

Nanga Parbat, First American Ascent. Carlos Buhler became the first native-born American to climb Nanga Parbat when he ascended the mountain with a Russian team in July. It was also the first Russian ascent of the mountain. Further details are lacking.

Nanga Parbat, Various Ascents. It was reported that a number of teams made successful ascents of Nanga Parbat in 1997. A China-Pakistan expedition that fixed rope up to 7400 meters on the Diamir Face put eight climbers on top June 15. Two Japanese teams climbed the Kinshofer route in July, all placing climbers on the summit. Two Korean teams were successful on the route as well. A six-man Catalan expedition put five members on top, but one of them, Joan Collet, fell and died while descending to Camp III. (*High Mountain Sports* 183)

CENTRAL KARAKORAM

Choktoi Glacier Area, Various Ascents. It was reported that a British expedition of Alex Franklin, Will Garrett, Fiona Hatchell, Colin Spark and Guy Willett operated in the Choktoi Glacier area in late June and some of July. They attempted Hanispur South (6047m) via the east face and north ridge, reaching 6000 meters before being turned back by windslab danger. Two members attempted P.6166m, finding climbing up to Scottish VI and A2 before the line they were attempting blanked out. They also tried two rock spurs on the flanks of Latok III, getting one-third of the way up (HVS A1/A2) before realizing the route was bigger than they thought. They did climb P.5400m via a loose ridge (AD).

Another British team (Richard Garnett, Dean Grindell, Mark Harris and Oliver Howard) also was in the area during July and part of August, climbing the smallest of the Biacherahi Towers (c.5900m) via an easy snow couloir on the north side. They also climbed an arête on one of the rock buttresses of Latok III over two days, finding climbing up to E2 5c on good granite. (*High Mountain Sports* 183)

Baintha Brakk, Attempts. It was reported that Germans Jan Mersch and Jochen Hasse attempted the South Pillar on Baintha Brakk (a.k.a. the Ogre, 7285m), reaching 6250 meters. (*High Mountain Sports* 183)

HAR Pinnacle, First Ascent, and Latok I, Attempt. Our expedition consisted of John Bouchard, Barry Rugo, Tom Nonis, and me. We had two permits, one for the often-attempted north ridge of Latok I (7145m) and one for the south pillar of the Ogre (Biantha Brakk, 7388m). In August, Bouchard and I made three attempts on Latok I. The final attempt was with Nonis and Rugo, moving alpine style. We reached a point on the pillar just below the halfway point. The climbing was superb. Unfortunately, extreme heat was causing considerable melting and rockfall from high on the face. Despite the stable weather, we felt conditions too unsafe to continue. Due to the very dry conditions, we followed the rock pillar from the very bottom of the route. Rock climbing was on solid granite up to 5.10 in difficulty.

Nonis and Rugo's attempt on the Ogre was stopped at the base of the main rock pillar due to dangerous avalanche conditions and bad weather.

In between our second and third attempts on Latok I, Bouchard and I made the first ascent of a previously unclimbed/unnamed spire directly behind our base camp at the head of the Choktoi Glacier. We estimate its altitude at 5700 meters. We climbed the spire in one long day from our base camp following moderate 3rd-class mixed gullies for 1,000 feet, then 11 pitches of rock climbing up to 5.10b on the south face. The actual summit is a spectacular perch, flat and about the size of a large table. In the absence of any official or local name for this