

In the meantime Holden and Lancashire, members of the Kohe Bandaka team took 3 days (11–13 August) to establish a new direct route (Grade 4–5) on the NW face of peak M7 (Kohe Kaimak—6284m). On 9 August Kurtyka, Porter and MacIntyre approached the NE wall of Kohe Bandaka and started to climb taking an almost direct line going up in the centre of the face, to the left of a huge hanging ice-terrace situated in the right lower stretches. During the first day of the climb they covered a comparatively easy section exposed to falling rocks and bivouacked on a level with the ice-terrace mentioned above. On the following day, after strenuous scrambling up some loose rocks interlaced with steep scree slopes they arrived at the foot of a narrow chimney cutting across a vertical rock belt over 100m high and made their bivouac there. The chimney proved to be a critical part of the route. The next morning they found it impossible to force their way up the chimney because frequent avalanches were sweeping the face above. In the afternoon things improved and they decided to start up again. The climbing was extremely difficult, exhausting and time-consuming. Late in the evening they reached the beginning of an ice-snow couloir where they spent their third night on the face. The fourth day saw them climbing a very steep spur to the right of the couloir. Extreme technical difficulties (Grade 6) at a height of over 6000m required considerable effort and attention so the following night found them half-way up the spur. This time they spent it on some tiny shelves one far from another. Only the next day in the afternoon did they complete the remaining part of the spur and so reach the final ice-field. Here they established their last bivouac on the climb. In the evening of 14 August, after climbing the top slope of steep hard ice and surmounting an overhanging serac barrier they set foot on the summit.

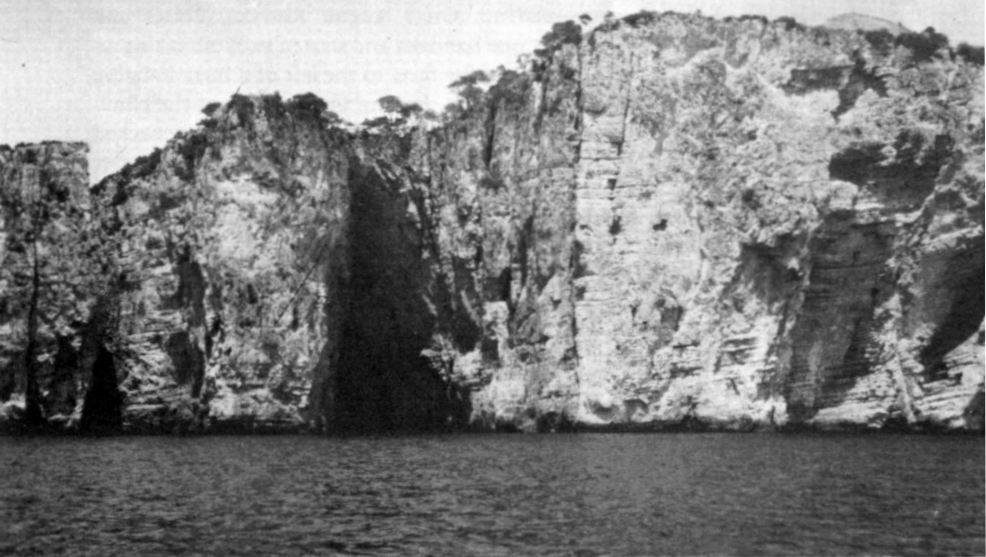
The expedition ended with a 3-day ascent of the W ridge of Noshag (7492m) by Janik and Wolf. On 23 August the teams met one another at Zebak exchanging happy news of their triumphs.

## Climbers' playgrounds—Europe

### 28 Sea cliff climbing at Gaeta

Gianni Battimelli

About halfway between Rome and Naples, on the Tirreno coast, the Montagna Spaccata, a rocky headland around which is built the small town of Gaeta, merges into sea with a vertical drop of 120m. Two fine routes (the 'Via dei Camini' and the 'Spigolo') were until a few years ago all the cliff had to offer to visiting climbers. Writing on these pages about the climbing grounds around Rome in 1972, A. Heppenstall said: 'The two existing routes (grades IV and V respectively) do not by any means exhaust the possibilities of the place'. As has been shown, Alan was right; and it must be admitted that to the British climber, used to the rapid and intense development which sea cliffs such as Anglesey have undergone in Britain, the presence of only 2 routes on such a large cliff would be somewhat incongruous. The point is that for a long time Roman climbers have considered this, and similar crags, only as practice ground for the 'true mountains'; climbing in such places was not considered as having any particular interest, were it not for training. But in



75 *The cliffs of Gaeta (Photo: CAI)*

recent years a changing attitude has developed, leading to a re-discovery of this playground and to an intense exploration and the creation of several new routes. Gaeta is no longer regarded just as practice ground; climbing on these cliffs has become a game in itself, with its own problems, demands and satisfactions. Along with this shift of view-point, a diffusion of new techniques and materials has taken place among Roman climbers (extensive use of chocks, PAs and soft shoes instead of boots, descendeurs etc); these certainly rendered easier the discovery and exploration of the cliff leading at the same time to a new and better style of climbing.

