

British Chamar Expedition 2000 Expedition Report

MEF reference 00/24

British Chamar Expedition 2000

An expedition to make the first official ascent of Chamar(Sringi Himal), by way of the unexplored West Face. September/October/November 2000



The west face of Chamar

Abstract

In September 2000 a team of 5 climbers undertook an expedition to Chamar, an unclimbed 7000m peak close to the Tibetan border.

The aim of the expedition was 'to explore and climb the West Face of Chamar'.

The only information about the west face available before the departure of the expedition was provided from several photographs taken by John Cleare from Himal Chuli.

On arrival at the Sringi Khola, the valley which the west face rises from, the expedition discovered a large 500 year old Buddhist monastery.

The Lama of the monastery objected to the expeditions aim and refused to recognise the validity of the expeditions peak permit.

After several days of negotiation the Lama produced a petition signed by the leaders of the local villages requesting that the expedition turn its attention to the east side of the mountain.

The east side of Chamar had been visited by several expeditions and was known to be an objectively dangerous proposition. The expedition was able to confirm these earlier reports, reaching 5900m in the process.

Upon retreat from the high point the expedition discovered that its Advanced Base Camp had been stolen in its entirety presumably by Tibetan bandits.

The weather during the expedition was very stable. However, occasional light snowfall and cloud cover made navigation difficult towards the end of the expedition.

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The compilers of this report and the members of the expedition agree that any or all of this report may be copied for the purposes of private research.

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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	6
1.1 Chamar	6
1.2 Expedition Organisation	6
1.3 Previous Expeditions	6
2. Objective	8
3. Team	9
4. Approach	10
4.1 Approach Summary	10
4.2 Drama with the Lama	11
4.3 Heading East	13
5. The Climb	15
5.1 Base Camp	15
5.2 Advanced Base Camp	15
5.3 High Camp 1	16
5.4 High Camp 2	18
5.5 High Point	18
5.6 Bandits	18
5.7 The Clean Up	19
6. Conclusion	20
Appendices	22
i) Food and Transport	23
ii) Medical Kit	27
iii) Itinerary	31
iv) Expedition Personnel	33
v) Service Companies/Suppliers	34
vi) Maps/References	35
vii) Technology	36
viii) Budget	37
ix) Police Report	38
Acknowledgements	42

1. Introduction

1.1 Chamar

Chamar, also known locally as Sringi Himal, is a mountain that consists of two distinct peaks both over seven thousand meters in height. It is situated in northern Nepal and is located between the Annapurna and Everest ranges, north of Manaslu.



Figure 1. Location of Chamar

1.2 Expedition organisation

In order to climb a mountain in Nepal an application must be made to the Ministry and Aviation and tourism. The application needs to be very specific regarding the objective. Prior to the expedition we were under the impression that a peak permit for Chamar would allow us to explore the west side of the mountain. However, in the event of not finding a feasible route it was understood that we would be able to go to the east side.

At our briefing at the Ministry we found this not to be the case. Our permit only allowed us access to the west side of the mountain.

1.3 Previous Expeditions

1953 New Zealand Expedition

In 1953 a New Zealand team climbed Chamars East ridge after abandoning their attempt on Ganesh. The New Zealand team attempted Chamar as a last chance attempt on a summit before they were obliged to return to New Zealand. An account of their expedition is given in the 1953 New Zealand Alpine Club Journal. Although

they reached the summit they did not receive official recognition from the Nepalese government, as they did not have permission to climb the peak.

1984 Japanese Expedition

A Japanese expedition attempted to climb Chamar in 1984, but were forced to retreat from the mountain just five hundred feet from the summit. Very little information is available regarding the Japanese expedition. Rob Brown, the leader of the British 94 expedition, attempted to contact the Japanese Alpine Club for details but did not receive any reply. When we hired porters to get us into the Sarpu Khola, we were told that a member of the Japanese team had been killed by an avalanche. This had apparently brought their attempt to a halt very close to the summit.

1994 British Expedition

A British expedition led by Rob Brown went to the eastern flank of Chamar in the post monsoon season of 1994. They found that the glaciated flank had changed significantly to the description given by the account of the 1953 New Zealand Expedition. The route had become threatened by seracs and was considered by the expedition team to be objectively unsafe. This coupled with very heavy snowfall forced the team to retreat from the mountain.

2. Objective

On arrival at Kathmandu the climbing team was gathered in its entirety for the first time and as such climbing ethics were finalised.

It was decided as a general objective that the primary objective of the expedition was to make sure that everyone returned from the mountain in one piece. As such it was decided that only the climbing team would go above base camp.

A secondary general objective was expressed as that the team should return from the mountain as friends.

The primary climbing objective of the expedition was to explore and make the first ascent of the west face of Chamar.

If the exploration of the west face proved the primary objective to be unfeasible then, the secondary climbing objective was to climb Chamar by a new route from the east side to make the first official ascent.

3. Team

Expedition Leader Tony Barton
Age 32
Previous Experience 4 trips to the Alps, climbing routes to TD. 1 trip to Nepal as part of a British expedition to Mera peak's South face. 3 trips to the Bolivian Andes one as leader of the Scottish Bolivia Expedition 98 and latterly to work as a guide.



Expedition Secretary Tom Wiggins
Age 26
Previous Experience 4 trips to the Alps, climbing routes to D. 1 trip to the Bolivian Andes as a member of the Scottish Bolivia Expedition 98.



Expedition Transport John Allot
Age 45
Previous Experience 10 trips to the Alps, climbing routes to ED. 1 trip to India as Deputy leader of the 99 British Banderpunch Expedition.



Expedition Medic Tim Riley
Age 24
Previous Experience 5 trips to the Alps, climbing routes to ED 1. 1 trip to the Peruvian Andes.



Expedition Member Peter Berggren
Age 26
Previous Expedition 4 trips to the Alps, climbing routes to ED 1. 1 trip to the Peruvian Andes.



4. Approach

4.1 Summary

The Team left Kathmandu on the 20th September and travelled by bus to Gorkha. From this point on all progress towards the mountain was made on foot. A sketch map of the caravan route followed is shown in figure 4.1 From Ghorka the route led over several ridges until dropping into the river valley of the Biri Daki which was then followed northwards until the confluence with the Sringi and Sarpu rivers. From this point the Sringi river was followed to the village of Bih, where a local guide was hired to take us into the Sringi Khola

The full itinerary of the approach route is given in appendix iii.

