

412

412



TWS

Manchester University Hindu Kush Expedition 1977



Manchester University Hindu Kush Expedition 1977

Patrons

His Grace the Duke of Devonshire PC MC JP VL LLD, Chancellor of the University
 Sir Arthur Armitage MA LLD, Vice-Chancellor of the University
 Lord Bowden MA PhD MScTech FIEE FIEEE, Past Principal of UMIST
 Professor R N Haszeldine MA DSc ScD CChem FRIC FRS, Principal of UMIST
 Manchester University Mountaineering Club

Team Members

Leader: Richard Eastwood BA BArch, Designer, 26
 Ian Nightingale BSc Cert Ed, Geography Teacher, 25
 John Vogel, Medical Student, 24
 Richard Thomas BSc, Physicist, 22
 Andrew Hamilton, Medical Student, 21
 Ian Grace, Civil engineering graduate, 21

Front cover pictures:

top: Sara Kalan from the east.
 bottom: l to r: peaks 86, 88, 89.

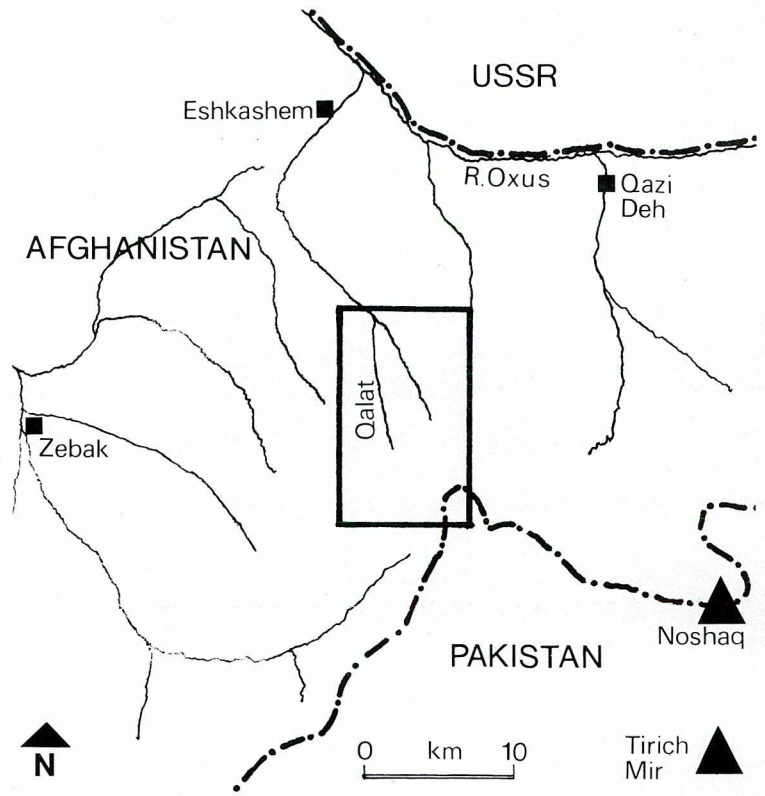
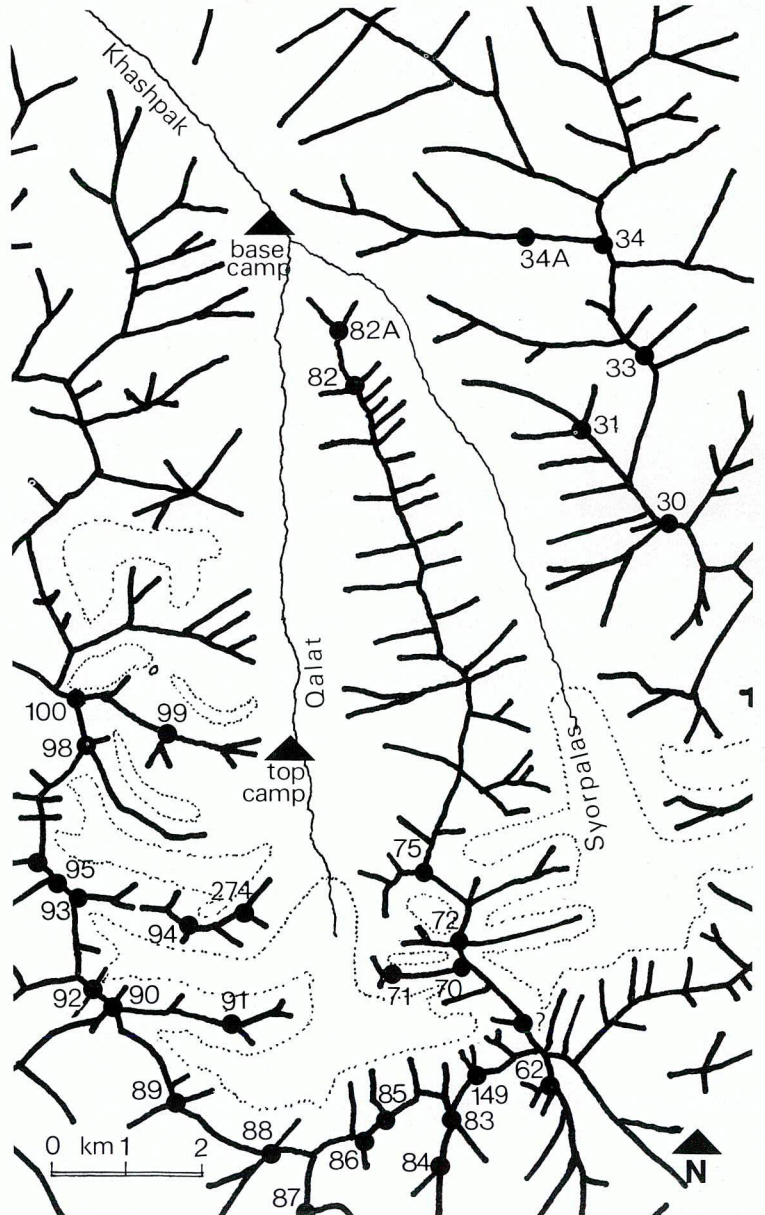


Table of altitudes

An = Aneroid, E = Estimate, W = Wala's figure; all other heights are the results of our triangulation.

Base camp	3624 m
Top camp	An 4110
KZ 30 Kohe Sangi	W 5540
KZ 31	4720
KZ 33	5220
KZ 34A (west)	4740
KZ 62 Sad Ishtragh	W 5852
KZ 70	An 5090
KZ 71	5064
KZ 72	5302
KZ 75 Kohe Qalat	5290
KZ 82A (north)	3970
KZ 83	5573
KZ 85	5304
KZ 86	5320
KZ 88	5339
KZ 89 Harama Safed	E 5600
KZ 91 Dandane Boz	5051
KZ 92 Sare Kalan	5939
KZ 94	5334
KZ 99	An 5045
KZ 100 Kalisa I Sangi	An 5640
KZ 149	5283
Col 83 - 85	An 5130
Col 86 - 88	An 5200
Col 94 - 278	E 5200
Col 70 - 72	An 4885
Unnumbered peak 70 - 62	E 5400
Eshkashem weather station	2620



Outline

This six-man expedition climbed peaks in the Zebak region of the Hindu Kush, Afghanistan, during July and August 1977. All the climbing was undertaken from the Qalat Valley near Eshkashem.

Manchester University Hindu Kush Expedition 1977

From Manchester to Base Camp

The team set off from the University on the morning of Saturday 25 June 1977, having been seen off by the Vice-Chancellor, a representative of Securicor Ltd, and a crowd of friends and reporters. John was soon collected from St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, and after spending the night in Surrey we caught an early-morning hovercraft to Calais.

It was a long day that saw us to a campsite near Nurnberg, then three full days to cross Austria and Bulgaria and into Turkey. Having had a long wait at the Turkish customs-post, we began to sample the hair-raising Turkish driving, as the scene around us changed rapidly.

One week after leaving England we were crawling through the mountains of Eastern Turkey (Anatolia). By now the two-lane Asian Highway was unsurfaced, and the rough going slowed us down to 20 mph. After passing Mount Ararat and the Iranian frontier, the heat was definitely on, and the country was an endless dusty brown with camels and mudhuts. Campsites were no problem, as one only had to pull off the road. Tehran held little joy for the drivers, and we were glad to get out of the sea of traffic and take the road over the mountains to the Caspian Sea.

On 6 July we crossed the Afghan border, after a couple of other incidents: we towed a motor-caravan to a garage, and gave a lift to a Canadian who was (and probably still is) trying to circumnavigate the world on a uni-cycle. Future travellers should note that getting through Afghan customs is greatly speeded-up by the presence in the vehicle of a six-foot uni-cycle!

The wind was the most unexpected feature of Western Afghanistan. The heat of the Kandahar Desert (at over 40°C) was anticipated, but no more easy to bear. The chief memory of Afghanistan is an endless, hot and dusty road, interrupted by a swim in every one of the few rivers crossed. So eventually the well-surfaced Asian Highway led us to Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, on 8 July. The next morning we discovered Rick at a hotel near ours: he had stayed in Manchester for exams, and then flown to Kabul.

Next came a week of frustration and worries, as we tramped from Ministry to Ministry in the attempt to get all the right people to sign letters which would allow us to set off into the mountains. Eventually all this was done, and after buying supplies, we set off northwards, accompanied by Aref, the official "guide" who was to accompany us throughout our time in the mountains. He had never been in our chosen area before, but proved to be an excellent interpreter and a very helpful friend.

The first day's drive was straightforward, on the tarmac road which goes north over the Salang Pass into the valley of the Oxus. But soon after we turned east, the main road faded into a rough track, and our progress became very slow. Our "Transit" van had a long wheelbase and low ground-clearance, so the underside was hitting the ground fairly often. After the village of Kishim a particularly rough section of track made us decide not to continue with our own van, and we returned to Kishim

and left the Transit in the care of a local hotel-keeper. At this town we hired — for a pretty high price — a small Russian-built four-wheel drive truck. This just held ourselves and all the paraphernalia we needed, and we spent the next two days jolting and swaying along the rough tracks.

