A General Intro to Climbing in China
Brief Chronicle of Climbing

1870
Alps, modern climbing started

1930
Eiger, north face; Himalaya

1950
Mt Everest
Climbing Started in China

1930
Japan invaded Asia

1950
P.R.C

Suffering from Qing Dynasty, invasion of western countries
People started climbing late

Not popular

No world-class climber (except the Tibetan 14K team)

Why do we talk about China?
The Home of Mountains
7 of 14 Eight Thousanders (the highest peaks)

- Mt Everest
- Chomolungma
- K2
Piolets d’Or

4 climbs in 19 since 1991, 21%

- **Piolet d’Or 1994**
  the Club Alpin Français @ Pamir Altaï

- **Piolet d’Or 2007**
  Slovenian Marko Prezelj and Boris Lorencic @ Chomo Lhari

- **Piolet d’Or 2010**
  Jed Brown, Kyle Dempster and Bruce Normand @ Xuelian West

- **Piolet d’Or 2003**
  Mike Fowler and Paul Ramsden @ Siguniang
History
・May 25th, 1960 North Face of Mt Everest, New Routes
・June 13th, 1957 Minya Konka

在当时国际帝修反的一片反华叫嚣声中，在三年自然灾害和功修背信弃义单方面退出中苏两国登山运动员共同攀登珠峰的活动的时候，中国登山运动员这次从北坡首次成功地登上珠峰的胜利，充分显示了中国人民在中国共产党和毛主席的领导下，无高不可攀、无坚不可摧，吓不倒压不垮的革命英雄主义精神。

--We beat the disloyal Soviet Union, we beat our enemy USA, we beat the natural disaster. It shows our bravery, long-live Chairman Mao, long-live P.R.C
2nd Generation

1980s-1990s

“7+2 dream”

Interests is switched to “satisfying climber’ ego”
International view
No pushing from politics

CMA (China Mountaineering Association) it is goal-driven; as individual, no personal interest is seen
3rd Generation

21st Century

Education
Peking University
Master in USA

Ice
WI 7 >M8

Rock
5.13-

Mountain
N/A

CMA

Peking University

 WI6

 5.12+

Mt. Everest, Alpinism
In-System Climber

V.S.

Free Climber
1. 谢卫成 /Achen
- 8C/ 5.14b
- The big-brother in Chinese sport climbers
- Route setter
- TNF sponsored athlete
- First ascent, south face of Five-Color-Mountain
- Winter ascent Ningjinkansa (7206m)
- Establish “the free spirits” route on Siguniang
- Nominee Piolet d’Or 2010

2. 严冬冬 /Dongdong
Piolets d’Or

4 climbs in 19 since 1991, 21%
Dilemmas for professionals

* Incoming

* Climb harder, risk more

* Pressure from CMA
Free climber community in Beijing
----”the White-River Gang”

The White-river Climbing Fund
The toughest trad climbers in China
All-rounders
Climbers all with high education
The middle class
International vision

M8, WI 4+

bolted, trad, bouldering
5.13+
History

- Politics----Ego----Enjoying climbing
- Himalaya----All disciplines
- CMA---Professional----Free climber
Geography

Unlimited Potentials in China in terms of natural resources
By Disciplines
Mountaineering

7000m+ Gongir, Gongirjoebear, Muztagata
- TIME: one-way (DAY)
  - Flight –1
  - Train –1
  - Car --1
  - Donkey---1
  - Climbing period—15-20

6000~8000m+, Cho Oyo, Ningjinkansa, Tsangzi
- TIME: one-way (DAY)
  - Flight –1
  - Car --1
  - Climbing period—15-20

6000m+ Gurla Mandhata, or Naimona'nyi
- Flight –1, Car 3, Climbing period 6

6000m Dang La, Kunlun Kekexili NP
- Flight 1, car 1, Climbing period 2-4

6000m+ Gnyan chen thang lha
- The most popular area
  - Flight 1, car 1, yak 1, Climbing period 2-5

5,000m=16,000ft
6,000m=20,000ft
7,000m=23,000ft
8,000m=26,000ft
5000-6000m+ Tianshan Mountain, Altir
The extreme mixed route, flight 1, car < 1, climbing period <5

4000-6000m, Qilian, Arkin, moderate mountains
Flight 1, Car 1, climbing period <3

5000-7000m Konka, Siguniang
The paradise of climbing, flight 1, car 1, climbing period <7, The extreme modern alpine climbing

5000-6000m Meri Snow Mountain, Death zone
Technical mountains with bad weather
Tons of unclaimed summits
Characterization of the climb:

Season: late Apr -- early June, Sep—Oct
Few vegetation, more ice and snow

Avoid summer and winter
Grass land, rock & ice

Season: avoid June to Sep
Few vegetation, rock & ice,
long hiking (multi days)

