

climb without companions or the use of any artificial oxygen, and much of his climbing would be in alpine style with only one fixed camp (or perhaps none) on each mountain and no Sherpas helpers.

But that is not how things actually worked out. Weather conditions were terrible for several weeks this spring with the winds a special problem. When Hinkes went to Lhotse, he was on a commercial team's permit, and it was not as a soloist but as a member of this group that he finally managed to be the first person this spring to gain the summit of Lhotse—and the only one to get to the top on his summit day—after having made good use of the group's camps, equipment, food, Sherpas and bottled oxygen. He summited Lhotse on May 23. A helicopter picked him up from the Lhotse-Everest base camp area as he had originally planned. But he had planned this to be on about May 10 or so and not on the 28th, as it actually was. The aircraft dropped him near an advance base camp which had already been established for him by another Briton, an American and a small Nepalese camp staff for his Makalu attempt.

The two teammates who were with him on his own Makalu permit had also already pitched two higher camps and stocked them with food and gear for his quick push for the summit. But Hinkes and the American colleague, Fabrizio Zangrilli, who went for the summit bid with him on May 30, got no higher than 7200 meters on this giant mountain when at midday they turned back; Zangrilli had been hit on the side of his head by a piece of falling ice and made ill by this, and both were fearful of more hits by rockfall during the hot part of the day. Hinkes could see that the winds up high were very strong, and on June 2 he decided to give up. Kangchenjunga was not even visited. He said he hoped to return to Makalu and go to Kangchenjunga next spring after having carried on with his attempts on this year's three other 8000-meter objectives.

Hinkes was not the only climber this season to be trying to close in on his goal of summing all 14 of the world's 8000ers. On Kangchenjunga was the Italian mountaineer, Fausto De Stefani, who already had 12 to his credit and lacked only Kangchenjunga and Lhotse. He went to Kangchenjunga with a Spanish team, but he didn't like their route. The leader of an American-British expedition said De Stefani asked to join their effort but they preferred to climb without him, so he finally teamed up with some South Koreans, but was unsuccessful nonetheless.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

*Mount Everest Group, Attempted Traverse.* A program similar to Reinhard Patscheider's (*see Tibet*) was Anatoli Boukreev's more elaborate idea for a traverse from Lhotse's summit (8516m) over to the top of Everest, and then, "if I feel like it," a traverse of Everest down the normal Tibetan route. He said he was on three permits: a British-organized commercial team's Nepalese permit for Everest from the south, the Kazakhs' Everest permit for the north side, and a Russian expedition's Lhotse permit.

Boukreev first went to the top of Everest from the Nepalese side rather early in the season, on April 26, as one of three Russians employed by an Indonesian army expedition (who called them their "mercenaries"), and he then came all the way down to Kathmandu with the victorious Asians. After spending nearly a week at this much lower altitude, he returned to the Everest-Lhotse base camp on May 18 to join an Italian climber, Simone Moro, who was already climbing with a big Italian Lhotse team and was on the same Nepalese Everest permit as Boukreev.

Boukreev and Moro now climbed together up Lhotse's normal route on the west face to the summit on May 26. (It was Boukreev's second ascent of this peak.) But they made no

move to go over to Everest. The weather was becoming unsettled that afternoon, and, more importantly, the normally very strong Boukreev was not now in good health: He suspected he had picked up a lung infection in Kathmandu, and his April ascent of Everest and descent to Kathmandu doubtless did not help. Moro had no interest in trying to go to Everest alone, so both men turned down and reached base camp the next day.

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*Lhotse, First American Female Ascent.* It was reported that on May 26, Christine Feld Boskoff became the first American woman—and second woman ever—to climb Lhotse. She had climbed to Camp IV (7805m) by her husband, Keith Boskoff. After waiting out a day of storms, Keith was not up to the ascent, so Christine continued alone to the summit, which she reached at 12:30 p.m. (*Climbing* 171)

*Lhotse Intermediate, Attempt and Tragedy.* Vladimir Bashkirov, a Russian climber who summited Everest with his Indonesian employers this season had, amongst his many accomplishments, led the successful first attempt to climb the very steep south ridge of a peak known as Annapurna South (7219m) in 1994. While he was engaged with guiding an Indonesian team via the north ridge on Everest, some of his Russian teammates had been fixing rope and pitching camps up Lhotse's West Face route while others had attempted to prepare a possible descent route for him and several colleagues, who would traverse from Lhotse to make the first ascent of the middle summit of the massif. This exit route was to be on the south ridge of a peak named Shanti Shikhar (or Shartse II) next to the massif's eastern summit, Lhotse Shar. Although his friends had not reached the top of Shanti Shikhar, Bashkirov said in Kathmandu after his descent from Everest and before going to Lhotse, that he still believed it could provide a good descent route from the east from Lhotse Shar.

No one had ever tried to reach this middle peak, known as Lhotse Intermediate (8410m), which is the world's highest unclimbed peak and is guarded on each side by a very difficult ridge at great altitude connecting it with Lhotse's main summit and with Lhotse Shar. On May 4 Bashkirov came down to Kathmandu, then flew back to the mountains with Anatoli Boukreev on about the 10th, and arrived at base camp in apparent good health a week after that, ready to make the first traverse across the great Lhotse massif.

Bashkirov, who already had six other 8000-meter summits to his credit, got to the top of Lhotse on May 26. He was among the last of his summit party of eight Russians to arrive there; he told a teammate that he had a slight fever, and he explained to a member of another team climbing the mountain at the same time that he was waiting for the last of his party to come up. When the last of them, including Bashkirov, got to the top, it was late in the day, nearly 4 p.m. The weather was very cold, visibility was poor, and Bashkirov was not well.

Neither he nor any of the others tried to make the traverse to Lhotse Intermediate. Instead, they all turned down toward the shelter of their camp at 7700 meters. But Bashkirov never got there. He managed to descend to 8000 meters unaided, then collapsed and was pulled down the snow slope to 7900 meters, where he was found to have no pulse or any other signs of life. He had died of exhaustion and perhaps the same infection that Boukreev had gotten. His teammates buried his body on the mountain in snow inside a sleeping bag.

Is the traverse from Lhotse to the middle summit to Lhotse Shar possible? His deputy leader, Vladimir Savkov, who did not climb above base camp, answered "it is very, very, very difficult" along the sharp, steep ridge. Said one of the men who did summit that fatal day, Gleb Sokolov, "maybe" it is possible, but he would like to try traversing from Lhotse Shar to