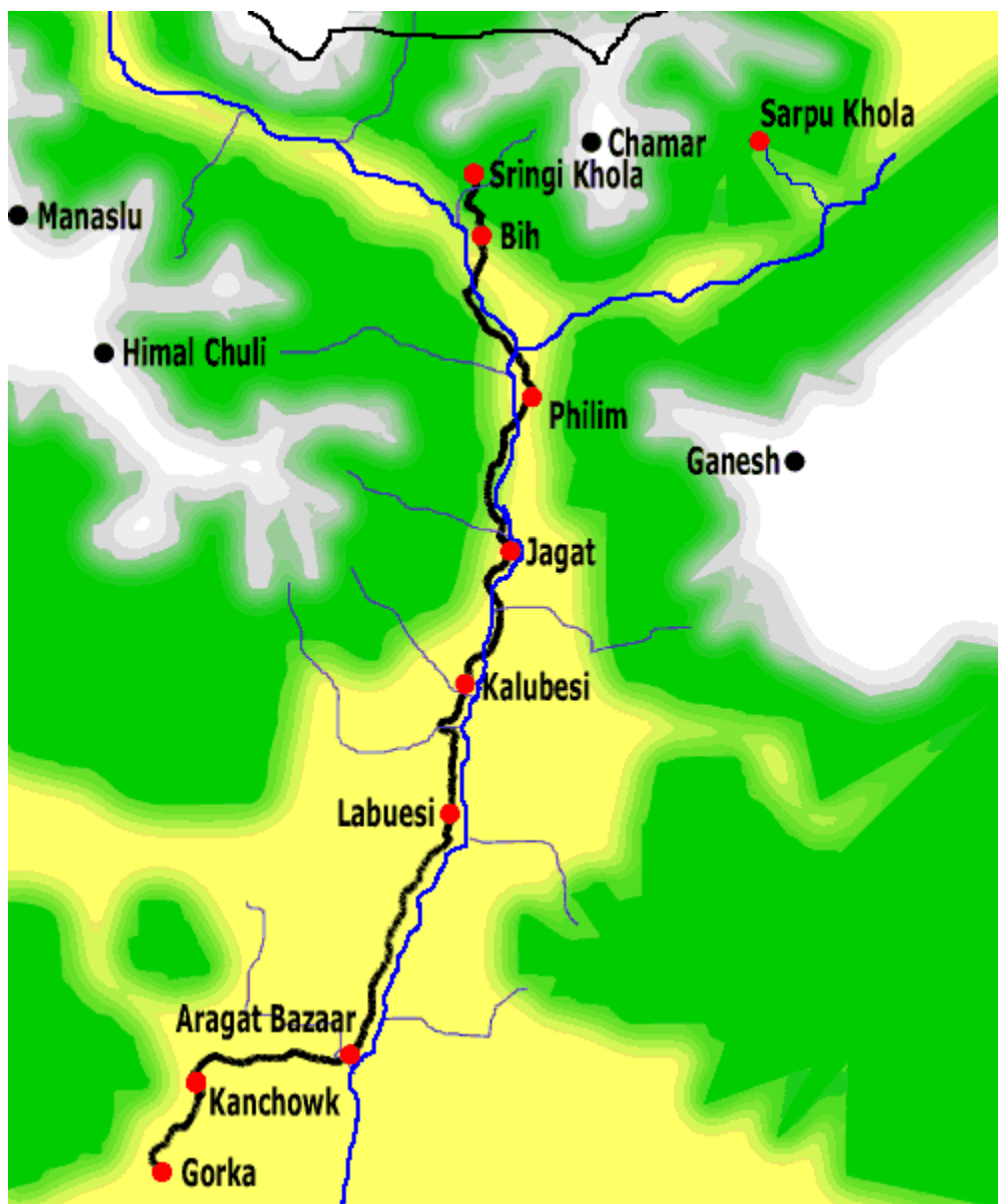


Figure 4.1 Approach route to the Sringi Khola

4.2 Drama with the Lama

After our arrival in Philim, the team took advantage of the short porter day and visited the Manaslu Preservation Centre. We were very surprised to find that they had a much more accurate map than we had, we were also even more surprised to find that the map showed a monastery within the Sringi Khola. Up until this point all our information had led us to believe that the Sringi Khola was unexplored and certainly uninhabited.

Our Liaison Officer and our guide Chet did not seem to think that this would be a problem, and that we may have to make a small donation to the monastery but that would be all.

On arriving at Bih the next day Chet and our LO went to visit the village elder and came back with a local guide and the blessings of the village to enter the Sringi Khola. We were told that we would have to see the Lama once we had entered the valley to seek his blessing.

The next day saw us make camp on a high meadow looking across at our objective, the west face of Chamar. We had been in the camp for less than an hour when we spotted a procession of Buddhist monks passing through the trees above our campsite. The local people informed us that the monastery had been sited in the Sringi Khola for over 400 years and that over 400 monks of both sexes lived there. The procession we were watching was the Lama's annual journey to another monastery near Manaslu.

Chet and our LO went off to rendezvous with the procession taking our peak permit with them. We waited expectantly. After half an hour the pair returned looking unhappy. The Lama was not prepared to recognise the peak permit as it had been granted without his consultation, furthermore he did not recognise the authority of our LO and as such had seized the peak permit and was going to take it to the next village with a police station on the route to Manaslu and verify its authenticity there.

Chet and our LO left that afternoon to follow the procession to Lamchik.

The following day was therefore a rest day as we had been instructed not to proceed further into the Sringi Khola until the matter had been resolved. We used the time to photograph and study our line on the west face. Our fears about objective dangers seemed to have been unfounded as a safe and logical line lay up the face.

In the evening, Chet returned, looking tired and haggard. He told us that the Lama, upon being told of the permit's authenticity was still very unhappy and wished, amongst other things, to see our itinerary, and as so Himal our Sirdar left that night for Lamchik to show the Lama our itinerary.

The next day was another enforced rest day and the team began to stagnate. Himal returned late in the evening and told us that the Lama would give us a final answer the next day and that our LO had gone to Philim to use the radio to contact Kathmandu. We asked if we could talk to the Lama personally, but we were told politely that it would not be a good idea. There was also talk of armed police escorts, but none of us took these particularly seriously.

After yet another day of lounging around staring at an objective that seemed to be getting more and more distant morale was low within the team and it was decided that the following day Tony and Tim would descend to Bih with a radio and find out what was going on.

The following day the news was relayed to the remaining team members that permission for the west face had been revoked, and so everyone descended to Bih. Tony and Tim had found out what the situation was from the village elder who had originally given us his blessing. The population in this part of Nepal is predominantly Tibetan so much so that most of the people living in the area do not speak Nepali. Consequently they are also Buddhist and therefore hold their local Lama in understandable high esteem. Upon learning of the validity of our peak permit he told the people gathered at the village that if we were to enter the Sringi Khola and climb the west face then he would leave the monastery and go elsewhere. The local people were very upset by this and apparently started to cry and begged the Lama not to leave. The elders of all the surrounding villages then signed a petition requesting that our permission for the west side of the mountain be revoked. See figure 4.2.

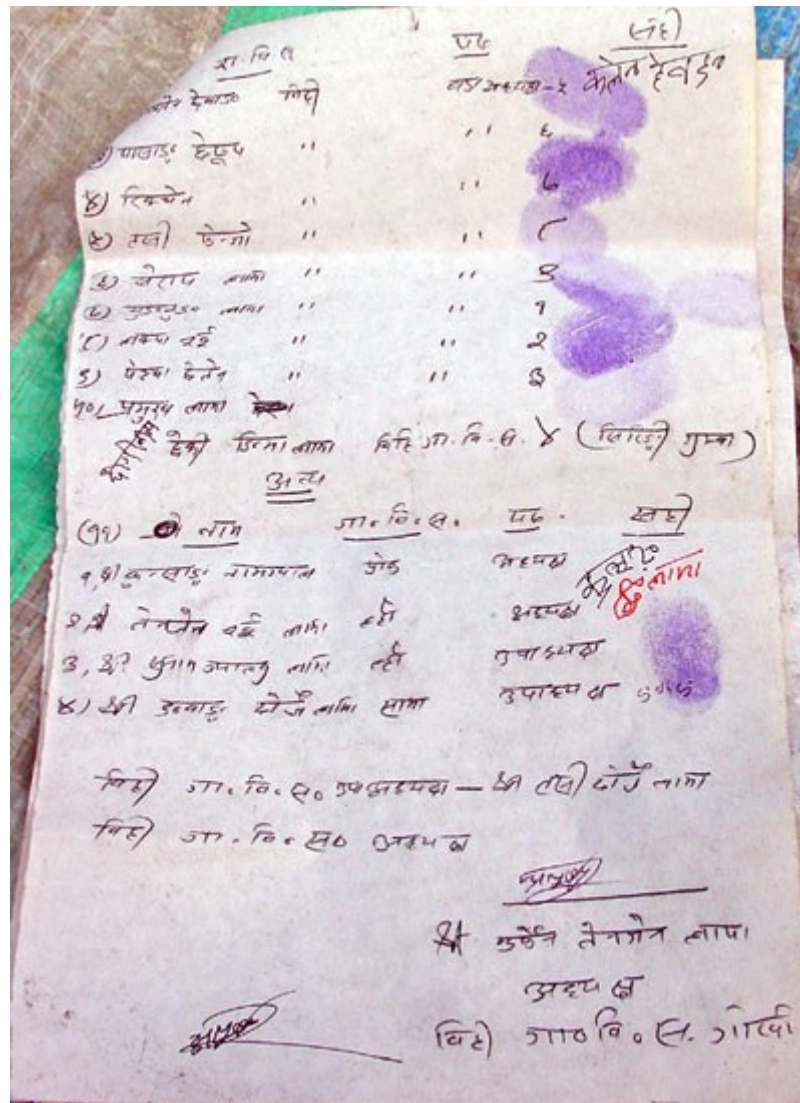


Figure 4.2 The Lamas petition

According to the beliefs of the monks god lives in the west face of the mountain Sringi Himal. However, it was strange to us that the Lama did not mind us climbing the mountain from the east. He claimed it was a different mountain. When climbed

from the east the mountain is called Chamar and was not sacred. When climbed from the west the mountain is called Sringi Himal and is most defiantly sacred. Peter asked Himal what would have happened if we had just ignored the Lama and climbed anyway, he replied that the Lama had said that he and his monks would have stoned us to death. We went east.

