

PC
MOUNT
EVEREST



FIRST IRISH
ASCENT 93

EXPEDITION REPORT

93/19

The Official Report of the First Irish Everest Expedition 1993



+638

Team Details

Leader	Dawson Stelfox, Belfast	NEPALESE STAFF	
Deputy	Frank Nugent, Dublin		
Climbers	Mike Barry, Tralee, Co. Kerry Tony Burke, Dun Laoghaire/Donegal Robbie Fenlon, Dun Laoghaire/Cardiff Mick Murphy, Leap Co. Cork Dermot Somers, Roscommon/Wicklow Richard O'Neill Dean, Co. Meath/Dunedin N.Z.	Nepalese Agent:	Bikram Neupane, Nepal Trek House Sirdar Asha Rai
Base Camp Managers	Leslie Lawrence, Dublin Nick Stevenson, Belfast	High Altitude Porters:	Khunke Sherpa, Jangbu Sherpa
Doctors	Kathryn Fleming, Belfast Stephen Potts, Belfast	Cooks:	Dendi Sherpa, Aka Raj, Dhana Rai, Doarjee Sherpa
Film Crew	John Murray, Dublin Brian Hayes, Co. Kerry Rory McKee, Comber, Co. Down	Chinese Liaison Officer:	Lawa
Treasurer	John Bourke, Killiney, Co. Dublin	Chinese Interpreter:	Go Lang Zi
Trek Leaders	Damien Cashin, Call of the Wild, Wicklow Tom Cleere, Dublin	HONORARY ADVISERS TO THE EXPEDITION	
		Auditors:	Deloitte & Touche
		Solicitors:	McCann Fitzgerald
		Advertising Agents:	BSB Hunter
		Insurance Consultants:	Coyle Hamilton Ltd.

TREK REPORT

There were three support treks accompanying the Expedition, each of 30 days duration. Seven days were spent trekking in the Langtang Himal crossing the Gosainkund Pass. This was the same route that the climbers had followed as part of their acclimatisation.

The trekkers then crossed into Tibet and walked to Base Camp meeting the climbers and many reached Advance Base Camp (Camp Colgate) at 6450m. Their itinerary then took them across the Tibetan plains to Lhasa and the Potala, the former palace of the Dalai Lama. A spectacular sight-seeing flight took them over Everest to Kathmandu, a few days of Nepalese food and culture and then home. Their presence helped the morale of the team and put flesh and voice to the wonderful support from home. (See **A Trekker's Experience** page 22)

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE IRISH MOUNT EVEREST TREKS 1993

Dept. 26/3/'93 — Return 24/4/'93

Trek 1 Leader - Damien Cashin

Mr. Bob Arnold	New York
Ms. Mairin Begley	Glasnevin, Dublin
Ms. Cathy Buchanan	Strangford, Co. Down
Ms. Sara Duff	Lurgan,
Ms. Marcella Dunne	Howth, Co. Dublin
Mr. Karl Flynn	Howth, Co. Dublin
Mr. Robert Jocelyn	Galway
Mr. Aidan Lawlor	Raheny, Dublin
Mr. Alan Sanfey	Dublin
Ms. Hanna Shields	Kilrea, Derry
Ms. Susan Spruce	Gwent, Wales
Mr. Rodney Teck	Roundstone, Galway

Dept. 2/4/'93 — Return 1/5/'93

Trek 2 Leader - Tom Cleere

Ms. Moya Bourke	Killiney, Co. Dublin
Mr. Maurice Burris	Churchtown, Co. Dublin
Ms. Valerie Burris	Churchtown, Co. Dublin
Mr. Raymond Field	Blanchardstown, Dublin
Mr. Paul Hussey	Malahide, Co. Dublin
Ms. Lesley Lawrence	Monkstown, Dublin
Mr. Noel Masterson	Churchtown, Dublin
Mr. John Monaghan	Bray, Co. Wicklow
Mr. Andrew Moynihan	Fair Hill, Cork
Mr. Mark Kellett	Sutton, Dublin
Mr. Eoin Thynne	Castleknock, Co. Dublin

Dept. 23/4/'93 — Return 22/5/'93

Trek 3 Leader - Damien Cashin

Mr. Terence Bannon	Newry, Co. Down
Ms. Terry Barrett	Dublin
Mr. Seamus Brady	Belfast
Ms. Una Coghlan	Dundrum, Co. Dublin
Mr. Martin Dunn	Stepaside, Co. Dublin
Mr. Brendan Henshaw	Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
Ms. Anne Marie Hughes	Sth. Cir. Rd., Dublin
Mr. David Irwin	Belfast
Mr. Morrough Kavanagh	Kiltarnan, Co. Dublin
Ms. Jessica Kavanagh	Kiltarnan, Co. Dublin
Mr. Frank O'Reilly	Enniskerry
Mr. Phil Ormrod	Malahide, Co. Dublin
Ms. Lorna Siggins	Blackrock, Co. Dublin
Mr. Neil Warnock	Sandycove, Co. Dublin

Introduction

"We are indebted to those who have gone before"

THE EVEREST REPORT.

Sounds dull. How **do** you capture the vitality of such intense experience?

Expeditions are transitory affairs but the effects linger on — echo and reverberate around other mountains and other lives. This is a record — not exhaustive, but seizing the essentials — how the

disparate strands were bound into an interwoven thread, protected by the sheath of a shared ideal; how that common cord absorbed the strains and pressures of extreme altitude mountaineering, and how we've unravelled the complex tangle and sent the offshoots back

to all corners of this island, enriched and strengthened.

We all climb on the backs of others' knowledge and experience and are indebted to those who have gone before equally as much as we owe the trip to those who financed and supported us. It is now our turn to repay that

trust and we enthusiastically and openly offer all assistance, advice and support. We want to share the experience as widely as possible, spread the understanding and knowledge we have gained and encourage the aspirations of all who will push forward in the future.

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Cover Photo: Robbie Fenlon nears the North Col — Photo: John Murray
 Back Cover Photo: EVEREST with climber in foreground from Base Camp — Photo: John Murray

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Why the North Ridge?

by Frank Nugent

The North ridge offered a realistic challenge appropriate to our experience. We knew the approach and were able to plan in detail with confidence. The history of early attempts on the route and the experiences of the 1987 Changtse Expedition all served to motivate a small but committed team to a successful expedition.

The 1953 route up the South East ridge of Everest has become devalued and other routes offered a very low chance of success. The North ridge is relatively free from objective danger, the main problems being the length of the ridge above 8000m and technical difficulty high on the route.

The climbing starts at Advance Base Camp, Camp Colgate at 6450m with the steep snow and ice slopes leading up to the North Col, Camp 1 at 7000m. Between Camp 1 and Camp 2 at 7700m is a classic snow ridge topped by a rocky spur. The ground is not steep but almost constantly exposed to strong winds and spindrift. From Camp 2 the ground steepens again with snow covered slabs of rock and short steps, leading to a snow basin at 8300m and the site of Camp 3 - the highest camp we put in place, still over a kilometre from the top, leaving a long day to the summit and back, coping with much technical difficulty on the way. The climb thus requires a lot of time over the critical 8000m height, coping with low oxygen levels and the infamous wind and cold of the North Ridge — to quote George Mallory in 1921, in a letter to his wife Ruth:-

"We were turned back by a wind in which no man could last an hour"

The style we adopted was agreed after much discussion, taking account of the technical difficulties, likely conditions and other ascents. It is worth noting that to date no oxygenless expedition has climbed the North Ridge, though some climbers of a large Russian/American team did make it, supported by other, oxygen using members. The reason is simply the length of time and technical difficulty over 8000m, whilst more direct or easier routes have proved more suitable for oxygenless ascents.

Thus although initial aspirations were oxygenless reality pointed to a limited use of oxygen for the final summit attempts.

Most Everest expeditions use a large number of high altitude climbing Sherpas and on the Nepalese side it is common for them to climb to the summit. We wanted to

ensure it was a truly Irish ascent and so decided to employ only one Sherpa (Khunke) to help with load carrying up to Camps 1 and 2, with a second Sherpa (Jangbu) to assist the film crew. In practice one of our cooks Dendi also carried a few loads to camp 2 and Khunke made a two trips to 8200m, though still the vast majority of the load carrying was done by Irish team members. Modern Sherpas are highly experienced professionals and our initial worries about exposing them to risk on our behalf were dispelled by their attitude and ability.

The experience of the Irish Changtse expedition in 1987 was invaluable to the preparations for Everest. Three climbers - Mike Barry, Dermot Somers and myself had all spent nights on the North Col and our base camp manager Leslie Lawrence had gained valuable experience in dealing with the Tibetan and Chinese authorities and organising Base Camp.

The team consisted of eight climbers all with the ambition and ability to make a summit attempt. However they were also invited because of their willingness to work together as part of a team, a characteristic not required for most small trips but essential on an Everest attempt. This proved to be crucial to success when by consensus Dawson and I were encouraged to make the first attempt with support from the other climbers in carrying loads of gear and food into place.

Eric Shipton, renowned climber and explorer and member of four early Everest attempts includes in his book 'Nandi Devi' a quote from Dr. Tom Longstaff which I can personally endorse -

"The man who eventually reaches the summit of Mount Everest will have done so, not by his efforts alone but over the shoulders of the pioneers - Mallory, Norton, Somervell - without whose hard won experience he would have stood no chance"

Coming along so much later, we also benefited from the accounts of those who have since climbed the ridge - amongst them Chinese, Americans and New Zealanders. The pre-war drama starting with the Howard-Bury led Reconnaissance in 1921, the disappearance of Mallory and Irvine in 1924 and the years of frustration all build up into a wealth of respect that can never be diminished. Dawson's success as not only the first Irishman to the summit but also the first British climber up the North Ridge revives those prewar associations.

This combination of a challenging mountaineering objective with historical and cultural associations gave the entire expedition, and through them many other people in Ireland and around the world, a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

CHOMOLUNGMA

by DAWSON STELFOX

MAY 16th

In the tent at Camp Colgate, finishing yet another game of patience and trying to keep at bay a growing sense of despair and frustration. Outside it's blustery and cold but brilliantly clear.

High on the mountain Richard, Tony, Khunke and Dendi are slowly descending after being repulsed yet again from Camp 3 by biting, gale force winds. They were lucky to get away with mild frostbite but their sense of disappointment, coming in on sporadic radio calls, is over-whelming.

We watched them this morning, tiny figures slowly moving up the vast and featureless broken spur above Camp 2 Richard calling in frequently on the radio, his broken and hoarse voice a measure of the immense difficulty of carrying a load up to 8000m without oxygen. None of them made it to Camp 3, at 8300m, but it was a great effort and we felt that progress had been made. They were almost back to Camp 1, almost safe. Then Jangbu broke the news from Nepali radio. 17 people had reached the summit from the South Col that morning, 17 to add to

the 38 that had got up from there last week on another day of bitter north-side winds. It's a different mountain round there of course - technically straightforward with a shorter summit day and the impetus of 19 expeditions and 400 climbers pushing forward, but I feel we deserve an even break with the weather and cheated that it isn't happening.

