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# Mount Everest Foundation Expedition Reports

SUMMARISED BY BILL RUTHVEN

## AMERICA – NORTH AND CENTRAL

**British Buckskin 2005** Paul Ramsden with Rich Cross. September-October 2005

It is well known that the weather can have a major effect on mountain areas. Hence this team was unable to land on the Buckskin glacier due to poor surface conditions (unbridged crevasses covered by powder snow) and even though they managed to land on the Upper Ruth glacier were unable to make any progress towards climbing either of their objectives – the NE face of Bear Tooth (3069m) and the N buttress of Moose's Tooth (3156m). The rock on both peaks was also covered with powder snow with no ice, causing dangerous avalanche conditions. The moral – don't go to Alaska in the autumn after a record dry summer! MEF 05/08

**'A Slice of Ice' – Alaska 2005** Stuart McAleese with Nick Bullock and Mike (Twid) Turner. March-April 2005

This strong team hoped to make the first ascent of the west face couloir on Middle Triple Peak (2693m) in the Kichatna Spires (aka Cathedral Peaks) where there is still much to be done. Unfortunately, weather conditions dictated otherwise. Although Talkeetna ('a small drinking town with a climbing problem') was virtually at a standstill owing to deep winter snow, they were surprised to find during their flight into the mountains that very little ice was visible. This was due to extremely low temperatures (–15°C in the sun on the glacier at midday) which would also preclude technical climbing, which is inevitably very slow. The intended objective – normally a continuous 1200m ice-line – was actually bare rock. During the next week continuous snow and strong winds hampered all movement and added to the avalanche risk, so although they explored much of the Tatina glacier, virtually no climbing was achieved. MEF 05/13

**British Ruth Gorge 2005** Tom Spreyer with Mark Walker. May 2005

Mount Wake (2755m) and London Bridge (2250m) are peaks facing one another across the Ruth gorge, and generally offer good scope for mixed routes. However, unseasonably warm and unsettled weather had cleared

most of the ice in the area, which necessitated a change of plan. They therefore 'moved into rock climbing mode'. After several failures they climbed *Ham & Eggs* (900m, V 5.9 W14) on the Moose's Tooth, continuing to its west summit, and then made a one-day ascent of *Dream in the Spirit of Mugs* (1100m, V 5.10c) on the west pillar of the Eye Tooth. Few other expeditions to the area achieved as much this spring. MEF 05/23

**Scottish Pantheon Range** Simon Richardson with Mark Robson. August 2005

The main objective of this team was to make the first ascent of the 600m NW pillar of Athena Tower on Mount Zeus (2959m) – described as the 'Bonatti Pillar' of the Pantheon Coastal Range (British Columbia). Unfortunately, at about one third height they encountered a 50-metre wall which, having no obvious cracks or other features, stopped further progress. They therefore turned their attention to the hitherto unclimbed 2km NW ridge of Zeus, which provided an excellent alpine route (at TD) and the first ascent of the mountain's West Peak, as well as the first N-S traverse. With the weather holding, they then crossed the Ragnarok glacier, and made the second ascent of the NW ridge of Mt Fenris (2896m) at AD.

MEF 05/28

**Yorkshire Tokosita Glacier 2005** Andrew Saxby with Jago Trasler. May 2005

Although the summit of Peak 3512m above Central Alaska's Tokosita glacier had been attempted by several climbers over the years, all had failed. Bad weather delayed this team's flight to the Mount Huntington landing site, but they eventually established a base camp at 2620m below their chosen peak. Unfortunately Coley Gentzel and Seth Hobby from the USA had the same objective, and in fact climbed it whilst the UK pair were getting established. Nevertheless, they continued in the hope of making the second ascent; but after climbing 300m of ice and mixed ground on the NW ridge (Scottish grade V), they were forced to retreat when Saxby suffered severe stomach pains, possibly due – at least in part – to hanging from belays in his harness. Frequent heavy snowfalls with whiteout conditions and avalanche danger precluded any further attempts. MEF 05/29

**Yukon 2005, Kluane** Glenn Wilks with Jonathon Wakefield. May-June 2005

In recent years, the Yukon has received considerably less attention from British climbers than Alaska but, as these men discovered, there are still rich pickings available. From a base camp on the Donjek glacier in Kluane National Park, they made first ascents of eight peaks between 3300m and 3700m, including Donjek 3, 4 and 5 at Scottish grades 2 and 3.

