

Guides des Montagnes Corses Vol 1 Le Massif du Cinto; vol 2 Centrale et Méridionale. Michel Fabrikant (Club Alpin Français, vol I—1975, pp 271, vol II—1976, pp 319, photographs, maps, diagrams, npq, in French) These 2 guides cover between them everything that a visiting mountaineer will wish to know about the mountains of Corsica. Vol 1 is the third edition of the Cinto guide, being virtually a reprint of the 1964 edition with an addendum bringing information up-to-date on refuges in the area and major climbs that have been done since 1965. Vol 2 is the first edition to the other areas and covers, as the author says, all that can reasonably be covered in a volume that size for such a large area. The comprehensive map in the back of each volume shows the complexity and interest of the areas under consideration, and it is surprising that, although frequently written about in pre-war journals of various clubs, little has been heard of British exploits there in recent years.

Craggs of the Swiss Berne Alps Suke Okazawa (SAC Sektion Bern, 1976, pp 250, photos, diagrams and maps, npq, in Japanese) This guide to the 'Bernese Alps' is a summarized translation from the German using many of the diagrams from SAC guide-books. It is the first guide-book based on the 'English model' to be published in Japan.

AFRICA

La Montagne et Alpinisme 107 18 contains an account of a traverse of the Atlas Mountains by Michael Peyron, made in the Spring of 1976. The route described starts in the region of Midelt in the E, and finishes in the forests N of Taroudannt in the W; it passes through the M'Goun and Toubkal massifs of the High Atlas. The route is between 500 and 600km long. Some practical details concerning maps, equipment, climate and places to stay are given and there is a bibliography. Hamish Brown gives a useful fact summary on the High Atlas in *Climber and Rambler* April 1977, p 38. *Les Alpes* (Review, Autumn 1977, p 122) contains a short article on the Hoggar by H. Faessler, with some good colour photographs, the outcome of a trip made in November 1975. Paul Luckock also writes about an expedition to the Hoggar on p 43.

Mr P. H. Hicks writes concerning our report published in *AJ* 81 236 where we stated that Cheeseman and Snyder had made the second 'grand traverse' of Mount Kenya. He points out that he and Firmin made the first ascent of the N face and traversed over Batian and Nelion to descend the SE face in 1944; he thinks that this was probably the second traverse of the mountain. Later, Firmin and Howard made several traverses by the various new routes that they climbed and he feels that there must have been a number of other similar traverses over the years. He wonders what the precise definition of 'grand traverse' is, and conjectures that possibly the Shipton/Tilman route of 1930 is meant. Rene Bere, Ashley Greenwood and Hicks attempted this route in 1946, but were forced to abandon it; however, he feels certain that even this route, if it is the 'grand traverse', must have been repeated, probably by Firmin and Howard. We would welcome any further views on this point.

Heavy rains have hindered recent climbing on Mount Kenya. Ian Howell and Iain Allan found a hard route on the unclimbed SW face of Point John (4883m). This sheer 370m wall overlooks the Teleki Valley and local climbers have had their eyes on it for some while. Much of the initial overhanging section was sustained A3—unfortunately, heavy rain denied them a chance of a summit push when this was a definite possibility.

This pair have also been active along with others in the Hell's Gate Gorge, where they have achieved a number of new routes; thus on the Main Wall they climbed Merlin (HVS, A2), First Aid (HVS, A1) and Poseidon (150m, VS/HVS with one A1 aid pitch).

On p 120, Michael Scott gives a review of the history of climbing on Table Mountain in South Africa.

ASIA

HINDU KUSH

Noshaq (7492m) Some fine alpine style ascents were made on Noshaq and on some neighbouring mountains by a Polish expedition in the summer of 1976. Christoph Zeruk made an 11-hour solo climb of Noshaq in a single push from Base Camp, bivouacking on the descent.

A 14-member Yugoslav expedition put all members on the summit in August 1977.

Several other new routes were made in the area at the same time by various members of the team.

Wakhan Corridor A German expedition led by Anton Putz made first ascents of Koh-e-Galati (5767m) and Koh-e-Benom (6078m) and a new route (N ridge) on Langar (6958m).

