

the conditions were different. The nice snow slope had become a horrible mirror of black ice. Early the morning, we waited for the stars but the snow was falling again. At 7 a.m. we decided to try something. We climbed slowly on the dark ice, and made many pitches.

Then we waited for the rain to stop. Eight days sleeping in the wet tents, eating peanut butter, playing cards, and listening to music. And like an incredible dream, the sun came back exactly the morning when the porters came back.

There are so many things to do in the Hindu Raj. Two valleys more to the east, 14 unclimbed summits; on the back side of Makutchum, Chikari, or maybe near the Koyo Zom...I will be back!

HERVÉ QUALIZZA, *France*

KARAKORAM

Passu Sar, attempt. Believing it to be still unclimbed and therefore one of the highest unclimbed summits in the Karakoram, a five-man Australian team led by myself booked Passu Sar (7478m). This peak is situated between Shispare and the Batura Group. However, shortly before leaving home, we learnt of a German expedition (reported in the 1995 AAJ), who appeared to have climbed Passu Sar in August 1994 and not the lower Passu Diar (a.k.a. Passu Peak, 7295m), which lies a little to the east. Checking with a local high altitude porter in Gulmit, we were able to confirm that Dirk Naumann, Ralf Lehmann, Volker Wurnig, and Max Wallner had indeed made the first ascent of the higher peak, using skis for much of the ascent and bypassing the lower peak by going through a high shallow saddle to one side.

We set up base camp in June close to the Passu Glacier but instead of finding the lower glacier just badly crevassed, as we had expected from information provided by the Alpine Club of Pakistan (which organized a successful expedition to Passu Diar in 1996), we discovered a giant icefall starting at around 4200m and having over 800 meters of vertical gain. On closer inspection we realised that the route was very complex, dangerous, and just not possible for a lightweight effort, so we abandoned any further attempt. The previous winter had been very dry and knowing this, we had arrived early to profit from whatever snow cover remained. However, it appears that a succession of dry years has taken a severe toll.

DAMIEN GILDEA, AAC, *Australia*

Sub-6000m peaks (Karakoram and Hindu Raj), attempts and ascents of new routes. On June 5 the Korean Five Peaks Expedition set off from Seoul for the Karakoram and Hindu Kush. The seven-man expedition, led by Gi-seok Seo, set out to make ascents of five peaks less than 6000m. These peaks were Khache Brangsa (5560m) and Ghonoboro (5500m) above the Arandu Valley, Mustum (5620m) and Shikari (5928m) in the Yasin Valley, and Bubulimotin (6000m) in the Hunza Valley.

First ascents were made on the North (5350m) and South (5560) peaks of Khache Brangsa in semi-alpine style. On June 15 base camp was established at 3800m and on the 18th ABC at 4300m. Chang-ho Kim, Seoung-mook Im, Gi-heon Jang, and Seong-moon Choi reached the summit of the North Peak on the 28th. The team bivouacked for the night at the 5240m col between the North and South Peaks, and the following day Chang-ho Kim and Seong-moon Choi reached the summit of the South or Main Peak. They spent three consecu-