

British Kajaqiao Expedition 2005

Supported by:

Finance: British Mountaineering Council
W L Gore Associates (Shipton/Tilman Grant)
Mount Everest Foundation

Equipment The North Face
Black Diamond
Cascade Designs
Nalgene
Scarpa

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Particular thanks is due to Tamatsu Nakamura for inspiring us in the first place, assisting with our information gathering and kindly allowing us to include his excellent maps in this report.

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Aims of the Expedition

- 1 To make the first ascent of Kajaqiao (6447m) in the Nyainqentanglha East range, Tibet, China.
- 2 To explore the potential for mountaineering and report back.

The Team

Mick Fowler (49) British. Civil Servant. Leader.

Regular climber in the greater ranges since 1982. Notable expeditions include Taulliraju South Buttress (Peru, 1982), West Face of Ushba North (Caucasus, 1986), Spantik North West Pillar (Pakistan 1987), AkSu North Face (Kyrgystan, 1990), Hunza Peak (Pakistan 1991), Cerro Kishtwar North West Face (India, 1993), Taweche North West Pillar (Nepal 1995), Arwa Tower North West face (India, 1999), Mt Kennedy North Buttress (Yukon, 2000), Siguniang North West Face (2002 China) etc.

Chris Watts (48) British. Distributor of Outdoor Equipment

Greater range climber since 1982. Notable expeditions include Taulliraju South Buttress (Peru, 1982), Bojohagur Duonasir (Pakistan 1984), Taweche North East Buttress (Nepal, 1995), Everest North North East Ridge (China, 199), Everest South Col (Nepal 199) etc.

Adam Thomas (33) British Rural community development project manager
Regular climber in the greater ranges since 1996. Notable expeditions include numerous first & second ascents in the Tres Marias, Cordillera Real, Bolivia (1998), second ascent of Kutshkulun Sar, Pakistan (1999), first ascent of Uddin Zom, Hindu Raj, Pakistan (2000) and attempts on Raksha Urai, Nepal (2001) and Chukporisum, Nyainqentanglha East, Tibet (2003).

Phil Amos (33) British. Environmental Engineer

Regular climber in the greater ranges since 1996. Notable expeditions include numerous first & second ascents in the Tres Marias, Cordillera Real, Bolivia (1998, first ascent of Uddin Zom, Hindu Raj, Pakistan (2000) and attempts on Raksha Urai, Nepal (2001) and Chukporisum, Nyainqentanglha

Preparation

Kajaqiao is in a part of Tibet which is officially closed to foreigners. Special permits are necessary and the only body that can co-ordinate the issue of these permits (which are required from the army, Beijing bureaucrats, local Governors etc. etc.) is the China Tibet Mountaineering Association (CTMA). Several agents are authorised to deal with the CTMA but they are only authorised to supply transport etc. and it can be difficult to find out if any agent is CTMA approved or not. In 2004 we tried to arrange an attempt on Kajaqiao via a well respected agent in Kathmandu. Ultimately it seems that the agent sub-contracted to a Lhasa agent who tried to obtain a trekking permit rather than a mountaineering permit. This, together with similar problems experienced by other parties, resulted in us failing to get there and no permits at all being issued for the post monsoon 2004 season. In 2005, after initial introductions from Jon Otto in Chengdu, jotto@bluesheeptravel.com we dealt direct with the CTMA mail to ctma@public.ls.xz.cn and enjoyed a hassle free trip.

Some foreigners have visited the area without permits but this is not to be recommended to those with a limited amount of time. Those who are caught are likely to spend some time in police custody and then be sent back to Lhasa. A fine is also a possibility. We came across no road blocks as such but westerners are objects of interest, the Chinese authorities are vigilant and our arrival was closely watched. If we had not had the correct permits it seems likely that we would have been turned back.

Language is a potential problem in that virtually no-one in the Nyainqentanglha East speaks English. Fortunately the CTMA supplied a Liaison Officer and an official who spoke good English.

