

**THE BRITISH  
BEUSTEN GLACIER EXPEDITION 1994**

## Contents

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Expedition Members
- 1.3 Itinerary
- 2. Maps & Objectives
- 3. The account
- 4. Cost per person
- 5. Food
- 6. Medical Report
- 7. Travel
- 8. Equipment
- 9. Comments
- 10. Acknowledgements

## 1.1 Introduction

I laid the foundations for the trip by visiting and climbing in the area in the summers of '89 and '91. On both occasions I'd seen many unclimbed peaks, however there was one in particular that would always come to mind. The summer of '94 seemed like a good opportunity to try and "lay the worm to rest."

From the summer of '93 onwards, I began to gather a team together. I really only involved people who I thought would get along together once we were out there. As it happened they all had something in common; they were going to the Himalaya for the first time, and for everyone except Jerry and myself, it would be their first real taste of the High-life.

So it was really going to be an expedition of discovery, with some adventure thrown in for good measure. With everyone returning home safely, "Insh Alah", (God willing)!

The grants we recieved from both the Mount Everest Foundation and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland were instrumental in two ways. The first being the obvious financial help, and the second being the endorsement of our plans and the encouragement to GO.

## 1.2 Expedition members

**George Armstrong** - Leader and expedition doctor

Age 31 - Veterinary surgeon

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe and N.America. The Peruvian Andes in '87, and the Karakorum Himalaya of Pakistan in '89 and '91.

Address: Lunton Hill Farm, Woodland, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL13 5NF.

**Dr. Jeremy Parker**

Age 28 - Medical Parasitologist

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe. The Peruvian Andes in '87.

Address: 146 Hyndland Road, Glasgow.

**Rob Lee** Deputy Leader

Age 27 - Geologist

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe.

Address: 37 Bentinck Street, 2nd right, Kelvingrove, Glasgow, G3 7TS.

**Ed Shakley**

Age 26 - Electronics engineer

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe.

Address: 109 Raeberry Street, Glasgow

**Sally Smith**

Age 32 - Surveyor

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe and

N.America. Trekking in the Gangotri region of India.

Address: 18 Ravenswood Road, Heaton, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne,  
NE6 5TU.

**Iain Miller**

Age 28 - Veterinary surgeon

Previous mountaineering experience:

Rock climbing and mountaineering in Europe.

Address: 38 Mid Street, Keith, Invernesshire.

## 1.3 Itinerary

**July**

9th & 10th The Gathering.

11th Fly to Islamabad from Manchester.

12th & 13th Travel to Skardu by bus.

14th Skardu.

15th Travel to Hushé by jeep.

16th Hushé.

17th & 18th Trek to base camp Spanser.

20th Convert "Jog's House" into 2nd base camp.

21st Bridge construction.

23rd Establish advance base camp.

24th Recce approach to peak.

25th Return to Spanser.

26th - 30th 1st unsuccessful attempt on the peak.

**August**

31st - 5th 2nd successful attempt on "Jog's peak"

6th & 7th Retrieve equipment.

8th & 9th Move to K7 base camp.

10th Walk to the head of the Charakusa Glacier.

11th - 13th Unsuccessful attempt on Sulo peak.

14th & 15th Successful attempt on Nasar (Pyramid) peak.

16th Return to Hushé.

17th - 23rd Explore the area around Hushé.

24th Return to Skardu.

25th & 26th Try to fly out of Skardu.

27th Return to Rawalpindi by bus.

28th Return to Manchester from Islamabad via Moscow.