It's mid-May. We have barely three weeks left and still a long way to go. Doubts are inevitably

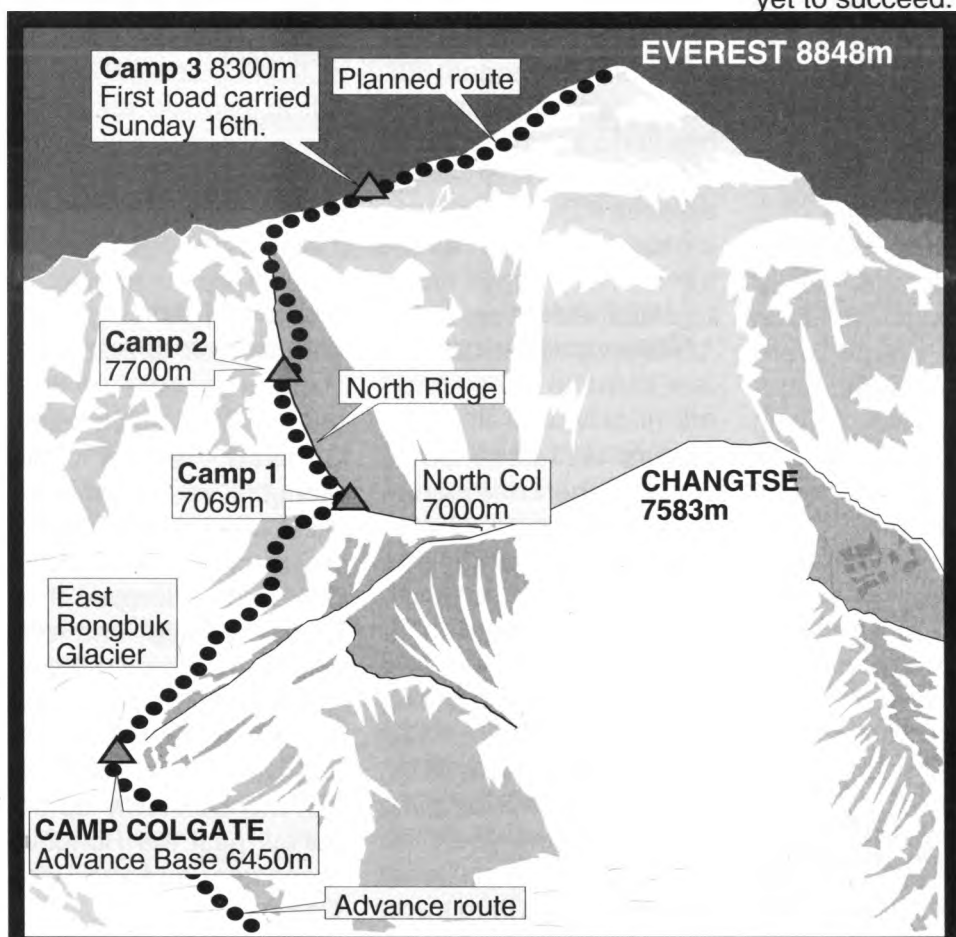
creeping in - even with the boost of early progress, the committed enthusiasm of a strong team and the strength of support flowing from Ireland.

Was this trip to be another frustrating failure?

JULY 27th

Failures. There's been plenty of those in Irish mountaineering, some glorious, some tragic, some just inevitable. But there's been plenty of successes too and all experiences build an understanding of ability - how to pick an objective that is both challenging and realistic with a real chance of success but the necessary edge of risk and failure, and a prize worth gaining.

Life above 8000m is tenuous, a weakening flame blown out in an instant by bad luck or bad judgement. The North ridge of Everest gains its height early and for almost a mile crawls upwards to the summit, punctuated by towers and pinnacles, flanked by steep slabs and overhanging cornices. It flaunts technical difficulty at high altitude after days of long and arduous climbing up from the North Col, itself protected by avalanche-prone and serac-threatened slopes. Those seeking a short sharp attack look elsewhere and previous successes have invariably been by large teams able to absorb the difficulty of long supply routes and the attrition rate of the fierce northern storms. An oxygenless expedition has yet to succeed.



Map by
Irish Times
studio

CHOMOLUNGMA

But there are attractions as well—the relative quiet and cultural interest of Tibet, the historical and romantic associations of the route and the prize — a climb that will never be devalued by technology or numbers, a route worth climbing to a summit worth achieving.

St Patricks Day

Aer Lingus hostesses pinned shamrock on the departing team, marking the end of two years intensive preparations. Kathmandu felt like coming home and the trek around Gosiankund a chance to relax from the pressures of finance, packing and publicity and focus on the mountain ahead.

The red flag fluttering over the harsh concrete border post at Zangmu brought home the political realities of Tibet, occupied and colonised by the Chinese for almost fifty years.

The official hotel was crude and extortionate, full of stranded tourist parties as the roads ahead were blocked by avalanche. Lawa, our TMA Liaison Officer and his young interpreter, Go, finally broke through the blockages and cleared us through Customs in time to move out the next morning in a convoy of trucks along narrow and twisting dirt track roads, constantly stopping to clear landslide and avalanche debris.

Just before dusk the lead truck slewed into a drift

and stuck. Everyone out-digging, pulling and shoving until altitude and darkness overcame enthusiasm. Nyalam was barely an hour's moonlit walk away up the snowbound road and we reached the village at midnight. Lawa rustled up a meal for us and a bulldozer for the trucks and the convoy finally pulled in at three in the morning. After a days rest and

walking some sections to acclimatize.

Crossing the Pang La at 5200m was a significant moment, the bitter wind a foretaste of things to come and the magnificent panorama of the Himalaya stretching along the horizon from east to west with my first view of Chomolungma, still a hundred miles away. That night was spent in Passum village and as darkness fell our trucks lumbered out of the dust. The road was

Barren, windswept and inhospitable, a vast rubble strewn floodplain below the moraines of the Rongbuk glacier, dominated by The mountain, our base for the next two months.

Within a few days the yaks arrived and after the inevitable haggling we loaded up and set off for Advance Base Camp, Camp Colgate, two days walk away at the end of East Rongbuk glacier. Converging flows have created a medial moraine, a highway through a tortuous and primitive landscape, but the trek is arduous and spectacular with rough boulderfields and danger from landslips with the harsh and lonely beauty of ice pinnacles thrust up from the glacier.

We reached Camp Colgate on the cold blustery afternoon of April 7th, a collection of old tent sites levelled out of the rough moraine. The few bits of rubbish gave a human presence to an otherwise hostile and bleak landscape. The yak herders dumped the loads and scurried off down. The half erected mess tent blew away and its salvage was left for more amenable conditions. Altitude took its toll and a hastily prepared meal aroused no enthusiasm. Some climbers descended to improve acclimatization but the rest of us were ambitious to get up to the North Col, site for Camp 1 at 7000m. It was early April - plenty of time, the weather was good, and

DATE '93	PHASES
March 10-19	1. Preparations in Kathmandu
March 20-27	2. Acclimitization Trek
March 28-April 2	3. Journey to Base Camp
April 5-7	4. Camp Colgace Approach and Stocking
April 11-13	5. Camp 1 Established
April 26	6. Camp 2 Established
May 26	7. Camp 3 Established
May 27	8. Summit Climb
May 31-June 11	9. Clearing Camps and Return

repairs we drove on to Xegar to spend the night in the Chomolungma Hotel, rival only to the Zangmu for comfort and elegance. Eager now to make up for lost time on the road we left early the next morning for Base Camp — two lorries with Leslie, Nick, Jangbu and Khunke going ahead with the gear, the rest following more slowly in the back of a third truck,

blocked below the Rongbuk monastery, ten miles short of Base Camp, by a frozen river and the drivers had dumped their loads. We kept one lorry and hired fifteen Tibetan 'navvies' to help us clear the way of snow drifts and ice sheets and the next day inched slowly up the valley, past the Rongbuk monastery and into Base Camp.

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expectations were high

APRIL 11th

13,14,15 ... glance up — the start of the next rope is only a few paces away ... 16,17 ... got to stop ... can't make it .

Lookdown ... good ... Mike and Frank aren't catching up. Collapse into the snow and look up — Khunke is disappearing into the distance and I give up all thoughts of keeping with him. As soon as I stop I'm shaken by persistent coughing, almost vomiting with the intensity of it. Its nearly noon and a powerful sun in a cloudless sky has turned the early morning crust into a sticky stodge, sucking power from already feeble legs and draining will. There is no escaping the sun on these open slopes, reflected off the surface and focused by the flanking walls. High above, a precarious, overhanging serac threatens our slow passage across its path, for sooner or later it will come down, bringing with it thousands of tons of snow and the tangle of old ropes threaded improbably through its icy core. This is the way to the North Col, the most dangerous part of our route, yet the section we will be on the most.

Good intentions are destroyed by lassitude. Breakfast was the usual ordeal - forcing down lumpy porridge and stodgy

pancakes. Taste and appetite ruined by altitude. Conversation was sparse, someone threw up outside.

Up the moraine to the Chinese camp where Frank and I spent yesterday evening, sipping green tea and declining meat off the bone from the dismembered goat lying in the corner of their cosy but squalid mess tent. They have been here almost a month, battled their way up to the North Col and suffered already from frostbite in the bitter cold of March. They have ropes in place up the only feasible line to the Col and they want some return on their investment. There was no point in us fixing parallel line so we reach a deal and agree to carry 80kg of their gear to the Col and later to Camp 2, in return for our use of the ropes.

Frank and Mike are getting close... Mick and Tony not far behind ... got to keep moving ... Up to the next rope. Jumar on, back up krab on, plod on, and on. Half-way up now, a broad platform and obvious place for a rest. Coughing and choking for some minutes. When I can look up Khunke is half way across the long traverse that leads out left to the bottom of a steep ice pitch. Above and beyond him the North ridge is in view, snow merging into rock, the skyline summit ridge a long, long way above.

Time slips by and I have to move. Across the traverse and onto the steep ground, camera out as the drama of the situation penetrates a brain focussed on pain and discomfort. The ice pitches demand a new rhythm - a steady plod no use here - instead short bursts of power interspersed by long slumps in the harness seems to work. The angle eases and the bergschrund, the last barrier to the Col, appears, bridged by a short aluminium ladder skewered into the snow with aluminium stakes. Crampons squealing on the metal rungs, one step at a time, up the steep ice beyond and suddenly the snow is falling away below and I'm looking across the West Ridge into Nepal. Up, over and one leg astride the ridge to pause and marvel at the position.

100 metres to go along the ridge and even the gentlest of slopes forces a halt and a desperate search for strength. The Col appears - four Chinese tents, a small legacy of broken poles and rubbish and Khunke, smiling, relaxed, handing me a cup of tea. Load off and lying in the snow, spent but satisfied. first time to 7000m for me, first time to the North Col and suddenly, lying there in the afternoon sun, absorbing the stunning views and enjoying the exuberance of Frank and Mike at being there, pleasure surpassed the pain and this altitude thing didn't seem so bad after all.

JULY 27th

After that first trip to the North Col and a few days rest at Base Camp we settled into the routine of load carrying.

On April 17th Dermot, Richard, Robbie, Khunke and I were at the North Col ready to establish Camp 2, buoyed up by a good forecast from the Met Office in England, coming in over the ABB/Telecom satellite phone at Base Camp.

Awake at 6.00 but not away until after 9.00. Already the chores of living at altitude were intolerable - using a pee bottle in a constricted sleeping bag, keeping a stove going through the long struggle to melt and boil snow and trying to maintain an acceptable level of comfort.