There is no need to take any food from the UK as, within reason, everything can be purchased in Lhasa.

If you use gas stoves screw –in type cylinders can be purchased in Lhasa although it is a good idea to get an agent to purchase these in advance. We used Migma (migmatse@hotmail.com) who appeared to have no problem purchasing 40 x 220g propane/butane cylinders for us.

We would recommend taking the absolute minimum amount of equipment from the UK as internal Chinese airlines are clued up to the profit potential of excess baggage charges.

Cost

The CTMA usually quote an all-in price and do not itemise individual costs. Expeditions to unclimbed mountains are charged at a premium with peak fees ranging from \$5000 to \$15000. Try as we might we were unable to find out why the peak fees vary so much or which peaks might fall into which charging category. It seems that everything is negotiable but the negotiating parameters are not those we are used to in the west. We

were initially quoted \$4500 x 4 which we asked to be reduced to \$4000 x 4 because we were a very small trip with minimal gear and were happy to stay in low rate accommodation. We were told that the main cost is the peak fee (we don't know how much it was) so skimping on other items was of little significance. Eventually we agreed on \$4200 x 4. Not long before we were due to leave it was explained to us that a 'special permit fee' of \$1000 each had been omitted. This was waived when it was pointed out that the quote we had been given specifically included this fee. It would seem then that the CTMA fee for a 4 person team attempting a 6500m unclimbed peak without any form of base camp support should be in the region of \$5,200 each.

UK to the Roadhead

Most parties from Europe fly to Lhasa via either Beijing or Kathmandu. We decided to go via Beijing as it was cheaper and there are daily flights as opposed to two a week from Kathmandu. The plane calls in at Chengdu and the Chengdu-Lhasa leg is one of the most spectacular mountain flights in the world.

Our UK travel agent (K E Travel of Lake Road, Keswick) experienced problems getting our flights confirmed by the Chinese airline. They did eventually get confirmation but by that time we had sought the assistance of the CTMA. They purchased the tickets for us (at the same price that was quoted to KE Travel) and we paid cash and picked them up from the CTMA offices in Beijing.

From Lhasa airport back to Lhasa airport everything was handled and paid for by the CTMA. The key place to get to is Lhari (Chali) which can be reached in one day on a direct route but, because of the need to show our permits in the town of Nagchu, it took us two fairly short days. The road to Nagchu is tarmac but the 250k or so from there to Lhari is unmetalled. From Lhari it is about 35km of unmetalled road to the hamlet of Tatse where our walk in began. Tatse is easily recognised by a substantial monastery on the rocky outcrop above the village.

Roadhead to Base Camp

Yaks and horses are rarely used for transport nowadays and we hired 10 porters at 100RMB each per day. The cost was covered by the CTMA.

It is worth noting that wherever possible the CTMA set up their base camp at the roadside and so your CTMA official and Liaison Officer do not double up as base camp guards. We left our BC unguarded and had no problems. However, it might be different in the spring when there are likely to be many people around the base camp area collecting caterpillar fungus.

The walk from Tatse to base camp at 4800m is on a rough track through shrubs and takes about 6 hours. Our base camp was above the shrub line.

Weather

The weather was mixed but consistently cold with night-time temperatures of perhaps –15 degrees at base camp. About 1.5 metres of snow fell whilst we were climbing and as the temperature rarely rose above freezing this did not melt.

It seems there are two possible climbing seasons. April/May when it is likely to be warmer but wetter and October/November when it is likely to be cold with substantial snowfall.

Climbing Potential

At the time of writing (December 2005) only three 6000m + peaks have been climbed in the Nyainkentanghla East range. There are numerous spectacular unclimbed summits. Our base camp gave access to an extensive snow plateau with Kajaqiao (6447m) and Manamcho (6264m) on the east side and less spectacular un-named peaks around 6000m on the west side.

