

which we followed for a half hour to get to the summit at 3:30 P.M. The descent took us back to a glacial basin and finally up the 100-meter rise to Camp III, where we arrived at nine P.M. Kloimstein and Vielkind and two of the Indian climbers made a second summit attempt but were driven back by bad weather. Most of the Indian members were not properly prepared for such a climb and had little chance for the summit.

GÜNTHER STEINMAIR, *Österreichischer Alpenverein*

Pakistan

K2 Ascent and Tragedy. Our expedition was composed of Slovenes Dr. Damijan Meško, Viki Grošelj, Davo Karničar, Boštjan Kekec, Rado Nadvešnik, Zvonko Požgaj, Boris Sedej and me as leader, Croat Stipe Božić, Mexican Carlos Carsolio, Swede Göran Kropp and Briton David Sharman. On May 18, we left Skardu aboard nine jeeps and reached Askole the same afternoon where a small army of porters was waiting. The approach march went without a hitch. We got to Base Camp on the Godwin Austen Glacier at 5100 meters on May 25 and paid off the 160 porters. The next day, we set up Advance Base at 5450 meters at the foot of the Abruzzi Ridge. Camp I was established on May 27, at first two tents, one of which was later ruined by the wind. Despite bad weather, we set up Camp II and III at 6700 and 7250 meters on June 3 and 7. On June 10, an avalanche destroyed the tent at Camp III. Kropp and Sharman left the broken tent and retreated in the strong morning wind. That same day, Carsolio and Požgaj brought a new tent to 7300 meters. Because of the deep snow, they waited there for Božić and Grošelj and spent the day digging a snow cave. On June 12, all four plowed through the deep snow to the Shoulder and set up Camp IV at 7860 meters. Early on June 13, they set out for the summit in good weather but with deep snow. Kekec and Sedej left for Camp IV while Karničar and Nadvešnik improved the route below and above Camp III. At 12:50 P.M. the two top ropes reported that they were about 20 minutes from the summit and that they would continue despite rapidly worsening weather. Their orientation and timing were wrong. They reached the summit at four P.M. and immediately began the descent to Camp IV where Kekec and Sedej were waiting. Grošelj found the tent at seven o'clock and Požgaj at eight, while Božić and Carsolio had to bivouac somewhere on the Shoulder. They got to Camp IV at four A.M. The weather was deteriorating even more, but more worrying was the condition of Kekec, who was uncharacteristically fatigued. Grošelj and Carsolio were to descend to Camp III to report on conditions for the evacuation. The former reached Karničar and Nadvešnik at Camp III at noon but Carsolio did not arrive until ten P.M. The group at Camp IV postponed their descent until the following day while Kropp and Sharman left Base Camp with medicines and oxygen. In a lull in the storm on June 15, Božić, Sedej and Požgaj began the evacuation of Kekec, but he died soon after departure. The other three got to Camp III in the evening. The next day, their descent became even more precarious because

of Božić's snow blindness and Požgaj's frostbitten toes and fingers. By June 18, everyone was back in Base Camp. A memorial service for Kekec was held at the Gilkey Memorial. Požgaj's and Sedej's injuries indicated a helicopter evacuation, which took place on the 20th. Only Kropp and Sharman were determined to have another go for the summit. Karničar wanted to try, at least partly, his ambitious plan and to ski, if not from the summit, at least from the Shoulder. He had previously left his skis just below the Shoulder. On June 22, while Kropp and Sharman were climbing to Camp IV, he suffered a deep disappointment. His skis had disappeared, doubtless blown away by the wind. He returned to Base Camp. At two A.M. on June 23, Kropp and Sharman left Camp IV for the summit. With crampon problems, Sharman lagged behind, slipped and took a little fall. He descended. Kropp got to the summit at eleven A.M. Just as before, the weather changed around noon. He too had crampon problems and experienced a dangerous fall before getting to Camp IV, where he spent the night. His descent was also difficult. After a bivouac about 500 meters from Base Camp, he reached Base Camp on the morning of June 25, a day after Sharman, who also had had to bivouac when he could not find Advance Base. The remaining climbers left Base Camp on June 30 with 50 porters. We used no bottled oxygen and had no high-altitude porters. This was the 10th 8000er for Grošelj. We Slovenes have now climbed 13 of the 8000ers.

TOMAŽ JAMNIK, *Planinska zveza Slovenije*

K2, via West Ridge. Our international expedition was led by Englishman Jonathan Pratt and me from the United States. We made the second ascent of the west ridge, which was first climbed in 1981 by Japanese Eiho Ohtani and Pakistani Nazir Sabir of the Waseda University expedition. Our members were Americans Greg Mortenson, Rob Allen, Scott Darsney, British Andrew Collins, Andrew Mayers, John Wakefield, Frenchman Etienne Fine, Canadian John Arnold, Welshman Dean James and Irishman Mike O'Shea. We established Base Camp, Advance Base, Camps I, II, III, IV and V at 4900, 5200, 5800, 6500, 6900, 7500 and 7800 meters on June 24, July 2, 3, 7, 12, 28 and August 16. We fixed 4000 meters of rope between 5700 and 7600 meters. A storm destroyed Camp II on July 15. On July 20, an avalanche hit Wakefield and Arnold below Camp I. Fine had to be rescued from Camp III on July 21 and again on August 2 from Camp IV with pulmonary edema. He also had frostbite this second time. He was evacuated by helicopter from Base Camp on August 5. On August 23, Wakefield had to be helicoptered out because of frostbite. On September 3, a sérac fall wiped out Base Camp. Late June and early July were very sunny, warm and calm. In late July and up until August 23, the weather was stormy, windy, cloudy with much snowfall. Late August and early September were sunny or partly cloudy with some light snow and wind, but generally good. On September 1, Pratt and I established a bivouac at 8200 meters. "Summit day" lasted for 3½ hours, from 6:30 A.M. on September 2 to two P.M. on September 3. I led first, placing and aiding on pitons to reach