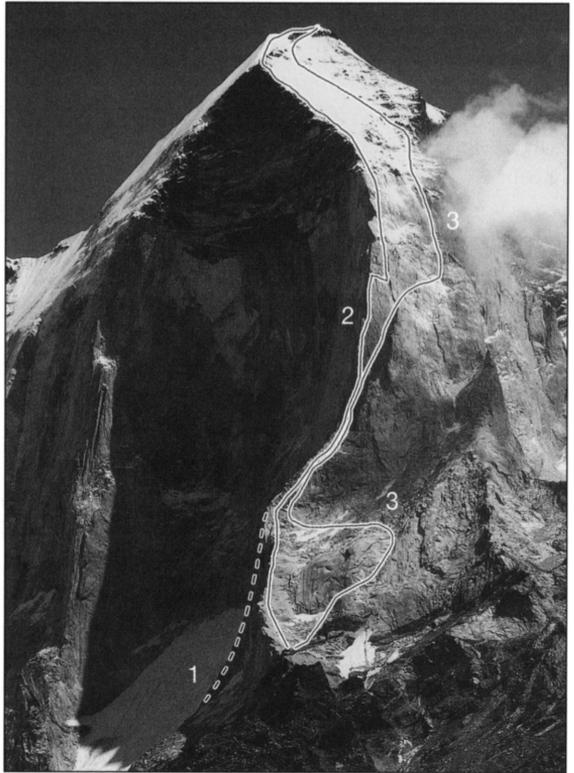


southwest pillar and free-climbed more than 30 pitches of 5a to 7b (French scale), with the exception of two pitches that might be a real challenge to any climber who repeats our route. Due to a snowstorm in the upper region we couldn't climb higher on the iced slabs and had to move to another crack system with the help of a pendulum traverse. More information can be found (in German) at [www.expeditionsbergsteigen.de](http://www.expeditionsbergsteigen.de). Please see "Berichte" (reports) for photographs of the 2001 and 2004 expeditions. [Additional details also in Lindsay Griffin's summary, below—Ed.]

WALTER HÖLZLER, *Germany*

*Bhagarathi III, direct southwest pillar, Stairway to Heaven.* In 2000 and 2001 Walter Hölzler attempted the direct southwest Pillar of Bhagarathi III, left of the now quasi-classic 1982 Barton-Shaw Route (also called the Scottish Route). On the second



Bhagirathi III. (1) Direct Pillar (Hölzler-Jasper, 2001). (2) Stairway to Heaven (Hölzler-Pflugmacher, 2004). (3) Barton-Shaw Route (a.k.a. Scottish Route, 1982). *Walter Hölzler*

attempt, with Robert Jasper, Reiner Treppte, and Jochen Schmoll, and operating from a portaledge camp at around mid-height, he reached a high point (with Treppte) of ca 5,800m, estimated to be ca 100m or so short of the end of the major rock climbing difficulties. Bad weather forced them down.

The 2001 team started climbing from the left side of the crest, but on his return in May 2004 with Jörg Pflugmacher, Holzler began up the right side of the pillar and first fixed 400m of rope to a point about one-third of the way up the crest. After removing their ropes to use higher up the route, the German pair then set off for a six-day capsule style ascent, hauling a portaledge. On the 19th of May they left the ledge at 5 a.m. and began climbing in increasingly misty conditions. After a total of 30 pitches from the bottom of the route, they reached the shale band, which forms the final 400m of the line. Setting off up this at 2 p.m. unroped, they decided to make a turn-around time of 3:30. Climbing loose ground of UIAA II and III they continued to the summit, reaching it at 4 p.m. They were back at the portaledge by 10 p.m. The route took a total of nine days. Two other parties attempted the Barton-Shaw Route but were unsuccessful.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO, CLIMB magazine*