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Scottish Himalayan 'Sin Hasan' Expedition 1997

Patron; Sir Christian Bonington

Leader; Scott F Muir

+625



SCOTTISH HIMALAYA EXPEDITION
1997

The 'THRONE'
5840m

Patron-Sir Christian Bonington, CBE

"It is the uncertainty that attracts me more than anything else, that gives me the impetus. If I knew it could be definitely done, I wouldn't find it anything like as attractive."

REINHOLD MESSNER

SUPPORTED by

Mount Everest Foundation
Mountaineering Council of Scotland
Moray House Institute of Education

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Summary

Scottish Himalaya Expedition 1997

The THRONE 5840m

Location-

Latitude 31' 51' Longitude 77' 43' in the state of Himachal Pradesh, Indian Himalya

Expedition members-

Scott F Muir (leader)

Kevin Kelly

Gordon Lennox

David Proudfoot

Malcolm Mc Ilraith

Ajay Makin (liason officer)

Tapa Dharma (cook)

Pooran (cooks Helper)

Duration in India-

21st August 1997 - 29th september 1997

Basecamp 30th August - 20th September 1997

The Climb:

Summit, 5840m reached 12th september 1997 (also climbed fore summit 5825m)

Route climbed, The North Ridge

Route grade, Alpine AD+ Scottish II-III

Route attempted, North East Face Direct, 1200m vertical height

Route climbed to 5400m approx (central icefield)

Grade- Alpine ED, E1/2, A2, Scottish III

Expedition Diary

August 1997

21- Glasgow / Amsterdam / Dehli (IMF)

22- In Dehli- Customs- Markets

23- In Dehli- IMF Briefing

24- Dehli / Manikaren

25- In Manikaren

26- Manikaren / Kharga

27- Kharga / Khirganga

28- Khirganga / Thunder Thatch

29- Thunder Thatch / Pandu Bridge

30- Pandu Bridge / Basecamp

31- Establish ABC

September 1997

01- In Basecamp

02- Basecamp / ABC

03- Establish Cache (edge of glacier)

04- At ABC

05- Team 1 / ABC - Bivi (1) NE Face, SM GL + KK

Team 2 / ABC - Bivi (1) Below North Ridge, DP + MMc

06- Team 1 On NE Face

Team 2 On N Ridge

07- Team 1 + Team 2 - Bivi - ABC - Basecamp

08- Rest Day

09- Rest Day

10- Basecamp - ABC - glacier cache (bivi 2)

11- Bivi 2 - Bivi 3 (The Castle) North Ridge

12- Castle Bivi 3 - Summit - ABC - Basecamp

13- Basecamp

14- Basecamp - Thunder Thatch, SM KK + DP

15- Thunder Thatch - Manikaren, SM KK + DP- GL MM AK left base

16- Manikaren, SM KK + DP

17- Porters arrive at basecamp- In Manikaren SM DP KK

18- In Manikaren GL MM AM In Manali SM DP KK

Expedition Diary continued;

20- In Manali MM AM GL In Manikaren SM DP KK

21- Porters Arrive Manikaren, DP SM KK, MM GL AM arrive from Mamali

22- In Manikaren, all team members

23- Manikaren, bus leaves late for Dehli

24- Midday in IMF, Afternoon Quest Tours and KLM

25- In Dehli

26- Leave Dehli Late for Scotland SM DP KK GL, MM stays in India

27- In Scotland via Amstereadam SM DP KK GL, MM stays in India

28- MM flight from Dehli

29- MM arrives Scotland

Background:

The organisation of the Scottish Himalaya Expedition 1997 was built around the spotting of a stunning peak seen whilst on the Scottish Himalaya Expedition 1996. I had the fortunate opportunity of being part of this excellent trip under the magnificent leadership of Graham E Little. Also on that trip was the spontaneous and outgoing character of Jim Lowther and the fatherly figure of John Finlay. We Successfully ascended the the very technical and long 1900m North Face of Kulu - Eiger. (See report: Scottish Himalayan Kullu - Eiger Expedition 1996). During a Recce on the opposite side of the Parbati valley, we caught sight of another tantalising and beautiful peak to the South West, down glacier Two, which the expedition later named The THRONE, due to its wide arm support like ridges and savagely steep Head wall. The peak teasingly appeared on all of my summit shots and in the end, proved to be to much of an opportunity to miss.

It played on my thoughts for many months on return and finally I submitted to organising a trip to attempt the first ascent of it.

