

# ASIAN ALPINE E-NEWS

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Minya Konka 7556m southwest face viewed from Zumei La

Photo: Yoshiharu Sugiura

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## Photos of Minya Konka 7556m

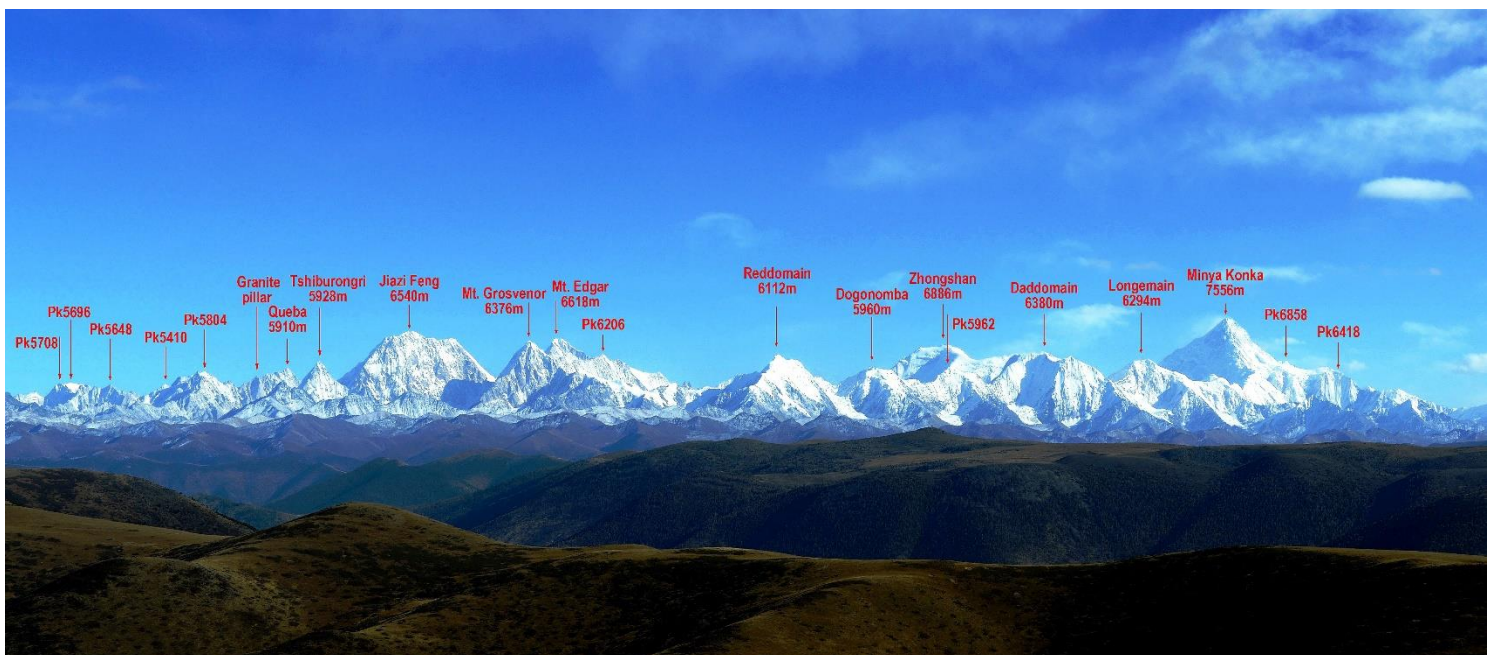
### Symbol of Mountains in West Sichuan Highlands

Minya Konka (Gongga Shan in Chinese) is the highest peak in the Hengduan Mountains, West Sichuan Highlands. Minya Konka, which means “the Highest Snowy Mountain” in Tibetan, is located in at the middle section of Daxue Shan to the north of Lamo-she. The massif covers some 60km from south to north and 30km from east to west and has the main peak 7556m at 101.8° E and 29.6° N.

The frequent geological movement in the Minya Konka area has brought about a lot of folds and fractures. As the mountain rises, valleys are formed with a height difference of 5000m on the east and west slopes. Teamed with more than 20 neighboring satellite peaks exceeding 6000m, it has a total area of 290k m<sup>2</sup> with 45 glaciers, mainly valley type glaciers though there are hanging glaciers in some places. Five glaciers have lengths of about 10km each, the longest being Hailuogou (Conck Ditch) Glacier that has a great wide ice fall more than 1,000m long whose glacial tongue goes down to 2600m because of the climate conditions and violent glacial movement.

The four main ridges (NW, NE, SW and SE ridge) stand on the magnificent pyramid, the main summit of Minya Konka. As the rocks are chiefly composed of granite and due to the long-time effect of ice corrosion and cutting, there appear narrow knife ridges and precipitous ice and rock buttresses.

The mountain area has of three climatic zones of the highlands, and temperate and subtropical. The climate undergoes great changes, the rainy season is from June to October and the dry season from Nov. to May.