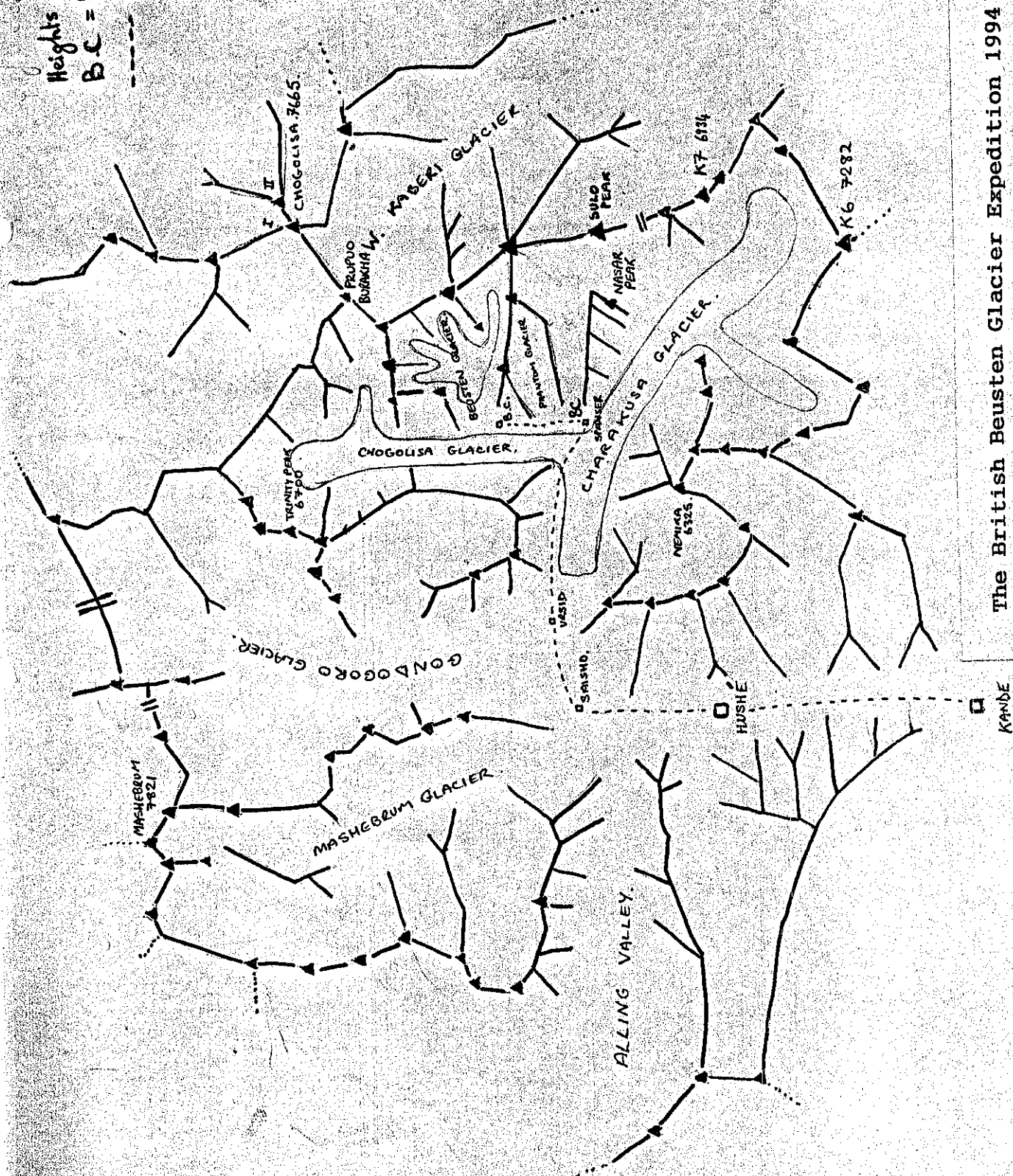
29th The End.

## 2. Maps & Objectives.

Heights in meters

B.C. = Base Camp

--- ACCESS ROUTE



The British Beusten Glacier Expedition 1994

- ① PARANTHA PEAK c. 5,300m
- ② POINTED PEAK c. 5,400m
- ③ CRESTED PEAK c. 5,800m
- ④ GIMBIA PEAK c. 5,900m
- ⑤ TOWER PEAK c. 5,900m
- ⑥ PATA KHA c. 6,000m
- ⑦ DEU PEAK c. 6,000m
- ⑧ RAVEN PEAK c. 5,700m
- ⑨ JOG'S PEAK c. 6,000m.

