

102 New route on Mount Kenya (Photo: Doug Scott)

15 hours with one bivouac (ED(inf), HVS). They later climbed the Diamond Couloir via the headwall, and continued to the Gate of Mists and on to Batian, descending by Nelion and the Shipton Route in 14 hours. The Ollier Couloir was climbed (grade V) for the first time by Phil Snyder and Rob Collister. On the N Face, the NE Buttress was climbed in its entirety (grade Vsup) by Ian Howell, Phil Snyder and Iain Allen. Another new climb was the Diamond Buttress Route (grade VI) by Ian Howell and John Temple on the S Face; they also climbed for the first time the ESE Face of Nelion (grade VI).

Climbers have also been busy in the Ruwenzori, at Hell's Gate Gorge and on Mount Mulanje (3001m), Malawi's highest mountain, and several new routes have resulted; details are given in *Mountain 47* 12 and *50* 11.

SOUTH AFRICA

We are indebted to Michael Scott who has provided us with an Events and Trends review of climbing in South Africa which appears on p 227.

ASIA

The trend towards lightweight expeditions, exemplified by ascents such as Messner and Habeler's of Hidden Peak and Tasker and Renshaw's of Dunagiri in 1975 has been reinforced this season. Some outstanding climbs have resulted—the ascent of the W face of Changabang by Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker represents one of the more spectacular of these.

The previous relaxation of restrictions in the Karakoram and in Garhwal is resulting in

an increased number of parties in both areas; the Japanese have been particularly active in the former and have recorded many first ascents.

An interesting breakdown of the types of problem facing the large Himalayan expedition these days is contained in a letter sent by James Whittaker, of the unsuccessful 1975 American K2 expedition, to the Ministry of Tourism in Pakistan (*Mountain Gazette* March 1976). A sad tale of continual porter strikes and desertions is revealed which resulted in an expedition, which had taken $2\frac{1}{2}$ years to plan, exceeding its budget of $200,000 by $50,000; more importantly, the party only reached a height of 6700m on the world's second highest peak.

We are indebted to the many correspondents who have kindly supplied material for these notes. Further details may be found in many cases in the pages of *Mountain*.

HINDU KUSH

Falak Sar (5918m) Dick Isherwood and Peter Hutchinson made an ascent of this peak on 4 August, following the route described in *AJ* 75 193. They camped at 5200m on the N Ridge; the climb was AD by Alpine standards. There were no bureaucratic problems in gaining access to this part of Swat Kohistan and porter fees were much more reasonable than in the Karakoram (25 to 35 rupees/day).

KARAKORAM

K2 (8760m or 8611m) In August, a strong Polish party led by Janusz Kurczab failed in a bid to climb the mountain by a new route on the NE Ridge. They reached a height of 8400m at which point the route's considerable difficulties were beginning to ease off. However, bad weather and lack of oxygen and time forced a retreat and subsequent conditions precluded further attempts.

The height of this mountain is currently the subject of dispute following an unsubstantiated reassessment by the Survey of Pakistan which raised its altitude by 149m to 8760m. On the old reckoning, the Polish expedition was turned back a mere 200m from the top. Anders Bolinder has checked the height using photographs taken from the summit of Hidden Peak by Schell's 1975 expedition and believes that the 'new' measurement is unlikely to be correct unless the heights of the Gasherbrum peaks are also in error. He suggests that the new figure may be the result of a publicity exercise by the Pakistan authorities.

Trango Tower (6248m) A 6-man British team made the first ascent of this fine rock spire. This success followed the abortive attempt of the previous year which ended when Boysen's knee became jammed in the crack now known as the 'Fissure Boysen'. A full account is given on p 184.

Batura Mustagh 1 (7785m) A German party succeeded in making the first fully substantiated ascent of this peak, which, discounting subsidiary summits, was officially the highest unclimbed mountain in the world. The summit was reached on 30 July by H. Bleicher and H. Oberhofer. It is thought that Keith Warburton's ill-fated Anglo/German expedition of 1959 probably did reach the summit—however, none of the 5 climbers involved survived a violent 3-day storm.

Paiju (6550m) A Pakistan team of 8 climbers under Major M. Hussain and advised by the American climber Allen Steck made the first ascent of this beautiful peak on 20 July. They followed the route previously attempted by American (1974) and French (1975) parties. This is the first major mountaineering success by a Pakistani expedition.

