
Pakistan 1991

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(Plates 20, 21)

1991 saw 52 expeditions, which is fewer than in previous years. It is reported that 18 groups cancelled in the period around the Gulf War. The expedition success rate was low, with an official calculation of only 14 summits reached. Though the weather was not as bad as in some recent years, there were relatively few of the sustained good spells most suitable for the highest peaks or slower tactics.

K2 (8611m) – NW ridge Pierre Beghin and Christoph Profit made the first ascent of the NW ridge. Arriving at Base Camp on 30 June they followed the same route as the Polish and British teams in 1982 and 1986, taking the Savoia glacier and avoiding gendarmes on the SW side of the ridge which stopped the 1975 American expedition. They regained the ridge around 6700m and placed a tent at 6900m before retreating to base to allow Beghin to recover from bronchitis. After two tries were repulsed by bad weather, a third began on 13 August from an advanced camp on the Savoia glacier. Reaching the tent at 6900m that night, they went up and left to join the N ridge at 7800m, with a bivouac at 7900m. Next day a traverse left took them into a dangerous windslab area, but they went on to reach the top at 6.50pm, just as the sun went down. There they were sighted by trekkers from Concordia 15km away. There followed a difficult and dangerous descent to their bivvy tent at 7900m, and a successful retreat from the mountain.

There had been no ascent of K2 from Pakistan since 1986, and attempts on the Abruzzi ridge by New Zealanders Rob Hall and Gary Ball and a German party led by veteran Sigi Hupfauer were unsuccessful.

Broad Peak (8047m) Two Japanese expeditions were successful in July. One was led by Keijiro Hayasaka, another by Yasuyuki Kawashima. Together they put ten climbers on the summit. Hayasaka (44), Toshimasa Yawata (41), Isao Ogsawara (38), Masanori Satoh (27) and Taro Tanikawa (24) all reached the top on 12 July. From Kawashima's group Hirofumi Konishi (29), Taeko Nagao (35F), Tetsuaki Yoshimura (29), Masami Abe (36) and Yasushi Yamanoi (26) succeeded on 30 July. A British *Himalayan Kingdoms* group led by Steve Bell was also successful, with Alan Hinkes, Robin Beadle and client Ramon Blanco (Venezuela) reaching the summit. German, French, an early Japanese, and Mexican expeditions failed. On the Mexican expedition the sirdar of porters, Mr Murad, was killed in a crevasse fall on 29 July.

Broad Peak – E face of the central summit (c8000m) In autumn 1991 Kurt Diemberger took part in an eight-member international-Catalonian expedition, led by Jordi Magriña, to Broad Peak from China. Starting from the Gasherbrum North glacier, they attempted the E face of the central summit and explored the

eastern Skyang glacier up to an unnamed col on its northern rim, before storms and heavy snowfall forced a retreat.

Gasherbrum II (8035m) This mountain was climbed by three expeditions. Swiss Philippe Menu, Felix Thurlir, Christian Haymoz and Ali Mohammed, a porter, reached the top on 28 June. Menu and Thurlir fell descending, but managed to stop and descend successfully. In July two South Korean expeditions, among others, were on the mountain. On 19 July Kim Chang-Seon, leader of his group, reached the top alone. It was his third 8000m summit. Next day five members of the other South Korean party from Sung Kyum Kwan University Alpine Club and led by Sangkook-Han, were also successful. Adrian Burgess's eight member international team suffered an accident when Paul Moores fell into a large crevasse. He was held with difficulty by Burgess, who injured a leg in the process. The party reached a high point of 7700m. Two American, one Austrian and a French party also failed, as did another American group trying Gasherbrum I.

Baltoro glacier lower peaks Unusually there seems to have been little success on the lower Baltoro peaks. After climbing Broad Peak, Yasushi Yamanoi and Atsushi Saitoh tried a route on the **Baltoro Cathedral (5866m)** but had to come down when Saitoh suffered mountain sickness. An American party made a booking in the Trango group, but neither it nor a Spanish team seem to have been successful. The Korean **Paiju Peak** expedition led by Joung Mo Nam, and a French expedition to **Chogolisa** led by Bernard Perrot failed. There was no better fortune for a Barcelona expedition to **Chogolisa Kangri (7665m)**.

Masherbrum West (7200m) – S face Mark Miller led a 14-person guided expedition which succeeded in making the second ascent of the mountain by a new route on the S face. Altogether 14 climbers reached the summit in two parties between 11 and 25 September, including Norman Croucher, the leading British disabled mountaineer.

