

interesting peaks to climb, and the Xinjiang Mountaineering Association is very helpful.

JOSS LYNAM, *Alpine Climbing Group*

K2, North Ridge Attempt. On June 11, Heinz Wohlweind, Hans Stegmeier, Reinhard Vlasich, Elisabeth Vlasich, Peter Kowalzik (leader) and I met in Beijing to climb the north ridge of K2 (*on an IMC commercial expedition from Germany — Ed.*). On June 14, after traveling by jet and jeep across China, we began the seven-day trek to K2 basecamp on the North K2 Glacier. We established ABC at 5000 meters on June 25. After four weeks of beautiful, albeit very hot, weather, we were ready to start summit attempts on July 25. A major storm hit the Karakoram. Wohlweind and Kowalzik were at Camp III, Stegmeier and myself were at Camp I (5000 meters). Both parties waited one day for the weather to improve, but conditions only worsened. Growing avalanche danger forced us down. Kowalzik and Wohlweind descended from Camp III (8000 meters) to Base Camp in near whiteout conditions in one day. After five days, the weather improved. Kowalzik, R. Vlasich and I made one more summit attempt and on August 5 we reached Camp IV at 7900 meters. By early the next morning, another major storm hit the Karakoram, and again we were forced to descend. Just below Camp IV, an old fixed line I was rappelling off of broke while I was descending a steep rock face. I fell about 30 feet and landed in a tangle of ropes. Fortunately, Peter was behind me and saw me fall. He and Reinhard stayed with me for two hours while I slowly regained full consciousness. I was able to descend on my own power to ABC. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Peter and Reinhard. I most certainly would have perished without their vigilance. The return trek went safely and without incident.

JAY SIEGER, *unaffiliated*

Sigunian Shan, Sichuan. In September 1994 I was based out of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan. From here I made two exploratory trips into the exceptional mountains of Kham, on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. First I visited the Songpan region and the National Park at Jiuzhaigou. There are a few mountains of interest to climbers in the area, notably Xuebaoding, east of Songpan. I made an ascent of a peak north of this area, known locally as Wosikaxiong (4000+ meters). It was a moderate rock scramble from the west. Later, I went to the Qionglai mountains northwest of Chengdu. This area, on the edge of the Wolong Nature Preserve, is quite accessible and very scenic. Here is Celestial Peak, a fine rock pyramid

first climbed by an American team several years ago. Celestial Peak, however, is overshadowed by the highest peak of Siguniang, certainly one of the most beautiful 6000-meter peaks in the world. I spent over two weeks in this region, exploring and climbing by myself. Based out of the nearby village of Rilong, I made several trips up the Changping Valley. On my first outing I hiked past Celestial Peak and Siguniang Shan, establishing a basecamp at the head of the valley below three fine peaks. I made an advanced camp at 15,000 feet. Next day I climbed a moraine ridge to a glacier descending from two of the peaks. I climbed up snow and ice to the saddle separating the two peaks, then easily bagged each summit (heights about 17,500 feet). Later, during a period of unsettled weather, I made a camp below the west face of Celestial Peak. I had seen another fine peak to the west from the other summits, but now the weather limited my options. Nevertheless, I made an ascent of a peak just west of Celestial, via a rock ridge which turned to snow and ice. The summit appeared to be slightly higher than that of Celestial Peak (given 5413 meters). I set my sights on Siguniang but the weather thwarted my plans several times. Finally I approached the south face from the Changping Valley, a rather difficult thrash. I made a bivy at the base of the south face at 15,000 feet. Next day I climbed the right side of the face up steep snow and ice gullies, reaching the east ridge at approximately 17,900 feet. I continued up the east ridge and face on snow and ice, arriving at the top in deteriorating weather late in the day. The descent was epic — I was forced to make an unplanned bivy on the ridge before completing the descent the next day (I down-climbed the route I had ascended). The route itself was classic — a moderate climb but with great character. This was the third ascent of the mountain, and by a new route.

CHARLIE FOWLER, *unaffiliated*

TIBET

Mount Everest, Ascents and Attempts During the Pre-Monsoon Season.

Sixty-seven climbers summited Everest from the Tibetan side of the mountain in the pre-monsoon (spring) season. Eleven teams, five of which were commercial expeditions accounting for 21 of the summitters, brought the grand total of Everest summitters from both sides to 608, after adjusting for climbers who have made more than one ascent. The success on the Tibet side was due to three very strong teams, plus strong individuals such as Anatoli Bukreev on other teams. All expeditions worked well together in what one leader called a “harmonious mob.” Another factor was the first complete ascent of the northeast ridge by a Japanese team under the leadership of Tadeo Kanzaki and Kiyoshi Furuno (climbing leader). Aided by an unusual-