

of Božič's snow blindness and Požgaj's frostbitten toes and fingers. By June 18, everyone was back in Base Camp. A memorial service for Kekec was held at the Gilkey Memorial. Požgaj's and Sedej's injuries indicated a helicopter evacuation, which took place on the 20th. Only Kropp and Sharman were determined to have another go for the summit. Karničar wanted to try, at least partly, his ambitious plan and to ski, if not from the summit, at least from the Shoulder. He had previously left his skis just below the Shoulder. On June 22, while Kropp and Sharman were climbing to Camp IV, he suffered a deep disappointment. His skis had disappeared, doubtless blown away by the wind. He returned to Base Camp. At two A.M. on June 23, Kropp and Sharman left Camp IV for the summit. With crampon problems, Sharman lagged behind, slipped and took a little fall. He descended. Kropp got to the summit at eleven A.M. Just as before, the weather changed around noon. He too had crampon problems and experienced a dangerous fall before getting to Camp IV, where he spent the night. His descent was also difficult. After a bivouac about 500 meters from Base Camp, he reached Base Camp on the morning of June 25, a day after Sharman, who also had had to bivouac when he could not find Advance Base. The remaining climbers left Base Camp on June 30 with 50 porters. We used no bottled oxygen and had no high-altitude porters. This was the 10th 8000er for Grošelj. We Slovenes have now climbed 13 of the 8000ers.

TOMAŽ JAMNIK, *Planinska zveza Slovenije*

K2, via West Ridge. Our international expedition was led by Englishman Jonathan Pratt and me from the United States. We made the second ascent of the west ridge, which was first climbed in 1981 by Japanese Eiho Ohtani and Pakistani Nazir Sabir of the Waseda University expedition. Our members were Americans Greg Mortenson, Rob Allen, Scott Darsney, British Andrew Collins, Andrew Mayers, John Wakefield, Frenchman Etienne Fine, Canadian John Arnold, Welshman Dean James and Irishman Mike O'Shea. We established Base Camp, Advance Base, Camps I, II, III, IV and V at 4900, 5200, 5800, 6500, 6900, 7500 and 7800 meters on June 24, July 2, 3, 7, 12, 28 and August 16. We fixed 4000 meters of rope between 5700 and 7600 meters. A storm destroyed Camp II on July 15. On July 20, an avalanche hit Wakefield and Arnold below Camp I. Fine had to be rescued from Camp III on July 21 and again on August 2 from Camp IV with pulmonary edema. He also had frostbite this second time. He was evacuated by helicopter from Base Camp on August 5. On August 23, Wakefield had to be helicoptered out because of frostbite. On September 3, a sérac fall wiped out Base Camp. Late June and early July were very sunny, warm and calm. In late July and up until August 23, the weather was stormy, windy, cloudy with much snowfall. Late August and early September were sunny or partly cloudy with some light snow and wind, but generally good. On September 1, Pratt and I established a bivouac at 8200 meters. "Summit day" lasted for 31½ hours, from 6:30 A.M. on September 2 to two P.M. on September 3. I led first, placing and aiding on pitons to reach

PLATE 58

Photo by H. Adams Carter

K2 from the West. Camps are marked.



the "Magic Line" at 8350 meters. Pratt led from 8350 to 8550 meters on a steep, mixed section which was dangerous on the descent. We both led on the final section to the summit, which we reached at 11:30 P.M. For more than two hours we had traversed a long ridge which was not especially difficult and rather flat over a multitude of false summits. From the summit we could see the various ridges of K2 dropping away in all directions in the dim moonlight. After 20 seconds on top, enduring the biting wind and blowing snow, we hurried down to a bivouac at 8550 meters. During this rest on a ledge, Pratt fell off and narrowly escaped a death slide down the snow slope. Without a canister gas stove for frequent brew-ups, we could not have survived. We would not have succeeded without the powerful efforts of all team members in establishing camps, fixed lines, food caches and giving real partnership. Both Pratt and I have been to the summit of Everest. Pratt is the first Briton to have climbed K2 and survived the descent.

DANIEL MAZUR

K2 Attempt. Peter Arbic, Troy Kirwan and I arrived at Base Camp on June 20. We wanted to climb the south-southwest ridge of K2, the "Magic Line," ascended by the Poles Wróz and Piasecki and Czech Božík in 1986. Starting on June 29, in three days we climbed to the Negrotto Col and returned to Base Camp. July 4 marked the beginning of the start of one of the two perfect four-day highs. We climbed the 1000-meter gully to the col in the dark when it was frozen. On July 6, we reached a point 400 meters above the col on perfect granite, where we had to throw aside caving ladders left by previous parties to get at the rock. The next morning, we were back in Base Camp, ready for an attempt with the next good weather. We heard by radio that Powers, Haberl and Culver had made it to the summit and later learned that Culver had fallen to his death on the descent. Storms continued. On July 13 and 14, climbable days sucked us up to the col and into another storm. Feeling we would need six days of good weather to complete the "Magic Line," we switched to the 1986 Kukuczka-Piotrowski south-face route. After moving a cache up on July 22, on July 27 we climbed to 6000 meters. The next day, we confronted a dangerous sérac barrier and decided to climb to Česen's south spur via the traverse done by Afanassief and Seigneur. A half hour later, we were on the south spur. We continued on to bivouac in a crevasse at 6900 meters. The next day, Arbic and I slogged upward whilst Kirwin descended fixed lines on the Abruzzi Ridge with a headache. Arbic and I pitched our tent at 7900 meters just below the Shoulder. The next day, we staggered to 8000 meters on the Shoulder but decided to retreat down the Abruzzi. We helped rescue Jensen. August weather was disgusting. On August 14, we shot up to Camp II on the Abruzzi. Arbic made it to Camp III, but we all retreated in storm. We pulled the plug on August 26, after 68 days in or above Base Camp.

BARRY BLANCHARD, *Alpine Club of Canada*