4.3 Heading East

When it became apparent that our permission for the west face of Chamar was going to be revoked, our LO set of for Jagat to radio the Ministry of Aviation and Tourism to try and obtain permission for an attempt on the east side of the mountain. Initially the plan was for us to await the ministry of tourisms decision in Bih, however, we knew that the trek to the east face could take as many as five days and we also knew from the 94 expeditions account that the Hindu festival of Diwali was due to start at any day and as such our porters would be very reluctant to carry our equipment any further.

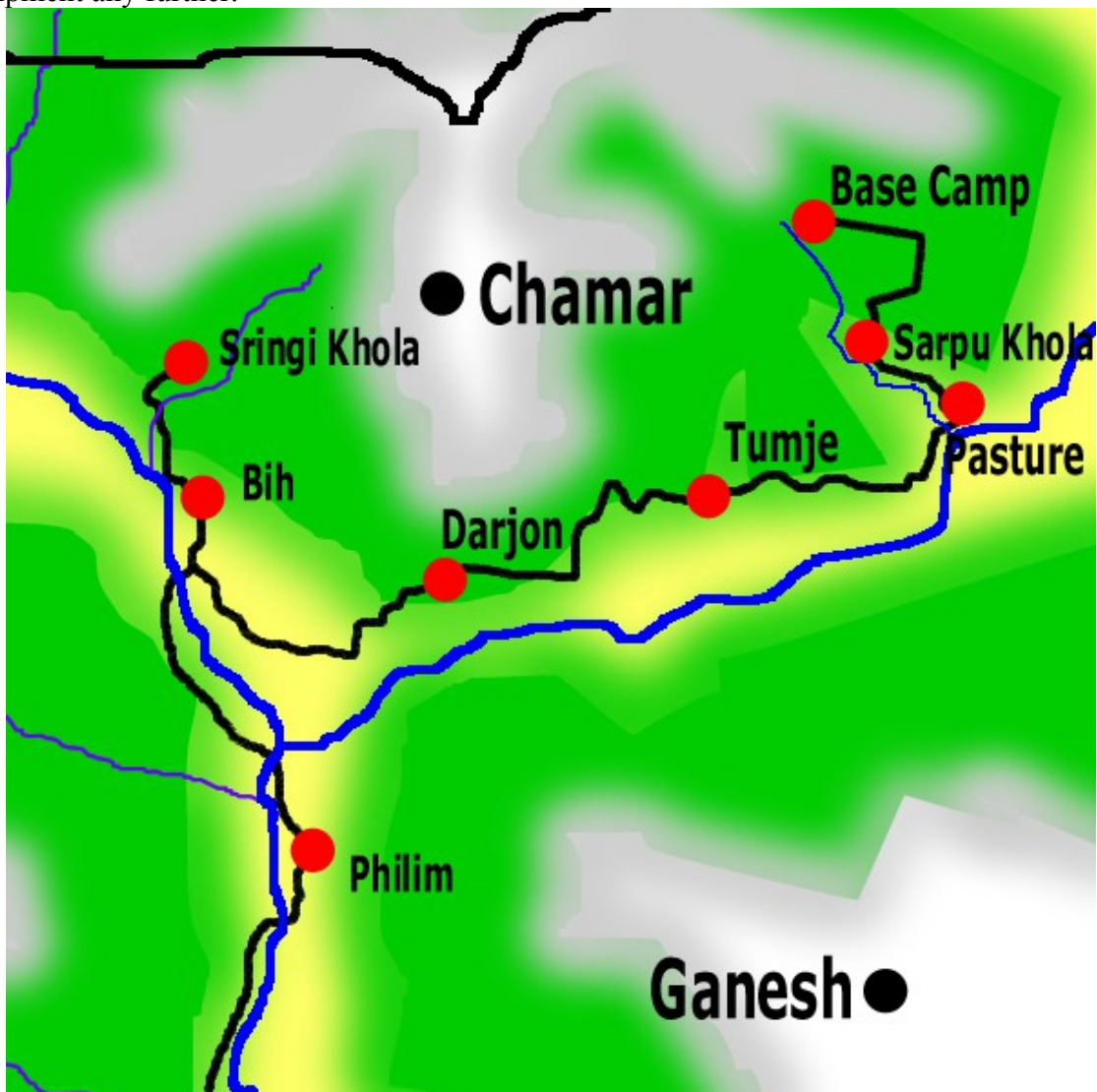


Figure 4.3 The route from the Sringi Khola to the Sarpu Khola

As such we decided to break camp the next day and set off for the east side of the mountain, relying on the good will of the ministry of Tourism to amend our peak permit.

The following morning there was a distinct lack of activity. Our Sirdar, Himal explained that the porters did not want to go any further and wanted to go home for the festival. We reasoned that as Diwali did not start for a further 5 days they could carry for us for a further 2 days, to get us to the east side of the mountain, and then get back to Gorka in time for the festival. Once at the east side of the mountain we could hire local Buddhist porters to carry our gear into base camp.

However, the porters were not impressed with this idea and flatly refused to continue. Out of desperation we asked Himal to explain to them that if they left us now we didn't want to see them on our return journey and that we would hire porters locally for the entire return journey. There followed much shouting between our porters and Himal, and after ten minutes the loads were picked up and we were away. Himal would not tell us exactly what inspired them to keep moving but it was considered doubtful that it had anything to do with what we said.

The local guide that had taken us into the Sringi Khola now led us to the east, but as he bypassed the main trade route between Bih and Tumje we had a much longer journey. He led us over a ill marked mountain track that took in a 4000m pass and resulted in a ten hour porter day that still did not place us where we wished to be. At Tumje most of the porters left us and we couldn't blame them. Himal, resourceful as ever, persuaded 14 of our porters to stay on and hired the balance locally. Our LO and Chet met us on the path to the Sarpu Khola, wondering why hadn't taken the easy path, but holding an amended peak permit. We hired another local guide to lead us up to base camp, this one knew where he was going but had the disturbing habits of leading from behind and collapsing to the ground at every rest stop.

Eventually on day 17 we made our base camp in the Sarpu Khola at the snout of the Sarpu glacier.

5. The Climb

5.1 Base Camp

Base Camp was established on the east side and approximately 200 metres above the snout of the Sarpu Glacier on 7th October at a height of 4600m. The camp was placed in a small flat area between a grazing pasture and a wall of moraine.

The pasture was presumably used for cattle grazing during some months of the year. There were also several small stone huts scattered around the area.

Water was sourced from several waterfalls that flowed into the south boundary of the pasture.

Directly opposite the base camp on the west side of the Sarpu Glacier stood a very small Buddhist monastery. During the time spent at base camp it contained no inhabitants, also due to large amounts of soil instability it appeared that there was no longer a path leading to it.

The next day was spent resting and sorting equipment and food for the first foray onto the Sarpu glacier.