ROUTE

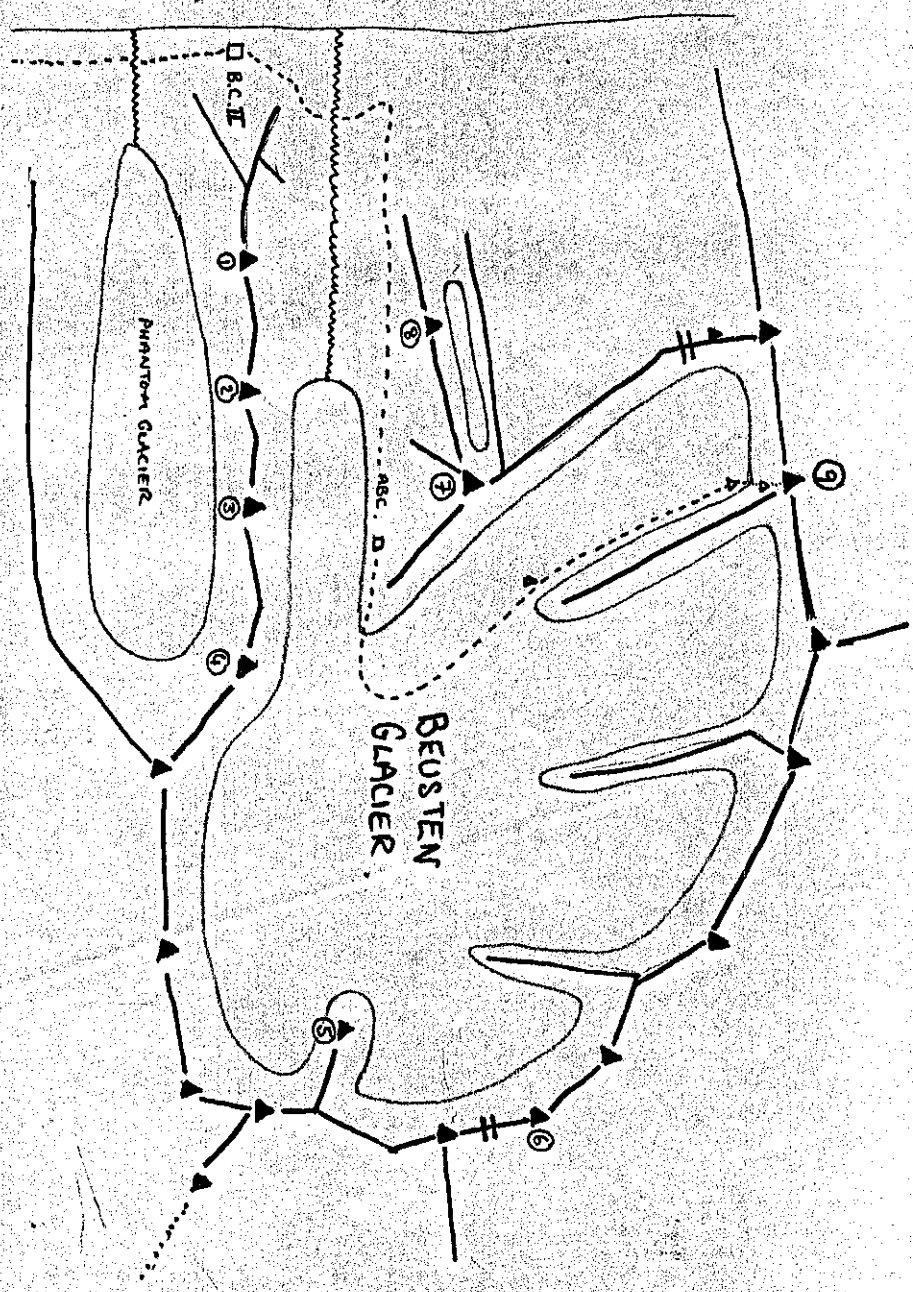
B.C.II SITE OF BASE CAMP, II "JOG'S HOUSE"

ABC. SITE OF ALIQUATE BASE CAMP.

A CAMPS.

= COL.

