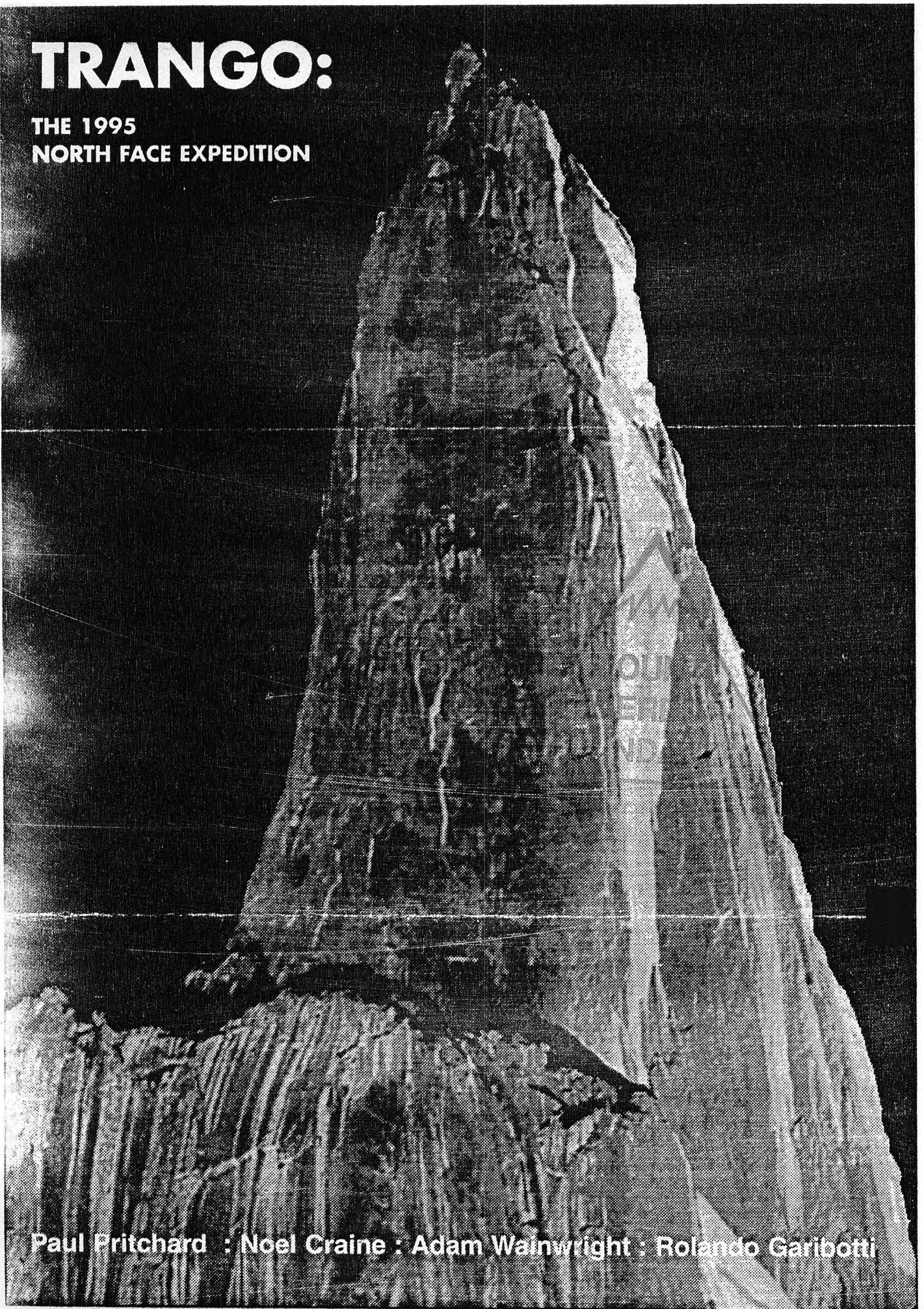


TRANGO:

THE 1995
NORTH FACE EXPEDITION



Paul Pritchard : Noel Craine : Adam Wainwright : Rolando Garibotti

TRANGO TOWER NORTH FACE EXPEDITION 1995 REPORT

MEMBERS: **PAUL PRITCHARD**
 NOEL CRAINE
 ADAM WAINWRIGHT
 ANDY CAVE

The team arrived in Rawalpindi on 30th June and after meeting our L.O., Captain Ahmed Jamal and having our briefing we headed off to Skardu by plane (sending all our equipment by bus) and arrived on 3rd July. There we met our agent Mohamed Ali Changazi of Himalayan Trek Tours who made sure our final preparations went very smoothly. We travelled by jeep to arrive at Askole on 5th July.

We were travelling and sharing many expenses with the British Womens' Trango expedition such as cook, L.O., kitchen and peak fees; so we left Askole with 60 porters. It was a 2 day walk to Paju, one day up the Baltoro past the Trango Glacier to a camp at the bottom of the Dunge Glacier and then a fourth 2½ hour day up the Dunge to a base camp on the 9th July. We found a new base camp 1½ hours higher up than the usual Dunge base camp on the opposite side of the glacier, much nearer to the Towers with much better views and with its own lake.

