

the southeast ridge is clearly defined, which is not true on the north. Four deaths occurred. A member of an expedition of 12 *Taiwanese* led by Chang Jui-Kong, Shih Fang-Fang, stated that he would get to the summit or die in the attempt. He summited alone on May 8 and then tried unsuccessfully to find his way back down. He was seen the next day crawling about on a snow terrace about 300 meters below the top before he sat down and died. The leader of a 16-member *Italian* expedition on the north face's Great Couloir route fell to his death on May 15, thus ending the attempt. Five climbers of Eric Simonson's *American-New Zealander-Australian* expedition (described below) reached the summit, but Australian Michael Rheinberger died on the descent. A Nepalese cook, Prem Thapa, died from a stroke. He was accompanying an expedition of 4 *Austrians*, 1 *Dane*, 1 *Briton*, 2 *Americans* and 2 *Canadians* led by German Peter Kowalzik. Dr. Dagmar Wabnig was unable to save the Nepali, but she did successfully treat an American who had cerebral edema and three other climbers suffering from pulmonary edema. On May 14, Heinz Rückenbauer of that group reached 8300 meters on the north face's Great Couloir route. There was a close call for a member of a group of 6 *Canadians* led by Jamie Clarke and Alan Hobson. John McIsaac and Denis Brown set out with American Steve Swenson from Camp VI on May 25 but had to turn back, suffering from the altitude. McIsaac was especially seriously ill. In the final stage of getting this dying man down to the foot of the mountain in the very early hours of the morning, a line of dots of light from the headlamps of perhaps 20 climbers from various expeditions could be seen moving upward to help carry him down in relays. He survived, thanks to the cooperation of so many people. But this cooperation came at a price for those who helped. An expedition of 3 *New Zealanders*, 2 *Americans*, 2 *French*, 1 *Canadian*, 1 *Guatemalan* and 1 *Romanian* led by New Zealander Russell Brice had first unsuccessfully attempted a couloir on the east side of the north ridge, getting to 8000 meters on May 9. They then turned to the North Col route. Two were moving up for their summit bid when Brice had to ask three of the team's four Sherpas to go up very quickly with a supply of oxygen for the stricken Canadians. The Sherpas made a forced march from 7000 to 8300 meters in four hours and 20 minutes. The two Canadians were rescued, but the international expedition no longer had the manpower and oxygen for a summit push. The team went home unsuccessful. Two other unsuccessful expeditions on the North Col Route were 3 *Americans* led by Steven Matous, who got to 7600 meters on April 27, and 6 *Italians* led by Giuliano De Marchi, who got to 8650 meters on May 19. For the report on the *American-Canadian* team on the Kangshung Face, see below.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Everest Ascents and Tragedy.* It was a difficult year on the north side of Everest in the spring of 1994, with a total of six climbers who reached the summit and three deaths. Five of our team members got to the top, but tragically one died. The core of our expedition was composed of 20 Americans, 10 guides and 10

