

*Pyramid Peak, Attempt.* The Australian Pyramid Peak Expedition consisted of seven climbers (Darren Miller, leader; James Serle, Gavin Dunmall, Nicola Sunderland, Scott Welch, Jon Chapman, Morvan Grant) with the aim to make the first ascent of this 7125-meter peak (which lies north of Kangchenjunga) from the Nepal side. The mountain had been climbed by the Japanese from the Sikkim side, but as yet had not had an ascent from the Nepal side. This was to be the first attempt granted by the Nepal Ministry of Tourism.

Base Camp (Pangpema) was reached on October 8 after a 15-day approach march. The route attempted was the west (south) ridge. Advance Base Camp and Camps I, II and III were established up to October 20, at which time a cold front consisting of high winds and then snow prevented further progress. The highest point reached was 6350 meters on October 22 by Gavin Dunmall and Jon Chapman. Base Camp was disbanded on October 28.

DARREN MILLER, *Australia*

## PAKISTAN

*Shakhaur, West Ridge.* The goal of the expedition was to climb Shakhaur (7116 m) by a new, safe route from the Northern Udren Glacier. The members of the expedition were Alfred Fendt, leader (42, Germany), and Gerhard Gritsch (26, Osterreich). The team reached Islamabad on August 6 and, after completing the administration formalities, was able to go on two days later via Dir and Lowari Top to Chitral, reaching Zundrangram in the Tirich Valley on August 9. The three-day approach march with 10 porters progressed from Shagrom (2800 m), through the Atak Gol, the Udren Valley, the Lopar Gol, the eastern moraine of Udren Darban Glacier and the Northern Udren Glacier to Base Camp (4630 m). The same day the team crossed west over the Udren Glacier to get a view of the western slope of the Udren-Zom and Shakhaur and to look for possible routes. The whole time avalanches raked the route of the Austrian first ascensionists and the Italian expedition of 1991 via the serac-area of the south glacier of Rohe-Nadir Shah, revealing the enormous objective danger of this route.

We decided therefore to explore the pillar in the west ridge of Udren Zom. On August 14 an equipment cache was installed at the beginning of a great couloir at 5000 meters. After climbing snow and ice-couloirs (up to 55°) and poor rock ridges (up to III) the team reached a suitable place for Camp I on a rock buttress (5620 m). After a stormy night in Advanced Base Camp, descent to Base Camp followed. After a break of two days the team decided to try the final climb in alpine style. After a night at the beginning of the snow couloir (5000 m), Camp I was reached on the early noon of August 21. In the afternoon the great glacier plateau between Rohe-Nadir Shah, Shakhaur and Udren Zom (6000 m) was reached (ice up to 50°, rock up to III). The night was spent again in Camp I. After reaching the plateau in the late morning of August 22, the team crossed the plateau to the north, because the way to the Col between Shakhaur and Udren-Zom was threatened by avalanches and serac fall from the north slope of Udren-Zom. The crew spent the time of extreme heat at noon in the tent and continued the climb in the afternoon to a safe place sheltered by a crevasse under the col between Rohe-Nadir Shah and Shakhaur and established Camp II (6220 m). The final climb followed the next day without technical difficulties via the Col and the smooth west ridge of Shakhaur. The summit was reached at 11 a.m. (Gritsch/Fendt) and Camp II at 2 p.m.

The way back to Base Camp was made with all the equipment on August 24. The route is mostly safe and can be recommended especially to small expeditions.

ALFRED FENDT, *Germany*

*Mount Buni-Zom, North Ridge, Attempt.* Our Academic Alpine Club of Hokkaido Buni-Zom Peak Expedition, 1995, was composed of Kiyokatsu Saito, leader, Kazushige Honda, Kentarou Tanaka, Osamu Sanpei, Toru Shimizu and Satoru Henmi. We left Chitral on July 30 and traveled to Phargam by jeep. We walked to the Kulakmari Falls and constructed Base Camp below the falls at 4000 meters on August 1. We climbed a 500-meter rock wall on the left bank of this falls over the next three days to get to the end of Khoraboht glacier. The lower and middle sections of this rock wall were of compact granite, but the upper part was covered by glacial talus breccia.

On August 4 we placed Camp I at the lower end of the glacier at 4750 meters, and on August 6 proceeded to Camp II at 5120 meters. On the way to Camp II, we first saw the peak of BuniZom (6551 m) and reconnoitered our route. The west ridge proved to be jagged and of loose and shattered granite, so we decided to



The main peak of Mount Buni-Zom (6551 m). Circle marks team high point. Kiyokatsu Saito

climb up the glacier and approach via the north ridge, as was done by the New Zealand first ascent party in 1957 (*New Zealand Alpine Journal*, 1958). After two day's rest in Base Camp, on August 10, we climbed to Camp II. Over the next two days we climbed the steep ice wall (400 m) that extends to the col between the main and north peaks of BuniZom to get to Camp III on a ice shelf at 5900 meters. On August 13, Saito, Sanpei and Henmi attempted to reach 6100 meters on the north ridge of the main peak, but were foiled by a lack of climbing gear. This ridge was narrow and a mix of rocks and huge cornices (especially from 6200-6500 meters). So, we turned to the top of the north peak (6338 meters), reaching it at 9 a.m. via an easy snow climb. On August 20, seven days after the first attempt, Saito, Henmi and Honda tried again, but floundered desperately in deep snow on the narrow ridge and were prevented by bad avalanche conditions on the snowy traverse from reaching anything other than a horn below the summit at 6400 meters.

KIYOKATSU SAITO, *Academic Alpine Club of Hokkaido*

*Tirich Mir, Ascent.* The Japan Hindu-Kush Expedition-1995 succeeded in climbing Tirich Mir (7706 m) on July 7, 1995. The team was led by Nozawai Ayuuni and comprised Iwazaki Hiroshi, 34, Imamura Hirotaka, 35, Imamura Fumiko, 35, L.O. Captain Abid Jamir, 25, and cook Mohammed Ari, 27. They arrived in Islamabad on May 29 and established Base Camp on June 14.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Tirich Mir, North-Northwest Face, Attempt.* A seven-member Spanish Tirich Mir expedition led by Carlos Soria Fontan (56) made an unsuccessful attempt on the north-northwest face route on Tirich Mir (7706 m). The group was attempting to make the second Spanish ascent of the peak.

Stephen Boys from England, who teamed up with the Spanish team, said, "Too much deep snow above 6,500 meters stopped us from making further progress."

Two members, Manuel Sanchez and Jose Carlos Llamas, managed to reach 7200 meters but fear of avalanches in knee-deep snow forced them to come down. The other three climbers were Angel Moreno, Santiago Martin and Jose Luis Hurtado. The group made Base Camp at 4800 meters, Camp I at 5750 meters, and Camp II at 6500 meters.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Tirich Mir West I, Attempt.* We wanted to open a new line on the south face of Tirich Mir West I (7487 m), but unstable snow and ice made us decide to follow the 1967 Czech route. On July 21 we established Base Camp (4700 m). CI was ready on July 24 at 5500 meters on the Upper Tirich Glacier. CII was established at 6500 meters after 11 hours of climbing on the 26. Later we put up a small camp between CI and CII at 6000 meters. On August 1 all the members went up to CII. The last three days had been snowy and we didn't want to try our new route because of the danger. We went down to BC. On August 9, three of us tried Dirgol Zom (6778 m) but found high avalanche danger. Jordi and I rested in BC with a tweaked hand and intestinal problems. On August 10, Pep, Jaume and Ferran tried the '67 Czech route. They left CII at 1 a.m. In the middle of the couloir, they fixed rope along a dangerous traverse for the descent. They reached the



A: Tirich Mir East (7692 m); B: Tirich Mir Main (7708 m); C: Tirich Mir North (7200 m).  
Xavi Llongueras

northwest col (7200 m) at noon. The rest of the ridge was very dangerous with big cornices and we decided to descend. We left BC on August 15 and reached Chitral a day later. Members of the expedition were Jaume Ros, Jordi Diaz, Ferran Hernandez, Pep Cañellas and me as leader.

XAVI LLONGUERAS, *Servei General d'Informació de Muntanya*

*Tirich Mir, Ascent.* It was reported that the French team of Pierre Bouchard and Lionel Boucher made the first French ascent of Tirich Mir on July 27 despite bad weather and deep snow on the lower section of the route. The pair established two camps on their ascent; most teams use four. From their second camp at 6500 meters they left at 1:30 a.m. on July 27 and climbed 1200 meters of mixed ground to reach the summit at 2:15 p.m. They returned to their camp the same day. (*High Mountain Sports* 172)

*Kuti Dorkush, South Ridge.* Annabelle Barker, Mary Twomey, Janet Vince and I established a fantastic base camp on the north side at the Sat Marao Glacier at ca. 3600 meters on a vegetated, flower-strewn ablation valley. Huge boulders formed caves for a kitchen and storeroom, which was fortunate as we had less than one week's good weather out of the month spent there.

High camp was set up at ca. 4500 meters with a further bivy at ca. 5000 meters. An ascent was made by all four team members via a new route on August 13. The (unroped) ascent took the snow/ice couloir at the left end of the ridge (Scottish Grade 1-2) then followed the 40- to 50-degree ridge to the summit. Some avalanche risk was encountered. The descent was made on the north side of the ridge via a couloir full of stone fall and rappels over seracs at the far left of the ridge. Further exploration was curtailed by the appalling weather (which stopped us from being home-sick; the constant rain was very reminiscent of the great British climate!).

PENNY CLAY, *United Kingdom*

*Istoronal, Southwest Ridge, Ascent.* Four Austrian climbers led by Doctor Roland Maruna recorded the third and fourth ascents of Istoronal (7380 m) on August 24 and 26 via the southwest ridge in alpine-style. Norbert Bannert (35) and mountain guide Walter Strauss (48) reached the top on the afternoon of August 24.