# CHOGOLISH GLACIER



The British Beusten Glacier Expedition 1994

The British Beusten Glacier Expedition 1994

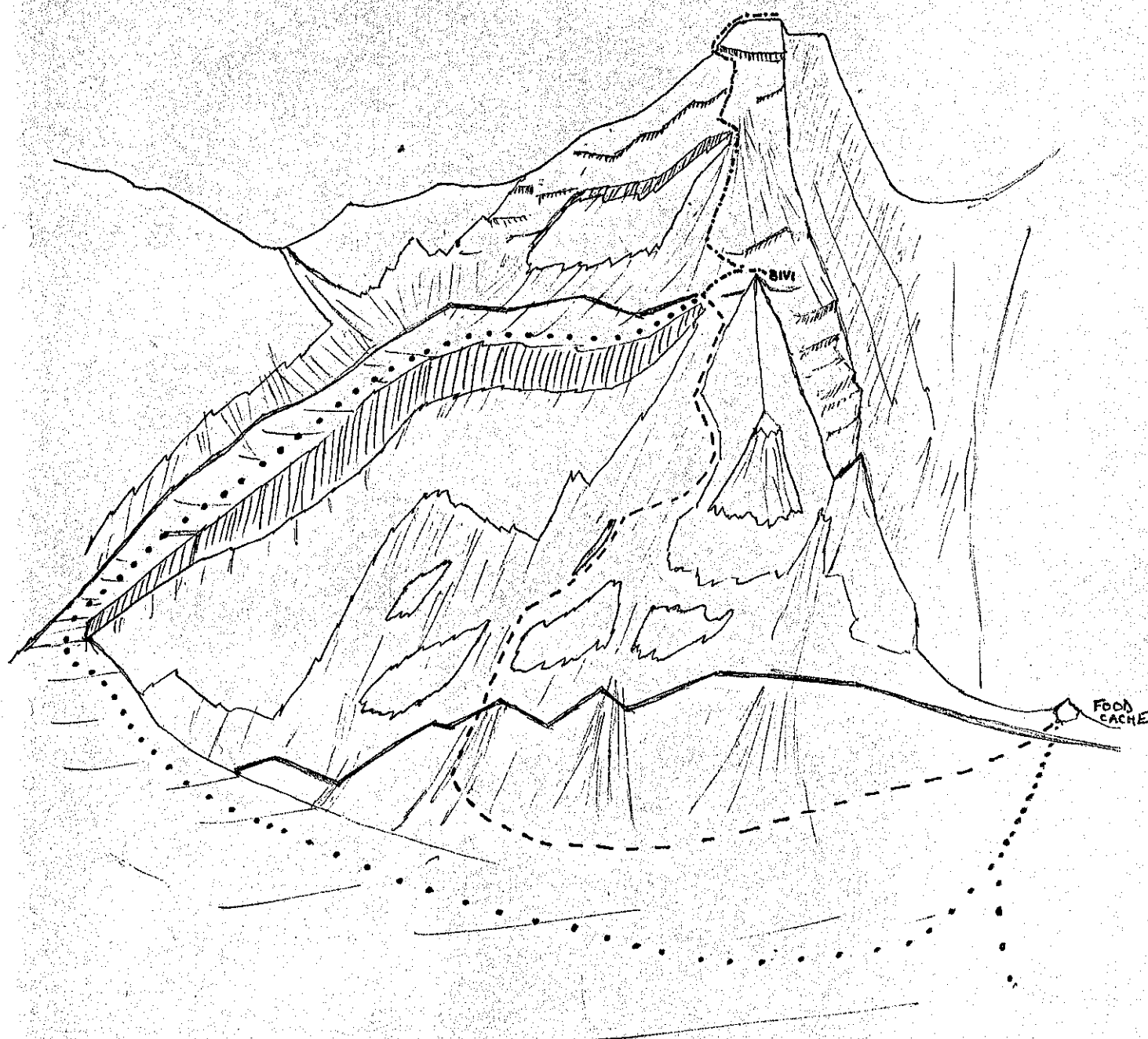
CHOGOLISA.

PRUPUO BURAKHA.





