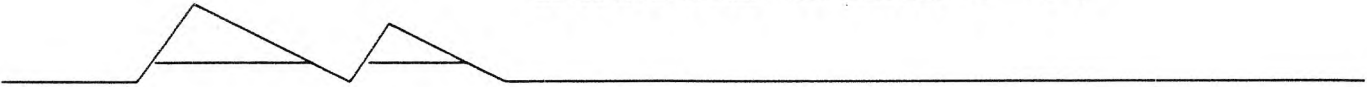


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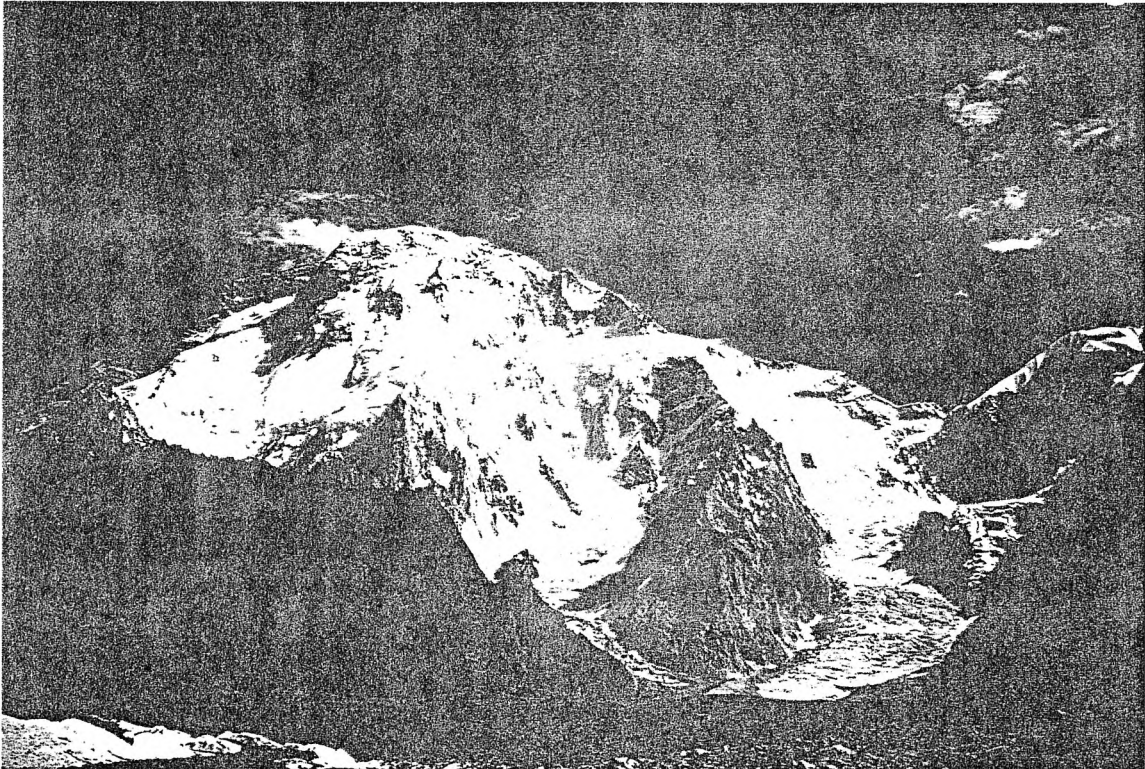
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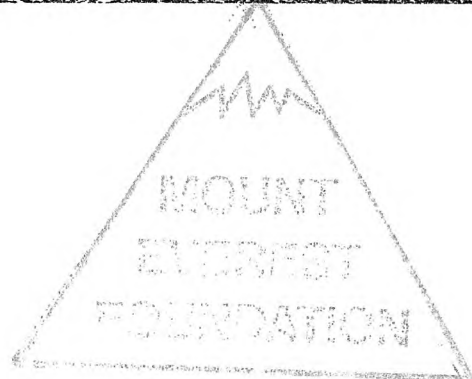
# BROAD PEAK '97