It is worth noting that, much as the mountains are very spectacular, we came across hardly any ice or snow ice.

Achievements of the Expedition

Mick Fowler and Chris Watts made the first ascent of Kajaqiao via the west face and north west ridge. The following article was written by Mick Fowler.

Adam Thomas and Phil Amos made a reconnaissance of Manamcho and reached a height of 5880m on the west ridge.

First Ascent of Kajaqiao

Chris Watts and I peered curiously out of the window of our hotel in the town of Nagchu. This was a fair sized town but, at an altitude of about 4500m on the Tibetan plateau, the temperature was stubbornly hovered below freezing and a dusting of snow blew around the courtyard. On the pavement a group of well muffled yak herders with eye catching fox fur hats leaned hard into the biting wind. It was 17th October, still a few months to go before winter. At 6447m the summit of Kajaqiao, the mountain we had come to climb, was about 2000m higher than this. What would the conditions be like up there we wondered?

Kajaqiao is situated in the Nyainqentanglha East range of mountains about two days drive East of Lhasa. This is officially a closed part of Tibet and so numerous permits are required to secure access. Permits tend not to be issued until the last minute with the result that visits to this area entail a fair bit of pre-trip anxiety. In 2004, it was not until 17 hours before our flight was due to leave London that we finally had to acknowledge that we had failed on the bureaucratic challenge. But we sensed there was something very special here which would make it all worth while in the end. And so we persevered. By mid 2005 the China Tibet Mountaineering Association (CTMA) had secured permits from the police, army, local Governor, Beijing bureaucrats and several others. Armed with 9 separate permits we now looked out at the Nagchu street scene, waited for our Liaison Officer to return and kept our fingers crossed that no bureaucrat would stand in the way of us reaching the mountain we had dreamed of so much.

It was a photograph taken by the Japanese explorer Tamatsu (Tom) Nakamura that first gave Chris and me the irrepressible urge to visit this part of the world. Not only did the mountains look fantastic but the ethnic interest looked considerable. Also very few westerners had been there and Tibet had long been on my list of places to visit. Adam Thomas and Phil Amos were amongst the small select group of westerners who had been there before. Their enthusiasm and will to return was such that we readily decided to team up. And so after a year and a half of bureaucratic challenges the four of us, together with Jimi, our liaison officer, and Tenzing, from the CTMA, were on the way. In the meantime Tom, in his characteristically helpful manner, had forwarded detailed maps along with photographs taken by two Japanese reconnaissance expeditions.

The 250km of dirt track from Nagchu to the regional centre of Lhari was notable for wild scenery, yaks and building my respect for four wheel drive vehicles. En route there were also several small mud hut type villages, a few nomadic tents and several impressively large piles of beer bottles. After a full day driving it was something of a surprise when the dirt track suddenly changed to a concrete dual carriageway with street-lamps down the centre and lock-up shop units down either side. This continued for a mile or so and then stopped as suddenly as it had started. There was no doubt about it, the Chinese influence had well and truly come to Lhari. On the pavement a group of nomads with traditional wrap around yak skin coats and red braids in their jet black hair were busy cutting up a yak with an axe. The head had been removed and hung forlornly on pristine metallic railings. Somehow it seemed a fine symbol of two cultures striving to live side by side.

We had reason to believe that Lhari could be the bureaucratic crux. A Swiss team en route for Kajaqiao had been turned back here in 2004 and we could do little but keep our fingers crossed as a stern looking policeman peered closely at the wide variety of official permits Tenzing placed in front of him. He appeared mystified but no matter, to our relief, I left clutching a police letter asking the headman of the local village to arrange for our equipment to be carried to our base camp. It seemed odd that a police letter was necessary effectively instructing him to help, but it was explained to us that collecting caterpillar fungus, a popular Chinese aphrodisiac, in the spring gave the local communities so much income that they might not be interested in portering for us without a little 'persuasion' from the authorities.