Khunke shot off in front up the broad snow crest of the ridge, but the going was firm and windswept and we all made good time, leaving the snow and up the broken rocky spur to a small exposed platform at 7700m. We erected one tent, stashed our loads and scurried down to the relative comfort of Camp 1. The real hard work had started - loads of fuel, food, oxygen and equipment to be carried up from Camp Colgate, trips slotting into good periods in the increasingly unsettled weather.

Frank and Tony moved up to Camp 2 with Khunke and Dendi as the joint Chinese/Taiwanese team headed for the top on a clear but cold and windy

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Richard O'Neill Dean at Base Camp. Photo: Frank Nugent

day in early May. Strengthening winds caused our first failure to make Camp 3 but the Chinese carried on and their subsequent ascent and descent turned into an epic struggle for survival. Losing one tent at Camp 3 they camped again at 8680m before reaching the summit the following day. While their four Tibetan 'Sherpas' made it down to the North Col that night, the two Chinese and Tiawanese climbers were exhausted and descended at a painfully slow pace. Down at Base Camp their leaders could see glory slipping into tragedy but could only watch helplessly as the climbers disappeared into the afternoon cloud. After another cold night without shelter or food the frostbitten and exhausted men made it to our Camp 2 the following day and were revived by the oxygen

and food we offered, before being helped off the mountain. I met them slowly walking down the moraines below Camp Colgate a few days later, crippled by frostbite and drained of life - a formidable reminder of the realities of this massive and hostile mountain. While their leaders celebrated below the climbers struggled down, to hospital, amputation and perhaps permanent disability. We turned our heads away and headed back up the mountain.

The weather continued unsettled and by early May it was obvious we wouldn't be able to stock Camps 2 and 3 with enough supplies for all eight climbers. Endless plans and discussions produced agreement that Frank and I should have first chance, with everyone else supporting, to be followed

by others as time and conditions allowed. Richard and Tony volunteered for the arduous task of putting in Camp 3, supported by Robbie and Mick, and it was agreed we should follow the Chinese example of sleeping on oxygen at Camp 2, with the summit attempts climbing on it above there. May 16th came and went - Camp 2 was fully stocked but their attempt at Camp 3 failed and a wave of depression followed. Daily forecasts brought no relief and pressure mounted for progress. Two more false starts and increasingly persistent snowfalls spread discontent, focusing on food and living conditions. Some climbers descended to Base Camp to wait for any improvement in the weather, the rest trying to maintain an illusion of impetus by hanging grimly on.

Slowly a hint of optimism crept into the forecaster's tone. High pressure, light winds, reasonable temperatures all coming...coming. It was enough and all the built up tension of the past fortnight released in a burst of concentrated energy as we raced up to the North Col in three hours and set out for the summit...

MAY 29th

Its snowing again. The tent smothered and straining. But I don't care now. I'm back down at Camp Colgate, back off the

mountain and back from the summit.

The yaks will arrive soon and the frenzied confusion of packing about to start, but for a while I can sink back in the luxury of a dry sleeping bag and put the last few days into perspective...

The early promise of settled weather foundered at Camp 2 when we were trapped by a day of gale force winds. Mike, low on oxygen and exhausted by his long stay on the mountain, descended. Khunke, Frank and I hung on, knowing it was our last chance. By evening the wind dropped and though it looked ominously unsettled we got ready for an early start and were rewarded with a fine morning.

Up more broken ground, past the remains of Chinese and earlier camps and on across a long traverse on slabs and rocksteps with occasional old fixed ropes to mark the line and give a degree of security.

Khunke retrieved loads dumped earlier, headed for Camp 3 and then down, off the mountain, his job done. But he stopped short and left Frank and I to do a second carry-over the last hour to the campsite at 8300m, an open snow slope with windsculptured terraces behind large boulders giving a level of protection from the wind. It was nearly 10.00pm before we had finished the second carry and forced down a meal of soup and potato, barely four hours

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before the alarms were set for the morning.

The insistent bleep forced me awake but will-power was not strong enough to face the effort of moving. It was calm, the tent still. By 2.30 I managed to wriggle around, the hoarfrost showering down my neck, and force open the frozen door zips, fingers sticking to the metal. Lightning over Nepal, dark clouds obscuring the stars over Tibet.

In a tent the size of a coffin movement has to be synchronized and tolerance is essential. Progress is slow and the departure time of 4.00 became 4.30, then 5.00, finally 5.15.

Plunging up into deep snow heading for a ramp we'd spotted the night before, leading through the rockband that guards access to the crest of the ridge. But the starless night swallowed up the torchlight and we wasted time and energy on deadend gullies running out against steep rock. Then... what's this? ...a loop of old rope ... pull it out. ... yes, there it goes, up a short rockstep and disappearing into the gully above. Tug down, seems OK. Jumar on, climb up, push jumar, sink back and recover ... start again.

Above the rock step deep soft snow in the gully was easy but exhausting. We took turns at plugging steps up the ridge, reaching it not long after first light. The storm in

Nepal receded with the darkness but daylight revealed dangerous looking clouds over Tibet, a demanding and difficult ridge in front of us and a considerable distance to the summit. But daylight also revealed new mountains, hidden till now by the bulk of the ridge - Kanchenjunga glowing in the dawn light away to the east and Makalu, already far below but impressive in its shape and beauty.

The ridge started gently but the complexity of the First Step was confusing until Richard, watching through the telescope at Base Camp, 15 miles away, was able to direct us to the right line. A low traverse around the initial tower, then up the steep northern flank and back briefly onto the crest before another tower forced us onto disconcerting steep and unprotected slabs. Out came the rope, 6mm kevlar, for the first time and I led up an awkward ramp to a broad platform at 8680m, and the remains of the Chinese tent. Frank was having problems with his breathing, struggling to get enough air for the demands of the steeper ground yet cautious of using too much oxygen so early on. Our lengthy struggle in the dark had put us behind schedule and although his first bottle was empty after only five hours and having rounded the 1st Step. He was concerned he was nearing the edge of safe control on

the awkward and serious ground. It was already obvious that we wouldn't make it to the top and back down before running out of oxygen and probably daylight and as we moved on across a narrow slabby ramp that turned the next pinnacle. Frank could see his control slipping away. He was constantly forced to remove his mask and gasp in the thin harsh air, and finally had to take the only option open to him and turn back, urging me to carry on without him. He stayed to photograph me as I traversed on towards the foot of the 60m high crag that forms the Second Step, the most formidable barrier on the ridge and the gateway to the summit, and then turned to begin the slow cautious descent, without the elation of the summit to counter the weariness of being alone on such a vast and complicated mountain.

The Second Step- the psychological as well as the physical barrier. Did Mallory and Irvine climb it in 1924? Unlikely. Did the Chinese climb it in 1960? Almost certainly and the first man up later lost both his feet to frostbite after removing his boots to climb the last overhanging crack. The Chinese were back in 1975 and neatly avoided a repetition of this by carrying up and placing a 20 foot aluminium ladder. It's still there, precariously fixed, swinging wildly on loose, rusty pitons. But even to reach the ladder is not easy. Strands of tattered ropes lie down a vertical buttress but to their left I

climbed a short, chockstoned and snow-filled gully that led up to a series of ramps zig-zagging up the crag to the foot of the ladder. First bottle nearly empty but turned up full, I gasped my way up, one rung at a time, body held vertical and pressed flat against the rungs to stop the swinging, eyes avoiding the protruding and vibrating pegs. End of the ladder, still steep. I sweep away the choking powder snow and search for holds. A long step out right, a lunge forwards and I'm up, gasping from an empty bottle, and on easy ground. Change bottles, mind clears. Radio on and talk to Base Camp - Dermot, John, Richard, Lorna, Kathy and Leslie huddled around the base set eager for news, eager to help, willing me on.

Easy ground now — a vast boulder strewn plateau. The afternoon cloud closes in, a light breeze picks up and it begins to snow. Keeping well down from the ridge to avoid the cornices, I plod on, searching out hard snow patches, stumbling into drifted holes between the rocks. Across the top of the Great Couloir, eyes straining through the cloud for the route ahead up the summit tower. A steep rising traverse across the upper snow-field, crossing a vertical windslab breakline to a rocky ridge, out onto more steep slabs. Forced rightward, towards the West Ridge, looking for a break in the steep buttress above. It stopped

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snowing, the sun burnt through from above and the cloud descended into the valleys. A broad ramp led back left onto the summit ridge. Steep, with a few short steps it was an unexpected last problem but with the summit close I swarmed up the steps, clambered out onto the ridge again and ... there it was — 200m away along a gentle snow ridge, a minor bump, the crown overhanging the Kangshung face, topped by an aluminium pole.

I wandered up the last few yards to the top, the snow untracked and pristine on all sides, absorbing the beauty of the most extensive mountain panorama on earth. The green jungle and forests of Nepal to the south contrasting with the brown rolling barren hills of Tibet. Mountains from end to end — Kanchenjunga in the far east, the painful reminder of Manaslu marking the limit of visibility to the west, but beyond that the same again all the way through to the Karakoram and the Hindu Kush. My eyes wandered around the Khumbu, picking out Lobuje and Imjatse, climbed last year with Margaret, Rory and Niall, and across the border to Rongbuk, down to Base Camp.

Radio on, make it dramatic ... "Everest to Rongbuk ..."

No speech preplanned, just a gush of pleasure at

talking to the team who had made it possible, to Margaret and all our friends, families and supporters. Glowing in the late afternoon sun I talked through Dermot at Base Camp to everyone - Tony and Robbie slowly making their way up to Camp 3 to support Frank and me and to make their own attempt the next day; to Mick and Mike who gave up their own chances to support mine; to Dermot and Richard, now confined to Base Camp by illness but who played an instrumental role in the success by their early work and continued wisdom; to everyone else for their invaluable contribution but especially to Frank, then slowly making his way down to Camp 3, the driving force of undiminished commitment throughout.

But it was after 5.00pm. Darkness would be on me by 9.00 and I knew it would take five or six hours to get back to Camp 3, the last few inevitably without oxygen.

Down the summit tower with two abseils over the rocksteps. Across the broken spur to the snowfield. Slowly down the windslab break, then with more abandon, slithering down shallow gullies to the plateau. Cloud rolled in again and suddenly I was lost. My tracks up were filled by the afternoon snow. The featureless slope gave way to the vertical drop of the Second

Step. Only one way down - I had to find the top of the ladder. I dropped down low.. no it couldn't be here ... laboriously back up again ... still couldn't find it... back down again, lower this time, getting steep ... hold on, this is serious — feet sliding and scraping on thinly snow covered smooth slabs.

Down below, Robbie saw me wandering around way off line, but the radio was off and he could only watch.

Stop. Despair moving in with the fading light. Calm down ... Think ... Remember what it looked like when you pulled over the top of the step... Much closer the crest. Back up again, and there, barely discernible depressions in the fresh snow — my tracks. Abseil again past the ladder, back along the traverse and down the narrow ramp, to the Chinese camp site. Oxygen gone, three hours to go, darkness closing in. The radio an invaluable companion - Frank was

safely down at Camp 3, Robbie and Tony safely up. Talking concentrated my own mind, forcing me to think, avoiding automation. Down and round the first step and in the last few minutes of daylight reached the top of the ropes leading off the ridge, down the steep rockband above the tents. Headtorch on, plunging down the morning tracks, grateful now for the deep trench we had ploughed upwards. The lights in the tent seemed a long way down.