clients. We were also joined by Dr. John Finley and Denise Deming, scientific nutritional researchers, New Zealanders Mike Perry and Mark Whetu, American Steve Swenson and Australian Michael Rheinberger, who were acting more or less independently. We had 12 Nepalese Sherpas and two Nepalese cooks. We traveled in two groups, one from Kathmandu and one from Lhasa, arriving in Xegar on March 13. We established Base Camp at Rongbuk and Camps I, II, III (Advance Base) at 17,000, 18,300, 20,000 and 21,400 feet with yak support. Camp IV on the North Col was established at 23,000 feet on April 2. April weather was cold and windy and we were glad for the fixed rope we installed on the north ridge en route to Camp V, which we placed at 25,600 feet, but not until April 28. A few days later, the camp was destroyed by high winds and had to be reestablished. Finally, by early May, we were ready to put in Camp VI at 27,300 feet. On the night of May 4, one of our Sherpas collapsed at Camp IV with a stroke. Over the next 36 hours, we evacuated him to Kathmandu, during which time he had seven *grand mal* seizures. We gave him 10,000 liters of oxygen, 10 liters of IV fluid and anti-convulsive drugs. Despite temporary paralysis on one side, he made a full recovery a month later. The evacuation down 12 miles of moraine to Base Camp took over 20 people from our group as well as several from other expeditions. This put us all several days behind schedule. On May 9, at the same time as we talked by radio to Ed Viesturs, who summited from Nepal, we watched by telescope dying Taiwanese Shih Fang-Fang a few hundred feet below him. Shih had reached the top the day before but got lost on the descent, necessitating a bivouac. We watched him crawl around on the snow terrace at 28,500 feet before he finally sat down and moved no more. A summit team was in position at Camp V a week later, but Sherpas had mistakenly carried down from Camp VI gear belonging to the Italian team. I sent Dave Hahn up to Camp VI in the middle of the night with our team's oxygen regulators for the Italians to use with our oxygen bottles at Camp VI. In the early morning of May 19, Dave left for the summit with one of the Italians, despite deep snow. At the Second Step, the Italian turned back, but Hahn continued on, virtually climbing nonstop from the North Col. He reached the summit at 4:55 P.M. Bob Sloezen met him in the dark below the First Step with food, water and more oxygen. A few days later, our next summit team was in position. Meanwhile, Steve Swenson had joined us after his team had found conditions on the east face impossible. [See below.] When, on May 25, our team decided to spend an extra day in Camp VI due to marginal weather, Steve felt he had to go for it. Windless, cloudy, warm weather was ideal for his oxygenless climb and previous wind had scoured much of the snow away that Hahn had encountered. Climbing with Steve were two Canadians, John McIsaac and Denis Brown, also attempting without oxygen. Unfortunately, they had to turn back, possibly because of the weight of oxygen bottles they had for emergency. As it turned out, it was good that they had them because McIsaac got pulmonary edema and had to be evacuated from Camp VI the next day, using oxygen. Swenson made it to the summit. On May 26, Michael Rheinberger, Mark Whetu and Dave Staeheli left for the summit. Despite excellent weather, they climbed slowly. Staeheli feared the pace was too slow and

turned back at noon from the Second Step. The other two kept on, despite the slowness of the pace and lateness of the day. Whetu had summited in 1991 via the same route and was strong, but 53-year-old Rheinberger, who had tried Everest seven times before, was slow but determined. They reached the summit at 7:18 P.M. and spent the night in an open bivouac 20 meters below the top. The next morning was cold and windy. Knowing they were in trouble, I sent our next summit team up from Camp VI to assist. Strong winds prevented the rescue team from getting higher than the First Step. Meanwhile, in eleven hours Whetu and Rheinberger were able to descend only 900 feet and at dark on the 27th, they were only just below the Second Step. Rheinberger was blind, delirious and unable to walk. Whetu had to leave Rheinberger, whom he had virtually been carrying, to die. Jason Edwards climbed up to the First Step in the dark to assist Whetu down to Camp VI at night. Despite the bivouac and the rigors of the descent, Whetu made it to Advance Base the next day with badly frostbitten feet. A few days later, Bob Sloezen made the ascent, arriving on the summit at nine A.M. on May 31. He had also made the climb by the same route in 1991. He spent nearly an hour on top, throwing mementos left by previous parties down the Kangshung Face. At the end of the expedition, we hauled all our garbage down from Advance Base and out from Base Camp. All camps were completely removed except for one tent at Camp VI. We removed many old fixed ropes and refixed the First Step. We carried down about half of our empty oxygen bottles from the upper mountain. At Base Camp we built and used a dehydrating solar toilet.

ERIC SIMONSON

*Everest, Kangshung Face Attempt.* Our expedition was composed of Canadian Barry Blanchard, Americans Steve Swenson, Sandy Pitman (f), Alex Lowe and me as leader, and Sherpa climbers Wongchu, Kaji, Pinzo and Nawang. Lowe, Kaji, Pinzo and I had all climbed Everest twice before. Catherine Mulvihill was Base Camp manager. We established Base Camp on April 3 at 17,800 feet at the site previously used for Advance Base. This avoided the long walk across the glacier. We attempted the American-Canadian-British route climbed in 1988 and repeated by Chileans in 1992. After fixing rope to 20,300 feet, we placed Camp I on April 15 at the same place as the two previous expeditions. Light to heavy daily snowfalls of 3 to 8 inches continued through April. After fixing another 1500 feet of rope above Camp I and marking the rest of the route with bamboo wands, we reached Camp II at 24,200 feet on May 3 and established it on May 7. The snow between Camps I and II was four-feet-deep and did not consolidate. The slopes higher were laden with wind-deposited snow, blown off the South Col. After considerable debate, we decided that the route was too dangerous this year and for me, the risk to the Sherpas was unacceptably high. On May 10, we turned back. The weather in May was better, but the snow conditions did not improve.

DAVID BREASHEARS