers in 2004 as noted on the above chronicle. Sean Waters from Christchurch and Jorian (Jo) Kippax from Tasmania stood atop Daddomain 6,380m via the west ridge on 29th October 2004. The

1:100,000
Jiazi 6540
Grosvenor 6376
Reddomain 6112
Mt.Edgar 6618
Yangzigou
Daddomain 6380
Longemain 6294
Zhongshan 6886
Minya Konka 7556

climbing route is shown on the photo below. Their expedition report "New Zealand Unclimbed China Expedition 2004" was published on the Japanese Alpine News vol. 6 May 2005.

Japanese "Giri Giri Boys" – First Ascent of East Face

Most powerful climbing group, now well-known Giri Giri Boys' three Japanese members, succeeded in opening a notable new route on the East Face. This is the 2nd ascent of Daddomain. The Giri Giri Boys' prime objective was to attempt drawing a direct line on the overwhelming southeast face of Mt. Edgar. However hair-raising dangers of falling rocks in a valley for approaching to the southeast face forced them to change a target to unclimbed east face of Daddomain in the headwarters of Yangzigou Valley. The summing-up is as follows.

Period of climbing: 6 days – April 20 to 25, 2011
Height difference of ascent: 1,900m from crevasse in central couloir to the summut
Route grades: ED1, W14, M5R, 21 pitches including continuous ones
Descent: Same route as ascent, 15 times rappelling to the central couloir
Members: Fumitaka Ichimura, Ryo Masumoto and Keimei Nagato
Period of expedition: March 26 to April 36, 2011

Itinerary and activity

March 26: Chengdu to Mosi
March 29: Mosi – Yangzigou BC at 3150m
March 30: BC – 4,050m for acclimatization and ferrying loads to deposit point
March 31 – April 3: Stay at BC due to bad weather
April 4: Stay in a tent at 4,000 (1st day of acclimatization)
April 5: Stay in a tent at 4,450m (2nd day of acclimatization)
April 6: Stay in a tent at 4,800m, ascended to 5,200m (3 rd day for acclimatization)
April 7 – 8: Stay at 5,200m, ascended to 5,400m (4th / 5th day for acclimatization)
April 9: 5,200m – BC, ascended to 5,400m (6th day for acclimatization)
Acclimatization was made in the valley towards Grosvenor 6,376m from Yangzigou.
April 10 – 14: Rest at BC
April 15: Started to Daddomain, but returned to BC due to bad weather. BC was moved to a point at 2,650m of confluence with a valley to the southeast face of Mt. Edgar.
April 16: Stay at BC due to bad weather
April 17: Reconnaissance of Mt. Edgar, but soon gave up at 3,000m. A valley that led to the southeast face of Mt. Edgar was dreadfully exposed to dangers of falling rocks with no escape or detour route.
April 19: Resumed to make an approach to Daddomain and set up ABC at 4,100m
April 20: 1st day of climbing Daddomain. Five weather. Left ABC at 3:40am and at 8:20am arrived at a prominent crevasse (4,400m) in the central couloir on the east face. Small

avalanches were frequently apt to happen in this wide central couloir. At 12:30 reached a point of 5,100m. From here started climbing. Snow conditions were variable. As protection was very poor, some pitches to fray nerves continued on the mixed wall. An unstable knife-edged snow ridge on the halfway of the east face needed a lot of time. Leaving the snow ridge, traversed to 5,450m and bivouacked in a rock shade at 21:00.

April 21: 2nd day of climbing. At 8:00am it was foggy. After the snow ridge on the snow field, followed steep ice climbing. Weather was changing but carried on ascending being exposed