*Kuti Dorkush. The South Ridge route follows the obvious couloir at the bottom left of the formation and then the ridge to the top. Penny Clay*

They were followed by mountain guide Wolfgang Neumuller (28) and Dr. Florian Mittermayer (31) on August 26, also in the afternoon.

The weather on the peak during the summit bid remained bad (misty with constant snowfall) during the climb. Alex Goelles (28) finished 200 meters below the summit and had to retreat for fear of frost bite. He was with the second party, which comprised Wolfgang and Dr. Florian. The other two proceeded in bad weather to the top.

Alex said, "The last 300 meters was a steep slope of 40 degrees. The seracs between Camp II and Camp III were also very dangerous and we crossed all the terrain in single file (roped together)."

The group also had two women climbers, Sabine Kraml (25) and Anita Maruna (17), Doctor Roland Maruna's daughter. Sabine reached 6200 meters (Camp II) but came down feeling sick.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Pute Towers, Various Ascents.* It was reported that Tom Goodwin and Pete Scott (N.Z.), Johan Gouws (South Africa) and Sam Stacey and Peter Thompson (U.K.) made the first ascent of the Third Tower (5800 m) via a long east-facing gully above the Yain Hisk pasture, followed by the crest of the south ridge. On August 8, they attempted Gutum Talji (ca. 5500 m) to the south of the Yain Hisk Glacier. Goodwin, Gouws and Thompson reached one of several summits. The team also climbed Batokshe (ca. 6000 m) south of Batura II. (*High Mountain Sports* 171)

*Ultrar Sar, First Ascent.* The most significant achievement of the last Karakoram season was the first ascent of the difficult and dangerous Ultrar Sar (7388 m), by the Pakistanis called Ultrar II, and known also as Bojohagur or Bojohagur II. It is the main peak of the two-summit massif of Bojohagur Duanasir situated in the southeast part of the Batura Muztagh, ca. 15 kilometers north of Nagar and ca. 13 kilometers north from the Karakoram Highway. In the last few years it had been renowned as the world's highest still unclimbed mountain.

In July the virgin summit was finally conquered by two separate Japanese expeditions. On July 11 the first ascent was completed by a duo from the Japan Alpine Club Tokai expedition, including the party leader, Akito Yamazaki. The pair climbed alpine-style from the southwest side of the mountain. Sadly, during the descent, the exhausted Yamazaki developed high altitude sickness and died at Camp I on July 19. On July 31 the summit was ascended again, by a Japan Kathmandu Club Expedition led by Ken Takahashi. The climbers fixed 4000 meters of ropes from 5200 meters to 7300 meters. The summit team consisted of the leader and four other members: Masayuki Ando, Ryushi Hoshino, Wataru Saito and Nobuo Tsutsumi. They followed the south ridge.

During the last decade Ultrar Sar had attracted more than 15 expedition from six or seven countries (including Norway in 1993). Their desperate attempts claimed a number of lives. The exploration was initiated in 1986 by a Japanese party, of which Ken Takahashi was a member. This year four parties gained permission to attempt Ultrar Sar: three from Japan (two of them successful) and one Pakistani-Korean. The slightly lower Ultrar West (7329 m) was ascended in 1984 by three climbers from a Japanese expedition.

JOZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik*

*Ultrar Sar, South Ridge, Attempt.* A Pakistan-Korean joint expedition to Ultrar Sar (7388 m) failed on an attempt on the south ridge due to bad weather that lasted 20 days. The expedition—the first of its kind—featured two Pakistani climbers, Hidayat Hussain (deputy leader) and Arifullah Baig. The two reached Camp I at 5600 meters while the Koreans, led by Seo Ki Seok

(33), made two attempts on the ridge, reaching Camp II at 6100 meters. The Koreans representing the Myung Ji University Club (Park Kwang In, 26, and Kim Min Sik, 25) showed remarkable resilience in attempting the peak, which was attempted by four expeditions this year, three of which were from Japan.

The group reached Base Camp (4800 m) on September 16 and took 10 days to establish Camp I (5600 meters) on a rock slope Seo graded as UIAA Grade IV that had frequent rock fall. The group made Camp II (6100 meters) on October 1. The climbing offered mixed climbing starting at 6000 meters.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Ultrar Sar, Attempt.* Masami Hasegawa, whose husband Tsuneo Hasegawa died on Ultrar Sar in an avalanche in 1991, attempted the 7388-meter peak via the southwest face, the same route that claimed her husband. It is unclear how high she reached. She made her attempt in the autumn.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Bublimotin (a.k.a. Lady's Finger), Southwest Face.* Members Yasushi Yamanoi (leader), Daisaku Nakagaki, and Taeko Nagao arrived at the foot of southwest face on August 12, 1995, with great baggage, after a long and dangerous approach. We started to climb on August 13 and climbing capsule-style reached the summit of Lady's Finger on August 24. It took 12 days including one rest day because of snow. The wall's height is 800 meters. We rated the route 5.10 A3+. We brought two 11 mm, 50-meter ropes, two 10 mm 50-meter ropes, three sets of Friends, three sets of nuts, 50 pitons, 12 days food and 60 liters of water.

YASUSHI YAMANOI, *Japan*

*Rakaposhi, Northwest Ridge.* As part of a six-man Colombian expedition, Anibal Pirvada climbed Rakaposhi (7788 m), summiting August 3, after climbing the northwest ridge, previously climbed in 1986 by a team from Holland. This might be the eighth ascent of the mountain.

VOLKER STALLBOHM, *Columbia*

*Diran Peak, South Face, Attempt and Ascent.* Shigero Aoki led a 15-member team that attempted the south face of Diran Peak (7257 m). The face proved unclimbable due to bad weather and constant avalanches. Two members, Iguchi and Hiruta, were able to reach 6700 meters but high winds and insufficient time made them return to safety on July 31. The group made Base Camp at 3200 meters, Camp I at 4100 meters, Camp II at 5000 meters, and Camp III at 5800 meters.

Earlier, two Japanese from another expedition, Iwasaki and Suzuki, reached the summit during a break in the weather on July 27.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

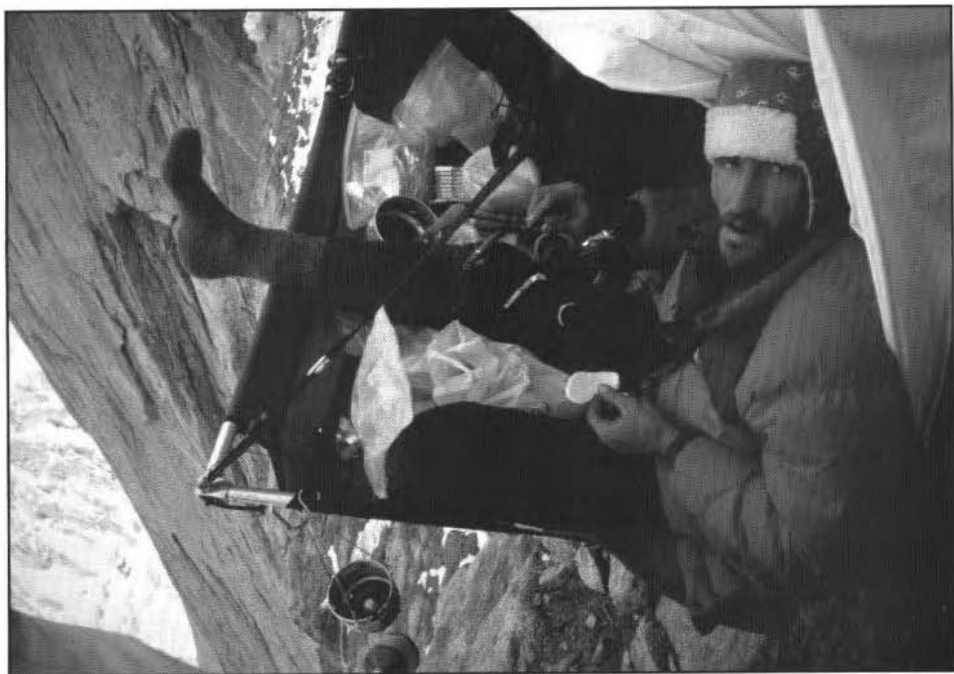
*Disteghil Sar, Attempt and Tragedy.* It was reported that two Britons and a New Zealander died in an avalanche high on the 25,869-foot Disteghil Sar in August. A Pakistani official in the northern town of Gilgit said the climbers, whom he identified as Stephen Thornley, 25, and Andrew Boas, 24, both British, and Christopher Hoare, a New Zealander, had died on August 12 in the Shamshal Valley on the 25,869-foot peak. Three other climbers from the same expedition, all New Zealanders, set off by road from Gilgit for Islamabad after the accident. The six men arrived



in Pakistan in June and told a local newspaper that they aimed to climb Disteghil Sar by a previously unattempted route. According to a Pakistani liaison officer, the team left their base camp on July 8 to attempt the climb. They later split into two groups for a final ascent by different routes. One group, which had tried a rocky route to the summit, returned to Camp Three in bad weather on August 12. The surviving climbers, named as Thomas Davies, Dominic Harmond and Peter Marriott, said they had seen their companions, who were attempting a snow and ice-route, through a long camera lens the same day, but then did not see them again.

They climbed back up to Camp II and waited there until August 23, returning to Base Camp on August 26. (*Reuters*)

*Amin Brakk, West Face, Attempt\**. The expedition was composed of Jose Carlos Tamayo, Adolfo Madinabeita and Jon Lazkano. We established Base Camp at 4200 meters on May 15 at a site called "Bila Congo" by the locals. We wanted to attempt the 1400-meter west face of Amin Brakk in the eastern Karakoram. After bringing everything to the base of the wall, we fixed the first 450 meters and began up the wall. From the start the difficulties were very sustained, with ice, rock, free and aid climbing on mediocre rock in the first part of the wall. Above the first part, we attacked the central wall, which was vertical to overhanging (A2, A4). We set up our second bivouac on top of a large roof at 9500 meters up the climb. Above this we continued directly toward the summit ridge. In total we climbed 11500 meters. At this point a very, very violent storm prohibited us from continuing to the summit. We endured six days of bad weather without leaving our portaledge, after which we abandoned our attempt. In all we had spent 15 days on



*Jon Lazkano on Amin Brakk.* Jon Lazkano collection

the wall. The descent was made under very dangerous conditions. The wall is objectively very dangerous, with ice and stonefall, etc. Climbing to our high point was rated 5.10 A4 65/70°.