## SCOTTISH / AUSTRALIAN EXPEDITION TO THE UNCLIMBED SOUTH RIDGE



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## **SUMMARY**

Rick Allen from Scotland and Andrew Lock from Australia attempted the unclimbed South Ridge of Broad Peak in July 1997. Climbing in alpine style but enjoying the benefits of some fixed rope left behind by an attempt earlier in the same season they reached a height of 7150m. The ridge immediately above comprised steep rock on the western flank and overhanging seracs on the eastern (Chinese) side. At this point, after spending a day traversing beneath the Western flank of the ridge and probing it for a way through, they retreated.

After three weeks of exceptionally stable weather some persistent snow showers moved in and Rick returned home to work. Andrew remained behind at base camp with the liaison officer and cook for a further week and eventually succeeded in making a solo ascent of the mountain by the original, West flank, route.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The expedition would like to acknowledge the assistance received from the following organisations:

The Foundation for Sport and the Arts  
The Mount Everest Foundation  
The British Mountaineering Council  
Walkers Shortbread Ltd  
Terra Nova  
Mountain Equipment  
Primus  
Multi-Power Fitness & Nutrition

## **MEMBERS**

Joint leader: Andrew Lock, 34, Police Officer, New South Wales, Australia

Joint Leader: Rick Allen, 42, Petroleum Engineer, Aberdeen, Scotland

Liaison Officer: Lieutenant Shahid Javed, Pakistan Army

Cook: Sher Afsal

## OBJECTIVE

Broad Peak main summit was first successfully ascended by an Austrian expedition in 1957. Herman Buhl, Kurt Diemberger, M. Schmuck and F. Wintersteller reached the summit by the West flank route.

The central summit was traversed by a Polish team in 1975 with the loss of three members.

The lower northern summit has also been climbed.

All three summits were traversed from the North by Kurtyka and Kukuczka in 1984 in a tremendous, alpine style tour de force. They descended by the West flank .

Every successful ascent of the main summit has been from the West and North. No one had succeeded in breaching the defences of the South ridge and indeed few had even attempted this tantalising objective. In the early 90s's Roger Payne, Julie Ann Clymer and Ian Peters probed the Southern approaches before turning their attention to the west flank and in 1993 Andrew Lock and a Swedish team reached just over 6000m on the SW approach to the South ridge.

## ITINERARY

23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Arrive Islamabad
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Meet liaison officer
26 <sup>th</sup> June	Briefing with Ministry of Tourism
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Depart for Skardu by road
28 <sup>th</sup> June	Arrive Skardu
30 <sup>th</sup> June	Depart Skardu by jeep. Arrive below Askole village
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Commence walk in with 30 porters. Cross Johla bridge
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Camp beyond Paiyu
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Rest
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Urdukas
5 <sup>th</sup> July	Goro II
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Arrive base camp
8 <sup>th</sup> July	Reconnaissance to rognon
12 <sup>th</sup> July	Reach 7000m on second acclimatisation climb
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Reach 7000m on third acclimatisation climb - reconnaissance of descent
26 <sup>th</sup> July	Attain maximum height on South Ridge of 7150m and retreat
2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Rick departs base camp
7 <sup>th</sup> August	Andrew reaches summit by West flank
10 <sup>th</sup> August	Andrew and LO depart base camp.

## ACCOUNT OF THE EXPEDITION

The approach to the great peaks of the Karakorum by the Baltoro glacier is too well documented to deserve a detailed description so only exceptional items are noted.

The expedition permit was originally obtained through Adventure Travel ( Ashraf Aman). However, they had neglected to inform us that there was another expedition attempting our new route one month ahead of us. Upon our arrival they seemed to be so busy with trekking groups and other expeditions that they were unable to assist us with some things and we elected to use Nazir Sabir Expeditions as our agent for the remainder of our stay. They did an excellent job.

