

*Baruntse Tragedy.* Three Frenchmen attempted or climbed Baruntse by the north ridge from the west. One of the three left the expedition early, having received minor injuries in a fall. Julien Graux and Phillipe Grézat climbed high on the north ridge and apparently fell to their deaths on April 27. (See above.)

MICHAEL J. CHENEY, *Himalayan Club*

*Sherpa Climbing Courses.* 37 Sherpas received certificates upon completion of mountaineering safety and rescue courses taught by two Sherpas and the members of the Eastern Sierra Himalayan Expedition in September. They were conducted in the Dzongla/Tsola Pass area of the Khumbu, quite close to the Sherpas' homes. Three consecutive groups of twelve students each received five days of instruction. Course content included: anchors, belays and protection (Yosemite technique); rappelling, raising and lowering; glacier travel, self-arrest, technical ice climbing and crevasse rescue; handling and transport of sick and injured; basic mountaineering medicine, with emphasis on altitude sickness and cold injury. The project was inspired by requests from the Sherpas themselves who are renowned for their natural climbing abilities, but feel the need for instruction in technical safety and rescue techniques. All the students work as high-altitude porters and guides, and were sponsored by both their employer, Mountain Travel Nepal, and private sponsors from the U.S. Course directors were John Fischer and Pertemba Sherpa. Instructors were Gordon Wiltsie, Jay Jensen, Richard Collins, Lanny Johnson, Pasang Kami Sherpa and I. All involved considered the project quite successful, and Pertemba hopes to offer such courses in the future, eventually with all Sherpa instructors.

PETER HACKETT, M.D.

*Baruntse, North Ridge from the West.* Baruntse (7220 meters, 23,688 feet) is strikingly situated between the Lhotse-Everest and Makalu massifs. The Eastern Sierra Himalayan Expedition was the third group to attempt the steep icy headwall which leads to the north ridge from the Imja glacier. All five members of the previous two attempts had perished. We had hoped to attempt the easier south ridge but could not get permission from the ministry. Our members were John Fischer, Gordon Wiltsie, Jay Jensen and me. Base Camp was established on September 27, after three weeks of Sherpa climbing courses, which aided acclimatization considerably. We climbed without Sherpa support above an Advanced Base Camp. The face on the right of our route had been swept clean, and the debris nicely filled in a large section of the icefall, providing easy climbing to a large sérac which protected Camp I at 17,725 feet. We then