On 21 July we reached Eshkashem, the nearest village on the road to where we wanted to climb. The van dropped us at the chalet-like government guest-house, from which we had a panoramic view of the Wakhan peaks and of the Russian mountains across the Oxus. The next morning we had a discussion with the Deputy Commissioner of police. He passed us on to the Commissioner, who in return for some medical advice kindly arranged for our porters, and also fixed their pay and the size of loads.

The seventeen porters turned up at six the next morning, and there were no objections to the loads which we had already divided up. The walk-in was one long, hard day in which we covered 17 miles. There were several welcome stops for tea at farms, and in the late afternoon we set up the tents by the river near the junction of the two valleys. This was base camp, and it was four weeks since we had left Manchester.

The locality

Base camp was situated at 3624 m, 11890 feet, just west of the Khashpak River. To the north all the hills are piles of loose beige shale, but to the south lies a large area of interesting peaks. The valley-bottoms are well vegetated right up to the snouts of the glaciers, and this is exploited by the local people for summer grazing. To be near their goats and cattle, a few families have summer shacks (aylaqs) in the valley, and the nearest was a mile from base camp. As a result we had visitors to camp almost every day. Most came seeking medical attention, since there are no medical facilities in the region. Our "guide" Aref helped here, both in assuring the security of the camp, and in translating many hours of conversation. Since base camp was some way from the head of the valley, we established a top camp alongside the river near the end of the Qalat Glacier. This site was more sheltered than base, and acted as a 'second home' from which to make forays onto the surrounding peaks.

The weather during most of our time in the valleys was fine and dry. Only at the very end of our stay was there a significant snow shower, though we had a lot of cloud at other times. There were frequent strong breezes in the valley, but hardly any wind higher up. The local people made it clear that our four weeks of perfect weather were an unusual occurrence.

This area has received little previous attention from mountaineers. The Sixth Polish Hindu Kush Expedition climbed here in 1971, as did the North of England Himalayas Expedition in 1975. The Poles climbed mostly in the Syorpalas Valley, and while Paul Bean's British team climbed a number of peaks, they still left many unclimbed ones and a wide variety of climbing.

It should be noted that there are very few peaks with names in this area, and we have not sought to add any new names. Peak-numbers quoted are taken from Wala's series for the Zebak region.

Initial climbs

Soon after we moved into base camp we began to look in detail at the climbing possibilities of the two valleys to the south. We had intended to climb in both, but a couple of forays into the Syorpalas Valley (on the east) made us realise that to begin with we would climb elsewhere. The aspect of the whole valley is somewhat forbidding, with very steep walls on both sides, and the end of the valley blocked by the sheer sweep of the Kalan Wall. In the event we found so much to do in the other valley that we never came back to climb here.

On 29 July, Tom scored the first high point of the trip, by going from the west onto the ridge between the two valleys, at the col between KZ 70 and 72. The following day, Andy and Ian G set off for an easy climb after the day's surveying, and found themselves doing some stiff unroped ice-climbing. Followed by a short rock-traverse, this brought them to the summit of KZ 70 (16700 ft, 5090 m), via the north face, but not before they had spent a night out on the mountain. On the last day of July, the other Ian, Tom and John went to try out the ice on the north face of KZ 94. They traced a diagonal line from centre to top left of the chaotic ice, and emerged after some hours onto the col between KZ 94 and 278 at 5200 m. As this was a training climb, and both peaks had been climbed before, they were content to leave it at that, having had a first taste of the oddly corrugated ice of this region. A few days later, Rick made a solo foray to the top of KZ 99 via its east ridge, and here sampled the loose rock and spiky crests which also characterise the area. KZ 99 stands at 5045 m, 16550 feet, and like the other early climbs was valuable not only for warming-up, but chiefly as a vantage-point to plan future ascents.

Peak KZ83, 18280 ft, 5573 m (IG)†

Right from our first glimpse of the Qalat Valley we were fascinated by the steepness of the huge headwall with its ice faces, seracs, and rock buttresses. Whilst I was surveying on the glacier Andy was having a look at one particular ice fall between peaks 83 and 85 and he decided that it wasn't nearly as steep as everyone was thinking. So after our acclimatisation climb, we prepared to ascend this ice fall to gain access to the ridge leading to peak 83. Obviously early morning was the safest time to venture under the seracs, and since our descent would have to follow the same route a bivouac on the col would be inevitable.

On Thursday 4th August we plodded up the shifting moraines to the foot of the ice fall and chose a bivouac site. The restless night's sleep ended at 2.30 am, and by 3.30 we were on our way.

As light came on, so did the major difficulties of the face, and we roped up. Almost at the col our pace slowed down and we realised that the altitude was having an effect yet again. However the reward was great when we finally emerged on the col at 9.30, fighting through a forest of huge snow spikes caused by the hot midday sun. Suddenly a wide new panorama was spread out to our south; it was as if we had escaped from the Qalat Valley, as we looked onto the brown peaks of Chitral. The height of the col was 16,800 feet, making the ice-fall 2000 feet high.

At the col we left our cooking gear and sleeping bags and at 10.45 am headed up the ridge, surprised at the rotten, loose rock. By 12.30 we were grinding to a halt with quite a distance still to go. It was a difficult choice, but we didn't feel that we could make it to the summit and back to the col by dark, and that would mean a forced bivouac on the ridge, with yet another on the col in order to descend the ice-fall at its safest.

So discretion won and we headed back to the col, intending to have an attempt at peak 85 instead. However, once on to the col, lethargy set in, and we just lazed in the evening sun. The descent took a little time, but we arrived without incident on the glacier at 8.15 for a rest before trudging back down to camp. We were disappointed, but happy in our own minds that we had made the right decision up on the ridge.

Kohe Qalat, KZ 75, 17355 ft, 5290 m (JV)†

Following a short debate on the relative merits of solo climbing, I finally left top camp at 2.30 pm on 6 August. Soon I met the first obstacle of the climb — the river from the main glacier. A frenzy of activity ensued, in which a series of undignified positions and a bath saw me safe on the other side. A short trek led to a scree slope from which I reached the valley-bench under the wall of the main ridge. A short distance north of the main mass of the peak some steep slabs offered an oblique line up to the right, and presently this brought me to a superb bivouac site below a col.

Setting out at three the next morning, I followed a gully full of water-ice and with verglassed sides; this prove to be quite hard, for although the angle varied, there were no belays to be found. By this route I came straight up to the col by six am. At this point the north west ridge (my planned line of ascent) and the two faces either side came into full view. A large overhang barred the way up the ridge, and the vertical wall of the west face was out of the question. That left the north face as the only alternative, despite it being steep and icy, with occasional falls of ice descending.

A hundred metres of delicate traversing placed me under a narrow crack which led above an overhanging block. This was the first opportunity to use a self-belay system: with the rope and rucsac attached to a piton at the foot of the pitch, I climbed up, and at the end of the 150-foot rope-length I put in another piton. I next abseiled back down the rope, and removed the piton and rucsac. I then re climbed the rope, and my lack of jumars forced me to do so hand-over-hand, using a single prusik on the rope as protection; this gave much psychological support, but fortunately its physical support remained untested.

After successfully negotiating the overhanging crack, five pitches of alternating slabs and cracks (grade IV to V) led diagonally across the face to the right. I soon came back via this line onto the north-west ridge, only ten feet below the summit snowfield, but the way was barred by a huge ice-mushroom on top of a steep granite slab. This was turned on the left by an exposed 9-metre traverse on 70° ice — certainly the most difficult and nerve-racking part of the climb. Then a crack and some steep snow led to the summit snowfield, and so to the summit itself. I reached the top at 2.22 pm, and very soon began the descent on the south side. This face is a mass of loose boulders, and gave a very tiring descent, with the result that I did not bivouac in the valley until the small hours of the next morning — and due to a navigational error I bivvied just 100 feet from the top camp, which was invisible in the darkness!

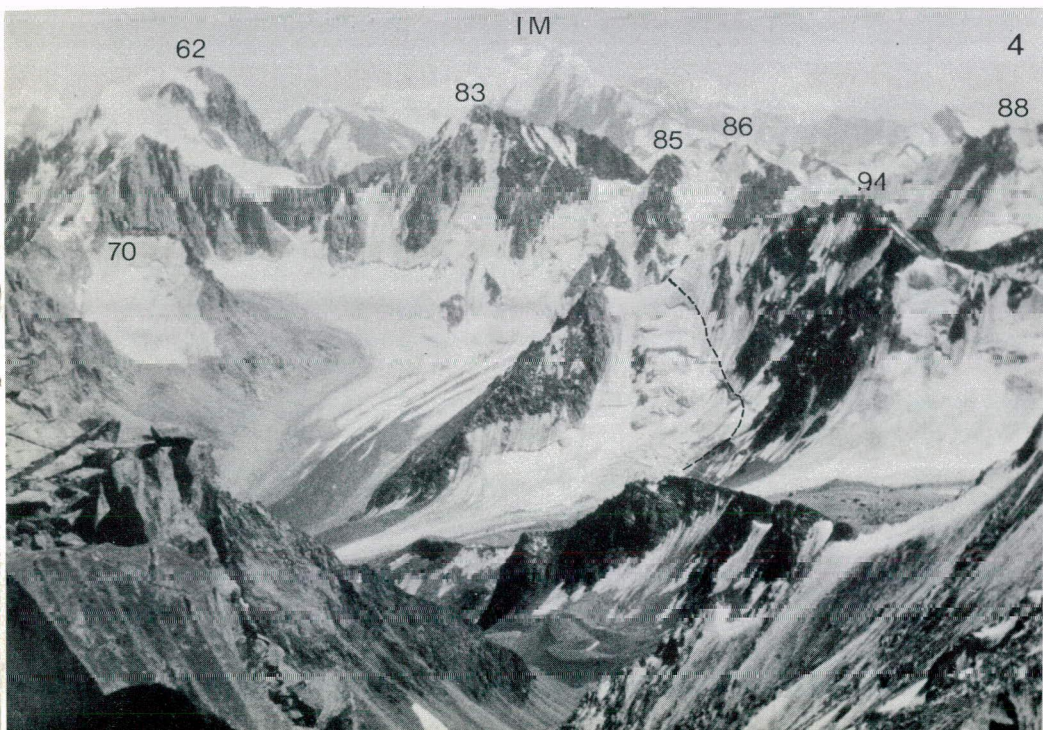
† Writers of sections of the report are identified in the headings by their initials.

