

approach was not feasible and the route was placed under the shoulder of the west ridge. We coordinated fixing the route with five other expeditions. We made three summit attempts: May 2 by Fischer, Berg and Jamieson to 28,000 feet thwarted by deep snow and exhaustion; May 13 by the same team turned back at 28,000 feet by storm; and May 16 to the summit by Torres, Phu Dorje Sherpa and Ang Danu Sherpa. I had to return from 27,000 feet. Oxygen was used above the South Col. Phu Dorje disappeared during the descent. His body was spotted several days later by other expedition members. Base Camp was a virtual city with considerable environmental impact and requiring expertise in international diplomacy.

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*Everest.* Our expedition had Karen Fellerhoff and Peter Athans as logistical leaders. The other members were Americans Jeff and Kellie Erwin Rhoads, Andy Lapkiss, Glenn Porzak and Tom Whittaker, Swedes Carl Johan Lager and Mikael Reuterswärd, New Zealander Peter Hillary, Belgians Rudy Van Snick and Nick Tettelin, Australian Roddy McKenzie, Britons Alan Burgess and I and 12 Sherpas. Porzak, Lapkiss, Al Burgess and I got to Base Camp on March 30, but most members did not arrive until April 12 because of supply problems in Kathmandu and illness in the Khumbu. On April 10, we established Camp I, a little higher than usual because of bad conditions in the icefall. Camp II was placed at 21,000 feet on April 17. Platforms for Camp III were dug at 23,500 feet on April 22 but the camp was not occupied until April 24. Porzak, the two Belgians, Reuterswärd and two Sherpas made the first summit attempt from Camp IV on the South Col on May 4. However, bad weather stopped this group as well as the next four summit attempts. The idea was that because of the considerable experience of the group we should all have the opportunity to make a summit bid. Actually twelve of the Westerners did go to Camp IV on the South Col without oxygen, spent the night there and either made a summit bid or descended, thwarted by bad weather. Finally on May 24 Lhakpa Nuru Sherpa, Sonam Dendu Sherpa, Roddy McKenzie and I left the South Col at midnight and reached the summit at seven A.M. We were back at the South Col at ten o'clock and at Camp II at two P.M. Two bottles of oxygen were carried by all four climbers. The snow conditions were very good, hard snow-ice. The weather was perfect until late afternoon when it quickly deteriorated. A final summit bid on May 25 was foiled by bad weather. There were two accidents and deaths on the South Col route this spring, involving other teams. The Nepalese government is now allowing a number of expeditions on this route at the same time. It would appear that the capability of teams ranges from very experienced to wildly incompetent. The main cause of accidents is because climbers are taking so long on the final day that they do not arrive at the summit until after four P.M. Then, tired from their efforts, they must descend in failing light and with failing strength. Teams should decide on a reasonably early turn-around time, such as two P.M., and then adhere to it.

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