

SHEFFIELD BATURA EXPEDITION 1991.

Members: Richard Marchant (Leader)
Jonathan Morgan (Medical Officer)
Simon Cooke (Treasurer)
Charles Halstead
William Lee
James Hall
Alex Owen (Trekking).

Contact Address: 290 School Road
Crookes
Sheffield
S10 1GR
(0742) 670542

Objective: First ascent of unnamed peak, 5973m., North Batura, Karakoram, Pakistan.

- 14-7-91: Si, Rik and Will flew from Heathrow to Karachi. From there 4 days overland to Gilgit.
Karachi--Lahore Train 20hr. £5:50
Lahore---'Pindi Coach 6hr. £2
'Pindi---Gilgit NATCO bus 20hr. £5
- 20-7-91: Food for 30 man\days bought in Gilgit £38
- 21-7-91: Jeep taken to the Naltar Lakes (£35) followed by walk with hired donkey to the Lower Shani campsite 3600m. Party from Durham University camped about 100m away.
- 22-7-91: Night attempt at Snowdome 5029m.. At 2:00am. turned back due to altitude sickness (4650m.).
Moved camp to Upper Shani.
- 25-7-91: Succesful ascent of Sentinel 5260m., easy snow climbing.
- 28-7-91: Rik and Will completed 1st. ascent of a central couloir on an unmarked peak (~5300m.), on the south of Shani Peak.
- 30-7-91: Left Upper Shani base camp, walked down to Naltar then jeep back to Gilgit. In the "New Tabac" by 8pm. for superb Chinese meal.
- 01-8-91: Jon, James, Charles, Alex and 500 *mars bars* fly from Heathrow to Karachi followed by internal flight to 'Pindi (£55).
- 02-8-91: Si parapented into Gilgit after a 1400m. descent to be mobbed by locals on landing, "Flyman-Simon".
- 04-8-91: Jon, James, Charles and Alex arrive, by minibus, in Gilgit. Team meet at Hunza Inn.
- 05-8-91: Day spent shopping in Gilgit for food, jerry cans, pressure cookers etc. for 200 man\days. Everything available though probably would have been much cheaper in 'Pindi, (£500).
- 06-8-91: NATCO bus taken to Pasu via Karimabad, (4hr. £1:20). Met Shrewsbury School party and discover they are going to the same base camp! Day spent haggling with porters to no avail, rates are fixed and the route pre-divided into stages, fees to be.
 $17(\text{porters}) \times 150\text{Rs.} \times 7.5(\text{stages}) = £500.$
- 07-8-91: After a night in the Batura Inn, tractor ride to Batura Bridge. Horrendous hot dry 11hr. slog to Yashpirt village.

- 08-8-91: Trek from Yashpirt to Gushisham which nearly killed Alex with exhaustion. Excellent views of the immense South Batura Wall, just short of 8000m.
- 09-8-91: 4 days spent ferrying loads to both Walton Nala and Shelin Maiden base camps and rest day.
- 12-8-91: Everybody to Shelin Maiden base camp with 10 days of supplies.
- 15-8-91: Rik, Will, Charles, Simon and Jon made first ascent of "Fawltly Tower" peak (5490m.). A mixed route, to the west of base camp, up the prominent shattered rock spire and it's adjacent snow summit (5539m.). James plodded up a snow dome (5350m.). Alex in tent with a *Walkman*.
- 18-8-91: Night attempt on 5973. James turned back early after a small avalanche. Rest get to height of 5450m on the 50 degrees ice of the north face then turned back by deteriorating weather (electric storm on South Batura Wall).
- 21-8-91: "Shrewsbury Rovers" leave after giving us their excess food. On the radio hear ...Gorbachov... KGB... Revolution... we wonder if home will still be there to go back to.
Second attempt on 5973. Didn't even start face as weather closed in again and snowed through the day.
- 22-8-91: Ferried food up from the Shelin Maiden site as now running short. Will fell in a torrential glacial stream, thankfully he got out OK.
- 23-8-91: Set out at 9:30pm. on our third attempt at 5973. Si turned back early as sick. The rest plodded, by moonlight, up gradually steepening neve snow. Just below the summit ridge snow changed to 70 degree water ice, terrifying 50m pitch. Jon lost a crampon and nearly his life. Thankfully he had just been lowered a rope.
- 24-8-91: Reached the ridge about 5:00am., freezing cold, stoves would not work. Waited about 1hr. but started to cloud over. Traversed and ascended the final stages of the west ridge. Came within 100m. of the top, weather deteriorated rapidly. Had no choice but to retreat. Back at base camp about 2:00pm., Weather perfect! Jon had carried his paraglider all the way up and down. All very annoyed.
- 25-8-91: Broke camp and ferried loads down, established camp at Shelin Maiden near a fascinating clear blue lake that was only about 30m. across but the bottom could not be seen.
- 26-8-91: Party split, James left for S. India, Charles left for the UK. The other 5 remained with plans to climb some of the superb sub-6000m. peaks in the cirque. Site proved excellent for paragliding with a constant valley wind and thermals, flights of 2hr. plus.
- 29-8-91: Si broke his arm in a rock fall at the foot of an unnamed peak at the end of the Shelin Maiden Valley. Jon diagnosed fractured neck of humerus.
- 30-8-91: Si, Jon and Will leave base camp to rush to Gilgit for X-rays.
- 01-9-91: 6 Porters arrived at base camp to help Rik and Alex carry the rest of the gear down to Gilgit.
- 06-9-91: Jon and Rik start the trek up the Hispar and down the Biafo Glaciers which they complete in a remarkable 10 days.

08-9-91: Si and Will fly home to the UK. Thankfully Si's arm did not need specialist attention.
 19-9-91: Meet in Karachi for a night with friends there. Alex having travelled to Peshewar and Lahore, James a hectic 2 weeks and 3500km on Indian buses\trains.
 20-9-91: Jon, Rik, Alex and James fly home to Heathrow. Expedition over.

Weather: Naltar:- Mixed to bad.
 Batura:- Mixed with only a few cloudless days but no frank storm.

Finances: Total cost:- £7000 (approx).
 Income:- £1920 (from sponsors).
 Remainder from personal contributions.

Sponsors: (to whom we are extremely grateful)

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| Sheffield University | £600. |
| British Mountaineering council | £500. |
| Mount Everest Foundation | £500. |
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| Outside (Hathersage) | 20% discount in shop. |
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