Avoid June to Sep, lots of vegetation,
extreme route, ice, snow, rock, big wall

Season: late Apr -- early June, Sep—Oct
Few vegetation, more ice and snow
Characterization of the climb

- Dry
- Little oxygen
- Few vegetation
- Hard to access
- Long climbing period
- Limited aging
By 王巨士
By 王巨土
Characterization of the climb

- Moist
- Vegetation
- Nomad people living nearby
- Aging, unstable face
- Reasonable climbing period
- Bitter winter
By 王巨士
By 王巨士
By 王巨土
Characterization of the climb

- Moist
- Vegetation
- Farming, hunting culture
- Aging, unstable face
- Big rock face
- Avalanche
- Reasonable climbing period

The paradise of climbing
By 王巨土
By 王巨土
By 王巨土
By 王巨土
The Tibetan
TIBET
Ice Climbing
1. **Peach Heaven Valley, 2 hours from BJ**  
Water ice, WI 1-WI 6+, a few dry-tooling  
(about 10 routes above WI 4)

2. **Yunmeng Valley, car 3 hours from BJ**  
WI4, long pitch, 150m

3. **The White River, car 2 hours from BJ**  
WI4+ M8

4. **Inner Mongolia, car 6 hours from BJ**  
WI5+

The most popular one, as crowd as Rumney
Peach Heaven Valley

WI4, 25m

The Needle, WI6, 10m+
Ice Climbing

- Drew climber’s attention back in early 2000s
- One of the best two ice climbing destinations in the whole world, Canadian Rockies and Double Bridge Valley (maybe the best?)
- From WI2---WI7, from 20m to 500m

“Canadian Rockies, hundreds of climbs, thousands of climbers; Double Bridge Valley, tens of climbers, thousands of climbs”
Jesus’s Robe, 30m+, WI4+
Dragon Breath, WI6+, 2 Pitches
Beijing
Siguniang
Guoliang
The center of trad climbing

Trad Climbing
Trad Climbing

Beijing

The White River

2 hours from BJ

5.6-5.12

Granite climbs

Memorizing Kristran 5.11b

Big Eyebrow 5.11d
Guoliang
The center of trad climbing

- Chinese version of Gunks
- 4 hours from BJ
- 1 hour from Zhengzhou
- Hundreds of climbs
- In park, have to buy ticket
- Quartz
Trad Climbing
Trad Climbing
Trad Climbing

Shaolin Temple
Big wall, Siguniang area
Granite

Trad Climbing
Free Elevator, 24 pitches, 5.10
South Face of “The Second Sister”, 12 pitches, 5.11+
Sport Climbing

- granite
- limestone
- quartz
- unknown

Map of China showing climbing routes of various difficulty levels.
Yangshuo

- It has everything in terms of “bolt” culture, along with deep water soloing
- Relative long single pitch
- Some multipitches
- Good accommodation
- Good traffic
- Climbing Season, all year
- It also offers kayaking, caving, (even language program, part time job)
The White Mountain Crag
5.14d Spicy dumplings

© John O'Brien
The Moon Hill
5.11-5.14a
Bouldering

Map showing locations of Blonc and Tsingdao in China.
By Wang Zeng
By Wang Zeng
By Wang Zeng
Sweating ?
Bouldering

Human activity destroyed the ecological system. Deserted since late 20th century.
Destination with strong climbing culture

- Beijing
- Guoliang
- Yangshuo
- Siguniang
- Tsingdao
  all disciplines
Abundant Resources

New crags and boulders are found everyday

Depend on

- climbers’ perspective
- depend on climber population
- property rights
Review of new climbs established in recent 8 months

Guizhou
Oct 2010- Apr 2011
Petzl Rock Trip, Oct 2011
250+ lines
9a+/5.15a grade
Review of new climbs established in recent 8 months

Guizhou
Oct 2010- Apr 2011
Petzl Rock Trip, Oct 2011

Leye, Guangxi
Bolting leader, Achen
Jan, 2011
Hundreds of routes
5.8-5.14
Achen started the project.
Review of new climbs established in recent 8 months

- Guizhou
  - Oct 2010 - Apr 2011
  - Petzl Rock Trip, Oct 2011
- Leye, Guangxi
  - Jan, 2011
- Achen
  - Xinchang
    - Oct 2010 - now
    - Sport, bouldering, trad
By Shanghai climber community

30 routes, from 5.8-5.12
Review of new climbs established in recent 8 months

Xinjiang
Tommy Caldwell’s crew
rock scramblin’ explorations
Sep, 2010

Guizhou
Oct 2010- Apr 2011
Petzl Rock Trip, Oct 2011

Xinchang
Oct 2010- now
Sport, bouldering, trad

Leye, Guangxi
Bolting leader, Achen
Jan, 2011
Established several 5.11+
Due to the independent nature of climbing in Kunming and the many years of effort on part of the local climbers here, the Redpoint Club has a very different perspective on climbing in Yunnan and how and when to advertise our efforts. **We really don’t want a “Yangshuo Two”** with tens of different guiding companies competing for business and scores of climber tourists crowding every crag.