An old rope lying slack in frozen snow pulled tight as I abseiled off, sending me slithering down a heart-stopping six feet. Off the ropes, down through the deep snow and suddenly there was Robbie, out to guide me in and envelope me in warmth, Frank and Tony brewing up in the tents. The day was over, 18 hours after leaving I was back in Camp 3.

I slept fitfully, barely able to think about the summit - more concerned with getting enough to drink, Robbie and Tony's attempt



Camp 2, site 7700m with Changtse in profile in background.
Photo: Frank Nugent

CHOMOLUNGMA

and getting down. They slept little and were away by 4.00am. Despite my excitement I fell asleep again until 7.00 when they reached the main ridge. In worsening weather we discussed their options and with a certain relief they made what later proved to be the wise decision and came down. In the elation of getting back to the camp it was easy to forget we were still at 8300m, higher than all but 4 other mountains on earth, out of oxygen, out of food, out of gas and out of energy. The cloud thickened and the snow started. We had to get down but it was after 10.00 before we could get packed and move out, rucksacks bulging and top heavy.

Robbie pulled ahead on the last of his oxygen, we struggled in his wake, oxygenless, cold and drained, more often slumped in the snow than moving, conscious that the ground was still more than serious enough to punish mistakes severely, dreading the distance we had to cover but dreading even more another night cramped in a small frozen tent without food and drink. Camp 2 loomed up in a daze of exhaustion, but we gasped the dregs of two oxygen bottles and recovered enough to brew up some orange and Gatorade. We added more gear to already overweight sacs and

staggered on, shocked by the amount of new snow on the ridge. We descended into thick cloud up to our thighs in powder and crawled, on hands and knees, the last, cruel, uphill step into Camp 1. I slumped over the crest to face John and Jangbu, the last occupants of the camp, shrouded in snow but determined to complete the film. Their long vigil on the col had drained them both but as we staggered back in they fought the elements and my tired indifference to record our relief at being down and my elation at having been up.

Tony was still some way behind and determined to stay the night on the Col, but I was determined to get it over with and headed on down, down through fresh avalanches roaring off the flanks of Changtse and the North East ridge, sweeping down past us so that only the fixed ropes stopped us being swept off the mountain. Off the ropes and across the endless snow basin, fixing on marker flags as targets for rests. Brian and Mike appeared out of the approaching gloom and it was an emotional re-union. They took our sacs and guided us back to camp. With two feet of fresh snow the normally innocuous moraines were transformed into an awkward and confusing

maze and I stumbled and tripped my way down to Camp Colgate, following Mike blindly with the blurred and double vision of complete exhaustion.

July 27th

Two months since I stood on the summit. Two months of travel, reunions, receptions and recognition. Time now for reflection, to make a record.

Everest is not the end, not the ultimate, but the temporary target of a moving fixation that once satisfied, moves on to the next project, the next mountain.

But Everest is the ultimate public mountain and already new resources for mountaineering are apparent, with renewed interest in the provision of climbing walls and support to the MCI. We have set up the Irish Himalayan Trust to ensure a fair distribution of what becomes available, for expeditions and for the people of Nepal and Tibet.

Everest has reaffirmed confidence in our abilities, confidence shaken by past failures and disappointments, and confidence beyond us to those who know our limitations and thus their own potential.

Everest is thus a baseline, a springboard for an exciting future.

ON THE RIDGE (Everest '93)

by Stephen Potts

When the teeth
Of his grip
Attacked,
Did the sounding
Of surrender
Ever fail to come up from
the ice
Before his weight
Bore down;
And the sound of scraping
In the air
Filled the eye
Of a passive northern face

He has returned:
The face of others lift
To see behind his gaze;
Find the changes
Brought of wisdom
Or a madness
From that place.



*Dawson Stelfox.
Photo: John Murray*

COMMUNICATIONS

by Leslie Lawrence

With over twenty people spread out over a vast and complicated mountain, good radio communications were essential. The experience of Changtse in 1987 and Manaslu in 1991 gave us first hand knowledge of the terrain, radios and their limitations.

Philips Communications Systems not only gave us valuable advice on how to operate in such tortuous terrain but also supplied all our requirements - 2 FM1100 Base Sets, 7 PRP 76 hand sets, spare batteries, charging units, solar panels, a variety of directional and omnidirectional aerials and even a small Honda Generator.

The Base Sets were located at Base Camp and Camp Colgate. As radio signals go in straight lines and the bulk of Changtse lies between the two camps we initially had reception difficulties. However, by locating a directional aerial high on the moraine above Base Camp and bouncing the signal off the North Face of Everest and back into Camp Colgate we got an almost perfect link.

The other camps were equipped with handsets, batteries being brought down to Camp Colgate for Solar panel charging. Battery life was shortened by the extreme cold and it became common practice to carry freshly charged batteries inside clothing. The next generation of lithium batteries soon to become available should reduce this liability.

There were two standard radio call times - 9.00 am and 6.00 pm and frequently others by arrangement. During the summit attempts the Base sets stayed open for climbers on the mountain to call in at any stage. Radio calls were a mixture of weather reports, co-ordination of equipment and supplies and medical advice from Kathy or Stephen. They kept track of movements on the mountain and allowed the Sherpas to keep in touch with each other. The daily weather forecasts arranged by Martin Stubbs of the British Central Forecasting Office in Bracknell proved to be the key in selecting the right launch of the summit attempts through the long period of unsettled weather.

The handsets were robust and simple and one was taken to the summit. Following progress at Base Camp through a telescope, Richard was able to talk directly to Dawson and Frank and guide them around the complicated First Step. Those now famous words came clearly over the airwaves down to us at Base Camp, 15 miles away

"Dermot, the altimeter is reading 8848 metres and I'm sitting on the Summit of the World"

The desire to integrate the excitement of the Expedition with the public at home required us to be able to communicate directly from Base Camp to Ireland - to talk to the Pat Kenny and Downtown Radio shows on a weekly basis and to allow Lorna's articles to the Irish



Frank Nugent rounds 1st step. Photo: Dawson Stelfox

Times to be immediate and accurate. Telecom Eireann became a major sponsor and made the running of the whole system possible.

We chose the ABB Nera "Saturn Compact T" Satellite Phone system for its reliability, robustness and light weight - a mere 34kg, supplied to us by ABB and Ericssons Ltd. It was assembled and ready for use in less than five minutes and no more complicated than a domestic phone to operate - just punch in the numbers and the satellite over the Indian Ocean does the rest. More complicated and time consuming was obtaining the permit from the Chinese authorities for its use, only finalised after we had already left for Tibet!

A fax machine kept down call charges and the small Honda generator from Philips provided the power - or it would have if we had done our homework properly.

A generator loses 3% of output for every 1000 ft. above 6000 ft. due to the reduced oxygen in the air. At Base Camp height of 17,000 ft., output was down by 33% and our first small generator just couldn't find enough power. Through the Chinese expeditions phone we got a message to Kathmandu and a more powerful Honda generator was brought in with the first Trek Group. Even this gave problems with the interminable dust at Base Camp and at crucial moments a blast of neat oxygen from our very limited supplies was used to revive the struggling engine.



Looking down the North Ridge from Camp 2. Photo: Robbie Fenlon

SHERPAS

by Mike Barry

Nepal—that beautiful country of sparkling peaks and deep cut valleys, of forested hillsides and naked slopes, of city and rural dwellers, of rich and poor. A nation of contrasts, a nation whose population of 18 million comprises a great number of ethnic groups, a nation of incredibly industrious people who try to make a living with the odds stacked against them. Two of these groups have earned the respect of the world — the Gurkas as a fighting regiment within the British Army and the Sherpas for their outstanding performances on the high mountains of Nepal.

They came from eastern Tibet, close to the borders of Mongolia and moved over the high passes of the Himalaya to the region south of Mount Everest in the 1500's.

Having lived on the high Tibetan plateau, they adapted easily to living at between 2,400-4,000m in the remote valley of Solo-Khumbu. Bringing with them their religion - Tibetan Buddhism, their language - a Tibetan dialect (The Tibetan for Sherpa means 'eastern one') and their dances, they established settlements in the deep cut valleys and hillsides of the region. Making a living by farming - growing potatoes, barley and wheat; and raising herds

of goats and yaks they traded goods with their counterparts in Tibet, thereby keeping language and religion alive. For the best part of four centuries they made a reasonable living farming the terraced fields carved out of the steep hillsides.

Come the 1920's and there was a change with the arrival of mountaineering expeditions. Very soon it was proven that the Sherpas out-performed all other porters from the lowlands, and indeed the western climbers. Their reputation for being honourable and hard-working was well earned and deserved. In the early years when expeditions were few this work fitted into the seasonal agricultural pattern. In recent years, with the rising popularity of trekking and over 50 expeditions a

season, the demand for Sherpas to be cooks, high-altitude porters and sirdars has had an incredible impact on the Sherpa community, still small, with a population of only 25,000. Farms are neglected and overgrown and terraced fields that took generations to construct can be lost to the monsoons in a few years. The lure of hard cash from an expedition or trek with a lot less graft than the dawn to dusk toil of a hill farm is hard to resist. The Sherpas now work throughout the Himalaya and many are away from home for long periods. The price has been high, with over 60 killed on Everest alone.

Illiteracy is still high, though most Sherpas have a working knowledge of English, mostly self taught amongst the older generation. There is now a great emphasis on education and since the 1960's a large number of schools have been built, many of them funded through the efforts of Edmund Hillary and the

Himalayan Trust. Often at Base camps I have seen our Sherpas studying school books in their tents.

Our staff on Everest represented a mix of modern Nepali life. Some would be of the old style, broken English, little education and a life of hard graft ahead of them. But there was also Dana, a young student teacher, eager for work to improve his English and pay his way through college in Kathmandu, though suffering from the lack of attendance at lectures caused by long stints on expeditions. They were gifted singers, dancers and poets, they cast a cynical eye over the Chinese occupation of Tibet and talk eagerly of visiting Europe or Japan. Over the last ten years I have had the immense pleasure of working with these people, singing and talking well into the night after some dreadful chang or raksi. I look forward to my next visit to Nepal and renewing old friendships.



Sherpas and Yak minders celebrate Irish Everest success. Photo: John Bourke



Dawson Stelfox approaches the Second Step. Photo: Frank Nugent

A Climber reaches the North Col at 7,000m. Photo: John Murray





Team photo at Base Camp

*Back L to R: Leslie Lawrence, Robbie Fenlon, Dermot Somers, Richard O'Neill Dean, Dawson Stelfox, Frank Nugent, Tony Burke, Rory McKee
Front L to R: Michael Murphy, Nick Stevenson, Mike Barry and Dr. Stephen Potts. Photo: John Murray*



*Looking down on Dawson Stelfox at Camp 2, 7700m, with Rongbuk Glacier, Lho-La pass and Pumori in background.
Photo: Frank Nugent*

EVEREST FILM REPORT

by John Murray

A one-hour film documentary of the Everest Expedition is in the final stages of post-production and will be transmitted on RTE in late October or early November. An Irish language version with Dermot Somers as presenter/narrator is also being produced for transmission sometime later in the year.

The considerable success of the Manaslu film helped a lot in putting the Everest film project together and much valuable experience was gained on that expedition. To date, Manaslu has been broadcast four times on RTE, three times in English and once in Irish.