Luckily I have the pleasure of knowing and climbing with some lads of equal enthusiasm and drive who were more than willing to accept the opportunity to attempt the THRONE,(Gordon Lennox and Kevin Kelly). Although young overall as a team, the technical standard of the team was high, especially in winter. With all of us having prior Alpine experience, the challenges and adventure of the greater ranges drew us in. We wanted to ensure that at all times a traditional approach was adopted in terms of placing and using natural protection, not bolts or fixed gear and that we climbed in a lightweight Alpine style approach.

The peak was also chosen as being challenging, but not un-realistically so. The height of the peak is relatively modest, so major acclimatisation would not be so much of a problem in the allocated time scale. Logistics in terms of getting too the peak were also slightly easier due to the popularity of the Area. However, we thankfully did not see another person for the entire time that we were in the Parbati Valley and Glacier Two.

I knew that the area around Glacier Two was outstandingly beautiful and mostly untrodden which added an extra adventurous dimension.

With the added wisdom of Malcolm McIlraith and the reliable and sound David Proudfoot as Basecamp managers / climbers (team 2). The amalgamation of characters and strengths / weaknesses would hopefully make for a successful trip.

NOTE:

Even though IMF applications were submitted almost 7 months before the date of departure . It was only the Friday before, 1 week notice that we actually had permission for the peak. They stated:

"We have been very busy with our 50th Anniversary Arrangements and have been unable to process your application prior to this date"

Government official.

SPONSORS

The expedition gratefully acknowledges:

Grants from the following bodies:

Mount Everest Foundation
Mountaineering Council of Scotland
British Mountaineering Council
Moray House Institute of Education

Equipment was donated by:

Bolle Sunglasses, (new Bolle 100's, glacier glasses)
Terra Nova Equipment Ltd, (Bomber tents)
Extremities, Terra Nova, (Terra gaiters, socks and gloves)
Rab Down Equipment, (Down clothing and sleeping bags)
Ferrino Expedition, (SMC, Rucksack)
SMC Mountaineering, (advice and support as company agents)
V.Z.S Technical Ceramics, (expedition drums)
Ian Joy Photography, (Fuji slide film)

Special Terms and Conditions.

Tiso of Ayr, (clothing, hardware, altimeters)
Mountain Man Supplies, Perth, (clothing, ropes, technical hardware)
Pinnacle Mountain Sports, (technical hardware)
Dr Gordon Millar, (invaluable help and advice)

Special Thanks are also due to:

Sir Christian Bonington, CBE (our Patron)
Col.B.K.D. Badgel
Our wonderfully and slightly bemused parents and thanks to our ever supportive girlfriends and fiancee's.
Once again - the Goddess Parbati (for once more granting us safe passage)

Thanks are due to Graham E Little and Jim Lowther for their continuing help and friendship and congratulations are extended to themselves and their wonderful wives, Christina and Vanessa on their new arrivals to their families. John Finlay once again presented that supportive shoulder to lean on and a sympathetic ear.

Thanks to one and all from the team.

Introduction

The peak that we anticipated attempting was visible almost all the way whilst climbing the Kullu - Eiger. Its tempting, teasing, majestic sweeping summit commands the view over the entrance to Glacier Two in a wide sweeping basin surrounded by knife edge ridges and steep snow aretes. We anticipated climbing the North East Face Direct, which would cover some very technical mixed ground. This should lead to an awesome finish on a narrow 'Chogolisa' looking summit.

If this is not possible then the slightly easier looking line of the North Ridge will be attempted, none the less impressive a line.

The team will climb the mountain Alpine style, with the endeavor to use as little aid as possible, employing good traditional ethics. All equipment will be stripped from the mountain as far as possible and an assurance of minimal ecological impact to this fragile environment.

There is no record of any previous attempts or expeditions venturing to the snout of Glacier Two except that of Scottish Himalaya Expedition 1996 of which Scott Muir was a member. The peak as far as the team can ascertain is unclimbed prior to this trip.

Logistics Report

Flights

Originally we booked our flights with Northwest airlines. This was booked using a travel agent, which may have been an un-wise move in-retrospect. Once flights were booked all other arrangements were fixed around our arrival and departure dates. Northwest, however managed to really drop us in it when it transpired that they were taking bookings without actually having the licence to fly the route. When their application was refused by the Indian government they cancelled the flight. A mere 2 months prior to our departure. Given that all other arrangements had, by this time, been made we were restricted to our choice of flights that we could re-book on. Subsequently we were forced to book flights with their sister company KLM, who were operating a service within a couple of days of our original dates. This was to cost us an additional (quid) 20 per head. And create un-told difficulties with our cargo.

