

*Manaslu Traverse.* A strong Soviet expedition from the Ukraine with 20 members, 16 of them climbers, was led by Dr. Vladimir Shumikhin and Sergei Bershov. They had hoped to ascend the still unclimbed east face of Manaslu (8163 meters, 26,780 feet). In 1987 a Polish pair climbed to 6800 meters on it and in 1990 a Soviet party got to 7200 meters but was stopped when three of them fell to their deaths. This year's expedition established Base Camp at 4200 meters on March 21. "There was surprisingly much snow," says Bershov, "and it snowed day in, day out." Despite bad conditions, three camps were placed at 5200, 6200 and 7000 meters, the last on April 8. A group led by V. Khitrikov made three attempts to finish the route but was driven back by bad weather. A late April snowstorm damaged camps and covered much equipment. They decided to try the Polish route from the south, climbed in 1984 by Lwow and Wielicki. On May 1, Alexei Makarov, Viktor Pastukh and Igor Svergun started alpine-style toward the Pungen La (6700 meters), the south ridge and southeast face to the summit, which they reached on May 6. They descended the normal northeast route, which took two more bivouacs.

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*Manaslu Attempt and Tragedy.* Our expedition attempted to climb Manaslu by the northeast face, the first-ascent route. We were Albert Brugger, Gregor Demetz, Karl Grossrubatscher, Friedl and Hans Mutschlechner, Stephan Plangger, Christian Rier, Erich Seeber, Werner Tinkhauser, Roland Losso, Dr. Pavel Dolecek and I as leader. We set up Base Camp and Camp I at 4000 and 5600 meters on April 18 and 21. At Camp I, we found a thin film of oil on the water we had melted from snow. This may well have been carried eastward from the burning oil fields of Kuwait. Bad weather prevented progress for the next two weeks. On May 7, Friedl Mutschlechner, Grossrubatscher and I climbed to Camp I. On May 8 and 9, we set up Camps II and III at 6250 and 7000 meters. After a stormy night, we three started for the summit. Mutschlechner turned back an hour later, fearing frostbite. Shortly after that Grossrubatscher also began the descent. I kept on to 7600 meters, where stormy weather made me retreat to Camp III, where I found only Mutschlechner. I learned that Grossrubatscher was dead. While photographing, he had lost a crampon and fallen a few meters, breaking his neck. After placing his body in a crevasse, Mutschlechner and I climbed down to Camp II and then began to ski down to Camp I. It began to snow. At 3:30 P.M., when still only a few meters from camp, Mutschlechner was struck by lightning and instantly killed. I spent a sad night in Camp I and skied down to Base Camp the next day. Grossrubatscher was one of Italy's best rock climbers. He had been on numerous expeditions and had climbed the Uli Biaho Tower and Cerro Torre. Mutschlechner was also one of the most successful alpinists, having climbed three 8000ers with Reinhold Messner.

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