FILM AND PRODUCTION CREW

In Nepal and Tibet, the film crew consisted of John Murray as producer/cameraman, Brian Hayes as director/soundman, Rory McKee as climbing supervisor/film assistant, Jangbu Sherpa as climber and film assistant. Back in Ireland, Myles Merriman is the film editor while Magnus Kelly and Conor Malone are helping with all aspects of post-production. Bobby Bell of RTE's sound dept. has been an invaluable help on all sound matters.

FILMING ON EVEREST

The Himalayan landscape was stunning and it was a privilege to visit and film in such a remote and little visited country as Tibet. All in all, filming went extremely smoothly and the equipment worked well given the conditions. One of the biggest problems was the weight of our equipment and without Jangbu's help, Brian and I would have had trouble walking 100 yards. The first trip from Base Camp to Camp Colgate and our first real taste of altitude came as a bit of shock. The yak herders had suddenly decided to do the journey in two days instead of the expected three and on both days we ended up stumbling along in the dark, absolutely shattered. The very last day almost matched it when after the summit attempts we had to evacuate the mountain in blizzard and avalanche conditions. Most of the middle period of the expedition was spent at Camp Colgate with the odd foray back to Base.

Towards the end, considerable time was spent at Camp One filming the climbers coming up the North Col and heading on up to Camp Two and above. Filming went as high as Camp Two at 7,700m (25,500 ft) with Dawson and Frank en route to the summit. Their intention was to film the summit attempt with Hi8 cameras and the camera load had been split in two with Dawson carrying the cameras and the camera load had been split in two with Dawson carrying the cameras and Frank the batteries.

Unfortunately when Frank finally turned back at 8,600m (28,200 ft), they forgot to exchange the batteries, which is more than understandable under the circumstances.

EQUIPMENT

The Everest film was shot with Eclair cameras on 16mm negative film. The drawback with the Eclair cameras is their weight (about 13 kg) and while they were used as high as possible on the mountain, lightweight SONY Hi8 videocameras were used when it became impractical to carry

the film cameras any further. Sound was recorded with Sennheiser and SONY microphones on Professional SONY Walkman tape recorders with built-in crystal pulse for recording synch action and interviews. Once again the Walkmans worked faultlessly as did most of the equipment despite the low temperatures and severe conditions. The film camera froze a couple of times at Camp One but thawed out after a few hours in the sun. Batteries were recharged with solar panels at Base and Camp Colgate. They worked perfectly and we were never caught with flat batteries. Extension leads were built for all batteries so they could be kept warm under clothing and lithium batteries were used for the videocameras and Walkmans at altitude.



John Murray and Jangbu Sherpa filming Frank Nugent climbing to Camp 2.

Photo: Dawson Stelfox

Negative film is still the medium used for most feature films and good documentaries. It is particularly suited to the high light intensity and contrast found at altitude and on snow. One of the drawbacks of film is that it comes in rolls of only 10 minutes duration (instead of 30 minutes or more for videotapes) that are heavy and slow to load. On the other hand, the rolls are so expensive and short that they concentrate the mind and mean few shots are wasted.

On our return from Everest, the film was processed and a copy made immediately. The negative will remain untouched until the very last stages of post-production when it will be transferred directly to videotape ensuring unbeatable broadcast quality.

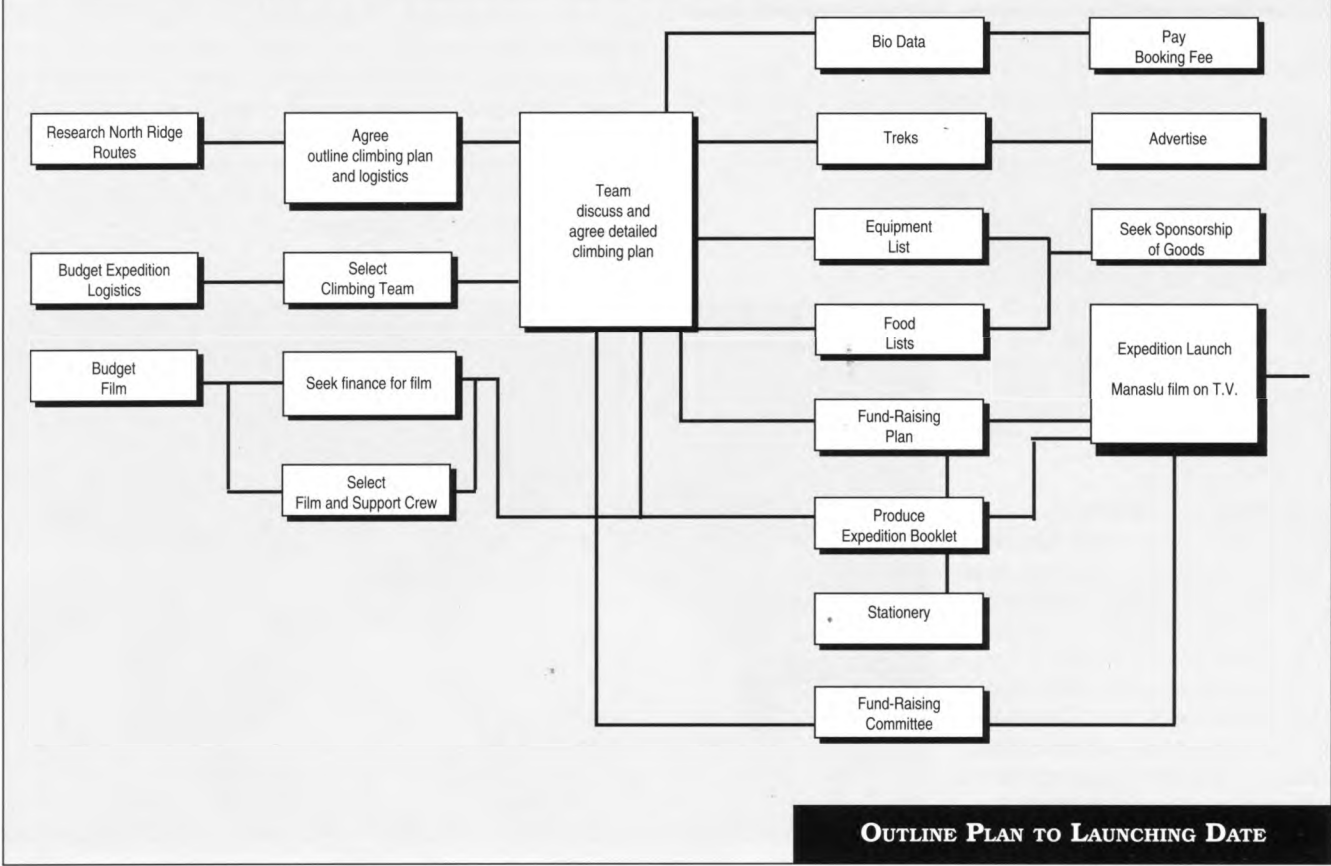
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Everest film is a considerable investment on RTE's part and represents the strongest support yet given to an adventure/expedition film. Special thanks are due to Clare Duignan, Liam Miller, Mike Kelly and Cathal Goan. On the film/technical front, we were very grateful for the help and advice of Fintan Ryan, Tony O'Connor, Stuart Hetherington, Jim Coughlan, Charlie Byrne, Dermot O'Grady and Mick McCarthy.

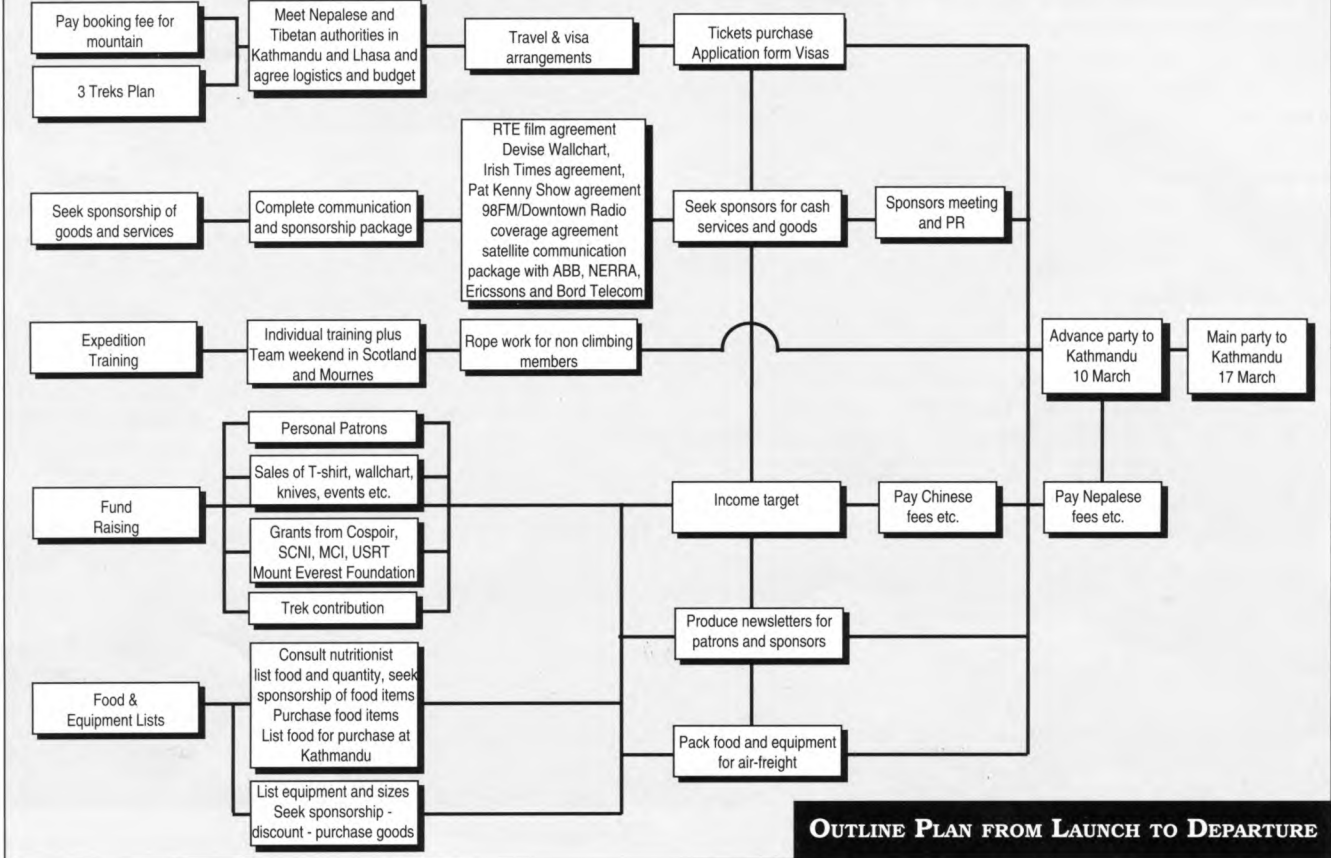
The Hi8 videocameras were very kindly provided by SONY Ireland and Professional Video Ltd. who also helped with video transfers. The solar panels were provided by Hyperion of Cork and Solarworld of Dublin, two companies specialising in solar power. Thanks are due to IBM Ireland and Eddie Gaffney for a portable computer, FUJI Ireland for stills film, Film Lighting Supplies for a sun gun and Photopak for lithium batteries.