Cargo

On enquiring directly to Northwest, not through SM travel (our travel agent), we managed to secure 40kg of excess baggage per person. This gave us a total of 60kg plus hand-luggage each with which to get our gear on the plane. As we hoped to rely on petrol stoves this meant that nothing would have to be sent cargo, and we wouldn't have to deal with the infamous Dehli customs. However, once our flights were re-booked with KLM, we were told to our horror that they would not honour the excess baggage agreement that we had with NW. Persistent appeals were made in vain, to try to sort out some sort of deal. Indeed a KLM employee divulged that even charities were not allowed this privilege.

This left us with the problem of shipping 200kg of food and equipment to Dehli. As recommended by a previous expedition we utilised the services of SOS air cargo Manchester Ltd. They were very efficient and familiar with shipping expedition equipment and materials. Including now a supply of gas canisters. Price (quid) 1.85/kg. On arrival in Dehli we enlisted the help of a Quest Tours agent, who with the aid of Kevin Kelly and David Proudfoot managed to clear customs in 1 day! A record. Customs is snow stricter than ever and is spread between 20 offices in 2 buildings a mile apart. They are also taking an increasingly un-charitable view of expedition imports. Our equipment as examined, then evaluated, and had to be accompanied by 10 copies of a form signed by 20 different people on several different occasions (by one gentleman in particular, 7 separate times). Future expeditions should not consider cargo as an option, only excess baggage. Both Kevin and David are now changed men.

Quest Tours

To simplify matters in India a company called Quest tours was enlisted to book transport, porters, arrange food etc. Quest picked us up at the airport and drove us to the IMF. As afore mentioned , helped clear our cargo through customs (an invaluable service) and provided a van (the trusty, if overladen, overheating Matador). The aim was to travel from Dehli straight to the road head at Manikaran. We left the IMF in Dehli at 5.00am and driving all day, with a few stops (once to repair the cooling fan) arrived in Manikaran at 11.00pm. Where we were met by another Quest tours agent. A very long and un-comfortable journey, but gladly over in one go.

On the morning of the 26th our compliment of porters arrived to start the walk in to basecamp. As per usual the were problems. The porters agent announced that there were too many loads for the number of porters that we had booked. The porters, although poorly dressed had brought massive amounts of food and fuel with them ,including 8 chickens. After a 2 hour discussion matters were resolved and we hired an additional 4 porters (conveniently already present) and we set off. Although inadequately clad of back and foot they made steady progress. Five short and often wet days lead us up the Parbati valley to our basecamp below the Throne, at the snout of glacier 2.

Kevin Kelly

CLIMB LOGISTICS

The team arrived at base camp (3750m) on the 30th of August. The afternoon was spent setting up tents and building a stone hovel roofed by our 15 x 10ft tarpaulin. In order to acclimatise as much as possible we went on to establish advanced base camp (ABC) the next day. This was at a height of 4350m, a 1-2hrs slog, depending on weight carried, up scree and boulders. A very large boulder was utilised on a steep grassy slope, above and below which we excavated two tent sized platforms. We had each carried up around 20kg of equipment and had enough food for 8 days for 5 people at ABC. We returned to base camp.

THE FIRST ATTEMPT

Team 1, Scott Kev and Gordon headed up to ABC on the 2nd of September after a rest day on the 1st, when Kev was ill. The next day we took mountain food and equipment up to a cash under a large boulder on the moraine between the two glaciers. This was at a height of 4690m. Team 2, Dave and Malcolm arrived at ABC. At night Scott became ill and on the 4th Scot and Kev rested, while Malcolm and Dave took their gear up to the cash and Gordon scrambled up the lower slopes of Twin Peaks to a height of around 5200m and looked across to the layout of the Glaciers and the Throne's North Ridge.

Both teams left ABC on the 5th. Team 1 at around 4am. The cash was gained after an hour and we stepped onto the East Glacier. The snow was hard and the going easy until 6am, when the sun hit. We were the crust breaking snow across the glacier and up to the East Face. We skirted up and around in terrible wet snow to a point (5250m) just down from a very steep and smooth section of the face and below where the gully up to the SE Ridge starts to steepen rapidly to its vertical and overhung corniced top. A ledge was fashioned in the snow and a phoenix tent erected. In the evening Scott lead up a couple of pitches and fixed the 8.5mm ropes for a quick start in the morning. A large snow covered ledge up and right from the tent was gained by free climbing up a series of corners. This ledge sloped up and right for about 50m to a high point and then down for another 100m where it appeared to go round a corner or disappear. It was later realised that this ledge system probably led into the broken terraced buttress on the right of the face. Scott moved up from the left extremity of the ledge to an overhanging twin crack line, starting with a slight chimney. He ran out of rope and abseiled off.