This was my second attempt. The first attempt was slightly more direct, but therefore more exposed to rockfall.

JON LAZKANO, SPAIN

*\*See accompanying photo of Amin Brakk in the opening pages of this journal.*

*Makrong Chhish, East Ridge, Attempt.* It was reported that Stephen Sustad and Simon Yates made two attempts on the east ridge of Makrong Chhish in August. The first, from August 26-29 via the northeast face, was thwarted at 5400 meters by unclimbable snow; the second, which approached the ridge via the southeast flank on September 1-6, reached 6400 meters before being stopped by dangerous snow conditions and bad weather. (*High Mountain Sports* 171)

*Chukutan Peak, First Ascent.* It was reported that Spaniards J. Bañales, I. Peribañez, C. Reima, L. Tejada, M. Fernandez and J. Mugara had planned to attempt Spantik, but were forced to change objectives due to snow conditions. They climbed Chukutan Peak (6290 m) and another unnamed peak (6100 m). In both cases they reached the summit ridge but not the main summit due to complicated, and dangerous, ridge traverses up to them. (*Desnivel*)

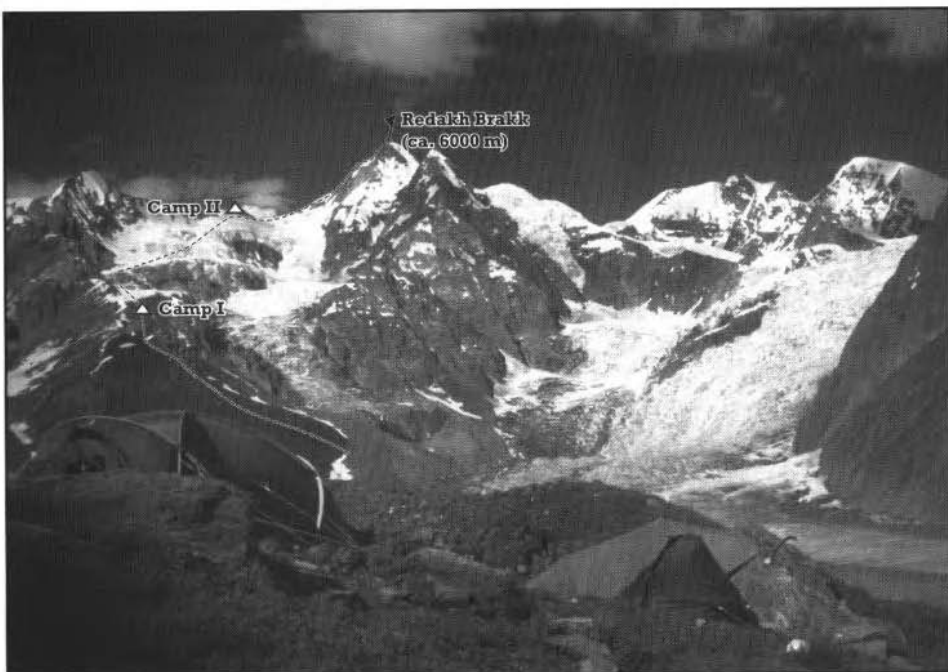
*Redakh Brakk, and Other Ascents.* During the Haramosh II Expedition in 1995, we could not help noticing a prominent unknown mountain that dominated the view to the northeast looming up behind the ridge bounding the far end of the Sgari Byen Gang Glacier. Exact location was problematical. The Nushik La is the old pass linking the Kero Lungma and Hispar glaciers, and our mystery mountain appeared to be somewhere nearby. Subsequent study of maps and photos showed the peak to appear much closer to another pass, the Bolocho La. This location was confirmed on the ground during the 1996 trip.

The suspected location close to the Bolocho La meant that we had a choice of three approach glaciers: Kero Lungma, Bolocho, and East Makrong. We chose the Kero Lungma; it seemed to offer plenty of alternative objectives should our primary one prove too dangerous or inaccessible. In the event, our mountain was not readily accessible from the Kero Lungma, but we had a whole glacier-full of mountains to go at, and we had no record of any of them having been touched.

Dave Wilkinson and Colin Wells had all seen the mountain from the Haramosh trip, and fancied a go. Bill Church and Tony Park later joined the team.

Our mountain appeared to be under the magic 6000 meters limit, so Pakistani government permit, peak fee and liaison officer were not required. Our approach followed the south bank of the Kero Lungma Glacier. Base Camp was situated in a small ablation valley, easily reached from the glacier below, but well banked up with old snow. Above it rose a mountain of about 5000 meters (later named "Tsunse Brakk"—"Small Peak," an unimaginative but descriptive name). We decided to try this peak as acclimatization and for a view. A short section 150 meters from the top gave a pitch of Scottish Grade 3, and proved quite awkward with only one ax and a ski-stick each. The view from the top was tremendous, but identification of our mystery mountain still proved uncertain.





*Redakh Brakk, showing line of ascent. Dave Wilkinson*

After a couple of days rest, we decided to walk up the glacier to try and find our mountain. Contrary to the map, the mountain appeared to be the other side of the Bolocho La, and so would not be directly accessible from the Kero Lungma. We had come up the wrong valley!

For further acclimatization and reconnaissance, we decided to bag another small peak above our camp. This was an easy walk up snow slopes with a very short top section on easy rotten rock. We estimated the height as 5200 meters. We called this peak "Goma," after the plump grouse-like birds (*ram chikor*) that we found nesting in abundance on its lower slopes. The next day, with an earlier start, we took an exhausting walk up the snowy glacier to the Bolocho La. Our previous impression was confirmed: the Jersey Walla map was incorrect (we stand by this), and our glacier was the wrong one. The Bolocho Glacier was in fact longer than shown, and to get to the mountain from this side, we would have had to cross the pass and descend to the Bolocho glacier, before starting our climb. Having only limited time and resources, we rejected this option, and decided to look for an alternative objective.

Across the glacier from our Base Camp, three small glaciers descended from the "Balchish range," the group of peaks forming the divide between the Kero Lungma and Hispar glaciers. We chose a pyramid-shaped peak on this ridge, marked as a peak on the map, but with no name or height given. We estimated its height as about 6000 meters—just legal. (We subsequently named our mountain "Redakh Brakk," Balti for "Ibex Peak," after the free-roaming beasts that populated the area.) The best approach seemed to ascend the lower ridge of the next peak to the west, then via the intervening glacier to a col overlooking the Hispar, and finally up the west ridge of our peak.

After a few days of unsettled weather, we packed four days worth of food and set off at mid-day to cross the glacier to a flat bottomed ablation valley shaped like an amphitheater. The next morning, a 4 a.m. start saw us gain the glacier on our right. By 9 a.m., we had reached our col; we also had a luxury camp site. We had only 500 meters of height to gain, and this was a west ridge, so would not get the first sun. An early start seemed unnecessary, so we set off just before dawn, traversing around some bumps on the level ridge to gain the proper foot of our ridge at a narrower subsidiary col. To our left, huge cornices projected out over the Hispar; we climbed by a series of couloirs, traverses and short steps well right of the crest. Conditions were superb. The middle part of the ridge steepened to a 50-meter section at 60 degrees plus. The ridge eased, and led in a series of broad corniced curves to a final cornice barrier. This was demolished with five minutes of old-fashioned chopping with the ax. A quick pull through the gap landed immediately on the summit.

After 10 minutes on the top, a single long abseil brought us back down the steep bit, and we were back in camp by 10 a.m. for a second breakfast.

Bill and Colin went for an old-fashioned col-crossing by returning via the Nushik La to Hispar and Gilgit. Their subsequent account of the descent of the steeper Hispar side, with 45-degree icy slopes traversing under seracs, made the old tales of crossing this pass with cattle hard to believe.

DAVE WILKINSON, *United Kingdom*

*Nanga Parbat, North Face, New Route.* Since Herman Buhl climbed Nanga Parbat (8125 m) for the first time in 1953, only one party (Czechoslovakia, 1971) has succeeded via the original route. Five other routes have been established elsewhere on the mountain, but none from the north. After a 1992 reconnaissance to the north and a subsequent study of aerial photos, I was convinced we could climb a new route via the ridge derived from the East Peak of Silver Crag. Our team consisted of 10 members who graduated from the same university (Chiba Institute of Technology), though only three members had adequate experience at high altitude. Of these three, two would not be able to participate for the whole expedition.

On June 5, 1995, after a three-day march from Tatoo with 100 porters and three tons of gear, we arrived at Temporary Base Camp (3900 m), normally regarded as base camp for other expeditions. Our Base Camp was established at 4500 meters on top of the so-called Great Moraine where other parties normally put up Camp I. We kept 20 porters to transfer loads up from TBC to Base Camp because of deep snow. Spending five days for logistics assignments was perfect for acclimatization. Camp I was established on June 11 at 5300 meters on the Rakiot Glacier. Up to this point we followed the original 1953 route.