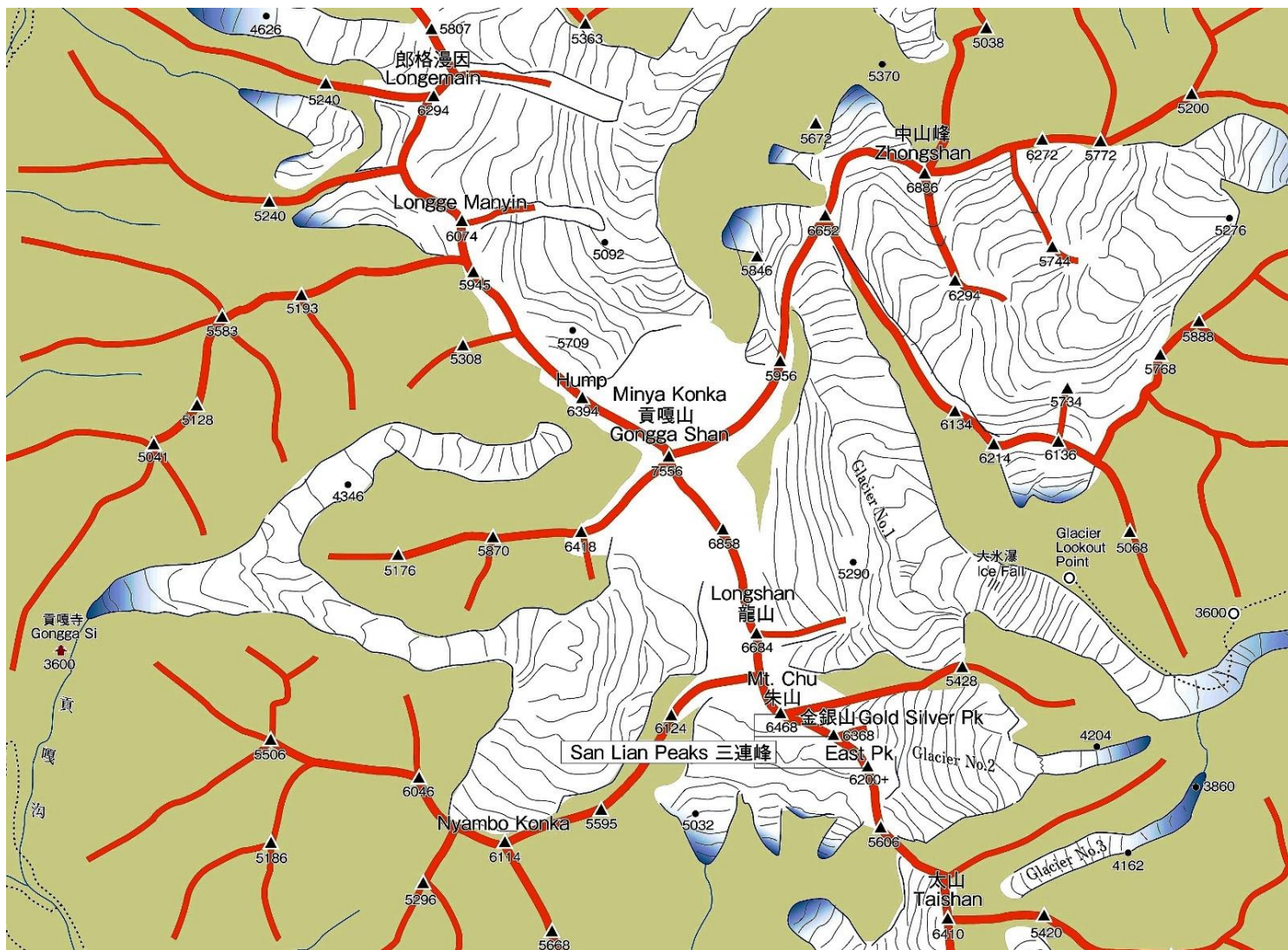


Panorama viewed from northwest



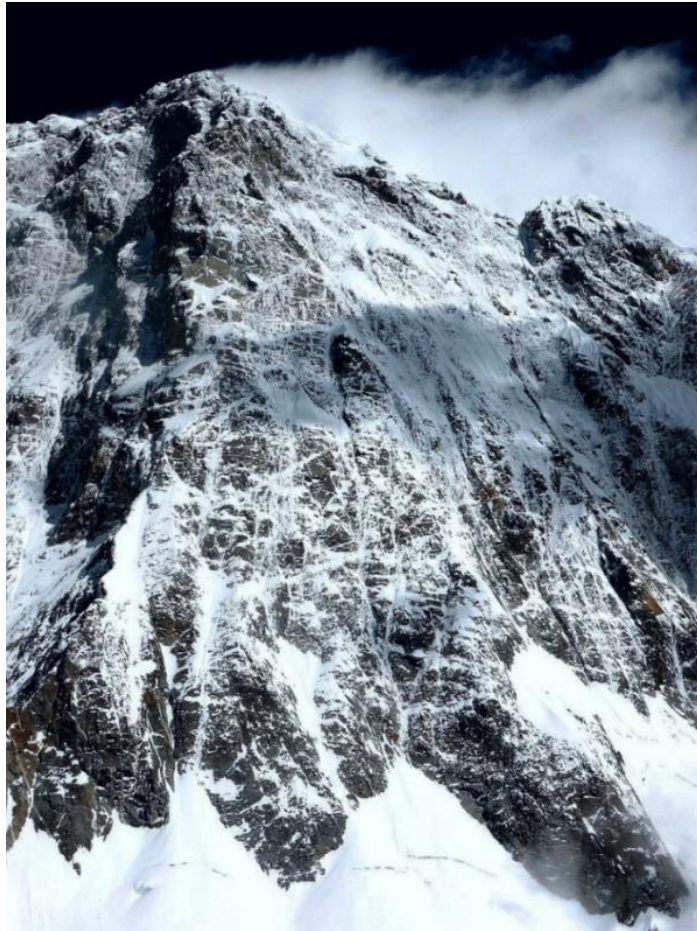


Panorama from southeast



All the ascents of Minya Konka, from the first ascent by American in 1932 to the twelveth ascent soloed by Czeck climber in 2016 were made via the northwest ridge except for Korean seventh ascent 1998. In 2018 Chinese made the thirteenth ascent via the northeast ridge from Yangtsu Gou valley.