That night Gordon and Scott hardly slept due to the constant noise of ice and rock coming off the face. Thankfully only small debris hit the tent. Kev on the outside of the ledge seemed oblivious and slept like a log, only complaining about the cold.

The next day (6th) we jumared up the ropes and Scott lead on a bit with, Gordon and Kev belaying from the bottom of the chimney. This section involved aid climbing

and progress was very slow because they were choked with turf. Kev lead through and gained a ledge then Gordon jumared up and tensioned out right to a corner system. This proved a lot easier and was quickly free climbed to a snow covered ledge. After much fun and games with the ensuing pendulum scott and Kev reached this ledge and Gordon's pack was hauled up. Scot climbed up a wet corner ramp (stream) heading right, Using his hammer to torque in the corner crack. He reached a large terrace and crossed to a blocky wall leading up to a belay below twin flake cracks. Gordon lead through using direct aid to scale these cracks (made more difficult by the crumbling nature of the rock) until it was possible to free climb up ledges to the right and mantle precariously onto a huge ledge. This situated us below the huge overhanging prow at the top middle of the face, a very prominent feature when looking from the left of the face but difficult to pick out when looking from the right (NE). Scott ran out the 60m rope up easy snow rightwards, from here we could see the easy looking terraced buttress down to the right. To reach this would necessitate a good 60m abseil and leave us in a very committed position, not having brought our tent or sleeping bags. After 12 hours of climbing we had gained only 200m. With clouds rolling in the decision was made to retreat and after 3 abseils in the dark and much pulling of the sticky wet ropes we were back at the tent.

That night was totally calm, without the stone and icefall previously experienced. This was probably because the night was much milder, as we found to our dismay crossing the unfrozen glacier in the morning, sinking through the crust even before the sun hit. We were at base camp in time for breakfast.

Team 2

Whilst Scott, Gordon and Kevin were on the NE Face, David Proudfoot and Malcolm Mc Ilraith attempted the North Ridge. They left ABC at the same time as team 1 and reached the right extremity of the North Ridge at its base by mid afternoon. Here they set up a Bivi, leaving early the following morning to attempt the ridge. With a cloudless start the sun was intense and made progress on the snow covered ridge incredibly labourious. After 12 hrs of continuous climbing they returned back to their bivoac exhausted, being only a mere 450m short of the summit. It was obvious that given good snow conditions (at night) that this would be a very viable proposition. They passed a suitable place for a high bivi underneath a Rock formation on the ridge we named the Castle. The following day they returned late on in the afternoon back to basecamp.

THE SECOND ATTEMPT

After two days rest and contemplation Team 1 and 2 decided to join forces for another attempt on the North Ridge. The plan was to travel very light. Gear was stripped back to ropes and harnesses (25m of 9mm per team). Although plenty food and gas were taken for two comfortable bivouacs. The key change of plan was to be moving in the dark when the snow is hard.

At 5:30pm on the 10th September David , kevin, Gordon and Scott left base camp. Malcolm was suffering from a swollen ankle from his previous attempt. We sorted gear at ABC and moved on to above the cash on the moraine (4690m). after lengthy brews and beef curries we had a short and uncomfortable sleep on the stones. At 4:00am we moved on to the castle. The going was very easy, following Dave and Malcolm's frozen foot prints. The castle was reached by 7:30am. A large comfortable platform was tramped out, which was great until the snow on the top of the castle started to melt and drip down on us. The day was spent brewing up and dodging the sun and the drips.

We left for the summit at 2:00am on the 12th September, Carrying only a little food and water. Gordon lead off with Kev on a very dark clear night, closely followed by Scott and Dave. As we rounded the castle and headed up a wide steep slope (45-50deg), for 250m on good hard snow, a lightening storm was brewing below in a nearby valley. A small serac at the top of the slope was turned on the left, then a blunt rib followed back right to the ridge proper. The ridge was blunt and easy angled at first and having swapped leads Kev headed up to a very steep sharp section of the ridge. Here the snow was terrible. The slope on the right was very deep soft wind slab and to the left the cornice was overhung and it was difficult to see how much because it was so dark. This steepening was only 100m but took over an hour, while the lightening flashed through the clouds below. It ended abruptly on a large platform and seeing the summit a short distance away we dug in to wait for the dawn (4:55am - 5:35am). Dave lead off along a short sharp section of ridge and reached the summit at 5:45am. After he stopped jumping up and down he took in Scott and Gordon and Kev followed. Nearly an hour was spent taking photos in the dawn, and an hour of plunge stepping and down climbing saw us at the castle as the sun was making itself felt. The rest of the equipment was lifted and we headed down to ABC. The camp was dismantled and with very heavy sacks we carried on down to Base, arriving in time for a late breakfast.