Diran (7266m) This mountain was climbed by Spanish and Italian teams, though others failed.

Hanispur (5990m) Chris Pasteur led a four-person team which made a presumed first ascent of this peak off the Nobande Sobande glacier. They also made the first ascent of the **Virjerab Pass (5700)** and, using skis, carried out some useful exploratory work on the Nobande Sobande/Braldu watershed. The other members of the team were Angus Atkinson, Elizabeth Pasteur and Duncan Tunstall.

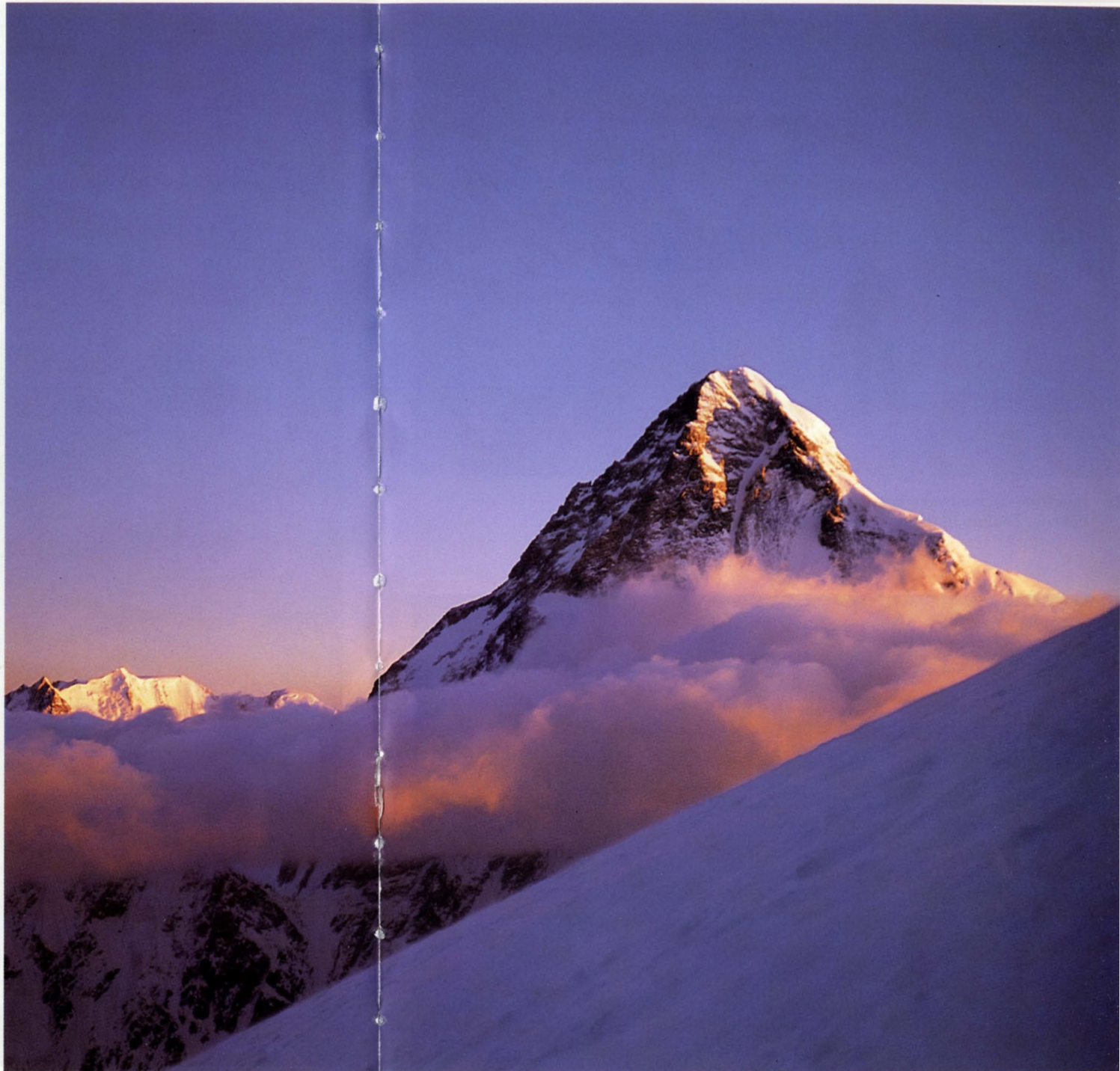
Trior (7720m) – N face On the Hispar there was something of a revival of interest after some quiet years. A Japanese Waseda University group led by Toshifumi Ohnuki made the second ascent of Trior, by a new route up the snow spur bounding the N face. The summit pair, Toshifumi Ohnuki and Atsushi Endoh, then traversed the ridge to **Momhil Sar (7342m)**. They had permission for both peaks and used fixed ropes and five camps on the spur. This was the first repeat of Trior since Wilfrid Noyce's first ascent in 1960.

