

Base Camp was at 13,500 feet and Camps I and II were at 18,300 and 21,500 feet.

ADRIAN BURGESS, *Alpine Climbing Group*

*Himalayan Winter Climbing.* The strongest winds generally come from the west and south. Route selection should consider this because jet-stream winds can stop movement altogether. The height of the mountain is more critical in winter because winds are worst above 21,000 feet. [See also Dr. West's article in this issue which explains that in winter there is less barometric pressure and therefore less oxygen.—*Editor.*] Routes passing through or near cols are much more windy and can funnel winds onto slopes which would normally be considered to be in the lee. When the wind direction changes from southwest to north, there is often one day of good, calm weather, but northerly winds never seem to last for many days. Although occasional snowstorms can occur in early December, they are rarely heavy and the first three weeks of December are normally the best for climbing. However, if there is an early snowstorm, it can hinder (and put up the price of) getting to Base Camp. November weather is normally sunny and dry and the Nepalese government does not seem to mind expeditions preparing Camp I (the higher the better) before December 1, provided no one occupies it, and even this may depend on the liaison officer, who may be looking forward to the New Year in Kathmandu. When hiring porters to go to Base Camp, beware the Tihar Festival around the beginning of November. It is like trying to coax a Westerner to work at Christmas. Because expeditions are better completed by December 24, there is little time to acclimatize on the mountain and previous acclimatization is advisable, possibly on a nearby trekking peak. When getting porters for the return trip, consider that a heavy snowfall might trap the expedition behind a high pass, such as on Makalu. Snow caves are best as camps on the mountain. Only very strong tents will resist the winds above 21,000 feet; living in them is worse than miserable. One-piece down suits are the best outer clothing in very windy conditions. The short cold days of winter seem to make climbing more tiring than at other times of the year. Since Christmas is when people like to be with their families, climbers have to be very highly motivated. Climbing Sherpas dislike high winds and are better below the windy zones. Frostbite may lead to amputation and so they are hesitant to commit themselves to long days in the cold.

ADRIAN BURGESS, *Alpine Climbing Group*

*Manaslu, Winter Ascent and Tragedy, 1984.* Our expedition consisted of Maciej Berbeka, Marek Danielak, Ryszard Gajewski, Stanisław Jaworski, Andrzej Machnik, Zbigniew Młynarczyk, Andrzej Osika, Maciej Pawlikowski, Bogusław Probulski, Włodzimierz Stoiński and me as leader. We planned to make a winter ascent of the Messner route from the south. Our approach via the Marsyandi and Dona Khola valleys took eight days. We reached Base Camp at

4000 meters on December 2. The next day Advanced Base was established at 4400 meters on the Thulagi Glacier. We then climbed and fixed with rope a 500-meter-high rock face of UIAA V, A2 difficulty. Camp I was set up at 5650 meters on December 5. On the 11th, while descending the wall from Camp I, a fixed rope, which had been cut by a stone, broke and Jaworski fell 100 meters to his death. After discussions, we decided to continue. On December 11 we crossed the "Ice Labyrinth" and placed Camp II at 6400 meters in the "Butterfly Valley." On December 21 Camp III was established at 7100 meters. From December 23 to 26 we celebrated Christmas in Base Camp. After that the weather deteriorated. Twice the tents of Camp III were blown off into the "Butterfly Valley." Temperatures at Camp III were down to  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$ . We fixed with rope the whole ramp where Camp III lay. On January 11, 1984 Gajewski and Berbeka set up Camp IV at 7700 meters on the plateau. That night the temperature inside the tent fell to  $-32^{\circ}\text{C}$ . On December 12 they made an early start for the summit and were on top at eleven o'clock. On the descent they had to buck hurricane winds directly in their faces and sometimes had to crawl downward. Berbeka froze toes and Gajewski a finger. On January 14 Pawlikowski and Probulski left Camp III and in worsening weather climbed to the plateau. They could not find Camp IV, which had been blown down by the wind. We decided to abandon the attempt and the expedition. This was the first ascent of an 8000er in January and the first winter ascent of an 8000er without supplementary oxygen.

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*Manaslu North.* Our Joint British Services expedition had 12 members under my leadership. We had 170 porters for the 15-day march to the traditional Manaslu east-face Base Camp. We established Base Camp, Camp I, Camp II, Snow Cave and Camp III at 12,600, 16,100, 18,200, 20,200 and 22,200 feet on April 12, 17, 22, 26 and 29 respectively on the eastern side of Manaslu North. The first summit bid was made on May 1 by me and three others after the weather had turned foul overnight. We set out at four A.M. but were caught and partially buried by a large avalanche, which wiped out the trail and marker poles behind us. We withdrew. Another full-scale assault started on May 4, despite snow so deep that the top of the tents at Camp III were two feet below the surface. After climbing to the north col of the main peak, Pat Parsons, Charles Hattersley, Terry Moore and Doug Borthwick reached the summit (7157 meters, 23,481 feet) on May 10 at 12:10 via the kilometer-long, technically difficult south ridge. We believe this to be the second ascent of the peak and a new route. When they got back to Camp III, they discovered it had been swept away by an avalanche. They finally found shelter at the Snow Cave after 20 hours on the move. Three peaks between 18,000 and 20,000 feet were climbed after the main assault.

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