Gordon Lennox

Medical Report

Included in medical kit:

**Antibiotics- Co-Amoxiclav
Erythromicin
Ciprofloxacin
Fucidin Ointment**

**AMS- Frusemide
Dexamethasone
Azetazolimide**

**Pain- Aspirin
Paracetamol
Ibuprofen
Declofenac
Tramadol**

Nausea- Buccastem

Diarrhoea- Loperamide

**Sleeping- Zopiclone
Tablets**

Also general dressings and plasters. Support bandages . Antiseptic ointment. Antiseptic eye drops. Hydrocortisone cream. Athletes foot cream. In-digestion remedies.

Porters

They all at some point had the cold. Sore heads, runny noses, tickly coughs. All apparent at low altitude so no confusion with possible symptoms of AMS. A couple developed a slight fever. 2 paracetamol was administered to only those complaining of sore heads or fever. The case seemed to be that once one of them had a couple they all wanted some. You have to be very strict with your drugs. One porter had an infected wound on his toe. The wound was cleaned, fucidin ointment and a clean dressing were applied.

Team

All members experienced on arrival at basecamp rhinorrhea. This was accompanied by bleeding of the nasal passages. This continued for the extent of our stay at basecamp (3700M) and for several days after returning to a lower altitude.

KEVIN:

**High Altitude Headache (Ibuprofen)
gastro-enteritis. Fever, diarrhoea, nausea. (Paracetamol,
Imodium,Ciprofloxacin)**

**Diamox 250mg bds. Started at 3700m 4 days before 1st attempt.
Stopped almost immediately due to side effects (tingling sensation in
face and extremities, altered sensation)**

**Asthmatic: Beclaforte, 4 puffs twice daily, Ventloin as required.
Asthma improved with altitude.**

Excema (Hydrocortisone cream)

SCOTT:

**High altitude headache. (Ibuprofen)
gastro-enteritis(Paracetamol, Ciprofloxacin, Imodium)**

GORDON:

High Altitude Headache (Ibuprofen)

MALCOLM:

Upset stomach (refused treatment)

DAVE:

Headache (Paracetamol, Ibuprofen)

Diamox 250mg bds, started course at 3700m, 4 days before 1st attempt. Continued until day after summit day. Suffered no symptoms of AMS.

AJAY:

Fine

Cook:

Cold (Lemslip)

Kevin Kelly

Equipment Notes

The team would very much like to thank those equipment manufacturers - Terra Nova - Bolle Sunglasses - Ferrino - Rab - who generously provided high performance products and sponsorship to the team. Without their generosity the expedition may never have occurred or at best the team would have endured the Himalayan Elements in relative discomfort.

The equipment linked below performed exceptionally well:

BOLLE 100's

Bolle 100 Glacier glasses provided excellent filtration protection from the powerful UV radiation and subsequent bounce from snow and ice experienced at altitude. In addition, so snug was the fit that the glasses were used in place of cumbersome goggles. Furthermore the clarity and high resolution of vision allowed the team to continue wearing the glasses throughout the twilight hours.

On a more humorous note the sunglasses reflective qualities the lenses possessed led to some creative and interesting photography.

On a more critical note, Bolle sunglasses may consider strengthening the leg attachments since on many occasions a leg would become detached when removing the glasses. On the team's Summit Descent the inevitable eventually happened when both legs of David Proudfoot's glasses became detached and the lenses unfortunately slid down the North Face never to be seen again.

TERRA NOVA EQUIPMENT

Terra Nova provided the Super Quasar and Hyperspace tents. With each team member having used a wide variety of other tents they unanimously agreed that Terra Nova's superiority in tent design and engineering. In layman's terms Terra Nova have successfully increased the volume of the tent for no added weight allowing three to rest and sleep relatively comfortably in the Super Quasar. Comfort rating was enhanced further with superior water resistant and breathable features, i.e. WATERSHED concept, fully taped seams, sealed waterproof ground and flysheets and breathable inner tent fabrics. An essential feature during torrential monsoonal rain and Himalayan blizzards. During the team's second assault at night the Hyperspace flysheet came into its own as a 4 man Bivi shelter.

