

Karakoram 1983

Paul Nunn

Photograph 2

In Pakistan 42 mountaineering permissions were granted including a few dual applications. Most popular was Nanga Parbat with 11 parties, closely followed by the various Gasherbrums (14), including several dual permissions.

On K2 the Italian expedition led by F. Santon was successful. It approached the mountain from China and took the N ridge route pioneered by the Japanese in 1982. From an advanced base at 4900m four high camps were established and all 20 members reached Camp 3 at 7500m. On 31 July Agostino da Polanze and Joseph Rakoncaj (32) started to climb from Camp 4 (8100m) though conditions were poor with deep snow. At 20.45 they reached the summit, and descended only 60m before an enforced bivouac. Good equipment and preparation enabled them to survive and descend safely. Joseph Rakoncaj is an experienced Czech high altitude climber. Subsequently a filming party comprising of the veteran Kurt Diemberger (51) and Julie Tullis (44) reached Camp 4, but were prevented from going further by bad conditions.

On the Pakistani side of K2, Basque, Spanish and British attempts were unsuccessful. The Basques tried the Abruzzi Spur, the Spanish, the W ridge and Doug Scott's party a route on the S face.

On the Gasherbrums Wojciech Kurtyka (35) and Jerzy Kukuczka (35) made notable alpine style ascents after a period of acclimatisation. They climbed the long SE ridge of Gasherbrum 2 through points 7200m and 7770m, bivouacking at 6500m on the Gasherbrum La and at 7300m. In this way they reached the summit of Gasherbrum 2 (8035m) on 1 July. They then descended the Original 1956 Route, thus traversing the whole massif. In three weeks of bad weather they rested at Base Camp on the S Gasherbrum Glacier (5100m) and on 20-23 July did a new route on the virgin SE face of Gasherbrum 1 (8068m Hidden Peak). They bivouacked in a little tent at 6700m and 7300m, but failed to climb the headwall direct, returning to 7300m before traversing to the SW ridge and following it to the summit. They reported 600m of mixed climbing on a face which rises 2600m overall from the glacier. Two major new climbs by a two man party was a fitting memorial to Alex MacIntyre, to whom these Polish friends dedicated the expedition. A team of Spanish climbers led by Javier Escartin climbed Hidden Peak without oxygen or high altitude porters.

Another outstanding achievement was Renato Casarotto's ascent solo of Broad Peak North (7600m), the highest unclimbed point in the Karakoram. After several unsuccessful sallies he climbed its N spur in 7 days from 22 June and descended the same route in 3 days. Stefan Wörner (Swiss) and an international team climbed three 8000m peaks, Gasherbrums I and II and Broad Peak, and Anka Czerwinska (34) and Krystyna Palmowska (34), both Poles, climbed Broad Peak with Palmowska reaching the summit. Officially part of the Swiss expedition, they had reached Base Camp on 24 May. Following an acclimatis-

ation climb they made their first summit attempt on 24 June but were stopped by deep snow at 7700m. On 29 June, starting from Base Camp, they made a final alpine style push, going that day to Camp III (at 7000m), next day to the gap by 1 pm and the summit by 3.30 pm before returning to Camp III and Base Camp next day. The same pair had climbed Rakaposhi in 1979 as an independent rope but the present climb was a genuine all female ascent accomplished in very fast time. Possibly it is the first 8000m peak to be climbed completely independently by women. An account of this climb appears elsewhere in this issue.