And finally, thanks to all the members of the Expedition for their interest and assistance in the making of the film.

IRISH EVEREST ASCENT 1993



IRISH EVEREST ASCENT 1993



NOTES ON EQUIPMENT

by Nick Stevenson & Mick Murphy

Good equipment alone cannot ensure a successful expedition but it can make the difference between comfort and discomfort, coldness and frostbite and even survival and death.

The choice of equipment was made by Nick and Leslie, in conjunction with the climbers who added their great practical experience to our knowledge of what was available. We were fortunate that John Bourke could raise money as fast as we were spending it ensuring that we did not have to compromise at all on any item which we wanted.

Our first fund raising success was in persuading the Northern Bank to sponsor the £4000 cost of our 'Deep Sleep' sleeping bags. Manufactured in Scotland by 'The North Face' and used in conjunction with their Expedition overbags and Cascade Designs Thermarest mats, these goose down filled bags proved their name to be quite appropriate and were the best bags any of the climbers had ever used.

We had a large amount of tentage with us to allow for destruction by the notorious North Ridge winds, but in the event only lost two and a few pole sets in the many storms. The mainstay of the tentage were The North Face VE25's. Designed almost 20 years ago these are light, spacious and incredibly strong, probably the finest expedition tent available. They were used up to Camp 1 at 7000m. We also brought 6 Phoenix Photon Extreme Goretex tents used mainly at Camp 2, 7700m,

were they took the brunt of the ferocious winds, but one eventually went to Camp 3 at 8300m. Our smallest, lightest and possibly strongest tents were 2 Wild Country Gemini's, used at Camp 3 for the successful summit attempt and at Camp 2. Camp Colgate was equipped with Phoenix Phusion Extremes and VE25s, and Base Camp with a mixture of personal tents, with two large Irish Army Mess tents as the invaluable communal meeting places.

Lurking inside all these tents were the climbers who had three sets of outer wear to choose from. Up as far as Camp Colgate they used Jacket and salopettes in Lowe Alpine's Triplepoint waterproof breathable fabric. From there to the North Col the preference was a one piece Gortex suit, with Rab down jacket and salopettes as necessary. From the North Col to the summit, and back, the climbers wore an individually sized one piece down suit from Valandre of France, which proved to be both extremely comfortable and efficient, in very pretty colours.

Under these various shells were layers of underwear and fleece all manufactured and given to the expedition by Lowe Alpine, with the stretch fleece pants being singled out for special praise. Hands were protected by layers of

oversized thermal gloves and Goretex mitts from Lowe, with down mitts from Valandre for extreme conditions, however more substantial Lowe mitts were needed. Head coverings centred around Lowe thermal and fleece balaclavas, with the ubiquitous Mountain Cap, one of the most functional pieces of mountain headgear available in the world. Glasses worn were Ray Bans.

Frostbite was kept at bay by the excellent Bridgedale AT socks manufactured in Newtonards, Co Down by Berkshire Hosiery, with Black Diamond Vapour Barrier socks worn at high altitude to keep body vapour from the foam inners of the Asolo Expedition plastic double boots, the lot covered with Wild Country overboots, imported from the USA. For the trek, approach and the journey to Camp Colgate we were supplied with Dubarry walking boots. These are extremely comfortable with supple leather but took a fair hammering from the rough moraine.

Crampons used were Grivel 2F, selected for their ease of adjustment, strength and light weight. We also had the Grivel Airtech ice axe which in conjunction with a Leki Makalu ski pole provided a light and versatile combination for the complex terrain.

Rope used was Beal 8.8m Everdry for climbing with 7mm polypropylene 3 strand fixed rope. Climbers provide their own personal technical gear, helmets, hammers and axes.

MSR stoves struggled with the altitude and impure fuel and cooking above Camp Colgate was done on EPI and Markill gas stoves with propane/butane mix of EPI GAS.

Lowe Alpine also provided all our rucksacks, manufacturing a special lightweight, big volume sack for the climbers. For general load carrying standard Cerro Torre II's were used, with the small Snowpeak 50 for trekking and lightweight excursions. The big sacks used the Paralux harness system, now 25 years old but still the most comfortable available and Lowe certainly deserve their reputation for manufacturing the toughest and finest quality packs in the world. Personal gear for lorry and yak loads were protected by Cascade Boundary Bags.

The equipment list ran to three pages so obviously the above comments are not exhaustive, but Leslie and Nick would be pleased to answer specific questions.

We are indebted to the following whose advice and guidance helped us to climb Everest - Chris Watts, Siobhan Sheridan, Charlie Campbell, Maurice McGlade, Ben Lyon and especially Jim Leonard for his work, enthusiasm and confidence.

A Trekker's experience

Ray Fields *"always wanted to see the Himalayas"*

by Ray Slattery

Reprinted by kind permission of An Cosantoir

DAWSON STELFOX made the headlines in early summer. The first Irishman to reach the Summit of Mount Everest. A wonderful feat. Apart from the emotional stress, the physical hardship to be endured is worse. With only 40% oxygen available at those heights, there is difficulty in breathing and walking. Sleep comes with effort, if at all. When you awake, your boots are frozen, and boiling frozen ice for a hot brew takes an age. Altitude sickness is a constant companion — blinding headaches, blurred vision and in the worst cases, pulmonary and cerebral oedema.

"In order to acclimatise, they spent a week trekking in the Lang Tang Valley ..."

Among the team that supported Stelfox were two members of the Defence Forces. It is easily assumed they came from a specialised or operational Unit. Not so. Head Chaplain Monsignor Ray Field and Father Eoin Thynne, both members of the Chaplaincy Service, are the first Catholic priests to reach a height of 22,000 ft on the mountain known to Tibetans as 'Lady Goddess of the Wind'.

Given the nature of his vocation, it is easy to understand some of the reasons Mons. Field went. He says that he "always wanted to see the Himalayas and, more especially, the monasteries". The country had a fascination for him since reading the book *Seven Years in Tibet* by Heinrich Harer. He also wanted to stand on Mount Everest. They wanted to support a historic expedition and Fr. Thynne saw it as a personal physical challenge. Both represented the esprit de corps so common among men of the cloth, and wanted to represent the Chaplaincy Service and the Defence Forces — in that order.

When the opportunity to be part of one of the three trekking groups to support the climbers, came in the summer of 1922, Mons. Field lost no time. He contacted his colleague, who was serving in Lebanon, and the decision was made.

The capital outlay required came from their own pockets. Fr. Thynne also saw it as a vocation, saying "You wouldn't expect people to sponsor you while you take a holiday". They arrived in Kathmandu in April and having settled in, prepared for their version of IT 1/92. In order to acclimatise, they spent a week trekking in the Lang Tang Valley, an experience in itself. They started from 4,000 ft. and by weeks end, reached the Gusain Kund Pass (15,000 ft.) in the snow. The daily seven hours of serious hill walking was to stand them in good stead, as it had the climbers. After returning to Kathmandu, they made for the Friendship Bridge on the Nepal/Tibet border.

The beauty of Nepal gave way to the rugged splendour of Tibet, but more importantly for them as priests, it was here they were to have a moving religious experience, as well as almost intolerable levels of physical discomfort. As Mons. Field puts it: "The Tibetans are a people who are infused by Buddhism. It fills their daily lives, their culture and their politics."

"Tibetans live their religion," concurs Fr. Thynne. "To see that alone would have motivated me to go to Tibet". The 14th Dalai Lama, their exiled leader for 34 years, is revered. To devout Buddhists he is the re-incarnation of the Buddha of Compassion as well as a spiritual and political leader. He is the main teacher of one of the world's great wisdom traditions, the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet. Now, the presence of the Chinese is everywhere. Lhasa, the capital is becoming more Chinese by the day, even down to the types of buildings being erected. For Westerners more preoccupied with the upheavals in Eastern Europe, it is easy to overlook what is happening in that isolated part of the world.

From Tingri, the group spent three days trekking to the approach to Everest Base Camp. On the route, they stopped at the Rongbuk Monastery, the highest in the world, and witnessed the lives of the eleven monks and eight nuns who live there.

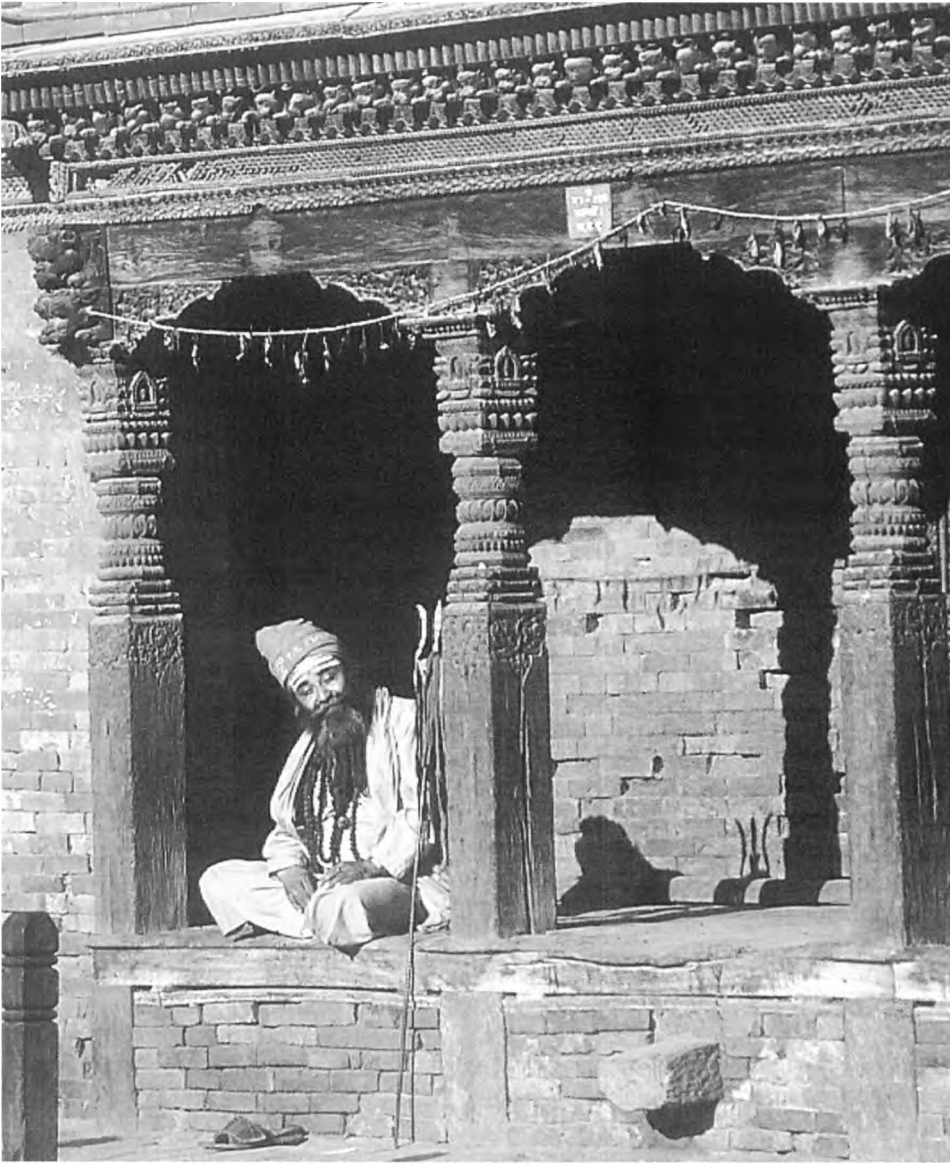
There is no electricity or running water. The buildings have no chimneys, so the smoke

from the fires ensures a steady cough and sooty appearance among the inhabitants. The monastery has never been rebuilt after being devastated by Chinese shelling during the Cultural Revolution, nor have the 500 monks who lived there at the time, returned. For all their hardship, Fr. Thynne said the monks and nuns were "Very open and friendly and also very welcoming. It was particularly moving to be present for their ceremonies".