South face



View from east





East face





**Northeast face**



**Panorama southwest side and cloud sea in the morning**



**Southwest face**





Aerial view from flight Daocheng~Chengdu, highest peak in the right: Minya Konka

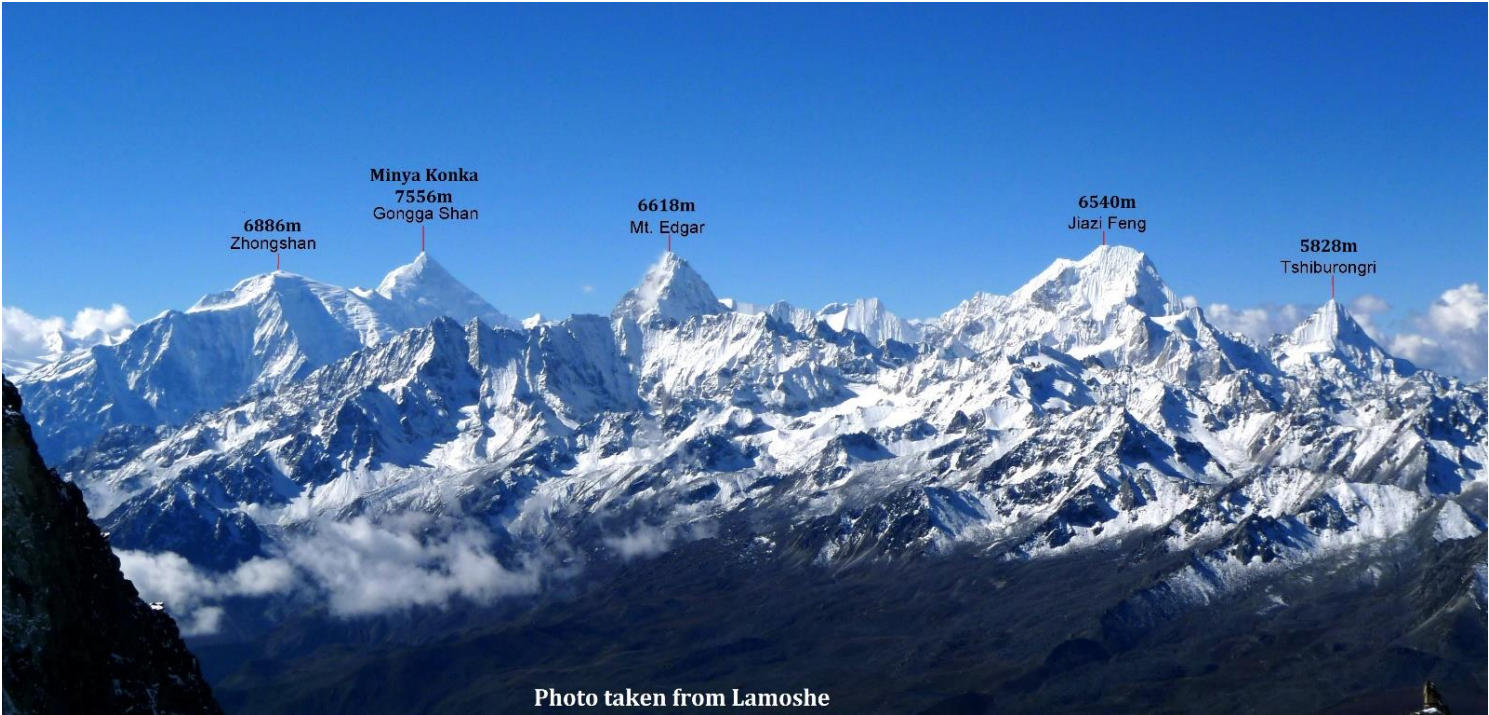


Photo taken from Lamoshe

## Mountaineering report 2018 of Mt. Minya Konka

Zhong Li



North Face, Konka

We might ignore some potential problems in terms of success, but failures will enlarge those mistakes.

——Zongli

In 2014, the idea of climbing Mount Kongka came out occasionally, which had been talked about in 2016 climbing report. During the past four years, this dream drove me training hard every moment: a mountain is waiting for me, a story should be ended, therefore I have to keep me abstinent, and try not to be lazy.

After the failure of 2016, it took me few years to adjust myself. This adjustment focus more on the mental perspective and the team perspective. We have to reform our minds, and get ready for moving. It took us one year to adjust our mental issue, conclude our failure, find out the way to deal with. We try to find the right answer, and prepare for dealing with the similar situation.

In order to find a solution, we went to Mt. Yat-sen, another mountain near Konka, which is almost the same hight with Kongka. We have to be fully prepared when facing the same problems.



Actually, our failure in 2016 was a kind of fortune for us. We learnt a lot from that, we began recognizing the greatness of Mount Minya Konka, literally, thus we realized our weakness exactly. But we still have opportunities to fix it.



2016 Konka Climbing Route

### **Preparation: The strategy and training method**

After our adjustment in 2017, we finally figure out the details of the climbing strategy in 2018:

1. Making the strategy especially for Mount. Konka. This strategy is totally different from other mountains, in terms of Konka's special climate windows and unique location. Be different from other mountains, the weather in Konka area is extremely unstable. According our recognition to Kongka, we made a set of climbing strategy, and train ourselves based on this. <sup>[1][2]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
2. We made a total different training plan according to Mt. Konka. This training period would be 6 months, three stages. The first stage is power training, the second stage is endurance training, the third stage is high- altitude performance. Every stage would be two months. At the end of each stage, we would have a physical standard to check if we had accomplished our training mission, and then we'll see if we should come to the next stage or not. <sup>[1][2]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>



3. According to our failure in 2016, we need to figure out the solution to deal with the crazy wind in Kongka. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
4. Based on our training plan, and the self- recognition during the actual climbing, we clearly understand our body. We strictly monitor our physical index, such as, during what situation, our performance could be the best, and since when our body begin dying out. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
5. When we actually begin climbing, we can check our climbing performance in different period, by monitoring our body weight. And, in what kind of situation we need to eat, in order to keep the food and water enough to equal our intake . <sup>[L]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
6. During the whole training process, we have to control our desire. We have to control our party times, the desire to alcohol and cigarette. Only one thing can explain all of our behaviors, and that should be making our body to be the best condition. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
7. After training months, I found my body recovering back to the condition when I was a professional athlete, full of energy, more than anything, at this time, our experience, our mind, and age, come to be the best time we ever had.







Training day after day, and training harder and harder every week

During the last high altitude training of the last stage, we decided to get on with the high altitude under the summit of Mount Queer (over 6,000m). We had a business activity at that time, it might be a little bit convenient.

After the activity, my partner Xiao Hai and I didn't go down, we carried our gears to the spot under the summit. We planned to sleep here for two nights. During the first night, we found our adaption to the high altitude is not so good, so we decided to stay longer. Many other mountaineers should witness this at the end of National Day holiday. I suppose, we totally get on with the height of 6,000m after two nights. We felt perfect, except moving slowly in terms of the high altitude.





The local helped us transport the goods

### **Climbing: towards Mount Konka**

Before the adventure, we checked our all equipments, and filtered some of the gears we would carry. We focused more on the different weights between different brands, we checked every gear we had, even one lock, just tried to chose the best option. After comparing them carefully, we surprisingly found Kailas new locks were lighter, and the BD and Petzl harness we used before, were even heavier than Kailas. Of course, Kailas helmets were the best options as well.



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Before the adventure, we were choosing the ultra light gears by weighing machine.

Therefore, we made a further adjustment. We were a little worried, since we got those gears just a few days before we start off, we didn't have enough time to get on with them. In order to get lighter and the best choice, I chose the new Mont Sleeping bag, during the end of the mountaineering, some issues came out surprisingly, and led us to a worse situation. I don't know the reason is my lack acknowledge of the new products, or the lack of studying the instruction—even my English reading is terrible.



KG110162 男款ICEPEAK冲锋衣



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●[FAB] ICEPEAK冲锋衣专门针对严酷环境的恶劣天气而设计，具有强大的高山性能，并且充分利用GORE-TEX® PRO面料耐磨防水且透气的保护性能。人体工学设计，基于运动人体的3D立体剪裁，运动自如，能轻松应对各种恶劣环境和气候条件下的登山运动,为阿式攀登,高海拔攀登提供安全可靠的防护!