While we were still in Islamabad we spent an entire additional day waiting for a briefing with the Ministry of Tourism - an unnecessary and expensive delay, as it turned out. The following day's flight turned back within a few miles of Skardu due to poor visibility and we were then faced with a journey up the Karakorum highway. Accommodation in Skardu was at the Concordia Hotel.

The road from Skardu to Askole had been restored to semi navigability for the first time since its construction in 1991 and we were able to reach the camping ground below Askole village in one day from Skardu.

We employed 30 porters for our food and equipment.

One of the agencies in Skardu has formed an alliance with a Japanese organisation called the Himalayan Green Club which has the laudable intentions of promoting re-forestation in the Himalaya. The agency has chosen to announce this liaison by daubing large boulders all the way from Askole to Johla bridge with this information (in green paint). A depressing day.

In response to a request from the Ministry of Tourism we camped in a nullah by a stream about 30 minutes beyond Paiyu to reduce the pressure on this traditional camping area. Few others seem to have heeded this request.

Mule trains are no longer in use on the Baltoro which makes it easier to get lost but more pleasant to walk if you are on the track. Cost per porter to base camp was Rs2,100.

Base camp was situated about 90 minutes beyond Concordia at the southern end of a prominent subsidiary rock ridge below the Western flank of Broad Peak. The normal base camp is two hours beyond in the direction of K2. A Basque expedition was nearby with the Inurretega brothers, Felix and Alberto, attempting the South ridge.

Andrew had climbed Dhaulagiri in Nepal just 6 weeks before coming to Pakistan and I generally acclimatise quite quickly so we lost no time in moving up on our first reconnaissance, climbing a rognon in the middle of the glacier at about 5500m.



Whilst descending on 8th we were surprised to see Felix and Alberto also returning to Base camp in fine weather. They had reached circa 7150 m and concluded that the South ridge was not suitable for a 2 man alpine style push and they were transferring their efforts to the ordinary route. Our delight was tinged with a little apprehension as Felix and Alberto have an impressive record and would not retreat lightly.

We followed the line taken by Andrew in 1994 and also by the Basques and climbed in three days to the edge of the snow plateau on the South ridge at 7000m. We dumped a little food and descended to 6250m as we were not yet ready for a night at 7000m.

The weather continued excellent and after 2 days rest we ventured onto the normal route to investigate our line of descent. This was quite a contrast to the delicious solitude of our own route. Here we were bombarded with rocks knocked down by a party above and had to toil to find a tent site. At least six teams were active on the West flank. We spent a night at about 6300m (CII) and another at 7000m (CIII)

A ripple of bad weather passed through on 21st and 22nd July and we were glad of the rest. On 23rd we embarked on our bid for the South ridge with sacks weighing around 20kg. On 25th we ascended the subsidiary SW ridge to its junction with the South ridge and camped at 7100m, looking down for the first time onto the Chinese side. A Polish sketch of Broad Peak reproduced as Figure 2 identifies this point as above 7470m but we judged this to be too optimistic by at least 300m.

The ridge directly above looked too steep and technical for too long to be tackled without fixing at least 300m of rope, which we didn't have with us. Instead, we traversed beneath the Western flank, seeking a gully that would lead us back onto the ridge, bypassing the difficulties. We had thought that we could see such an opening from below. The snow varied from knee deep to thigh deep. Eventually we got into the gully system but progress was blocked by some steep, rather featureless and loose rock, like badly exfoliating granite. We retreated, not just to our tent but all the way to 6100m in the dark. One abseil anchor gave way but the rope was held by other anchors left behind by the Basques.

On 30th and 31st the weather broke convincingly and as Rick's flight was on 9th August he arranged for 2 porters to come up from Urdukas and departed base camp at midday on 2nd. They moved quickly, reaching Urdukas that night and crossing the Johla bridge the next day before camping. By midday on 4th they were in Askole. They negotiated a jeep that evening and, despite the deterioration in the road, spent the night at the head of the Shigar valley and reached Skardu early on 5th. Stayed at Hunza Lodge. Recommended.

Rick travelled down the Karakoram Highway on 7th/8th and departed Islamabad on 9th.