The level of difficulty of the new routes (all done in the last 3 years) is quite high by the usual standards of the local crags, and 2 of them, the 'Via dei desideri' ('Wishes route') and 'La forza sia con voi' ('May the force be with you') are decidedly hard. The latter, in particular, offers a truly spectacular first pitch, a 33m regular and overhanging corner which is climbed completely free, using only chocks for protection. Still well worth doing are 'Hellzapoppin', a long mixed climb on sound rock with very exposed situations and airy traverses, and the very elegant 'Spiderman' which goes up directly just on the edge of the big spur which is the characteristic feature of the cliff at its highest point, at a surprisingly reasonable standard; it is a far more direct line than the old route of the 'Spigolo', which actually follows, after the first pitch, a chimney line well on the right of the true edge. Access to routes is by abseil, which adds to the commitment of the climbs; very often one has to do long free stretches, hanging in space with the sea below, something which is always quite intimidating the first time, but which turns with growing confidence into an exhilarating experience. Belays are equipped with fixed pitons, and the necessary aid and protection pegs are generally left in place; but the trend is towards using as few pitons as possible, and it is thus necessary on the new

routes to carry a full selection of chocks. The rock is a good limestone, always very solid on the lower part of the wall, continuously swept by waves, sometimes a bit loose and vegetated on the upper part.

Summer is very hot in Gaeta, better for swimming than for climbing. The best moments are to be found in the sunny days between October and May, when you have the ideal temperature and can enjoy entirely the climb, without crowds of boats criss-crossing the water at the foot of the cliff. Even in winter you can climb with no problems, although on windy days with rough sea the approach to the lower part of the wall can present some difficulties and lead to an unwelcomed bath 'hors-season'. (But then British climbers are used to climbing in wet conditions . . .)

## 29 Outcrops in Vaud

Charles Mont

On the flanks of the Jura and astride one of the major routes to Switzerland—Pontarlier, Vallorbe, Lausanne—are 3 minor rock climbing areas, very suitable for a short break of journey. All are limestone.

(a) Paroi de St Loup, close to the village of Pompaples on N9 between Vallorbe and Lausanne, offers more than 50 routes up to 40m, many of them free. The best

76 *Paroi de St Loup* (Photo: C. Kemp)



time for climbing is spring or autumn since it is liable to be over-hot in the summer.

(b) La Roche Ronde on the Côte de Pralioux (Vallorbe), not far from the railway station, gives 9 routes up to 60m, some free.

(c) Gorges de Covatanne, between Yverdon and St Croix on the Pontarlier to Yverdon road, gives 9 routes up to 90m, both free and artificial.

Guide-book: *Trois Écoles d'Escalades Vaudoises* C & Y Remy (Librairie Bauer SA CH-1020 Renens, 1975).

### 30 Climbing in the Black Forest

Joachim Schneider

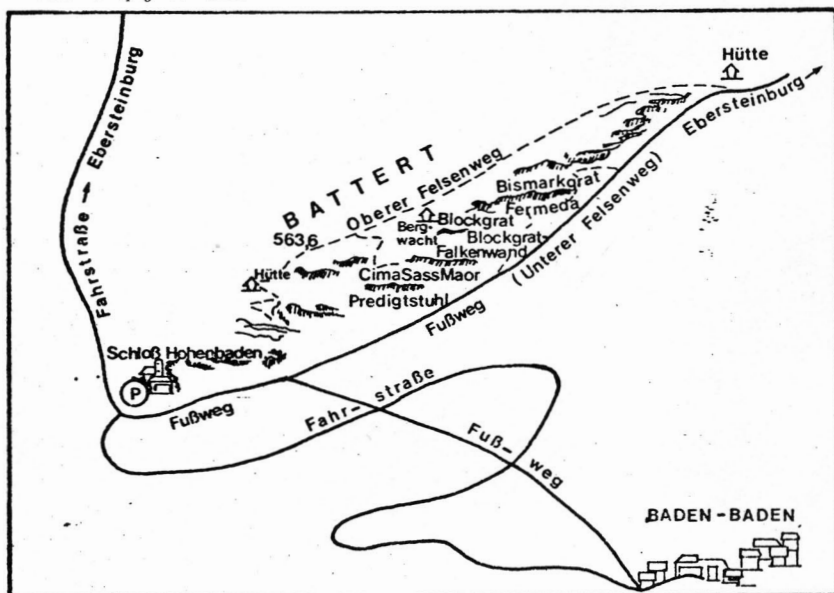
(Translation: E. N. Bowman)

The Black Forest, situated in SW Germany, extends for a distance of about 180km along the Upper Rhine between Lörrach and Karlsruhe. It is much visited by walkers and lovers of the countryside and is well known as a deeply forested area of medium height. The climber too comes into his own, while the skier will find excellent snow conditions both for downhill runs and ski touring (Langlauf). The best districts are the Hornisgrinde near Baden-Baden in the N and on the Feldberg (1493m) in the S. The best climbing areas are as follows:

1. *The Falkenfels near Bad Herrenalb*, about 30km S of Karlsruhe comprises faces and towers from 20 to 40m in height, composed of breccia and sandstone. There are about 30 routes ranging from medium to difficult.