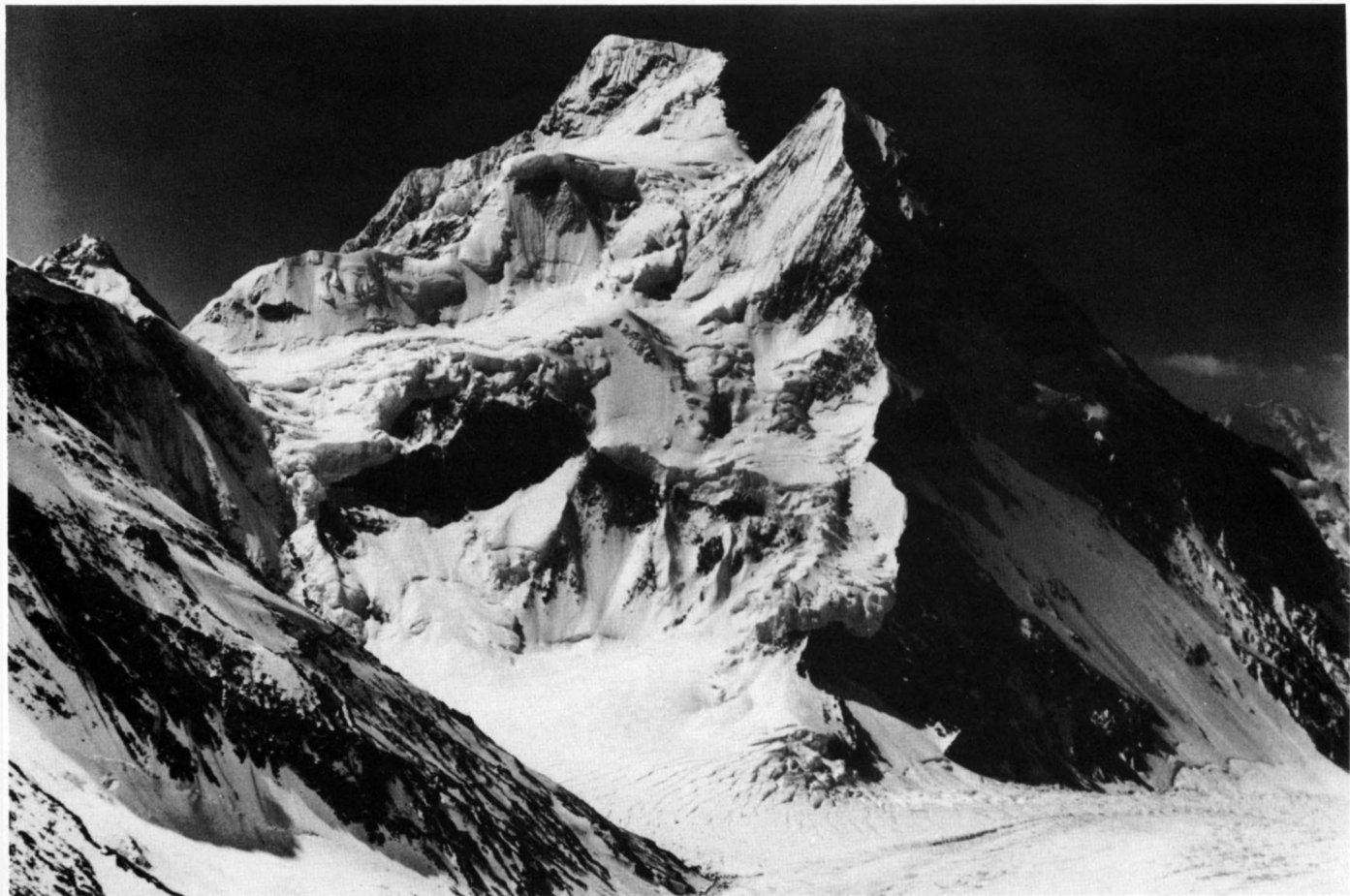
A large party led by Doug Scott attempted Lobsang Spire (5708m), Broad Peak and K2. An early attempt by Alan Rouse and Andy Parkin on the mixed ground of the W ridge of Lobsang Spire failed near the summit. Between 10-18 June Greg Child (Australia), Doug Scott and Pete Thexton climbed the 600m vertical South Pillar in six days, with two more taken in descent. It was a technical climb, involving 5.9 and A4 climbing, and aid from bolts near the top.

On Broad Peak Jean Affanassief (France), Roger Baxter Jones, Andy Parkin and Alan Rouse repeated the Original Route in June. Later Doug Scott and Steve Sustad (U.S.A.) repeated the climb, but Thexton and Child turned back on the summit ridge suffering from altitude after reaching that level in two and a half days from Base Camp. Though it was Child who felt ill effects first, Thexton became very ill on the descent, and Child had difficulty in getting him to the bivouac site. There he died in the night despite the attention of Child, Don Whillans and Goa Shah, the expedition Sirdar, apparently from a combination of altitude related causes. The expedition members then went different ways, some continuing on K2 and others returning home.

Polish women and Ronald Naar's group were not successful on Broad Peak, but a number of other expeditions were active in the Gasherbrums. Naar and van Sraug made the first ascent of Peak 6400m via a difficult route on the W face. Michael Affanassief guided a client, Abbe Claude Stucki of Geneva, up a new route on the SW Face of Angelus Peak (6855m) and returned by the easier SW arête with one bivouac. George Brosig, Adi Fischer and Hubert Wedlinger did a new route on the NW flank of Chogolisa (7665m).

Notable achievements elsewhere included the Kyoto Climbers' Club ascent of the S face of Masherbrum (7821m). Led by Tateshu Sudo (33) they made base camp on 3 July and made a first alpine style attempt on the American 1960 route on 27 July, with five climbers. This failed, but between 12-17 August Masahiro Nomura (28) and Kakeyasu Minamaira (25) did the American route in alpine style.