About 35km from Lhari the village of Tatse sits on meadows above the beautiful Yigong Tsangpo river. It has a population of about 40 and is dominated by an immaculately kept monastery. The locals remembered the Japanese reconnaissance trips and also a Japanese attempt on Kajaqiao. The younger people in particular were friendly and very interested in what we were planning to do. They told us that Kajaqiao is pronounced Chachacho and the mountain named after its likeness to hands drawn together in prayer. An elderly woman expressed concern that it would snow forever if anyone ever stood on the summit but the younger occupants were enthusiastic at the prospect of helping us. Since the introduction of motor vehicles, yaks and horses are rarely used for carrying and it was decided that portering would be best.

‘I think 10 will be enough’ announced Tenzing.

We looked around at the enormous amount of gear that Tenzing and Jimi had brought. There were at least three huge gas cylinders, a massive marquee style tent, several large yak steaks, crates of beer.....and on it went. 10 porters seemed ridiculously inadequate. Tenzing clearly recognised the look of concern on our faces.

‘We will have base camp here’ he reassured us pointing to the meadows next to the river.

This was all very curious. With security in mind we had specifically clarified that Tenzing and Jimi would be staying at our base camp. Something had clearly been lost in the translation but there wasn’t much we could do about it now. CTMA policy it seemed was to have base camp at the roadside wherever possible.

The porters arrived on motor bikes, which was something of a first in my experience. The first part of the walk-in then involved a mile or two of them roaring away on their bikes with us trailing far behind. After 6 hours or so though we had arrived at the site of the base camp used by the Japanese. The only evidence of their passing was a couple of rudimentary tent platforms which we gratefully occupied. The porters had been excellent and, as our heads throbbed painfully at the 4800m altitude, we were more than grateful for the help they gave us to build a kitchen shelter.

We awoke to perhaps 25cm of snow. It was considerably colder than we expected to the extent that the eggs that the porters had caringly carried had frozen solidand were to stay that way for the duration.

Our acclimatisation explorations revealed that the head of the valley was dominated by two mountains, Kajaqiao at 6447m and Manamcho at 6264m. Both looked inspirational but seriously snow plastered. The amount of snow was a real concern. The initial 25cm dump had been added to regularly and by the time we were ready to attempt an ascent a metre of new snow must have fallen. This wouldn’t have been so bad with plenty of freeze and thaw but with the temperature continually below freezing the snow simply accumulated as deep powder. We had not brought snow shoes with the result that travelling around was absolutely knackered.

Bad weather and deep snow slowed us to the extent that it took two days of heavy panting to get from base camp to the foot of our chosen line at about 5300m. Clouds had prevented us from getting a good view when we were acclimatising but now we could see that the west face above us sported a series of left trending shallow couloirs leading up to the crest of the north west ridge. The overall angle was not too steep but it was difficult to judge the difficulties.

Our first bivouac on the face was a remarkably good find. Perched on the crest of a projecting rib of rounded slabs I was surprised that we managed to cut a very comfortable tent sized platform. The day had been an exhausting one, largely because of the vast amounts of soft snow that had accumulated on ramp lines on the lower part of the face. Technical wading, which is the best way I can describe it, is not my favourite style of climbing. But at least we were making progress and as the evening sun bathed us we relaxed in the tent and soaked up the view. And increasing impressive it was too. The skyline to the west was opening up with a myriad of teeth like unclimbed peaks whilst down below we could see Adam and Phil as tiny dots moving almost imperceptibly across the huge expanse of snow and ice which borders the west side of Kajaqiao and Manamcho. They looked very small and insignificant against such a vast and majestic backdrop.

Above it was steeper which was good in that the deep snow which had plagued us so far would not stick. The problem though was that sections which looked easy were in fact granite slabs covered with a thick dusting of powder. The day proceeded cautiously. It wasn't that there was anything particularly difficult but it all felt horribly precarious and insecure. At one point I was reduced to a gibbering 'watch me' call on ground which we would have moved together on if the snow had been nicely frozen. But this part of the world seemed not to be over endowed with nicely frozen snow.