MEF 05/37

## AMERICA – SOUTH AND ANTARCTICA

**British South Georgia 2005** Julian Freeman-Attwood with Rich Haworth, Crag Jones and Skip Novak. January-February 2005

After sailing 1300km from Port Stanley to land at Larsen Harbour on Novak's yacht *Pelagic*, this team skied up the Philippi, and eventually onto the southern Spenceley Harmer glacier, to start a very committing 17-day south-north traverse of South Georgia. En route they tried to climb the north ridge of Mt Baume (1912m) but were repulsed by bad weather some 400m from the summit. However, they were successful in making the first ascent of Pk 5680 (1727m) to its north-west, before completing their traverse at Royal Bay, where they were reunited with *Pelagic*. MEF 05/01 (See article 'Strictly for Aficionados', p143.)

**Rio Turbio, Lost Valley of the Andes** Leo Houlding with Jessica Corrie and Kevin Thaw from UK plus Vicente Banate and Tommy Hienrich from Argentina and Mark Karhl and Tom Koiesk from USA. March-April 2005

Despite the presence of big granite crags, the Rio Turbo valley in Argentina's Lago Puelo National Park (close to the Chilean border) had not previously been visited by British climbers. Unusually heavy rain and a flooded river initially prevented access by the present team, but after nine days, the level eventually dropped and they were able to get across on horseback. Although two hours from base camp they were able to see their prime objective – an 800m granite wall dubbed the Mariposa – there was insufficient time to attempt it. However, their exploration revealed that this was an impressive location with plenty of scope for first ascents, and they therefore plan to return in 2006. MEF 05/05

**British Antarctic Peninsula 2005** Phil Wickens with Alan Geer, Alastair Gunn, Tim Hall, Alun Hubbard, Andy Kerr, and Colin Souness plus Nico L'Homme from France/Poland. December 2004-March 2005

This team sailed from S America on Alun Hubbard's yacht *Gambo* to Anvers Island, where they hoped to complete a traverse of Mt Francais (2825m) via its SE and NE ridges. A 1000m new line on the SE face took them to the S ridge, but from here they retreated due to Category 5 avalanche danger. A second attempt via Mt Rennie was also abandoned owing to bad weather (only five and a half clear days whilst they were in the area) and dangerous snow conditions. Moving to Wiencke Island, they made three attempts to climb and link the challenging Seven Sisters of Fief (c1430m), but again bad weather prevented success. However, they climbed a new gully route on the NW side of Noble Peak (c760m) at AD+ and a new route on the SE face/N ridge of Mt Wheat (1095m) in the Wall Range at AD-. As an 'expedition within an expedition' Hall made the first successful 'paramotor' flight (defined as foot-launched powered paragliding) in Antarctica. MEF 05/11

**South Georgia '05** Alun Hubbard with Tom Chamberlain, Alistair Gunn, Tim Hall, Dan Haywood and Rory Williams plus David Fasel from Switzerland. February-May 2005

With a change of team, this was to some extent a continuation of 05/11, using *Gambo* to access South Georgia. The bad weather continued, with a pressure drop to 930mb causing 'unbelievable winds'. In 13 days on Mount Paget (2996m) they only experienced two weather windows, each of about six hours. Both attempts to reach the summit were unsuccessful, but they did achieve the first ascent of its subsidiary peak (c2100m), which they named Buzen Point. MEF 05/12