Pictures opposite:

1: top of 88. 2:88 at left, 89 beyond.

3: good road near Kishim. 4: view east from 92: TM is Tirich Mir.

5: Ian N on ice on 94.



Harame Safed, KZ 89, 18370 ft, 5600 m (IN)

Our hearts were set on Kohe Qalat, so the larger routes on the valley's headwall would have to wait. The north ridge of the mountain just above the top camp was an attractive line, one which was too good to miss. As it turned out Tom and I did miss it, perhaps with regret. We trudged into top camp to find that Andy and Ian were attempting peak 83, a 5600 metre peak directly up the glacier from our camp. Through the binoculars we could even see them approaching the col to the west of the peak. Doubt set in. Could we let them beat us on to the higher peaks? It seemed to Tom and myself that there was only one answer and the next day saw us plodding up the glacier away from our original objective to bivouac below peak 89, which we hoped to climb.

From a distance the peak appeared to have a fine north-east face, completely covered with snow and ice. In the morning we approached the face through some avalanche debris to find that the face wasn't particularly steep. Never mind, it was a large peak and so we were not too disappointed. Soloing up the face presented no problems although the altitude was slowing us down. At the top of the face a rather soft cornice presented some difficulty but soon only the summit pyramid lay above us. After a considerable rest we climbed the remaining 200 feet to the summit on good ice, perhaps the only really interesting section on the whole climb. Still, it was a first ascent and we were pleased to have completed the climb and to be at 5600 metres for the first time.

Pictures were taken and a descent made down an easier angled slope to the north before abseiling a few hundred feet down rocks to the glacier.

Peak KZ 88, 17520 ft, 5339 m (AH)

After our attempt on 83, we had intended to have a go at 89, but Ian N and Tom had beaten us to it. So we transferred our attentions to 88.

It wasn't a particularly high peak, but it had an impressive north face; the bottom half was all ice, but half way up a rock buttress encroached from the left and seracs from the right. Between these there seemed to be a narrow couloir leading to the upper ice field and thence to the summit. The route was almost a direct line from bottom to top.

So it was back up the glacier and the incorrigible moraine. We bivouacked in some avalanche debris at the bottom of the face, and the next morning dawn found us trudging up the first slopes.

Ian led the bergschrund and I followed. It was steep, brittle, smooth ice which "dinner-plated" at every blow. It didn't seem to ease off much after the 'schrund either.

After the first pitch we each lead three pitches at a time. We climbed towards the couloir but it became apparent that this was entirely water ice and as such would be more difficult to climb. However, it looked as though there might be a route on the rock leading back to the ice face above. As we climbed the lower face it gradually became deep in furrows. These thin, vertical, snow or ice ridges, formed by the sun, made the climbing slightly easier.

When we reached the rock, it was my turn to lead again and it didn't look very inviting. I traversed left and found a steep ramp going in just the direction I wanted to go. The rock was pretty loose, but cemented together by ice. In two pitches we reached the upper ice field.

From now on we followed the ice at the edge of the rock. The face was getting steeper and the furrows tended to run diagonally, so they didn't help much. We were also beginning to feel the altitude now, but it wasn't as bad as on 83.

Ian finished his leads just as the angle started to ease. I led through, clambering over the deepening furrows up a little ridge, thence to the summit. Ian followed. It was very difficult to imagine that we were the first people to have climbed the mountain. Out came the cameras!

We planned to descend by a short steep ice face to the west of the summit and so we started traversing the ridge. At first it was sharp and loose and required care, but soon it turned into a boulder-pile on the south side and we scrambled quickly down to the col. We carefully down-climbed about six pitches to the bergschrund, which we abseiled over, leaving an ice screw in place. Then a quick trot brought us down to the bivouac site just as the light was fading. We felt that we had just climbed the mountain by a superb route, not hard but very enjoyable.

Kalisa I Sangi, KZ 100, 18500 ft, 5640 m (RE)