Udren Zom Central (7078m) Five members of a 9-man Japanese party made the first ascent of this peak on 10 August 1977.

Saraghrar (7349m) The Spanish again failed, after making very considerable efforts, on the SW wall, one of the highest in the world—said to be 'reminiscent of the N face of the Grandes Jorasses but about twice as big'.

Koh-e-Shan (7010m) A Czech team made the first ascent of this peak in the Urgende Bala valley during the summer of 1977, as well as new routes on others nearby.

Alpine-style ascents of the E face of **Koh-e-Bandaka** and the N face of **Koh-e-Mandarar** were made during the summer of 1977 by a Polish/British party.

PAMIRS AND TIEN SHAN

A group of American climbers were the guests of the USSR Mountaineering Federation for 6 weeks in 1976 and climbed in the Caucasus, Pamirs and Tien Shan. Rather than taking part in big expeditions, they concentrated on alpine style ascents and rock-climbs up to c 5500m. In the Pamirs, George Lowe, Chris Jones, Slava Onishenko and Misha Ovehenekov made the first direct ascent of the N face of Pik Mirali, which involved very hard technical ice-climbing. In Tien Shan a number of classic routes were climbed. Henry Barber made a 4½-hour night solo climb of the central ice-field of the N face of Free Korea Peak (1000m of ice up to 60°, plus a 50m rock band). This turned out to be Barber's first alpine route. Later, Lowe climbed another new ice-route on the face. Solo climbing is normally forbidden in the USSR.

The American group concluded that the Russian standard on ice is some way behind the West, due to their outmoded equipment, but that their rock-climbing standard was very impressive.

KARAKORAM

The Ogre (7285m) One of the major events of 1977 was the first ascent of this mountain by Doug Scott and Chris Bonington (see p 3).

Gasherbrum I (8068m) was climbed on 8 July 1977 by 2 members of a Yugoslav expedition—the first ascent of the SW ridge. Later one member of the group was lost when bad weather defeated a solo attempt.

Broad Peak (8047m) Three of a 14-man Japanese team reached the top on 8 August 1977.

K2 (8610m) The second ascent of the mountain was made on 8 & 9 August 1977 by 7 members of a large Japanese/Pakistani expedition led by Ichiro Yoshizawa.

Biale (6729m) and **Tah Ratum (6648m)** received first ascents by Japanese parties during the summer of 1977, while **Phuparash (6750m)** was climbed Alpine-style by a British party.

Trango Towers (6250m) The 1976 British expedition climbed Nameless Tower; in 1977 a 6-man American party (Rowell, Schmitz, Hennek, Roskelley, Morrissey and Biskalgelia) made the first ascent of Trango Main Tower, via a route on the S face (1000m, 5.8, A1). All reached the summit except Biskalgelia. The Americans thought that their summit was slightly higher than Nameless Tower.

A 5-man British expedition led by Don Morrison attempted the W ridge of **Latok II (7110m)** in 1977. Three of the party had reached a point some 500m below the summit when disaster struck below; Morrison fell through a snow-bridge into a deep crevasse and could not be seen or heard by his partner, Tony Riley. The 3 climbers near the summit found themselves without support and were thus forced to descend, when the expedition was abandoned. A

large Italian expedition under Professor Arturo Bergamaschi was successful in climbing the mountain, 3 of the party reaching the summit on 28 August 1977 via the slightly lower S summit, (Ezio Alimonta, Renato Valentini and Toni Masé). The expedition also undertook some glaciological studies in the area.

KASHMIR

Nanga Parbat (8125m) An American attempt on the Diamir face was abandoned after the deaths of 2 expedition members.

Nun (7135m) Sylvain Saudan ('the skier of the Impossible') descended on skis from the summit in June 1977. Only 60 porters were involved in the approach march, no oxygen was used and the ski-ing was conventional rather than parachute-retarded. Plans are afoot for a similar venture on an 8000m peak in Nepal.

Sind Valley An American party consisting of Tobias, Dyleski and Brower visited this valley (about 3 days trek E of Srinagar) in the summer of 1976; they made a number of new ascents of its medium sized peaks (c 5000m). The area seems to have great potential for small expeditions with modest aims. John Jackson was apparently also in the valley in 1976, revising a guide first made in 1945.