---Hanna Waight forwards the letter from W2 2011
My Trips
Lanzhou  
Xining  
Shanghai  
Beijing

4 hours to town, 1 hour to valley

Himalaya Style  multi days  fixed camps
Alpine Style  limited days  moving camp

One day by train, 3 hours by flight

Gangshka 5254.5m
3-4 hours
Trekking on loose face
WI 2

The final face, 14 pitches, 600m
Summit
Late return
Storm
About 38 hour no food
Gangshka

- Accessible
- Moderate terrain
- Easy technical ice climbing, glacier roping operation

A good bet for entry-level real alpinism
(Vegetarian will have a bit trouble there)
Chola
6168m
Chengdu
Entrance 3800m
Base Camp 4500m
Advanced Based Camp 4950m
Camp 1 5160m
Camp 2 5650m
Summit 6168m

Trekking
Cross icy lake
4 hours

Camp 4500m

Advance

Deep snow/ WI3 ice climbing
10 hours +

Dangerous crack zone
Rope operation

Ouch!!
Hard to access
Unfreindly

Loose rock, brutal elevation
Partial 5.7-5.8 rock

Deep snow/ powder in the afternoon

Ouch!!
Hard to access
Unfreindly
Entrance 3800m

Base Camp 4500m
- Loose rock
- Brutal elevation
- Partial 5.7-5.8 rock
- 7 hours

Advanced Base Camp
- Dangerous crack zone
- Rope operation
- WI2+ ice climbing
- 8-10 hours

Camp 1 5160m
- Deep snow/powder in the afternoon
- WI3 ice climbing
- 10 hours +
Entrance 3800m
Base Camp 4500m
Advanced Base Camp 4950m
Camp 1 5160m
Camp 2 5650m
Summit 6168m

Trekking
Cross icy lake 4 hours
Loose rock, brutal elevation
Partial 5.7-5.8 rock 7 hours

Advanced Base Camp
Dangerous crack zone
Rope operation
WI2+ ice climbing 8-10 hours
Deep snow/powder in the afternoon
WI3 ice climbing 10 hours +
Entrance 3800m

Base Camp 4500m
- Loose rock, brutal elevation
- Partial 5.7-5.8 rock
- 7 hours

Advanced Base Camp 4950m
- Dangerous crack zone
- Rope operation
- WI2+ ice climbing
- 8-10 hours

Camp 1 5160m

Camp 2 5650m

Summit 6168m
- Deep snow/powder in the afternoon
- WI3 ice climbing
- 10 hours +

Trekking:
- Cross icy lake in 4 hours
- Loose rock, brutal elevation
- Partial 5.7-5.8 rock
- 7 hours
Entrance 3800m
Base Camp 4500m
Advanced Based Camp 4950m
Camp 1 5160m
Camp 2 5650m
Summit 6168m

Trekking
Cross icy lake 4 hours
Loose rock, brutal elevation Partial 5.7-5.8 rock 6 hours
Deep snow/ powder in the afternoon WI3 ice climbing 10 hours +

Crack Zone, Tricky
Dangerous crack zone
Rope operation
WI2+ ice climbing
8-10 hours
Loose rock, brutal elevation
Partial 5.7-5.8 rock
6 hours

Dangerous crack zone
Rope operation
WI2+ ice climbing
8-10 hours

Deep snow/powder in the afternoon
WI3 ice climbing
10 hours +
Entrance 3800m
Base Camp 4500m
Advanced Based Camp 4950m
Camp 1 5160m
Camp 2 5650m
Summit 6168m

Trekking
Cross icy lake 4 hours
Loose rock, brutal elevation Partial 5.7-5.8 rock 6 hours
Dangerous crack zone Rope operation WI2+ ice climbing 8-10 hours
Deep snow/ powder in the afternoon WI3 ice climbing 10 hours +

2 hours
Entrance 3800m
Base Camp 4500m
Advanced Base Camp 4950m
Camp 1 5160m
Camp 2 5650m
Summit 6168m

Trekking
Cross icy lake 4 hours
Loose rock, brutal elevation Partial 5.7-5.8 rock 6 hours
Return 12 hours
Summary & Dilemmas
● In-system management, CMA

● The unclear property rights, the vague laws, abuse of power

● Preservation V.S. Exploration

● Health care, income, values in climber community
Climb Hard

Behave Smart

Do not understand

没有钱 --- May You Chain

Have no money

Skip Tibet

Smile!
Thank You