运动版型/3D头盔风雪帽/高领护脖/胸前交叉口袋，风琴扩容设计，背负状态下也能轻松取物/腰部免脱衣松紧调节扣/可拆卸下摆阻隔条，配合安全带使用可固定夹克/袖口魔术贴调节/抽绳和腋下拉链全部可进行单手调节/YKK防水拉链

●[面料]N40R-X GORE-TEX® Pro,100% NYLON

●[产品用途] 阿式攀登、高海拔攀登

The gears sponsored by Kailas

We checked all the weather we could check.

We suppose, if we start off on 12th, Oct, and climb strictly according to the plan we made before, then when we arrive C3 and reach the summit, the wind will be more gentle. But as we all know, the weather forecast is not so accurate every time, we cannot depend on that completely. Except that, when we checked the surround weather, we didn't find a better climate window. Anyway, every is ready, we just have no idea how the weather will be at the time.

We decided to start from Yanzi Valley on 12th Oct, and went through the formalities in Xinxing Village.

Our team member were me (Zongli Li), Xiao Hai (Haijun Tong). We were the mountaineer who would climb Mount. Minya Konka. Chu and Shi Wei will come to supply us in C1 when we come down. Their mission was helping us transport the goods. They will stay at the ABC (4,200m), they can contact with Huafeng and Xiao Shulin, who cannot directly communicate with me from BC in terms of the long distance.

Huafeng and Xiao Shulin will stay still at the BC waiting for us. Through Chu and Shi Wei, they could react according to our progress and demand on the mountain. Each of

them was strong mountaineer, they were full of mountaineering skills after one year, and capable of transporting the goods under the technical routes.



The bridge was damaged, the local people were helping us build the “bridge”

### **Building the bridge**



The local told us, the bridge was damaged by the flood, we could not reach the BC in one day, we had to move as fast as we can.

On 13th Oct, we start from Xinxing Village (2,700m) to the side of the bridge (3,600m), camped for one night. The local prepared enough wood for building the bridge, but we didn't finish that in terms of the exhaustion.

We wanted to be as the lightest as we can, thus we only carried on high altitude tent. However, we found this high altitude tent didn't work in the low altitude, while it was raining cats and dogs outside, it was raining mizzly inside as well. The whole night "raining" made our sleeping bags so wet that we easily squeezed out water.



We set the BC at the junction of glacier

### **Reaching the BC**

We got up at 9 o'clock and start on 14th, when we get the river we found the bridge was ready. Through the bridge, we easily trekked to the BC around 11 o'clock, Haizi Dang, which was located at 3,700m. We tried to move forwards our BC to a higher spot, soon I called off that idea in terms of the heavy snow and the potential danger. We had to transport the goods by ourselves from here.

We also need to two team members in BC. After settling down, we left some goods, and kept moving to ABC. We preferred ABC, which was set at the junction of glacier and BC, 4,050m, rather than the traditional BC.



On the way to C1, every step was snow deep to my thighs.

### **15th Oct, transporting the goods, towards C1**

8 o'clock in the morning, we start from ABC. We hoped to trek across the glacier, directly the end of our route, which was C1, 5050m. Chu and Shiwei helped me and Xiaohai transport most goods in terms of the high ascent.

We didn't find our camp until 5pm. I was worried that Chu and Shiwei might have accidents when they descended, thus I asked them to go down, Xiaohai and I will be in charge of transporting from now. We cannot find our way clearly in terms of the heavy fog, we had to trek along the glaciers.

Our insulation layers and sleeping bags got wet, so we were very worried the scenarios will get worse and worse from C1. The wet down products will not work, if we carry a 1.5kg wet sleeping bags, they will just waste our energy. It became a severe issue I had been worried about.





When we reached C1, it was nearly dark.



From C1 to C2

### **16th Oct. Climbing, now: C1-C2**

We got up at 4 am. We were familiar with the climbing route, so we reckoned this might be the easiest day during the whole climbing. We hoped we could get into a better groove from today, climb more efficiently, so we were not in hurry today, in order to save enough energy.

More haste, less speed. If we got too exhausted to keep climbing, tomorrow will be harder and harder.

We left the camp around 6am. We knew, the efficiency of getting ready was not so high. Boiling the water and preparing the gears took us much time. We were a little bit lazy. We have not switch into a climbing mode yet.

Surprisingly, we arrived C2 around 11am. We climbed by 'running belay'. I supposed our condition, even the mountains's condition, were perfect. Our crampons could be kicked into the snow within three kicks. The snow condition was very stable as well.

We only set 2 belay stations on the two side of the hole 800m technical route. Besides that, we moved together. We had the confidence that we would not drop at all, full of faith to me and my partners.









From C1 to C2

We arrived C2, 5,800m. The sunshine in C2 was good enough to dry my wet sleeping bags and other wet gears. We were happy to see that the problems were solved. Due to the lack of preparation and adaption, we didn't feel sick of high altitude. We ate a lot, noodles, meat, we ate 500g ham... Xiaohai and I were meat lovers. In this altitude, we were not so interested in rice, especially our instant rice. We also knew every food will not be so good in thin air.





Compared with 2016, the condition of the camp changed a lot, but here was a deep hole, we were relieved that we might not be blew off by the strong wind. Before, Mount Konka gave us a leeson, we knew we cannot make any mistake. Only one mistake could kill us, so no matter in what kind of condition, we should preparation for the worst scenario.

### **17th Oct, C2-C3: snow slope 60°~75°, led by Xiaohai**

We got up at 4 am, and start at 5:40, we arrived C3, 6,700m by 5pm, in 11 hours.

One thing Learnt from 2016 told me, this might be the hardest day, 900m ascent in total, the long snow slope seemed endless. Based on our observation, we consider the next part will be easier. In my memory, there was a spot which possibly could trigger a avalanche, so we were trying to find that place.

Due to the 60°~75° snow slope, only this single terrain, not so hard, Xiaohai led climbing this day. He was in full charge, all under his control. After climbing for the whole day, we still felt a little bit tired, but not as tired as before.



**60°~75° snow slope, one mistake, we fell 1000m.**

In terms of the change of glaciers, the C3 in our memory totally disappeared. There was no flat ledge any more for us to set our camp easily like 2016. Only 50° snow slopes, lots of snow bumps. What we learnt from 2016 warned us, we had to be very cautious.