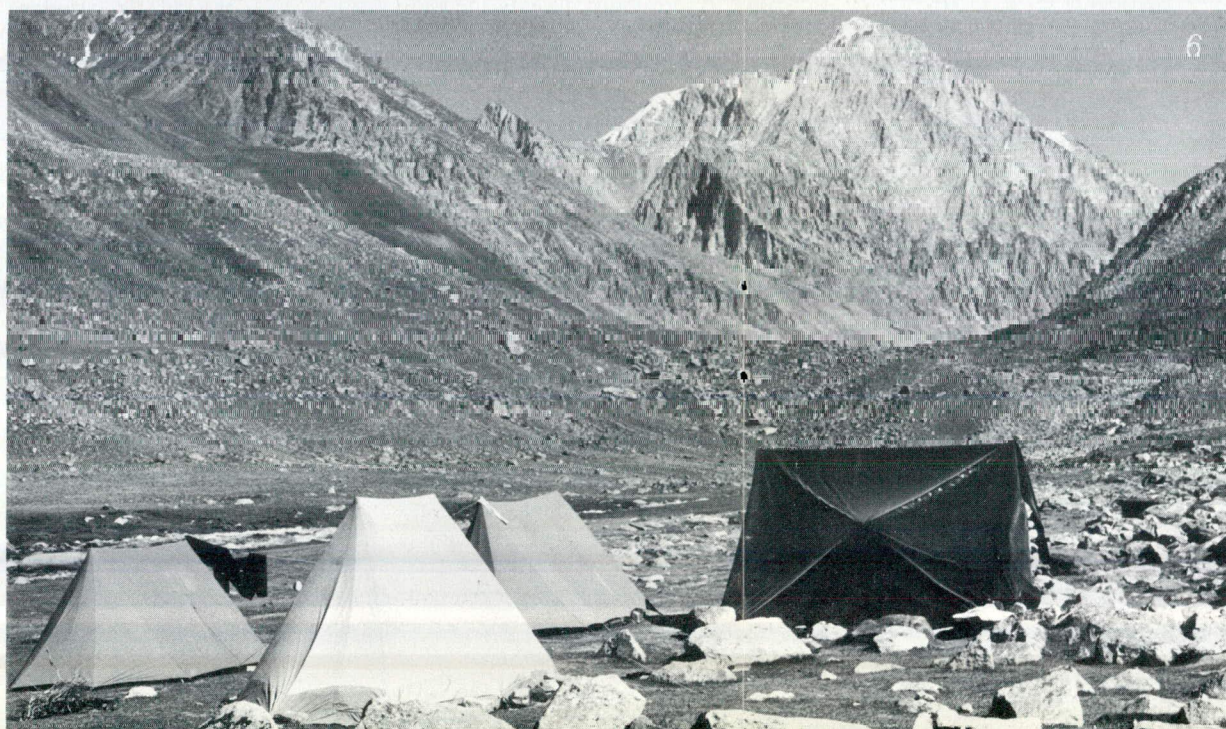
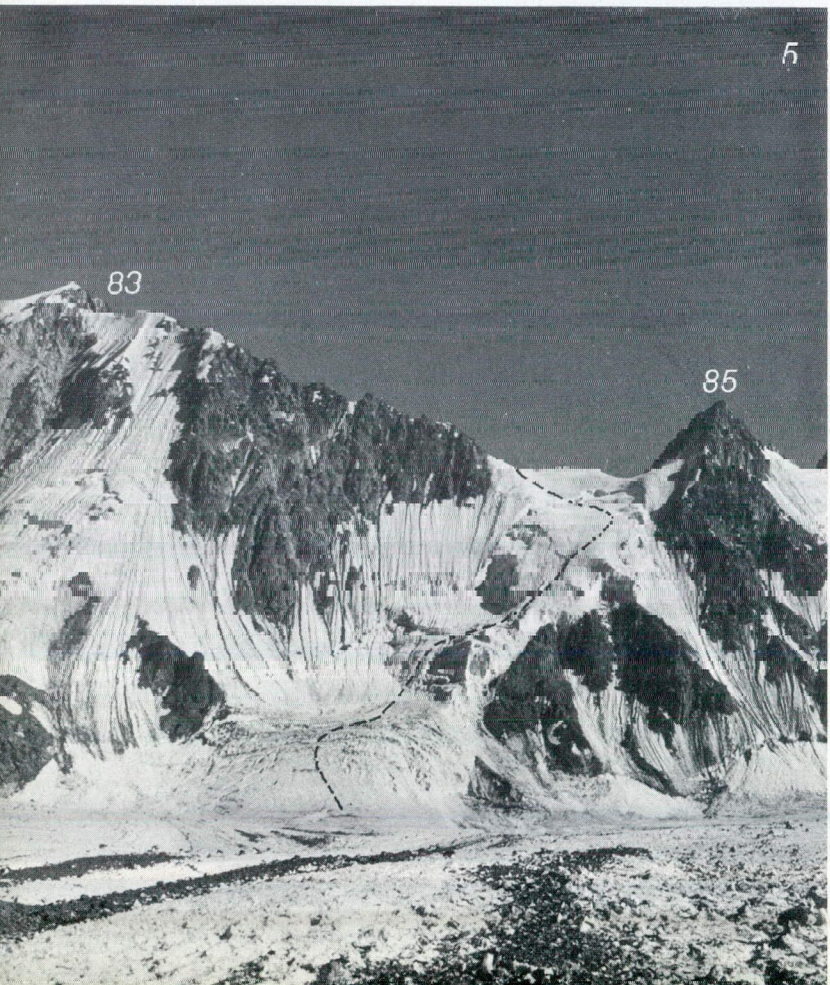
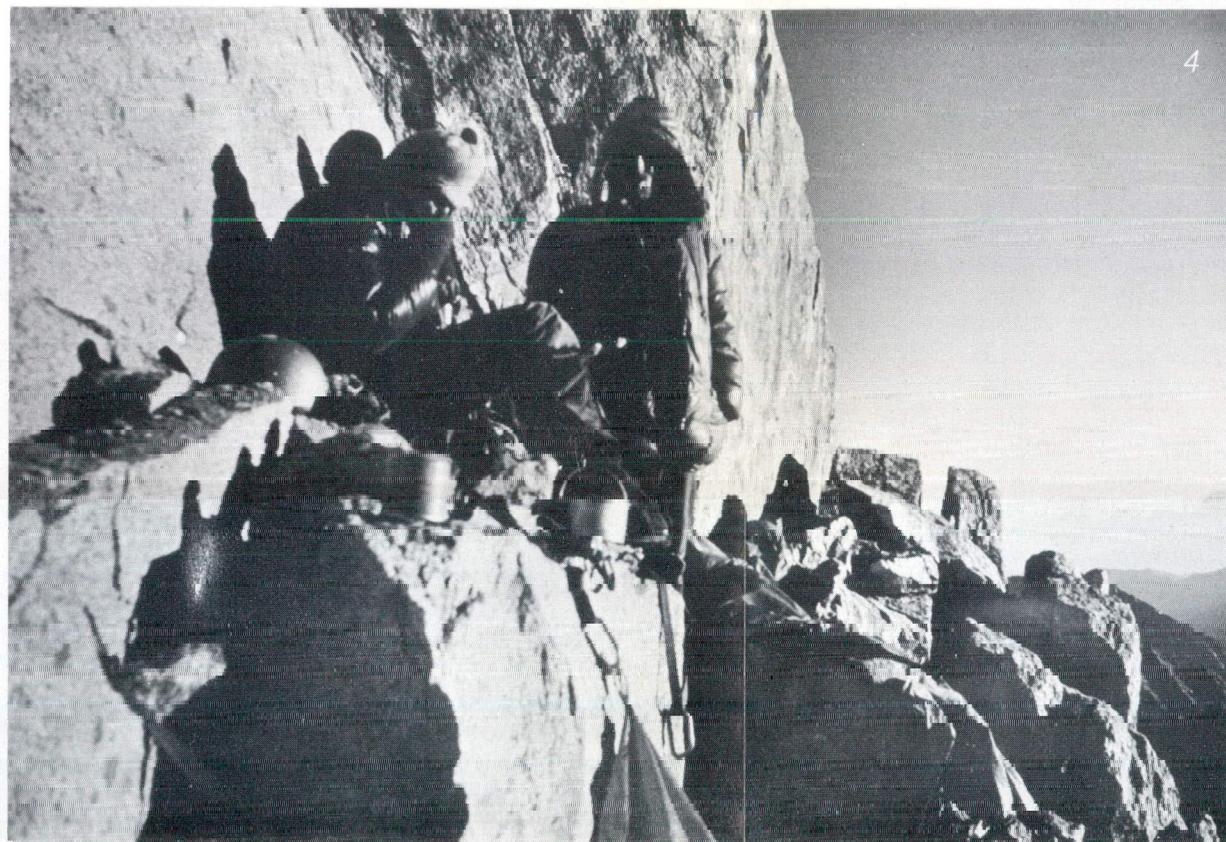
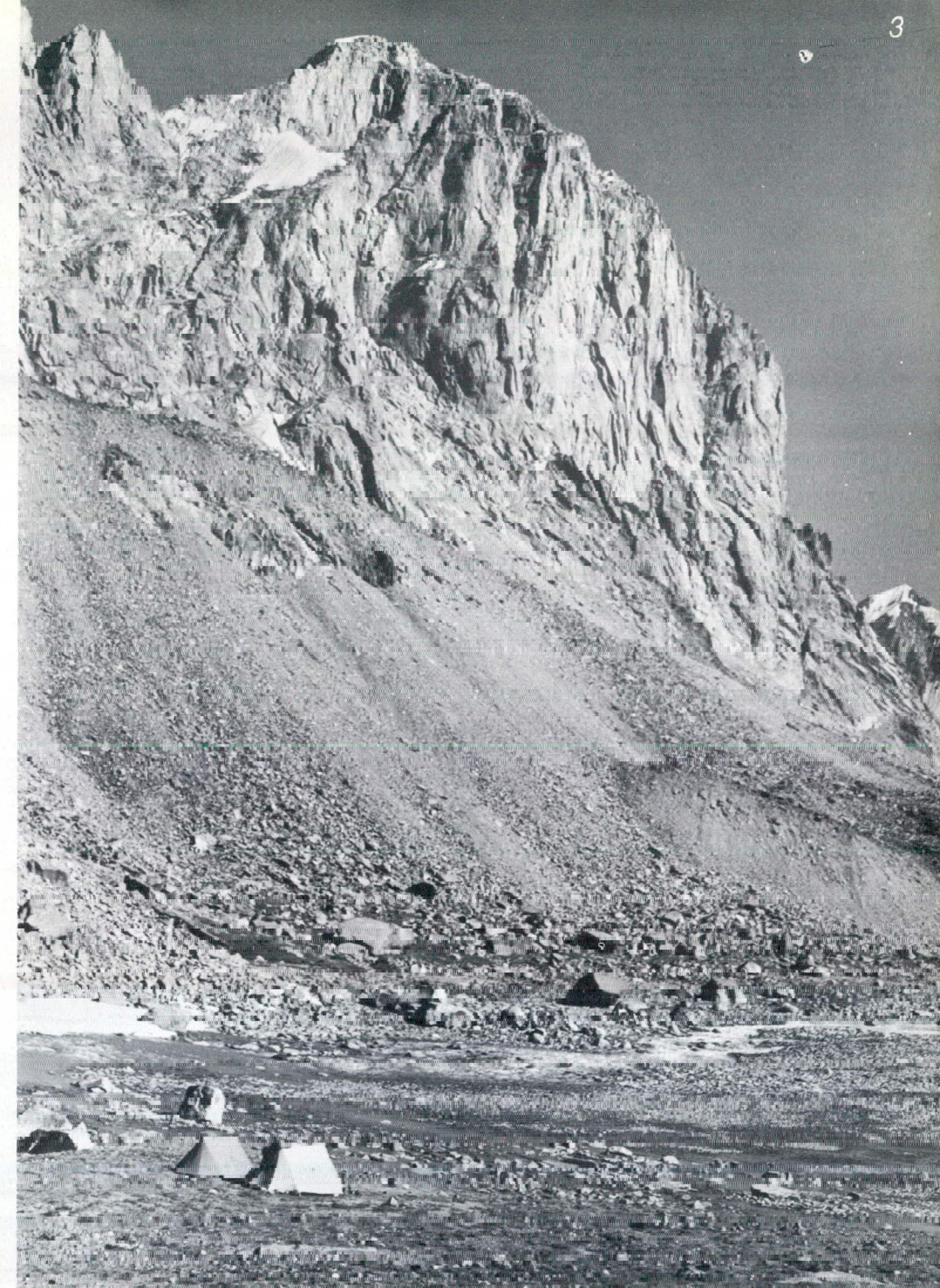
During my warming-up climb on KZ 99, I had a chance to inspect KZ 100, which is part of the same ridge. It appeared to offer a long route up the glacier on the north side, to reach the rock pinnacles on the ridge, so Ian N and I decided to have a shot at this line. After a gorgeous pink sunset we spent a cold but comfortable night bivvying by the lake to the north-east of 100, and by the time it was getting light on 11 August we were already above the snout of the glacier.

The glacier/icefield which starts virtually at the summit of the mountain sweeps in a series of waves down to 5100 m, and is bounded on its east side by a shallow rock spur. We began by making our way up this spur, which provided reasonable going on rather loose rock. Soon, however, we were forced out onto the ice, where the angle was less than forty-five degrees, and good footing was provided by regular shallow furrows. Before long the angle increased to about sixty degrees, and the depth of the furrows also increased. We were also beginning to get better views of the summit ridge, and it was clear that the waves in the icefield and a series of rock-pinnacles separated us from the highest point. We had to go almost straight up to the ridge and then move along it to the summit.

Reaching the ridge was easier said than done, because of the ice-ridges: these thin flakes of ice were separated by foot-wide furrows up to four feet deep, and across the many acres of them was the way to the ridge. After long sessions of hacking-down the ice-ridges, we emerged onto the summit ridge at 9 am and realised just how far we were from the top. Between us and the highest pinnacle lay at least half-a-dozen more, all separated by seemingly endless expanses of deeply furrowed icefield. Having climbed the steep face of the first pinnacle, we moved slowly along the ridge, sometimes going over pinnacles and sometimes round the north side.

Towards midday our hacking and clambering brought us to the top of a short cliff where a col separated us from the summit pinnacle. Ian arranged an abseil, and we soon accompanied some loose blocks down to the ice-covered col. From here seventy feet of stiff climbing on much firmer rock led to the summit. We marked our arrival with plenty of photographs, and sat back for a while to gaze at the panorama of peaks which surrounded us on every side.

Getting up the mountain had not been the most enjoyable experience because of the conditions underfoot. We knew that the only reasonable descent was by the same route, so it was with mixed feelings that we ploughed back along the ridge.



route would continue up the rock-ridge to the summit. During the evening of the same day, heavy clouds gathered and there was a light fall of snow — the first we had seen during our stay.

Early the next morning Tom and I accompanied Ian and Andy as they repeated their straight line up the 500-metre ice-face. The angle varied up to 65 degrees, on ice of varying quality, and all the ice-screws were hidden under the new snow. However, we had not reckoned on how much slower we would go when filming in detail, and also we were slowed down by the weight of film and gear. As a result it was well into the afternoon when we got to the col at 5200 m to the west of the peak. As we looked out over the great peaks and glaciers of Chitral, the clouds were gathering as if for a heavy storm, and a brief foray up the rock ridge showed that the rock here was every bit as rotten as we had found it elsewhere. If we had continued to the summit we would have been forced to bivvy high up, possibly in a storm, and this did not seem a good idea. So with mixed feeling we had to turn and make a long series of abseils back down our route. We had shot a lot of climbing footage and made an interesting climb, but after another night out on the glacier we knew that we had to go down and start clearing the camps. Our own time was running out, and it seemed that summer in the Hindu Kush was also coming to an abrupt end.

