

*Nojin Kansa, Ascent.* In the spring, Masakazu Okuda led a three-member Japanese expedition that made an ascent along the ridge between Togulon (ca. 6800m) and Nojin (Ningqing) Kansa (7206m), continuing to the summit of Nojin (Ningqing) Kansa via the west face. Exact details are uncertain; it is unclear whether this was a new route.

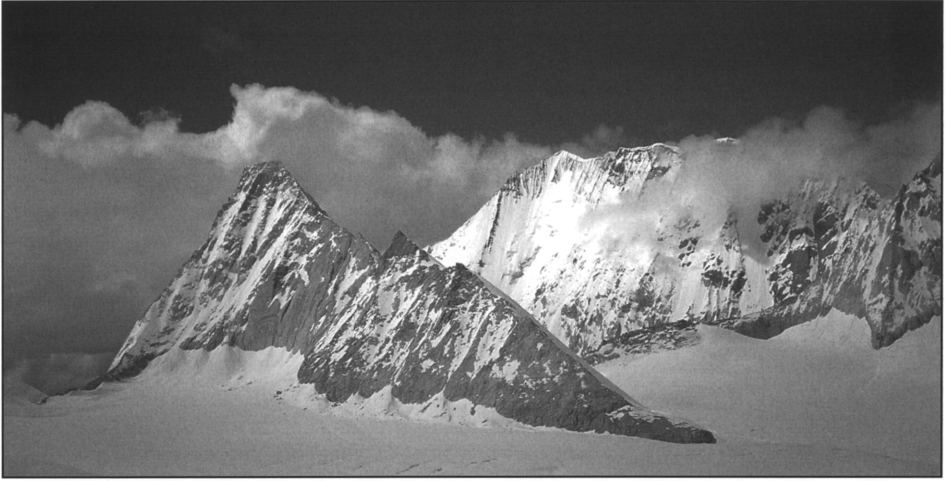
*Lungma Ri Area, Various Activity, Previously Unreported.* In July-August, 1997, we made a traverse of the Transhimalaya and climbed several 6000-meter peaks near Ombu Lake. Against our expectations, we found a mountain massif in this area with several peaks instead of only the one 7000-meter peak, Lungma Ri.

ČESTMÍR LUKEŠ and IRENE OEHNINGER, *Switzerland*

*Pholha Khyung, Attempt.* We departed Kathmandu on August 31 en route to Tibet's Transhimalaya. Our team was comprised of Britons Julian Freeman-Attwood, Lindsay Griffin and Phil Bartlett as climbers and Pat and Harry Reeves as trekkers. As the token American, my responsibilities included explaining this country's decision to give China permanent Most Favored Nation trading status as we drank Cokes and Pabst Blue Ribbon beers bought in the Tibetan hinterlands while listening to the locals talk about the relatives they had lost to the Han Chinese's efforts to domesticate Tibet. In one week of travel, we headed up through Nyalam and Tingri, hung a left at Lhatse, then took a right at a nondescript dirt track one and a half hours past Saga on the road to Mt. Kailash. One and a half more hours along this track through small collections of nomad houses brought us to Base Camp (4960m) in the middle of a beautiful basin on September 6. We were unable to find a lower altitude at which to place Base Camp; this would prove problematic for recovery from illness and general attempts at acclimatization. Other factors contributing to the nearly complete lack of climbing we would do were weather, lack of fitness and general disinclination on the part of most of the climbers. The highlights of the trip were the delightful locals. Nomads who tended their sheep and yak in these pristine mountain valleys during the summers, they would be our constant companions for the next month. Though they were quite familiar with the yeti that lived in a nearby valley and protected the region's holy mountain, they had never heard of Reinhold Messner and refused to believe he exists.

Our objectives as defined by our permits included an aesthetic 6530-meter peak the nomads called Pholha Khyung and the highest peak of the Gangdise Range, Loinbo Kangri (7095m). Loinbo Kangri, the only peak in the area to have received an ascent, had been attempted by a Himalayan Association of Japan expedition in 1994; the first ascent of the mountain was made in 1996 by a joint South Korea-China expedition. Julian and Lindsay had reconned the area the year before, following a route taken by Sven Hedin just after the turn of the century.

All the team minus Lindsay climbed up to ca. 6100 meters on a snow peak southeast of Pholha Khyung on September 12. Pat, Harry, Phil and I climbed up the easy south flanks of Pt. 5916m (as measured by an unreliable wrist altimeter), a subsidiary summit of Peak ca. 6400m directly across from BC, on September 18. Pat and Harry departed BC on September 25. Lindsay continued to be kept low by illness; Phil and Julian decided they no longer wanted to try either of our permitted objectives. Instead, they climbed a ca. 6000-meter shoulder peak on the 28th, following a route that paralleled snow leopard tracks over the top, while I returned to BC to further recover from food poisoning and get psyched for a solo attempt on Pholha Khyung. On September 30, with Phil in support, I walked up to our high camp below



*The southeast faces of Pholha Khyung (in front) and Loinbo Kangri. CHRISTIAN BECKWITH*

Pholha Khyung, then continued on up to recce the route for the next day. My high point of ca. 6200 meters on Pholha Khyung via a couloir on the southeast side would be the last effort of the trip, as the bad weather that had plagued our stay closed in for good that evening, signaling an end to the expedition.

Of note in the area is the southwest face of Pholha Khyung, which looked to yield a fine wall of golden granite perhaps as much as 800 meters high, and the striking ca. 6400-meter peak half a kilometer northeast of Pholha Khyung that would offer 800-meter mixed and/or rock routes. Himalayan wildlife, including lynx, ramchekor, wild sheep, wild asses, snow leopards and the oft-discussed but rarely seen yeti, along with the friendly and equally wild locals, would yield a wonderful adventure to those interested in exploratory climbing some distance from the usual haunts.

CHRISTIAN BECKWITH, *The Wayward Mountaineers*

*Tangmonja, Attempt, and Machag, First Ascent.* It was reported that Britons Derek Buckle, Gary Hill, Alyson Starling, John Town, John Whitely and Rik Wojtaszewski travelled to the Jomo Chu region of the western Nyangchen Tangla (Nyain-Qen-Tanglha) in July-August. From a Base Camp beneath the east face of Jomo Kangri (7048m), the team attempted the west ridge of the unclimbed Tangmonja (6328m). Advanced Base Camp (5525m) was established near the foot of the ridge. Poor weather prevented the team from climbing higher than 5850 meters, where the flat ridge quickly begins to steepen. Taking full advantage of a break in the weather, Buckle, Hill and Town made the first ascent of the prominent peak just to the southeast of Tangmonja via the 400-meter west face (AD-). The terrain involved excellent 45- to 50-degree granite and mixed ground; the ascent took nine hours from camp. They named the peak "Machag" (6025m) after the anvil-shaped summit block. (*High Mountain Sports* 210)

*Peak 6250, Ascent, and Namlo Karpo, Attempt.* New Zealanders Peter Cammell, John Cocks, Cam Falkner, Martin Hunter, John Nankervis and Adrian van Schie spent five weeks in the Kongpo region of eastern Tibet in the autumn. Accompanied by Tibetan mountaineer Ar Ke