The big stone behind the ledge also disappeared. Choosing a better camp became our first priority. There was a ledge over 100m, might be a better choice, but we didn't have enough to climb another 100m. It was late. If we had to climb another 100m, it might

take us one hour, even more. It was dark. We were almost out of energy, if we kept going, we were not sure if we could get up early to attack the summit. So we decided to stay here, but we could not find a flat spot.

We had to dig, keep digging, until it was dig and flat enough. We did it along the stone near the ridge, hence the wind were not so strong. We digged 1 meter deep, it was enough for us to make our tent stable by our four axes and ice pitons. We might have a good sleep. What we had experienced last time, the wind almost blew us off the cliff. But this time, we didn't have any flexible room to move. As long as our tent moved even a little bit, we might drop from 1000m cliff. We could not make any mistake, we must be sure.



Fixed our C3 by axes and ice pitons.

We planned to get up at 3 o'clock and start before 5 o'clock tomorrow. We didn't know what will happen next, we only know there would be another 850m from 6,700m to 7,550m. The this so called 850m, was in the context of over 7000m. But according to our observation, we supposed the last part might not be too steep. We had confidence.





Mt. Konka and its shadow.



We enjoyed the mountains and the sea of the clouds surround us.

**18th Oct, attacked the summit: strong wind, strong snow, heavy fog.**

On 18th, I got up and ate a cake, drank a little water and was ready to go. We found our pack was light, nothing unnecessary. We could finally understand the minds of our clients before. Sometime we might take it easy as the leader or the guide, we could complain about our clients' efficiency. Right now, we deeply understand them in this situation. It was beyond our limits.

During the commercial mountaineering, almost all of our clients broke their boundaries, this exploration was not inferior than our Konka adventure. We should not complain about them, every climbing will be a sort of challenge for the participant.

We spent 20 mins in wearing the shoes, our breather came quickly, our appetite became bad, our performance was not good any more.

Although we ate something, but it was not enough at all compared with the amount of our exercise. In 6,700m, everything tasted bad. But we need to intake the nutrition, or we could not recovery as soon as possible.

5am in the morning, we left our tent. We put some snow on our tent, just in case it was blew off by the wind, again. We left our camp, kept climbing, after a while, we could clearly feel better. We transversed to the Northeast ridge. Everything went well this morning, the wind and snow stopped a little while around 8 o'clock, but literally 'a while'. It stopped a little bit while around 12 o'clock. Although it didn't last long time, but it was pleasant enough to me.

Under the sunshine in the morning, we even witnessed the Mt. Konka and its shadow at the same time.



For a while, the weather was stable. Mt. Konka seemed nice and accessible.





But after a while, Mt. Konka showed its real nature, irascibility.

We tried our best to climb upwards.

In 1pm, we became tired, the weather seemed unstable. The snow and the strong wind squeezed into every gaps. One side of my glove was not close enough, I could feel the coldness of the snow and the wind.

2pm in the afternoon, our mind was not strong anymore. We didn't know how far we should go. We could not see anything 50m away, we almost whacked out. When drinking some water, we discussed about this situation, we made up our mind, although it was late, we will never give up. We prepared for years, this was the reason why we came here. We start.

We found the route became tighter, the shape of the mountain was like a triangle. We were close to the summit. Meanwhile, we could clearly our performance was slower, we were out of energy gradually. Sometimes we had to stop and adjust our breathe.

After 4 pm, we could see the snow cornice along our left side, we knew the summit was just in front.



The slope was not flat, we had to kick a step before stopping to drink the water







From 50m to 20m, the visibility was worse and worse.



We still could not find the summit clearly, we had to lower our heads and go step by step. In 4:45 pm, we found the slope in front of me disappeared, it became flatter. There was a huge snow cornice in 10 meters, and nothing higher. We almost used up, moved to the summit, and sit there. I didn't have energy to talk with Xiaohai. Except the place I sit, there were another two 10m spires. The summit seem like a three legs of a tripod.

We knew, we stood on the summit of Mount. Minya Konka !!!



Our photo together





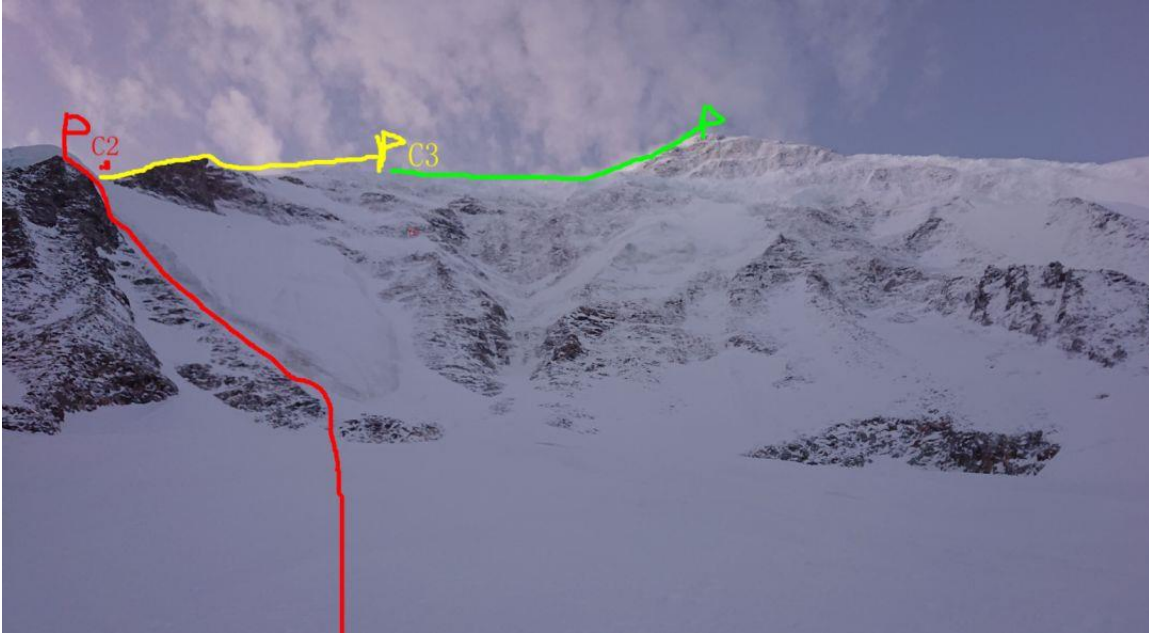




We could hardly hold the flag tight, everything related to water, including the moisture with every breathe.