5.2 Advanced Base Camp

At 6.00am on the 8th October the climbing team descended the moraine onto the Sarpu glacier. The team stayed at the centre of the glacier to avoid stonefall that both sides of the glacier were exposed to. Progress was made with some difficulty as the glacier was completely covered in unstable scree.

After approximately one mile the glacier changed direction, flowing from the west, and gained height rapidly. The resulting icefall caused some problems with route finding. A tenuous route was picked between ablated seracs before the team left the glacier via the north bank.

According to the 94 Expedition the route to advanced base camp followed the north bank of the Sarpu glacier.

However, upon reaching the point where the glacier changed direction to flow from the northwest, it was found that the route along the northern bank had tumbled into the glacier during the previous 6 years leaving the route impassable.

3 60m abseils brought the team back onto the glacier where progress was made up the north side of the glacier. During this time the weather deteriorated until visibility was reduced to approximately 10 metres.

Advanced base camp was established at 4900m on an area of scree that had to be worked to produce tent platforms. Water was found in the form of a small stream that was excavated from the moraine.

The following day the team descended back to base camp finding a route that stayed on the glacier for the whole way.

The next few days were spent stocking base camp before further exploration could begin. For a detailed account of day-to-day movements of the team on the mountain please see appendix III.

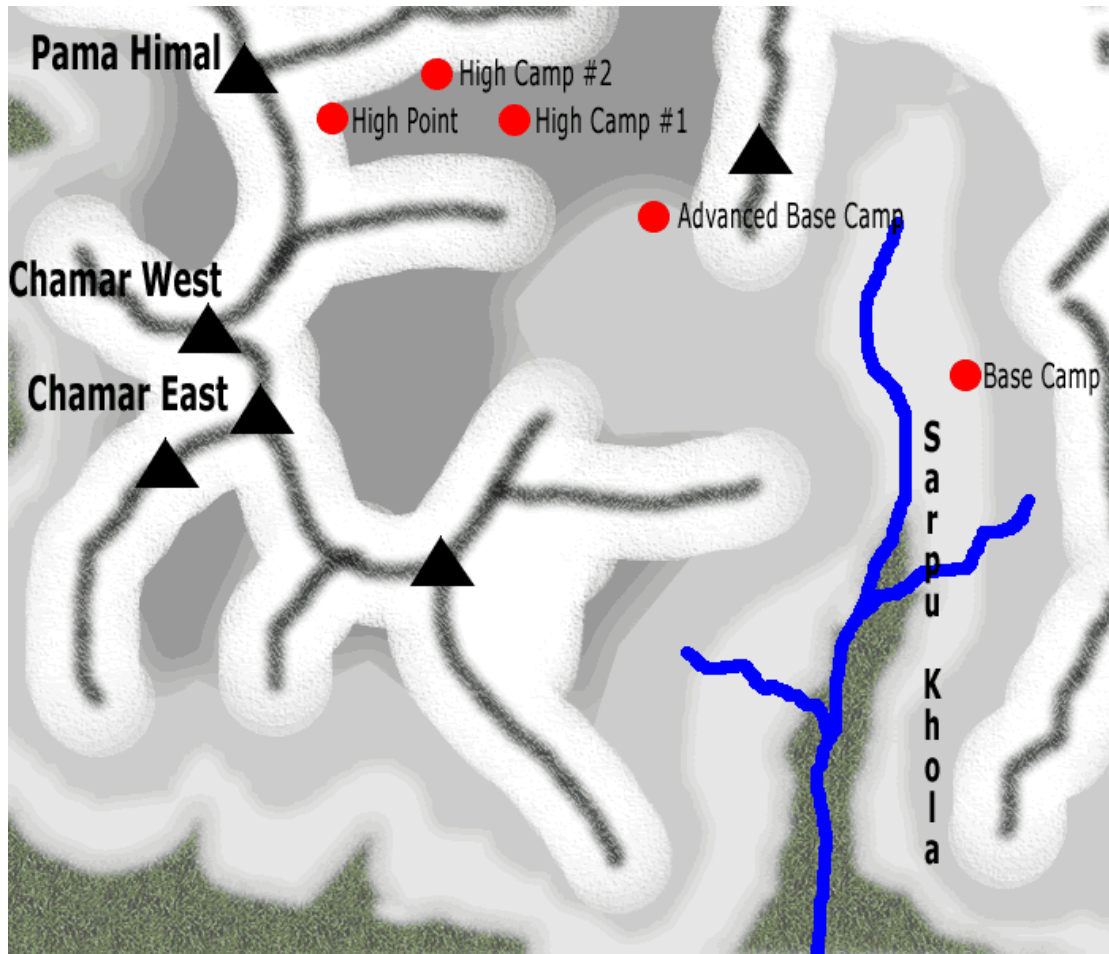


Figure 5.1 Sketch map of Chamar

5.3 High Camp 1

On the 13th October Tony Barton, John Allot, and Tom Wiggans left advanced base camp carrying light loads and climbed moraine on the west side of the upper glacier that flowed into the Sarpu glacier from the north just below advanced base camp. The route climbed steeply for 250m and was exposed to occasional stonefall that became progressively worse as the day continued.

Above the second icefall the glacier turned to flow from the west. The route stayed on the moraine and followed the north side of the glacier. High camp was established at 5500m on a flat section of the now snow covered glacier.

High camp gave a clear view of the original 1953 NZ Expedition route up the east ridge, the northeast face and the north ridge which descends down to a low point before climbing to the summit of Pama Himal. See figure 5.2



Figure 5.2 A is the line taken by the New Zealand 53' Expedition on the east ridge, route B is the north east 'ramp', and C is north ridge route.

From the vantage point of high camp it became obvious that there were only three possibilities for an ascent from the east side.

After establishing the high camp the team of three descended to ABC where Peter Berggren was waiting. Tim Riley had been unable to accompany him due to reoccurring illness.

Peter Berggren decided to proceed to high camp the following day accompanied by John Allott. Tony Barton and Tom Wiggans descended to base camp to rest and to carry up further loads. Whilst at high camp Peter and John proceeded to investigate the approach to the potential routes on the east face.

During the first two trips to high camp both teams witnessed several serac falls and avalanches on both routes.

On the 16th October the whole team was united at ABC and it was felt that a decision regarding the route had to be made due to the shortness of time remaining. Tim Riley had not been to high camp at this point and as such was put in the unenviable position of having to vote on which route to choose based solely on a picture taken with a digital camera and then displayed on Tom Wiggans's Laptop computer.

The original east ridge route was felt to be too dangerous due to the state of the seracs on the lower part of the route leading up to the ridge.

The ramp route of the north east flank was also dismissed for the same reason.

This left only route C, which gained the north ridge via a steep couloir and then followed the narrow ridge to the summit. This route appeared to be the only objectively safe route, however, it also appeared to be the most technically difficult.

A further problem to all the routes from this side of the mountain was the sighting of large cracks where slab avalanches had peeled off the north eastern slopes of the mountain which were common to all routes. It was hoped that arriving at these slopes the snow would have consolidated.

In order to concentrate fully on the north ridge route, it was decided that high camp should be moved to a location that would give better access to the north couloir.

5.4 High Camp 2

On the 18th October Tony Barton and Tom Wiggans re-sited high camp to a new location higher up the glacier. The new camp was sited at a height 5650 on the extreme north side of the glacier at a point where it was in the least danger from stone-fall from the north and avalanche debris from the north east flank of Chamar.

5.5 High Point

On the 19th October Tony Barton and Tom Wiggans left high camp at 5.00am with the intention of fixing rope to the top of the col. However, on arriving at the base of the couloir (5850m), the team encountered constant stone-fall that forced them to shelter beneath a buttress to the north of the entrance to the col. During the next half an hour the stone fall increased in severity and as such the pair retreated, leaving the fixed rope in a sheltered niche below the buttress.

