

from former years when climbing K2 with bottled gas was simply not the done thing.

Sadly, three more people died high on the mountain in a similar scenario to the 1986 disaster. On the 28th Davoud Khadem Asl from Iran and the experienced Sergei Sokolov from Russia were camped on the Shoulder. Unlike their teammate, Alexander Gubaev, they hadn't left for the summit that morning but decided to wait another night to see if the weather would improve (it had gradually deteriorated overnight). It is thought that Gubaev, climbing without oxygen, reached the top (the first mountaineer from Kyrgyzstan to reach any 8,000m summit) but he did not return. Asl and Sokolov could not be persuaded to go down and were subsequently trapped by a big storm. They didn't attempt to descend until August 1, after which nothing more was heard from them. Some of the remaining climbers at Base Camp mounted a rescue but were forced to abandon their attempt due to heavy snowfall.

One more climber was to summit, bringing the total for the season to 48 and the overall total to 246 ascents. This was the Catalan, Jordi Corominas, achieving what was undoubtedly the finest ascent on K2, or any Pakistan 8,000m peak last year, the second ascent of the Magic Line (see below).

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, *CLIMB Magazine*

K2, Magic Line, second ascent, death. On August 16th Oscar Cadiach and Manel de la Matta joined the summit bid along with Jordi Corominas from their last Camp at 8,100m. The first two decided to turn around at 10:00, from 8,300m, due to cold and exhaustion. After a short rest in the tent at 8,100m, Oscar and Manel descended together back to Camp 3 (7,500m), on the Pulpit glacier. They reached Camp 3 at 16:00 and spent the night there. Jordi Corominas reached the summit in a solo bid at 24:00. He descended the Abruzzi, finally stopping to rest in Camp 3 after 30 hours of continuous effort.

The next morning Manel and Oscar kept descending. Despite the increasing bad weather and their exhaustion, they were both happy and content. On their way down, they talked about future projects and new climbs to attempt in the next months. They slept in Camp 2 (6,900m). The next morning, Wednesday, they climbed back down to Camp 1 [approx. 6,300m] on the Negrotto Col, which they reached early.

It was then when Manel, for the first time, began to complain of acute abdominal pain. It prevented him from breathing normally. His anguish increased in the next hours. Oscar, always by his side in the tent, helped Manel to re-hydrate, eat, and keep warm. Communication with BC was broken by then, as the severe cold had exhausted the batteries in the climbers' radio. But Wednesday evening at 20:00, Oscar was able to send a short SOS: "Help Negrotto," over the radio. One hour later, in the middle of a snowstorm, Valen Giró, along with Balti Ghulam, set off from BC with some food and medical supplies. The high avalanche risk forced them to retreat shortly after. At 3:00 in the morning August 19 they left BC again to climb up to C1 on the Magic Line.

Meanwhile, in Camp 1 at Negrotto Coll, at 4:30 a.m. on August 19, Manel de la Matta passed away in Oscar's arms.

The Spanish Federation of Climbing and Mountaineering have raised controversy in the past two years, refusing to give out their annual award due to "lack of good enough climbing." But this year, the federation decided, was different: There was one expedition worthy of receiving its annual award, the Spanish version of France's Piolet d'Or: The ascent of K2's Magic Line.

The “Piolet de Oro” award has no monetary price attached, although some small grants are given each year to other outstanding climbs accomplished by Spaniards. Manel de la Matta was awarded a post mortem “Creu de Sant Jordi” (Saint George’s Cross) medal reserved for outstanding people and dignitaries in Catalonia, where Manel lived.

Adapted from ExplorersWeb.com

Gasherbrum III (7,952m), second ascent. On June 17 Alberto Inurrategi, Jon Beloki, and I arrived at Gasherbrum base camp; we wanted to attempt G-IV by the northeast original route, but by July 12 we were tired of the bad weather and the deep track on the Gasherbrum plateau, so we decided to attempt G-III instead. On the 25th we camped on C-4 of G-II with a lot of other people, and the next day we followed the 1975 Polish Route on the south east face of G-III. On the first hard pitch we found a titanium piton, the only trace of previous climbers. I turned back 200 meters below the summit, but my partners reached the main summit at 10:30 a.m., 29 years after the first (and only) ascent.

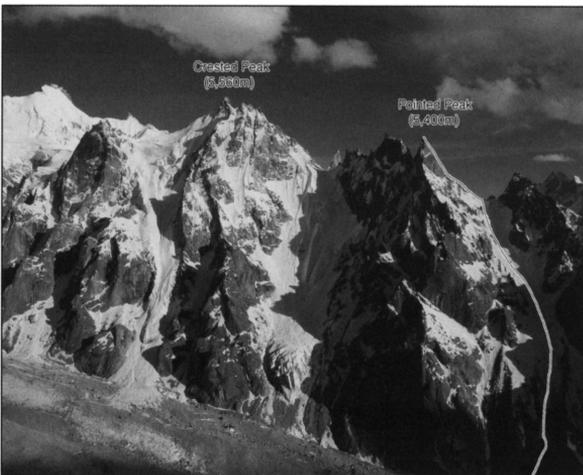
JOSE CARLOS TAMAYO, *Spain*

MASHERBRUM RANGE

For a map of the region around the Nangma and Charakusa glaciers, please see page 32 in this AAJ.

CHARAKUSA VALLEY

Chogolisa Glacier region; Pointed Peak (ca 5,400m), Peak 5,300m; Chogolisa Cathedral, Pilastró Kekka (4,500m); Raven’s Peak, Chogolisa Shield (ca 5,300m); various new routes. We left for Pakistan in our usual style, six people without prefixed goals wanting explore and to climb as we do in the Alps. Initially we wanted to go to the Kondus and Saltoro valleys, but we were



Crested and Pointed Peaks, showing the southwest face—west ridge route (Giordani-Maspes-Paoletto). *Hervé Barmasse*

denied a permit a month before departure. So we moved ourselves to the Hushe where we had already climbed in 1998 and 1999 (Charakusa, Honbrok, and Khridas valleys with eight new routes). After two days of trekking we were on the Chogolisa Glacier, where we climbed four new routes on nearly unknown mountains. We only found signs of one ascent on Peak 5,300 and some anchors along the southwest ridge of Raven’s Peak. All our first ascents were made alpine style. The team was Maurizio Giordani, Ezio