

Soviet-era teams, this group was not highly disciplined nor tightly structured. Those who wanted to climb the mountain and could pay came, and they climbed independently of each other, nominally led by Valenia, an engineer, diplomat, politician and former member of parliament. The leadership was reluctant to talk about the death of Mrs. Galina Tchekanova. Her name had not been included in the team's membership list (presumably to save money on the permit fee). It seems that she disappeared probably in a fall on October 18 after reaching the summit. Unsuccessful were 8 *Belgians* led by Bernard Mousny, who got to 6700 meters on October 16 and 7 *Frenchmen* and 1 *Swiss* led by Michel Richard who turned back at 7400 meters also on October 16.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

Dhaulagiri Ascents and Tragedy. Our international team consisted of Italian Marco Berti, leader, Italian Marco Bianchi, Italian (South Tirolean) Christian Kuntner, Poles Piotr Pustelnik and Józef Goździk, Portuguese João García and me from the United States. We left the trailhead at Baglung on August 29. On September 5, after trekking up the Kali Gandaki and over the French Pass, we were the third expedition to arrive in Base Camp. A Japanese team had already worked a route through the upper and lower icefalls. Unfortunately, Berti received an emergency note from Italy on the 7th and left to fly home. We regrouped, essentially dividing into two teams: Bianchi, Kuntner and García, and the two Poles and me. On September 9, we together established Camp I at 5800 meters. On the 16th, with some skepticism because of the weather, we made Camp II at 6850 meters. The next day, the weather worsened and the Italians headed down. Swiss Olivier Roduit and Pierrot Boven also arrived at Camp II that day. On the 18th, the storm got worse and we fought our way down in full storm conditions, surviving avalanche danger below Camp II, in the upper icefall below Camp I and on the Eiger traverse. After a few days in Base Camp, Bianchi and Kuntner left a day ahead of us others and kept a day ahead of us throughout. On September 23, our group arrived at Camp I in an easy five hours. This shows the effect of acclimatization, for it had taken me a miserable twelve hours on the first trip up. On September 24 and 25, we went to Camp II and III. At four P.M. on the 25th, Bianchi and Kuntner, along with Swiss François Perraudin and Paul-Victor Amaudruz returned from the summit. We four left on the 26th at four A.M. with Swiss Stéphane Albasini and Robert Baehler. Baehler turned back, but Albasini summited ahead of us. At 12:30, Pustelnik, Goździk, García and I reached the top. Our euphoria ended 600 meters lower down. As Goździk and I crossed a steep snow bowl which connects the summit traverse to the northeast ridge proper, to our horror we watched Baehler, who had stayed below, slip and fall over a steep rock cliff 1500 meters to his death. Roduit and Boven later went up and found his ice axe where he had fallen. It was a grim reminder of the effect of oxygen lack. Baehler

had been a guide for 24 years and knew how to use his axe. At a lower altitude, he would doubtless have self-arrested. We were all back in Base Camp on September 28 and left on the 30th.

R.D. CAUGHRON

Dhaulagiri Winter Attempt. Swiss Franco Dellatorre proposed to make a solo winter attempt on Dhaulagiri's normal northeast ridge. He assumed he would be able to make use of the fixed ropes of the teams that had summited in October, but scanning the ridge from Base Camp, he determined that he would need to fix about 400 meters of new rope because most of the autumn ropes were either not visible or now hopelessly off the route. He sent a message to his trekking agent in Kathmandu to provide him quickly with rope. In the meantime, he climbed alone to 6500 meters to acclimatize. On the descent to base, he found no rope had arrived. He waited another day and still no rope arrived and so he abandoned his climb, presuming the message had not reached Kathmandu. However, when he got to the nearest village, Marpha, he found there his liaison officer—and his rope. A very angry Dellatorre claims that the liaison officer told the man who had brought the rope from Kathmandu that the rope would not be needed since the Swiss climber would be back in Marpha en route to Kathmandu on December 10, which happened to be the very day that Dellatorre actually reached his highest point before descending to Base Camp to pick up his rope.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

India—Garhwal

Nanda Devi East. Because of the closure of the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, the only access to Nanda Devi East is from outside the sanctuary. There were four expeditions to the mountain. *Britons* Julie-Ann Clyma and her husband Roger Payne hoped to climb a new, difficult route on the northeast ridge. After a long time in the area and much bad weather, they climbed the south ridge alpine-style, reaching the top (7434 meters, 24,390 feet) on October 6. They gave a disturbing report on rubbish at Base Camp which had been left there since 1993. The route on the mountain is littered with rope. [See below.] *Spanish Catalans* led by Ferràn García on June 27 completed the seventh ascent of the first-ascent route via Longstaff's Col. [See below.] *Spanish Basques* led by Montxo López de Ipiña got to 6900 meters on the same route, finding the weather too cold and windy. Their high point was reached on October 4. *Indo-Americans* led by Krishnan Kutty and Tom Ball failed to climb the mountain, withdrawing in mid September.

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