Singhi Kangri (7141m) A Japanese team (leader: Prof Harne Sato) made the first ascent of this mountain; 7 members reached the summit on successive days, the route being from a base camp on the Staghar Glacier via the N Face and the N Ridge. A possible route on the steep 2000m SE face had previously been rejected since it did not present any obvious camp sites.

Sherpi Kangri (7303m) was climbed by a 10-man Japanese party led by Kazumasa Hirai in August by a route up the W Ridge; 2 members, T. Ogata and T. Inoue, reached the summit.

Skyang Kangri (7544m) This important satellite peak of K2 was climbed on 11 August by a 10 strong Japanese team led by Genzo Mitsui. The route was from the Godwin Austen Glacier and the E Ridge, with 4 camps, 2 climbers reaching the top.

Gharkun (6620m) A 5-man Japanese expedition (leader: Haruki Sugiyama) climbed this peak,which lies just S of K12, in July, all 5 reaching the summit.

Asparasas I (7245m) received its first ascent in August by an 8-man Japanese party led by Hideo Misawa.

KASHMIR

Nanga Parbat (8126m) An Austrian team under Hans Schell made the sixth ascent of this mountain by a new route on the S side, well to the left of the Rupal Face climb, and ultimately joined the SW Ridge which was followed to the summit. Four camps were set up, the last at 7500m. All 4 climbers reached the summit from this last camp after negotiating steep rock steps and making 2 bivouacs.

GARHWAL

Nanda Devi (7817m) A joint Japanese/Indian expedition succeeded in making the traverse between Nanda Devi East and the main summit for the first time, a route on which 2 very able French climbers, Roger Duplat and Gilbert Vignes, had disappeared in 1951. The expedition split into 2 groups, one setting up support camps on the main summit while the other traverse party climbed the East Peak. Yoshimori Hasagawa and Kazushige Takami then traversed the connecting ridge, with 2 bivouacs, arriving at the main summit on 15 July.

103 Nanda Devi from the W (Photo: H. Adams Carter)



This mountain was also climbed by an American expedition led by H. Adams Carter and Willi Unsoeld. A new and extremely difficult route was followed up the N Ridge; Louis Reichardt, John Roskelley and James States reached the summit on 1 September. The climb was completed in spite of severe weather conditions which caused frequent avalanches and immobilized the climbers from 13 to 19 August. Subsequently, a fifth camp was established on 23 August at 6350m beneath a rock buttress on the N ridge, whose first 200m were nearly perpendicular. This major obstacle was finally forced and a sixth camp set up on 31 August at 7300m from which the climb was completed. Tragically, in a further bid for the summit, Willi Unsoeld's daughter, Nanda Devi Unsoeld (named after the peak) fell desperately ill from stomach trouble, complicated by the high altitude, and died before she could be evacuated from the mountain.

Changabang (6864m) The long SW Ridge was climbed for the first time by a 6-man Japanese party led by Naoki Toda. The style of this second ascent of the mountain left something to be desired—siege tactics were used involving 300 pitons, 20 bolts and 8000ft of fixed rope.

A British party under Colin Read failed in an attempt on the S Buttress in September. Having arrived at the main headwall at 6000m, they decided that the difficulties remaining could not be overcome in the time available. The party split up at this point and John Adams and Robert Blyth climbed the SW Ridge of Sakram (6254m) in 2 days. The other 5 climbers made a 3-day Alpine style ascent of Changabang by an ice route (Scottish 4) up the SE Face; the route lies between the original 1974 route and the S Buttress. Descent was via the E Ridge with a bivouac on the Changabang/Kalanka Col and a traverse across the S Face of Kalanka, returning to base on the fourth day.

In September and early October, Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker made a very difficult new route up the 1700m W Face of Changabang in 25 days. The climb involved extremely difficult rock pitches (Grades V and VI, and A2) including a tension traverse, and the pair were forced to retreat to Base Camp at one stage due to the bitterly cold weather which rendered bivouacs on the face impossible. Tasker compares the route to the E Face of the Grande Jorasses, with the added difficulties of altitude, extreme cold and taxing mixed climbing up icy runnels. This ascent is probably the most outstanding lightweight Himalayan climb so far achieved, and is indicative of the scope that exists for small expeditions in very big mountains.

NEPAL

A new rule that permission for expeditions must be applied for one year in advance has cut down the number of parties in Nepal this year. Also there has been a considerable increase in climbing fees and in the insurance fees charged for high altitude porters.

