

200-foot lead rope. Our route began well to the left of the Norwegian route. It joined it at the top of the snow ledge, continued along it for three rope-lengths and then branched to the right of it to reach the summit. We sighted fixed pitons and slings on rock outcroppings left by the Norwegians on the final pitches to the summit, verifying the likelihood of their complete ascent. (They doubtless met their accident on the descent.) Our ascent, then, was the second to the east summit (6231 meters, 20,443 feet), as both the Japanese and Spanish teams who repeated the Norwegian route did not venture past the rim. It should be noted that Great Trango Tower has three principal summits: the main (central) summit (6286 meters, 20,624 feet); the west summit (6237 meters, 20,463 feet); and the east summit, to which we climbed. Bühler and Studiman had hoped to climb the Nameless Tower, but Bühler broke his ankle halfway up the Kurtyka-Loretan route when he fell some ten meters. Studiman did a splendid job with the evacuation and they were back in Base Camp in a day and a half.

JOHN MIDDENDORF

Great Trango Tower, Basejump. Our multinational team consisted of Australians Nic Feteris and me, Britons Leo and Mandy Dickinson, New Zealanders Wade Fairley and Geoff Gabites and Russians Vladislav Moroz and Irina Singleman. We arrived in Pakistan on July 17. The road from Skardu now reaches Askole. The journey was an eventful one. A four-wheel drive vehicle carrying 20 porters crashed 150 feet down a rock slide, seriously injuring three people. As the only doctor for miles, I had to treat and transfer the injured to the nearest hospital at Skardu. Despite the delay, we arrived at Base Camp at 4200 meters on the Trango Glacier on August 3. On the Great Trango Tower, we followed the 1984 American route up the gully between the Nameless and Great Trango Towers and then onto the west ridge. We established Camp I at 5000 meters on August 5 in the shelter of a gigantic boulder. Camp II was placed on August 12 at 5500 meters in the lee of a rock finger standing 200 feet above a gully running east from the main gully. A single 20-meter ice wall rose just below camp. From Camp II, the climbing was over steep ice up to 6000 meters. A two-pitch traverse followed to access the narrow tongue between ice cliffs spilling off either side of the mountain. Three more moderate pitches led to a plateau beneath the north summit. We fixed the route to here. Feteris, Vlad Moroz, Gabites and I visited the summit multiple times between August 18 and 24 while investigating many sites on the edge of the northwest face for a rock ledge from which to launch our basejump. We needed a site above a vertical or overhanging section of wall with no protruding ledges for 300 meters. Access to the edge of the rock wall was made difficult by the 70-meter-high séracs lining the face. The site we picked was at 5955 meters. A two-pitch abseil over a sérac gave access to a small rock ledge in the center of the face. We spent a day carving ice off the ledge to widen it. On August 26, Feteris and I strapped on six kilograms of camera gear to our helmets and mounted cameras to chest and leg. Vlad Moroz filmed and Gabites had a motor-drive Nikon next to us. Leo

PLATE 71

Photo by John Middendorf

**Bongard melting snow at the
Snowledge Bivouac on the Great
Trango Tower.**



Dickinson had a long lens just above Camp II and Mandy Dickinson and Irina Singleman had long lenses in the landing area on the northern side of the Dunge Glacier. I was to jump slightly ahead and to the side of Feteris. His helmet cameras faced forward to film me and mine faced backward to film him. We had purpose-built canopies, basejumping rigs and "flight suits." At midday, we unclipped from the ropes, commenced our countdown and launched into space. Almost immediately, Feteris began somersaulting out of control. After three seconds, I also began to somersault. Both of us tumbled until the 6th second and then regained control. At the 8th second, I gave Feteris the open signal and he dumped his pilot chute a half second before me. The canopies took another two seconds to open, by which time we had fallen 500 meters. The film shows that we were 80 meters off the floor of a steep gully. Later, we blamed the rarefied atmosphere and the weight of the helmet cameras which changed our center of gravity and sent us head down into somersaults. The landing at 4200 meters was a hard one due to the rarefied atmosphere. A video copy of the film may be purchased from the author for US \$50 c/o 1/1A Greycliffe Street, Queenscliff, NSW 2096 Australia.

GLENN SINGLEMAN, *Australia*

Summary of Trango Ascents. Eight routes have been climbed on the *Trango Nameless Tower* (6239 meters, 20,470 feet). There have been 13 ascents to the summit. 1. June 8, 1976, Britons Anthoine, Boysen, Brown, Howells, southwest face (new). 2. June 15, 1987, Slovenes Cankar, Knez, Šrot, south-southeast face (new). 3. June 23, 1987, Swiss Piola, Schaffter, Frenchmen Fouquet, Delale, west buttress (new). Fouquet descended by paraglider. 4. July 13, 1988, Pole Kurtyka, Swiss Loretan, east face (new). 5. September 3, 1988, Germans Kraus, Lipinski, Schneider and Wilz, Kurtyka-Loretan route to snow band and then Slovene route. 6. September 5, 1988, Germans Albert, Arnold, Güllich, Leinauer, Münchenbach, Schwierisch, same route as 5; Albert, Güllich and Münchenbach climbed free. 7. August 9, 1989 Spaniards Gallego, Ros, Clavel, Seiquer, between west buttress and southwest face (new). 8. September 20, 1989, Germans Albert, Güllich, Kurtyka-Loretan start and then between the British and Slovene routes, "Eternal Flame Route" (new). (On September 18, Albert and Stiegler had climbed to within 300 meters of the summit on the new route and then climbed to the summit on the Slovene route.) 9. September 5, 1990, Frenchwoman Destivelle, Americans Breashears, Lowe, Slovene route. 10. September 9, 1990, Japanese Minamiura, Solo to right of Kurtyka-Loretan route (new). 11. September 15, 1990, Japanese Hoshino, Kimoto, British route to rescue Minamiura. 12. August 13, 1992, Korean-Americans Cho Kukkyu, Cho Chonghwan, So Hoyoung, Chu Young, Slovene route. 13. August 23, 1992, American Wilford, Australian-American Child, east side of south face (new). *A drawing of the Trango Nameless Tower with most of the routes appears on page 286 of AAJ, 1990.*