The Homeward Journey

While the six of us were at the top camp for the last climb, our guide Aref went down to the village and succeeded in finding two men with two donkeys to come and move our remaining food and gear to Eshkashem for a fixed fee. This arrangement worked well. Having walked down to the village under skies now grey and stormy, we waited only one day before finding a half-laden lorry whose driver was prepared to take us back to Kishim and our van.

Once back in Kabul we obtained our exit-visas in record time, and were soon heading across the deserts bound for home. The van was now only half-full, but part of the space was taken up by souvenirs! The return journey from Kabul took only twelve days — one day less than going — and we reached Britain on 11 September.

Future possibilities

Sad Ishtiragh (KZ 62) is accessible via the north ridge, as we have demonstrated, and will provide a long and perhaps tedious route. It has been suggested by previous visitors that there should be a north-wall route from the Syorpalas Vally onto the same peak: no natural line shows up, and any route here is likely to be hard and threatened by falling ice. In a "dry" summer it will be possible to climb KZ 83 by the northern ice-rib which leads straight towards the summit. KZ 85 and 86 also remain unclimbed, but will not provide climbs of high quality. Routes also remain on KZ 90 and 91. Previous visitors have suggested the west face of Kohe Qalat (KZ 75) as a good rock-climb: this is actually a thinly iced-up rock-face with many overhangs and no natural lines. Future developments in the area will probably occur on hard wall-climbs from the Syorpalas Valley, and on the more varied and neglected peaks in the valleys further west.

Regional information

A small number of articles on the area exist in the established mountaineering press, but the most comprehensive source on climbing in the Zebak region is Jerzy Wala's book 'Hendukuse Kebak', published in Krakow, Poland, by the Klub Wysokogorski. This veritable goldmine of information is updated regularly, and can be seen in Britain at the Alpine Club Library or the BMC offices.

Surveying (IG)

Two different kinds of surveying were carried out: conventional triangulation using a theodolite, and photogrammetry. The theodolite loaned to the expedition by the Royal Geographical Society was a 30-second CTS model. All the other items of equipment were loaned by the University. The triangulation was carried out by measuring out base-lines and finding the angles from these lines to various peaks, the theodolite being set up at the end of one line after another. Ends of lines were marked by spare tent-poles with coloured flags attached. Surveys of this kind were carried out both at Base Camp and at the head of the Qalat Valley. Although altimeter checks were available, it was assumed for the purposes of calculation that the heights of principal peaks in the area were correctly surveyed by Jerzy Wala — the Pole who has produced most of the available maps of the Hindu Kush. Our theodolite work has enabled us to put heights to many of the other peaks of this area, which should fill some of the gaps in Wala's table of mountain-heights.

The most unexpected result from the triangulation is the discovery that Sare Kalan (Warhead) is actually higher than Sad Ishtiragh. Although this confirms the visual impression built up during our climbing, we would nonetheless like to see this height checked soon by another expedition.

The photogrammetry work consisted of taking several pairs of stereo photographs from above the glacier, using a normal single lens reflex camera with a lightweight tripod and a magnetic compass. The result was a series of shots of the glacier of somewhat limited value, but given adequate time and facilities it should be possible to produce a contour-map of the Qalat Glacier. Further results will be published separately.

Filming (RE)

Cine film of the expedition's activities was shot by ourselves, using equipment and film kindly loaned by the BBC. The camera was a 16mm Bolex H16 S, with clockwork mechanism, separate viewfinder and turret-mounted lenses of 16, 25 and 75mm focal lengths. This selection of lenses proved ideal for the circumstances, but the separate viewfinder was a little inconvenient. The mechanism had not been winterised, so it was fortunate that we never met with any prolonged periods of very low temperatures.

The reloading of 16mm film during a climb proved to very time consuming, and the weight of both film and camera caused some difficulties. Of the 5000 feet of film supplied, we used 3500 feet.

At the time of writing, the film is in the hands of the BBC in Manchester, and a script is being prepared.

Other activities

Our other main task apart from those mentioned already was to collect seeds of alpine plants for some University members of the Alpine Garden Society. It was a thing of some surprise to us on arriving in the valley, that there were plants and flowers in profusion. We found a vast range of flowers which are also found in the Alps, but here all specimens were found in miniature forms. Also, the Alps can rarely boast such carpets of Edelweiss as we saw. The main subject of our seed-collecting was Dionysia, a small tussocky plant with tiny pink or white flowers: these we found in several different kinds.

Vehicle

Most of our travelling was done in a 35 cwt Ford Transit 175 van, loaned to us by Securicor Ltd, complete with spares. Securicor made some valuable modifications: a sump-guard

Sad Ishtiragh, KZ 62, 19200 ft, 5852 m (AH)

After a rest at camp, Ian G and I decided to have a go at Sad Ishtiragh. At about 19,200 feet, it was one of the highest peaks in the area and had also been one of our published objectives. The route followed a ridge north-west of the summit, over a subsidiary peak, down to an enormous but gentle ice field and thence to the top, either by a detour round some seracs, or by a short ice-face.

We found a good bivouac site on a level expanse at the start of the ridge. Unfortunately the strut of one of my crampons had broken, but Ian, being an engineer, managed to make it stay on my boot with the aid of a spare bootlace. We were off with the dawn, soloing up the snow slopes on the ridge. The climbing was easy but magnificent, with superb views of the Syorpalas valley and its mountains. We made excellent progress and were soon sitting near the top of the subsidiary peak looking down on the enormous snow field which we had to cross.

It appeared as though a gargantuan plough had been there before us and turned the field into a mass of huge furrows. Some were about five feet deep with huge narrow gulfs and we would try to balance precariously from ridge to ridge. Some would be thick and solid and easily hold your weight; others would collapse as soon as you put your weight on them, sending you crashing into the little crevasses from which you had to laboriously climb out. It was an effort. As we climbed higher I began to feel the altitude more. When I was thrown down by a collapsing ridge I found it a good excuse to have a rest.

We had decided to make for the ice face rather than go all the way round in these conditions. My progress was becoming slower and slower. It was a curious feeling, knowing that I had the energy, but not the oxygen to use it. Eventually I couldn't put five steps together without having a rest. It was getting late, we still had about a thousand feet to go and at this rate it would take all day. So just below the bergschrund we decided to turn back.

It was nearly as bad on the way down, because although we had a bit of a trail, the snow was now wet in the sun. But I gradually felt better as we lost height. We soloed back down the ridge, apart from one steep section which we abseiled. We had to take care though, as the sun had softened the snow which lay on top of ice. We both went for semi-controlled slides, fortunately without incident, except that my other crampon broke, which didn't help. I wasn't in a good mood; Ian put up with me very well. In retrospect, apart from the furrows we had quite enjoyed ourselves. But most of all, it was another experience, and that's what counted.

Sare Kalan (Warhead), KZ 92, 19490 ft, 5939 m (IN)

We didn't know it then but it was Monday 15 August. Not that it mattered to us at the time, except that in a few short days we would have to leave the mountains. The afternoon had seen us walking up the glacier under the face we hoped to climb, the mountain hiding the sinking sun from us and making the air cold. Tom was first to the face and set about looking for the line to take up the face the next day. We bivvied on a large flat stone on the glacier, having only half-decided on the route to take the next day.

The morning start wasn't that early, and as we set off up the icefield the morning sun galloped down the face to meet us. Up to and over the bergschrund and a hundred metres of easy icefield before moving left to a small ledge on the rock.

We never saw it. Something whistled and changed note as it passed us. At least we had the sense not to look up. A large

scoop in the face 1200 feet above was warming up in the sun and loosing stones at us below. On the rock we climbed a couple of pitches as quickly as possible to avoid this bombardment. By following a line rising on a steep diagonal we were able to climb a groove system. The groove soon became harder and was in places ice-filled. On one pitch this proved to be useful, as rocks 'cemented' into the ice provided the only available firm holds.

By about 2.30 pm. we had reached a significant ledge system. Brew time! A supply of ice enabled a hot drink to be made and we greedily consumed cans of sardines. It was cold now, the aspect and the steepness of the face had combined to keep the sun off us. With reluctance we started to climb again.

The groove line had run out and the only line which seemed possible was off to the left, a steep dark wall. We climbed this wall and the steep corner above was bridged with increasing difficulty until we gained a broad ledge. We hadn't seen such a large ledge since we had started the climb and we didn't take much convincing that this was the place to spend the night, even though there was still a couple of hours of daylight left. Another cold night was spent on our exposed perch but a bright morning broke and we spent some time warming ourselves and drying out our gear in its welcome rays.

We set off up a crack line which gave a few hundred feet of continually difficult climbing before the angle eased off a little making climbing quicker and giving more time to admire the view. After several hours we reached a large ledge on the ridge leading to the summit and after one pitch of ice the snow ridge above was followed to the summit block. We celebrated with a boiled sweet apiece and spent several minutes taking photographs.

At 5.00 pm we stepped down from the summit and reversed the ridge to the ledge. An even colder night on the exposed shelf, then a slow descent the following day, abseiling down the north ridge to the icefield below. Fortunately a hidden but easy gully enabled the last 1,000 feet to be descended quickly, and we were whooping our way down the glacier to reach top camp as dusk fell.

