

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.

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