

*Shishapangma, Attempt and Tragedy.* An expedition from the Ukraine led by Ivan Valenya planned to make ascents of Cho Oyu and Shishapangma but owing to organization difficulties got stuck in Kathmandu for 21 days and started climbing Shishapangma by the classical route only at the beginning of October. At 1 p.m. on October 5, its participants Viktor Pastukh and Gennadi Vasilenko reported by radio from an altitude of about 6700 meters that they were looking for a way down. There was no visibility and it was snowing. They were never seen by anyone. Evidently, they were hit by an avalanche at an altitude of about 6300 meters and perished.

VLADIMIR SHATAEV, *Russian Mountaineering Federation*

*Cho Oyu and Shishapangma, Ascents and Tragedy.* In the autumn, V. Bachkirov (leader), B. Sedousov, N. Zakharov, E. Vinogradski, V. Pershin, G. Tortladze, B. Mednik, A. Sedov, A. Klimin, A. Paskhin, and A. Kovalchuk attempted Cho Oyu's normal route and Shishapangma's normal route from Tibet. We had to break trail in waist-deep loose snow on avalanche-prone slopes up to 7500 meters. Having established three camps (6400 m, 7000 m, 7400 m) all the members reached the summit on September 23.

Being well-acclimatized, we decided to scale Shishapangma alpine style. This time we were without Klimin, Paskhin, Kovalchuk and Sedov but joined by A. Boukreev and a climber from South Korea. On October 2 we arrived at Shishapangma BC and on October 4 left for the summit.

Several other expeditions worked on the mountain from the beginning of September but nobody climbed higher than Camp II (6900 m) because of the bad weather. Several expeditions were thinking about going home.

We left BC in the appalling weather conditions and in the vicinity of Camp I just missed Vasilenko and Pastukh from the Ukrainian Expedition. They were going down from Camp II after waiting there for better weather. They were never seen again. Most probably they were killed in an avalanche somewhere between Camp I and Camp II. We spent two nights at Camp I (6400 m) waiting for the weather to improve. After the wind calmed a little we reached 6900 meters and the next day 7400 meters, again in the storm. The wind was so horrendous that I was blown uphill for 10 meters on the 40-degree slope. It was impossible to move on for the next three days, so fierce was the wind. On October 10 in a lull of the storm all the members left for the summit and reached it the same day.

VLADIMIR BACHKIROV, *Kaliningrad, Russia*

*Cho Oyu, First African-American Ascent of an 8000-meter Peak.* An American team led by Eric Simonson of Ashford, WA, summited Cho Oyu in two groups from the Tibet side on May 13 and 14. Summitters included Jean Ellis, the first African-American to ascend an 8000-meter peak. He had qualified for the 1980 Olympic team in the marathon, but with the boycott of the Moscow Games, had his hopes crushed. After his successful ascent of Cho Oyu, his words were, "After all these years of waiting, this is my gold medal."

ERIC SIMONSON

*Cho Oyu, Various Ascents in the Post-Monsoon Season.* The Himalayan season's greatest success numerically was not on any mountain in Nepal but on Cho Oyu from Tibet, where 16 of the autumn's 21 Cho Oyu expeditions claimed an unprecedented total of 77 summitters, and three of these successful men also went to the top not just once but twice. This triumph on Cho Oyu, 8201 meters high, would seem to confirm that the standard west ridge/face route on the world's sixth