2. *The Lautenfelsen near Lautenbach*, close to Gaggenau in the Murg Valley and about 40km from Karlsruhe. There are about 35 routes up 20–40m granite walls.

77 Battert (Map: J. Schneider)





78 Climbing in the Black Forest (Photo: H. Franke)

3. *The KGB Towers.* (Kletter-Gilde-Battert) (Battert Climbers' Club), on the Black Forest Road between Bühler Höhe and Kurhaus Plättig some 20km from Baden-Baden. There are about 15 routes on granite walls up to 30m in height.

4. *The Eckerfelsen near Oppenau.* This beautiful region in the heart of the Black Forest can be reached from Offenburg via Oberkirch, a distance of about 30km. There are some 40 routes on the 50–60m faces.

5. *Battert.* The Battert lies just beyond the spa of Baden-Baden in the N part of the Black Forest. It is best reached via the track or road leading to the Old Schloss of Hohenbaden or via the small resort of Ebersteinburg. Accommodation can be obtained in the Baden-Baden Youth Hostel or in private pensions and inns. Tents may be pitched on a camp site near Gernsbach. No tents are permitted in the Battert area as the rocks are in a nature reserve.

The rocks consist of 'silicious conglomerate of the Lower Red Sandstone' and provide more than 200 routes and variations. They were first discovered in the 1880s by Prof Dr Wilhelm Paulcke, who climbed and named most of the most important routes. A large number of rewarding routes were explored after the First World War by Ludwig Hall, Fritz Kast, Fritz Schütt, Walter Stösser, Martin Schliesser and others. A hut erected in 1938 is open every weekend and on holidays and serves as a base for the Mountain Rescue Service (Bergwacht).

The Battert has something for everyone, where the beginner and the 'tiger' find equal satisfaction. The routes are nearly all straightforward face climbs on near vertical firm rock with good holds. There are scarcely any 'piton routes' or large roofs or overhangs, so that fine clean climbing can be enjoyed without too much

effort. Free climbing is the order of the day even in the upper grades of difficulty, mostly on small round holds, very demanding on the nerves and finger tips. There are only 4 routes where étriers and screw pitons are required.

All the climbs, faces, ridges and towers, are concentrated in a very small area so that the starts of the various climbs are quickly reached. It is quite possible for good climbers to accomplish from 20 to 30 ascents in a day and as the rocks are up to 60m in height intensive training climbs can be undertaken without much waste of time. The most rewarding climbs are as follows: Bismarckgrat III; Bockgrat and Blockgrat IV; Durlacher Wandl and Eidechse V-; Schleirante V- (2 run-outs and 2 pitons!); Freundschaft V; Neue Falkenwand VI-.

A guide to the Battert was published in 1975 and is obtainable from the German Alpine Club, Section Baden-Baden.

## Mountains in the *Strand* (Notes on a sickroom expedition)

Kevin FitzGerald

Anyone familiar with the last 50 volumes of the *Alpine Journal*, and who is not, is aware that over the years the pattern has scarcely changed. There was little to choose in reproving acerbity between Keenlyside and Coolidge. The heartiness of Mummery, which grates on a modern ear no less acutely than, say, 'The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney', is now reflected all too clearly in the laboured understatements of guideless tigers.

The scholar-mountaineer has seldom held his own against the writing climber or the unimaginative leader compelled to report the doings of his expeditions, and now that translations from the Ish, accompanied by summit photographs which might just as well have been taken upon some handy crag are to be set beside the matchless stories of Freshfield or Schuster perhaps the time has come to leave the whole thing in the hands of novelists and other professional writers. It is, after all, not yet 40 years since one of the greatest bow oarsmen who ever rowed for Cambridge described to this writer an epic defeat of Oxford in the following sentence: 'Well, er, one rowed, and one rowed, and after a bit one could see them. Then Richard called out "Easy all" and there it was. Most exhausting.' Ouida did better than that.

Some years ago the writer was compelled, after a prolonged tour in the USA, to take things rather more easily on some fracture boards in a London Clinic. It was while re-reading Mummery (and some admirable Noyce) that the thought came to him that his long and patiently collected run of *Strand Magazines* (the first number appeared in January 1891 towards the end of the second Golden Age of Alpinism), might provide, after only the gentlest of researches, a great deal of misleading information about mountains of a kind likely to entertain the climber of to-day. Volume one was opened and pay ore struck on page 69.

Filippo, no mountaineer he, has been led up a pretty steep path by Fenice, the Maid of Treppi. He is frightened, and also full of her secretly administered love potion. Not caring for either of the sensations, he tries to find his own way down