The route from Camp I to Camp II is divided into two stages. The first stage was a steep snow and granite rock wall up to 5700 meters. After following an obvious 45-degree snow ridge, the climbing started with a rock crack (IV+) and followed a steep rock and icy snow band/gully. Six pitches above the crack, there appeared one pitch of 50 meters (IV+) where a 10-meter wire ladder was fixed for load transfer. To the left of our route, a big snow gully leads up to the skyline of the ridge where we wanted to climb. However, it is raked with rockfall after 10 a.m. As we climbed higher, we felt more and more rockfall flying down toward us, as our route was directed toward the upper parts of this snow gully. After gaining about 500 meters, which corresponds to two-thirds of the first part, we came up against a massive rock overhang. To the right, no feasible route was found. We were obliged to take a route to the left into the snow gully for 20 meters to come out above the overhang. Putting ourselves into this gully required everybody's courage. Before setting off one member confessed he would rather ask for forgiveness than be

punished by the rockfall of this gully—hence, the “Confessional Pitch.” (Two expedition members, Tamura and Kousaka, were later injured in separate incidents by rockfall in the Confessional Pitch.)

After overcoming this point, the route led diagonally to the right up until we came out on the skyline ridge at 5900 meters. The second stage was a sharp, intricate and narrow snow ridge that jags almost horizontally up to Camp II. It was technically not as difficult as the first stage, but it took us five days to fix 600 meters of rope. Camp II was established at 5900 meters just below an massive ice tower on June 25, 14 days after having left Camp I.

Above Camp II, the ice tower rose 300 meters straight up into the blue sky. This ice tower is actually the bottom end of the glacier that falls down the ridge from Silver Crag. How we could overcome this vertical ice tower had been one of the issues since the planning stage. Fortunately, we discovered a vertical slit in the center amidst the overhanging ice. After four pitches of 70-degree hard ice, we overcame the difficult section and reached the point where the ice tower produced the slit. In the slit, the exposed ice surface was replaced with hard snow and a lower angle. After exiting the ice tower at roughly 6300 meters, the route became easier and followed along a vast ridge in knee-deep snow to Camp III (6700 m), which was established on July 4 where the slope becomes steeper as it heads for the East Peak of Silver Crag.

The route from Camp III traversed on the flanks of Silver Crag toward the mouth of the Silver Plateau. After climbing two snow and rock pitches, we faced a sheer 50-meter, 80-degree crack. “Yabe’s Crack” (V) was named for Yabe, who led the crack with bare hands. After this, we traversed 400 meters further along the northwest flank of Silver Crag, then continued another 400 meters on a steep snow slope that led us to the mouth of the Silver Plateau. We completed the route up to Camp IV at 7350 meters on July 18.



*Nanga Parbat, showing original 1953 route and 1995 Japanese route. Hiroshi Sakai*

On July 21, after two days of bad weather at Camp III, all six members loaded up the necessary equipment and food for one last-chance push to Camp IV. I had selected Yukio Yabe (29), Takeshi Akiyama (26) and myself (38) to go for the summit. The remaining three members devoted themselves to support, and climbed down to Camp III the same day. On July 22, the three of us woke up at 12:30 a.m. and left Camp IV at 3:10 a.m. with head lamps. However, we returned to Camp IV a short while later because Akiyama felt a pain in his chest and Yabe's fingers and toes had gone numb with cold. During the night, we took oxygen while sleeping to gain back strength. The next morning we left Camp IV at 3:10 a.m. in windy but clear conditions. By good luck, the Silver Plateau snow field was in perfect condition with less than ankle-deep snow, and we successfully reached the opposite end of the Plateau before 8 a.m.

From the Diamir Notch, the whole profile of the summit massif can be seen. Before going down 150 meters to the Bazhin Notch, I engraved the route we should take on the summit wall into my memory. Also, I checked and confirmed with a compass the location of Camp IV in case of whiteout. Calculating that we could manage to come back to Camp IV the same day after reaching the summit, we left equipment and food in Bazhin Notch so that we could climb as lightly and as quickly as possible.

Soon after setting off into the snow gully, which rises up in the summit's massive wall toward the north end shoulder of the summit ridge at 8070 meters, I realized that this massive wall was much bigger than I had calculated. After we had climbed almost half of this snow gully we were obstructed by a steep rock section. Leaving my climbing sack behind to lessen the weight, I led out to the left of this rock almost 100 meters to see if there was any feasible route beyond this



*Yukio Yabe and Takeshi Akiyama on summit day, Nanga Parbat. Hiroshi Sakai*

rock section. Above, there was a feasible route which led us to the north-end shoulder in a 120-meter rope length. It was already close to sunset and becoming windy. Along the summit ridge, we repeatedly climbed up and down around small projections of rock. Suddenly, the ridge ahead of me fell away and nothing higher was left. I had reached the summit of Nanga Parbat; it was 5:13 p.m. Twenty minutes later, Yabe and Akiyama also reached the top.

We began our descent at 6:10 p.m. and continued until 10 p.m. but couldn't reach the Bazhin Notch and were obliged to bivouac at 7700 meters with poor equipment. The next morning, July 24, it was snowing and nothing was visible, especially on the Silver Plateau snow field. However, we managed to return safely to Camp IV, 39 hours after we had left. The bad weather continued until we returned to Base Camp on July 28. It was a narrow success—thank the gods of Nanga Parbat for a lot of good luck.

HIROSHI SAKAI, *Japan* [Translated by MASAYOSHI FUJII]

*Nanga Parbat, Kinschoffer Route, Attempt.* In 1995, Arnold Zukuta, Chris Kettles and I undertook an expedition to Nanga Parbat to explore the possibility of skiing from the summit via the Diamir Face and the Kinschoffer route. Our intent was also to establish effectiveness of some esoteric amenities that we theorized would have significant benefits at high altitude. This included my personal experience with hydrogen peroxide. Blood oxygenation through drinking hydrogen peroxide did not prove to have relevance in acclimatization because its effects are too short-lived in the blood stream to offset the partial pressure of oxygen in the atmosphere. It was, however, extremely effective in eliminating muscle fatigue and increasing recovery time after exertion. As well, it is invaluable as a water purifier, disinfectant and treatment for frostbite.

After two weeks of storm, we stocked the Messner Rock for Camp I. An attempt to excavate the fresh fixed rope we had learned of, to try and make a fast route up and down the couloir to Camp II, was fruitless. Chris left the expedition soon after we arrived in Base Camp, leaving Arnold and I with fresh logistics and a smaller rack of gear. Our high mark of 5700 meters was reached on August 2. With unfortunate equipment problems, interference by Japanese climbers, unstable rocks, snow and weather, the mountain bade us leave and come back another day. Returning safely from the incredible objective hazards of the Diamir face was embraced as a success for our first 8000-meter expedition.

PTOR SPRICENIEKS, *unaffiliated*

*Nanga Parbat, Kinshofer Route, Solo Ascent, and Fifth Man to Climb all 14 8000ers.* It was reported that Krzysztof Wielicki "led" a 10-member international expedition to Nanga Parbat, though he was still on K2 [see *Climbs and Expeditions: Tibet*] when it arrived in Pakistan. Jacek Berbeka led the team in his absence. Problems between the leader and porters plagued the expedition on its approach and continued in Base Camp. Three members left the expedition early on, and Berbeka was back in Base Camp on August 8 after an unsuccessful summit attempt via the Kinshofer route. Joan Garcia (Portugal) and Andrew Lock (Australia) remained on the mountain at Camp IV with the intentions of continuing their attempt when Berbeka told the members in Base Camp that he did not wish to wait for Wielicki and was calling off the expedition. He left the next day with the two remaining Polish climbers while the German Bernd Hackler and two cooks volunteered to wait. Garcia and Lock were told over the radio that the expedition was over, at which point they abandoned their attempt. Upon reaching Base Camp they found that Berbeka had taken the majority of the expedition cash, which left them with the matter of sorting out an end to Base Camp on their own.



Wielicki, having successfully climbed the north ridge of K2, traveled the Karakoram Highway to Chilas with his Sirdar and left for a solo attempt on the Kinshofer route. He climbed more or less continually for 48 hours and reached the summit on September 1, then descended to 5800 meters the same day and was back in Chilas seven days after departing. (*High Mountain Sports* 172)

*Nanga Parbat, Winter Attempt.* The aim of the expedition was to make a small, lightweight ascent of Nanga Parbat (8125 m) in December, 1996. We (Rafael Jensen and Victor Saunders, with Gulam Hassan, liaison officer) chose the Kinshofer route because the technical difficulties are mostly low down. The expedition was in two parts: a reconnaissance in November, and the attempt to climb the mountain in December separated by a visit to Islamabad to complete the bureaucratic formalities, and pick up our L.O., Gulam Hassan. Hassan was an old friend of Rafael's who had climbed Gasherbrum I on his own account.

We fixed our Base Camp at a group of shepherds' huts at approximately 3700 meters. The normal summer base at 4300 meters took us a short day's trail breaking to reach. Rafael and I had heavy trail breaking across the Diamir Glacier, where we hauled three rucksacks each. The triple hauling was necessary because of the constant low temperatures (down to  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and the amount of food we needed to deal with it. It took three days to carry our loads to the bottom of the route, and another three days to establish and occupy a camp at 5000 meters. We found the initial couloir of the Kinshofer slow going. Though there was deep snow on the glacier, the couloir itself was bare and icy. We experienced some stone fall, which may have been caused by the lack of snow at Camp II. It eventually became clear to us that this time we had bitten off more than we could chew, and we retreated from below 6000 meters.

VICTOR SAUNDERS, *United Kingdom*

*Nanga Parbat, Attempt and Tragedy.* From May 10 to July 5, Razvan Petcu (leader), Mihai Gioroianu, Mariuo Gane, Bogdan Pintilie and Gabriel Stana attempted the Kinshofer Route. From Camp IV, at 3:30 a.m., four climbers went for the summit. At 8000 meters, Marius Gane and Bogdan Pintilie gave up and went back to Base Camp. M. Goroianu and G. Stana reached around 8050 meters before being turned back by a violent storm. They went down to Base Camp, but Gabriel Stana decided to stay in CIII with Razvan Petcu to wait for better weather and a second summit attempt. After five days in BC, the other three climbers started to look for the two. They found an avalanche path and some clothes but no other sign of Petcu and Stana. It was the first Romanian attempt on Nanga Parbat. Petcu (41) and Stana (23) were talented and experienced mountaineers with many ascents in the Carpathians, Caucasus, Pamir and Tien Shan.