**Stoats Apolobamba 2005** Carl Reilly with Tom Bide, Graeme Schofield and Sam Walmsley. June-August 2005

Although Japanese climbers visited the Acamani region of the South-Eastern Cordillera Apolobamba during the early sixties, little is known of their achievements and recently published Bolivian maps do not cover this part of the Apolobamba. These young explorers – all past or present members of the University of Birmingham Mountaineering Club – planned to extend the well-known 'Paul Hudson Map' whilst making first ascents of some of the local peaks. They actually climbed five (assumed new) routes which they graded from D- to TD; two (including a traverse) on Casalala (5650m), two on Huelanacaloc (5847m) and one on Canisaya (5652m). MEF 05/20 [For further information see website: [www.apolobamba.com](http://www.apolobamba.com)]

**British Cordillera Oriental 2005** Tony Barton with Tim Riley. May and August 2005

Although the Cordillera Oriental is relatively easy of access and the majority of its peaks are of moderate height, it is one of the lesser-visited areas of Peru. However, the vulnerability of a two-man team was brought home to this pair when Riley injured his back soon after arriving in Peru in May, forcing him to take a prolonged rest. Fortunately he recovered sufficiently to allow a return to the mountains three months later, when they climbed a new route on Nevado Nausacocha (c5150m) and several other previously unclimbed peaks. MEF 05/27

**Welsh Western Patagonia 2005** Chris Smith with Steve Hartland and David Hillebrandt. September-November 2005

These stalwarts with short memories returned to Patagonia in the hope of at last making the first ascent of Cerro Aguilera (2500m). During some of their previous attempts they had not even set foot on the mountain, but in 2004 [MEF 04/17] they found what seemed to be a satisfactory approach from the south-east, so this year were hopeful of topping out. Alas, the elements were against them once again with only two days of 'good' weather during four weeks in the area. The wind was so strong at one stage that their tent 'exploded'. MEF 05/41

**Tepui 2005** John Arran with Anne Arran, Miles Gibson and Ben Heason from UK, Alex Klenov from Kazakhstan and Ivan Calderón and Alfredo Rangel from Venezuela. March-April 2005

Following their success two years earlier [MEF 03/27] the Arrans returned to Venezuela with an augmented team hoping for similar results in 2005. Unfortunately they found that access to other unclimbed tepuis was virtually impossible owing to the thick jungle terrain surrounding them. They therefore turned their attention to the 1000m main face of Angel Falls. On this they were successful in making the first ascent of a route which they called *Rainbow Jambaia*. The 31 pitches up to E7 6b/Fr 7c/7c+ took 19 days, with 14 nights spent on the wall. Anne Arran, as an individual, was joint recipient of the Alison Chadwick Memorial Grant for 2005. MEF 05/43 (See article 'Rainbow Jambaia: A First Free Ascent of Angel Falls Face', p121.)

**Rondoy West Face 2005** Gareth Hughes with Tim Darlow, Myles English and Oliver Metherell from UK and Robin Deplante from France. July-August 2005

For the leader this was a return to an area that he had visited 12 months earlier as a member of Iain Rudkin's expedition MEF 04/37. Their prime objective was a new route up the obvious ice funnel on the west face of Nevado Rondoy (5879m) in the Cordillera Huayhuash. Unfortunately there had been little snowfall in the area since May, so conditions were dry and the glacier had changed considerably, making the approach dangerous and the route unjustifiable. Conditions on Jirishanca (6094m) were no more encouraging, but the summit of Cerro Mexico (5040m) was reached via its west ridge (D). They therefore decided to carry out a thorough exploration of the east side of the Copa Massif in the Cordillera Blanca. Here they had more success, reaching the summits of Copa (6188m), Artesonraju (6040m), Tocllaraju 6025m), and Chopicalqui (6534m) by routes up to D+, and reconnoitring various other peaks. In the light of their experience, they now feel that conditions would probably be safer earlier in the climbing season, eg May-June. MEF 05/46

## GREENLAND

**CUMC Centenary Kangerdlugssuaq 2005** James Sample with Alex Cowan, Matt Harding, Ali Ingleby, Leah Jackson-Blake, Jenny Marshall, Mike Moss and Tom Stedall. June-July 2005

Bad weather delayed this team's arrival in Greenland and then kept them tent-bound for three days 60km short of their intended landing area. However, once the weather improved, they made the first ascent of the most significant local peak, before skiing to their planned area, where they made first ascents of a further 11 significant peaks (mostly unnamed) via routes from PD to TD. MEF 05/10