Everywhere they went, the priests were asked for pictures of the Dalai Lama. Not having any, Mons. Field distributed the collection of miraculous medals he had been requested to bring. Today the monks and nuns have them pinned to their breasts. Fr. Thynne doubts they realise their significance but chuckles when he thinks of the effect the sight must have had on the following group of trekkers.

The sight that greeted the Chaplains on reaching Base Camp (15,000 ft.) was indeed welcome. There among the 'bubble' tents was a large green canvas structure, one of two Defence Forces tents, on loan to the Expedition. They were greeted by Frank Nugent, and given refreshments. Frank's father (Cpl) Paddy, had spent 24 years in Clancy Barracks. Coincidences didn't end there, the trekking group guide Tom Cleer, is a Reserve Forces Lt. with C Coy, 7 Inf. Bn (FCA) in McKee Bks.

Now came the final push to their objective, Advance Base Camp (22,000 ft.). The first day, they trekked up the Rongbuk Glacier to the Chinese Camp and on the second reached Point Jackquine. On the final day they struggled through mist and snow reaching Camp Colgate to see Dawson Stelfox coming through the murk to greet them. "It was a marvellous moment to have struggled up that height — we were all suffering badly from lack of oxygen at that point," says Fr. Thynne. Of the original fourteen in their group, five had made it, the remainder were too ill. It gave them an appreciation of the trials of Richard O'Neill-Dean who failed to reach the summit. "There is such a build-up of emotion," says Mons. Field, "when



Holy man in Katmandu. Photo: John Murray

Richard came down to Advance Base Camp this 6ft 8in man just sat there and cried inconsolably for 10 minutes." He had reached 8,000 metres, but not the summit.

Now came the final push to their objective, Advance Base Camp (22,000 ft.) ...

They had fulfilled their primary objective of reaching Advance Base Camp. Trekking through Nepal had been unforgettable and visiting the Ronbuk Monastery, a moving experience. Celebrating the Good Friday ceremonies on top of the Gusain Kund Pass was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. But it was the attitude of the climbers that most impressed. "The climbers were ready to make tremendous sacrifices for each other.

The team spirit was unbelievable, I have never seen anything like it. Their objective was to get one of their number, the one who was physically strongest and emotionally and psychologically most focused, onto the Summit. That they succeeded was a remarkable achievement" says Mons. Field.

The Chaplains had made it to 22,000 ft. on what to Tibetans was "Chomolungma" — the sacred mountain. Asked if they could have gone higher, an unexpected sharpness enters the normally even, clerical tone — "Oh yes ... without a shadow of a doubt, I would love to have gone further. I'm sure we would have made the North Col," says Mons. Field. "Ah, come on Ray," adds Fr. Thynne, "we would have made it to the Summit." You get the impression he is only half-joking.

For Dawson Stelfox, WHAT ON EARTH IS THERE LEFT TO DO?

UP AND DOWN THE VALLEY

(RONGBUK '93)

by Stephen Potts

There is a temple
Three hours from here
By foot,
There for anyone
Who will accept
The blur of their own reflection;
And behind
As many paces off
Is a shrine,
There for a few
Who might reflect
On their own survival
If they stand there at all

Oh to stand in the arms of the
godhead;
To stand on the crown of the
goddess

The temple is a hope
The shrine is real:
Times simple form
Rock
Worshipped;
Sign of grace
I hold a prayer
Chomolungma can displace

Here
The mystery of knowing
There
A simple fold up from the earth.
I sit alone with all I hear
Neither view will disappear

FOOD & NUTRITION

by Frank Nugent

To plan the food requirements and selection for the Expedition we needed an accurate estimate of the number of days climbers and staff would stay at each camp. Based on the climbing plan, for simplicity we divided food into two categories.

1. Base Camp and Advanced Base Camp Food
2. Hill Food for Camps 1, 2 and 3

Base Camp (BC) and Advance Base Camp (ABC):

This food was largely based on staples and was cooked by our Nepalese staff, and consisted of potatoes, rice, flour, cereals, tinned meats, fish and fruit varieties of biscuits plus beverages: packet soups, tea, coffee, dried milks, fresh eggs and early in the expedition, vegetables.

Hill Food:

We decided to prepare hill food into 2 person/2 day packs. These packs were prepared in Ireland and largely comprised of drinks, soups, Complan, main course meals, bars. The packs were made up in January into three different types and put into plastic sacks and loaded into plastic barrels for air freight. We weighed out and mixed fruit and nut mix, porridge, sweets and assembled Brew Kits comprising tea bags, chocolate drinks, coffee sachets and Complan, sugar and milk sachets. All these were excellent.

We took advice from Mary Maloney M. Sc. of the Department of Biological Sciences, Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin Street, in nutritionally balancing the diet and ensuring an adequate calorie intake. We tried to use food that offered weight-for-weight more energy.

Energy Needs:

We estimated with Mary's help that we needed between 5,000-6,000 calories on climbing days and on rest days 3,000-3,500 calories. Because at altitude food consumption is difficult, compounded by cooking difficulties in a cold hostile environment, we tried to vary the mainly carbohydrate diet. We also ensured an adequate fluid consumption to limit the effects of dehydration. We estimated that a 5 litres daily intake of fluid was necessary to

maintain performance from day-to-day; it was important to constantly emphasise this. We tried to use a carbohydrate boost to aid calorie intake but climbers found it hard to consume and thought it reduced their appetite and made all food bland and tasteless.

Mary provided us with a table based on the foods we included in our packs and some handy tips for using isotonic drinks and glucose polymer with our food. She also recommended a low dosage multivitamin tablet (to be taken daily) for Base Camp and Advance Base Camp. We purchased 50% of the food in Kathmandu, mainly staples and tinned food. We brought 50% from Ireland, tinned food, cereals, biscuits, drinks, jams etc. We regretted not bringing more tinned or dried vegetables from Ireland (peas, beans, onions, celery etc.).

In calculating the split between hill food and BC/ABC we had overestimated the numbers of days spent on the hill, limited partly by the number of days the weather allowed us. We were able to use the hill food for ABC and BC purposes to the delight of our Base Camp staff who loved the Bewley's cake, Erin Hot Cup soups and the crackers and cheese, not to mention the tinned kippers from Donegal

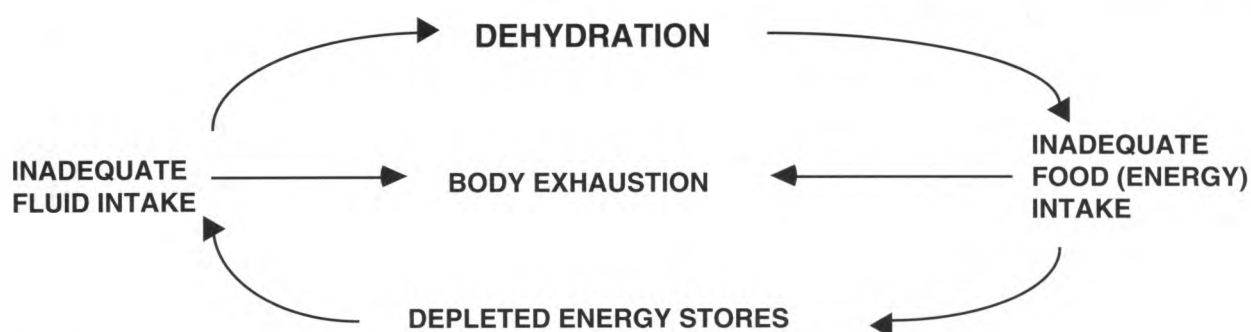
Conclusion:

This was the best diet I experienced in three Himalayan Expeditions. It could be improved at Base Camp with more variety, particularly vegetables. We overestimated the amount of time we would spend in the mountain camps. The prepacked food kits were convenient particularly the Brew Kits, sweets and Complan.

Polymer glucose additives were no substitute for tasty food, as at altitude one is disinclined to eat bland food. An emphasis on fluid replacement and a consciousness of the need to replace energy is vital to any successful mountaineering performance particularly in the high, dry Himalayas.

Special thanks for our main food sponsors **Musgrave Ltd.**, **Erin Foods**, also to Chivers, Folaín Jam, Donal Flanagan & Sons, Campbells Bewleys, Irish Biscuits Ltd., Rhone Poulens Rader, Gatorade, SHS (Ireland) Maxigul, McDonnells Ltd., National Dairy Council, Antigen Pharmaceutircal Ltd. and to Mary Maloney D.I.T. Kevin Street, Dublin, for her services.

Energy Depletion Model



Food/Nutrition Chart

AIM: 5000 + 0 - 6000 Calories/day - climbing
 3000 + 0 - 3500 Calories/day - rest day
 100g Protein per day

DRINKS	WEIGHT/g	PROT/g	CHO/g	CALORIES
Tea/coffee	2	-	-	-
Nutritional tablet	-	-	-	-
1 Sugar sachet (1 level spoon)	5	-	5	20
Marvel	2	.6	1	7
Isotonic drink (GAT) (1 level spoon)	4	-	3.5	14
Glucose Polymer (MAX) (1 level spoon)	5	-	4.3	17
Isotonic drink (DIO)	2	-	8	32
Cup a Soup	15	1.0	10	50
Fruit drink - full mug (7 level spoons)	28	-	25	105
Instant chocolate (sachet)	50	3.2	18.5	106
Complan	57	12	31	247
BREAD/CEREALS/SPREADS				
Ryvita (2/pkt)	10	.5	7	30
Alpen (sachet)	50	4.9	36.1	182
Ready Brek	50	5.7	34.3	187
Savoury crackers	50	4.8	34.2	220
Fruit & Nut mix	200	26.5	61.0	834
Fruit cake	50	1.9	30.0	171
Margarine (pack)	10	-	-	74
Jam	7	-	7	28
Honey	7	-	7.5	30
BARS				
Twix	64	3.7	40	317
Bounty	60	3.0	35	282
Ostler	30	1.4	20	125
Balisto	41	2.0	30	160
Fudge	30	1.0	18	130
Tracker	37	3.4	28	181
Muesli bar	35	3.0	14	137
Boiled sweets	30	-	26	104
Choc Hob Nobs/Club Milk	30	2	20	146
MAIN MEALS				
Little Dinners (each)	45			
Veg & Beef casserole	45	8	30	196
Beef curry	45	5	32	185
Chicken curry	45	5	33	184
Spaghetti Bolognaise	45	11	41	243
Kitchen Classics (box:				
Veg Lasagne	400	11.6	54	429
Lasagne	400	16.8	53	476
Chicken Curry	370	23.3	52	461
FISH				
Sardines	100	23.7	-	217
Tuna	100	27.1	-	189
Mackerel	120	22.7	-	425
Herring	120	20.6	-	281
Meat				
Corned Beef	120	32.3	-	270
CHEESE	100	25.5	-	412
Instant Potato	65	5.0	8	54
Pasta (Batchelors)	130	18.0	93	436

Reporting the Irish Everest Expedition

by Lorna Siggins — Irish Times Reporter

“One glimpse and it draws you, beckons you, pulls you in.” Grown men they were, dancing and jumping about when these first words appeared up on the computer screen. Though Thursday, May 27th 1993 may be *the* date to remember, Friday May 7th, was good enough for *The Irish Times* systems team.

