

*Tawoche, Northeast Buttress.* Mick Fowler and Pat Littlejohn climbed the northeast buttress in four and a half days in April. They followed the line previously tried by a French team in 1990 and climbed up left to a right-slanting ramp line to gain the crest of the buttress at approximately 5600 meters (the previous highpoint). From the top of the buttress they followed the connecting ridge to the top of Tawoche (6542 meters) which was reached at 7:30 a.m. on April 28. The route was 43 pitches long, was climbed alpine-style (after the first 70 meters) and the overall grade was ED (Sup). Mike Morrison was sick for the duration with the result that he and Chris Watts were unable to undertake any serious climbing. (*An account of this climb appears earlier in this journal.*)

MICK FOWLER, *Alpine Climbing Group*

*Pumori, Ama Dablam, and a Season-Ending Storm.* These two popular destinations had eight and 17 teams on them respectively. A total of twenty-eight people summited Pumori by its standard route up the southeast ridge and face, and altogether 67 climbers gained the summit of Ama Dablam by its usual route on the southwest ridge. Leaders returning from Ama Dablam commented on how smooth relations were amongst the large international community on their mountain, a situation that was a very pleasant surprise for many of them. Ama Dablam summitters included a 15-year-old high school student from the United States, Mark Pfetzer. They also included a New Zealand mountain guide, Russell Brice, who amazed others by his ascent that began from Camp 1 at 5200 meters at 6 a.m., found him on the top (6812 meters) at 9:20 a.m., and then safely back to Base Camp at 4600 meters in time for lunch at 1 p.m. "It was just a nice day out for me," he said, "a half-day holiday." Brice's summit day, November 8, was the final day on which anyone got to the summit of Ama Dablam. On November 9, an unusual snowstorm began about noon and by the time it ended on the night of the 10th, it had dumped a remarkable two meters of fresh snow at base.

Such massive amounts of snow or rain is most unusual in the autumn. The summer monsoon rains often bring numerous fatal landslides which carry away small houses in Nepalese villages. Foreign trekkers do not normally venture into these areas in the summertime. The world's television, radio and newspapers carried many stories about this epic storm, however, and especially about the tragedy in the Gokyo Valley, where a massive avalanche smothered the tiny village of Panga, where all 13 Japanese trekkers and ten of their eleven Nepalese staff, plus two local residents, were killed. Farther east, at the site of the north Kangchenjunga basecamp, another Japanese group was hit by the heavy snowfall, and three Japanese and four Nepalese died. In the Manang region, just north of the great Annapurna mas-