

TOSHIYA NAKAJIMA

Hungchi from Tibet side - New route

Hungchi, the 7011m peak named Gyuba Tshomotse by Nepali, is a fascinatingly steep peak located at the border ridge of Khumbu massif. It was first climbed in 2003 from Nepalese side by Osaka Eiho Alpine Club (see JAN Vol. 5, May 2004) but still remained unscaled through Tibet side, which tempted me to make another trial on its north face despite of my first failed attempt in autumn 2003.

Thus I led the comeback party consisted of 5 men in 2006 and succeeded in first climb of the new route and the second ascent on Hungchi. The party, including 21 porters, 2 Chinese guides, 400kg gears and foods, started Qomolungma BC, trudged along east moraine of Rongbuck Glacier and entered into West Rongbuck Glacier. Everything looked quite unchanged in this deserted area, except that there still remained some guide flags set by the 2003 party.

We set ABC at the foot of Nup La, and then C1 at the base of Hungchi's north wall. Water flows on the lower glacier basin and deep snow on the upper part hampered us to make smooth progress. 300m fixed rope was required to set for crossing crevasses on the way to C1.

Next step was to climb the north wall. 4 days' works needed to go through it. On 1st day, Momose and I waded through deep snow up to the dead-end of the basin from where we started to climb the wall previous time, and found huge ice blocks scattered there. Apparently we were exposed to avalanche risks, therefore we needed to look for another line to go up, which should be nothing but a hard direct wall climb although free from collapse of seracs pushed out high above.

On 2nd day, Momose and I carried out 200m rope-fixing, in addition to 100m fixed rope set previous day, then on 3rd day Sekiya and I made endless efforts to fix another 180m rope. At last on 4th day, Momose, Sekiya and I finished tough negotiation to go through the wall while extending fixed-rope another 100m, and then pitched C2 on the north-west ridge. On the following day, Momose and I left C2 for a summit bout. The north-west ridge was like a wide staircase. In order to go up each step of the stairs you had to traverse to its right-side edge (i.e. windward Nepal side), which meant to repeat time-consuming big detours. Clear sky seen in the morning gradually disappeared and then it turned into a harsh blizzard. Strong wind hastily began to scratch out our footprints on the stair field and our return guideposts should be wiped away before long. Perhaps the sooner we retreat the better. So we decided to go down leaving climbing gears there.

The day dawned on November 1st. Weather was still bad, we felt quite exhausted with struggle up to this day and had almost run out foods. Only a cup of soup and some coffee were left for our breakfast. Nevertheless we were high-spirited enough to catch our last opportunity. Started at 8:30, we somehow reached the depot, from where we stretched 200m fixed rope, and climbed the summit rock without rope support. At 15:50, I stood on the corniced top and soon Momose followed me.

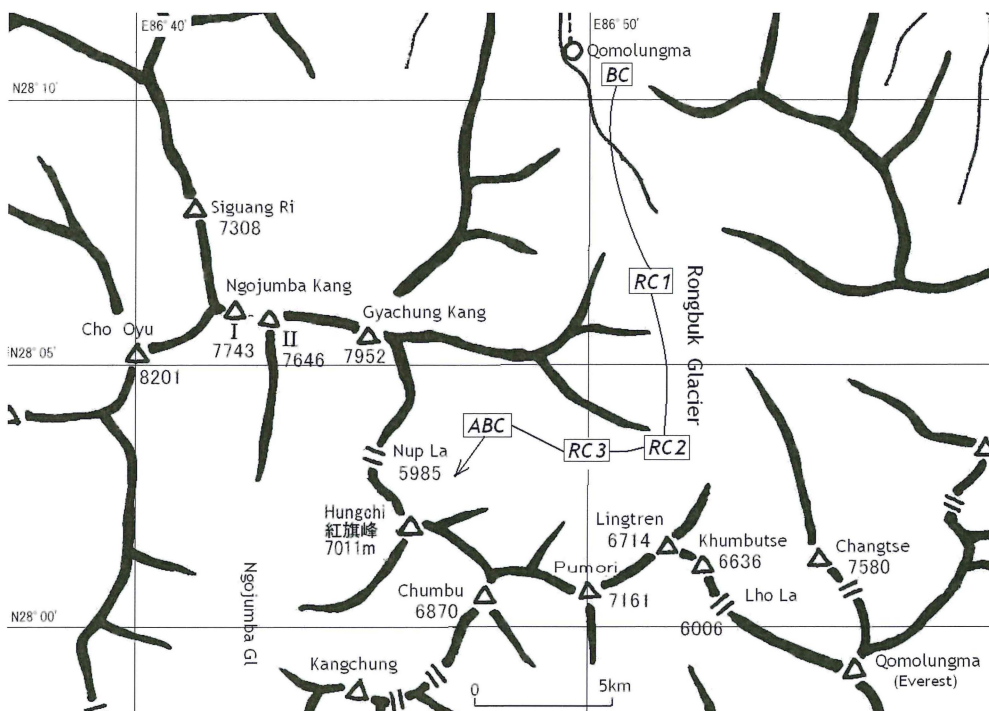
Members:

