

24 Frenchmen, a Swiss and a Portuguese led by Michel Pellé. On October 9, Frenchmen Pellé, Philippe Grenier, Thierry Defrance, Alain Roussey and Pierre Aubertin got to the summit. Some of the climbers achieved personal "firsts." Berger was the first Luxembourger to stand atop Everest and Ortega the first Peruvian. Other planned firsts were not accomplished. Marc Batard of France did not succeed in becoming the first person to sleep at the top of the world—he didn't actually manage to reach the top. If he had, it would have been his third time there. Nepalese Iman Gurung became ill at 7300 meters on October 7 and did not realize his ambition of setting a new speed record by climbing from Base Camp to the summit in just 20 hours. This left still standing Batard's record of 22 hours and 29 minutes, set four years ago.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Everest, Southwest Face Attempt.* The huge, steep southwest face of Everest has been successfully scaled by only three expeditions. This autumn, a team led by Ukrainian Mikhail Turkevich, who had already climbed the face in 1982, was composed of ten Ukrainians, three Russians and two Frenchmen, including Christophe Profit. They employed no Sherpas and had no climbing oxygen. They wanted to make a new direct route straight to the summit, but they were somewhat late in getting started and, after two weeks of climbing, reluctantly concluded they could not open a new line in the time and with the resources they had. They decided instead to attempt to repeat the 1975 British route. After two more weeks of team effort, three Ukrainians reached 8500 meters before two of them became frostbitten and had to descend. The remaining man, Igor Svergun, stayed high on the face alone and the day after his teammates had gone down, he made a solo bid for the summit. Just how high he reached he doesn't know. It was a dark night on October 19 and his headlamp batteries were dead when he stopped ascending. Without artificial oxygen, he became confused. He surely got to the south summit. By his description of the area where he had to stop because he was confronted by a steep wall with a lot of fixed ropes, he may well have reached the Hillary Step, not far below the summit. Wherever he was, he waited for the moon to rise to give him light, too confused to remember that it was the time of the new moon. After three or four hours' wait, a very strong wind blew up and he decided to go back down. By the time he had gotten down to the highest camp at 8300 meters, he could scarcely breathe, possibly having developed pulmonary edema. Luckily, slightly above the camp, he had found a bottle of some other expedition's oxygen. Without an oxygen mask, he simply opened the valve and breathed in pure oxygen in gulps. He continued the descent with the bottle on a rope, from time to time taking more gulps from it. In a period of 24 hours through the day and night, he climbed down from the highest camp to the camp at the foot of the face at 6400 meters. Even then, he didn't stop for many hours. He and his bottle, "like a woman with her dog on a leash," went on downward with the bottle sliding before him through the Khumbu Icefall, helping him to avoid crevasses as well as supplying him with occasional bursts

PLATE 62

*Photo by Pedro José Tous*

**KHUMBU ICEFALL.**



of oxygen. By the time he got to Base Camp, he was in remarkably good condition considering all he had gone through during three trying days.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Everest.* Our expedition consisted of Americans Robert Hoffman, Kurt Cox, Bradford Bull, Edward DeLean, Philip Perrin, Robert Elias, Karen Stephens, Sherman Bull, Dean Johnson, Ross Berry and me, Mexicans Sergio Fitch Watkins and Alfonso de la Parra and Peruvian Augusto Ortega. [Fitch Watkins and Hoffman had to leave the expedition early because of serious disputes with members over money matters. —*Editor.*] We arrived at Base Camp on September 2 and by October 3 had Camp IV stocked on the South Col. We decided that October 9 would be our one summit attempt. On October 7, Sherpas Apa, Pasang Kami and Tashi and Bradford Bull, DeLean, Johnson, de la Parra, Ortega and I left Camp II. Our night at Camp III was a long one due to a stove mishap which burned a tent. Bull hastily evacuated the tent in his inner boots and slipped, which left him 30 feet down a crevasse. He was uninjured but his retrieval and rewarming and the adjustments to the camp made for an unproductive night of rest. We arrived on the South Col on the afternoon and early evening of October 8. We left the South Col at 12:30 A.M. on the 9th without Johnson, who elected to remain at Camp IV. DeLean turned back at 27,500 feet and Bull and Tashi stopped just below the South Summit. Ortega, de la Parra, Pasang Kami Apa and I, reached the summit at eight A.M. In keeping with the Nepalese Ministry of Tourism's new regulation, we deposited \$4000 as security that we would remove all non-burnable rubbish from the mountain and Base Camp and that we would ship our empty oxygen cylinders, used batteries and other such items back to the United States. We did so and our deposit was refunded in full. The empty oxygen bottles had to be shipped via air freight because they are not accepted in overland shipments at the Indian border.

WALLY BERG

*Everest.* Our members were Patxi Fernández, Mikel Reparaz, Juan Tomás, José Ramón Zubizarreta, Félix Iñurrategui, Juan María Eguillor, Iñaki Ochoa de Olza, Josu Bereciartua, Alberto Iñurrategui and I as leader. We climbed the standard South Col route. We established Base Camp, Camps I, II, III and IV on August 23, September 1, 6, 13 and 24 at 5350, 6000, 6500, 7300 and 7980 meters. Eguillor, Fernández, and the Iñurrategui brothers made the first post-monsoon ascent on September 25, the latter two without artificial oxygen. Ochoa de Olza had to turn back at 8500 meters because of frostbite. Eguillor went snow-blind and he and Fernández had to bivouac at 8700 meters on the descent, suffering frostbitten feet and hands. After they were evacuated from Base Camp by helicopter, Bereciartua climbed to the summit on October 1. On October 3, Tomás, Reparaz and I reached the top.

PEDRO JOSÉ TOUS, *Spain*