

Kun Ascent and Attempt. A French expedition led by Jacques Duevisson climbed Kun by its east ridge in mid August. A month later, British climbers under the leadership of John Harris Schwelm failed.

KAMAL K. GUHA, *Editor, Himavanta, India*

Exploration of the High-Altitude Desert of Rupshu and Ascent of Mata, Southeast Ladakh. Our members were Chetan Bhattacharji, Rajbans Talwar, Vijay Jung Thapa, Ms. Rupa Dutta, Ms. Rohini Prakash, Ms. Seema Mishra, Gautam Das, Rano Gupta, Shantanu Swargiary, Sedenshen Kikon, Dr. Anil Gurtoo, and I as leader. We were joined by ten students from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, whom we welcomed as they were willing to carry full porter loads. At the end of the first week of June, we left Pangmo Maidan (13,300 feet) near Hal village above the Spiti River. We trekked up the Takling Nala to the Chungar grazing ground, beyond which the track petered out. From camp at 16,400 feet, we crossed the Takling La (17,300 feet) to camp at Takling Sumdo at 16,000 feet. We then descended gently down the two-kilometer-wide river bed of Takhu Chu to Thatang Sumdo, where it joined the river from the Parang La Glacier to form the Pare Chu. This river has a strange course. It flows into Tibet and then is turned back into India by the Drongmar Range to meet the Spiti at Sumdo. We traveled to Raolcham. After crossing the Pare Chu for the last time to Narbu Sumdo at 15,300 feet, we had arrived in the Rupchu Desert in southeast Ladakh. The Pare Chu flows south from Narbu Sumdo to Tibet 29 kilometers away. From Narbu Sumdo we traversed the high-altitude desert to Kiangdom or Chung Tung (14,900 feet) near the southwest shore of the lake, Tso Moriri, which is 28 kilometers long and 3 to 6 kilometers wide. We spent a day taking depth readings, meeting the nomadic Changpas and climbing heights on either side of the lake. We were in a hurry to reach Karzok (15,100 feet) so as to dispose of the 29 mules to cut skyrocketing costs. Karzok is three kilometers from the northwest end of the lake. We spent several days reconnoitering the way to Mata (20,607 feet) and climbing humbler points for views of the surrounding terrain about which even the detailed maps show errors. We established Camps I, II and III at 16,600, 18,800 and 20,200 feet on June 26, 27 and 28. On June 29, Mata's summit was reached by Chetan, Seema, Rupa, Rano, Shantanu, Gautam, Dr. Gurtoo, nine of the St. Stephen's boys and three porters. The peaks in Rupshu are very easy. They have no snow on their southern sides below 20,000 feet. Their northern slopes have snow and tiny glaciers till 16,000 feet. The reason for this is the furious south-north and the west-east winds that blow all the time. Meanwhile, the rest had been exploring other features around Karzok. We took extensive depth readings in the Tso from about the same locations as Drew in 1873. The lake is shrinking and is more than 50 feet less deep. Many portions had weeds and muddy water. In 1984, when I was last there, the water had been clear. On the trek, we had to carry everything, even fuel and fodder for a few days for the mules. Parts of the Pare Chu valley and of the Rupshu desert did not even have the thorny furze that is elsewhere common. However, around the Tso's southwest end we found more fecundity than in 1984. From Karzok, a rough jeepable road

has been stretched to connect it to Leh 220 kilometers away. We took a lift from a visiting truck (mercifully still a rare event). Rupshu was unique and devastatingly beautiful, all the more so since for days on end we saw no homo sapiens at all. We were grateful to be supported by a Shipton-Tilman Grant.

ROMESH BHATTACHARJI, *Himalayan Club*

India—Eastern Karakoram

Aq Tash. A joint Indo-Japanese expedition was led by Indian Hukam Singh and me. After arriving at Base Camp at 4800 meters on July 18, we established Camp I at 5600 meters on the Yangbar Glacier on July 21. From there, the eight Indians headed for the south ridge while we seven Japanese attacked the southwest face. We Japanese climbed the central couloir and fixed 1500 meters of rope. We cut a shelf in the ice for Camp II at 6200 meters. On August 5, Ryoji Okamoto, Masao Yokoyama and I completed the upper rock difficulties and stopped on snow slopes some 150 meters from the top in order to give the Indians the chance to make the first ascent, which we expected them to do the next day. On August 6, Nobuo Yamamoto and Yasufumi Mizote did go to the summit (7016 meters, 23,019 feet). On August 8, Prem Singh, P.T. Sherpa, Mohan Singh, Khem Raj, Sange Sherpa, Wangchuk Sherpa and Hira Ram completed their route and also got to the top. More details and a photograph appear in *Iwa To Yuki* of December, 1993.

MINORU NAGOSHI, *Hiroshima Alpine Club*

Mamostong Kangri II. Our joint Indo-Austrian expedition of twelve made the first ascent of Mamostong Kangri II (7023 meters, 23,042 feet). The Austrian members were Reinhard Streif, Wolfgang Mörtl, Wolfgang Köblinger, Hans Kloimstein, Raimund Vielkind and I as co-leader. The Indians were Ravi Kumar, co-leader, A.S. Nagendra, K.V. Mohan, Rukmangaduraju, G.B. Ravindra and C.S. Yogananda. On arrival in New Delhi, we were informed that our permission for the climb had been withdrawn. It took ten days of anxious negotiation, particularly by our Indian members, to have it reinstated. After leaving the roadhead at Sasoma in the Nubra valley, we moved in early August with 20 mules up the Tulum Puti to Base Camp at Skyangpoche at 4720 meters at the tongue of the Mamostong Glacier. Camp I was established above a moraine at 5100 meters and Camp II on the glacier at 5600 meters at the foot of a 55° ice slope. We fixed 300 meters of rope there and pitched Camp III at its top at 6100 meters. The weather was good throughout. Two gullies were reconnoitered and given up. On August 14 at six A.M. Köblinger, Mörtl, Streif and I left Camp III, descended 100 meters to a glacial basin and crossed to the base of a ridge leading toward the peak. Behind the ridge, we started up a moderate snow slope on the west face. The terrain got steeper and some of the snow waist-deep. After bypassing some huge crevasses we reached a ridge,