750 meters of rope on the lower part of the Kurtyka-Loretan route for seven days. On July 7, José Chaverri, Lorenzo Ortiz and Santiago Palacios made their final attempt, which ended ten meters below the summit because of perpendicular unconsolidated snow. Chaverri then joined Basques Kike de Pablos and Jon Lazkano on the Slovene Route, where they had already fixed half the route. On July 19, Chaverri and de Pablos were overtaken by nightfall when they were not far from the summit, but they gave up and rappelled off in the dark.

Great Trango Tower, East Face, Swiss-American Expedition, Second Ascent to the East Summit. Our expedition, consisting of Swiss Xaver Bongard, Ueli Bühler and François Studiman and American photographer Ace Kvale and me, arrived in Pakistan on June 10. On June 24, after a three-day trek from Askole, we made our Base Camp near the mouth of the Dunge Glacier where it runs into the Baltoro on June 24. Bongard and I immediately began preparations for a new route on the east face of the Great Trango Tower. We scoped the line, established Camps I and II on the very dangerous approach, much of which was possible only at night, and fixed the first pitches. On July 13, after some periods of unsettled weather, we spent the first night on the wall in our hanging 2-man A5 portaledge. We climbed capsule-style, with only six ropes total, and established five camps on the wall, four hanging and one at the snow ledge halfway up, fixing our ropes above each camp until we decided it was safe and timely to move the camp up. Many of the belays were in suicidal positions, due to ice-, snow- and rockfall from above, but camps were generally in safe havens. On July 28, we summited, after being trapped 400 feet below the rim for three days in a fierce Karakoram storm. The climbing involved many pitches of technical aid climbing, some pitches of free, difficult ice and mixed climbing. The last five pitches below the snow ledge involved vertical ice climbing and rotten aid and free climbing up a dangerous steep corner system which we named "Gollum's Gully"; this turned out to be a major drainage for the snow ledge. It was possible to climb these pitches only at night, due to incessant ice and snow pummeling down during the day. The rest of the route also had severe objective hazards because of ice, rock and snow avalanching from the snow ledge system and the summit séracs. Occasionally, huge sections would exfoliate off the wall and pound down around us. The upper headwall above the snow ledge was superb, though chimneys in the final section required multiple "Harding Slot" maneuvers in inclement weather at 20,000 feet. The final six pitches from the rim to the summit involved technical ice and tenuous mixed climbing, as well as a tough final slug through deep unconsolidated snow to the summit ridge and onto the east summit. It took us three days to rappel the route. From the base of the actual climb, we had to rappel a buttress to the east of the approach gully because of dangerous all-day and all-night avalanches caused by the warming summer conditions. We made 44 rappels in all. In general, the weather was fine, though we spent many days and nights in freezing storms in our hanging bivouacs. We named the route "The Grand Voyage." It was Grade VII, 5.10, A4+, WI3. We climbed 4400 feet from the actual base to the summit in 33 pitches with a

COLOR PLATE 9

Photo by John Middendorf

GREAT TRANGO TOWER's East Face.

PLATE 70

Photo by John Middendorf

Xavier Bongard on the GREAT TRANGO TOWER.

200-foot lead rope. Our route began well to the left of the Norwegian route. It joined it at the top of the snow ledge, continued along it for three rope-lengths and then branched to the right of it to reach the summit. We sighted fixed pitons and slings on rock outcroppings left by the Norwegians on the final pitches to the summit, verifying the likelihood of their complete ascent. (They doubtless met their accident on the descent.) Our ascent, then, was the second to the east summit (6231 meters, 20,443 feet), as both the Japanese and Spanish teams who repeated the Norwegian route did not venture past the rim. It should be noted that Great Trango Tower has three principal summits: the main (central) summit (6286 meters, 20,624 feet); the west summit (6237 meters, 20,463 feet); and the east summit, to which we climbed. Bühler and Studiman had hoped to climb the Nameless Tower, but Bühler broke his ankle halfway up the Kurtyka-Loretan route when he fell some ten meters. Studiman did a splendid job with the evacuation and they were back in Base Camp in a day and a half.

JOHN MIDDENDORF

Great Trango Tower, Basejump. Our multinational team consisted of Australians Nic Feteris and me, Britons Leo and Mandy Dickinson, New Zealanders Wade Fairley and Geoff Gabites and Russians Vladislav Moroz and Irina Singleman. We arrived in Pakistan on July 17. The road from Skardu now reaches Askole. The journey was an eventful one. A four-wheel drive vehicle carrying 20 porters crashed 150 feet down a rock slide, seriously injuring three people. As the only doctor for miles, I had to treat and transfer the injured to the nearest hospital at Skardu. Despite the delay, we arrived at Base Camp at 4200 meters on the Trango Glacier on August 3. On the Great Trango Tower, we followed the 1984 American route up the gully between the Nameless and Great Trango Towers and then onto the west ridge. We established Camp I at 5000 meters on August 5 in the shelter of a gigantic boulder. Camp II was placed on August 12 at 5500 meters in the lee of a rock finger standing 200 feet above a gully running east from the main gully. A single 20-meter ice wall rose just below camp. From Camp II, the climbing was over steep ice up to 6000 meters. A two-pitch traverse followed to access the narrow tongue between ice cliffs spilling off either side of the mountain. Three more moderate pitches led to a plateau beneath the north summit. We fixed the route to here. Feteris, Vlad Moroz, Gabites and I visited the summit multiple times between August 18 and 24 while investigating many sites on the edge of the northwest face for a rock ledge from which to launch our basejump. We needed a site above a vertical or overhanging section of wall with no protruding ledges for 300 meters. Access to the edge of the rock wall was made difficult by the 70-meter-high séracs lining the face. The site we picked was at 5955 meters. A two-pitch abseil over a sérac gave access to a small rock ledge in the center of the face. We spent a day carving ice off the ledge to widen it. On August 26, Feteris and I strapped on six kilograms of camera gear to our helmets and mounted cameras to chest and leg. Vlad Moroz filmed and Gabites had a motor-drive Nikon next to us. Leo