

reached the summit 22 hours later. The first 600 meters of the route was steep rock, followed by 600 meters of steep snow. He named the route *Never-Ending Story* (VI 5.9 AI4, 1200m). A complete account of his climb appears earlier in this journal.

Tarke Kang, Ski Descent. A small four-member group of Czech mountaineers (Robin Baum, leader, Vladimír Smrž, Vladimir Prieložný, Josef Peterek) traveled to Tarke Kang (a.k.a. Glacier Dome, 7193m) with the goal of climbing the north face and then skiing it. They left Jomosom on September 21. After crossing Mesokantu La (5400m), they reached BC, which was placed close to a small lake near the main Tilicho Lake, three days later. They acclimatized by ferrying loads, which the mules had dropped four kilometers from BC. They established CI (5600m) near the base of the face, eight kilometers from BC.

On October 1, Baum and Smrž went to the face and set up CII at 6300 meters on a steep snow slope. Avalanche danger forced them down. When the weather improved, the second group, Prieložný and Peterek, started up the face. They couldn't find the tent, so they went on climbing.

On October 5, Baum and Smrž started up the left side of the north face. During their ascent, they watched as the second group descended on the right side of the face (the side of the first ascent). At 6300 meters, they set up the first bivouac on steep ground. The next day, they ascended ice slopes between seracs to 6700 meters. On the 8th, they advanced with skis only to the summit, which they reached at 12 o'clock. After one hour on top, they skied down toward the second bivouac. They packed their things and were at the base of the face by 3:30 p.m.

On the way to BC, they met Prieložný, who wanted to climb the right side of the north face overnight. During his ascent, he signaled every two hours with his headlamp to indicate everything was all right. At 8 a.m. he stood on the summit. For the descent, he chose a safer route to ski down and after five hours he was at the base of face and CI. On October 16, after 23 days on the mountain, the small expedition left BC.

Jiří NOVAK, *Czech Republic*

GANESH HIMAL

Paldor Peak Group, Attempts. Sabine Krol and I were in the Ganesh Himal from February 12-March 6. Our goal was to make first ascents on mixed rock and ice faces on climbed and unclimbed peaks in the Paldor Peak group. Unfortunately, we had a lot of bad weather. We had blue sky and sun only in the mornings. By midday, clouds would arrive, and it would snow every afternoon and evening. Sometimes we had as much as one-and-a-half meters of new snow after four hours' snowfall.

We and our 12 porters needed four days for the 35-kilometer approach. After the second day, we walked in deep snow; it was very hard for the porters. Because of the bad weather, it was not possible for the porters to reach the main group of Paldor Peak (5928m). Our Base Camp was established at 4300 meters approximately three kilometers south of Paldor Peak. Near BC were some steep rock peaks between 5200 and 5400 meters high.

West of BC stands a 5250-meter rock peak with a long east ridge. A small rock pinnacle interrupts this east ridge. A 350- to 400-meter high rock pillar leads to the top of this rock pinnacle. We attempted this rock pillar on February 22, climbing 350- to 400 meters of mixed, with (sometimes friable) rock to UIAA V- and snow/ice to 50° with one section of 70°.

Approximately 50-80 meters below the summit of the rock pinnacle, we were stopped by heavy snowfall. We rappelled the route, leaving some pegs for rappelling.

Some days later, we attempted the unclimbed ca. 700-meter west ridge of a ca. 5380-meter rock peak east of Base Camp that looks like a pyramid. We reached the ridge via a small 300-meter north-facing couloir, encountering snow/ice from 50-65° and rock/mixed to IV-V. We climbed ca. 300 meters on the west ridge to a small rock pinnacle, where we were once more stopped by heavy snowfall. Difficulty on the ridge was up to V with some friable, loose rock. We tried the ridge two more times, but were stopped both times near the rock pinnacle by too much snow. We rappelled the west ridge and the north couloir, leaving some pegs behind.

After the last attempt on the west ridge, we left our Base Camp and walked back to the road in four days, then drove to Kathmandu. We removed our rubbish from the approach and BC and took it back to Kathmandu.

EDUARD BIRNBACHER, *Germany*

Kangchenjunga, Ramtang, And Medical Research. Base Camp was established at Pangpema at 5100 meters on the north side of Kangchenjunga. Chris Comerie and his seven-strong climbing team attempted to repeat the 1979 Boardman-Tasker-Scott route on Kangchenjunga via the North Col. They retreated from Camp IV due to persistent high winds. Research equipment (2800 kg) was flown in by helicopter to BC from Kathmandu via Ghunsa. The scientists resident at Base Camp studied 71 subjects as they passed through BC. Areas studied included: respiratory defense, migraine, changes in body weight and fat distribution, changes in lung fluid and the physiological control of breathing.

The Ramtang team shared the same Camp I as the Kangchenjunga team, which was established around October 10. We then avoided most of the icefall by scrambling up the lateral moraine to gain the upper glacier, where Camp II was pitched at 5900 meters. The serac band above Camp II was climbed more easily than anticipated. From here, it was an easy walk to the foot of the south face of Ramtang (6700m). Most of the face was threatened by a high band of seracs and a formidable cornice, so we elected to climb the shoulder leading to the eastern summit. This turned out to be an easy névé slope of around 55° (AD). Fixed ropes were put in place to safeguard descent. These were removed five days later. On reaching the eastern summit, we decided not to traverse to the main summit (which appeared only marginally higher) due to the presence of huge and dangerous double cornices.

Ascents were made as follows: October 18, Richard Weller, Ulrich Stiener, Nga Temba, Na Temba and Sange Saila Sherpa; October 19, Roger McMorro and Nigel Hart; October 21, Sally Glynn, Simon Currin and Sange Saila Sherpa; October 22, Denzil Broadhurst, Chris Smith, Gerald Dubowitz, Nga Temba and Na Temba.

After early doubts about the difficulties and dangers of Ramtang, the route proved to be relatively easy, objectively fairly safe and most enjoyable. Ramtang is a fine vantage point for viewing the Kangchenjunga massif, and we had the great privilege of being the first team to receive a permit to climb this fine mountain.

SIMON CURRIN, *United Kingdom*

Kangchenjunga, First Female Ascent. My husband, Gary Pfisterer, and I led an international expedition to climb the north face of Kangchenjunga (8586m) in the spring. We were a small