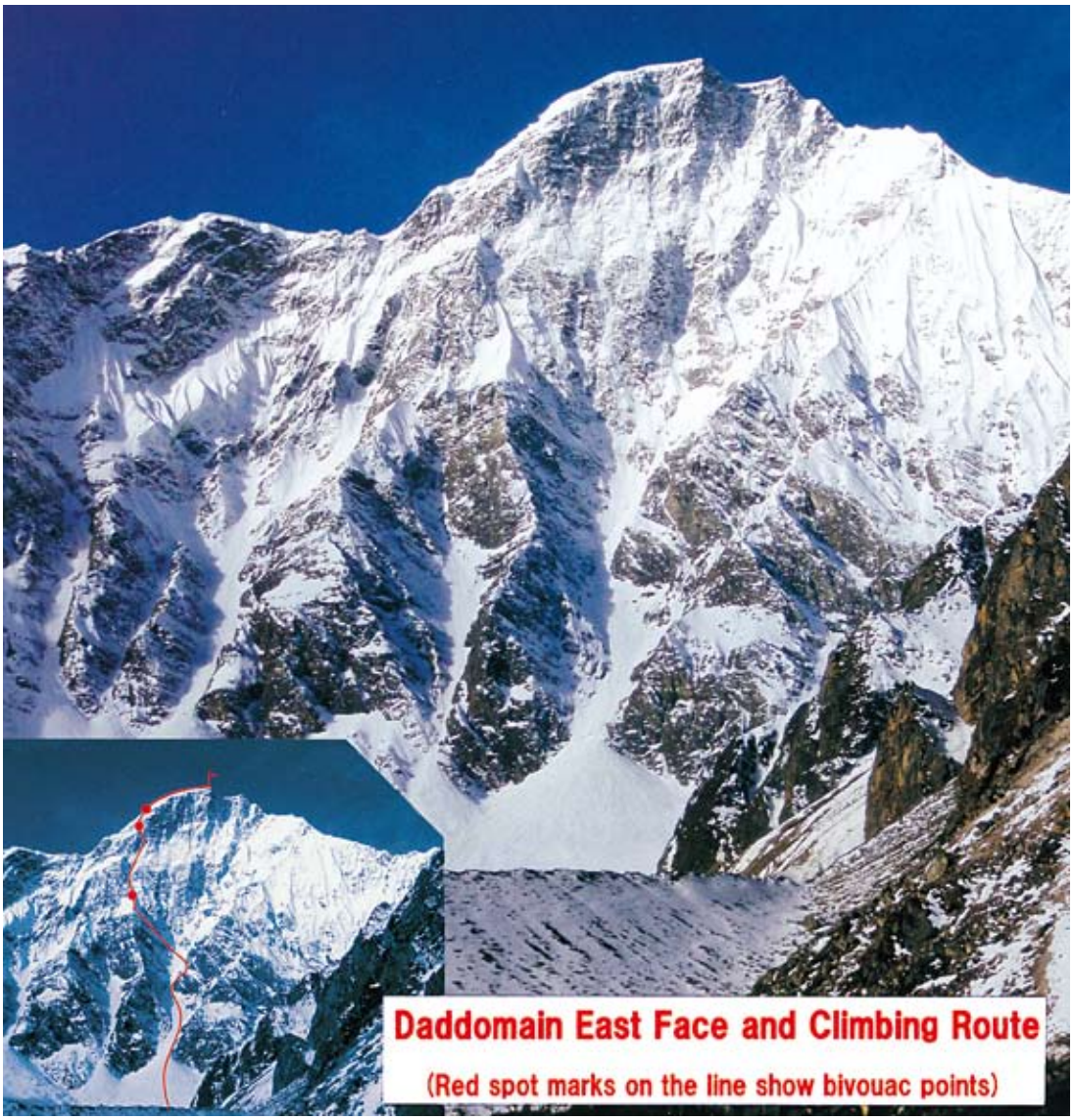


Photo by Takaaki Nagato

to avalanches and reached 5,950m at 22:00. Bivouacked spot there was very unstable. It began to snow.

April 22: 3rd day of climbing. At 10:00am started climbing in snowing. There was much danger of avalanches. Bivouacked at 6,100m at 15:30 due to snow storm

April 23: 4th day of climbing. Started at 9:30am. Climbed one pitch but returned due to snow storm of no visibility and stayed at 6,100m. Three days snow fall increase danger of avalanches.

April 24: 5th day of climbing. Fine weather came back, but stayed at 6,100m for waiting snow conditions being stable.

April 25: 6th day of climbing. Started climbing at 7:00am. Weather was fine for standing atop. Finally reached the summit at 9:25am and descended to 4,100m

April 26: 4,100m - BC

April 27: BC – Mosi

April 28: Mosi – Chengdu