Unfortunately, a Spanish team had just completed one of our prospective new lines and an American team were deeply involved with the other. The rest of the rock on the North face was pretty blank and we couldn't justify the amount of drilling needed. Adam and Andy went off to attempt the Slovene route on the south face whilst Noel and myself continued to explore the North side.

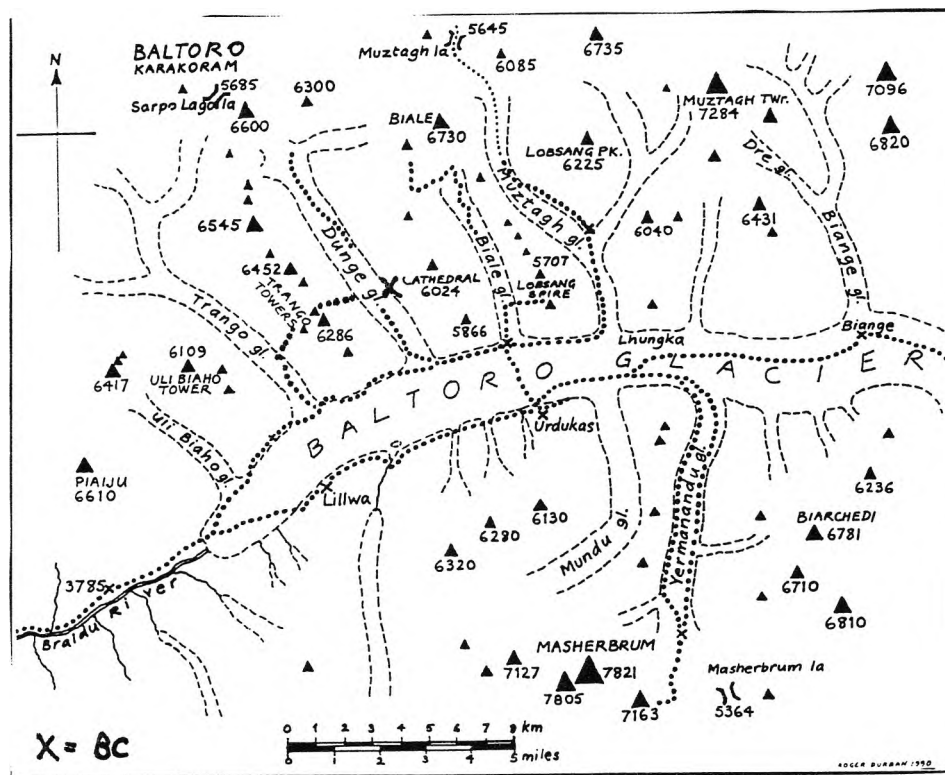
By 22nd July we had carried loads up the gully to 'Col Curran' (5,400m) thereby being the first to make this approach. We slept high in the gully and next morning the weather had deteriorated badly. To avoid being avalanched we decided to descend immediately. On the descent Craine fell into a crevasse cracking three ribs and damaging a lung. Craine got down to base camp safely with help from Pritchard. Meanwhile Cave and Wainwright had fixed 200m of rope to the shoulder at 5600m on the south face and had been stormed off. Cave agreed to escort Craine back home to the UK.

After so much snow, the approaches above the Dunge Glacier had become very dangerous, so at the beginning of August we decided to attempt the Slovene route from the Trango Glacier. On the 2nd of August we jumared to the shoulder camp and on the 3rd and 4th fixed rope on four pitches. The climbing was technical (A2, E2) and on a perfect sheet of granite. Then the weather broke again and a five day storm ensued which we sat out at an American team's base camp on the Trango Glacier. The weather cleared and on the 10th August we jumared to the shoulder camp. On the 11th we set off on the lines at 6.00am, freed our top two ropes for climbing and began grappling with severely iced up rock. We had come prepared for a super fast lightweight rock climb - two sets of nuts, two sets of friends, slings and twelve quick draws. We brought one set of crampons, one lightweight ice axe and one pair of plastic boots. We hauled one bag with two sleeping bags, mats, two gas bottles, a stove and four meals. We planned two days for the sixteen remaining pitches but with so much ice we realised things would be a bit slower. The climbing was always difficult and sometimes we doubted whether we could climb the pitches which required a lot of ingenuity and sculpting of ice. Two further days of climbing saw us on the summit (6,259m) at 4.30pm on 13th August - the same day as the K2 tragedy - in a terrible wind.