I told Xiaohai, you need to record the views surround us, or nobody could tell if we summit or not, we could not state the altitude we stood was 7,556m

I was worried about this, since the visibility was very low. We could hardly see far away. I took out of my Kailas and Mountain Free flag. The wind was so strong that the flags could be blown away easily. We had to be careful. After taking my photos, I took photos for Xiaohai. Xiaohai got two flags, when he carried one, another was blown away. I tried to use my phone to check our altitude, but I failed. The phone was dead in terms of the coldness. I had no idea at all except recording the surround views, but it was not clear out of 10 meters either.



The Route to the summit

### Going down: in the darkness

After taking photos, we began going down. We knew it will be dark after 7 pm, we might not be back to our camp before sunset. Fortunately, our route was not too complicated, it was just matter of time. We had confidence.

We had to going down as soon as possible, but we were very tired now. We had to stop to adjust our breathe every step. It was about to be dark, we had to descend in darkness. We climbed down along the ridge, we cannot remember how far we went. Xiaohai led in front, he skipped a ridge, I didn't know why, but I tried to prove he was right, cause in my deep mind I consider it a mistake. But I did not make my conclusion in my mind, I had to prove. I tried again to turn on my phone, hope I can find exactly where we were. This time, the phone worked.

We descended many pitches, most of time it was down- climbing. When we came to a flat spot, I tried to find a ridge in left, I found it was far away. That slope was not the one in my memory, so we decided to skip the ridge, traverse back to the left side. When I finally saw the stones on the ridge, I was relieved. I remembered the shape and the size of the stone, I knew I need that stone .

Xiaohai was doubt. I told him what would come next. He was eager to climb down, and be back to the camp as soon as possible. I could feel he was upset and at this moment. He felt fears, and less confidence to my decision, but he was not so confident with himself either. At this time, I didn't have any strength to try anything. What we could do was just trusting. If we made mistakes, we had to prove it was right.





We were exhausted<sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

### **Blind**

I had to take a 10 mins rest every three or five steps, cause my breathe cannot follow anymore. My legs felt soft, out of energy, felt weak. We tried to eat something, and recover back, but there was few food left.

I didn't know the exact time, maybe 1 am at the midnight, we saw the ledge over our camp, we though our camp was just under that ledge, but when we skip a snow slope, we didn't find out camp. Xiaohai let me follow him, he skipped a ridge and came down to a spot. I didn't know why, I just know I was out of power. I cannot find our camp anymore.

The snow lashed my body, my face, and my eyes with the strong wind. I cannot see anything. What I could see was just whiteout. I told Xiaohai there was s stone above us, where we might hide there from the wind. We might Bivy there tonight, and try to find our camp tomorrow morning.

I didn't know why I cannot see anything. I was upset, what if I cannot see anything forever? I was upset about the reason caused this, but absolutely I had no idea. I believed in the midnight, the reason was not snow blind. Actually, even in the night, we wore our glacier glass as well, in terms of the strong wind. Therefore, I was pretty sure it was not snow blind. But I cannot explain it either. I was always afraid of what I cannot explain and understand. However, as long as Xiaohai could see, we had confidence to be back. In this circumstance, our best choice was rest, until my performance recover to normal. I didn't know if this was the best choice, but it was my instinct.

In this situation, I was worried my mind shook, I felt Xiaohai's mind was shaking before. The shaking of our minds might led us to the real dangerous situation . I understood as a

mountaineer, when we lost confidence in danger, and let the fear go, we can hardly be back. This was much more dangerous than climbing itself, even more horrible than the hazardous environment. At this moment, our first priority was to calm down.



SEP

### **Sit along the big stone in 6,800m for one night**

Soon, Xiaohai seemed to find the spot I was talking about. I followed him by rope. I knew this was not the same spot I meant, though the spot I said was better, I supposed he was not able to find a better place in this situation. This spot was OK, we could hide here from the strong wind. I cannot see anything, but I can sit. I didn't know Xiaohai location. I began shaking when I was sitting on the side of the cold stone. Was it because of the coldness, or my extreme energy expenditure? I could just sit there along the stone by my helmet.

I heard someone keep telling me, my clothes was not close enough to keep me warm, I should make it warmer. My clothes crinkled badly in terms of moving with harness. But I didn't have enough energy to care about this. What I could only do, was trying not to lay down. As long as I didn't lay down, the clothes could still keep my back warm although they wrinkled. If I laid down, my inner clothes will be pulled over my back, the wind will blow into my down jacket, I will get colder and colder. The wind blew the snow, it shaped a place where I could only put my one feet there, so I had to put my two foot together, covered with my backpack to block the wind. I should have put my backpack under my foot to block the ice and snow, but I didn't know why I didn't do that. Maybe I was worried the backpack might moved? I didn't know. My consciousness was not clear anymore.....

Even though I knew another side of the stone might be more comfortable, I was too tired to find it. Neither did Xiaohai. This spot was not so good, but at least we could sit, the stone could block most wind. This was what we really need.

I lost my gloves, this was a serious issue. My hands might get frozen. Even we stayed in C3 for one more day, I was not sure we can dry our wet gears, this was the truth. We had to go down. One more mins we stayed here, one more danger we had to have. Once, I tried to adjust my body pose to make myself more comfortable, I even found slept on a ice crampon. I asked Xiaohai to let my lay down, he didn't react. He seemed to hardly move his legs either. I had to try to stretch myself as possible as I could.

Just in this condition, I could feel the sun rose. I waked Xiaohai up, but I cannot see him. He was just behind me, but I could not twist my body. I asked him, could you find our camp, it should be not far in the right side. At this moment, he left. I cannot recall how long he left, my mind was not so clear, but during this period, I felt lonely. I still cannot see anything. I took off my glass, I could captured the generous shape.

I still could not see anything, I was upset. I felt lonely since I can hardly do anything, just like, I was the last human in this earth. I tried not to be swallowed by the lone and the fear. I knew as long as I felt lonely, it will become dangerous, even more dangerous than losing my sights. I tried to calm down.

Soon, Xiaohai came back, I was surprised he could locate the camp so soon. I told him I still cannot see anything. I followed Xiaohai, not far from the rest spot, I was happy to find my gloves. I didn't like losing my gears, I cared about this random behaviors and the coming consequence, though it happened anyway. We came back the camp soon, maybe in 20 mins. We boiled some water, ate something, and began to sleep. It was morning now, the sun shined into our camp, very warm. There was no wind in the camp. I felt happy. We haven't contacted with the BC for the whole day, we were too exhausted. We totally focused on our climbing, so we ignored this things. The condition was so good enough to let us think about anything besides the climbing. We told the BC our condition, we planned to go down from C3 directly to C1 the next day. Apparently, we over estimated our abilities at that time.