After this incident it was decided that the couloir would be best climbed during the night when the danger of rock fall was at a minimum. The following day Tim Riley and Peter Berggren set off in the early evening. Tom Wiggans and Tony Barton packed to loads of food and gas with the intention of following Tim and Pete several hours later and carrying the loads to the high point before descending.

However, as Tony and Tom were leaving the camp Pete and Tim radioed in to say that the stone fall in the couloir had not reduced at all and that the route was unfeasible. Pete climbed higher into the couloir for another 50m to reach the expedition high point off 5900m before retreating. The pair retrieved the fixed rope left the previous day and descended to high camp.

On the 22nd October the decision was made to abandon the attempt on the mountain. However, as high camp was still well stocked with food and gas the team decided to re-site high camp once more to a pasture at 5300m that had been passed on the way up the mountain. This was done on the 23rd October. The pasture was next to a stream and gave good views of the south eastern aspects of Chamar and it was hoped that from this vantage point the expedition would be able to gain some useful photographs for any future expeditions.

5.6 Bandits

After several days of poor weather Tom Wiggans decided to descend to base camp on the 28th October. Due to snowfall during the previous days and the heavy load carried the route down to ABC took quite some time. Unfortunately, on arrival at ABC, or rather the site of ABC, Tom was very surprised to find that there was nothing there! At some point while the team had been on the mountain all the equipment had been stolen from the site. For a full list of the equipment taken please see appendix X. Tom continued his descent down the glacier and found that the fixed rope on the lower part of the glacier had also been removed. During the time spent on the mountain the icefall of the glacier had altered quite dramatically. Several landslides from the banks had buried parts of the route down and new crevasses had opened up on the lower part of the glacier.

The rest of the team descended on the 29th October.

5.7 The Clean Up

The expedition retrieved all the equipment and debris generated during the time on the mountain including all the fixed rope.

The expeditions base camp crew then took care of the disposal of rubbish. All of the burnable rubbish was burnt and then buried. The empty gas canisters were transported with us to the first metal disposal site at Philim. The fixed rope and the remaining gas was donated to our Sirdar.

When the expedition commenced its walk out on the 30th October the area that had been base camp was left looking undisturbed.

6. Conclusion

Despite the problems encountered by the team during the time spent away from Kathmandu, the expedition achieved its general objective of returning without injury to team or crew. It has to be said that perhaps the relationship between some of the team members became a little strained during the last days of the walk out. However, these tensions soon dissolved on immersion in Kathmandu's bright lights and fine foods, and the team departed from Nepal as friends.

Upon returning to Kathmandu Tony Barton attended a debriefing at the Ministry of Aviation and Tourism. Tony expressed the expeditions sense of dissatisfaction at being charged \$3000 for a route that was to all intents and purposes off-limits. Making the point that for the amount of money in question, some basic research on their part would not have gone a miss.

The official at the Ministry expressed his sympathy but said that it would be up to his superiors to decide whether the matter should be taken further.

Subsequently Tony submitted his interpretation of the situation in writing to the Ministry. At the time of writing no response has been received.

Had the team been allowed access to the west face I am sure the team would have left the area with, if not the summit, at least the satisfaction that they had pushed the route as far as was feasible. Due to the extreme differences in exposure to the sun between the east and west faces on the mountain, a ridge with an east face that provides no more than unstable scree can provide superb steep ice that is objectively safe on its western side.

The eastern side of Chamar is a far from enticing proposition and the expedition, despite its efforts, did not spot any other potential route that could be recommended to future expeditions.

The north ridge route would be the most reasonable proposition from the east side if the approach couloir was found in good condition. A further consideration in the teams decision to abandon the route was that had the north ridge been gained and then retreat due to accident or sickness become necessary. A descent into the west side would have been by far the easiest and most logical descent route. But given the threats made earlier by the Lama regarding any approach of the west face. It is likely it would entail physical danger of a different nature.

In Kathmandu the team heard a rumour that the Ministry of Aviation and Tourism had removed Chamar from its list of available peaks.

The theft of advanced base camp was a major surprise given its remote position and the difficulty involved in reaching it. The 94' Expedition reported having some items stolen from base camp but nothing from advanced base camp. It is thought that the thieves gained access to the glacier by following the river at the centre of the valley to the snout of the glacier. This route looked impossible to us, but having said that so did negotiating the Sarpu Glacier in Chinese made baseball boots.

It is worth noting that the expedition base camp crew were considered to be beyond reproach in this respect and were horrified when they found out about the incident.

On a note to other expeditions planning an expedition to that area it is not advisable to leave anything unattended even for a short period of time.

The expedition would wholeheartedly recommend that any expedition planning a trip to Nepal enlist the services of Himalayan Expeditions and in particular our Sirdar Himal Tamang. He and his crew approached and overcame all the problems encountered by the expedition with a thoroughly professional attitude.

Despite the expedition failing to achieve its climbing objective, overcoming the difficulties encountered on the way made the expedition a very worthwhile experience.

Appendices

- i) Food
- ii) Medical Kit
- iii) Itinerary
- iv) Expedition Personnel
- v) Service Companies/Suppliers
- vi) Maps/References
- vii) Technology
- viii) Budget
- ix) Police Report

Appendix I

Expedition Food and Transport

Information re Chamar 2000

- 1) Fuel and Stoves above Base Camp
- 2) Food above Base Camp
- 3) Transportation of Food and Fuel to Kathmandu
- 4) Baggage Allowance
- 5) Supplies in Kathmandu

I've worked out some figures for quantities of food and fuel based on the number of man days above Base Camp. We should have three weeks (21 days) x 6 = 126 Total Man Days. In reality, we will not all be above Base Camp for 21 days due to many reasons eg. rest days, bad weather, health reasons and so on. I've therefore used a figure of 84 man days (2/3 of total possible time). Using this proportion, all figures have been rounded up rather than down.

1) FUEL AND STOVES ABOVE BASE CAMP

Go Gas 220g bottles x 40 at £100 to be sent by Air Freight (see Total Costs on last sheet).

Kerosine x 20ltr to buy in Kathmandu (for MSR XGK stoves) as an alternative and/ or back up to gas stoves.

Coleman fuel is about £7/ ltr and although cleaner and easier to light, took longer to boil a litre of water than Kerosine under the same conditions, when I tried the two. It is sometimes possible to buy Coleman fuel in Kathmandu if we wanted to. The above should give us a margin over our likely requirements and a choice.

Gas Stoves

There are obviously many, but I've considered three.

1 Epigas 150g direct screw to bottle. These have a small burner head and are light but take 5.5mins to boil 1 ltr of water. OK for some uses but not outstanding.

2 Bibler hanging stove kit 200g stove with a holder and hanging arrangement. This looks strong and boils 1ltr in 3.5mins (has a large burner head). It can be used hanging or just screwed onto the bottle without the hanging kit. It seems good and comes at £64 (no I'm not on commission!).

3 MSR Firefly is similar to Bibler but not yet available due to a technical problem. I'll probably get a Dribler (sorry, Bibler). Tony has kept the first one I had on trial. Let me know if you want one, and I'll order one for you.

2) Food - based on 84 man days above base camp

Food Type	Quantity (weight)	Cost	Freight Cost
cornflakes (100g/b/fast)	10kg	£16.00	£20.00
oatcakes	4.2kg	£12.60	£ 8.40
mars bars	5.46kg	£18.27	£10.92
tube cheese	2kg	£12.00	£4.00
pepperoni	1.5kg	£21.00	£3.00
carbohydrate drink 1.4kilo x 3 makes 42ltr	4.2kg	£45.00*	£8.40
custard powder (24 x 79g)	1.9kg	£10.80	£4.00
halva (24 x 100g x £0.77)	2.4kg	£18.50	£4.80
tea bags (160 approx.)	0.6kg	£ 2.00	£1.20
instant soup	1.7kg	£11.90	£3.40
Main Meals - total 84			
freeze dried meals (40 x 125g x £3)	5.00kg	£120.00*	£10.00
noodles (44 x 100g)	4.4kg	£20.00	£8.80
Totals	43.36kg	£308.07	£86.92

* may be able to negotiate a 20% reduction on these items

Food to buy in Kathmandu : cake, biscuits, dried fruit & nuts, dried milk, sugar, bags of sweets

3) TRANSPORT OF FOOD AND FUEL

I am using an air freight company based at Manchester Airport who charge about £2/kilo. An exact quote can be given once the figures have been finalised. They tell me that supplies need to be taken to them about 2 weeks before our departure- I'll see to that nearer the time, but probably go a little before 2 weeks. I have checked with Bikrum in Kathmandu that it is ok to send our supplies to their address. So far the costs are £30 to send the Gas and £87 to send the food = £117 in Total.

4) BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

According to Gulf Air the normal weight limits are 20kg + 5kg hand luggage. They also say '3kg over is usually ok'. You may get away with a lot more but you can never tell for sure. Excess Baggage can be charged at £17/kilo (ouch!).

5) SUPPLIES IN KATHMANDU

Bikram Pandey from Himalaya Expeditions has told me that most climbing supplies are available in Kathmandu and that they will help us to find suitable places to buy from when we arrive. However, some equipment will be Russian and of course there is no guarantee that what you want will be there. So in short, it's a gamble. I would suggest that we take most of the important supplies and use local supplies in Kathmandu as a contingency should we 'loose' gear in transit.

SUMMARY OF COSTS SO FAR (theoretical)

Cost of Gas	£100
Cost of Food	£ 308
Trans. Gas	£30
Trans. Food	£87
Total	£525

I think that Insurance is too expensive given that the minimum premium is about £350 with an excess of £250 (not funny).

The BMC Mountaineering Insurance does not cover items sent by freight.

Food and Transport Conclusion

Several lessons were learned during the course of the expedition regarding transportation.

- a) Although the shipping agency quoted an all in price of £117.00 for the shipping of food and gas. An extra shipping tax charge of £37.00 was added when the shipment was actually delivered to them.
- b) According to regulations gas and other potentially dangerous cargo must be packaged by the freight company. The shipping company packaged the gas in the form of two or three gas canisters per cardboard box. Unfortunately they were then shipped individually rather than being palletised together.
When the team members went to collect the shipment they found that they had to pay a handling fee of \$10.00 per item, and as such had to pay \$120.00 for the individual boxes rather than just \$10.00.
- c) Finally, on the outward bound flight from Heathrow the expedition members luggage was not held to any scrutiny regarding weight whatsoever. However, on the return journey Gulf air demanded \$800.00 from Tom Wiggans and Tim Riley claiming that they were 36Kg over their baggage allowance. This was negotiated down to \$196.00 which was paid, with great reluctance, by credit card. Weighing your baggage prior to departure is to be recommended as on returning to the UK the baggage concerned was reweighed at considerably less than that claimed at Kathmandu airport.

Appendix II

Group Medical Supplies

by Tim Riley

Having been given the unfortunate name of team medic I have listed below the items included the group medical kit . I have made a few comments at the end indicating refinements to the kit which would be useful.

The plan was that half the team should carry a small first aid kit containing the essentials then the group kit used as a joint thing, with the intention and ability to split it up as required. On the whole this concept seemed to work out fine but then again nothing serious happened to put it to the test!

Personal Medical Kit

*Tweezers	1
*Scissors	1
*Sewing needles & thread	
*Safety pins	A few
*Surgical Gloves (may be useful)	1
*Band-aids	15
*Sterile gauze (10cm)	3
*Triangular bandage	1
*Cotton bandage	1 or 2
*Alcohol swabs	5
Paracetamol/Asprin	Some
Imodium	1/2 pkt
Strepsils	Quite a few packets
Blister stuff eg second skin products	
Personal Medications	
Lighters (also for general use)	4
Sunscreen & lipsalve	Plenty

*Just about all of the above will be contained in standard mountain first aid kits made by Gregson and Lifesystems. I would probably suggest the 'mountain' kit from Lifesystems at £22, there are larger and smaller versions at £35 & £17 respectively.

Group Kit

General stuff

Surgical scissors	
Scalpel	
Cotton wool	1 packet
Surgical tape	1

Vaseline	1
Iodine droplets	1 bottle
Savlon	1 bottle
Calmine	1 tube
Ibuprofin	50 tablets
Antiacid tablets	1 Packet
Haemorrhoid ointment	1 tube
Rehydration solution eg Gastrolite	12 sachets
Calamine lotion	Small tube
Glucose tablets	5 packets
Ziplock bags	12
Sterile gauze swabs	5
Antiseptic wipes	10
Eye drops	1
Ear drops	1
Laxative	1 pkt
Deep Heat	1 tube

More serious stuff

Thermometer	2	
Enema tube	1	
Butterfly stitches (Steistrips)	2 Dozen	1
Lifesystems Dentol first aid kit	1	£8.95
Nomad Sterile set for remote travel	1 (In case of a hospitalisation)	£14

Pain

Codine & Paracetamol tablets	1 Box
Diclofenac	100 no. (50mg tablets)
Diamorphine tablets (unavailable)	50 no. (10mg tablets)

Altitude Sickness

Diamox	(Mild AMS or to aid sleep)	50	
Dexamathasone	(Cerebal oedema)	50	(4mg tablets)
Nifedipine	(Pulmonary oedema)	50	(20mg tablets)

Antibiotics

Ciproflaxin	100 tablets
Erthroycin	100 tablets
Metranidazole	150 tablets
Amoxycillin	80 tablets

Immunisation

Tetanus
Polio

Typhoid
Hepatitis A & optional B
Malaria was not much of a risk in our area.
Rabies – possibly required for rural areas.

The antibiotics, drugs for pain and altitude were bought from Kathmandu. This was a very easy and cheap. We actually took about double the amount of altitude drugs stated above as this made it easier to split among team members.

Total cost for the group kit was about £80 pounds for the items bought in England which covered everything apart from drugs this cost about £40 in Kathmandu.

Also of use were the following books,

Medicine for Mountaineering by J. A. Wilkerson A good book but perhaps too big and too detailed for the likes of me.

Medical handbook for walkers and climbers
by Peter Steele A more condensed version of the above and easier to use.

First aid and survival in mountain and remote
Areas. by J. Duff & P. Gormly This book was the cats whiskers, it is small but told you everything you needed to know without confusing you with all the stuff you don't need.
At less than £5 it is a bargain.
It is available in Kathmandu at the KEEP project near Hotel Utse opposite Shona's gear shop.

The British Mountaineering Council website also contained some extremely useful information. www.thebmc.co.uk

General Comments

Health problems among the team were always minor and thankfully not too frequent.

Initially there were the usual problems caused by a change of diet. Unexpectedly constipation was more of a problem than diarrhoea. Flu like symptoms gradually decreased.

Occasionally more severe bouts of diarrhoea and sickness occurred but only one team member took any antibiotics (this was ciproflaxin and seemed to help).
More 'Boots' rehydration sachets would have been used if they tasted better.

Larger quantities of Asprin would have been useful to treat headaches and minor ailments from porters and locals.

The porters seemed to have few problems, just a few cuts and grazes from falls. One kitchen boy hurt his arm which we were concerned was broken but he seemed to recover over several days.

From an acclimatisation point of view our gradual height gains seemed sensible and no particular problems were apparent despite the different rates at which we adjusted. Our gradual height gains seemed sensible. By the end of our stint high up nearly all team members were feeling pretty tired, general opinion was that we spent too long above 5000m. The walk down to base camp for a rest and plenty of food was uninviting and too time consuming.

On the whole the medical kit proved to be pretty good. Useful additions would be Antiseptic cream rather than just liquid and something for a niggling cough of more use than strepsils but antibiotics were our other extreme. Something like general 'cold and flu' capsules would have been useful.

