

HIROO KAMEDA

First Ascent of Southeast Face of Niuxin Shan 4924m Qonglai Mountains in Sichuan – China 2010

(Translated, edited and supplemented with maps by Tamotsu Nakamura)

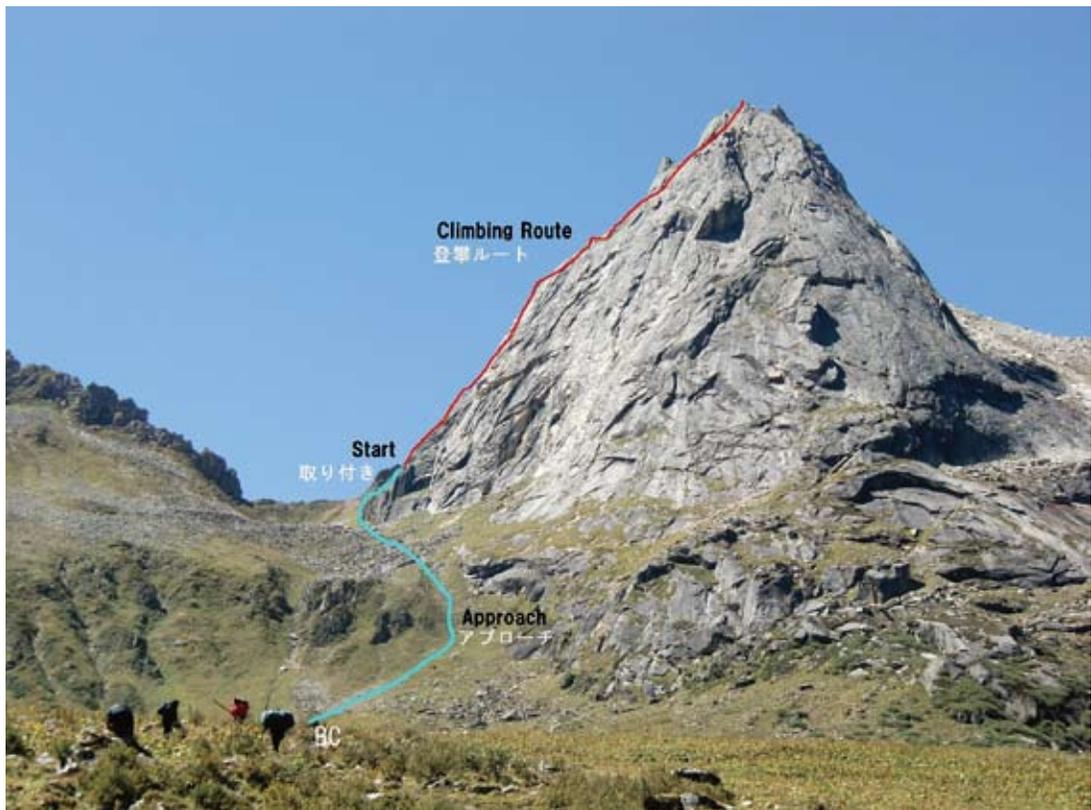
The Mountaineering Federation of Yamanashi Prefecture sent an expedition led by Kazuyoshi Uematsu to Qonglai Mountains in Xiaojing County, Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province in 2010. The main objective was targeted to opening a new route on the unclimbed southeast face, the largest wall of Niuxin Shan 4,942 meters, which is one of outstanding rock peaks located in the eastern bank of the Shuangqiao Valley west of the famous Mt. Siguniang 6,250 meters. A party that first attempted on Niuxin Shan was from Japan being led by Naoki Ohuchi in summer of 2002. They succeeded in the first ascent of the west face. (see page 70 – 71 of the Japanese Alpine News vol. 3 May 2003)

Period of expedition: September 11 – 20, 2010

Climbing member: Leader, Hiroo Kameda
Member, Makoto Hashimoto

Climbing route: Southeast face 415m 12 pitches

Map: See an article on the first ascent of Se'erdenpu shown elsewhere





On September 13 we set up our base camp on a glassy spot at 4,300 meters in the Shuangqiao Valley. The southeast face of Niuxin Shan could be seen from the BC. We went close to the lower part of the steeper wall for reconnaissance and found a possible climbing line. We suffered from high altitude sickness but soon recovered after an overnight.

On September 14, fine weather, was the day of an attack on the wall. We left the BC at 07:00 in the morning. “Lead” carried 4kg and “follow” carried 7kg that included bivouac gears. We started climbing of the 1st push on the lower wall at 09:30. The following is a summary of climbing.



Climing – 2 nd pitch



4th pitch & Se’erdenpu (right)

1st pitch (5.7 50m): Kameda led climbing. Gentle face, rock and glass mixed.

2nd pitch (5.10aR 25m): Hashimoto led climbing. As we lost a time having failed on the other line, it was already 12:00. We negotiated annoying slabs of the lower part of the wall carefully setting micro-nuts and cum. It was hard but exciting climbs.

3rd pitch (5.10b 30m): Kameda led climbing with no loads. Hashimoto recovered all of pitons and cum. Climbing on the granite wall was enjoyable.

4th pitch (5.8 40m): Kameda took a lead. Climbed up a concave rock then to a rock ridge, an angle became gentle and a big wall appeared in front, where we reconnoitered to find a place suitable for bivouac. We once rappelled down 100m to bring back gears for bivouac and re-ascended.

5th pitch (5.6 15m): Hashimoto took a lead to the bivouac spot and arrived there at 16:30. We spent a long and sleepless night as sitting uncomfortably. Hashimoto suffered from headache all the night.

On September 15, it was finest weather.

6th pitch (5.6 45m): Resumed climbing at 07:30. Kameda took a lead but this pitch was just a walking.

7th pitch (5.9 45m): Kameda took a lead. It was a pleasant climb.

8th pitch (5.7 20m): Kameda took a lead. This pitch was short as there was a terrace.

9th pitch (5.8 40m): Kameda took a lead. He climbed a concave rock using less friction and finally reached a col on the main ridge which led to the summit of Niuxin Shan. We completed an ascent of the southeast face!

10th pitch (5.7 45m): Kameda took a lead. There was only one place for protection. Climbing itself was not difficult but the both sides of the ridge had a dreadful sheer drop.

11th pitch (5.6 30m): Kameda took a lead. The rocks of the summit ridge were fragile. We must be careful for falling rocks. The summit appeared. We stopped in a safer place after a bid descent.

12th pitch, the last pitch (5.7 30m): Kameda took a lead. After traversing scree of 15 meters, we climbed the ridge to the summit. We accomplished the first ascent of the southeast face of Niuxin Shan and first stood atop at 10:00 as the Japanese. Ten times rappelling made us return to a starting point the wall of the southeast face at 14:00, and then we hastened to go down to the base camp in a happy mood.