

Samdrup, the nine climbers, several of whom had already been successful on Cho Oyu and Shisha Pangma as well as on Everest in 1975 and 1990, climbed both peaks. On April 26, Tshering Dorjee, Ren Na, Pemba Tashi and Akebu completed the ascent of Annapurna. On the last two days of May, all nine climbers ascended Dhaulagiri: on May 30, Tshering Dorjee, Pemba Tashi, Akebu and Dachung and on May 31, Da Chimyi, Gyalbu, Lodue, Ren Na and Wangyal. Samdrup said that they found Annapurna technically more difficult than Everest from the north, and they fixed 4000 meters of rope on the unusually long line they picked on the north face. Nonetheless, the four summiters managed an ascent all the way from their last camp at only 6700 meters, 1400 vertical meters, to the summit and a safe return to camp late the same night, a round-trip of 21½ hours. Because of the meager supply of oxygen at the camp when they set out at three A.M., only two men climbed on oxygen during the ascent and even they had none left for the descent. Dhaulagiri via the northeast ridge was found by the Tibetans technically easier than Annapurna and Everest but harder than their own 8000er, Shisha Pangma. The second group had such perfect weather at the top that they didn't want to come down and while they lingered there for an hour and 11 minutes, they burned incense, an activity not routinely performed on an 8000-meter summit in Nepal.

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*Annapurna South Face Attempt and Near Tragedy.* Franc Knez and Slavko Svetičič attempted to complete the route on the south face of Annapurna previously tried by Beghin and Lafaille. Accompanied by Andreja Knez, they left on August 23 and a few days later were joined by Matjaž Pečovnik and a TV team. When at the end of September, Knez felt ill, Svetičič decided to try alone. On October 3, he began to climb with 50 kilos of equipment but after a bivouac at 6800 meters, he descended because of avalanche danger. On October 7, he set out again but at 6:45 A.M. he was swept down 500 meters by an avalanche. By nine A.M., the rescue operation began and he was carried down to Advance Base at 4800 meters by 7:30 P.M. The following day, he was carried to Base Camp and on October 9 was helicoptered to Kathmandu. He has returned to Slovenia, where it has been decided that no spine operation will be necessary.

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*Annapurna North Face Attempts.* There were two unsuccessful attempts to climb Annapurna by the usual north-face route. Nine Spanish Catalans led by Oleguer Suñe reached a high point at 6200 meters on October 4. A second expedition of Catalans, also numbering nine, were under the leadership of Sebastià Massagut. They had to turn back on October 21 at 6850 meters.

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