RAB DOWN EQUIPMENT

With each team member equipped with Rab products - sleeping bags - down jackets - no one grew cold on this expedition. Least of all Scott Muir who's Ladakh 1000 had a 300gram down upgrade prior to departure. The message is simple, using Rabs Ladakh 800-1000 bags and Andes, Glacier, Guide and Kinder Guide smock, you'll be as snug as a bug in a rug!!!.

FERRINO EXPEDITION (SMC MOUNTAINEERING)

Skylite 45+5 litre was used by Scott Muir during the five day walk-in and on both attempts and successful ascent. The Skylite is superbly lightweight, stable and comfortable sack. However, as most climbers are hard to please, there was some substantial design flaws. It would not accommodate a rollmat, Therma Rest or any other equipment that required to be strapped to the sides/exterior of the sack due to the extraordinarily short compression straps. As a lightweight mountaineering sack the bottom compartment entrance was deemed unnecessary and it was felt that any future designs may wish to add an internal lid pocket and floating lid that maximised on the extra 5 litre capacity. It would be good to add ice axe holders that actually worked and adaptations had to be made.

This short equipment critique is hoped to give guidance to expeditioners looking for reliable and bombproof equipment.

David Proudfoot

FOOD

- 0) AIRLINE FOOD: Well at least you get to steal the plastic cutlery!
- 1) RESTURANT FOOD: Superb!
- 2) STREET FOOD: Even better and Cheaper!
- 3) EXPEDITION FOOD: Our Nepali Cook 'Tapa'- may he live forever; fed us like princes, 3 meals a day, endless Chi, Lunch bags, The Ritz!
- 4) MOUNTAIN FOOD: The Pits!, well not quite.

We took an assortment of chocoholic buzz bars of various brands with us, but found that you could get many brands in Dehli en route, in Manikaren, and on the trek in. Also packet soups, noodles and a great variety of dried fruits, fresh fruits(at this time it is apple season in the Parbati!), biscuits, nuts, bombay mix, halva and of course rice and dal.

We also took some military Arctic rations containing various Re-Hydrated combinations. All of which made you Shit, and biscuits of a fibrous nature which counteracted almost entirely the previous effect.

The ration packs however, fortunetly also contained toilet paper and thus by hard chewing of biscuits in between meals, Quick brews of Re-Hydrated meal pack No 2 at meals and continuous vigorous use of the toilet paper- we managed to counteract the results and stay alive up their. They are NOT recommended and by god those guys must be Tough!.

Malcolm Mc Ilraith..

Scottish Himalaya Expedition 1997

Report on Future Climbing Objectives.

Peaks Surrounding Glacier no 2 in the Upper Parbati Valley - South Side

Mapping and Location:

A number of maps are in existence covering this area, most of them are sketched maps, and considerable variation exists between them. i.e. place names, spot heights, precise location of summits, etc. This has made accurate Grid referencing a bit of a challenge.

The information presented in this report is based on the "LEOMANN" map: INDIAN HIMALAYA, Sheet No 5, Himachal Pradesh, Kullu-Valley, Parbati Valley, Central Lahak.

The Valley West

The west flank of Glacier No 2 rises from the boulder field pastures of "Bakar Bihar Thach" at 3815m in the main Parbati Valley to a first prominence at 5000m. HORNED PEAK- Lat. 31'-50'N- Long. 77'-31'E, One of the horns was unclimbed in 1970.

Continuing to rise to 5,666m, The TWINS- Lat. 31'-53'N- Long. 77'- 40'E

The South West buttress of the TWINS drops into a vast bowl. Formed between it, the small but beautiful peak of GEMINI lying to the South West again. From this basin also rises the start of the North Ridge of 'SIN HASAN' (THRONE) 5840m, Lat. 31'-51'N- Long. 77'-40'E

This ridge was the line taken by the successful summit party- See report on the climb.

1) The still unclimbed East face would provide some excellent challenges on steep mixed ground. this side resembles a large tooth and is impressive.

2) The stunning East ridge from its pinnacled, multi gendarmed start above the flank wall rising from the glacial moraine of the Valley floor- to the summit headwall is more than 2000m of ascent and over 3000m long of traverse. A Big tick.

3) The main challenge remains. The North East Face direct. This towering and overhanging 1000m headwall is awesome and scary. It will require extensive big walling

and good weather conditions. Stonefall and icefall is however quite a problem on approach and descent.