**KMC Törnârssuk Expedition** Dave Bone with Marylise Dufaux, Dan O'Brien, Carl Pulley and David Whittingham. July-August 2005

Törnârssuk Island is uninhabited and lies off SW Greenland to the west of Pamiagdruk, an island visited by a Karabiner MC expedition in 2004 [MEF 04/20]. This team planned to explore and establish new rock and mountaineering routes in the northern half of the island. However, their arrival coincided with the end of a long dry spell, and they were subject to a series of active depressions with much rain and strong winds, which limited their activities. Nevertheless, they climbed a number of new routes, varying from F to E1 and up to 1000m long. Apart from a strong European team that put up a number of difficult rock routes in 2004, the island appears to have little recent climbing history, although the team was surprised to find an automatic radio/TV/mobile repeater station complete with diesel generator, helipad etc. MEF 05/26

**British Kangerdlugssuaq 2005** Peter Whyley with Carole Feldman, Paul Hawksworth and Cath Walton. July-August 2005

This group of teachers used Tangent Expeditions to access the region to the south of the Hutchinson glacier in order to explore and reach the summit of as many unclimbed peaks as possible in the time available. As far as was known, the exact area had never previously been visited, and the only available map proved to be inaccurate. Climbing mainly at night, they were successful in making 11 probable first ascents of peaks between 1480m and 1905m. MEF 05/47

## HIMALAYA – INDIA

**N Wales Changabang '05** Nick Bullock with Stuart McAleese and Olly Sanders. September-October 2005

The plan to climb a new route on the west face of Changabang (to the right of the Boardman-Tasker route) originated with Twid Turner and Louise Thomas, who heard that the Nanda Devi Sanctuary had reopened. Unfortunately the couple had to withdraw from the team when Louise became pregnant, and on arriving in India, the others found that the Sanctuary was still closed. They were therefore forced to approach from the north via the Bagini glacier and 9km of the 'moraine from hell'. As they started the climb the weather broke and after heavy snow flattened their base camp, a Dutch team came to their assistance and lent them tents. However, the bad weather continued, so with food running out and a tooth abscess making its presence felt, they abandoned the attempt at 6200m. MEF 05/24

**British Sikkim 2005** Julie-Ann Clyma with Roger Payne plus Kunzang Gyatso Bhutia and Sagar Rai from the Sikkim Amateur Mountaineering Association. March-April 2005

Although the fact that Sikkim has borders with Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan means that all visitors have to obtain an 'inner line' permit, this is not difficult, and the authorities have recently designated a number of peaks in the area around the Talung glacier as 'trekking peaks'. Having seen some of these during 2004, Clyma and Payne returned to explore the glacier and hopefully to make first ascents in the area. Despite poor and very cold weather throughout, two peaks were climbed: the north summit of Lama Lamani c5650m received its first ascent via the NW flank and W ridge (AD+) and then Tinchengkang (6010m) by its NW ridge at D- (probably its first 'alpine-style' ascent and third overall). MEF 05/49  
(See article 'Early Season Alpine Summits in West Sikkim', p139.)

## HIMALAYA – NEPAL

**British Machermo** Owen Samuel with Andy Turner. October-November 2005

Machermo (aka Phari Lapcha) (6017m) in the very popular Gokyo valley is one of 33 peaks recently given 'trekking peak' status by the Nepalese authorities. Although one route (*Bonfire of the Vanities* ED1) has already been climbed on its north face, these two prospective guides felt that there was scope for another. Unfortunately, an unseasonably cold period meant that snow conditions were poor with little ice, making the face unclimbable. After reaching 5300m on a rising traverse, they were forced to abandon their attempt. MEF 05/21

**Ngozumba Glacier Research Project** Doug Benn with Steve Keene from UK, Jason Gulley from USA and Endre Gjermundsen from Norway. November-December 2005