By dint of judicious route finding the day progressed safely, if slowly, ending with an open bivouac on the left bounding rib of the main couloir line.

"This is a crap bivouac ledge" announced Chris emphatically.

We had already put a lot of effort into it but I had to admit Chris's comment was disturbingly apt. What had looked a promising possibility was ruined by an immovable block. There was nothing for it but to fashion a narrow nose to tail ledge out of a thin snow band. Fortunately the clouds which had swirled around for much of the day had lifted and a glorious evening had developed. We were even able to sit side by side with the stove hanging between us whilst we brewed up and endured our evening meal of Chinese baby powder and curious fruit flavoured sausages. This was one of two menu options, the other being noodles with flavouring sachet. Both were very light but sufficiently unappetising for us to frequently fail to finish our portions. On the bright side this meant that the food was lasting longer than we expected - which was very handy because all this grappling with powdery snow was taking longer than we had planned.

Despite the discomfort factor being fairly high we both snuggled down contentedly, soaking up the remarkable view and looking forward to a good nights sleep.

It was some hours later that I awoke with a start. I had been wrapped cosily in the tent fabric but now it was billowing around me like a huge sail and spindrift was blowing uncomfortably into my sleeping bag. Moving too hastily to rewrap myself resulted in my end of the ledge collapsing and me spending the rest of the night perched uncomfortably on the remains. Chris woke briefly to curse the spindrift runnel pouring directly onto his head before settling down and snoring loudly. By daybreak I had given him a good kicking on several occasions with no positive response. He did though feel that he had not had a good nights sleep which was comforting in a perverse sort of way.

Experience and determination are probably the two key factors which dictate success or failure in the greater ranges. With a bleak and windy dawn both were tested to the full and we made a hesitant and weary team as we scrabbled and dithered over the best line. This sort of climbing is so difficult to grade and describe. To begin with it was similar to the insecure scrabbling of the day before. Above though we could see that the angle increased slightly which could make things much more difficult. But mountains are nothing if not surprising, the steeper ground was closer to the windswept ridge and as the angle increased the snow conditions improved. We were able to move faster and by afternoon were enduring a character building cross wind on the ridge. The choice was difficult. On the windward side the wind was fierce and the ground technical whereas on the lee side excitingly steep powder snow presented its fair share of problems. We alternated uncomfortably reaching an easing of the angle above a prominent serac an hour or so before nightfall.

“Time for a snow hole’ Chris shouted above the sound of the roaring wind.

Snow holes have always distressed me. Perhaps it is because I have never had the time to dig out a nice, spacious one or perhaps I have latent claustrophobic tendencies which only surface when I am surrounded by snow on all sides. Chris though had such enthusiasm that I found myself reluctantly digging into the slope and going so far as to lie on my stomach and hug vast quantities of snow against my body in my efforts to clear out what I had dug. Inevitably snow ended up inside my clothing and I became damp. The calm atmosphere in the hole was encouraging though. After an hour Chris pronounced it big enough, produced his sleeping mat and bag and settled down. I peered in. Length and width looked ok but the ceiling was flat and about 40cm high. Hesitantly I decided to test my feelings before committing myself. It felt awful. A quick bit of experimenting revealed that even the weedy Fowler shoulders were broad enough to dislodge copious quantities of snow from the roof when I turned over. The snow tended to fall in my face and down my neck. I was beginning to feel really cold.

“No way. Sorry Chris. Can’t do it.”

For me the last hour or so had been a complete waste of time and energy. I now felt a fast rising need to arrange something safe for me, otherwise it was all going to go horribly

wrong. Chris, who somehow appeared very comfortable with the snowhole, was very understanding. It was dark out now and we struggled against the wind to erect the tent. After 15 minutes we sat in the flapping fabric together. The hastily stamped out snow platform was ludicrously uneven and the outer edge overhung the slope.