In the Baintha Brakk group, the Korean party who tried Baintha Brakk 2 (peak 6960m) in 1981 returned and were successful, taking the NE ridge from Death Alley; a 4 man French party tried the impressive South Pillar of Baintha Brakk 1 (The Ogre). After a long hold-up in bad weather, they set up two camps low down in 11 days, fixing ropes on this section. Then Gerard Pailheiret and Dominique Suchet climbed the difficult pillar in five days, with much technical crack and slab climbing of V, V+ and VIa. Eventually they made slow progress on unstable snow and encountered bad weather about 17 June at around 7105m. After waiting for an improvement they retreated on 18 June in bad weather, making a 17 hour descent of 34 rappels to Camp 2. Elsewhere, an American



2 Broad Peak from NE ridge of K2 showing the Middle (higher) and North summits

Photo: Janusz Ferenski

group led by David Howe Jnr tried Paiju Peak and Graeme Dingle led a New Zealand party to Trango.

At least eight expeditions were active in the Hunza region, on Minapin, Rakaposhi, Lupghar Sar, Distaghil Sar South, Batura 1, Point 7500m in the Batura, Sia Chish and Point 6885 (Batura). On Batura 1 Eduard Koblmüller (37), Fred Pressl, Franz Tschismarov and Gerhard Lunzer made a new route on the face to the left of the German 1976 route. With camps 2 (5900m) and 3 (6700m) they climbed the face with a bivouac at 7200m before reaching the summit. Batura 4 (7500m) was climbed by the SE spur by the Cracow group led by Zygmunt Heinrich, with camps at 5100m, 6200m and 6400m. Fixed ropes were used and two ropes of three climbers each reached the top on 31 August and 2 September. This route had been attempted by the Austrians in 1981 without success.

A Belgian expedition climbed Rakaposhi by the original (SW ridge) 1957 route. Led by Jacques Callater they had intended doing the Polish route, but eventually abandoned the idea. Six camps were made, the final one at 7400m. On 2 August three Belgians and Sultan Allah Baig, a high altitude porter, reached the summit. On the descent Michel Bodart was carried away 300m by an avalanche near the final camp and received multiple injuries. His companions got him to Camp 4 and he was evacuated by Major Kashim of the Pakistan Air Force, who took a very lightly fuelled helicopter to 6200m to rescue the injured man. Unfortunately Sultan Allah Baig disappeared during a rapid solo descent below Camp 2 and was never found.

Nanga Parbat was the single most popular mountain, with 11 parties in action and the usual low success rate. Two Japanese parties were among those early on the mountain, trying the SW ridge from the Rupal Valley. The 11 man Toho Keirijukai Club (Tokyo) party had set up base-camp on 23 April at 6300m. On 17 June a party of seven climbers carrying loads at about 7000m was avalanched and one climber, Shimira, was killed and three others seriously injured, so that their attempt was abandoned. On the same route was the Fukuoka Tokakai Club. Two of their members escaped unscathed in the 17 June avalanche and their attempt continued. On 14 July 3 members, Takamori, Lida and Yamada were killed by an avalanche at Camp 1, their bodies eventually being found by the Austrians in late July. Eduard Koblmüller (37) completed a successful ascent by the SW ridge alone, after reaching 7950m with his companion; this was the 12th ascent of the mountain. In the third attempt by Japanese climbers since 1976 the Toyama Prefecture Climbing Club climbed the W face (Diamir Face) by the Kinshofer Route. M Taniquchi (34) and N Nakashini (24) made camp 5 at 7850m and reached the summit on 31 July.

Nanga Parbat's bad reputation remains intact: there have been 57 attempts and only 13 ascents; 45 climbers have lost their lives on the mountain, including 13 since 1962. Avalanches have been responsible for a high proportion of these fatalities.

West of the Baltoro — a footnote*Stephen Venables*

Providing up to date information in a yearly journal is a problem. My West of the Baltoro article (*AJ88*) was written two years ago and a few remarks need correcting and adding to. Firstly, it now seems that with a trekking permit climbers may visit a named area and climb peaks up to 6000m within that area, *without* having to be accompanied by a liaison officer. Secondly, the Karakoram Highway is now open as far as the Batura Bridge, which means that the Batura and, probably, Shimsal valleys are open. Since I wrote the article, Kunyang Kish has received another two attempts — in 1982 the French attempted the N ridge and the Japanese attempted the difficult E ridge. Bojohagur Duanasir, the third summit of Ultar, was attempted by the ubiquitous Japanese. This summit is open to foreign expeditions and in summer 1984 a strong team from London are to attempt it. Another ripe plum near Baltit — Hachindar Cchish — fell to the Japanese in 1982.