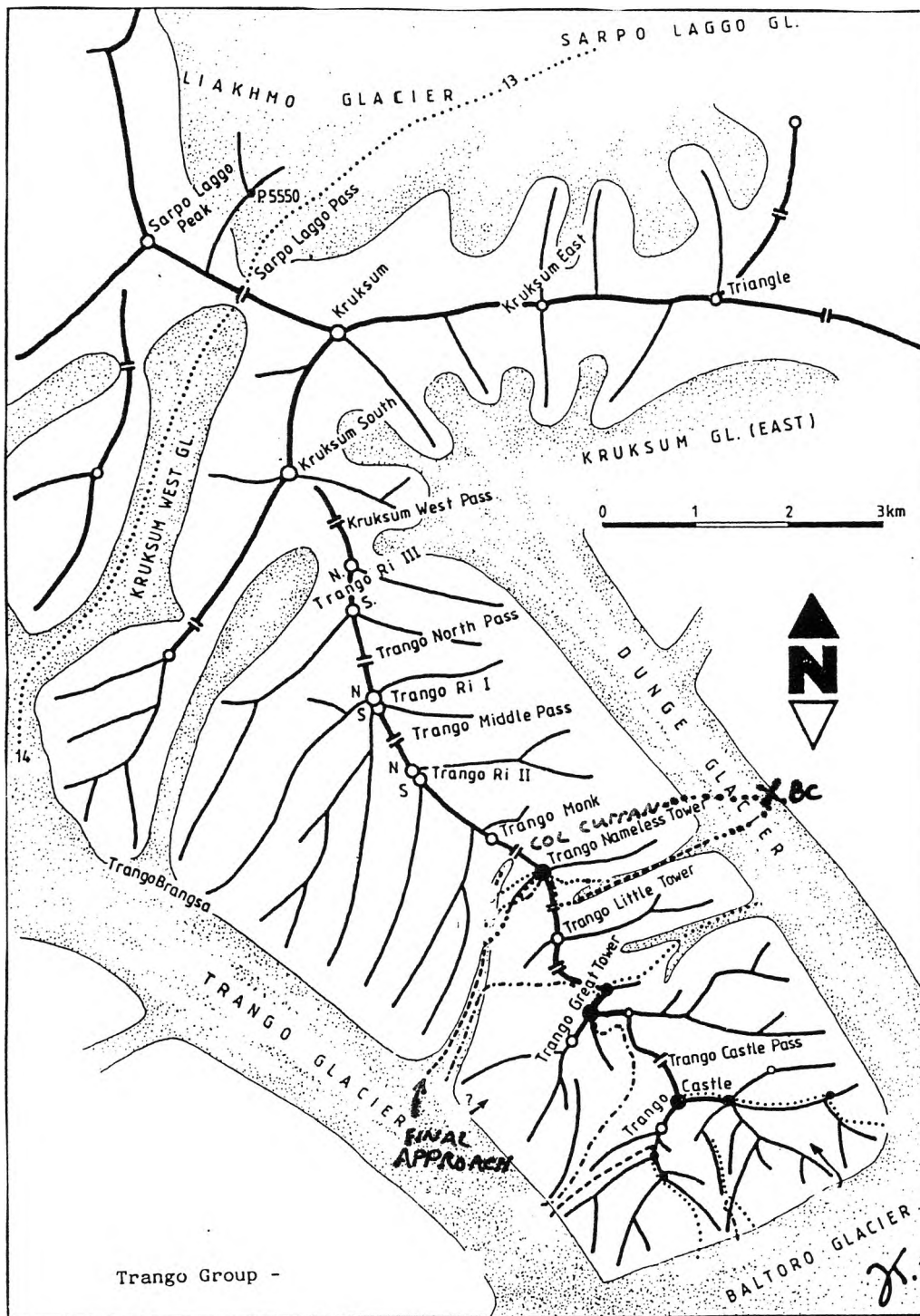
After the summit photos, only three hours were required to rappel eighteen pitches to the shoulder camp. On the rappels I began to feel very odd and on arrival at the shoulder my lungs began to gurgle. After a bad night I felt worse on the fourteenth and gurgling more. It was definitely pulmonary oedema in very strange circumstances - in an acclimatised person, descending. The remaining rappels were very difficult for me but we had help from the Women's expedition in getting our equipment and fixed rope down.

After a few days at base camp my lungs had recovered enough for us to beat a hasty descent to Skardu. We left on the 23rd August (although Wainwright had gone on the 17th) arriving in Skardu on the 26th. We employed 28 porters for the descent. Debriefing at the Ministry of Tourism was on the 1st September.

Although the Expedition did not succeed in its original objective, the climbers were still very pleased to have made one of only a few lightweight ascents of the mountain, the first British ascent of the Slovene route and the second British ascent of the Tower.



LOCATION OF TRANGO NAMELESS TOWER



Accounts

Income

Grants	
MEF	£1,200
Sports Council for Wales	£1,500
Nick Escourt Award	£1,000
Polartec Perf. Challenge	£2,000
Personal contrib. (£600 each)	
	£2,400

Total £8,100

Expenditure

Travel	£2,400
*60 Porters in	£1,020
*28 Porters out	£580
Equipment	£1,100
Accommodation	£200
*Agent	£150
*Liaison officer	£400
*Cooks	£500
Freight	£500
*Food & supplies	£1,000
Hill food	£300

(approx) £8,100

* Some expenses were shared with British Women's Trango Expedition. Half the shared expense has been listed.

Supported by: MEF, Nick Escourt Award, Sports Council for Wales, Malden Mills, Lyon Equipment, Mountain Equipment, DMM, North Face, Terranova Tents, Scarpa, Buffalo, HB, Black Diamond, A5, Power Bar, Wild Country.

Paul Pritchard