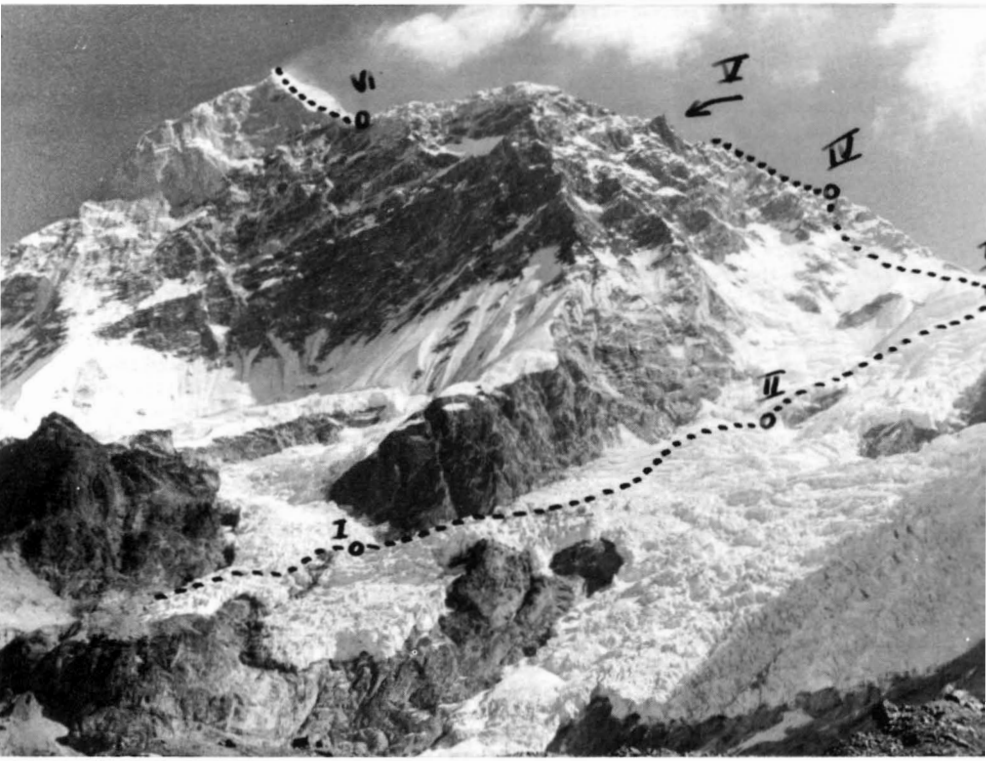
Everest (8848m) The British/Nepalese army expedition led by Lt Col Tony Streather succeeded on the South Col route; Sgt John Stokes and Cpl Michael Lane reached the Summit on 16 May. Due to difficult snow conditions, they were forced to bivouac below the South Summit and as a result were both severely frost-bitten. Earlier in the expedition, Capt Terry Thompson was killed in a fall in a crevasse near Camp 2.

The 12-man American Bicentennial Expedition led by Philip Trimble made the third post-monsoon ascent in October by the South Col Route. Not counting a 6-man CBS film team which accompanied the expedition, this was the smallest party for many years; no separate ice fall porters were employed. The summit was reached, after 45 days on the mountain, by Chris Chandler and Bob Cormack.

Everest is booked till Spring 1981. The Nepalese authorities have banned a projected solo bid on the mountain by the American priest, the Rev. Roger Ford, on humanitarian grounds.

Annapurna IV (7525m) The dangerous S Face was climbed by a German expedition led by Pit Schubert. Base Camp was established at 5200m at which point there was a disagreement in the party. Schubert and Bauman favoured a bold line up the left-hand side of the face which involved negotiating the entrance to the snow basin which forms the face; this is apparently extremely hazardous, the area being raked by avalanches from the sur-

rounding mountains. These 2 therefore set off to try their route in a single Alpine-style push which they expected would take 4 days. In fact, they took 9 days to ascend and a further 4 days to return. In the meantime, the remaining members of the expedition concluded that the climbers had been lost on the mountain, and therefore evacuated the camps. Schubert and Bauman were thus forced to trek to the nearest village for help after surviving their ordeal on the mountain, and arrrived in a state of starvation. The question remains whether their route across the basin constitutes a safe way into the area and hence to other routes on adjacent mountains such as Annapurna 2, or whether the pair were merely lucky to avoid being killed by avalanches.