This unusual expedition was set up to study the role of high-altitude ice caves in the evolution and drainage of ice lakes, and assess the feasibility of cave diving within them. Basing themselves on the Ngozumba glacier between Cho Oyu and Gokyo they succeeded in exploring and mapping five caves at altitudes between 4900m and 5300m (the longest of them extending to 905m), achieving the record for the world's highest surveyed cave in the process. They exhibited a wide variety of morphologies ranging from high, narrow 'canyon-like' tunnels to wide, low-roofed caves occasionally opening out into large chambers. MEF 05/48

## CHINA &amp; TIBET

**British Gongkala 2005** Dick Isherwood with Toto Gronlund, Peter Rowat and Dave Wynne-Jones plus Nona Rowat as base camp doctor. September-October 2005

In a brief visit at the end of a previous expedition to Western Sichuan, Isherwood realised the potential for exploration and first ascents in the Gongkala Shan area, so lost no time in arranging this return. In particular it was hoped to climb the two principal peaks – Kawarani I & II (5992m and 5928m respectively) (aka Kawaluoren). With no obvious easy routes from the north, the team concentrated on the southern approach where, after initially supporting – and even blessing – the expedition, monks from the local monastery suddenly became aggressive and insisted on them leaving. With little time remaining, they returned to Haizi Shan (5833m) in the hope of completing the route previously attempted [MEF 04/33] but once again were repulsed by bad weather. However, Rowat and Wynne-Jones made what was probably the first ascent of a consolation peak of 4800m. MEF 05/04 (*See article 'A Cautionary Tale' p71.*)

**2005 British Habuqung Shan** Derek Buckle with Alasdair Scott, Martin Scott and Bill Thurston. September-October 2005

The Habuqung Shan mountain range lies west of Lhasa and north of Sangsang and is believed to contain 16 peaks over 6000m, the highest being Dobzebo. Although British climbers visited an area a little to the north in 2002, it is thought that no climbing has ever taken place in the range. This team explored the area, and made the first ascent of Dobzebo North (6412m) via its south face and of Dobzebo South (6429m) via its south-west ridge, experiencing no technical difficulties on either. MEF 05/16 (*See article 'Dobzebo and the Battle of the Mountains', p55.*)

**British Kajaqiao 2005** Mick Fowler with Phil Amos, Adam Thomas and Chris Watts. October-November 2005

Although located in an area of Tibet officially closed to foreigners, in 2004 Fowler received a permit for an attempt on Kajaqiao (6447m) in the Nyainqentanghla East Range. However it was 'the wrong sort of permit' and was withdrawn at a late stage. Fortunately a new (correct) permit was issued for 2005, and the team took full advantage of it. Despite very cold conditions (–15°C at BC) and 1.5m of snow falling while they were on the mountain, Fowler and Watts were successful in making the first ascent of the peak via its W face and NW ridge at a grade of Scottish V. They took six days to climb and three days to descend. Meanwhile, Amos and Thomas concentrated on the area to the south of Kajaqiao and reached a height of 5880m on the NW ridge of Manamcho (6240m). MEF 05/17 (*See article 'Through Permits and Powder', p2..*)



**Imperial College Shar Kangsum 2005** Daniel Carrick with Naomi Bessey, Ben Gready and Joe Johnstone. July-August 2005

There are about 15 peaks above 6000m in the Shar Kangsum range of Tibet, and this University expedition planned to explore and make first (official) ascents of as many of them as possible. Although they had to abandon an attempt on their main objective Purba (aka Shahkangsham, 6822m) at c6000m due to avalanche risk, they were successful in making the first ascents of three other others: Peak 6603, Peak 6210 and Peak 6390, each being climbed 'alpine style' at grades up to PD+. MEF 05/25

**British Xiashe** Ed Douglas with Tom Prentice and Duncan Tunstall. October 2005

It is rumoured that Xiashe (5833m) in the Quionglai Shan of West Sichuan had been attempted once before by a Korean team, but this 'illegal' expedition was unsuccessful. Two New Zealand women pipped Douglas and Tunstall to the summit by a few days to claim the first official ascent. However, the British pair established a fine new route on the hitherto unclimbed 1300m north face, then descended by the west ridge. They called their route (which was graded Scottish IV/5) *Don't Cook Yak in Anger*. In the meantime, Prentice opted for a solo reconnaissance of the area (the mapping of which leaves a lot to be desired) during which he made an unsuccessful attempt on Pt 5690m by its long north-east ridge. MEF 05/36. (See article 'Xiashe North Face', p35.)

