

NEPAL

Pre-Monsoon in the Nepal Himalaya. Seven climbers died this spring in the Nepalese Himalaya, all during descents from 8000-meter summits. Two had no previous success on any 8000-meter mountain and used artificial oxygen during the final hours of their climbs to their summits, while five had been to the tops of 8000ers in previous years and did not use oxygen at all this spring. The seven were:

- Pascal Debrouwer, a 29-year-old Belgian organizer and guide of travel in mountain regions of the world who before this year had scaled the least difficult 8000er, Cho Oyu, on Everest's north side. He used no bottled oxygen.
- Tadeusz Kudelski, a 44-year-old Polish teacher with no summit success on any lower 8000er, on Everest's north side. He did use artificial oxygen.
- Michael Matthews, a 22-year-old British securities trader also with no previous 8000-meter summit experience, on Everest's south side. He too used supplemental oxygen.
- Vasili Kopytko, a 34-year-old Ukrainian doctor who had scaled Cho Oyu and now was part of a three-man summit party who were the first Ukrainian citizens to reach the summit, on Everest's north side. He used no artificial oxygen.
- Miss Ji Hyun-Ok, a 33-year-old South Korean fine-arts teacher who had summited Gasherbrum I and Gasherbrum II in recent years, on Annapurna I's north face. She became the first Korean woman to reach the highest peak of Annapurna I, but she and her Sherpa companion fell to their deaths the same day. She used no bottled oxygen.
- Kami Dorchi Sherpa, 33, who scaled both Annapurna I and Manaslu last year. He accompanied Miss Ji to the top of Annapurna I and died with her. He also used no bottled oxygen.
- Michael Knakkegaard-Jorgensen (better known by a simplified version of his family name, Jorgensen), a 31-year-old mountaineer and tour operator who had scaled Everest and Lhotse in recent years, on Makalu's northwest side. He was the first Dane ever to summit Makalu. He used no bottled oxygen.

ELIZABETH HAWLEY

Post-Monsoon in the Nepal Himalaya. In the post-monsoon in the Nepal Himalaya, the summer monsoon rains and snowfall continued throughout September and into early October, several weeks beyond the normal end of the rainy season, only to be followed by a few mid-October days of more heavy snowfall resulting from a cyclone nearby in India. Many teams on Cho Oyu, Ama Dablam, Baruntse and other mountains with very limited time at their disposal had to retreat from what they considered unsafe avalanche conditions or simply from snow too deep to manage to get through.

There was very little success on Nepal's eight 8000ers. Even on Cho Oyu, where success rates are often high, 21 expeditions did some climbing but just nine of them sent anyone to the top and all followed the normal route on the northwest side. The other 12 teams—including cautiously-led commercial ones—withdrew well below the summit because of dangerous snow conditions. And those who were successful were able to reach the summit only from September 26-October 1; before and after those dates, snow conditions were very bad.

One Japanese mountaineer, Toshiyuki Kitamura, tried to solo Cho Oyu's seldom-climbed southwest face but had to abandon his attempt at 7400 meters in soft snow under a hot sun that defeated him. He moved over to the standard route and followed teammates to the top