The link with the Irish Everest Base Camp came at about 6 p.m. Chinese time, and 11 a.m. back in Dublin. Two hours before, this reporter had arrived in with the third trek to a warm welcome. As the trekkers drank lemon tea and watched Mike Barry baking brown bread on a griddle in the evening sunshine, a laptop Toshiba was taken from a dusty black leather bag and set up in the mess tent.

It took only two attempts to make the phone link with the modem plugged in to the ABB Nera satellite phone. The copy — about 700 words of it — was transmitted at 64 kilobits a second by the Inmarsat link over the Indian Ocean. Technology

apart, there was news to relate. Two climbers with the successful Chinese/Taiwanese/Tibetan expedition had gone missing after reaching the summit on May 5th. Their safety had just been confirmed. They had survived a night using the Irish expeditions’ Camp Two.

Up till then, this reporter’s own link with the team had been by telephone. Direct daily dispatches began in mid-May, a week after the arrival at Base Camp and the brutal trudge up the Rongbuk glacier, following an endless trail of yak droppings to Camp Colgate at 6,450 metres (21,200 ft.).

Once back at base, the

reporter’s log records a daily routine of radio calls up the mountain, contact with the British Central Forecasting Office at Bracknell, visits from frustrated members of the Swiss expedition nearby, and the tireless efforts of Leslie Lawrence and John Bourke on the Honda generator when reports were transmitted each evening to Dublin.

Interpretation of events further up improved with the return of three climbers — Richard O’Neill-Dean, Robbie Fenlon, Tony Burke — to Base Camp on May 18th for a few days’ recuperation. Dermot Somers’ reluctant descent a few days later added an extra dimension — selfish it may be of

me to say it, but his loss was my gain.

Another Saturday feature had just been transmitted that week when “disaster” struck and the Toshiba’s battery transformer blew. *The Irish Times*’ phone bill shot up from there on in, as reports had to be dictated. Already, the generator was displaying symptoms of altitude sickness: who at base camp can forget the night of Friday May 28th, 24 hours after Dawson Stelfox had returned from the summit, when Richard O’Neill-Dean sat crouched under an umbrella out in the snow, feeding the generator oxygen as Leslie worked to hold the line.

Many thanks are due: to the expedition’s trekking agent, Bikram Neupane and his colleague Deepak Pyakurel who ensured that the Toshiba arrived in one piece; to Asha Rai and his Nepalese staff who helped keep spirits up; to Paul Barrett of ABB Nera; to Caroline Doherty of The Great Outdoors, Margaret Stelfox and Lesley Lawrence; to the Green Monks, Pat Leahy and his AIB hill walkers; and, principally, to all members of the expedition for their cheerful co-operation, tolerance, and good humour — particularly on summit day.



Dermot Somers talks to Pat Kenny with Doctor Kathy Fleming in the background.

Medical Report

by Kathy Fleming

Dr. Stephen Potts and Dr. Kathy Fleming shared the daunting role of Expedition Doctor - Stephen for the first six weeks, Kathy for the remainder. Both survived the ordeal and gained the respect of the climbers, trekkers, Tibetans and the many visitors to Base Camp. Kathy looks back on her first expedition...

"If every climber has, at worst, two chest infections, that means 2 x 8 courses of Antibiotics at 24 tablets each course, therefore a minimum of 400 tablets - say 500, split between Base and Camp Colgate...."

And so it continued way past midnight until Stephen and I had covered every possible medical problem that we might encounter. Totals were calculated, rounded up and drugs listed in categories. Cahill May Roberts generously supplied the antibiotics and drug reps up and down the country gathered the rest, working hard to meet the deadline of the January packing weekend. We had over estimated of course. Packing took two days, filling six barrels. After three months on the mountain we left base camp with four barrels, subsequently donated to a village health post in Tibet and the Himalayan Rescue Association in Kathmandu.

Anticipation and good preparation saves a lot of heartache. A questionnaire on medical history and information leaflets on altitude problems, immunisations and hygiene helped to avoid unpleasant shocks up the mountain.

Each climber was supplied with a Gregson Pack First Aid Kit, the contents tailored for altitude and supplemented by the main medical kits at Base Camp and Camp Colgate. We also had a Gamow bag - the portable hyperbaric chamber for treatment of high altitude illnesses-, two 'Paraguard' stretchers and a variety of fracstraps and neck collars for evacuation of a seriously injured climber.

The party remained amazingly well. We expected many more problems from the chronic hypoxia considering the time spent above 5000m. There were the inevitable bad gut problems on the trek (often caused by over or unwise indulgence), respiratory system disorders and many viral head-colds that developed to bronchitis pneumonia and pleurisy. All medical problems were compounded by the hypoxia of high altitude. Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) was minimised by the slow acclimatisation schedule in Nepal and Tibet, although everyone adjusts at a different rate and some members were still suffering from headaches and

lassitude well into the trip. Diamox was taken in the early stages by some with the usual divided opinion on its effectiveness. Sunburn, snow-blindness and frostbite were all minimal, though temporary loss of sensation to hands and feet affected some climbers out for too long in some of the violent storms.

One climber was forced to descend to base camp after developing a clot in the leg. Blood clots more readily at altitude as a result of a combination of factors - thickened blood, sludging of venous circulation and the ever present dehydration. Management in the field was limited to rest, elevation and increased aspirin therapy and subsequent investigations in Kathmandu were normal.

Although our team and the trekkers didn't stretch the supplies, we were much in demand from other expeditions. The Swiss Doctor retired to Kathmandu suffering from the altitude and many of the remaining team brought their cards to the Irish medical centre. The few healthy Swiss finally abandoned their attempt when their three high altitude Sherpas became invalids, one twisting an ankle, the others suffering from viral infections. The veteran German expedition climbed Dong Feng (7003m) and descended with creaking chests. They were treated with a winning formula of drugs from the medical chest and Bushmills from Leslie.

Climbing and trekking at extreme altitude can be daunting but there is now much experience, advice and advice available. We are indebted to Dr. Charles Clarke of the UIAA Mountain Medicine Centre, London, for coming to Ireland last year and sharing his knowledge with us. Those looking more detailed advice on how to deal with the medical requirements of an expedition can contact us through Dawson Stelfox.

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THE IRISH HIMALAYAN TRUST

With the success of the First Irish Expedition to Mount Everest and the subsequent increase in public interest in mountaineering and the Himalayas, a Trust has been established with the following aims:

1. To support Irish climbers in travelling abroad to the greater ranges of the world, in particular the Himalayas, with equipment, advice and financial help
2. To support environmental, educational, social and cultural projects that benefit the people of the high mountain areas of the Himalaya.

The underlying purpose is to channel resources in a fair, efficient and responsible manner in order to maximise the benefit to both future generations of Irish climbers and the indigenous people on whom expeditions rely so much. As Sir Edmund Hillary was the patron of the Everest Expedition it is hoped to make an early donation to his Himalayan Trust that builds schools and health posts and carries out reforestation programmes in the Sherpa country of Nepal. Other possible projects include the support of one of the Expedition's young Sherpas through teacher training college and support to the Scout Association of Nepal environmental projects.

The Trustees are:

Dawson Stelfox, (Chariman), Leader of the Irish Everest Expedition and first Irishman on the summit of the world;

Frank Nugent, Deputy Leader of the Irish Everest Expedition;
Joss Lynam, Chairman of the Expeditions Commission of the International Union of Alpine Associations

and

John Burke, (Treasurer), Fund Raiser and Treasurer to the Irish Everest Expedition.

The Trust will maintain a stock of specialist equipment for use by expeditions and will liaise with the Expedition Advisory Committee of the Mountaineering Council of Ireland.

The Trust Fund will be started from the proceeds of the Lecture Tour of the Irish Everest Expedition in the Autumn of 1993 and other income. It is hoped to attract support from a wide range of private and corporate sponsors and to build up sufficient capital to allow reasonable contributions to be made annually from interest received.

For further information contact Dawson Stelfox at the address below.

THE IRISH HIMALAYAN TRUST, WILMONT COTTAGE, 99 DUNMURRY LANE, BELFAST BT179JU



John Bourke. Photo: Frank Nugent.



Doarjee Sherpa. Photo: Frank Nugent.

SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS — YOUR EXPEDITION

John Bourke, Treasurer

On the 27th May when Dawson Stelfox was speaking from the summit of Mount Everest to the Expedition's Base Camp, he said that his being there was a consequence of a "pyramid" of effort and support. The analogy was a good one evoking a mountain image and without that mountain of work and support by so many, many people, groups and organisations there would have been no first Irish ascent of Everest.

We want you to know that without your support there would have been no Expedition. Our success is your success. That fact and its recognition was almost tangibly present in countless discussions and talks at Base Camp and Camp Colgate throughout the course of the Expedition. Our sense of your involvement with the Expedition was heightened by the comprehensive ongoing feedback we were receiving from Ireland via our communications system.

Some of you gave time, others money, others again equipment, supplies, services, all of you gave your moral support.

You sold and bought Patrick Magennis's Swiss Army knives as well as tee shirts in their hundreds and postcards in their thousands — you went to Jane and Tom Fenlon's Everest Party — to Jimmy Laide and Gerry Christie's Table Quiz in Tralee — to Frank Harte and The Voice Squad at Mother Red Caps.....

Bernard Lawlor lent us the Gresham — Willie Treacy lent us trucks — Ursula MacPherson lent us Gartan — Des Travers lent us mess tents — Des Connolly lent us his warehouse.....

Ted Hession named Camp Colgate and gave us "PJ" Clarkson — Con Hough and Rita Carolan made us official — Paddy Kenny, Gerry Cullen and Marie Lord gave us air transport — Diarmuid O'Sullivan our Sat Pack — Johnson Dixon our radios — Des O'Carroll drugs. Denis O'Brien gave us air time — Gerry Smith gave us Lorna Siggins — The gang from Tullamore Pat Loomis and Andy Williamson gave us gear and more gear.....

Early believers and among our most valued supporters were Joss Lynam, Jim Leonard, John Armstrong, Eddie Gaffney, Zeff Klinkenbergh..... and Pat Rigney who stocked us with our celebratory drinks in '92.

Unstinting help came from Neil Warnock, Noel Dempsey, Catherine Bourke, Terence McGrann, Robert Jocelyn, Brendan Henshaw, Bob Arnold who gave us Jacquin's Point.....

There are so many people to whom the Expedition collectively and Expedition members individually owe thanks that it is impossible for us to thank you all and our List of Helpers and Supporters is far from complete. To all of you who supported us — remember you made it happen — it was your success.



2nd Trek group on Lang Tang Trek. Photo: John Bourke

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A special thanks to Patrick Magennis for organising much of our fund raising ventures

To all of you who supported us — remember , you made it happen — it was your success

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