From here the ridge turns South East to 'WHITE DOME' at 5806m , Lat. 31'-51'N - Long. 77'- 40'E,

and then to the East to PARBATI SOUTH 5806m, Lat.31'-50'-30''N- Long 77'-42'E. This peak has been climbed from the East.

The whole of this North facing, Southern end of the valley is a morass of tumbling twisted seracs and snow slopes- Terminal territory!. The ridge continues Eastwards until it merges with the East flank of the Valley.

The Valley East

The East flank of Glacier 2 rises more abruptly from 'BAKAR BIHARTHACH at 3815m. Up the massive North Face of KULLU-EIGER 5646m. Lat.31'-54'N- Long. 77' -43E. This peak was first climbed by G.E.Little, S,Muir, J Lowther in 1996 by the North Face. "The Mask, ED,E1.A1,Scottish 5"

As the ridge continues southward the valley is flanked by two 1000m walls topped by the soaring rocky towers of 'Flat top' 5200m and the Prow 5100m. This is definitely big wall climbers territory. Rising further up the valley opposite Sin Hasan and the bottom of the Glacier is the shield shaped face of the 'Matador' and its accompanying skelf of The SOUNDHORN, a mere 500m of immaculate granite.

After this the valley leans back in a series of scoops and buttresses and the tumbling seracs of the lateral feeder glaciers until the soaring form of the CARDINAL 5974m, Lat. 31-52N-Long. 77'-44'E and its awesome faces. The rock walls on this peak have been called The MITRE and The SENTINEL faces. A soaring open corner over a Kilometre high presents the plumb line of the valley or the Jewel in the Crown. It dominates the entire upper valley and looks as though it would go.

This concludes the brief history and survey of this very much unclimbed valley. If you like Adventure Alpine Mountaineering then this region is well worth the effort and almost all of it is unclimbed. The 6000m zone is a workable altitude for serious climbing and there are no tourist peak freaks or oxygen zombies to get in the way. If you like sunshine and Golden Granite then half way down the Parbati Valley there is a fine set of accessible Trango towers at sub 5000m and with faces over 500m. Good climbing.

Malcolm McIlraith..

Conclusions:

**The Expedition was a great Success with all members of the team returning as good friends. Out with the inevitable squables, the trip was incredibly harmonious and India was enjoyed by all. The Peak was climbed for the first time by the Excellent North Ridge and an excellent outing was experienced, making full use of good nighttime snow and fine weather. The future climbing objectives are excellent and anyone wishing slides or extra information should contact myself without hesitation on the address provided below. It would be well worth an attempt on the still unclimbed/unfinished North East Face Direct.
Good Climbing**

21.11.97

**Scott F Muir
74 Boydfield Ave
Prestwick
KA9 2JJ
01292 475625**

Expedition Accounts

Receipts

Mountaineering Council of Scotland Grant	£675-00
Mount Everest Foundation Grant	£800.00
Moray House Institute of Education	£100.00
Scott Muir contribution	£1265.00
Gordon Lennox contribution	£1265.00
Malcolm McIlraith contribution	£1265.00
Kevin Kelly contribution	£1265.00
David Proudfoot	£1265.00
Total amount in receipt	<u>£7900.00</u>

Expenditure

Travel-	£2849.00
Food and Porters-	£1250.00
Peak + Deposit-	£1100.00
Team Hardwear-	£838.00
Liason Gear-	£360.00
Air Cargo-	£348.00
BMC Insurance-	£645.00
Visa's-	£130.00
Gas + Medical-	£160.00
Incidental expenses in India	
/ miscellaneous and Report costs.	£220.00
Total expenditure	<u>£7900.00</u>

