

in at their first high-altitude camp at 5400 meters collapsed under a heavy load of snow and they were smothered to death. The leader of this group, Cleve Armstrong, was in another tent six meters away from the one in which Richard Davidson and Debbie Marshall slept the night of October 3-4; he cleared snow off his tent several times and survived the night, but the next morning, when he went to find out why the other two had not joined his walkie-talkie conversation with Base Camp, he found that the weight of at least a meter of fresh snow had forced their tent down on top of them and suffocated them in their sleep.

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*Dhaulagiri I and Annapurna I, Ascents.* A Korean team of four climbing members and an equal number of Sherpas under the leadership of Sung Soon-Je, who himself did not climb, scaled both Annapurna I and Dhaulagiri I in the pre-monsoon season. They went first to Dhaulagiri I, but when bad weather was consuming too much of their time, they split into two parties. On May 1, Deputy Leader Um Hong-Gil summited Dhaulagiri I with Ngati Sherpa, and two days later Kim Hun-Sang and Park Young-Seok with two other Sherpas, Kazi and Gyalzen, were atop Annapurna I. They used no bottled oxygen to reach either peak, and this pair of neighboring mountains were not the first 8000ers "conquered" by two of their team. Um had already summited Everest plus four others, Park, Everest and Cho Oyu; both give climbing as their occupation.

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*Dhaulagiri I, Solo Ascent.* The Dutch climber Bart Vos reported he reached the top of the seventh highest mountain in the world, Dhaulagiri I, alone on October 17, the first Dutch mountaineer ever to gain this 8167-meter summit. He had chosen to ascend Mount Dhaulagiri I by a seldom-attempted route up its east face and to climb entirely alone without any teammates, Nepalese Sherpa helpers, artificial oxygen or any fixed camps above 5780 meters in one week of successively higher bivouacs. He then descended the normal route via the northeast ridge. (His ascent was not strictly solo since other teams were on the mountain at the same time as he. All of the others climbed the standard route; Vos's route of ascent joined their ridge at about 7900 meters for the final distance to the top.)

Vos said that he encountered technical difficulties for about 200 vertical meters on the face above an altitude of 7600 meters, "but the real difficulty was the duration [of a week] and the weather," which was often very windy with fresh snowfall. This was the third time Vos had gone alone to Dhaulagiri I. He had been the only person anywhere on the mountain in the spring of 1994 in a truly solo attempt; in the autumn of 1995 he had used the standard route, which others were also climbing at the same time, but he moved independently of them.

Vos is perhaps best known for his claim to have summited Mount Everest in October 1984 as a member of a Dutch expedition. He and others from that team climbed together from their highest camp toward the summit. His companions turned back before gaining the top, but he went on alone and said he had reached the highest point on earth. His summit claim was publicly questioned in the Netherlands at the time, but it was also stoutly defended.

Having one's claim questioned when one goes to a summit alone is a common problem for soloists, and Vos prefers to climb by himself. His assertion that he summited Dhaulagiri I was not immediately accepted by Nepalese tourism ministry officials, who routinely issues certificates to summiters but who asked Vos to send them photos to substantiate his statement.

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