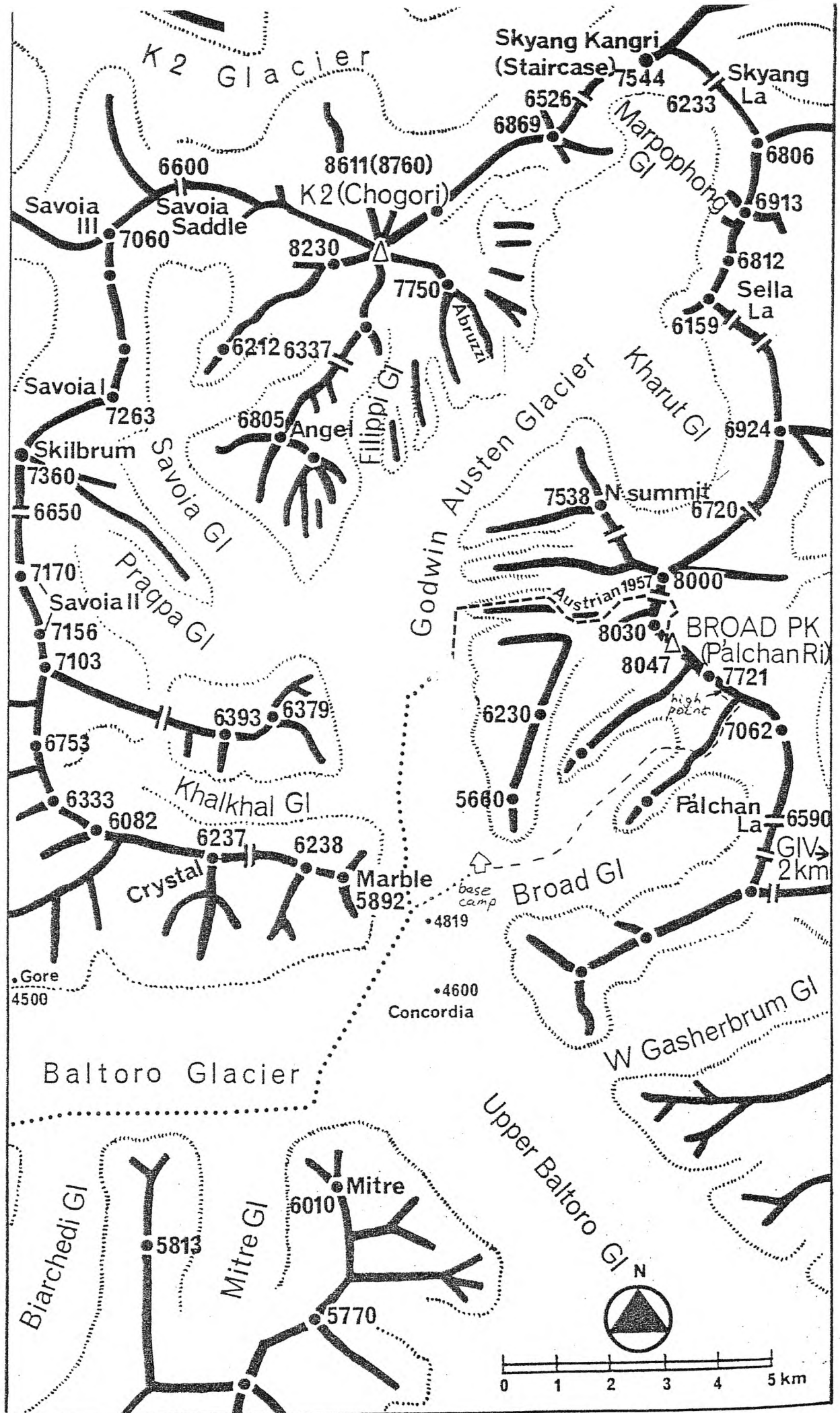
Back at base camp, Andrew waited until the bad weather cleared a little on 5th August. He spent the night of 5th at the Spanish base camp below the West flank and began to climb at 05.30 in the company of some Americans who were going up to retrieve equipment from camp one. Andrew continued to camp three at 6900m and remained there, brewing up until midnight. He left the tent at 12.30 with no moon and heavy cloud cover. All previous tracks had been buried by fresh snow and there was

avalanche debris above C3. At 3am he stopped and waited until 4.40 for enough light to continue. Skirting high on the slope under the buttress to reduce the avalanche danger he found himself in thigh-deep, all previous tracks and ropes having disappeared. He finally reached the col at midday.