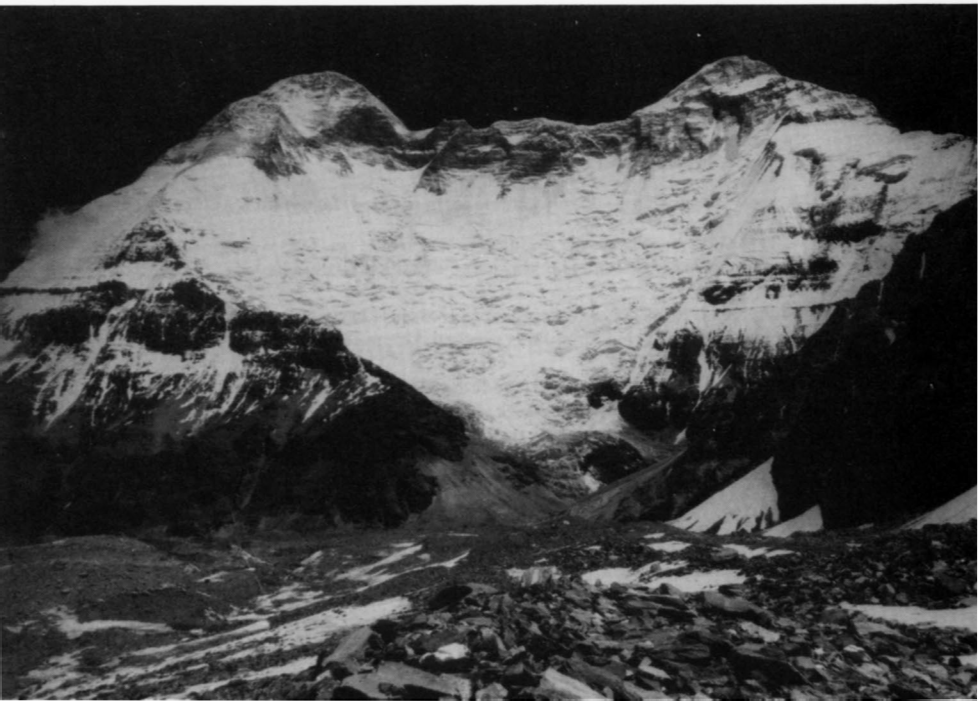
GARHWAL

Trisul (7120m) A Yugoslav expedition led by Tone Sazanov made the first ascent of the 3000m W face from the Upper Ronti Glacier; 3 climbers reached the summit, 2 on 15 May 1976 (Andrej Gasseli and Stefan Marencé) and Vanya Matijevc on the following day.

Dunagiri (7066m) On 21 October 1976, a Japanese team under Makinouchi climbed this mountain by the very difficult N ridge, 6 members reaching the summit.

A joint Indian/Japanese ladies expedition was climbing in the Garhwal in 1976 at about the same time as the joint men's team was involved in the Nanda Devi traverse (*AJ* 82 238). Their

95 *The peaks of Nanda Devi (Photo: Indian/Japanese Traverse Expedition, 1976)*



objectives were **Kamet** (7756m) and **Abi Gamin** (7355m); they were unsuccessful on the former, 2 attempts failing because of bad weather. However, they succeeded on Abi Gamin, 2 Indian girls and one Japanese reaching the summit on 18 June 1976.

During 1977 successful ascents were made of **Rishi Kot** (6259m) by a British party (second ascent); **Kalanka** (6931m), a new route on the N face by Czechoslovaks; **Nanda Devi** (7816m), the original route by a British party; **Maiktoli** (6803m), a new route on the S face by Japanese.

Bethartoli Himal (6352m) A 5-man Italian team, led by Renato Moro, all reached the summit on 17 September 1977, by way of the N ridge. This was a first ascent; there had been 4 previous attempts.



