Cho Oyu from the North in the Pre-Monsoon. As in other seasons, there were numerous ascents of Cho Oyu by the west side from the north. The well-known Mexican climber, Carlos Carsolio, made a whirlwind tour in the pre-monsoon season and did two fast, oxygenless ascents of 8000ers, summiting alone in both cases. After acclimatizing on a minor peak in the Everest region, Lobuje East, he traveled quickly to Tibet to join Swiss Erhard Loretan’s commercial expedition. He made the fastest ascent ever of Cho Oyu in just 19 hours. He went to the summit from Base Camp at 5650 meters, which he left at three P.M. on April 25 with Loretan. They rested for an hour at Camp I at 6400 meters. Loretan was not interested in climbing the standard route, which Carsolio had decided on, and he turned back at 6600 meters at 7:30 P.M. The Mexican carried on up alone in full moonlight which was so bright that he had no need for his headlamp. He was on the summit at 9:57 A.M. on April 26. He

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then left Tibet for Lhotse. Loretan’s expedition was otherwise composed of 6 Germans and 2 Swiss. On May 4, Germans Helmut Katzenmaier, Walter Korber and Helge Sprindler (f) also reached the summit of Cho Oyu. On April 29, Fabio Pedrina of Christian Dupré’s group of 6 Swiss reached the summit. Austrian Ernst Schwarzenlander led 5 Germans and 6 Austrians. The leader reached the summit on May 3, followed on May 4 by Germans Lutz Protze, Andreas Ratka and Thomas Türpe. Jiří Novák was the leader of 4 Czechs, 2 Italians and 1 German. On May 12, Czechs Stanislav Šilán and Zdeněk Hrubý climbed to the top, followed on May 14 by Czech Ladislav Kamarád and Italian Benito Lodi. Oscar Piazza, the leader of 12 Italians, and Angelo Giovanetti climbed to the summit on May 12, followed on May 16 by Andrea Oberbacher. Swiss Norbert Joos was leader of 8 Swiss, 2 Germans, 1 Austrian and 1 Briton. On May 20 Swiss Heinz Blatter and Joos completed the 149th ascent of the peak. Unsuccessful were Demetrio Carrasco, leader of 7 Mexicans, 1 American and 1 Chilean and Argentine Orlando Aedo, who headed 4 Spaniards and 2 Argentines. Briton Jonathan Tinker led 3 British climbers and 1 American who were turned back at 6800 meters on June 7 by winds, snowfall and lack of manpower.

Cho Oyu from Tibet in the Post-Monsoon. Cho Oyu was successfully climbed in the autumn by 35 climbers, bringing the total of foreign—or non-Sherpa—summiters to 409. All, except for the brilliant Japanese trio whose climb is recorded under the Nepalese section, climbed or hoped to climb the mountain on the Tibetan side, including those who planned to slip across the frontier from Nepal. Two of these latter teams never got onto the mountain. For a number of years, climbers have obtained permits from the Nepalese government to scale Cho Oyu and have then slipped illegally across the border and followed the easiest route, which is on the Tibetan side. It is simpler and easier to get to the mountain this way and the total cost is much less. But this September when 7 Americans and 1 Khazakh led by Neal Beidleman and 6 Spaniards and 1 American led by Iñaki Otxo de Olza moved across the Nangpa La, they met with an unpleasant surprise. The Sports Commission of Tibet has given full authority to one of the China-Tibet Mountaineering Association’s deputy general secretaries, Rinzin Phinzo, to check unauthorized ascents. Since June, a team of five has been posted just north of the Nangpa La. Despite the lack of some fingers, which he lost to frostbite when he was on Everest in 1988, Rinzin Phinzo had a pistol in a holster at his waist, but he was most cordial to one of the Americans whom he met just north of the pass and even invited him to lunch. The situation became quite clear when the Tibetan displayed a thick wad of American dollars and wrote the number 2000 in the snow: welcome to Tibet and Cho Oyu—at US $2000 per climber, payable in cash in advance. There were seven members in the Spanish group; the price offered to them, they said, was a total of only $13,000. The Americans and