

team of three Americans (Gary, Chris Shaw, Tim Horvath), one Canadian (Paul Malo), and two British (Jonathan Pratt and myself).

We left Kathmandu on March 21 and traveled for 20 hours to Basantapur before trekking for 13 days through a beautiful unspoiled region of Nepal to our Base Camp at Pang Pema (5000m). The team started work on the climb immediately, although Paul was forced to descend for a while due to serious altitude sickness. We climbed the Czech Route on the north face using a lightweight approach with no porters above Base Camp and no supplementary oxygen. We established fixed camps at 5800 meters and 6800 meters with a temporary acclimatization camp at 5400 meters. We dug a snow cave for Camp II at 6800 meters to avoid heavy spindrift avalanching off the Rock Band.

The main technical difficulties were the Ice Building at 6000 meters (150 meters of 40° blue ice) and the Rock Band (6800 - 7000m). We fixed both sections, but ropes on the Ice Building were frequently cut or buried by avalanche debris. The Rock Band was the crux of the climb with 50 meters of Grade 5 ice followed by rock pitches up to 5.9 in difficulty. It took five days to fix 400 meters of rope here.

Our first two summit attempts in late April and early May were thwarted by deep snow above the Rock Band (though we reached 7700m on the second attempt). It was frustrating to turn around with the summit in view, but our rate of ascent was too slow in such deep snow to realistically expect to reach the summit.

Paul returned home in early May, and the remaining five of us set out again in perfect weather on May 14. Our spirits plummeted when we arrived at Camp I to find that one tent had blown away, but we found it intact down a crevasse about 400 meters below camp. Conditions above the rock band were much improved, and we made good progress climbing alpine-style and pitching camps at 7400 meters and 7800 meters just beneath the Croissant rock.

Summit day dawned crisp and clear, and we left high camp between 4:30 and 5 a.m. We were distressed to pass the bodies of two Japanese climbers, who we later discovered had died on descent from the summit two days earlier. Conditions were good, but climbing at that altitude and the prior summit attempts had taken its toll on Gary, who was forced to turn around at 8450 meters. I continued on alone, passing Jonathan, Chris and Tim on their way down from the summit.

On the final summit ridge, I felt small and vulnerable knowing that one false move could send me hurtling down the south face. I reached the summit at 2:20 p.m. with mixed emotions: relief and elation at having finally made it, but disappointment not to be sharing this summit with Gary. Safely back at Base Camp, the reality of our success sunk in. Four of the team had reached the summit. Chris and Tim had climbed their first 8000er. Jonathan had now climbed the world's five highest mountains, and I'd made the first female ascent of Kangchenjunga, the last 8000-meter peak to be climbed by a woman.

GINETTE HARRISON, *United Kingdom*

*Jonsang, Attempt.* One of the few teams trying something innovative in Nepal last spring was the six-man Irish expedition led by Kieran O'Hara that planned to attempt the unclimbed southeast face of Jonsang, the 7483-meter summit of which forms the triple border point of

Nepal, Tibet and Sikkim. The Irish team were seriously delayed in Kathmandu due to the non-arrival of freighted gear, but finally established Base Camp during the second half of April at Pangpema next to the Kangchenjunga teams. The following two weeks were spent stocking an Advanced Camp at the start of the Ginsang Glacier and then attempting to find a safe site for CI close to the foot of the face. This proved impossible, so a site was eventually chosen at the foot of the Jongsang La which leads over into Sikkim. Hoping to climb the face in an alpine-style push, the Irish left on May 8 to acclimatize on the flanks of the 6954-meter Langpo Peak, which lies above the West Langpo Glacier southeast of the Jongsang La. They established two camps on this side of the mountain and reached an altitude of ca. 6800 meters before returning to Base Camp for a rest. On May 13, all six were at CI ready for an attempt on Jongsang the following day. At 12:30 a.m. on the 14th, Tomas Aylward, Seaghan Brogan, Garth Henry and Kieran O'Hara set off for the face with five days' food, leaving Robbie Fenlan and Malcolm McNaught to follow a day later. The four very soon found the climbing harder than anticipated and pitched sustained slopes of 55-65° on ice and mixed terrain (Scottish 3/4) for 20 hours before cutting out a bivouac site at 6500 meters. A sleepless night followed and the following morning Aylward and Brogan began to descend immediately. Henry and O'Hara continued to ca. 6600 meters but were soon engulfed in the bad weather that moved in on the 15th. They quickly realized that descent was the only realistic option. All four rappelled to the foot of the face, where they were met by the other two climbers. There was no time left for another attempt and the group could only strip their camps and return home.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Alpine Climbing Group*

*Drohmo and Janak.* On April 13, a small Anglo-American-Nepalese expedition established Base Camp on the summer yak pastures of Lhonak (4650m), the site normally used for the penultimate overnight camp on the trek in to Kangchenjunga's North Side Base Camp at Pangpema. The main objective of this team was Janak (7035m), the unclimbed west summit of Jongsang, which lies on the border with Tibet. However, as a prelude the climbers wanted to make the first ascent of Drohmo (6850m), a complex mountain that stands opposite Wedge Peak overlooking the Kangchenjunga Glacier. As Jongsang is still unclimbed from Nepal, the expedition was required to have joint membership, so three climbing Sherpas made up part of the seven-man team.

After an initial period of reconnaissance and acclimatization, Julian Freeman-Attwood, Skip Novak and Doug Scott (who had initially contemplated Drohmo in 1979 while making the first ascent of the North Ridge of Kangchenjunga) established a camp on April 22 at ca. 5180 meters below the south side of Drohmo. The fourth member, Lindsay Griffin, was at this stage still at Base Camp attempting to recover from a stomach illness that had troubled him throughout the approach trek. On the 23rd, the three climbers made an inspection of the glacier below Drohmo and found that the steep south face of the mountain sported extensive serac structures, making any line leading to the main summit seriously threatened.

East of a deep notch, a sharp and corniced crest continued over a lower summit before eventually falling toward the Ginsang Glacier. With no safe route to the main (west) summit, the three decided on the central spur of the south face, which led to a point on the corniced crest well to the right of the lower (east) summit. Although just about any approach to the south face was not out of the firing line from a major avalanche or serac fall, the crest of the