Peak KZ 86, 5320 m, 17450 ft (RE)

As we approached the end of our stay in the valley, we wanted to have a try at KZ 86, one of the peaks in the centre of the valley's headwall. We also wanted to film the climb in detail, with Andy and Ian G as the main climbers, and Tom and I to film them. While Tom had a well-earned rest after the success on KZ 92, Ian and Andy went up in the early hours of 20 August and placed a series of ice-screw belays up the ice-face just west of the peak. From here the

Pictures overleaf:

1 & 2: looking east and south-east from 92; N is Noshaq, TM is Tirich Mir. 3: the west face of Kohe Qalat, with top camp below. 5: 83, 85 and the route up the ice-fall. 6: Base camp, with Kohe Sangi (30) in background. 7: Ian N crossing furrowed icefields near the summit ridge of 100.

was fitted; low-compression heads put on the engine; extra lights and stone-grilles provided; an extractor-fan added to improve the ventilation; and six seats fitted. No roof-rack was needed, but we found it important to tie down all the gear inside the van.

We gave the van two oil changes in our 11500 miles of motoring, and it also had a general service in Kabul. The only fault occurred when the oil-pressure warning-switch broke and sprayed the engine with oil; fortunately this happened near a town with a Ford dealer. There were no real difficulties over obtaining petrol, although a petrol-shortage in Turkey caused some anxious moments. In Iran and Afghanistan the best rule is to fill up every time you come to a petrol station. Petrol (of very low octane value) is always available, but diesel is not easy to find east of Istanbul.

Climbing equipment (RT)

Ropes

Two ropes were essential on most routes, as descents were invariably awkward and required abseils. 9 mm ropes were normally used, usually doubled, but sometimes single when climbing in threes.

Pegs, Nuts and Ice Screws

A selection of all were required on every route. The rock was granite, ranging from atrocious to excellent, and nuts could normally be used for rock belays. Slings could normally be used for abseils. Little problem was experienced with tubular ice screws icing up, as daytime temperatures tended to be above freezing, and the Salewa half-tubes were rarely used, as their psychological holding power is less than that of the normal ones. The ice, on the whole, tended to be hard water-ice so that tubes were easier to place than drive-in's. Simond drive-in's were easier to extract than the Salewa's and are cheaper.

Ice Axes and Hammers

These were of various makes. Terradactyls were found to be of limited use due to the crenellations, or vertical flakes formed by the sun's action on the ice slopes causing banged knuckles. A modified form of 'Terra' with a longer shaft and a longer, less angled pick worked very well.

Ascenders

One pair of Jumars and one pair of Cloggers were taken but not used. When climbing in threes, the leader tended to wait until the other two came up before continuing. This takes longer than having the third man prussicking.

Bivouac Tents

Despite the good weather, we generally slept inside these for warmth. Night temperatures were low enough to freeze the condensation inside the tents, which were made of waterproof nylon, but even so the down gear still froze up slowly as it soaked up the water. A great improvement would be to have the tents made of a non-proofed material to allow a bit of breathing and cut down on condensation.

Sleeping Bags and Duvets

Various combinations of bivvy gear were used; duvet and sleeping bag, sleeping bag, or just duvet. Down gear did ice up slowly if used inside bivvy sacks, especially in bad weather. Slaters of Prestwich supplied us with a couple of 'Fiberfill' bags to test and these proved not to suffer as badly from the damp and ice; though heavier and more bulky to carry they are worth the extra weight. I found that a duvet alone on high bivvys was not really warm enough.

Anoraks and Overtrousers

Various makes of gear were used. The two anoraks from Slaters were excellent for climbing in, being well cut to avoid bagginess and with ample pockets. They did suffer from not being long enough to protect the backside when sitting. Sprayway anoraks were more generously cut to overcome this, but were consequently more baggy in use.

Boots

Some of us used double boots, some single. I found that single boots were only just warm enough, but I did suffer from cold toes a bit. I think that had the weather turned bad, doubles would have definitely been essential on the higher routes.

Gloves

Fingerless mitts proved very useful on rock pitches, but daytime temperatures were not so low as to require silk gloves. Dachsteins and sometimes overmitts were worn on ice.

Climbing Equipment

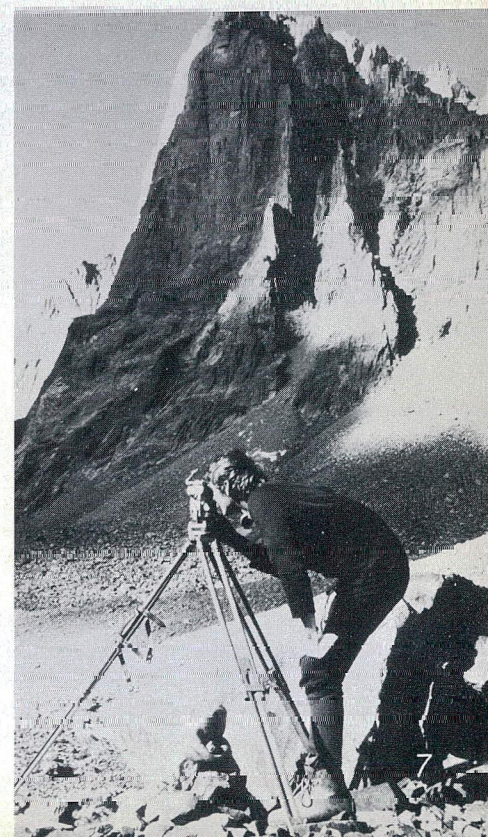
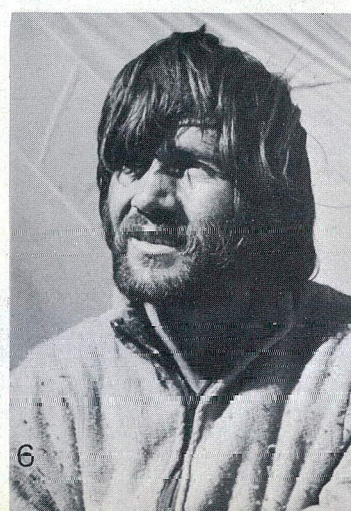
		Manufacturers
6	45m x 9mm ropes	Edelrid, Mammut
1	45m x 11mm rope	Mammut
19	assorted rock pegs	Clog, Chouinard
20	assorted ice pegs	Simond, Salewa, Clog, Snowdon Mouldings
27	assorted nuts	Various
44	snap karabiners	"
6	screw gate karabiners	"
	slings, tie offs, spare tape	"
6	deadboys	"
7 pr	crampons	"
7	ice-axes	"
7	ice-hammers	"
6	harnesses	"
2 pr	ascenders	Jumar, Clog
12	hammer holsters	Troll
	sticht plates	
1	set etriers	Own
2	bivouac tents	1 Don Morrison, 1 Own
1	bivouac sack	
	sleeping bags	Slaters, Mountain Point five
	duvets	Various
	balaclavas	"
	overmitts	"
	woollen mitts	"
	fingerless mitts	"
2	one-piece polar suits	Slaters
	anoraks and overtrousers	Sprayway, Slaters, others
	head torches	Various
30	batteries (15 used), spare bulbs	Ever-Ready
3	petrol stoves	Svea, Optimus
3	gas stoves	Camping Gaz
30	gas cylinders (15 used)	" "

Domestic equipment (IN)

This selection came mostly from two sources: much was owned by team-members, and the rest was bought from expedition funds. Much of the equipment was for camp maintenance, and so was used comparatively infrequently, but a few major items received constant and heavy use.

Tents were an item in constant use. They were all Vango Force Ten models, comprising a Mark 5 loaned by the British Mountaineering Council, two Mark 4 tents and one Mark 3. All were entirely satisfactory, but it should be added that they never had to withstand any really rough weather. Two tents suffered damage: the Mark 3 received a tear in the flysheet after very close inspection by an over-inquisitive cow at top camp, and a Mark 4 was damaged by fire during difficulties with a petrol stove. In addition to the tents, a large shelter was constructed at base camp, and was found to be a very useful innovation. Being made of aluminium tubing and polythene sheeting it was relatively light to transport. The shelter was large enough to contain all the food, medical supplies and some equipment, and still gave enough space for cooking and eating. When we finally left the valley, we gave the shelter to the local porters, who greatly valued the sheeting and lightweight poles.

Stoves were the other most heavily used pieces of equipment. At base camp petrol stoves were in continual use, and at top camp one petrol and two gas stoves were employed. During the month in the valley we used about three and a half gallons of petrol and a dozen gas cartridges. Petrol was carried in one-



gallon oil-cans, which were of convenient size for handling and packing.

All the stoves worked well, except for the new Optimus 88 petrol stove. The windshield on this stove seemed not to allow adequate air to enter for combustion, so that the stove tried to burn outside the windshield and so extinguished itself. When it did work properly, the heat melted the alloy pan-support. Experiment showed that the burner was not at fault. It should be noted that petrol stoves have an advantage over paraffin in this part of the world, because paraffin is very difficult to obtain even in major towns. Although some domestic hardware is available in towns like Taloqhan, it is advisable to regard Kabul as the last place for buying any supplies. In Kabul we bought rope and sacks with which to make up porter-loads: these were appreciated by the porters.

Packing-boxes were used throughout the expedition. Thick cardboard boxes were donated by a sponsor, and were used for almost all the equipment and supplies. Those containing food and cooking-gear which were in daily use on the main journeys soon became battered, but most survived the eleven weeks. The choice of size proved useful both for handling and for packing in the van. Some heavy climbing hardware was packed in small plywood cases. We also took a few items of entertainment value, but only the books were used much, and such intellectual pursuits as chess had only occasional use.

Matches proved to have a value far beyond their basic use. They are a cheap item, highly valued by the locals because they are scarce outside the major towns. They were much in demand as tips, and people demanded them everywhere from Turkey to Afghanistan.

Although our translator brought all his own clothing, footwear and rucksack, we found it necessary to lend him foul weather gear, sleeping-bag and general domestic items. Fortunately we had enough spare things to provide for him, and there was also sufficient spare food for him.

In conclusion, no major items were left behind, and there was little surplus taken to base camp. The journey out to Afghanistan gave a useful indication of the rate at which supplies were being consumed, so we were able to cut down on the quantity carried when we left our own vehicle. A further re-assessment was carried out on reaching Eshkashem, in order to cut the cost of portering.