CONSTANTIN LACATUSU, *Club Alpin Lynx*

*Nanga Parbat, Winter Attempt.* A Polish expedition attempting Nanga Parbat (8125 m) in winter via the Diamir Face returned after being evacuated from the Base Camp. Two of the climbers, Zbigniew Trzmiel, 33, and Krzysztof Pankiewicz, 45, suffered from frost bite on their summit bid on February 11 when they were 250 meters below the summit. It was the first helicopter rescue on the 3900-meter Nanga Parbat Base Camp on the Diamir side. The pilot had problems landing. Other members were Jacek Fluder, Bogdan Jankowski, Zbigniew Kroskiewicz, Maciej Pawlikowski, Ryszard Pawlowski, Bogdan Stefko and Jaroslaw Zurawski. Liaison officer was Rehmattullah Baig.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*



*P. 5400m, Ascent.* It was reported that a five-man German team (Markus Aigneher, Martin Grziwarsch, Bernd Illguth, Christian Schultes and Florian Siemer) climbed the north pillar of a 5400-meter rock spire above the Biafo Glacier. They established a temporary camp at 4800 meters and fixed rope to a bivouac site at 5000 meters in between bouts of weather, then fixed a certain amount above their high bivy en route to the top of the pillar (though not to the summit). Their efforts resulted in an entirely free route christened No Rope No Hope with difficulties up to 5.10d. They descended the line of ascent in 30 rappels. (*High Mountain Sports* 172)

*Ogre's Thumb, South Face.* It was reported that Italians Maurizio Giordani and Mauro Fonz, with D. Jonathan Hall, made the first ascent of the south face of the Ogre's Thumb (5600 m) in the Latok group at the foot of the Ogre (Baintha Brakk). The formation had already been tried without success in 1991 by Giordani and Stefano Righetti and then again in 1993 with Stefano Pellagrini. This time, thanks to a short period of stable weather, the attempt met with success. In four days (July 8-11) the trio managed to climb 33 pitches to the summit, most of which were harder than VI. The crux was rated VII+ A3, and the team climbed over 1300 meters on their route.

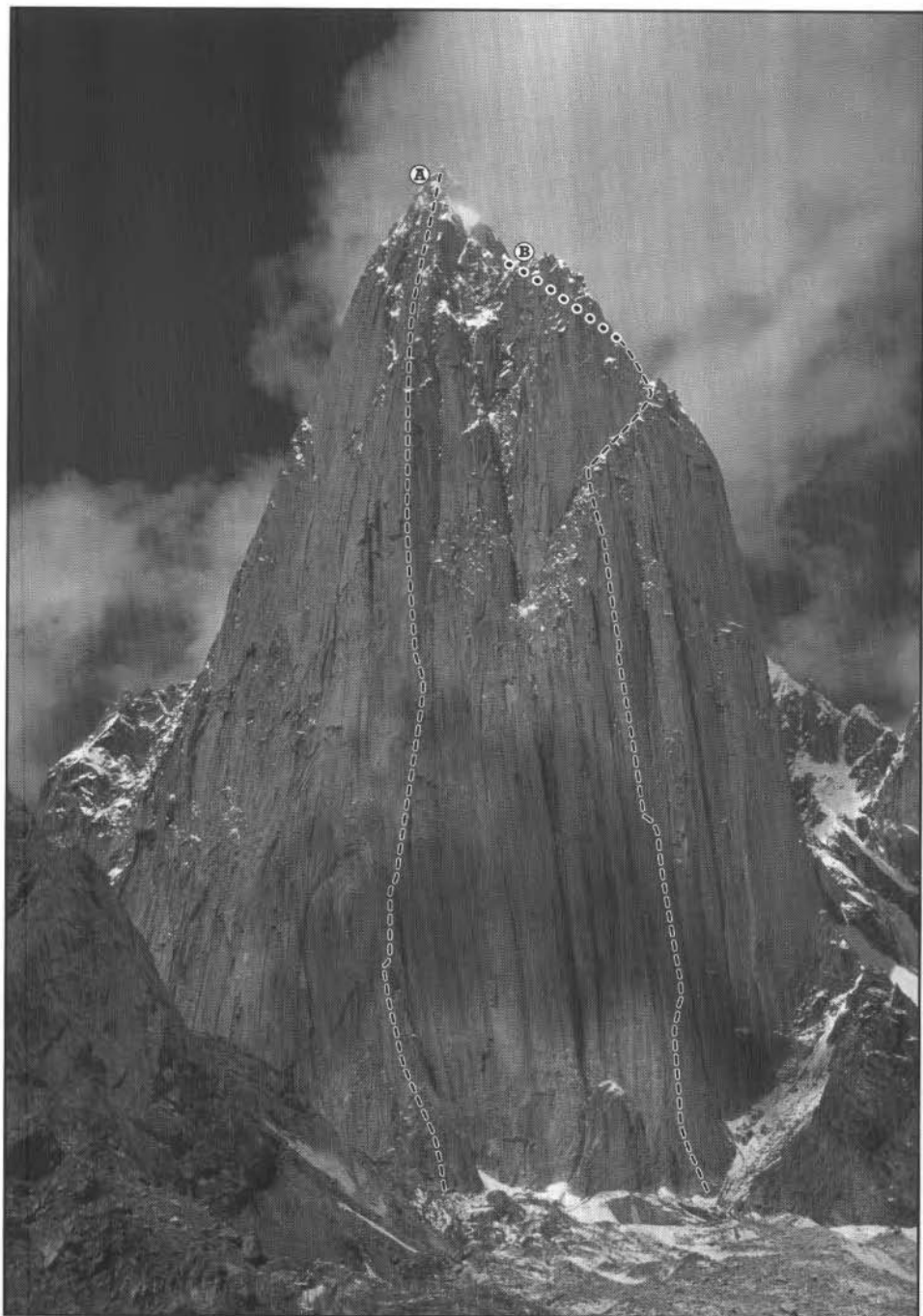
*Baintha Brakk, Southeast Ridge, and Latok I, North Ridge, Attempts.* During July and August, nine climbers performing as two teams attempted to make the first ascents of both the north ridge of Latok I and the southeast pillar of Baintha Brakk (the Ogre). Base camp was high on the Choktoi Glacier. Dave Wills and Brendan Murphy made three attempts on Latok, climbing in pure alpine style. Their best attempt was the first. They reached a high point of 6200 meters after three days of continuously difficult climbing (up to Scottish VI) before a cornice collapse led to a rucksack being lost and enforced a retreat. Two subsequent attempts were halted by bad weather. On the Ogre, Rich Cross, Matt Dickenson, Adam Jackson, Al Powell, Nick Williams, Julian Wood and I employed fixed ropes on the icefall's slopes to col 5600m and the initial rock pillar. The col was reached after nearly three weeks of effort; I took little part due to a twisted ankle. Food shortages, caused by raven raids on the col, meant that only Dickenson and Powell were in a position to fix to the top of the buttress and make an attempt from there in alpine style. They reached 6850 meters—the base of the final difficulties—before being caught by weather. Despite waiting two days they were forced to retreat. The route includes difficult rock (E1) and mixed (Scottish VI) climbing. Storms plagued the last days of the expedition but considerable effort was made to strip all camps and fixed ropes.

ANDY MACNAE, *British Mountaineering Council*

*Trango Nameless Tower, South Face, First Japanese Ascent.* Three Japanese recorded the first Japanese ascent of Trango Tower (6239 m) via the south face Slovenian Route on July 17 at 4 p.m. Their ascent took them 27 days. Group leader Tatsuo Shinohara graded the climb 5.10 A2. The group had intended to make a free ascent, but icy cracks forced them to use some aid. The three summiters were Tatsu Shinohara, Toshi Kikuchi and Takeshi Nagano.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Shipton Spire, East Face.* Charles Boyd, Greg Child, Greg Collum, and I arrived in Islamabad the first week of June. Our good friend, Gullam Rasoul, traveled for several days from his home village of Hushe to meet us and help us go through the absurd song and dance with the Ministry



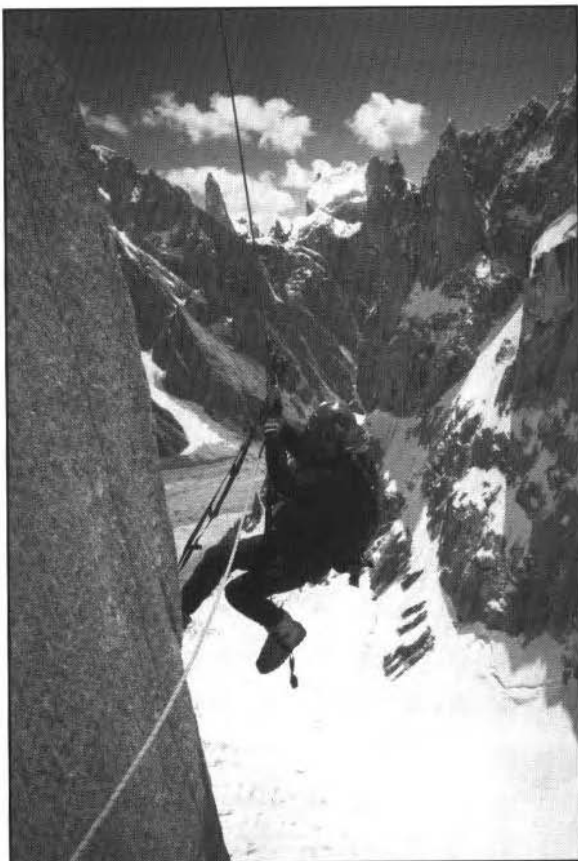
Shipton Spire. A: 1996 (Collum-Boyd-Foweraker-Child) high point; B: 1992 (Selters-Boyd-Bebie-Collum) high point.  
Bill Hatcher

of Tourism. Picture this: a country that at the time of our visit was essentially bankrupt having a group of civil servants decide if it would be advisable for a group of relatively affluent Westerners to visit one of their poorest regions to employ locals. I nearly suffocated laughing when one of the civil servants asked what they could do to increase tourism. Since he held the fate of our holiday in his hands it didn't seem appropriate to respond that in most countries governments attract tourists by eliminating bureaucracy.

