

it threatened by avalanches. Yannick Seigneur had been shortly before us on the middle of the buttress and had reached 23,000 feet. Our route rose from the Bazhin Glacier at 12,500 feet in a bold line to the south summit. It first climbed a rock spur which protected us from ice avalanches on the way to Camp I at 15,100 feet. The camp was at the foot of a 6500-foot-long couloir, which we climbed on the left side. Camp II was halfway up at 16,750 feet in the only possible spot. The exit from the couloir was 70° and threatened by rockfall, and so our Hunza porters carried only once to Camp III at 19,350 feet on the central icefield above the couloir. This was the first camp not subject to falling rock and ice. It was there that we joined the route attempted by Seigneur. On July 31 Ritter and Bühler first climbed the 65° ice face above. On August 9 Camp IV was set up at 21,325 feet among séracs. On August 14 Ritter, supported by Piotrowski, climbed the "First Icefield" on the right side of which Camp IV was pitched at 23,950 feet. The next day they ascended the "Second Icefield" and crossed a small rock band to the "Third Icefield," which led to the south col. They were forced back by deep powder snow. That same day Münchenbach and Bühler climbed to Camp V. The four spent a crowded night in one tent. On August 16 the four set off. A nearly vertical 150-foot section took over an hour to lead. The warm sun had melted the snow so that they were soaked and did not dare to bivouac. All but Bühler descended to Camp V. Though the others expected him to follow them down, Bühler kept on without adequate bivouac gear to spend the night out below the south col in frigid weather. On August 17, around noon, Bühler reached the south summit (8042 meters, 26,384 feet), the top of the east buttress. He got back at six P.M. with seriously frozen hands and feet to Camp V, where Ritter and Piotrowski were waiting for him.

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Nanga Parbat, Southwest Ridge, Tragedy and Ascent. Our expedition, made up of Stefan Wörner, leader, Dr. Alex Berger, Martin Braun, Peter Hiltbrand, Norbert Joss, Hansruedi Staub and me, arrived on May 9 at Base Camp below the Diamir Face. On the second day Peter Hiltbrand was evacuated by the porters to the last village because of cerebral edema. The weather was bad. Finally, on May 14, we headed in the direction of Ganalo Peak and placed Camp I at 17,050 feet. On the 15th we continued toward the Dima Glacier, but the objective danger was so great that we gave up the idea of making a new route and decided on the Kinshofer route on the southwest ridge (first climbed by Austrians Hanns Schell, Hilmar Sturm, Robert Schauer and Siegfried Gimpel on August 11, 1976). On May 18 we set up Camp I at 16,400 feet and on May 22 Camp II at 20,000 feet. On May 23 Joos and I made a supply dump at 21,325 feet but had to descend because of bad weather, which lasted for ten days. Meanwhile Hiltbrand returned to Base Camp. On June 3 Berger, Braun, Joos and I regained Camp I, which was deep in snow. On the 4th we plowed our way to Camp II, digging out our fixed ropes. Dr. Berger