Food (AH)

In planning the food, the main difficulty was not so much what to take, as how much to take; how much would be needed for the journey, for base camp, and for climbing. This was complicated by not knowing how long we would be in the mountains, and what proportion of this time would be spent in climbing. Another problem was whether or not to divide up the food into man/day packs of various duration. In the event we did not, and in consequence had to carry out a major resorting of the food before going into the mountains. This re-assessment allowed us to leave behind a few items which we could do without, and also reduced the total quantity to suit the number of porters we could afford.

Pictures opposite:

1 & 2: ice near top of Sad Ishtragh. 3: looking along N ridge to Sad Ishtragh. 4: Ian & Tom with flags on top of 92. 5: Team, 1 to r: Ian G, Tom, Ian N, Rick; in front, Andy & John. 6: Aref, our guide. 7: Ian G surveying, with 75 beyond.

The only division we made in the packing of food was between journey food and mountain food, with that for travelling going into separate boxes. On the journeys we bought some local produce to supplement our own muesli for breakfast and evening meals based on tinned food. The food used in the mountains was all dried, apart from jams and a small amount of canned fruit. Generally, the quantities worked out well. At the end we had a small amount of everything left over, but this probably resulted mainly from eating out most of the time when we were in Kabul: a few of the restaurants there are both good and very cheap. We also bought some produce locally, particularly fruit, rice, potatoes and tea. The quantities listed below were used over eleven weeks, and the items of which we had too much were cereals, dried milk and tea bags.

Many letters were written to potential food sponsors: only a few bore fruit, but they brought plentiful results. The rest of the food was bought from a discount store. It is worth remarking that British tea does not work well at altitude, but that bought in Kabul proved very good. We were given a wide range of seasonings, and these proved an excellent idea to bring variety to dehydrated stews. We found that dried stews containing rice were a nuisance, since the rice never cooked at top camp.

Food for 490 man/days:

240 portions dried stews	7 lbs dried apricots
24 tins assorted beef stews	10 lbs raisins
12 tins sausages	70 pkts biscuits
12 tins beefburgers	12 lbs crispbread
12 tins luncheon meat	48 jellies
48 tins fish	10 lbs boiled sweets
160 pkts soup	36 lbs milk chocolate
12 lbs dried peas	55 lbs assorted sweet bars
12 lbs dried beans	24 tins rice pudding
24 oz dried peppers	15 lbs canned fruit
1 jar mixed herbs	1 pkt custard mix
1 jar garlic powder	15 lbs muesli
1 jar curry sauce mix	12 lbs porridge oats
24 tubes tomato puree	12 lbs "instant porridge"
6 bottles oil	12 lbs margarine
10 lbs potato powder	200 sachets drink powder
4 lbs pasta rings	45 lbs dried milk
20 lbs peanuts	21 lbs instant coffee
6 lbs jam	10 lbs tea
6 lbs honey	golden syrup
6 lbs marmalade	sugar
3 lbs peanut butter	

Medicine (JV)

We were fortunate in suffering no accidents or injuries, and the only illnesses experienced were of short duration. All the team members suffered at least one bout of diarrhoea and vomiting and, although these attacks were sudden and totally debilitating, recovery never took more than a couple of days. During the period in the mountains most suffered from persistent diarrhoea but not to such an extent that activities were ever limited by it.

These intestinal conditions were treated with Lomotil and metaclopramide. Both of these proved to have only limited effectiveness. It is felt that Dr. Peter Steele's "Everest Cocktail" may prove better than the first of these and cyclizine was certainly more effective than the latter. It would have been useful, however, to have carried cyclizine injection as well as tablets. The only significant omission from the medical list was an anti-spasmodic, such as propantheline. This became necessary for pain associated with an intestinal disorder.

In connection with the general good level of health which was maintained, it should be pointed out that we were

quite strict about water supplies. Except in base camp and on the mountains all water was either boiled or treated with purifying tablets. Most of these tablets leave the water tasting like swimming-pool water, but it appears to have been worth putting up with this. All members took malaria prophylaxis regularly and none suffered any problems in this respect.

A feature of travel in Asia is the ceaseless requests for medical attention from local people. Many of the afflictions only developed with the first glimpse of an approaching European, and it is sometimes difficult to pass on without handing out something, even if it is only sweets. We were fortunate in having plenty of foil-wrapped aluminium hydroxide tablets, which proved to be an agreeable "treatment for all ills," which also looked impressive. These tablets coincided with the most common complaint in Badakshan Province, which was stomach trouble.

The following list is a summary, highlighting the items of most significance to an expedition of this kind.

Medical supplies

Large cotton dressings	
Sofra-tulle	10
Steripads	8
Surgeon's gloves	1 pair
Dextrose infusion	2 packs
Triangular bandage	1
Ophthalmoscope	1
Sphygmomanometer	1
Angiocaths	9
Airways	2
Spray dressing	1
Micropore tape	3 rolls
Aminophylline injection	10
Frusemide injection	5
Hydrocortisone injection	10
Sterile gauze swabs	9
Alcin	2 boxes
Pripsyn powder	4 boxes
Strepsils	16 boxes
Cetavlex cream	5 tubes
Bonjela	2 boxes
Dalmane 15 (Flurazepam)	500
Inflatable splints	2
Suture set	1
Polymyacin spray	1
Fortral injection	10
Erythrocin injection	3
Chloramphenicol eye drops	2 bott.
Benzylpenicillin	5
Penicillin V 250 mg	500 tabs.
Tetracycline 250 mg	500 tabs.
Pentazocine 25 mg	500 tabs.
Prognanil	1000 tabs
Electrosol	200 tabs.
Paracetamol	1000 tabs.
Velband	9
Gypsona	12
Moleskin	3
Syringes (various)	18
Band Aid	30
Butterfly	4
Hypodermics	21
Stethoscope	1
Torch	2
Cyclizine 50 mg	200 tabs
Septrin 480 mg	200 tabs.
Medi-swabs	100
Lignocaine injection	20
" with adrenaline	20
Maxilon injection	30
Naloxone	6
Piriton	10
Solprin	500 tabs.
Salkutamol	
Frusemide	
Hibitane concentrate	10
Uvistat cream	
Uvistat lip salve	

Acknowledgements and accounts

Income

Mount Everest Foundation	£ 150
British Mountaineering Council	150
The Dyson Fund	50
The Gilchrist Educational Trust	50
Greater Manchester Council	400
BBC-TV (North-west)	250
Manchester University Student Health Centre	15
His Grace the Duke of Devonshire	50
Sir Arthur Armitage (University of Manchester)	200
Mr J Drinkall	100
Miss V R Johnson	50
Mrs P Baldwin	10
Mr G N C Flint	10
Professor M Irving (Salford A H A)	10
Mr G H Scriven	25
Mr C E Young	10
Colonel M Henley	
Mr & Mrs S Keller	
Mr N King	
Dr S Towneley	
Ringway Round Table	
Hedges Frozen Foods Ltd (Mr J Armstrong)	
Lancashire Bedding & Equipment Ltd	
N S S (Mr Mills)	
Weaste Meat Co Ltd (Mr B Thompson)	
Rank Xerox (UK) Ltd	
H N Nuttall Ltd	
Norman France & Son Ltd	
George Brown (NW) Ltd	
	combined total
	38
	300
	50
	10
	10
	1938.00
Total sponsorship	£1938.00
Team members' contributions (6x £200)	£1200.00
Bank interest	21.51
	Total income
	£3159.51

Expenditure

Vehicle:	Insurance	£ 362.00	
	Carnet	6.48	
	Carnet re-insurance	182.00	
	Petrol (655 gallons)	340.00	
	Other	47.60	£ 938.08
Channel ferries			102.00
Hire of local trucks: 2 x Afs 8000			213.33
Porters:	17 @ Afs 600, + 150 (out)		
	Afs 1600 + 150 (return)		
	total Afs 12100		161.33
Guide fees:	44 days @ US \$ 20 per day,		
	less 20% discount; total \$ 704		391.11
Hotel & camping fees:			32.13
Road tolls in Afghanistan			5.73
Visas:	Afghanistan: entry £6.00		
	Afghanistan: extension £8.00		
	Bulgaria: transit £41.30		55.30
Food:	in UK	£319.98	
	abroad	£ 97.46	417.44
Household items and consumables:			25.45
Climbing equipment:			100.31
Theodolite hire (RGS) for 3 months			39.00
Insurance:	medical, rescue, property, etc.		215.00
Administration:	paper & printing	£ 41.53	
	telephone calls	10.00	
	post, copies, etc	80.10	131.63
Report production:			129.40
Miscellaneous:			191.00
		total expenditure	£3148.24
		cash remaining	11.27

Acknowledgements

Many people are named below, and our thanks go to all of them for their help and encouragement. We hope that we have named everyone, though compiling these lists has been tricky simply because we have had so much kind support! Without this help we would have no subject for our report.

We must make special note of the continuing support of our Patrons, who have stuck with us through every uncertainty of the preparations. Also, we shall none of us ever forget the enthusiasm and advice of John Mills: his death two months after our return to the UK was a loss to many as well as ourselves. To us and to many young climbers from the University he gave added support by allocating a grant from the Dyson Fund of which he was a trustee; and he and his department kindly acted our *poste-restante*.

Securicor made what can only be described as a rescue, when we found ourselves without any vehicle only six weeks from departure. Such enthusiasm, generosity and prompt action were quite overwhelming.

We must also recall the efforts of Bob Wilkins, who was involved in dreaming up the Expedition in the first place, but was unfortunately unable to come with us in the end. Finally, we must thank our families and close friends for putting up with two years of suspense and countless periods of organised havoc.

