

running short, and faster progress would be needed to reach the summit. They established a portaledge at Camp 2 on the 26th. The following day the weather remained clear enough for two members to work the route toward Camp 3, while three others rappelled to retrieve more rations from base camp and advanced base. The weather deteriorated again halfway through the ninth pitch, and the two lead climbers rappelled to the portaledge hoping for a positive forecast for the next day.

After a night of subzero temperatures, they were up at 4 a.m. in promising weather. However, the next two pitches (70m) proved a struggle. There were plenty of hook placements, but the thought of running it out for great distances was overbearing, and they opted to bolt every 8m until they reached more ice. From there, they climbed two more 50m pitches, at the top of which they placed two more bolts where the ice had thinned enough for granite to show through. Eventually, however, snowy weather again prevailed, and they rappelled into the night.

They spent the following days sitting out bad weather and trying to haul the portaledge to the next camp, but to no avail. On June 2 the weather cleared, allowing Kim Ji-sung and Lee Keun-tak to jug through pitch 14 and Ji-seong to lead another 50m aid pitch, before worsening weather forced him down. Soon after he returned to the portaledge, the snow showers ceased. The following day Ha Ho-sung aided pitch 16 using a plethora of exquisitely solid skyhook and talon edges. Although the proposed site for Camp 3 was still some distance away, it seemed attainable.

However, once again that cruel joke called snowfall returned. The expedition leader, Chung Seong-kwon, sat there feeling the toll of attrition, staring over at his partner, watching the snow fall even harder at their high point of 6,100m, and guessing how cold Ho-sung must be. Despite sufficient provisions, hope of good weather, time, and the will to stay on the wall had all gradually withered away with the falling of the snow. He knew they must go down.

The Korean Changabang attempt was graded VII W15 A2. The team wishes to thank The North Face Korea and Korean Trango for their sponsorship.

LEE YOUNG-JUN, MOUNTAIN MAGAZINE, Korea (translated by Peter Jensen-choi)

Changabang, west face, Boardman-Tasker Route, attempt. The boulders basked in the sun, 9½km of them, wave after wave of rock misery. Waiting. The chance of breaking an ankle, breaking a leg, or being trapped by two closing together like the doors of an aircraft hangar, was ever-present. I hated it.

A new route on Changabang's west face sounded good a few thousand kilometers away, an age away with a team of four to spread the load. The intended team of four turned into a pair, Stu McAleese and I. A late arrival made it three. Olly Sanders was going to be in India, so it made sense to drag him along.

When we decided to climb the west face, we had the impression that the Nanda Devi Sanctuary had re-opened since its closure in 1982. This was not the case, and to climb on the west face we would have to approach from the north, via the Bagini Glacier. This caused several difficulties: we couldn't see the west face; the approach was now 9km over possibly the worse moraine I have encountered; and to reach the Bagini Ridge we were faced with a 450m climb resembling the North Face of the Tour Ronde in the French Alps.

The type of climb and the overall cost dictated we had more gear than I was accustomed to. A capsule-style expedition is not one I would normally consider, but the \$6,500 that the IMF and local government charged, the \$6,000 the agent charged, the flights, the freight, and

insurance charges, all made for a total bill of \$15,000. I am not proud to say the cost had a direct effect on style.

We spent seven days carrying and establishing advanced base and three more ferrying and wading, carrying, climbing, fixing, and hauling, until the rope hung 100m short of the ridge.

The snow started as normal mid-afternoon. Seventy-two hours later, after 1½m had fallen, it stopped. I had developed a tooth abscess, and our tent was buried. The decision to go to base camp was easy.

Nine hours of snow-covered boulders and dreaming of base camp comfort passed. Camp was not the haven we had hoped. The tents were flattened and covered in snow. Our kit had been left inside and had become a soaked-sodden mess. Rivers ran under, around, and through the tents. The ground looked like a rugby pitch at the end of a game.

Sanders left with Dutch who had been attempting the north face of Changabang. After four days of high pressure had melted the snow and turned the meadow into a barren, dust-driven desert, the hill called. McAleese and I answered.

When we reached advanced base after five hours, a huge concern was alleviated. The tent was intact, although two broken poles called for improvisation. However, the food stash was beyond improvisation. Animals had raided it, and we were now on a time line imposed by starvation.

It took four days in freezing, bone-numbing temperatures to reach the Bagini Ridge and another three to establish a camp. The angle of the slope leading onto the ridge from the Nanda Devi Sanctuary was a lot less than from the north. Pete Boardman and Joe Tasker had repeatedly soloed this ground with loads, escaping to the comfort of base camp. This was a luxury not available to us on the steep and technical north side. The gendarme between the col and our present position, the same spot as Boardman and Tasker's Camp 1 at 5,480m, looked difficult to pass, and I marveled at their tenacity.