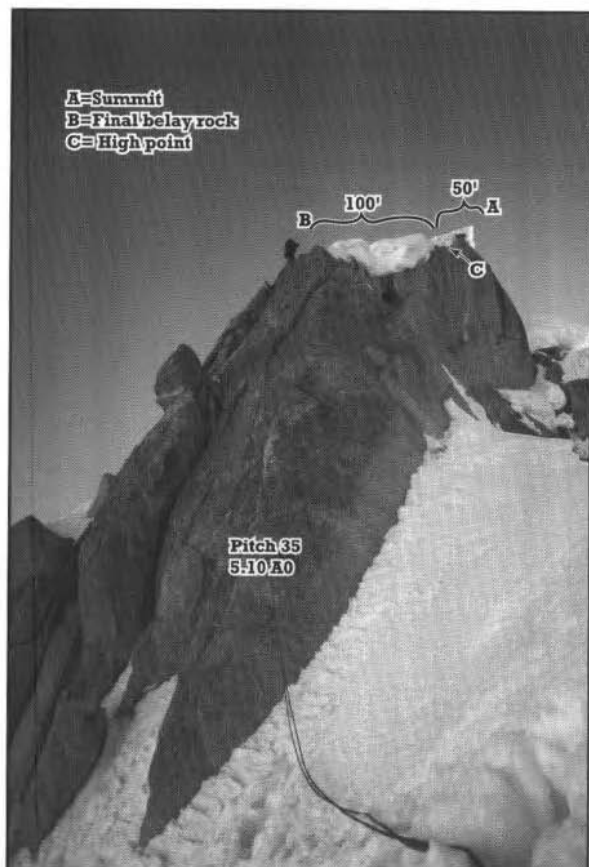
Due to poor flying weather we drove to Skardu and, after stocking up on local foodstuffs and supplies that seem to be increasingly available, journeyed by jeep toward Askole. The road at this time was washed out in several places, which resulted in some "portaging." We walked in at a relaxed pace over the next few days, and established a base camp in a beautiful meadow on a lateral moraine across from Shipton Spire.

At this point I should note that I have been referring to the spire as Shipton Spire, but officially it is still unnamed. Greg Collum gave it its working title when he noticed a photo of the spire in Eric Shipton's book *Blank on the Map*. Collum hiked up the Trango Glacier in 1989 while a number of us were climbing on Nameless Tower, spotted the spire and returned with Chuck Boyd, Mark Bebie and Andy Sellers in 1992 for an attempt. They chose a line on the right side of the spire, which they climbed only to be turned back in stormy weather about 800 feet from the summit. An attempt was made on the same line in 1995 by the Japanese climber Paniguchi Ryuji. As previously reported, he was killed by rockfall on September 21; we found a number of scraps of destroyed gear at the base that seemed to confirm this.

Our proposed line lay up the center of the wall, following a series of crack and corner systems that started off a flying buttress. We established an advance base in the same location as the previous groups. Reaching the start of our route had to be done quite early before the sun hit the upper slopes of a major central drainage system that funneled debris throughout the day. We experienced reasonably unsettled weather whilst climbing: typically, we would have two good days before deterioration settled in and lasted for the next four to six. At this point the dual-edged sword of having packed in a large quantity of fixed ropes became apparent. They were great for dealing with bad weather and no doubt allowed us to stay fresh enough to push hard when the weather



Chuck Boyd, juggling with a view on Shipton Spire. Greg Child



Foweraker, nearing the end of the climbing.  
Greg Child

cleared, but they reduced commitment—and, more to the point, were a lot of work to fix in place!

After three “camping trips” the weather cleared and off went Boyd, Child and I; Collum had elected not to join us on this push. After a couple more bivies we had surmounted the steep wall section that constituted the first 60 percent of the climb and continued up the spectacular lower angle systems. We were poised for the summit. To date the climbing had constituted about 4,000 feet of some of the best alpine granite I’ve ever been on, with a bit of mixed thrown in on the top 500 feet. I set off up the straight-forward snow ridge that led to the summit about 100 feet above our belay (actually, “wallowing up to my chest in the soft, late-day glop” would be more appropriate). About 30 or 40 feet below the top I elected not to proceed up the final section, portions of which were sloughing off as I watched in trepidation.

So, what kind of a holiday was this? A first ascent of a mountain? No. A long magnificent climb in a

spectacular setting with good company that finished just below an untrod summit that awaits someone wishing to “fill their boots” with true conquest? Maybe. An interesting question in my mind about what makes a successful holiday? Yes. (36 pitches, 5.11- A4. Full alpine wall rack including ledges.)

GREG FOWERAKER, *Canada*

*Mustagh Tower, Northwest Ridge, Attempt.* This summer a team of four attempted the Northwest Ridge of Mustagh Tower and reached a high point of about 21,100 feet. Conditions were characterized by abnormally deep snow cover and frequent stormy weather. Aid and Al Burgess, Supy Bullard, and Peter Carse established Base Camp at 14,500 feet on June 1. During an initial period of fine weather, Camps I and II were established (16,350’ and 18,250’), and the headwall above Camp II was fixed to the West Col (20,000’) by June 13. A nine-day storm that dumped four feet of snow at Camp II forced us to retreat to Base Camp, where we enjoyed 10 gallons of Adrian’s famous homebrew.

During the next phase, plagued by frequently changing and unsettled weather, we established

Camp III at 20,300 feet and climbed to the top of the 800-foot step where the angle of the ridge begins to ease off.

By rope-soloing directly up through the rockband at the top of this step on July 4, I found that it was unnecessary to make the traditionally described traverse to the right, with its wildly exposed moves on the brink of the southwest face. The direct line was only about 5.4ish, steep and loose but adequately protectable, and about 75 feet high. From the top of the step a good view of the upper 2700 feet of the route was obtained.

Faced with deteriorating weather and a shortage of supplies, we all descended to Camp II later that same day. We departed Base Camp on July 8 after five weeks on the mountain.

PETER CARSE, *unaffiliated*

*Lobsang Spire, Attempt.* Two hundred meters of hard technical climbing denied a multinational group of young climbers the second ascent of Lobsang Spire (5700 m). The group leader, James Howel (24) from Britain, and his team attempted the south face of this rock pinnacle, which presented 400 meters of 100-degree climbing, but were turned back from the face by bad weather and insufficient amount of food. The group progressed slowly from 5300 meters, covering one rope length (60 meters) a day due to the overhang. They halted at 5500 meters at the base of corner system.

The team was Micah Jessup (20, U.S.), Dave Martin (24, U.S.), Ethan Jessup (26, U.S.), Marco Kupiainen (24, Sweden), Mohammad Ibran, guide, and Mohammad Ismail, cook.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Masherbrum I, Southeast Face, Attempt.* A Russian-American expedition led by Dr. Lev Ioffe (who resides in the U.S.) on the southeast face of Masherbrum (7821 m) was halted due to avalanches. The six-member expedition was attempting the peak in semi-alpine style and reached 7200 meters. The team decided to descend on August 9. All the members reached 7200 meters. The team comprised Irina Agarkova (33), Elena Lebedeva (36), Mikhail Souslov (36), Kontantino Sakharov (36), and Vladimir Bogdanov (39). The expedition made Base Camp at 4100 meters, Camp I at 4600 meters, Camp II at 5300 meters, Camp III at 6000 meters.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Masherbrum I, East-Southeast Ridge, Attempt.* It was reported that Peter Cole led a four-man American team (Cole, Gary Kuehn, Erik Olsen, Scott Porter) that reached a high point of 6050 meters. At Camp II (5650 m) on June 20, below a seemingly protective serac, an avalanche hit them from both sides. They were uninjured, but had to wait three days for snow conditions to improve before descending to Base Camp. A small amount of food and equipment was buried at Camp III (6050 m) and conditions made it impossible to re-ascend and retrieve the gear. At a debriefing in Islamabad, officials imposed a fine of \$500 on the team, despite Cole's record of environmental stewardship on former expeditions. (*High Mountain Sports* 171)

*Masherbrum II, Ascent.* It was reported that a Pakistan Army expedition that had wanted to climb Masherbrum I turned their attentions to a 6200-meter peak 12 kilometers to the southeast of Masherbrum I. Ten members are thought to have reached the summit. There is some confusion about precisely which peak they climbed, as the true Masherbrum II is the 7806-meter southwest summit of Masherbrum I. (*High Mountain Sports* 171)

*K2, South-Southeast Spur, First Chilean Ascent.* We departed for Pakistan on May 24, after more than one year of programming and intensive physical training. We arrived at Base Camp on June 11, after a few days in the capital of the country, Islamabad, and the hiring of the porters in the town of Skardu. We were a total of nine persons: seven mountaineers, one physician and one cameraman. (Mountaineers: Alberto Gana, Waldo Farias, Aldo Boitano, Misael Alvial, Michael Purcell, Cristian Garcia-Huidobro and Rodrigo Jordan, Expedition Leader; Physician: Alfonso Diaz; Cameraman: Cristian Buracchio).

A large Japanese expedition of 18 members arrived some days later to climb the same "Cesen Route" that we would take; that is, the south-southeast buttress. We agreed with them to carry on two completely independent ascents in fixing ropes as well as in setting camps. This agreement was entirely honored by both expeditions.

Little by little we fixed ropes and by the end of June we reached the place for Camp I, after climbing several complicated meters of ropes because of too much snow over rock. The spot was at 6300 meters in a narrow rock terrace with hardly any space for our tents.