104 Makalu showing the Spanish route (Photo: Spanish Makalu Expedition, 1976)

Makalu (8470m) Czech and Spanish expeditions were on this peak in April and May. The former, led by Ivan Galfy, reached the SE summit on 26 April by a new route up the Southern Spur, but were not able to reach the main summit subsequently because of bad snow conditions and oxygen malfunction. The Spaniards under Jose M. Montfort had in the meanwhile climbed the SE Ridge. At this stage, the 2 parties decided to join forces, thus allowing the Czechs to use the Spanish camps in descent down the easier SE Ridge. The Czech climbers Milan Krissak, Karel Schubert and Michal Orolin were joined by the Spaniard, Jorge Camprubi and a joint Camp 6 set up at 8200m on the ridge between the 2 summits. Orolin failed to reach the top but the other 3 were successful. However, they lost contact with each other in the descent, and Schubert failed to regain Camp 6. Subsequent attempts to rescue him were not successful due to bad weather and fatigue and he died on the mountain.

Kanjiroba (6885m) A small Hong-Kong based British expedition made a fine Alpine-style ascent of this mountain in October; full details will appear in next year's journal. Another party from Hong-Kong under Capt P. C. Cooper climbed **Annapurna South Peak**

(*Moditse*; 7219m), 3 members reaching the summit on 12 October.

Jannu (7710m) A 16-man Japanese party (Leader: Masatsuga Konishi) made the first ascent of the N Face in May; 13 climbers and 3 Sherpas reached the summit.

Tukche (6921m) A Nepal Police Mountaineering Expedition climbed this peak from the W on 2 October; this was the second all-Nepalese expedition and was outstandingly well organized.

SIKKIM

In May, 2 members of the Mountaineering Club of Bombay, Harish Kapadia and Zerksis Boga, made a high altitude traverse of a little known part of NE Sikkim. They explored the Zemu and Kanchenzonga Glaciers and the area of The Twins, and afterwards crossed to the N, via the Tangchung La and Thieu La, following the route taken by Freshfield in 1899. From Muguthang, they travelled E to the Lachung Valley over the Lugnak La and the Sebu La.

AUSTRALASIA

NEW ZEALAND

Bad weather and accidents were the major characteristics of the 1975/76 summer season; the former curtailed activity in many areas while the latter provided the local press with many sensational headlines. Nevertheless, a number of worthwhile new routes, mostly in the Mount Cook area, where achieved because the big faces tended to remain clear of ice. Details of these climbs can be found in *Mountain 50* 12. The frustrations and tragedies of the season at home were echoed by the experiences of New Zealand climbers further afield. An 11-man team narrowly failed to climb Jannu (7710m) by the difficult NW Face route which involves a 5000ft ice-face. They reached the top of this face, but bad weather dictated retreat with 400m of ridge still in front of them. The death of the outstanding New Zealand climber, Phil Herron, on Torre Egger added to the heavy accident toll closer to home. (The 1975 winter season is dealt with in *Mountain 47* 11.)

AUSTRALIA

Australian climbing is evidently still being developed with great vigour in all the States: as in other areas of the world where rock climbing is extremely popular, standards are being pushed higher and higher and in the process aid is being eliminated from more and more routes. Thus Australia's first grade 24 route, *County Road*, has been climbed by Nic Taylor in Mount Buffalo Gorge in Victoria. Many new routes have appeared here and the same is true of Mount Arapiles, which has been dubbed 'the hardest cliff in Australia'. A new area called The Wafers has been the scene of much activity in Queensland. Unfortunately, Australian climbers contributed significantly to the high number of accidents in the 1975/76 New Zealand season mentioned above. The Gledhill twins were involved in a tragic chain of events on Mount Unicorn which led to the death of Alan. Two other Victorian climbers, Mark Spain and Andy Kelso, were also killed in the Mount Cook area. *Mountain 50* 13 gives further details.

WEST IRIAN (NEW GUINEA)

The Indonesian Mountaineering Club, Wisata Ria Remaja, reports that a national team climbed Ngga Pulu in 1976, which they identify as the highest mountain in what was formerly known as the Carstensz Massif. Following last year's article on climbing in Indonesia by Haryadi Ishak, there appeared an appendix by Evelio Echevarria which gave information about new names and heights for the peaks in West Irian. This was in many respects at variance with the article which preceded it and the Hon. Editor indicated that any information which was available and which helped resolve these inconsistencies would be welcome. An account of the Hong-Kong Mountaineering Club Expedition to this area in 1972 appeared in *AJ 78* 188; the accompanying map recalls their achievements. It also shows the original names for the peaks (where Ngga Pulu is not the highest peak); the height given for the Carstensz Pyramid (17000ft, 5182m) differs both from the figure given in the Indonesia article (5030m) and from the even lower height given in the