



Mount Qomolangma, the Earth's highest mountain above sea level. /CFP

On May 29, 1953, New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Nepalese guide Tenzing Norgay achieved the historic milestone being the first people to reach the summit of Mount Qomolangma from its south slope. Seven year later on May 25, 1960, three Chinese climbers, averaging 24 years old, challenged the treacherous "death route" on the northern slope and successfully conquered the summit, making it the first-ever ascent from the northern side in human history.

However, the journey to conquer Mount Qomolangma didn't end there. Xia Boyu is among those who scripted a legendary tale in the annals of Chinese mountaineering. Born in Chongqing, Xia eventually became the first disabled Chinese person to dare to climb Mount Qomolangma.

In 1975, as a member of the Chinese Mountaineering Team, Xia made his first attempt at summitting Mount Qomolangma. However, he confronted a blizzard that left his feet severely frostbitten, ultimately leading to a surgery where both his legs had to be amputated below the knees.



Xia Boyu climbs Mount Qomolangma on the Nepal side, May 9, 2016. /CFP

"The experience of amputation dealt a heavy blow to me. I once believed that the remainder of my life would be confined to a wheelchair. I lost faith in life and felt as though I had plunged into an abyss," Xia recalled.

A fortuitous encounter with a German prosthetics expert revealed to Xia that he could not only walk again, but also resume his climbing endeavors. This revelation rekindled the spark of hope within Xia.

However, the path to summiting Mount Qomolangma was never smooth. In subsequent attempts, Xia faced numerous twists and challenges, including a failed attempt due to an avalanche in 2014, the Nepal earthquake in 2015, and encountering a snowstorm close to the summit in 2016.

Finally, in 2018, Xia set off again and successfully reached the summit of Mount Qomolangma, becoming the first Chinese double amputee to achieve this feat.



Tsang Yin-hung set a new record for the fastest ascent by a Chinese woman in 2021. /CFP

In addition to Xia Boyu, many Chinese climbers have successfully reached the summit of Mount Qomolangma and set records. Tsang Yin-hung set a new record for the fastest ascent by a Chinese woman in 2021, while Sun Yiquan made his second ascent in 2018 and the third in 2019, establishing himself as one of the Chinese climbers with the most successful climbs from the southern slope.

As of May 23, 2023, more than 30 people, including Chinese scientific expedition members, civilian climbers, and guides, have successfully summited Mount Qomolangma from the northern slope. On the 70th anniversary of the first human ascent of Mount Qomolangma, Chinese climbers have shown unwavering courage in the face of adversity, paying tribute to this extraordinary achievement.