

*Gasherbrum II.* Ours was the first commercial French expedition to an 8000er. We had three guides: Michel Vincent, Alberto Re and me. On July 11 Vincent, Re, Olivier Paulin, Theo Mayer, Pierre Gévaux, André Molinaire, Christian Frémont, all French except for Italian Re and American Mayer, and high-altitude porters Ghulam Hassan and Ibrahim reached the summit of Gasherbrum II (8035 meters, 26,362 feet). Gévaux descended in five minutes by parachute to Camp I at 6000 meters. That same day Italians Renato Casarotto, his wife Goretta, Gabriel Slovina Ubaldini and high-altitude porter Mohammed Ali also reached the summit. She was the first Italian woman to climb an 8000er. Tragically shortly thereafter Jean-Pierre Bouygues died on the descent from Camp IV from cerebral edema. With us was also the team of Jean-Marc Boivin. He had reached the summit on July 8 in the company of Bernard Prudhomme, Laurent Chevallier, Michel Poencet, François Diaféria, Gérard Vionnet-Fuassé and Pakistani porter Little Karim, who carried a hang-glider. They had continued on despite the death on June 24 of their Japanese photographer, Taru Nakano. He was jūmaring between Camps I and II. Because the fixed rope was buried in new snow, he released his jūmars to try to climb the final ten meters to a terrace. The snow collapsed under his feet and he fell 400 meters to his death. On July 13 Boivin set out from Camp I with porter Ghulam Hassan and climbed to Camp IV at 7400 meters. After climbing solo to the summit on July 14, he descended to Camp I in the hang-glider. All these ascents were by the normal (Moravec) route.

CLAUDE JACCOUX, *Club Alpin Français*

*Gasherbrum II, Parachuting and Hang-Gliding.* Among other exploits achieved by French climbers on Gasherbrum II, two impressive records were set. On July 11 Pierre Gévaux successfully descended by parachute from the summit. On July 14, Jean-Marc Boivin made the first descent of an 8000er by hang-glider. On July 8 he carried his 17-kilogram hang-glider to the summit but strong winds prevented the start. Six days later Boivin again reached the summit—in 16 hours from Base Camp! On the top he had to spend four hours to free the hang-glider from fresh snow and to start when there was no wind. The flight to Base Camp took 20 or 25 minutes. It was hazardous because of fatigue after the speedy climb, the work on the summit and the reduced carrying capacity of the air, which at 8000 meters is only a quarter that of sea level. In September 1979 Boivin made a hang-glider descent from Camp IV at 7600 meters on K2. The previous record, however, was made on May 12, 1984 when Japanese Naotaka Tadano descended from 7800 meters in 19 minutes to 5100 meters from below the main peak of Kangchenjunga.

JÓZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik, Poland*

*Gasherbrum II, Ski Descent of South Face.* After the other members of our expedition had to return to France, Pierre Mure-Ravaud and I reached the sum-

mit of Gasherbrum II on July 31 by the normal route. Also on the summit that day were members of another French and a Swedish expedition. There was fog on the summit. All the others descended. I waited on the top for the clouds to lift in order to photograph. An hour later I put on my skis and began the descent. I caught up to the others at the 7700-meter col. There Michel Metzger of the other French group put on the boots and skis left a couple of weeks before by Boivin. In the fog, he misjudged the slope, took a fall but was able to stop. I had intended to continue skiing down the south face to Base Camp that same day, but since my climbing companion Mure-Ravaud appeared indisposed, we bivouacked at Camp IV at 7500 meters. The next morning Mure-Ravaud descended with the Swedes. Since Metzger had not originally planned to ski down, he had not observed the route through a sérac barrier, as I had with binoculars from below. He waited for me. Once out on the broad slope, he skied down the left side and I on the right. Suddenly he hit a slick of ice. His skis fell off and he hurtled down the slope. Some 200 meters lower the slope lessened and he came to a stop. I skied to him and found him alive! From the foot of the face at 5900 meters, we regained Camp I at 5400 meters. The south face had never before been ascended or descended.

TIERRY RENARD, *Club Alpin Français*

*Gasherbrum II.* Four of our eight members reached the summit of Gasherbrum II. On July 16 François Germain, who is Swiss but has lived for four years in Sweden, got to the top with the Japanese Tomaji Kato. Kato's companions, Takashi Takahashi and Masaki Matsumoto, got to the summit on July 28. On July 31 Tommy Sandberg, Per-Olof Bergstrom and I also reached the summit. Seven Frenchmen were also on top that same day. We all climbed the normal route, with camps at 6000, 6500, 7000 and 7500 meters. One of our members got to just above Camp IV but had to descend because of an intense cough and fever. Another reached Camp II but returned to Base Camp because of snowfall. Back in Base Camp, he developed a deep venous thrombosis in his right leg and was evacuated by helicopter. One member developed pneumonia after arrival in Base Camp. He reached Camp I only once. Five days before he climbed to the summit, Germain carried a female French climber down from Camp II to Camp I on his back. She was exhausted, could not walk and was hallucinating. The French doctor had almost given up hope for her life. The steepest part of the route was between Camps I and II.

PETER WENG, *Svenska Fjällklubben, Sweden*

*Gasherbrum II.* On July 31 members of the French expedition led by Louis LePivain reached the summit of Gasherbrum II by the normal route. They were LePivain, Michel Metzger, Rémy Pillière, Nicolas Campredon and Guy Flecher. On August 1 Metzger accompanied Thierry Renard in a ski descent of the south face, while the Swedes and the others helped ailing Mure-Ravaud, Renard's companion, off the mountain.