JUNE 23. A second try reached a similar height about July 5. In his third attempt, in mid July, he reached a little higher, about 8300 meters but decided to withdraw in view of the weather, playing safe as usual. He descended the whole length of the ridge to the foot of the mountain and the De Filippi Glacier where on July 16 he was watched by Kurt Diemberger as he fell into a crevasse only about an hour’s walk from Base Camp. The crevasse was about 40 meters deep. He managed to get out his radio from his rucksack and call his wife who was at Base Camp and had been told by Diemberger to turn the radio on. He whispered, “Goreta, I am dying in a crevasse near Base Camp.” She organized a search party from the Italian, British and German expeditions nearby, including their doctors. Very soon they found him in the bottom of the crevasse, still alive. After lifting him to the surface, all efforts of the doctors were useless and he died soon afterwards. Following the wishes of his wife, his body was placed back to rest in the crevasse. This is a great loss for Italian mountaineering and a cruel blow for Goreta Casarotto, who has always accompanied him in far-away expeditions and given him priceless moral and practical support on all his solo climbs. She accompanied him in 1985 when together they reached the summit of Gasherbrum II.

XAVIER EGUSKITZA, Pyrenaica, Bilbao, Spain

K2. After a period of acclimatization, two Basques, Mari Abrego and Josema Casimiro, officially members of Renato Casarotto’s expedition but climbing independently, made a swift, illegal ascent of the Abruzzi Ridge of K2 in a five-day alpine-style push. In a period of good weather, they moved up each day, carrying their tent and all necessary food, fuel and gear. They went up to Advance Base, Camps I, II, III and IV at 5250, 6050, 6750, 7400 and 8150 meters from June 18 to 22. In still excellent weather on June 23 they climbed the “Bottleneck and got to the summit just after the Barrards, Michel Parmentier and Wanda Rutkiewicz. They took five days to make the descent in bad weather, arriving at Base Camp on June 27. They were accompanied part of the way down by Wanda Rutkiewicz.

GREGORIO ARIZ, Club Anaitasuna, Spain

K2, Women’s Ascents and Tragedy. French climbers Michel Parmentier, Maurice and Liliane Barrard were joined by Pole Wanda Rutkiewicz. Both women had already climbed two 8000ers. Apparently the expedition was not a happy one from the beginning. Maurice Barrard lost the expedition’s funds, passports and airline tickets in Rawalpindi. They reached Base Camp at the end of May. According to other climbers on the mountain there was little harmony among them from the start. In early June they got to 7000 meters and descended to wait out nine days of storm. They set out again on June 18 but progress up the mountain was slow. Above the fixed ropes and Camp III, Liliane Barrard was having considerable difficulty. They moved unroped. She took three or four hours before she would move up over a sérac. On June 22 all four bivouacked
in a two-man tent without sleeping bags at 8300 meters. On the 23rd they left for
the summit in lovely weather. Wanda Rutkiewicz became the first woman to
reach the summit of K2 when she went ahead of the others who rested for an
hour a half-hour below the top before going on to the the summit. When they got
back to their bivouac tent at 8300 meters, the Barrards insisted on spending a
second cold night there. On the morning of June 24 Parmentier started ahead to
melt water at 7900-meter Camp III. Rutkiewicz followed. She looked back to
see the Barrards descending slowly, apparently exhausted. They were never
seen again. The two spent the night at Camp III and Rutkiewicz descended to
Camp II with Basques Mari Abrego and Josema Casimiro, who had reached the
summit on the same day as they had. She waited for Parmentier for two days
before she descended. Meanwhile Parmentier was waiting for the Barrards. He
finally left when it began to storm. He had to be directed down the route by
Benoît Chamoux, who told him on the radio just where to go. He was uninjured,
but Wanda Rutkiewicz had frost-bitten hands and feet. Austrians found Liliane
Barrard’s body at the foot of the south face on July 19.

Broad Peak and K2. An Italian group, “Quota 8000,” which has a six-year
program to climb all fourteen 8000ers, had K2 and Broad Peak for its goal in
1986. The team consisted of Italians Agostino Da Polenza, leader, Marino
Giacometti, Gianni Calcagno, Soro Dorotei, Martino Moretti, Tullio Vidoni,
Frenchman Benoît Chamoux and me* from Czechoslovakia. On June 4 we
placed Base Camp below K2 at 5100 meters. We placed Camp I at 5700 meters
and Camp II on the Negrotto Col at 6300 meters on K2. After bad weather we
turned to Broad Peak. On June 16 we placed Camp I at 6300 meters on the
normal route on Broad Peak but returned to Base. On June 18 Dorotei, Giaco-
metti, Moretti and I spent the night at Camp I and the next day camped at 7100
meters. On June 20 the three Italians got to the summit, but I had to stop on the
8030-meter forsummit because my movie camera froze. Chamoux left Base
Camp on the evening of June 19 and, taking advantage of our tracks, reached the
summit also on the 20th. He was back in Base Camp 24 hours after he started.
I spent a day at 7100 meters and on June 22 climbed to the summit of Broad Peak
solo. After the death of the two Americans on the south-southwest ridge of K2,
we decided to climb the Abruzzi Ridge. Bad weather held us up at 7800 meters.
Calcagno, Vidoni, Moretti, Dorotei and I set out again on July 3. We biv-
ouacked at 6700 and 7800 meters and got to the summit of K2 on July 5.
Chamoux left Base Camp at ten A.M. and Advance Base at six P.M. on July 4
and again using our tracks, got to the top at 4:30 P.M. on July 5. We all
descended together. On July 6 Austrian Kurt Diemberger and Englishwoman
Julie Tullis, who were our film team, got to the “Bottleneck” at 8200 meters.

JOSEF RAKONCAJ, Čekoslovensky Horolezecky Svaz

* Rakoncaj is the first person to have climbed K2 twice, each time by a different route,
having also climbed K2 from the north in 1983.