### **20th Oct, Keep going down:**

After resting for the whole night, we began going down in 8 am, 20th. We cannot successfully set a ice hole in one and half hours, in terms of the continuous snow and the hard ice. We didn't have enough power to fix the ice pitons into the ice. We lost our patience gradually, we decided to leave our pitons behind. We can hardly finish setting a ice hole in this situation. We didn't care if it was Ok to leave the pitons, and the rest pitons can make us safe during the way back to the BC, we just did it, leave one of the five pitons. I didn't know if our consciousness will be clearer.

After the second pitch, my stomach felt not so well. I seldom had this condition before. I tried to bear it, since I cannot find a place to solve it. We tried to descend on the stone terrain, cause it was really hard to set the ice pitons. It might take us more than 10 mins to fix only one piton. We carried Kailas new pitons, these pitons were sharp to fix into the ice, but we just had no strength.

There was a huge crack three pitches to the C2, this crack was so wide that I could poo in it. I took off my backpack, left it near my. I reckoned that spot was very flat, but when I stood up, my pack slipped down. Xiaohai even asked me, if I was on purposed to do that. 100m down was the pass between Mt. Yat-sen and Mt. Konka, the pass was very flat, so my backpack stopped at the flat pass, we could go down and get the pack. But I was not on purpose to do that.

I didn't remember how many pitches we descended, we just came back to C2 by 5pm. It will be dark in 2 hours, we knew that, even though the sun shined on us, we felt warm, but we also knew how painful it will be after the sunset. The C2 was comfortable, we decided to stay in C2 for one more night.



After being back, no matter how tired we were, we were happy, there was nothing else we should be worried about.

### **21st Oct. Back to the foot of the glacier**

In the morning of 21st, our team came to 5,050m. Our efficiency was much slower than they thought, in terms of the thick snow and energy expenditure. When we came back to the ground around 3pm, two team members came from the shadow, I felt the warmth, just like a family. We went down to the ABC slowly, until it was dark.

No matter how we were back to the surface, we overcame the most dangerous part. We could be totally relieved right now, the team waiting in the BC helped us transport our rest goods back to the BC, and contacted our car back to the city.

22nd, we came back to Xinxing village, it was over. We began to drink and eat. I supposed my weight was 61kg at that time, since my weight was 62kg after I came back to the city 2 days later. The relationship between the loss of my weight and the influence to my continuous climbing performance, this was a topic I should rethink.



I (left), Xiaohai( right), when we came back

### **The route information**

The North face to Northeast ridge, 2,500m total elevation, two camps. 800m ~1000m ascent every day. The snow slope is  $65^{\circ}\sim 75^{\circ}$  . Few stones. We carried one 7.8mm twin rope, 100m 5mm accessory cord, 5 ice pitons, 10 locks, 7 slacklines, one tent, one MSR reaction, one spare burner, one spare glacier glass. Self gears not included.

We named this route “Fearless “, meaning three points:

1, It is the spirit of the mountaineering. Mountaineering is a high risk sports, but many mountaineers left us from the beginning of the mountaineering, as many mountaineers always join us. We came here this situation in terms of the spirit of Fearless. After the super strong wind in 2016, we nearly fell from 1000m cliff, we reseted ourselves, we never gave up, we were not afraid of danger, we finally accomplished this climbing in terms of this spirit. We are getting better and better, we can break our boundaries just because of this spirit.

2, Except me, the 6 members in this team were all new blood of Mountain Free. Most of them were born in 1990s, they were the young guns. I also hope they could keep this fearless spirit. After being experienced mountaineering like this, they will finish something greater.

3, Through we fearless young guns from Mountain Free, we will deliver the spirit, acknowledge, understand of the mountaineering. We hope our experience, skills, and thoughts can help more mountaineer choose their own goals in the right way, by the right mountaineering style. We hope we could keep this fearless spirit forever, through these fearless young men, we could let more mountaineers understand the spirit and the core value of the mountaineering, rather than a tour or a simple visit. Let more mountaineer know the mountaineering spirit , this process itself is a huge fortune for me, it worths more rethinking and recalling than views we saw.





Our mountaineering route in Google earth

## Conclusion

12-year mountaineering life, 10- year guide experience, dozens of non- summit mountains and new routes, they all made me. Recalling the memory of be introducing to CMDI by Sichuan Mountaineering Association, I consider the result I got these years were closely related to the support of Mountaineering Association. As the only team which was permitted to climb Mt. Konka of the four teams this year, I was really flattered.

We have our own recognition to mountaineering. There are three perspectives in the preparation part, which are physical, gears, and mental. About the mental part, we cannot train it in short time. After setting the goals, we need to overcome fear, bear pains, accept every problems Mt. Konka gave us. Therefore, from the perspective of mental, I cannot explain it, we had accumulated over a long period, but from the perspectives of gears and physical, I could share something with you.

I divided body preparation into three stage, strength training, endurance training, high altitude performance training.

We set the goals four years ago, prepared for three years, train ourselves for more than half year. This is our training plan. This half year training made our body become 150% stronger. During the mid time of strength training, my weight was 63kg, I could finish

90kg set deep squat 3 sets, 8 times. During the endurance training I could keep the balance the pace and the distance, my 10k pace was between 4mins40second ~ 5mins. During the mid-late time of the whole training, I controlled my weight strictly, and tried to study how my sports performance and endurance changed with the change of my weight.

I find my performance will be the best when my weight keeps 65kg. When my body weight is lower than 63kg, my strength and endurance will be lower, I have to keep intaking to keep my body in the good balance, or our energy will be dying. When my weight is 62kg, my body store was almost empty, even if I immediately stop exercising, it will take me 3 days to recover back to my normal condition. At this time, I should intake 30% more nutrition. When my weight grows to 67kg, there will be some power rest, this kind of rest power can let me climb for one more day.

When I was ready for Mt. Konka, my weight was standard 67kg. I considered this store was enough. But the fact told me, two more kilograms would be better for me to climb Konka. Before Konka, I didn't suppose I was able of climbing over two mountains in the same period, but here, now, I concluded the three day adaption on Queer Mountain was absolutely necessary, and the recovery back to the city after the adaption could fix the loss of my body. Comparing and weighting all the gears, made our load more accurate and lighter, and this made us more efficiency when using the gears during the climbing. About the balance between weight, altitude, performance, and intaking, I should spent more time and experience studying deeper. Of course, I'm not the expert in this domains, thus I have to study these information based on my own case.

