

camp but eventually succumbed to our hunger. I thank the Mugs Stump Award and other sponsors for their support on our first Himalayan experience.

MAXIME TURGEON, *Canada*

*Latok I, north ridge, attempt; Tony Tower, Releasing Bad Energy.* Damian and Willie Benegas were again on the Choktoi for an attempt on the north ridge of Latok I. They arrived in base camp on July 22 and found conditions on the face to be the best they had seen, with mostly dry rock and clean granite cracks where on their previous two attempts, they had climbed under huge snow towers and avalanche gullies. In contrast the weather was probably the worst they had encountered in the area. Their first attempt, in early August, reached 5,200m. Here a storm pinned them in the tent for four days before they were able to escape.

Their second attempt began on August 13. On the initial rock buttress, they climbed a few new variations up to 5.10a, but while leading the fourth pitch Willie pulled off a huge block, which chopped the rope and went straight toward his brother, belaying below. It broke in two just above Damian's head, and only a watermelon-size fragment dealt him a glancing blow, ripping his jacket. The brothers continued and that day climbed almost 1,000m from base camp. The next day they continued for seven pitches to the second shoulder, finding the climbing enjoyable and safe, a big change from 2005, when they were climbing under huge threatening snow mushrooms. The altitude was around 5,500m.

The next morning it was snowing hard, and by the 16th the easy 4th- and 5th-class rock above looked like a 55° powder ski run. On the 17th they made a difficult and dangerous rappel descent, keeping near the crest of the rock buttress in the lower section to minimize the danger of flanking avalanches. On a couple of rappels, ropes irretrievably jammed and had to be cut. They reached base at 10 p.m.

On August 19, four days before leaving for Skardu, the pair climbed a short new rock route on Tony Tower, which they called Releasing Bad Energy (six pitches, 5.10a). They have proposed to the Alpine Club of Pakistan that in 2007 they initiate a Karakoram Climbing School to teach Pakistan climbers to become high-altitude guides and to bring them closer to the standards of safety and professionalism characteristic of Nepalese Sherpas.

FROM EXPEDITION DISPATCHES ON THE NORTH FACE WEBSITE

*Latok V, first ascent; Latok II, south ridge, first alpine-style ascent.* Doug Chabot, Mark Richey, and I arrived at base camp on the Baintha Lukpar Glacier on July 28, with the intent of climbing the west face of Latok III. We arrived at the end of an extended period of hot weather, which had melted much of the ice from the face, causing considerable rockfall. During acclimatization we made what we believe is the first ascent of Latok V (6,190m). [See note below on Latok nomenclature.] On August 4 we ascended the glacier to the col between Latok V and Latok IV and then up the east face to the south ridge. We continued along the crest of the ridge to a bivouac at 6,000m. On August 5 we reached the summit and descended to our bivouac, then back to base camp the following day.

Observations of rockfall on the west face of Latok III made during acclimatization trips up the glacier caused us to change our objective to the south ridge of Latok II (7,103m). At the time we did not know this route had been followed by a 17-person Italian expedition, to make