The new route was not going to happen. Seven days of food remained if we followed a controlled diet. We decided to attempt the Boardman-Tasker line up the northwest ridge, knowing there was no chance to summit, but hoping for a miracle.

Miracles didn't happen. The weather became unsettled once more, the temperature plummeted, my tooth abscess returned, and after three days on the ridge we had only climbed 200m. However, following in Pete's and Joe's footsteps had been liberating. Respect for their achievement grew with every step. Some of the climbing we completed was mixed Scottish IV, with the meat of the route looming above: 800m of technical rock, hanging arêtes, overhangs, and blank walls with no obvious way. Boardman and Tasker stuck at it until they found a way and reached the summit, an awesome achievement that still waits a repeat. But the approach from the north does add logistical and physical difficulties.

On day five we decided this sort of existence wasn't fun and stripped the climb from our high point of 6,200m. On day six we descended, dragging all our kit to advanced base. On October 6 we left base camp.

Eight years have passed between the two expeditions on which I played at capsule-style. I find alpine-style gives more enjoyment and satisfaction, without the drudgery and monotony. You stick your neck out a little maybe, but there is much more in the way of reward—and it's cheaper. We thank the Mount Everest Foundation, British Mountaineering Council, and the committee of the Nick Estcourt Award for their generous financial support.

NICK BULLOCK, U.K.

Changabang, north face, attempt. Andreas Amons, Cas van de Gevel, Melvin Redeker, and I tried to climb 6,864m Changabang by its north face in the autumn. Arriving at base camp on August 25, we spent the first 12 days acclimatizing and load carrying to advanced base. The walk over the Bagini Glacier proved to be long and tiring, full of loose blocks. Although we were supposed to be in the monsoon, throughout this time the weather was perfect. On September 9 and 10 we fixed 300m of rope on the 1996 couloir, because we wanted to climb capsule-style with portaledge. [This line was tried in June 1996 by a British party, who retreated at 6,200m—Ed.]. The climbing was perfect, with superb, steep, solid ice.

The monsoon finally arrived, with seven days of rain, snow, and mist, or as our British neighbors, attempting the west face, put it, “fucking ming.” When the weather finally cleared, we were unable to find our gear left under the face, even though we had tied it in and dug holes seven meters deep. About 10m of new snow must have accumulated below the face. With half our gear gone, we decided to climb in a lighter style. Again bad weather arrived, and with avalanches falling we retreated to base camp, which we left on September 29.

The weather seemed to be a bit off last autumn, with clear skies in August and rain in the middle of September. The north faces of Kalanka and Changabang looked absolutely great, but they are not places to be when snow starts falling.

MIKE VAN BERKEL, *The Netherlands*

KUMAUN

Nanda Devi East, east face, attempt. Marco Dalla Longa led a 12-member Italian expedition to attempt the first ascent of the east face of Nanda Devi East (7,434m). The team approached via Munsiry and the Milam Valley, establishing base camp on August 31. By September 7 they had placed three camps, the highest at 5,400m, on the central pillar of the east face. The team, which was primarily from the Bergamo region, split into three working groups, fixed ropes on the route and reached the top of the first tower on the pillar. From the 9th to the 18th a long spell of bad weather pinned them down at the higher camps. As the route was now out of the question, the climbers descended and turned their attention to nearby Nanda Lapak (5,782m). On the 23rd Ferruccio, Ferruccio, Perongelo, and Yuri reached the summit via the south ridge.

Toward the end of the expedition tragedy struck. Dalla Longa suddenly went into a coma and subsequently died of a stroke. The team's doctor suspected cerebral edema. Dalla Longa was relatively young and fit, and reportedly had no health problems during the expedition. The expedition had a satellite phone (carrying a sat phone is supposedly illegal for foreign expeditions), which could have saved his life as it was immediately used to arrange helicopter rescue. However, due to bad weather it took four days for the helicopter to arrive. The entire expedition was evacuated by air to Munsiry on the 27th and to Delhi on the following day.

HARISH KAPADIA, *Honorary Editor, The Himalayan Journal*

Nanda Kot, east ridge, attempt: Nanda Devi East, south ridge, attempt. Our approach to the Nanda Devi region began on August 30. After a three-day bus ride, six days walking up an ancient Indo-Tibetan trade route brought us to a base camp below Nanda Kot. Trails carved