

III and then go for the summit. Several of us carried loads to the top of the fixed lines. On that day, the weather took a turn for the worse. The next day, we all headed down to Base Camp to wait out the storm. Time was running out. Without consulting the team members, our leader had made arrangements for porters to arrive a month after we had arrived in Base Camp. Most expeditions plan to spend five or six weeks to climb Gasherbrum I. If the weather had held, this would not have been a problem. But the storm dumped much snow and made the route dangerous. We returned to Camp II on the Gasherbrum La and checked the couloir, but it was loaded with snow. We had no choice but to give up the climb.

GARY BOCARDE

*Gasherbrum II Ascent and Tragedy.* The expedition in which I took part was a commercial one of 14 members organized by Frenchman Bernard Muller and his wife, Laurence de la Ferrière. We left Skardu on May 19 and got to Base Camp on May 31 at 5150 meters on the upper Baltoro Glacier where it is joined by the glacier that lies at the base of Hidden Peak. Despite 18 days of unstable weather, we placed Camp I on June 4 at 6050 meters where the real ascent of Gasherbrum II begins. Following the first-ascent route of Austrian Moravec, we placed Camps II and III at 6650 and 7400 meters on June 19 and 21. On June 22, after a three-hour climb, Muller, Bernard Vallet, Jean Pierre Renaud, Georges Lozat and I reached the summit in fine but very cold and windy conditions. This was my fourth 8000er. On June 23, Jackie Peche reached the summit from Camp II solo. On June 24, Henry Albet, Marc Buscail and Pascal Hittinger, with two Balti porters, reached the summit. The mission of the porters was to carry up monoskis, with which Albet proposed to ski from the very summit. On the 25th, after having spent a second night at Camp III, Albet got ready to continue on the second part of his descent, despite the hardness of the snow. During his first turn, Albet slipped on the ice and fell 1200 meters to his death at the base of the glacier not far from Camp I. Hittinger gave up his idea of making the descent on a monoski. The other members of the expedition were Christian and Patrice Davi, Californian Mike Price and Swiss Monsieur and Madame Russenberger.

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*Gasherbrum II Attempt and Tragedy.* Our expedition was not the only one to experience tragedy in the Gasherbrum group. A Mexican climber succumbed to pulmonary edema on Hidden Peak and a French monoskier fell 1200 meters to his death on Gasherbrum II. After I departed, another Frenchman died of pulmonary edema at the Gasherbrum Base Camp. But the loss of Gary Silver was a crushing blow for me. Our expedition consisted of Gary Silver, Dr. Chip Woodland, Phil Boyer and me as leader. Our plan was to climb Hidden Peak (Gasherbrum I) by the original American route. We had unexpected delays of 16 days (!) with the Ministry of Tourism. About halfway up the Baltoro, we experienced a porter strike, settled by paying them 30% more than we had planned. Shortly after reaching Base Camp, Boyer developed pulmonary edema. Though his condition was never terribly serious, Dr. Woodland thought