“Sorry Mick. Can’t sleep here”

And so much as it might seem laughable Chris ended up in the snow hole with me outside in the tent. Fortunately the wind seemed to have dropped slightly and my initial concerns about being blown away without Chris’s weight lessened.

There was one section of the tent ledge which was shaped like a small volcano and I curled myself around this in as comfortable a manner as possible. For a few hours all was well then, when I must have been half asleep, I had the awful sensation of my small volcano erupting and taking me into the air. All hell let loose and then my face was planted firmly into something hard and cold. This was a new experience for me. Fortunately I had a small torch around my neck, the light from which revealed that the tent was now upside down and the cold hard things against my face were the crossed poles which are normally at the top. My immediate urge was to escape from the claustrophobic fabric but there were a few things to be done first. For a start the wind was gusting wildly and jumping out only to watch the whole show blow away would not be clever. It was whilst I was putting my boots on that I came across Chris’s inner boots. This was a worry. He must have only put his outer boots on to return to the snow hole. But where was he now? Clearly the tent had been hit by a snow slide but what had happened to the snow hole? If there was any problem he would certainly need his inner boots. Having located the entrance zip I stood on the tent fabric, cursed the situation that had ended up with us sleeping apart and scoured the slope above me for signs of the hole. The narrow beam picked out nothing but flat wind swept snow. There was no sign at all of the two substantial entrances that we had dug the evening before. Securing things as best I could I started to search for the entrance. I had only taken a few steps when a surprisingly loud and urgent shout stopped me in my tracks.

“Fowler! Fowler!”

And then after contact had been renewed via a tiny hole.

“I’m stuck. F*****ing well get me out of here”

A section of the cave had collapsed leaving Chris disorientated and partially smothered. From outside it was easy to grab his extended hand and pull him to safety. But it turned my stomach just to look in at the partially collapsed low roof illuminated dimly by the light of my headtorch beam. In the confusion Chris had been unable to find his headtorch. I could only imagine how terrifying it must have been milling around in the dark in such constricted circumstances aware that there could be further collapses and not knowing which direction the surface was in.

Together we retrieved items from the remains of the cave, dug out the tent, put it the right way up and squeezed inside. It was good to be back together again. Checking everything took some time but remarkably nothing appeared to be lost or damaged. It was light by now and I was uncomfortably aware that the hours had slipped past quickly. The wind seemed stronger than ever, we were in the cloud and it was one of those situations where a negative decision could come all too easily. We decided to contemplate over a hot drink and half a chocolate bar. In the end we decided two drinks would be worthwhile but we were unanimous from the start in recognising that there was nothing really wrong apart from frayed nerves and the weather. Onwards it would be.

The north (lee) side of the ridge was frighteningly steep bottomless powder which appeared to defy gravity. This meant that we were forced onto the rocky crest which was technically challenging and outrageously windy. Nevertheless clearings in the cloud cover showed that we were making progress. By mid afternoon nearby Manamcho (6264m) was below us. Some maps show Kajaqiao as 6447m and others as 6525m. Either way we knew we couldn't be too far off. At about 6300m my camera ran out of film. The wind and spindrift were such that changing the roll was out of the question. Fortunately, for the first time ever, I had packed a cheap, lightweight spare.

The final section to the base of the summit snow proved memorable. A shallow gully came up to the crest from the right hand side and the far side of this was steep and technical mixed ground blasted by the full force of the wind driven snow. It was with some relief that I completed this section and hung from a small but secure nut belay. Above me a snow overhang protected the summit snow/ice slope. We were nearly there.

“Your nose!” I screamed.

Chris had arrived at the belay and what I could see of him looked mystified at my concern. Goggles fully covered the top part of his face and his balaclava the bottom part. In between though his nose was fully exposed and sported a white patch the size of a small coin. Being engrossed in technical climbing in wild conditions he had no idea that his nose had started to freeze. I had never seen anything like it before and could hardly believe it had all happened so quickly. Dangerous combination this wind and cold. And with a fully exposed open slope above I feared that continuing could make matters worse. The thought of going down was even mentioned. But bodies are remarkable things. A protective layer, a few deep breaths through the nose and a healthily pink glow returned. Lesson learned. These conditions demanded great respect.

Our altimeter read 6500m as the slope started to ease off. The highest point was still 20ft above us but huge cornices were visible on the other side and we had that uncomfortable feeling that we were pretty close to the break point. It was 18.30. The skies had cleared a little on the final section and I had been looking forward to a glorious panoramic view. In fact though views east and north were obscured by the cornice and those to the north and west hampered by inconvenient clouds. And the wind still howled incessantly. My hopes for indulging in photographic frenzy were dashed as I fought bravely to hold the camera still whilst taking shots which I instinctively knew were destined to be blurred and

unremarkable. After not very long at all we retreated to our last ice screw and abseiled into the gathering gloom.

It took an exciting bivouac followed by three days of abseiling, avalanche dodging and serious wading to rejoin Adam and Phil at base camp. They had reached about 5800m on Manamcho but had been stopped by the wild weather and low temperatures. They were though still smiling. Exciting mountains have that affect on people.

As for Chris and me - we felt great. Excess blubber had been used up and Kajaqiao, our objective of two years, was climbed. And with the cornice tip untouched we slept comfortably knowing that the old lady in Tatse would be happy to know that it wouldn't snow forever.

Reconnaissance of South Side of Kajaqiao and Manamcho by Phil Amos:

Adam Thomas and I traversed the glacier below the west face of Kajaqiao, intending to get round to and attempt the south face of Kajaqiao. However, deep snow (generally above the knee, thigh deep in places) made progress hard work and we changed our objective to the north west ridge of Manamcho which was closer. We gained a level part of the ridge at its foot four days after leaving BC, although one of those days was an exploratory day where we returned to the previous night's camp after breaking trail partway across the glacier. The ridge was gained via its north face - four pitches of Scottish IV/V on snow covered ice and mixed ground - steep broken slabs and frozen rubble. We built a comfortable ledge on the ridge crest, but decided to turn around the following morning due to a combination of deteriorating weather, strong winds blowing across the ridge, cold (-20 to -25C estimated - my tears froze!) and concerns about spending the next night out on the ridge. Our high point was 5880m (by GPS) and at that time we thought Manamcho was around the 6400m mark. Finding out it is 6240m hurts! We abseiled back down the north side of the ridge, reaching the glacier in 3 x 60m abseils and got back to BC the following day - the day that Mick & Chris summited.

We estimate it would have taken another day to reach the foot of the S face of K.

Further information on Adam and Phil's 2003 expedition can be found at www.virginsummits.org Additional information can be obtained from Adam at adamclimb@btinternet.com or Phil at Filamos@btinternet.com

ACCOUNTS

(For team of four to attempt Kajaqiao)

<i>Income</i>	£
British Mountaineering Council	2500
W L Gore Associates (Shipton Tilman Grant)	2695
Mount Everest Foundation	825
Personal Contributions	9400 (2350 x 4)
Total	15,420

<i>Expenditure</i>	£
Flights to Beijing	1958
Visas	120
Beijing to Lhasa (Return)	1560
Insurance	990
Payment to CTMA (\$16,800)	9882
Food/fuel etc. for base camp	325
Accommodation in Beijing	120
Epigas x 40	165
Taxis/Misc. items	300
Total	15,420



KAJAQIAO (CHACHACHO) & NEIGHBOURING PEAKS

NYAINQENTANGLHA EAST

▲ Chinese map
△ Russian map

Drawn by Tamotsu Nakamura