**New Zealand Unclimbed Tibet 2005** Sean Waters with Jo Kippax. September-November 2005

Although a permit for a similar expedition was issued in 2004 it was withdrawn at a late stage. This year they were luckier, and although hampered by heavy rain, the team was able to access the Lawa Valley in the Nyainqentanglha East region of Tibet, where the precipitation continued in the form of snow, which made all progress difficult – impossible without snowshoes. After 12 days of effort, they established a camp on névé below the southern aspect of Birusato (c.6550m). From here a full day's climbing took them 900m up steep snow/ice couloirs followed by snow arêtes and ramps to the summit, but necessitated an unplanned bivouac before descending next day. MEF 05/44

**Hong Meigui Yunnan 2005** (caving) Richard Bayfield with Maxine Bateman, James Bruton, Louise Dugan, Simon Froude, Katie Froude, Ruth Kerry, Martell Linsdell, Alys Mendus, Hugh Penney, Ben Stephens, Jon Wichett and Steve Whitlock plus local contact Liu Hong. July-August 2005

This was a follow-up to recent expeditions [*including MEF 03/49 & 04/54*] to the Zhongdian limestone plateau at 4300m in Yunnan Province which seemed to indicate massive caving potential. In particular they planned to explore many of the high level entrances discovered in 2004 in the hope

that they might improve on the previous area's depth record of 120m (in Dawa Dong). Sadly, the area did not fully live up to expectations, but nevertheless, aided by local yak-farmers, the team found some 30 new cave entrances and a massive resurgence of ice cold water that awaits investigation by a team of hot-blooded cave divers. (*For further information see website: www.hongmeigui.net*) MEF 05/51

## PAKISTAN

**British Kero Lungma 2005** Peter Holden with Bill Church and Colin Morton. July-August 2005

This trip was originally proposed by Dave Wilkinson, but he was unable to participate owing to a climbing injury incurred beforehand. The intention was to return to the Kero-Lungma glacier (visited by two of them in 1996) to explore its north-east branch and climb some of the biggest peaks at its head. They were successful in making what was probably the first ascent of 'Twin Peak I' (c5500m), but had to retreat several times from high camps on 'Twin Peak II' (c5450m) and Peak 6123m due to poor weather and dangerous conditions. They warned future expeditions to the area that indicated heights varied from one map to another, and rarely agreed with their own findings. MEF 05/31A

**International Uli Biaho 2005** Jay Piggott and Jonathan Clearwater from NZ, Jeremy Frimer from Canada and Samuel Johnson from USA. July-August 2005

This team hoped to make the first ascent of the stunning 2000m line on the NE buttress of Uli Biaho (6109m) in pure alpine style: however, on arrival at its foot they realised why it remained unclimbed – a 60m summit mushroom avalanched down the face several times each day, making the route completely unjustifiable. An attempt on the mountain's south ridge took them within 400m of the summit before a storm forced a retreat. Three expedition members then made the first ascent of a 1600m rock route (VI, 5.11, A2 AI3, M5) on the SW ridge of Trango II (6327m), which they named *Severance Ridge*. MEF 05/35

## CENTRAL ASIA & THE FAR EAST

**2005 Ak-Su 'Free and Clean'** Mark Pretty with David Pickford, Ian Parnell and Sam Whittaker. July-August 2005

Since access to the eastern bloc countries is now so much easier, the granite spires above the Ak-Su main and subsidiary valleys of Kyrgyzstan have become a popular destination for technical rock-climbing teams. The area has been likened to the 'Yosemite Valley in the 1930s with terrorism'.