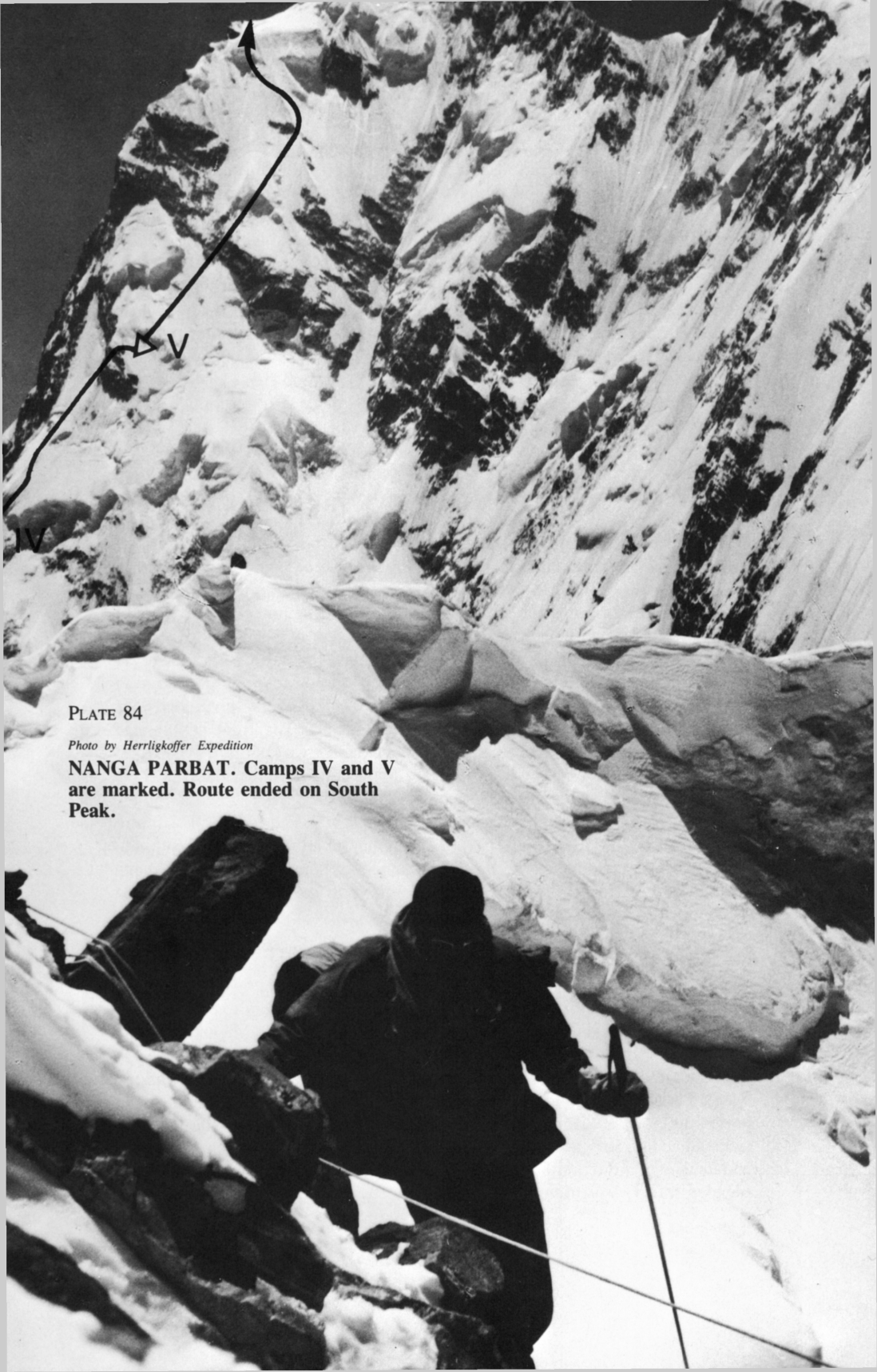


PLATE 84

Photo by Herrligkoffer Expedition

NANGA PARBAT. Camps IV and V are marked. Route ended on South Peak.

had to descend, sick, to Base Camp on June 5 but we other three climbed the Kinshofer couloir to our dump and from there traversed towards the Bazhin col on windslab which luckily held to let us reach a rocky island, where we placed Camp III at 22,800 feet. On June 6 we broke trail to 23,625 feet and descended to Camp II as planned. On the way down, we met Wörner, Staub and Hiltbrand, who hoped to establish Camp IV the next day and climb to the summit the day after. We tried to discourage them since none of them had yet been above 20,000 feet and they were not acclimatized. On June 7 Braun, Joos and I climbed back to Camp III while the other three advanced to establish Camp IV at 24,275 feet. Wörner and Staub got there in good time, but Hiltbrand lagged; he was definitely sick. At two A.M. on June 8 Wörner got to our tent at Camp III to say that Peter Hiltbrand was in very bad shape. Joos and I hurried upwards, soon joined by the other two. At eight A.M. we began to drag Hiltbrand down in a cloth sack. After 50 feet or so we were exhausted and realized it would take two days to get him down to Camp III. At 8:15 he went to sleep for ever. We closed his eyes and slipped him into a crevasse. Should we continue or give up? To quit would serve no purpose; we'd climb the mountain for Peter. Braun had to go down because of hemorrhoids, accompanied by Wörner. Joos, Staub and I went back up to Camp IV on June 9. In the afternoon Joos and I broke trail to 24,600 feet. On June 10 we set out at five A.M. A half an hour later I struck my cold feet with my ice axe and to my horror my plastic boots split! Could I continue? I took off boot and socks, rubbed my feet and after replacing my footgear, put on my crampons to hold it all together. Despite the wind, cold and the wind slabs, we continued. My foot stayed warm. After 650 feet, the couloir split. The right branch had normally been taken, but because of avalanche danger we kept left. We skirted two rock steps (UIAA IV+ to V) unroped and got to a rather delicate ridge that led to a north summit at 8035 meters (26,362 feet). In a violent wind we continued toward the main summit. I was going well and got to the summit (8125 meters, 26,660 feet) at 1:30 P.M., the tenth party and the first Swiss to reach it. Joos joined me at two P.M. We found that Staub was content to reach the north summit. But was this "victory" worth the price? Nanga Parbat has had 42 victims for its ten "victories."

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Nanga Parbat, Diamir Face. A Franco-German-Austrian expedition was led by Pierre Mazaud and composed of Michel Afanassief, Michel Berruex, Raymond Despiau, Kurt Diemberger, Hans Engl, Walter Cecchinell, Hubert Hillmaier and others. They climbed the Kinshofer route on the Diamir face of Nanga Parbat. On July 12 Berruex, Engl and Hillmaier set out with five Hunza porters to establish Camp IV at 23,950 feet. The next morning Hillmaier felt sick and he and Berruex returned, but Engl kept on, reconnoitering on the 13th and reaching the summit, despite miserable weather, on the 14th. He descended safely, still in very bad weather.