Sponsors making gifts in kind

Securicor Ltd: loan of vehicle and spares
Mr Peter Smith, Chairman
Mr Ron Smith, Transport Manager
Mr Tony Everett, Transport Manager (London)
Mr Ernest Joyce, Publicity Consultant

St Bartholomew's Hospital:

Special Trustees
Voluntary Board
Students Union

Capt. & Mrs J H Evans Hindu Kush maps
Mr D La Rocque, American insurance
International Underwriters

Spicer Cowan Ltd paper for printing
Mc Vitie & Price Ltd. biscuits
Tate & Lyle Ltd sugar & syrup
The Nestle Co Ltd instant coffee
Libby, McNeil & Libby Ltd fruit drinks
Unigate Ltd dried milk
Kellogg Co GB Ltd fruit drink powders
Wrigley Co Ltd chewing gum
Bowater Scott Corp Ltd toilet tissue
Cussons, Sons & Co Ltd toilet soap
T Slater (Quilts) Ltd sleeping bags & clothing
Sprayway Ltd waterproof clothing
Sinclair Radionics Ltd quartz clock
ICI Plastics plastic sacks
J J Cochrane Ltd packaging material
Thwaites Breweries Ltd tee-shirts
Black & Edgington Ltd flags
Wellcome Foundation Ltd medical supplies
Roche Products Ltd " "
ICI Pharmaceuticals Division " "
Boots Co Ltd " "
Reckitt & Colman
Keeler Instruments Ltd medical instruments
W B Pharmaceuticals Ltd sunscreen & lipsalve
Mr & Mrs Wilkins foodstuffs

Other suppliers

BMC Services Ltd insurance: property & medical
Baggott Evans & Co Ltd motor insurance broking
National Westminster Bank Ltd,
Manchester University
Precinct Centre banking facilities
Richard Holt Travel Service travel bookings
KWT Printing Services Ltd printing
Colne Filmsetting Ltd IBM typesetting
Halford Shead & Co carnet re-insurance

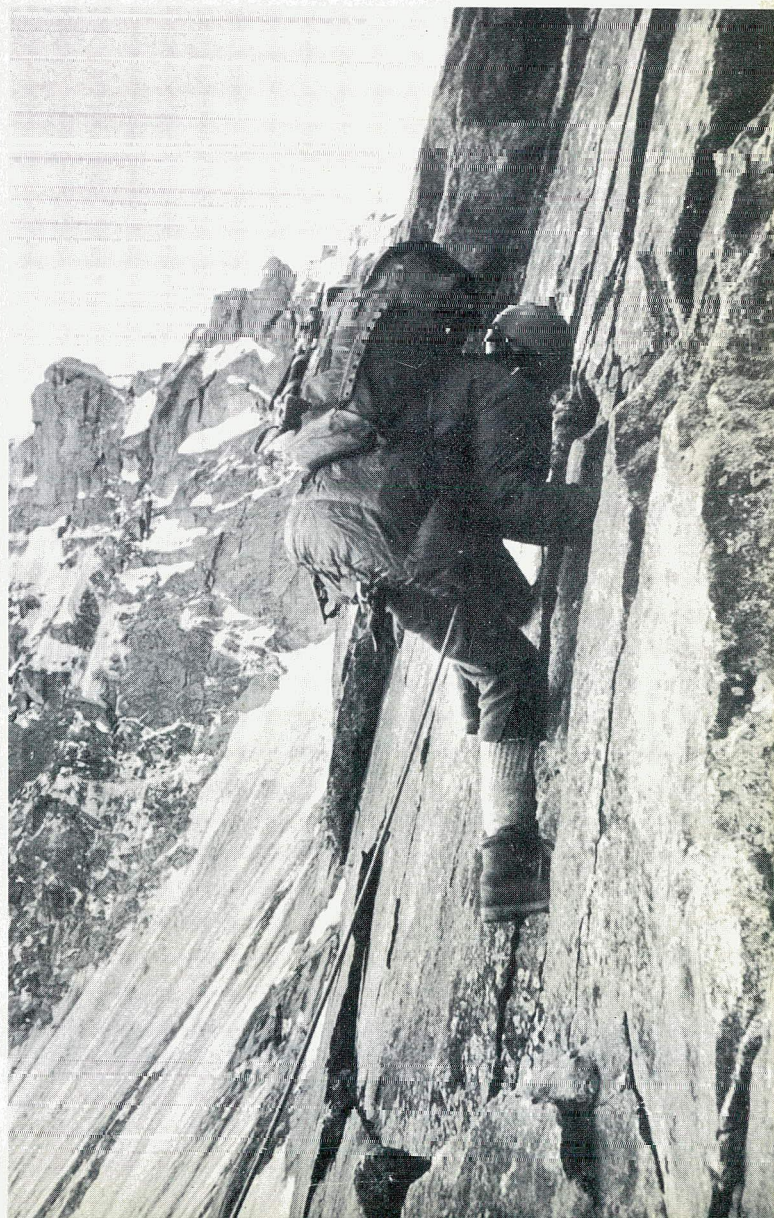
Help and Information

Our Patrons
the late Prof John Mills University of Manchester
University of Manchester School of Architecture
University of Manchester Medical School
University of Manchester Dept of Civil Engineering
University of Manchester Communications Office
Mr Michael Amor Alpine Garden Society
Dr Ron Knight St Bartholomew's Hospital
Miss Davies " "
Mr David Jones " "
Foreign & Commonwealth Office London
British Embassy Kabul
Afghan Embassy London
Mr & Mrs Yusuf Salehi Kabul
Mr Arif Akbery (Guide) Kabul
Mr Noor Mohammed Kabul
Mr M E Yunnis Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, Kabul
Mr M O Seradj Afghantour, Kabul
Mr Arthur McBryan Kabul
The Alpine Club Library London
Royal Geographical Society London
BMC Equipment Pool Birmingham
Manchester Chamber of Commerce & Industry
BBC Radio Manchester
Manchester Evening News
Mr Bob Stoodley Manchester Garages
Mr Alan Tritton Barclays Bank Ltd
Mr George Steele Watford
Mrs Steele Huddersfield
Mr Colin Laycock Manchester Business School
Mr R Gray Manchester
Mr Peter Wiles UMIST Physics Dept
Mr Peter Boardman Manchester
Mr Peter Holden Nottingham
Mr Michael Kearns Manchester City Magistrates
Courts
Dr John Chapman University of Manchester
Mr Jerzy Wala Krakow, Poland
Mr Thomas Trubswetter Rosenheim, Germany
Dr Adolf Diemberger Salzburg, Austria
Bury Technical College Lancashire
Architects' Co-Partnership, Inc Potters Bar
Dr Robert Wilkins Manchester

Report typeset by Colne Filmsetting Ltd., West Drayton, and
printed by KWT Printing Services, London WC2, on
paper donated by Spicer Cowan Ltd.

Back cover pictures:

top: 83 at right, and Sad Ishtarag beyond.
left: Ian G on 86, with 89 and 92 beyond.
right: Ian N on Sare Kalan (92).



Manchester University Hindu Kush Expedition 1977

Department of Physiology The Stopford Building University of Manchester Manchester M13 9PL England

Patrons His Grace the Duke of Devonshire PC MC JP VL LLD Chancellor of the University
Sir Arthur Armitage MA LLD Vice-Chancellor of the University
Lord Bowden MA PhD MScTech FIEE FIEEE Principal of UMIST
Manchester University Mountaineering Club

PRELIMINARY REPORT - September 1977
for limited distribution to Patrons and major sponsors

All the members of the team returned to Britain on 12 September, exactly 11 weeks after departure. The Expedition can be summarised as both successful and trouble-free.

The team travelled to and from Afghanistan by road, taking 13 days on the outward journey and 12 on the return. The Ford Transit van loaned by Securicor Ltd covered a total of 11 500 miles, and suffered only one minor fault. The vehicle was taken only halfway from Kabul, the Afghan capital, to the climbing area; the rest of the journey was done in a hired four-wheel-drive truck over very rough roads.

Eight days were lost in Kabul obtaining ratification of permissions. The group was accompanied into the mountains by a "guide" provided by the Afghan Tourist Organisation. His main function was as an interpreter, and he also proved helpful and friendly. Seventeen porters were hired to move the food and equipment from the village of Eshkashem to base camp, a journey of about fifteen miles. Four and a half weeks were spent in base camp, during which time the weather was generally fine and predictable.

It became clear at the start that the Qalat valley offered more than enough good climbing to keep us occupied throughout our stay. An advance camp was established six miles up this valley from base. The fine weather allowed a considerable number of climbs, including a variety of terrain and grades of difficulty. (Numbers prefixed KZ in the following list are Wala's peak numbers in the series for the Zebak area).

continued...

LIST OF ASCENTS:

Col between KZ70 & KZ72, from the west.

KZ70 (5070metres) & KZ 71 (5060m): short ice-climb & rock traverse.

Col between KZ 94 & KZ 278 (col 5200m): 250m ice-face, AD inf.

Attempt on KZ83: reached col (5150m) between KZ83 & KZ85, by 500m-high ice-face.

Qalat (KZ75, 5400m): solo rock climb, 900m, D sup.

KZ99 (5045m): rock climb, 500m, F.

KZ89 (5600m): easy-angled ice-face, 550m, PD.

KZ88 (5250m): steep ice-face, 600m, D inf.

Kalisa I Sangi (KZ100, 5640m): mixed terrain, 500m, PD.

Attempt on Sad Ishtragh (KZ62, 5859m): reached 5550m: snow, 500m, PDsup.

Sare Kalan (KZ92, 5650m): rock, 900m, TD, via NE face. (This peak has in the past been referred to as "Warhead").

Attempt on KZ86 (5400m): reached col between KZ86 & KZ88 (col 5200m): ice, 500m, AD inf.

The choice and quantity of food and equipment proved to be adequate without being excessive. A comprehensive medical kit was taken, but fortunately little was used. Ailments were mainly limited to stomach disorders and dysentery.

Additional tasks of the Expedition included surveying, filming, collecting plant-seeds, and a study on goitre in the local population. All of these were accomplished successfully, but the results of the filming and the surveying will not be available for some time.

In financial terms, the Expedition has broken even up to the time of writing, but there will be some further expenditure on administration and printing a full report. In particular, the cost of the porters and hired transport was much higher than anticipated. The total cash budget has been roughly £3500, excluding the vehicle and gifts in kind.

A detailed, illustrated report will be published shortly.

Our grateful thanks go to all our sponsors.