In the third stage, high altitude performance training, we chose Mt. Riguolengjue in July, then the whole August in Mt. Amne Machin, in September we went to Bogeda Peak in Xinjiang. We rested for 10 days after Bogeda, and we chose Mount Queer as our last adaption before Mt. Konka. We made the plan like this, since we had commercial activities in these mountains, another consideration was altitude and the route.

After we made this training plan, I didn't go to high altitude before July. During this period, I trained my strength and my endurance. After this half year training, I moved to the third stage, I need to try my best to make by body adapted to the climbing condition. I consider this adaption was necessary and I happened to be familiar with Mt. Riguolengjue. This mountain contains mix, ice, snow terrain. Training in all terrain, this is a factor we have to consider. The snow slope in Mt. Riguolengjue is similar with slopes in Mt. Konka. At the third stage, I don't agree to try too hard or too high mountains. 20 days, twice attempts in Mt Amne Machin brought back recover regain my ability of high altitude adaption. Since then, we added more weight training exercises.

During the climbing in Mt. Bogda, camps setting and the specialty of the route, are quite similar with Mt. Konka, just like a small size Konka. The last adaption was in Mt. Queer. After we finished Mt. Queer commercial activity, Xiaohai and I camped under the summit for three days, the altitude there should be over 6,000m, hence we could adapt faster to the 6000~7000m altitude. It's normal to feel a little bit sick over 7000m, but it

won't effect the whole climbing. As the matter of fact, we literally did not feel sick even in C3, 6700m, Mt Konka.

### **The preparation of Gears**

Before we start, we seriously calculated the weight of the gears, between Kailas and other international brand. We filtered most of our gears. I'm really glad to find that, after developing a few years, we finally have our own brand, there's no difference between our gears and those international gears.

Rethinking this climbing, I'm satisfied with the strategy we used. We made this strategy early, climb as fast as possible. When reviewing the climbing history of Mt. Konka, most of them were more like Himalaya style, only few of them climbed in Alpinist Style. From the BC, 900m ascent every day, just illustrated the concept of "fast and light". We reached the summit on the forth day, finished 3,550m elevation route. It might be as sort of breakthrough. For the past few years, I tried to push this idea, fast and light to my limit. I don't know if I could do it better, but according to my past experience, this must be my limit at this stage. We valued our physical index, training effect, endurance performance, and even with climbing window and the altitude, finally tried my best.

Speak of my last attempt in 2016, I always tried to find my so called "Balance". This time, when I climbed over 7000m, my intaking and consuming were off balance. Our choice of food, and the my demand to heat was out of balance as well. Of course we still have many shortages, but success would let us ignore many weakness. This success just let us ignore some.

During this climb, we also exposed some issues. Firstly, choosing a pair of down gloves was one of the mistakes. Many years ago, I formed a habit of carrying burner with me, but I didn't carry it this time just in order to chase fast and light. I was very regret. And the choice of sleeping bag was also a mistake.

But the choice of the rope was the best, we chose a 7.8mm twin rope, a 5mm accessory cord. We concerned them gliding before, but it didn't happen. Another pair of gloves we use was very good in this situation, Kailas sheep skin glove. Whether the warmth, or the function, this product was almost the best.

From CMDI in 2008 till now, it has been just 10 years. During this ten years, I never stopped climbing. Every time I finished a hard climbing, I thought a lot. But this time, I was in peace. I thought nothing, I don't know why. After such an important climbing, I became peaceful, just like going back from work, nothing different. I don't know if it's good for me.

According to my past climbing, I conclude a factor which is much more important than skills: team or partners, they also proved this point. My eyes became blind, Xiaohai helped me. He found a spot where we could hide here from the strong wind, and we found back to the camp. As soon as we came back to C1, our team, Chu and Shiwei had



been waiting for us, they helped me and Xiaohai keep going down. Before climbing, the transporting under the C1 were supporting by our team and other four members. Therefore, we could absolutely focus on the route, while normal mountaineers and the local cannot do that.

### The Questions about the summit:

So far, many people doubted our climbing, in terms of our lack of clear photo and the data we public. From this two points, firstly we recorded videos surround us on the summit, although not clear, but enough to prove if we stood on the summit. Of course, we will make a video to memorize this climbing. Our team know clearly if we reached the summit. Secondly, the related department examined this climbing for a long time, finally defined our climbing, and issued the summit certification. We will share more details in the coming presentation, we also welcome more mountaineers could exchange ideas with me face to face.

Recalling these ten year free climbing, 12 year mountaineering guide, I had a lot to say.





No: 0007616

## 证明书

Certificate

童强军 于 2018 年 10 月 18 日 16 时  
45 分, 在攀登 大雪山 山脉的 贡嘎山  
峰时, 到达海拔 7556 米顶峰  
特此证明。

签发人: 高敏



四川省登山户外运动协会

2018 年 10 月 15 日

# 四川省登山户外运动协会

## 关于成都自由之巔户外运动有限公司 组队攀登大雪山脉贡嘎山的意见函

成都自由之巔户外运动有限公司：

贵公司向国家体育总局提交的关于申请2018年秋季攀登贡嘎山的资料收悉，经我协会初审，所提交的资料符合《国内登山管理办法》办理行政许可的要求，请贵公司向国家体育总局申请攀登贡嘎山行政许可事项，在报请国家体育总局、中国登山协会批准后，在我协会备案，届时，我协会将会积极提供相关服务。

四川省登山户外运动协会

二〇一八年五月九日

地址：成都市天府西路6号 邮编：610071 办公电话(传真)：028-87825617



# 国家体育总局

体许可字〔2018〕77号

## 国家体育总局关于准予成都自由之巅 户外运动有限公司攀登贡嘎山的决定

成都自由之巅户外运动有限公司：

本机关于2018年6月8日，收到你公司提出的攀登贡嘎山活动的申请。

经审查，已符合法定的条件和要求。现决定，准予成都自由之巅户外运动有限公司于2018年10月20日至11月20日攀登贡嘎山主峰。

请严格按照《国内登山管理办法》进行登山活动，注意安全。

请四川省体育局做好管理和服务工作。请中国登山协会、四川省登山户外运动协会按照章程，协助成都自由之巅户外运动有限公司做好管理和服务工作。

附件：贡嘎山登山队人员名单



Official summit certification



Terrified avalanche

*Article/ Zongli Li*

*Translation/ Mingwei Song*

*Photo/ Mountain Free*