Masakatsu Nakamura (General Director, age:62)
 Toshiya Nakajima (Leader, 41)
 Takayuki Momose (Deputy Leader, 60)
 Yukihiisa Akada (38)
 Yoshikazu Sekiya (54)

Summary Diary:

2006

October 15: Qomolungma BC established
 18: RC1
 19: RC2
 20: RC3
 21: ABC at the foot of Nup La
 24: C1 at the base of the North wall
 30: C2 on the North-west ridge
 31: First summit bout failed
 November 1: Second summit bout succeeded
 2: Returned ABC
 4: Returned BC



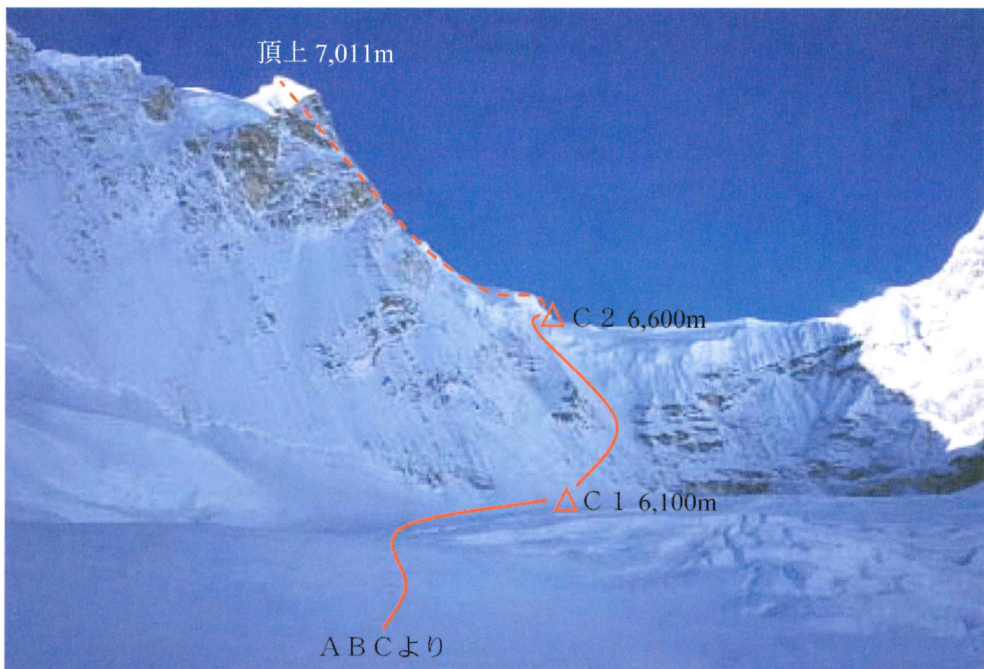
HUNGCHI



North Face



Climbing Hungchi



Climbing route