The weather during this period—as well as during the whole expedition—was very bad, with two or three fair days followed by six to 10 days of foul weather. We continued fixing ropes and carrying loads and by the middle of July we established Camp II, at 7000 meters. Above 6500 meters the route is relatively simple, but it is necessary to walk in deep snow.

The weather remained bad but the sun showed again by the end of July. One Japanese, in a solo ascent, and four Italians took advantage of this spell, accomplishing the summit by the normal route. Unfortunately they arrived on the summit late in the day and one of the Italians died due to a fall during the night's descent.

During this spell of good weather we fixed ropes up to 7400 meters and left a cache. The seven mountaineers reached the Shoulder, at 7600 meters, with all the supplies needed for the attack of the summit, to be carried out by four climbers.

The weather turned bad again and we had to wait 10 days to try for the summit. There was a spell of good weather on August 9. We climbed directly to Camp II without stopping to sleep at Camp I. We made the 2000 meters of difference in altitude in about 12 hours. We arrived rather tired due to deep snow, deposited by 10 days of snowfall.

The attack on the summit was carried out by Cristian Garcia-Huidobro, Misael Alvial, Michael Purcell and myself, Waldo Farias. Aldo Boitano helped carry supplies to the Shoulder.

The next day we climbed to Camp III on the Shoulder. We arrived exhausted because we had to climb by the Cesen Shovel through powder snow. That night we slept eight hours with oxygen to recover fully from the effort carried out during the previous two hard days. We choose to rest during the next day. It snowed lightly, but six Japanese made the summit using oxygen continuously during the climb and the descent.

We started shortly before 9 p.m. with our headlamps. We were heavily loaded, each one carrying a sleeping bag, and a share of a portable stove, a pot, a shovel and some food and water. Misael and I used oxygen for a while because we were very tired.

In the Bottleneck we found some ropes fixed by the Japanese the previous day. We left some things there to climb lighter. We stopped to rest in a terrace at 8400 meters and enjoyed a marvelous dawn. Here we shared oxygen with Cristian (we were carrying two bottles for the four of us) who continued breaking trail. We reached the summit after a few hours of climbing over easy slopes, but covered with deep and unstable powder snow. Cristian arrived at 9:15 a.m. and the rest at 10:30 a.m. We stayed on the summit for two hours and started down at 12:30 p.m. The



descent was very difficult because Michael was extremely exhausted and walked slowly. We had to stop several times to wait for him. Night fell when we were at the Bottleneck, but finally, much spent but happy to be safe again, we arrived at the camp at 10:30 p.m. after trekking more than 25 hours.

The next day we descended safely to Base Camp. That same day six additional Japanese made it to the summit, completing twelve Japanese to reach the summit by this route.

WALDO FARIAS F., *Chile*



Misael Alvial and Waldo Farias wallowing through deep snows to the summit. Cristian Garcia-Huidobro

*K2, South-Southeast Ridge, Ascent.* A Japanese expedition led by Yamamoto Atushi (33) put 12 members on the summit of K2 and recorded the third and fifth ascents of K-2's south-south-east ridge. Deputy leader Matsubara Masayuki (31) led a team of six climbers from Camp III at 7850 meters. The climbers reached the top and recorded the third ascent of the Basque route, followed by a Chilean expedition which put four members on top on August 13. Yamamoto started on August 14 with six others, including Takahashi Kazuhiro (22), who upon summiting, became the youngest climber to climb the mountain.

The summiters who reached the top on August 12 were Matsubara Masayuki, 33, Akasaka Kenzo, 28, Murata Bunsho, 26, Yoshida Yuichi, 26, Tanigawa Taro, 29, and Sshiina Atsushi, 26. The summiters who reached the top on August 14 were Yamamoto Atsushi, 33, Inaba Hideki, 32, Nagakubo Koji 27, Takeuchi Hirotaka, 25, Takahashi Kazuhiro, 22, and Sana Takashi, 23.

The expedition used oxygen above Camp III and used 4000 meters of fixed ropes. The team made Base Camp at 5200 meters, Camp I at 6400 meters, Camp II at 7050 meters, and Camp III at 7850 meters.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*K2, Ascent and Tragedy.* Italian climber Lorenzo Mazzoleni, 30, died on July 29 in a fall from the Shoulder (8000 m) after having successfully climbed K2 via the Abruzzi. According to sources, Lorenzo, along with three others, reached the summit at 4:30 p.m. on July 29. On the descent Lorenzo was the last climber. Salvatore Panzeri, who was ahead of Lorenzo, never knew what happened as the climbers were unroped. All the four climbers were members of an Italian National Research Council (CNR) scientific expedition led by Agostino Da Polenza. The climbers, whose goal was to place a two-meter laser reflecting tripod on the summit to facilitate an accurate height survey of the mountain, were also part of a golden jubilee celebration of Lecco Spider (an Italian climbing club). The body of Lorenzo Mazzoleni couldn't be brought down and was placed between Camp III (7700 m) and the Shoulder. The summiters who made it down to Base Camp are Giulio Maggioni and the brothers Mario and Salvatore Panzeri.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*K2, Abruzzi Ridge.* It was reported that Japanese Masafumi Todaka had planned a solo ascent of the unrepeatable Kukuczka-Piotrowski route on the south face in three days with bivouacs at 6800 meters and 7900 meters, but unsettled weather and deep snow forced him to change his goals to the Abruzzi Spur route, which he climbed in the company of but independent from the Italian expedition on the same route. He summited on July 29. (*High Mountain Sports* 172)

*K2, Attempts.* It was reported that a seven-man group (Rick Allen, Andy Parkin, Mike Smith, Harry Taylor and Brian Tilly, U.K., plus Maciej Berbeka, Poland) planned to attempt the unclimbed east face. Some members reached ca. 6500 meters on the south-southeast spur, while other reached more or less the same height on the Abruzzi. Allen and Parkin reached ca. 6300 meters on their east face line. Berbeka was avalanched on the lower part of the Abruzzi, sustaining vertebrae damage. He was then evacuated by helicopter, and the expedition was soon after called to a halt.

A German expedition led by Falk Liebsstein had hoped to climb the northeast ridge but, upon realizing the objective was too serious, turned their attentions to the Abruzzi. Liebsstein and a partner reached ca. 7000 meters before the expedition ended on August 17. (*High Mountain Sports* 172)

*Broad Peak, Ascent and Tragedy.* Three Korean climbers perished after scaling Broad Peak (8047 m) on July 20. The group leader, Hong Jung-Pyo (41), stated that two climbers, Han Dong-Keun (29) and Yang Jae-Mo (24), reached the main summit at 5:28 p.m. and left their teammate Lim Sun-Taik (24), who was experiencing chest pain, at the false summit. The two reached the main summit and were on their way down to help Lim who was coming down alone from the false summit (8036 m). The two met Lim on the ridge while Hong sent Lee Chi-Sang (32) and Yoon Kyung-In (25), who were on their way up, to help the ailing climber. The weather suddenly turned bad and the three climbers died.

The Korean group made Base Camp at 5000 meters, Camp I at 5600 meters, Camp II at 6300 meters, and Camp III at 7100 meters.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Gasherbrum IV, East Face, Attempt.* No protection and avalanches stopped a Korean expedition of the Seoul University Alpine Club at 7400 meters on August 11 on the east face of Gasherbrum IV (7925 m), which remains unclimbed. The expedition reached the highest point yet recorded on the face, a distinction previously held by Japanese solo climber Yasusi Yamanoi (7000 meters) in 1993. Two members, Kim Chang-Ho and Lim Saeng-Muk, reached 7400 meters, but the constant avalanche hazard made them retreat to safety.

The near-vertical east face offers nearly 1,500 meters of hard mixed climbing. This was the second Korean attempt on the peak. The team consisted of Lee Gye-Nam (29), Kim Chang-Ho (27), Park Young-Sik (35), Kim Yong-Ho (25), Kim Saeng-Muk (25), Kang Houn-Soo (20) and Kim Duck-Sun (20). LO was Capt. Raja Zubair Farooq.

The group made Base Camp at 5200 meters, Advance Base Camp at 6000 meters, and Camp I at 6850 meters. They used 1000 meters of fixed rope.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Gasherbrum I, Ascent.* Spaniards Txetxu Lete Bernardo, Koke Lasa Berasategui and Luis Miguel Lopez Soriano climbed the Japanese Couloir on the north face, summiting on July 16, 1995.

*Gasherbrum I, Ascent and Tragedy.* Spanish Climber Manuel Alvarez Diaz (38) perished after successfully scaling Gasherbrum I (8067 m) on July 17. According to sources, after reaching the summit on July 12 at 10:30 a.m., Diaz fell on the descent and injured his backbone, neck and one eye. He was unable to continue and was lowered by his partner to Camp III (7200 m) where they stayed for six days. Rescue was impossible due to avalanche hazard. After six days Diaz's eye was completely gone, he had frost bite on his hands and paralysis had set in. He was laid to rest in his sleeping bag at Camp III.

ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Gasherbrum II, Attempt.* The seven member New England Expedition Team consisted of Maury McKinney, Brad White, Joe Lenteni, A.J. LaFleur, Tom Pollard, Bill Cialdea, and was led by Rick Wilcox. The expedition was the first of the 1996 season. We established Base Camp on May 17. During the next month we established camps at the traditional heights of 5900 meters

(Camp I), 6400 meters (Camp II), 6900 meters (Camp III), and 7400 meters (Camp IV). All team members, with the exception of Joe Lenteni, arrived at Camp IV on June 11th. The weather for the last 10 days had been fabulous. During the night of the June 11-12, high winds arrived, the prelude to a major Karakoram storm. On June 13 all members at Camp IV descended through extreme avalanche conditions, high winds, and low visibility to Camp III. The dangerous descent continued on June 14 to safety at Camp I, which was reached after dark. The storm raged for nine days total, and deposited over three meters of snow on the base camp.