One team member was on painkillers (diclofenac) on the return trek for a knee injury but found the dosage no use at all.

That's all folks!

Appendix III

Itinerary

A) Approach March

Day	Date	Location
1	21/09/00	Khanchowk
2	22	Aragat Bazaar
3	23	Labuesi
4	24	Kalubesi
5	25	Jagat
6	26	Philim
7	27	Bih
8	28	Sringi Khola
9	29	Sringi Khola
10	30	Sringi Khola
11	1/10/00	Sringi Khola
12	2	Bih
13	3	Darjon
14	4	Tumje
15	5	Sarpu Khola
16	6	Sarpu Khola
17	7	Base Camp

B) The climb

Exp. Day	M. Day	Date	Tim		Tony		Tom		John		Peter	
			Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night
18	1	8/10/00	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC
19	2	9	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC
20	3	10	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC
21	4	11	ABC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	ABC	BC
22	5	12	BC	BC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	BC	BC
23	6	13	BC	BC	HC	HC	HC	HC	HC	HC	ABC	ABC
24	7	14	BC	BC	ABC	BC	ABC	BC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC
25	8	15	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	BC	HC	HC	HC	HC
26	9	16	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	HC	ABC	HC	ABC
27	10	17	HC	HC	HC	HC	HC	HC	BC	BC	BC	BC
28	11	18	ABC	ABC	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	ABC	HC#2	ABC	HC#2
29	12	19	HC#2	HC#2	ROUTE	HC#2	ROUTE	HC#2	ABC	ABC	HC#2	HC#2
30	13	20	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2
31	14	21	HC#2	ROUTE	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	ROUTE
32	15	22	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2	HC#2
33	16	23	HC#2	HC#3	HC#2	HC#3	HC#2	HC#3	HC#2	HC#3	HC#2	HC#3
34	17	24	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3
35	18	25	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3
36	19	26	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3
37	20	27	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3
38	21	28	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	BC	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3	HC#3
39	22	29	HC#3	BC	HC#3	BC	BC	BC	HC#3	BC	HC#3	BC

HC=High Camp, BC=Base Camp, ABC=Advanced Base Camp

C) Return to Kathmandu

Day	Date	Location
40	30/10/00	Pasture
41	31	Lokwa
42	1/11/00	Philim
43	2	Jagat
44	3	Kalubesi
45	4	Labubesi
46	5	Aragat
47	6	Aragat
48	7	Kanchowk
49	8	Gorka
50	1/9/00	Kathmandu

Appendix IV

Expedition Personnel



Back Row: Youth, John Allott, Tim Riley, Peter Berggren, Himal, Mr. Aryal, Santos
 Front Row: Tony Barton, Knuckles, Tom Wiggans, Lakpa, Trek, Muscles

Himal Tamang	Sirdar	himalt@yahoo.com
Jagan Nath Aryal	Liason Officer	jnaryal@hotmail.com
Lakpa Tamang	Expedition Cook	C/o unnat@wlink.com.np
Trek	Expedition Sherpa	Contact Himalaya Expeditions: himalaya@mos.com.np www.himalayas.org
Santos	Kitchen Hand/Sherpa	
Youth	Kitchen Hand	
Knuckles	Kitchen Hand	
Muscles	Kitchen Hand	

Appendix V

Service Companies and Equipment Suppliers

Trekking Agency

Himalayan Expeditions Inc.
“Nuwakott Ghar” Sanepa Chowk,
Lalitpur
PO Box 105,
Kathmandu,
Nepal
Tel: +977 1 546990

Mountaineering Equipment

Outdoor Research
2203 1st Avenue South
Seattle,
WA 98134-1424
USA

West Coast Leisure
102 High Street,
West End,
Fort William
Tel: +44 1397 705777

Rab Carrington Ltd.
32 Edward Street,
Sheffield,
S3 7GB
Tel: +44 114 2757544

Shona's Rentals
Alpine Expedition Service
Jyatha,
Thamel,
Kathmandu,
Nepal
Tel/Fax:+977 1 265120

Solar Equipment

Maya Solar
PO Box 379
Twickenham
TW1 2SU.
Tel: +44 208 287 9068

Appendix VI

Maps and References

New Zealand Alpine Club Journal 1953

Published by the NZ Alpine Club.

The chapter entitled "The New Zealand Himalayan Expedition, 1953" describes the unofficial ascent of Chamar East summit. "An exploit that would undoubtedly have received much more attention if it were not for the activities of Mr E. Hilary during the pre-monsoon season of that same year."

HIGH ASIA, An illustrated history of the 7000 metre peaks

Jill Neate. ISBN 0-04-440480-8

The definitive 7000m peak reference manual, and also the initial inspiration for both the 2000 and 1994 expeditions

1994 British Nepalese Chamar Expedition Report

MEF reference 94/20.

The account of the 94 expedition provided invaluable information about the eastern flank of Chamar. Furthermore Rob Brown the expedition leader kindly allowed the use of his photographs for this web-site

BMC Nepalese Summary Sheet

Available from the BMC.

The summary provides current information regarding visas, medical requirements, and general information regarding organising an expedition.

Manaslu Ganesh Himal Trekking Map – Scale 1 = 50000

Published by Mandala Maps

Rough and ready map of the trekking route to base camp. Not suitable for use on the mountain

Ganesh Himal

Published by Nepa maps Produced by Himalayan Maphouse

Himalayan MapHouse, GPO Box 3924, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: maphouse@wlink.com.np

Appendix VII

Technology

The expedition carried several different pieces of equipment in order to aid progress on the mountain. These were:

1. Sony Vaio Laptop
2. Sony DSC S70 Digital Camera
3. Solar Panel Recharging system
4. Motorola TA200 Walkie-Talkies

The expedition contacted Sony prior to departure to enquire whether they would be interested in offering their assistance by providing either some equipment or a discount on some equipment for use on the mountain. Sony declined our invitation, however, Tom Wiggins decided to purchase a Sony laptop as a personal investment. The selection was based on the machines robust construction and extreme lightweight (1.3Kg). After purchasing the laptop Sony became more forthcoming with information about potential problems associated with using the unit in harsh conditions.

The Sony digital camera and the Motorola radios were bought at Dixons Heathrow Terminal 3 Branch.

The camera was paid for by Tom Wiggins. The radios were paid for by the expedition.

It is possible to pre-order equipment from the store and then collect it when departing from the airport. This allowed the expedition to buy the products at duty free prices.

The solar charger was provided at a discount from Maya Solar (see equipment suppliers). The charger consisted of two solar panels mounted in a soft wallet case. A DC to DC converter plugged into the solar panel outlet that altered the output voltage from the solar panels to that required by the apparatus to be charged.

The solar charger was thus able to charge both the laptop and the digital camera. The performance of the charger was unremarkable at lower altitudes, however, at higher altitudes the performance became far more impressive due to the higher ultra violet content of the light and due to reflection of the snow covered terrain.

Maya Solar also provided the expedition with an LED torch, a solar recharging torch, and two different types of solar battery rechargers.

The LED torch was particularly useful for reading with as it was lightweight and conserved head torch batteries. Due to the way LEDs operate they are far more efficient, robust, and perform very well at low temperatures. A head torch using an LED instead of a standard bulb could yield similar light levels but with a battery life of almost 20 hours.

The radios were not particularly useful on the eastern side of the mountain, as their performance is compromised when users lose line-of-sight. However, on the west face where this would not have been a problem they would have provided a low cost communication solution.

Appendix VIII

Budget

Approximate costs for whole team

Travel:	£2500
Food/Transport:	£400
Peak Fee:	£2700
Agent and LO total:	£8035 (Sirdar, crew, porters, insurance, etc.)

