

climbed the First Step in the darkness and continued toward the Second Step. The step has two parts, the lower 10 meters and the upper 10 meters. Having reinstalled the Chinese ladder up the upper part, they passed the Second Step easily. Dawn broke just before the triangular snowfield. The snowfield started as a hard snow wall but eventually the climbers had to break trail through softer snow. They rounded some rocks on the north face side, then, following rope left from the fall 1991 Japanese expedition, which looked like it was ready to break, traversed for two pitches. Then they climbed two pitches up a rock slab gully, and, fixing rope, climbed straight up onto the summit ridge. A 15-minute climb up the snow ridge, less steep than what they had been climbing on, brought them to the summit. The summit was relatively broad, like a cornice; a surveying device with optics, which had been carried up the year before for survey work, was still standing. The time was 7:15 a.m.

After one hour on the summit, the group started down, raced back through the pinnacles, and descended all the way to ABC that day, arriving at 6:16 p.m. just before the sun set.

NIHON UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB (*translated from the Japanese by Harold Solomon*)

*Mount Everest, Ascent by George Mallory.* Our team ascended the North Face route. On May 10, our first summit team left ABC to position themselves at C6 for a May 14 attempt. Chirring Sherpa, George Mallory and Jeff Hall were the first to summit at 6:30 a.m. following their 1 a.m. departure. They were later joined by Kaji Sherpa, Jim Litch, Dan Aguilar and Wongchu Sherpa. A second team comprised of Phinjo Sherpa, Colin Lynch, Jangbu Sherpa, Jay Budnick, Steve Reneker and Kurt Wedberg summited on May 16. For George Mallory it was a closing of the family circle tragically begun when his legendary grandfather disappeared with Andrew Irvine above their Everest high camp on May 8, 1924. In another "closing of the circle," Steve Reneker carried the ashes of our friend Dave Tollakson (AAJ 1994, *In Memoriam*) to the summit. It was figuratively Dave's seventh continental summit following his death as our Everest teammate on a practice climb in April, 1994.

PAUL PFAU

*Mount Everest, Summer Attempts.* While the monsoon weather was dumping large amounts of snow on the mountain, three summer attempts were made from Tibet: one by a Swiss expedition and two by small

American teams. None were successful. American David Breashears was caught by a huge wind slab avalanche about 30 meters below the North Col at 7000 meters. His life was saved by a previous expedition's fixed rope, which he had clipped. He said, "It made me realize how mortal I was," and went home.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Mount Everest in the Post-Monsoon.* A small Indian team came to the north side of Everest during the summer and stayed on well into the autumn. They were at or above basecamp nine weeks in all. Their leader, Atanu Chatterjee, said they were finally defeated by the unhappy discovery of the disappearance of three-fourths of the important ladder which earlier mountaineers had placed at the Second Step (8700 meters), and which all climbers via the North Ridge route now expect to use. The Indians had neither enough rope nor enough strength to surmount the Step or traverse around it.

Two out of three South Korean teams on the same route in the autumn managed to overcome this problem. All three teams also reached the Step and were turned back by the absence of the well-known ladder. One team had no strength left to continue their climb, but the other two temporarily retreated, brought up a good supply of rope, and together went to the summit on October 14.

One of these successful teams had begun their ascent on Everest via the northeast ridge. The Koreans had brought with them Lhakpa Nuru, one of the Sherpas who had summited by this route and who had reached the top five other times. But an avalanche struck a party of two members and four Sherpas when they were at 6900 meters. It killed Lhakpa Nuru and injured another Sherpa and two Koreans. When this team returned to the northeast ridge a week later, they found there was still serious danger of avalanching, and they abandoned that route.

The other successful Korean team also lost a Sherpa, Zangbu, who fell to his death during his descent down the Great Couloir from the summit. He either lost his footing or was involved in a small avalanche. He fell 3000 meters

An autumn expedition from Spain suffered the loss of member Xavier Lamas, who was killed by an avalanche while they were acclimatizing on Changzheng, just north of Everest.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY