

British Lhotse Shar Expedition 84

Paul Moores: Tighphuirt, Glencoe, Argyll PA39 4HN Scotland, Tel: 08552402

Paul Moores with fellow expedition members, Adrian Burgess, his twin brother Alan and Mike O'Donnel, a multi-national team, that recently attempted to climb Lhotse Shar (8,383 metres) the World's Sixth highest point without oxygen. They narrowly failed to reach the Summit after trying to climb the difficult South Face for over 30 days, as Paul Moores describes here:-

The aim of the Expedition was to climb Lhotse Shar with a small team of four climbers in a style known as "Alpine Style". That is without the additional aids of oxygen or high altitude Sherpas. Previously this mountain had been climbed only three times but always by large teams of climbers, using oxygen and high altitude Sherpas, and many many thousands of metres of fixed ropes. A method which tends to destroy the uncertainty and challenge which is always present in "Alpine Style" ascents.

We flew to Kathmandu in Nepal on the 5th August and spent the first week buying local food and organising the 35 porters who would help us to carry our loads up to Base Camp at 5,000 metres. After a 14 day walk-in beginning in the jungle and slowly working our way up day by day in the torrential monsoon rains, we eventually arrived at Base Camp near the end of August. The porters were dismissed and from this point on it was between the four of us and the mountain. The next two weeks were spent in the essential process of acclimatisation. During this period we surveyed the South Face and carried supplies up to our Advanced Base Camp. This helped us to acclimatise and at the same time establish our next camp.

On the 16th September the four of us moved up to Advanced Base Camp at 5,300 metres where we planned to stay so as we could begin climbing on the massive South Face. We set out at 3 a.m. each morning in the dark, trudging our way by torch-light through knee deep snow, until the ground became so steep that we needed to use ropes. The next section of the Face was so steep and potentially dangerous that it took up 10 days of constant trudging up and down before we could establish Camp 11. The nature of the climbing was such that we were unable to continue without some sort of fixed rope, this was necessary to ensure our safe descent when we would return from the Summit. We had now split into two teams of two, working day on day off, slowly climbing our way up this huge Face, and it was at this time that one of the climbers, who had already previously suffered with frostbite, had real problems in re-warming his feet. He also was suffering with stomach problems and was unable to keep food down. This caused us a real problem as he had to return to Base Camp, cutting the team by 25%. The climbing above was of an extreme nature, much more difficult than we had expected, we had no more rope to fix on the mountain and our team had already got weaker. It was at this point that we decided to retreat and leave the mountain for another day.

Although the four climbers did not reach the Summit of the mountain the Expedition could not be classed as a complete failure. An objective of such magnitude attempted in such a lightweight style requires not only skill and endurance, but a certain amount of luck with weather and conditions. When a team of friends pit themselves against heavy odds the measure of success is in the knowledge that all gave off their best and could have tried no harder. The Summit was not reached but the peak of effort was.

accl 23747

MEF 84/16

Report of 1984 Lhotse Shar Expedition

Members: Adrian Burgess (leader)

Alan Burgess
Paul Moores
Mike O'Donnel
George Reid

On the 28th August 1984 Alan, Adrian and Mike set up base-camp on the west bank of the Imja Glacier; beneath the eastern flank of Island Peak at a height of approximately 17,000 feet. The route to Camp 1 was begun on the 2nd September and lay up moraine; rubble covered glacier and slopes on the eastern side of the col separating Lhotse Shar South Spur from Island Peak. From the col a northern traverse over a series of snowy bumps; followed by a 70 ft. abseil onto the western flank, led to a glacial shelf and the site of Camp 1 at 19,100 ft.

This camp was finally established on 10th September and work on the lower part of the South Spur began. Very deep snow was encountered and fixing rope up the crest of the spur was very slow work. Every day it snowed after 12 noon and the weather only improved after 20th September.

On the 17th September George and Paul arrived at base-camp and were soon helping in the preparation of the route. Over a number of days the fixed rope was pushed out to a height of 22,000 ft. and a 600 ft. traverse left led to Camp 2 beneath a small serac. On the 24th September Paul and Alan moved to Camp 2 and fixed 600 feet more rope. At this stage they were in a position to see that we would still require 1500 feet more rope which we would have to buy from the nearby village of Pheriche.

On the 26th September Adrian and Mike went to Camp 2 to continue the fixing of rope. At the high point it became obvious that all the hard work ^{which} was still necessary for the establishing of Camp 3 would prove too much for the physical strength and morale of our small group. The team returned to base-camp.

Alan and Adrian Burgess then decided to change the climbing permit to that of the S.E. Ridge of Lhotse Shar, as it appeared easier than the former route.

Climbing quickly to 21,000 feet they encountered a serious serac barrier which they felt required some fixed rope for the descent. The two-some were not able to carry fixed rope and so the expedition was abandoned on 7th October.

LHOTSE - SHAR BUDGET - 1984

(US \$)

| | |
|---|------|
| FLIGHTS FROM DENVER-KATHMANDU (RETURN) | 5820 |
| EXCESS BAGGAGE | 93 |
| SHERPA INSURANCE | 330 |
| SHERPA GEAR BOUGHT IN KATHMANDU | 770 |
| FOOD BOUGHT IN KATHMANDU | 716 |
| FOOD BOUGHT IN NAMCHE BAZAR | 1354 |
| SHERPA EXPENSES WHILE IN KATHMANDU | 14 |
| 4 MEMBERS EXPENSES IN KATHMANDU HOTELS/MEALS ETC. | 320 |
| NUMEROUS SMALL ITEMS BOUGHT IN KATHMANDU (INCLUDING KITCHEN) | 490 |
| SHERPA FLIGHTS FROM LUKLA TO KATHMANDU | 110 |
| 4 MEMBERS, 1 LIASON OFFICER FLIGHTS FROM LUKLA TO KATHMANDU | 300 |
| MINI-BUS TO ROAD-HEAD (KARANTICHAP) | 138 |
| PORTER WAGES - 10 DAYS x 50 Rps. x 25 PORTERS | 750 |
| 47 LOADS ON YAKS TO BASE-CAMP | 340 |
| COSTS EN ROUTE TO BASE-CAMP EG. EXTRA FOOD, VEGETABLES, HIRE OF KITCHEN/ROOMS GENERAL ROADSIDE COSTS, EXPENSES WHILE IN NAMCHE BAZAR | 374 |
| FRESH VEGETABLES TO BASE CAMP | 108 |
| RETURN OF LOADS TO LUKLA/KATHMANDU | 290 |

WAGES:

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| LIASON OFFICER | 271 |
| SIRDAR | 243 |
| COOK-BOY | 216 |
| CLIMBING SHERPA | 243 |
| SHERPA BONUSES | 180 |
| PEAK PERMIT | 2400 |

AGENTS FEE

250

\$ 16,120