RICK WILCOX

*Gasherbrum I and II, Ascents.* Alan Hinkes (U.K.) summited two 8000ers during the 1996 season: Gasherbrum I on July 10 at 10 a.m. and Gasherbrum II on July 29 at 4 p.m. Hinkes was part of an Austrian expedition led by Wilfried Studer.

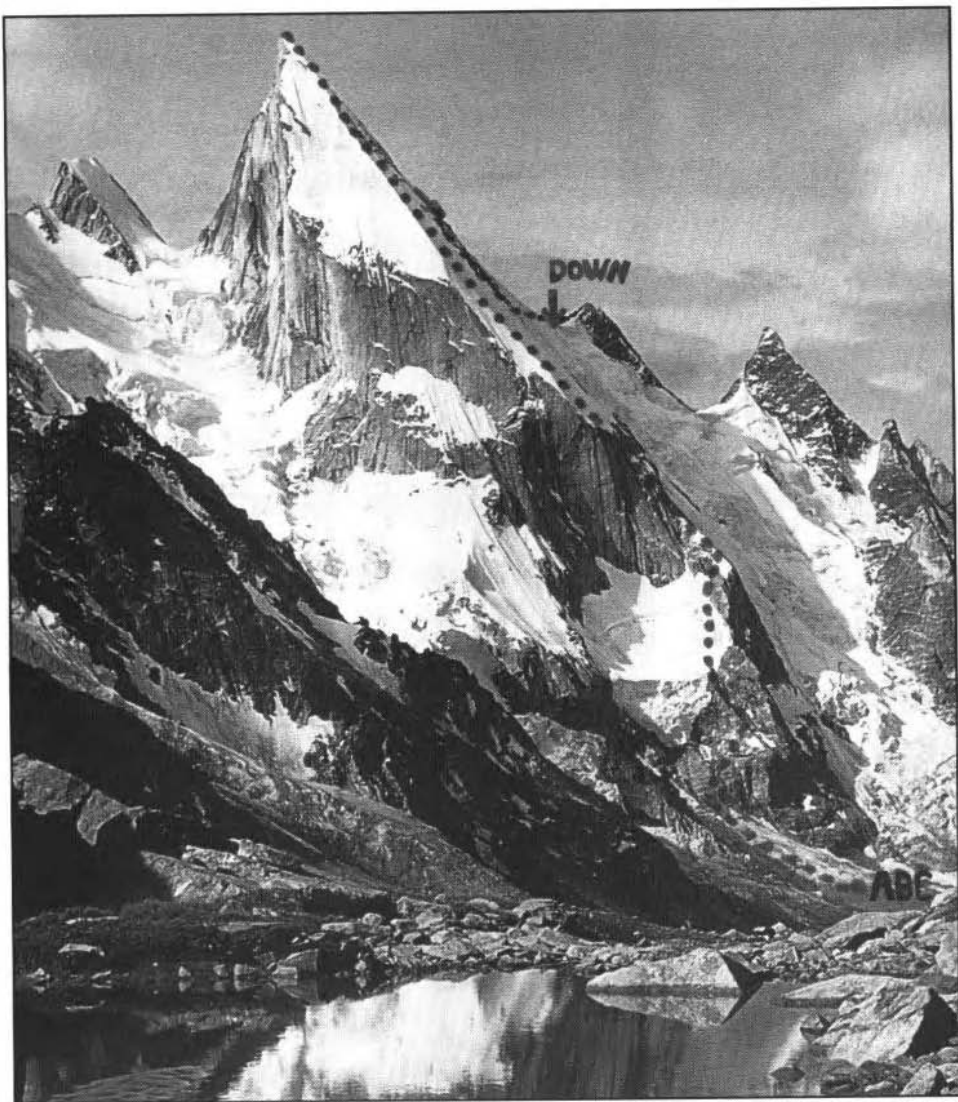
ASEM MUSTAFA AWAN, *The Nation, Pakistan*

*Gasherbrum I and Gasherbrum II, Enchainment.* The French climber and guide Jean-Christophe Lafaille, best known for climbing hard endurance routes, completed ascents of Gasherbrums II and I in one continuous push, without descending to Base Camp, in July. He arrived at Base Camp on July 6 but bad weather made climbing impossible for three weeks. He started his project on the day that had been scheduled as the end of his expedition. On July 28 he soloed Gasherbrum II (8035 m) by the standard route in the very short time of 11 hours 20 minutes. After a rest in his tent at 5900 meters on July 31, Lafaille climbed Gasherbrum I (8068 m). He felt a bit tired and the descent was tiresome too. The ascents were made totally alpine style with no help from anyone else. The two-summit round trip was covered in somewhat less than four days. The first traverse of both summits was made in 1984 by Reinhold Messner and Hans Kammerlander within eight days. They made their descents by different routes.

JOZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik*

*Gasherbrum I and II, Ascents.* It was reported that Iñaki Ochoa (29) of Spain completed ascents of both Gasherbrum I (8065 m) and Gasherbrum II (8035 m) in July. He began on July 10 with an ascent of GI, then moved on to GII, which he climbed in a 36-hour push from Base Camp without supplemental oxygen. GII marked his fourth successful 8000-meter summit. (*Climbing*)

*Lila Peak, West Face/North Ridge, First Official Ascent\*.* Lila Peak (6200 m) in the Gondokoro area of the Pakistan Karakoram was officially unclimbed; however, signs of a British group were found on the summit (gas cartridge) and west face-south slopes/ face-west (the British group climbed without a permit on the easier route of our descent.) The summit was reached on July 2 at 11 a.m. by Fabio Iacchini and Paolo Cavagnetto. The two started from ABC at 1:20 a.m. and climbed alpine style (no fixed ropes) on the 55-degree slopes. The main difficulties were the avalanche dangers due to loose snow below the summit. The descent took place on the west face down to the west col (10 rappels), and then on the easier south-facing slopes. At 5 p.m. the pair was back at BC. The summit was reached again on July 3 by the second team (Camillo Della Vedova, Giovanni Ongaro and Guido Ruggeri). They left ABC at 12:10 a.m. and reached the summit at 11 a.m. They spent two hours on top, then descended to BC, which they reached at 10 p.m.



Laila Peak, showing line of ascent. Oreste Forno

This was the second attempt on the mountain. The first took place last year and failed because of bad environmental conditions.

ORESTE FORNO, Italy

\*It was reported in *High Mountain Sport's* "Mountain Info" that the mountain had previously received at least three unauthorized ascents, first in 1987 by a British group who climbed the west face and then rappelled down the far side, then, sometime "in the '90s," by a German team who took roughly the same line of ascent, and a third time by a Swiss team, in 1993.

*Paty Peak, South Ridge.* I well accepted the fresh snow that slowed Dean Hernandez and Mathew Sinclair's approach to Paty Peak's north ridge—I hadn't seen the two of them for at least two years—and shifted our objective from a mixed route on another peak to Paty's virtually white-free south ridge. A cloudless sky permitted unobstructed views of K6 and K7 while Dana and I worked along the ridge to an unplanned spacious notch bivouac. I was oddly content to spend a night where we were, since it meant not abandoning the route. We didn't talk much, though benighted on the ridge with my elder brother added a calm absent during my two years in China.

Once free from a blanket of clouds, the sun's caress allowed an hour's nap before we managed the last three pitches to the apex of the prominent crack that divides Paty's entire west face and from which we saw the summit, 30 feet away. Fatigued, out of food and water and wanting neither to spend another night out without bivouac gear nor push our luck with the weather, we started our west face raps without visiting Paty's golden crest. During the descent Dana spotted a jammed rope in what the 1988 British Karakoram Exploration Expedition called the "Exploding Mango Crack." Not wanting to repeat some party's epic, swung northward to another crack system, which offered a snagless line to the ground. At about 10 p.m. on August 3, we met Dean and Matthew lugging food, water and a sleeping bag on their way to meet us, since we had taken longer than they expected to descend from the base of the peak and they thought one of us might be hurt. Back at advance camp they cooked us dinner. Within 12 hours all reached Base Camp shouldering the first drops from our second five-day storm. Paty Peak (c.18,180'), south ridge, nine pitches, IV 5.10 A3.

DEAN HAGIN, *unaffiliated*

## CIS

*Caucasus Ski Traverse.* I made two attempts on the ski traverse of the Caucasus. The first attempt was in 1994, in which the party managed the first part of the traverse. On the second attempt the party failed on the first part, but completed the second section. The Anglo-German Caucasus Ski Traverse 1994 took place between March 19 and April 10, 1994. Its members were David Hamilton (Leader), Matthias Hammer, John Kentish and Mark Scarratt. The expedition proposed to make a high-level traverse of the central Caucasus from the town of Elbrus to Verkhney Balkaria (ca. 110 km) and crossing some nine high passes on route. To reduce load carrying three food caches were preplaced by helicopter along the route, and for logistical reasons we started the route from Verkhney Balkaria. A day of mostly walking brought us to the start of the Dykhsu Gorge, where deep snow, trees and boulders made progress difficult. Easier glaciated terrain brought us to the foot of the Dykhiauz Pass by the end of the third day. An abortive attempt to cross led to an ice cliff, which was impossible for us to descend, or a double corniced ridge to traverse. We retreated to easier ground, where a miserable camp ensued. A logistical error led to fuel supplies being exhausted.

The next morning in worsening weather we re-climbed the pass to a different point, where descent of the steep ice below was possible. The descent culminated in a rappel over an overhanging ice cliff. We reached our supplies at the Austrian Hut, below the Bezingi Wall, where we remained storm-bound for two nights. Very dangerous snow conditions, further fuel shortages and a recurrent tropical illness in one team member led us to abandon the traverse. The retreat to Bezingi took a further two days in the deep snow.

The 1996 Caucasus Ski Traverse took place between March 9 and March 31, 1996. Its mem-