



MAMMUT
SWISS 1862

MAREK HOLEČEK ACHIEVES SUCCESS WITH "SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL," THE FIRST ASCENT OF NEPAL'S SURA PEAK NORTHWEST FACE



Basecamp at the bottom of the 1300m high northwest face. (Photo: ©Marek Holeček)

On May 23, Marek Holeček and his partner Matěj Bernát became the first to conquer Sura Peak's northwest wall, a six-thousander in Nepal. The Czech duo accomplished this feat in four days, adopting an alpine style without bottled oxygen, Sherpa assistance, fixed ropes, or established high camps. Their route spanned an impressive 1500 meters, featuring sections with a 90-degree incline, earning it the name "Simply Beautiful." They estimated the difficulty of the route to be M6.

Following his successful ascent of Baruntse's West face in spring 2021, tackling the demanding "Heavenly Trap" route, Marek Holeček decided to return to the Khumbu region. After months of research and preparation for his next challenge, he chose the previously unclimbed 1300-meter-high northwest face of Sura Peak, between Ama Dablam and Baruntse. He selected his 27-year-old compatriot Matěj Bernát, the first Czech to conquer all 82 four-thousanders in the Alps, to accompany him on this expedition. The duo spent two weeks acclimatizing in the central Himalayas before establishing their camp at the foot of Sura Peak's northwest face, situated around 5500 meters, on May 13, 2023. The sight of the



MAMMUT
S W I S S 1 8 6 2

towering wall left a deep impression on Marek, with a 50-degree climb that gradually turned vertical, leading to a formidable glacial ice tower known as a serac. Above the serac, an overhanging rock face appeared daunting and seemingly unconquerable.

Prompted by favorable weather conditions, the Czech climbers embarked on the wall early the following morning. In ideal conditions, Marek and his partner made remarkable progress, covering a substantial vertical distance in a short span of time. Although the sun provided some warmth, by noon, fatigue and burning lungs began to take their toll. Additionally, the strain of constantly looking up and using the ice axes left their shoulders throbbing with pain. Thankfully, Marek discovered a suitable bivouac site within a cave at around 6000 meters, offering respite for the night.



Climbing in the ice barrier. (Photo: ©Marek Holeček)

Challenging conditions in the crucial section

The following day presented not only unwelcome changes in the weather but also demanding rock and ice climbing for the climbing team. After scaling a 150-meter ice section, they reached the rock face that had earned Marek's utmost respect at the base of the wall. Right from the start, the rock revealed its extreme brittleness, making it difficult for the ice tools to find any substantial purchase. Marek exerted considerable effort and strength to climb around 70 meters across two pitches. The belays primarily provided psychological reassurance as they would have hardly withstood a significant fall, according to Marek. Indeed, while belaying his partner Matěj after the climb, Matěj slipped off the crumbling wall twice. Fortunately, the belay held firm, preventing the team from plummeting into the valley. With the weather deteriorating, the two climbers needed to find a bivouac pitch as quickly as possible. However, there was no plateau on this part of the wall. After unsuccessful attempts to drill a hole in the 70-degree wall, their only option was to secure the tent to an ice bolt in the wall. As Marek describes it, the bivouac resembled a hanging

Contact

Mammut Sports Group AG
Industriestrasse Birren 5
CH-5703 Seon

Public Relations

Phone +41 (0)62 769 82 71
pr@mammut.com
mammut.prezly.com

garbage bag on the wall. The two mountaineers found themselves in an uncomfortable position, enduring an energy-sapping night.

Climbing to the summit with their last reserves of strength

The next morning, Marek and Matěj struggled to motivate themselves to resume the ascent. Ahead of them lay another 80 meters of climbing on brittle rock. Retreating was not an option, as the sections they had already conquered were equally demanding. Marek struggled through the next two pitches for hours, pushing himself to his mental and physical limits. Fatigued and suffering from extreme cold, the duo finally completed the rock passage and proceeded with two ice pitches. They discovered a suitable bivouac spot in a crack that felt, according to Marek, as comfortable as a four-poster bed compared to the previous night.

The two mountaineers planned to reach the summit on May 23, 2023. However, the last part proved to be challenging, with their hands cramping from previous exertions and their shoulders aching. After two hours, Marek and Matěj finally stood atop the summit, rewarded with a magnificent view of the surrounding mountain peaks. Their joy was short-lived, as they still faced a long descent. First, they navigated a narrow ridge with a kilometer drop on either side. Even after several hours of progress, the valley came into view agonizingly slowly. Shortly before 11 p.m., they reached a small teahouse where porters awaited them—a true luxury, as Marek fondly recalls. "Simply Beautiful," he describes it as a testament to pure alpinism—a beautiful first ascent up an untouched wall.



Short-lived joy before the long descent. (Photo: ©Marek Holeček)

Contact

Mammut Sports Group AG
Industriestrasse Birren 5
CH-5703 Seon

Public Relations

Phone +41 (0)62 769 82 71
pr@mammut.com
mammut.prezly.com



MAMMUT
S W I S S 1 8 6 2

About Mammut

Mammut is a Swiss outdoor company founded in 1862 that offers mountain sports enthusiasts worldwide high-quality products and unique brand experiences. For 160 years, the world's leading premium brand has stood for safety and pioneering innovation. Mammut products combine functionality and performance with contemporary design. With its combination of hard goods, footwear, and clothing, Mammut is one of the complete suppliers in the outdoor market. Mammut Sports Group AG is active in around 40 countries and employs approx. 800 people.

mammut.com

Contact

Mammut Sports Group AG
Industriestrasse Birren 5
CH-5703 Seon

Public Relations

Phone +41 (0)62 769 82 71
pr@mammut.com
mammut.prezly.com