

meters on March 10. Advance Base at 6500 meters was established on March 18 with three large tents and 30 small ones to house seven tons of material. Ten members set up Camp V at 7790 meters and on April 7, Camp VI at 8100 meters. The 127-member south team, led by Kunga Sherpa, set up Base Camp at 5350 meters on March 28 to climb the South Col route. Setting up camps was seriously hampered by bad weather, but the route to the South Col was prepared by April 23 with ropes fixed on the rock band. Yet the establishment of Camp IV on the col was delayed until April 30. On May 3, Camp V was established at 8500 meters and occupied the next day by Ang Phurba Sherpa and Top Bahadur Khatri of Nepal, Mitsugi Kitamura and Gota Isono of Japan and Ringen Puncoq and Da Cering of China. There was a live TV broadcast on May 4 from the highest camp on the north that afternoon. Six men set out up the northeast ridge at five A.M. on May 5. Ang Lhakpa Sherpa of Nepal, Norburu Yamada of Japan and Cerin Doje of Tibet reached the top at 9:25 A.M. The team from the south had had high winds in the night. Ang Phurba ran out of oxygen two hours before reaching the summit and had to slow down. Ang Phurba, Ringen Puncoq and Da Cering gained the top an hour after the north team. It is not clear whether the other three did not attempt the climb or gave up. The six summiters shook hands and planted their respective national flags. Ang Phurba, who was without supplementary oxygen, hurried to the north after 20 minutes. Ang Lhakpa traversed to the south after 90 minutes. The Japanese TV crew, Susuma Nakamura, Syoji Nakamura and Saigusa Teruo, reached their summit "location" at 12:55. The TV transmitter was strapped to Susuma Nakamura's helmet. They soon started beaming the summit rendez-vous to the world. Three others, Lhakpa Sona Sherpa of Nepal, Nunehiko Yamamoto of Japan and Li Zhixin of China, came up from the Tibetan side, but they did not traverse and descended to the north. The first group of three north-side summiters reached Camp IV on the South Col at 7:45 P.M. They were in Base Camp at four the next afternoon. Ang Phurba had a little difficulty descending via the north because of the "unfamiliar route." He stopped at Camp VII. The other two south-side summiters went down to Camp VI. On the following day, Ang Phurba reached Camp III while the other two stopped at Camp IV. All were in Base Camp on May 7. Two other attempts planned for May 8 and 12 were called off. However, Sundare Sherpa, Padma Bahadur Tamang, Ang Rita Sherpa, Narayan Shrestha and Ang Karma Sherpa left Camp IV at 2:50 A.M. on May 10. The last three dropped out after two hours, but Sundare and Padma Bahadur pressed on to reach the summit at 10:45 A.M. They were back in Base Camp on May 12. This was the third time that Yamoto had climbed Everest. Sundare has made five ascents of the mountain.

KAMAL K. GUHA, *Editor, Himavanta, India*

*Everest West Ridge Attempt.* The British Services Everest Expedition attempted to climb Mount Everest from Tibet via the west ridge in the pre-monsoon period. The members were 17 soldiers, ten sailors and Royal Marines, nine airmen and a TV crew. Fifty-two expedition members and 17 tons of stores

arrived at Base Camp by March 13. To get to Advance Base, a mixture of yaks and human porters from expedition members was used. An intermediate camp was set up. Advance Base was finished at 19,600 feet by March 22. The next phase involved forcing the route up the 4000-foot spur that leads onto the west ridge. Merv Middleton's group fixed 2800 feet of rope, the first 300 feet of which were up 70° ice. They got Camp III in by March 27. Then a group led by David Nicholls fixed more of the route up potential avalanche slopes and got in Camp IV at the top of the spur on April 7. On April 12, Henry Day, deputy leader, and a group involving Nigel Williams pressed the route to Camp V, a highly exposed traverse for 1½ kilometers along the west ridge over some difficult snow slopes. The camp was fixed on April 15 at 25,600 feet on the only available flat area which unfortunately acted as a wind tunnel. The first summit bid was set for April 29. Nicholls, Middleton, Maxwell, Garratt, Moore and McLeod failed in their bid because their support group were unable to establish the top assault camp high enough in the Hornbein Couloir. They reached 27,500 feet. Another assault was mounted for May 9. They reached Camp V on May 6. Much snow had fallen and when they got to the huge snowfield leading to the Hornbein Couloir, they found dangerous, unstable conditions and had to withdraw. The last and final attempt was planned for May 17. Nicholls, McLeod, Day and Hughes and their support party reached Camp V on May 15 but a further day had to be spent stocking, delaying the summit bid for a crucial 24 hours. Day had to drop out. The other three spent an uncomfortable night on May 17 in the top camp. Unexpectedly, that night the weather turned bad and a huge storm developed. The next morning, things were worse, but Nicholls and McLeod set out in the storm and forced their way up and over the crux to arrive on the summit snowfield at 28,200 feet. In a fierce blizzard they had an anxious radio conversation with me. With much sadness and disappointment, they withdrew.

DOUGLAS KEELAN, *Lieutenant Colonel, Royal Marines*

*Everest, Northeast Ridge.* Our expedition consisted of climbers Brummie Stokes, leader, Dr. Philip Horniblow, Harry Taylor, Joe Brown, Mo Anthoine, Dr. John English, Pete Long, Ali Kellas, Davy Jones, Ian Nicholson, Trevor Williams, Sam Roberts, Bill Barker, Russell Brice and me as deputy leader. In the course of the expedition, Stokes was struck by three separate attacks of cerebral edema and had to depart from the mountain on August 1, leaving me in charge. Although the plan had been to move by road to the Rongbuk Base Camp, on June 7 we were refused entry into Tibet by the Chinese border guards at Kodari. The whole expedition and its equipment had to be flown to Lhasa, mostly on June 18, and then trucked to Base Camp, at considerable expense and loss of time. From there we had masses of gear to organize into loads for yaks to carry to Advance Base, 14 miles away. After a 19,000-foot intermediate camp had been set up on June 25, by June 29 Mo Anthoine, Pete Long, Harry Taylor, Russell Brice and I had located and set up Advance Base at 21,000 feet on the site of the four previous northeast-ridge expeditions. Despite poor weather, Camp I at 23,200 feet was established on July 5. The long traverse over suspect