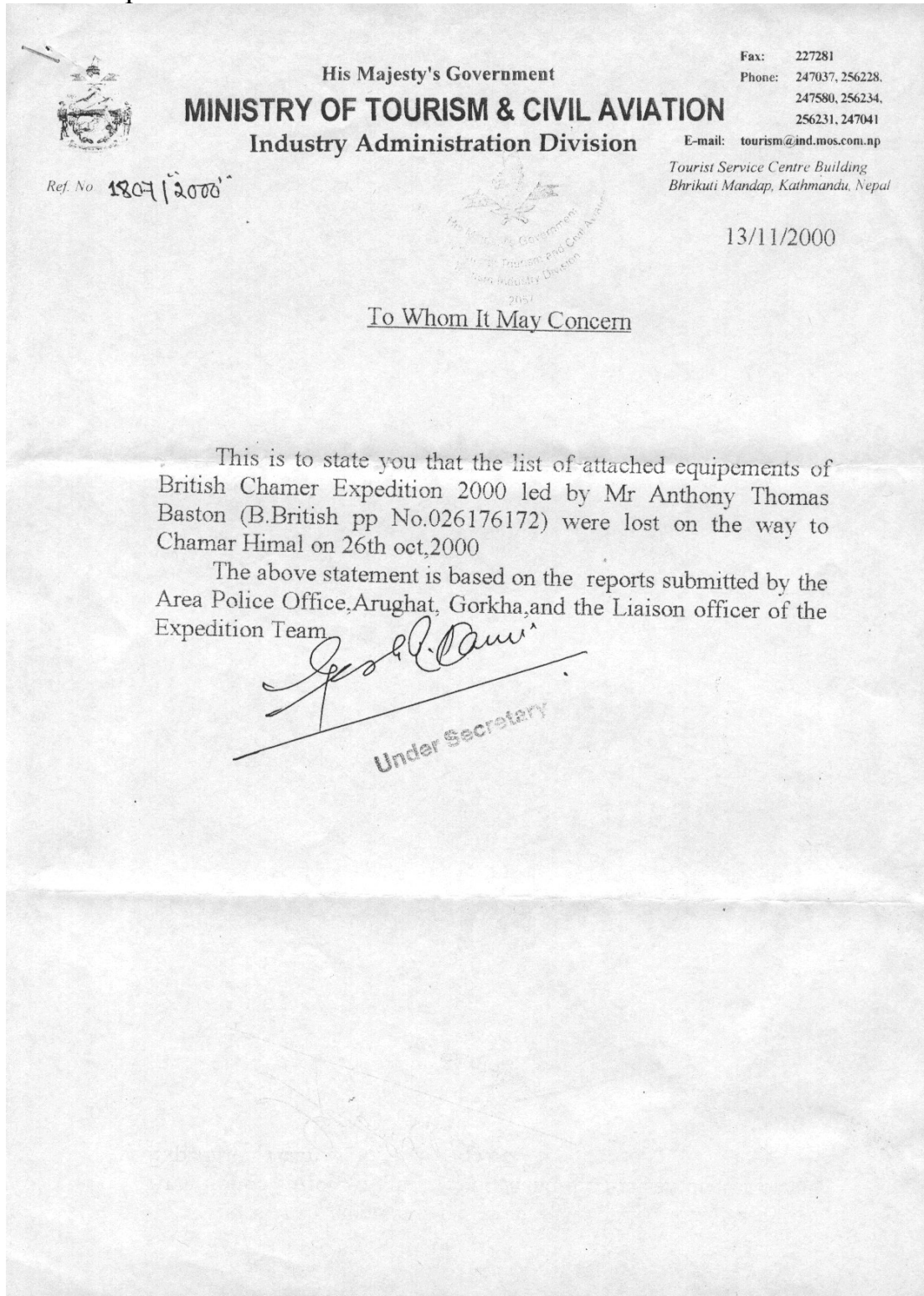
Total Expedition Cost: **£13635**

Grants MEF&BMC: £3300

Most of the above items were payable in US dollars, as such the sterling value is dependent on the exchange rate at the time.

Appendix IX

Police Report

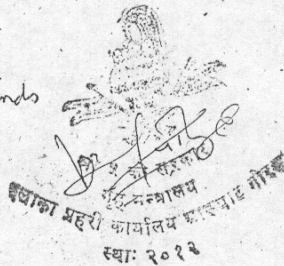


TIM RILEY

- 1x 50m Mammut Genesis rope (New)
- 1x Charlet Moser Ice Screw
- No 5 1½, 2, 2½ Wild Country Technical Friends
- Sizes 1-10 DMM Walnuts
- Hox on spectra (New)
- 5x Quickdraws
- 2x 30cm slings
- TNF High Point Hat
- Low windproof gloves (New)
- Fleece neck tube
- Extremity extreme socks (New)
- MSR Stainless Steel Alpine Cookset
- MSR Heat Exchanger
- MSR Windshield
- 1 litre stainless steel flask

TOM WIGGANS

- Expedition Socks (New)
- MSR XGK II Stove
- 2x MSR 1 litre fuel bottles
- Bivi Bag
- Pair Bridgdale liner socks (New)
- OR Windstop Hat (New)
- OR Expedition Gloves (New)
- MSR Trillium Stove Base
- Pentax P35 camera
- Pentax 35-90 lens
- Pentax 70-200 lens
- Cokin polarizing filter
- Cokin UV filter
- 12x Jessups rechargeable batteries (New)
- solar powered torch (New)
- 5x Fuji Velvia Film (New)
- 3x 17cm Black Diamond Ice Screws
- HB Fall Arrestor
- 4x 120cm Wild Country Slings (New)
- 3x HB Strangers
- 4x Wire gate traps
- Petrol Jumar (New)



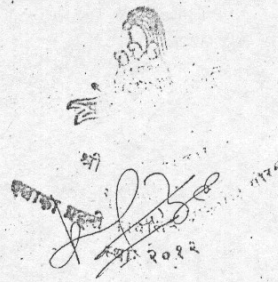
Gen. J. B. Dan
Under Secretary

PETER BERGGREN

RAB down Vest (New)
Primus gas stove
Primus multi-fuel stove + pump (New)
2 MSR Bottles
2 Smiley Ice screws
2 Wildcountry locking carabiners
1 full set of Black Diamond Wires
Pair Bridgedale thermal socks
TNF Thermal Underwear
Canon EOS 1000 system camera
1 roll of Fuji 36 colour slide film
Rottafella snowshoes
6 Simond knifeblades
2 DMM straightgate carabiners
2 DMM bentgate carabiners
2 Wild Country Slings
Pair of Peak Performance prescription glasses
2 Black Diamond ice axe blades (New)

ANTHONY BARTON

North Face Mountain 24 Tent (New), OR Hooped Bivi Bag
Motorola TA200 radio (New) 7 ROLLS FUJI Film
MSR 2 litre titanium pan (New)
MSR Heat Exchanger
MSR XGK II Pump Unit
Simond Racing 23cm ice screw (New)
3x Black Diamond Express ice screws (15cm, New)
2x 60cm Slings (New)
2x 20cm Extenders
4x HB Hi-lite Bentgate krabs
4x HB Hi-lite Straightgate krabs
2x Black Diamond locking krabs (New)
Black Diamond Camelot #1 (New)
HB Quadram #1 (New)
Petzle Junior (New)
60m Edelweiss dry 8.5mm Rope (New)
200m Rivaslan fixed rope (New)
Black Diamond crampon bag (New)
Pair liner gloves (New)
OR Brooks arbo boots (New)



Yes! Nepal
Under Secretary

Acknowledgements

The British Chamar Expedition 2000 relied on the assistance of many different people and organisations. The expedition members would like to thank the following.

The Mount Everest Foundation and the British Mountaineering Council for the expedition grant.

Mike Pescod, John Temple, and Adrian Jones.

Bikrum Pandi and all his able staff at Himalayan Expeditions. Jim Meyers at Outdoor Research. Gerry Arcari at Rab Carrington Ltd. Andy at Maya Solar.

Mr Aryial, Chet, Himal and the rest of our remarkable base camp crew.