96 *Bethartoli Himal* (Photo: Renato Moro)

NEPAL

An Events and Trends review for the Nepal Himalaya covering the period 1970–6 appears on p 218; it has been kindly contributed by Mike Cheney. The pre-monsoon season of 1977 was poor in terms of the number of expeditions reaching their official objectives. Thus, Reinhold Messner's international 6-man team retreated from the S face of Dhaulagiri; the proposed route proved too dangerous to justify proceeding. A 2-man British party met with disaster on Sisne Himal (6627m). Richard Anderson and Andrew Russell were swept 300m down by an avalanche; Russell was killed but Anderson managed to extricate himself (see p 73). As a result of this accident, the Nepalese authorities have decided not to grant permission to parties with less than 4 members climbing above Base Camp; however, 2 (or perhaps 3) of these may be Sherpas. The absence of 'walky-talky' radios among expeditions' equipment has also raised unfavourable comment, although as yet there is no regulation stipulating their use.

Annapurna IV (7525m) *Mountain 53* 11 carries further details of the epic climb by Schubert and Baumann mentioned last year. Their performance is likened to that of Hermann Buhl on Nanga Parbat in 1953.

Lhotse (8500m) A German expedition under Gerhardt Schmat made the second ascent in May, 10 members reaching the top in 3 parties. Max Lutz was killed on the descent. The route was directly up the face above the Western Cwm.

Nuptse (7880m) A Japanese party made the first ascent of the NW ridge (overlooking the Khumbu Icefall) and the NW summit (7745m); Osamu Kuniie and Jamboo Sherpa reached the top on 10 May. A post-monsoon expedition to this mountain by Scott and Braithwaite had to be abandoned due to injuries received on the Ogre.

Everest (8848m) A large-scale S Korean assault placed one member and one Sherpa on the summit by way of the South Col on 15 September 1977. The local view is that the success was mainly due to massive Sherpa support.

Pumori (7145m) Four of a 6-member Canadian team reached the top on 7 October 1977, semi-Alpine-style, by way of the SW ridge.

Annapurna I (8091m) The summit was attained by one Sherpa and one member of a Dutch expedition on 13 October 1977—the first post-monsoon ascent and the first Dutch success on an 8000m peak.

Annapurna III (7556m) was climbed by 4 members of an Italian expedition on 23 & 25 October 1977. Disaster struck on the descent and one climber lost his life.

Nampa S (Rokapi) (6807m) Two members of the 1977 Northumbria Himalaya Expedition reached the top on 10 October, after considerable difficulties on the approach march.

A Japanese expedition to **Dhaulagiri I** and a French to **Manaslu** both ended in failure.

An article on the Himalayan Rescue Association appears in *Off Belay* 33 21. It was founded in 1973 by John Skow, an American Peace Corps volunteer. Originally based on a hut rented in the tiny village of Pheriche in Nepal, the Association now has a new aid post and in addition posts at Namche Bazar and at the Mount Everest Hotel. An international executive committee which includes Mike Cheney and Dr John Dickinson runs the HRA—the only salaried staff are the full-time Sherpas, the others all being volunteers. In addition to providing rescue and medical services, research into the various types of mountain sickness is being carried out. The Association is still a young organization, short of funds and equipment.

SIKKIM

In 1976, a party of 5 Indian schoolboys under the leadership of Michael Cross and Robin Brooke-Smith climbed Bidhan Chandra Peak (5520m). Difficulties of access to this once restricted area appear to be easing. Another schoolboy trip to the Himalaya is described on p 174.

Kangchenjunga (8598m) An Indian Army expedition led by Col Narendra Kumar has achieved a notable success by making the second ascent of the world's third highest mountain. They followed a new route up the difficult E spur from the Zemu Glacier in Sikkim. This route had defeated earlier German parties (1929 and 1931) who had climbed in the post-monsoon season—the Indians (Major Prem Shandra and Naik N. D. Sherpa) reached the summit on the 31 May. In fact, they stopped 6ft short of the top in deference to local religious beliefs. Unlike the earlier German attempts, oxygen was used, and supplies were dropped by air up to 5000m; Ladakh scouts rather than local porters were used.

MALAYSIA

Mountain 53 12 carries a report on a Hong Kong Chinese expedition to Mount Kinabalu (4100m) in Borneo, Eastern Malaysia. The massif apparently has some potentially good climbing, eg a 5000ft route on the W face of Alexandra Peak on magnificent rock. The jungle guarded approaches are a problem and there is a considerable degree of official interference, which makes hiring of guides obligatory even for the easy tourist route on Low's Peak (the highest summit).