The summit ridge was in fair condition but the old ropes were either buried and out of sight or frozen into the ice and useless. At one point he was forced but continued and reached the false summit at 5pm and found lots of flags there. Andrew estimated that most parties this season had gone no further. The summit ridge drops about 15 metres and curves up to the left and it took Andrew an hour to cross the few hundred metres to the top. He summited at 6.05 pm on 7<sup>th</sup> August. The ridge was heavily corniced and, descending, he fell between the cornice and the rock a couple of times on the way down. The exposed rock section was descended with great difficulty (and no rope). Andrew decided to bivouac at 7900 metres for as long as he could ward off the frostbite. A strong wind was blowing up the East face and over the ridge but he managed to gain a little shelter and remain awake, working his fingers and toes all night. The sun reached him at 5am and he continued down, reaching camp 3 at about 10am where he rested and brewed up until 1pm. He then descended all the way to basecamp reaching the Spanish camp at 8pm. He picked up 200m of old fixed line on the way down.

Shahid Javed , our liaison officer assisted Andrew in collecting a kitbag full of tin cans from the glacier which were carried out by their porters. The expedition was thus able to make a small, positive impact on the environment.

Andrew, Shahid and Sher Afsal departed from base camp on 10<sup>th</sup> August, crossing the Gondoro La to reach Hushe village and thence Skardu.