This team planned to repeat some existing routes but also make some first ascents. Despite being plagued by bad weather they were successful in climbing two completely new routes, *The Beast*, 550m, with pitches up to E4 6a and *From Russia with Love*, 400m, up to E7 6b, the latter possibly ranking as one of the current hardest on-sight routes. They also freed an existing aid route and climbed a dozen one-pitch (up to 45m) routes between E3 and E7. MEF 05/02

**Grand Poohbah** Paul Knott with Grant Piper and Graham Rowbotham. July-August 2005

Maintaining his reputation for visiting remote mountain areas, this year Paul Knott chose the Fersmana glacier basin in the central region of Western Kokshaal-Too. The aim of his team was to explore and climb, and in particular to make the first ascent of the highest peak in the area – Pik 5697m, nick-named ‘Grand Poohbah’ in 2000 by Mike Libeck. After experiencing a number of problems in accessing the area – a vehicle breakdown, a closed road and a changed border – they were delighted to find the area populated by elegant spires and steep granite walls. Unfortunately, Grand Poohbah itself was defended by overhanging séracs and they could see no feasible route. They therefore turned their attention to other peaks, making the first ascent of Neizvestniy (Russian for ‘Unknown’, 5240m) and attempting others to which they gave appropriate Russian names, viz: Granitsa (‘Border’, 5370m), Pogranichnik (‘Border Guard’, 5220m) and Zastava (‘Border Post’, 5010m) but without reaching their summits. Being stranded for several days at the road head whilst trying to get out made them seriously consider taking a satellite ‘phone on future trips.

MEF 05/18

**Cambridge Mongolia 2005** Alan Dickinson with Tom Lambert. July-August 2005

The best laid plans oft go awry, especially when conditions on the ground fail to match their appearance on maps and satellite photographs. When this duo eventually reached Monhh Khiarhan (4202m) (Mongolia’s second highest mountain) in the Altai Nuruu range, they found that a 70km ridge traverse that had been their prime objective ‘looked rather tame’ so they turned their attention to the peak itself. This they climbed from the north over a subsidiary peak (spotting footprints of what may have been a snow leopard en route) and returned the same way. After moving to the Tavanbogd National Park, they attempted a route on Huiten (4374m), the highest peak in Mongolia, but turned back 150m from the summit because of bad weather. However, they did complete what may be a new mixed snow and rock route on a peak of 3542m to its south-west. (*For further information see website: [www.mongolia2005.org.uk](http://www.mongolia2005.org.uk)*) MEF 05/32

**University of Bristol 2005 Tajikistan** Simon Spencer-Jones with Ed Bailey, James Byrne, Ian Hatcher, Rob Lavin, Amy Marshall, Stevo Nicholls and Sam Smith. June-July 2005

This team of past and present students of Bristol University with varied experience planned to explore the southern end of the 70-80km long Fedchenko glacier in the High Pamirs. Climbing in groups of two to four, they soon made first ascents or new routes on Peak Volodiya (5847m), Peak Bronwen (5550m) and Tanymas (5900m). The most experienced pair, Ian Hatcher and Simon Spencer-Jones, then set off to attempt the expedition's principal objective – a multi-day traverse of Peak Bakinshikh Kommisarov (6834m) and Peak Revolution (6948m). Unfortunately, the weather rapidly deteriorated, with strong winds and heavy snow, and the pair were never seen again, despite a number of air and land searches. We would like to express our deepest sympathy to their families and friends.

MEF 05/33

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Benarat 2005** (caving) Dick Willis with Tim Allen, Andy Atkinson, Mark Brown, Richard Chambers, Andy Eavis, Robert Eavis, Rich Gerrish, Martin Holroyd, Matt Kirby, Dave Nixon, Pete O'Neil, Robbie Shone, John Volanthin and Mark Wright. September-October 2005

The Mulu area of Sarawak is one of the most significant karst areas in the world so has long been popular with British cavers. This team proved that the Terikan caves formed a single 32km system: they also extended the Whiterock caves by 17km to a total of 20.9km and connected them to the Clearwater caves, making this the tenth longest system in the world, at 130km. There is obviously much more work to do in the area.

MEF 05/52