

*P 20,970, Kiar Nalla, Kishtwar Himal.* Our expedition made the first ascent of P 20,970, previously unclimbed and unnamed, during September and October. The mountain is the highest of several unclimbed peaks on the north side of the Kiar Nalla. We met with many frustrations in the early part of the expedition, such as a six-day wait before porters became available in one village and finding it necessary to construct a Tyrolean traverse across a raging torrent between Base Camp and Advanced Base. The summit was reached on October 7 by Roy May, solo, after his companions on the summit bid, Roger Thurrow and Peter Macdonald turned back because of a harrowing slab avalanche close to the top. Meanwhile six other members were attempting Sickle Moon (21,570 feet), only once previously ascended by a 26-man Indian Army expedition. We chose a new route on the northwest (Sarbal Glacier) face. The final summit push was made between October 8 and 10 by Martin Bennett, Bill Hodgson, Robin Andrews and me, supported by Arthur Grout and Peter Thompson. Rock difficulties of severe standard and ice pitches up to Scottish grade IV meant slow progress. On the third day we reached 19,000 feet where the rock-and-ice rib abuts the west ridge. Although we were above the major difficulties, with a lot of ground to cover, worsening weather and little food and fuel, a retreat was inevitable.

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*Barnaj II, South Peak.* An eight-man Japanese expedition led by Nobuyoshi Kubo had permission to climb Barnaj I. After getting to Base Camp at 13,125 feet in the Barnaji Nala on May 22, they gave up the idea of climbing Barnaj I because of three dangerous hanging glaciers. They worked out a route on the glacier under the west face of Barnaj II (20,637 feet), hoping to traverse the ridge from Barnaj II to Barnaj I. However the liaison officer forbade them to go ahead with the traverse, saying the permission was only for Barnaj I. They established Camps I, II and III at 15,425, 17,225 and 18,875 feet on May 26, June 2 and 11 respectively. All members and the liaison officer climbed P 6150 (20,177 feet) and P 6170 (20,243 feet) on June 13 and 14. Although the liaison officer reported to the Indian Mountaineering Foundation that they had climbed Barnaj I, the maps show the latter peak to be west of Barnaj II. The peaks they climbed were south of Barnaj II and slightly short of its summit.

*Barnaj II Attempt.* We attempted Barnaj II (20,800 feet), an unclimbed mountain in the Padar region of Jammu-Kashmir, close to the Ladakh border. Between August 29 and September 2 Jim Curran, Geoff Smith and I moved by mule from Kishtwar to Machail (c. 9900 feet). Smith and I then travelled about 40 miles round-trip to explore the eastern approach to Barnaj II via the 16,500-foot Hagshu La, a pass into Ladakh.