BROAD PEAK

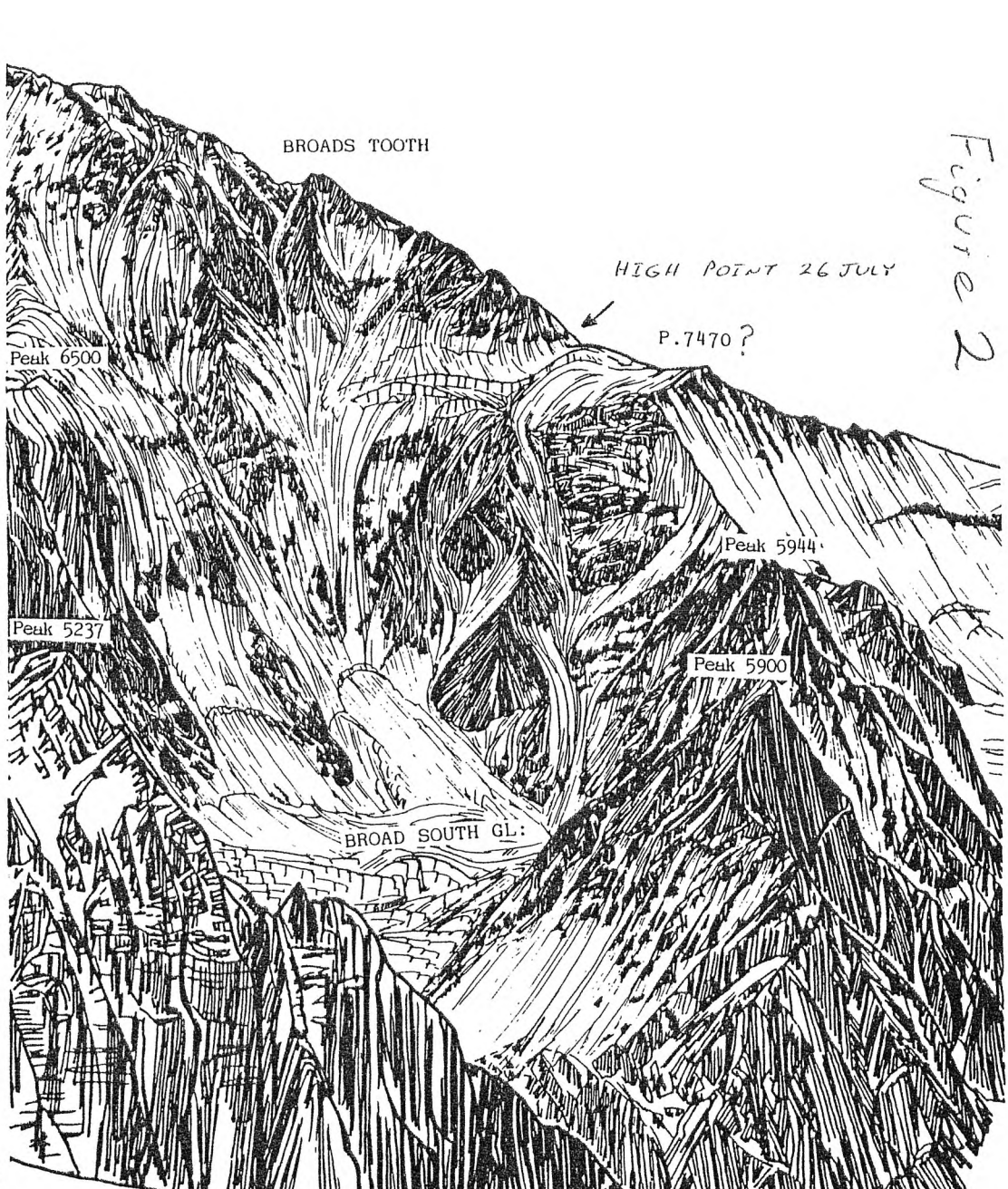


Figure 2

GODWIN AUSTEN

GLACIER

2

## APPENDIX I : ACCOUNTS

### EXPENDITURE

Fees & Administration		
Peak fee	£4,687	
Environmental fee	£ 125	
Agency fees	£ 312	
Total		£5,125
Hotel accommodation – Islamabad	£ 335	
- Skardu	£ 139	
Total		£ 474
In-country transport		£ 579
Kitchen equipment	£ 108	
Kerosene	£ 34	
Total		£ 142
Trekking and base camp food		£ 356
Staff costs		
Equipment	£ 467	
LO & cook wages	£1,072	
Porter wages	£1,916	
Total		£3,455
Miscellaneous		£ 169
Insurance		£ 205
Air fares		£1,796
Total		<u>£12,301</u>

### INCOME

Foundation for sport and the arts	£4,000	
Mount Everest Foundation	£ 900	
British Mountaineering Council	£ 500	
Members contributions		£6,901
Total		<u>£12,301</u>

## APPENDIX II: EQUIPMENT NOTES

### Tents

Base camp tents manufactured by Terra Nova were excellent.

The team used Macpac tents high on the mountain. These proved to be light to carry and robust, although severe weather was not encountered.

### Down Equipment

Rick and Andrew both used Mountain Equipment down jackets, Andrew used a Mountain Equipment down suit above 7000m. Rick experimented with a Mountain Equipment Dewline sleeping bag in conjunction with his down suit on the main push on the South ridge. This ultra light weight combination proved to be effective in the comparatively good weather. It might have been a little too bold had the team been faced with a multi day storm!

### Other Clothing

Mitts, gloves and hats from Terra Nova were hard wearing and warm.

### Stoves

A super light-weight titanium stove from Primus was used on the South Ridge. This enabled two stoves to be carried for the weight of one, a great assistance in re-hydrating after a long day.

### Food

Locally purchased foodstuffs were used during the walk in and at base camp. Some excellent oatcakes and shortbread from Walkers of Aberlour were our main breakfast food and evening snack food high on the mountain. Mineral supplement drinks from Multi-Power Fitness and Nutrition were excellent, although a greater dilution than that recommended was necessary for easy absorption at altitude. These drinks were in great demand by other teams.