Scott F Muir
74 Boydfield Ave
Prestwick
KA9 2JJ

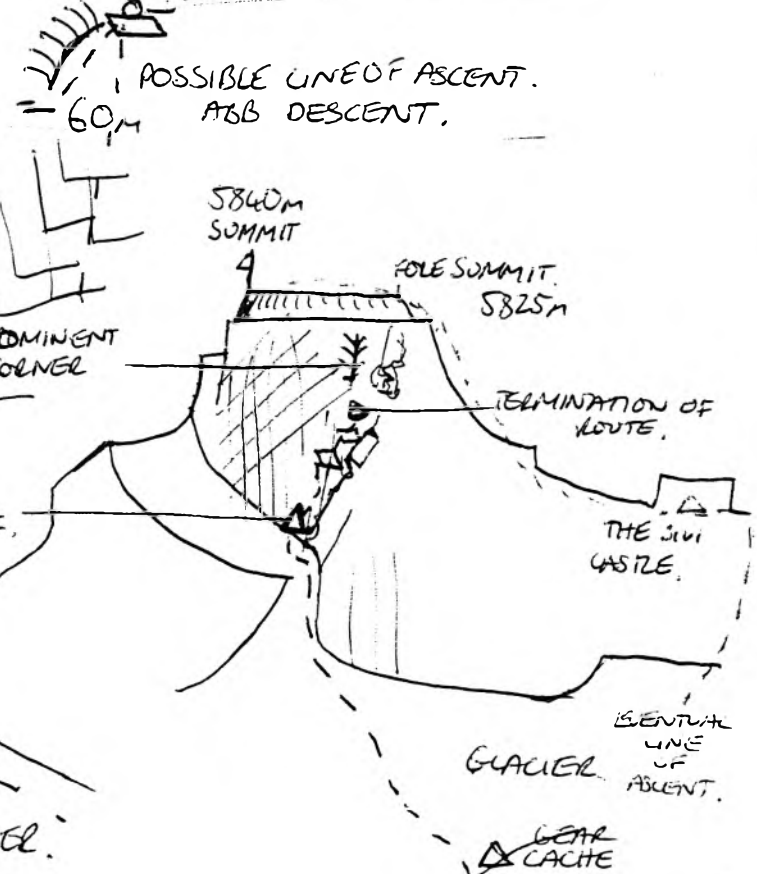
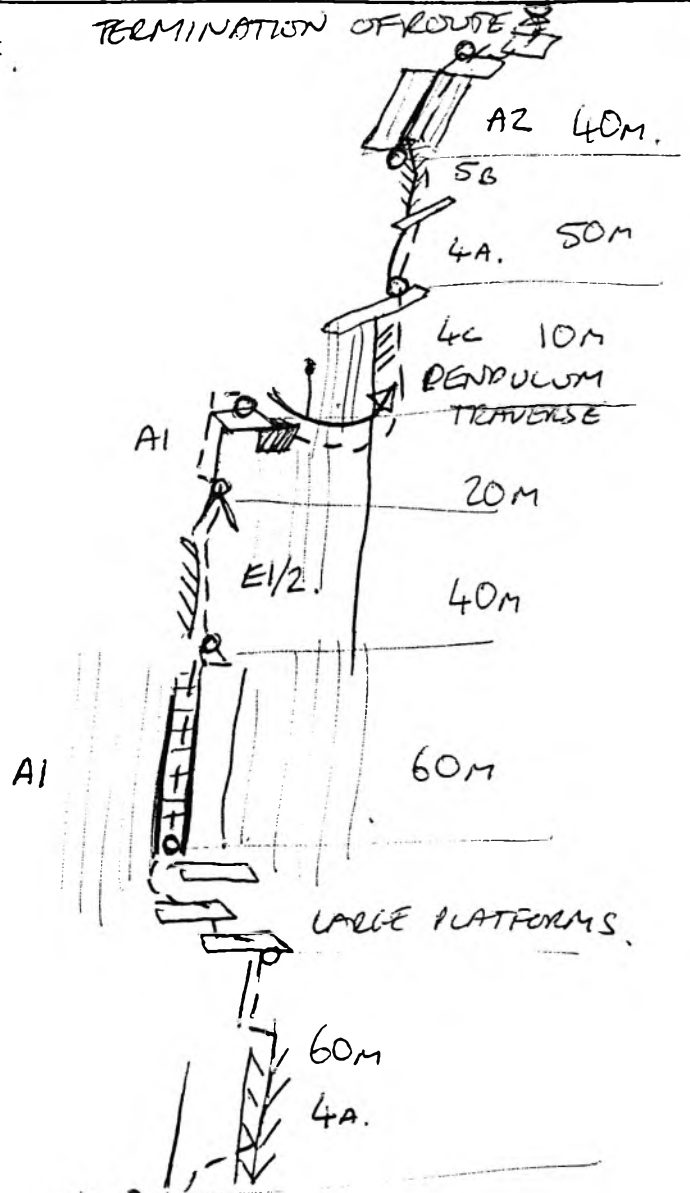
21 November 1997

TOPO OF ATTEMPT ON - NE FACE DIRECT OF THE THRONE 5840M.

5400M APPROX.

TERMINATION OF ROUTE

NE FACE
CONTINUALLY
OVERHANGING FOR
1000M.



NE COULOIR

SCOTTISH II

TOO GLACIER.