

*Lhotse South Face Tragedy.* Although two expeditions from Katowice, Poland had already tried this tremendous wall, both times they had lacked luck—one or two windless days when the attacking teams were high. This year we managed to organize a team strong enough to climb the face. Our expedition was composed of Jerzy Kukuczka, leader, Ryszard Pawłowski, Maciej Pawlikowski, Przemysław Piasecki, Tomasz Kopyś, Michał Kulej, Elżbieta Piętak, Witold Oklek, Leszek Czech and me, Poles, Frenchman Yves Ballu, Swiss Fulvio Mariani and Italian Floriano Castelnovo. Our plan was to fix rope to Camp II while climbers acclimatized on neighboring 6000ers and on the normal route on Lhotse. The climbers on Lhotse's normal route would also establish a camp at 7400 meters to protect the descent from the summit. However, nature changed our ambitious plans as the monsoon lasted until the first days of October. There was no alternative but to try only the Polish route on the south face of Lhotse. Luckily we had several kilometers of rope which were carefully fixed on the wall. Camps I, II, III, IV, V and VI were placed at 5800, 6200, 6800, 7100, 7450 and 7800 meters on September 13, 18, 28, October 5, 8 and 21. During the whole period while the rope was being fixed, the weather was bad and there was a great danger of avalanches. The climbers suffered from the high moisture and sharp cold, and most had painful coughs. Not until October 5 did the weather improve enough pitch the higher camps. As traditionally is the case, in the middle of October strong winds blew in from Tibet. On October 18 Kukuczka and Pawłowski set out from Base Camp hoping to reach the summit. The next day, the wind stopped blowing. Taking advantage of the good weather, they reached Camp VI on October 21. On the following day, they continued, bivouacking first at 8000 and then at 8300 meters. The weather was still excellent. Just after sunrise on the 23rd, Kukuczka began to climb toward the ridge crest which he could already see. Just as he was about to reach it on the final obstacle, he suddenly fell off. The rope could not hold the fall of more than 100 meters and broke and he fell the whole length of the face to his death. Pawłowski could not inform Base Camp about the accident because Kukuczka had the radio in his rucksack. He spent the night on a rock ledge at 8100 meters. The next day he met the support team of Kopyś and Pawlikowski. All three returned to Base Camp on October 26.

RYSZARD WARECKI, *Klub Wysokogórski Katowice, Poland*

*Lhotse.* A two-man Korean expedition completed the 20th ascent of Lhotse. Leader Heo Young-Ho reached the summit via the west face on October 14.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Lhotse South Face, Solo Winter Attempts.* There were two separate unsuccessful attempts made by Frenchmen to climb the south face of Lhotse in winter. On November 29, Marc Batard reached 7000 meters before giving up. Accompanied by Catalán Enric Lucas, Christophe Profit reached 6700 meters on December 18, but after two bivouacs there, the pair had to descend in bad

weather. Lucas then returned to Spain. Profit made a solo attempt on January 13 and 14, 1990, which reached 7150 meters, where his tent was destroyed by the wind. A final attempt from January 19 and 21, 1990 failed at 7600 meters.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Nuptse, Joint Attempt by the Left Buttress of the Central Part of the South Face.* Our expedition was composed of Italians Kurt Walde, Alberto Guelpa and me. On April 14, we placed Base Camp on the Lhotse Nup Glacier. The next day, four Canadians set up camp next to ours. We all had the same objective; the route attempted in 1986 by Jeff Lowe and Marc Twight. A few days later, our group headed for Camp II on the normal Everest route both for acclimatization and to scan the 1961 British route on Nuptse, which we hoped to use on the descent. The Canadians also spent some days acclimatizing. In early May, we were all back in Base Camp, but two Canadians and Guelpa had to withdraw for health reasons. That left Canadians Jim Elzinga, Peter Abril, Kurt Walde and me, who joined forces. Starting on May 7, it took us seven days of very difficult climbing to reach the top of the buttress at 6917 meters. The weather was clear and cold on the first four days and unstable during the last three. We bivouacked at 5600, 6100, 6300, 6550, 6750 and twice at 6900 meters. On the eighth day, we were holed up in an ice cave at 6900 meters. On the evening of May 15, Peter and Jim headed up for the summit of Nuptse. Kurt had a badly infected throat and possibly frostbitten feet. We two began the descent of the 1961 British route. The Canadians had meanwhile gained 200 meters more, but they too began the descent. With another bivouac at 6100 meters on the descent we got down. The Canadians returned the next day.

ENRICO ROSSO, *Club Alpino Italiano*

*Nuptse, Northwest Summit.* A five-person German expedition to Nuptse was led by Ralf Dujmovits. On November 2, they climbed the northwest ridge to the northwest summit (7742 meters, 25,400 feet), still about 400 feet short of the true summit.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Everest, Polish Ascent and Tragedy.* An expedition led by Eugeniusz Chrobak climbed Mount Everest up the western side from Nepal. The 19-member team included 10 Poles, 4 Americans, 3 Mexicans, a Canadian and a Briton. They established five camps along the west ridge and Hornbein Couloir. Rather than to climb directly to the Lho La, they went over the south summit of Khumbutse (6408 meters), west of the pass, and dropped down to Camp I at 6000 meters at the head of the West Rongbuk Glacier. On May 22, nearly two months after reaching Base Camp, Mirosław Dąsal and Mirosław Gardzielewski reached the top of the Hornbein Couloir in an unsuccessful try for the summit. They retired to Camp IV to support the next summit team and help evacuate the camps. On May 24, Chrobak and Andrzej Marciniak left Camp IV at the foot of the Hornbein Couloir at one A.M. and reached the summit of