A Japanese party led by Seishi Wada from Osaka had permission for both Nanga Parbat and Kunyang, but succeeded on neither. Nor did New Zealanders trying **Hispar Sar (6835m)** and another unnamed peak succeed. On



20. Above High on Broad Peak, 8047m.
(Alan Hinkes) (p270)

21. Right K2 from Broad Peak.
(Alan Hinkes) (p270)



9 July Steve Hillen and David Tyson (UK), members of a four-man team, fell to their deaths from a steep section, while descending from an attempt on the unclimbed ice peak **Makrong Chhish (6608m)**.

Ultrar II (7329m) Edi Birnbacher and Hans Firth (German), Gunther Steinmair (Austrian) and Mike Henry (American) tried the incomplete British 1984 line, but abandoned it around 6000m because of the dangerous approach and bad weather. (Oddly, in the official listing they are recorded as succeeding.)

Ultrar I (7388m) Mick Fowler, Crag Jones and Victor Saunders (UK) and Steve Sustad (USA) tried two different routes to this unclimbed summit. Saunders and Sustad reached 6500m on the SE face when Saunders' crampons and Sustad's ice-hammer broke within one pitch, the first time either had broken equipment in 20 years. (Full details in article 'We Failed on Ultrar' in this volume.) Fowler and Jones reached a similar height on the SW face, but made the first ascent of **Hunza Peak (6200m)**.

Ultrar I (7388m) The same mountain saw later disaster. Tsuneo Hasegawa, Kiyotaka Husino and veteran Pakistani mountaineer Nazir Sabir attempted the same SW face route in October. Three camps had been established, and the above trio were moving up on 10 October after a spell of bad weather. A massive avalanche swept the face, taking the two Japanese 1300m to their deaths. Nazir Sabir had stopped in a sheltered place to remove clothing and escaped. One can only mourn the death of two excellent Japanese mountaineers and welcome the survival of Sabir, the second Pakistani to climb K2 in the 1980s, with a Waseda University expedition, by the route attempted by the British in 1978.

Tirich Mir (7706m) A joint Pakistani-Kyoto JAC Japanese party succeeded, after earlier attempts were defeated by high winds. They took the normal route from the upper Tirich glacier, setting up four camps with Camp 4 at 7300m on 4 August. A Pakistani member suffered an accident on 5 August and had to be evacuated. On 10 August Yoshiaki Horie (33) and Osamu Funao made a summit attempt but were defeated by wind, and another attempt by Kiyooki Miyagawa (50) and Kensuke Matsuda (48) on 14 August was unsuccessful. Finally leader Tateshi Sudoh (41) and Miyagawa made the top on 15 August.

Tirich Mir East (7692m) A Norwegian attempt was led by Jon Gangdal (36). It had the ambitious aim of traversing the mountain by climbing the SE ridge and going on to the main summit. The latter section had been climbed in 1978 by the Polish-Yugoslav route. They set up six camps in bad weather. The Gangdal brothers set out to complete the traverse on 12 July, reaching the fore summit (7620m), but were unable to continue their traverse because of the wind's ferocity.

Sani Pakkush (6885m) A German expedition, led by Hubert Bleicher, succeeded on this mountain.

Nanga Parbat (8125m) One Japanese party spent 75 days on the SE pillar on the Diamir Face, but gave up at 7900m. Earlier an Anglo-Polish winter expedition, led by Macej Berbeka and including British members Nick Kekus, Sean Smith, Jon Tinker and Simon Yates, failed on the Rupal Face in atrocious weather. (See article 'Wintering on Nanga Parbat 1990-91' in this volume.) On

21 July Roger Mear and Dave Walsh made the first British ascent of this mountain, by the *Kinshofer* route on the Diamir Face via the direct finish, in an eight-day alpine-style push. (See article 'Eight Days on Nanga Parbat' in this volume.)