# The British Beusten Glacier Expedition 1994

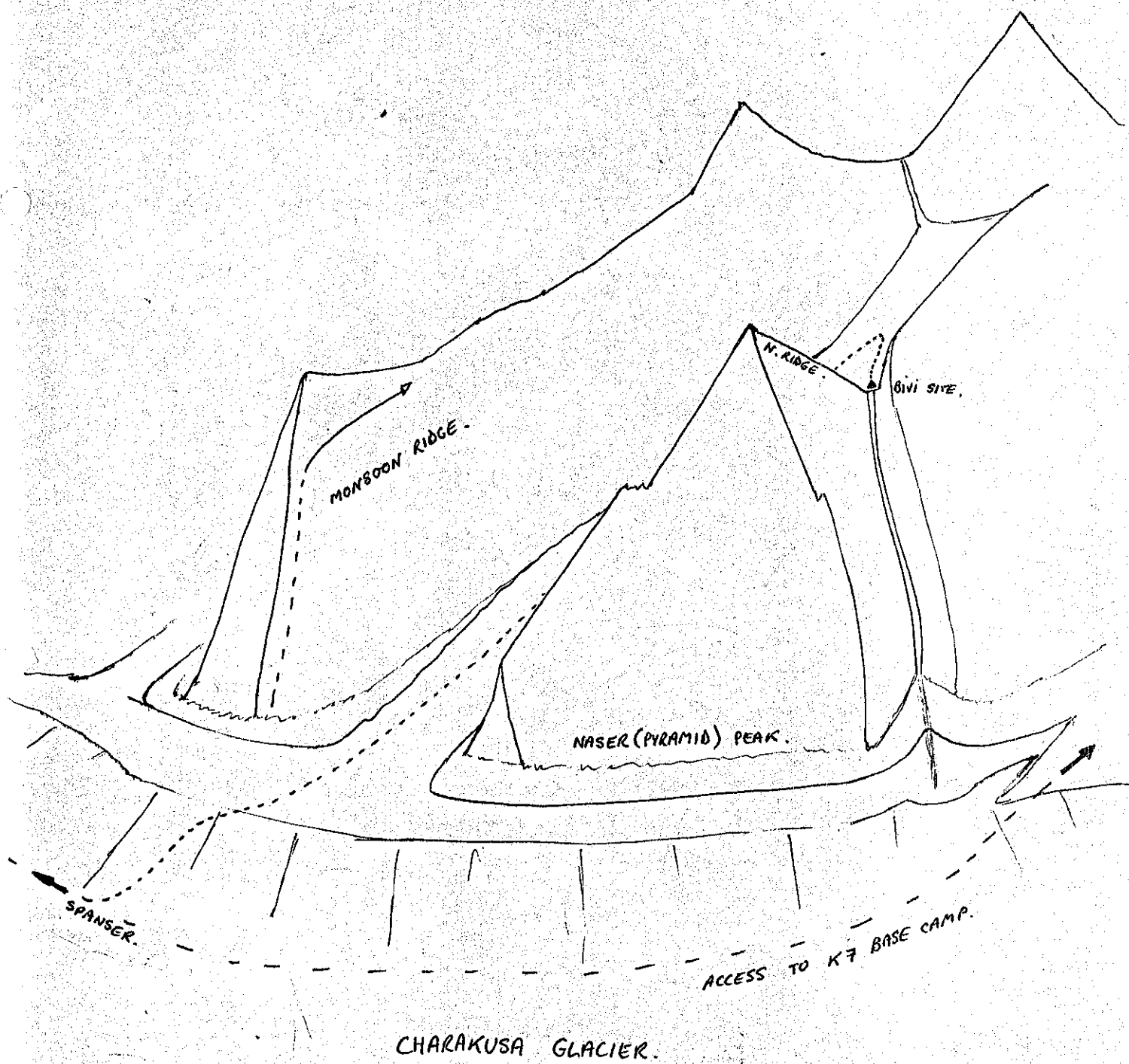


- ASCENT ROUTE
- DESCENT ROUTE

506



The British Beusten Glacier Expedition 1994



### 3. The account

The expedition began the day before we were due to fly, in the back garden of Punk and Zoe's, in Stockport. Special thanks goes to Zoe for providing endless supplies of bacon butties while we were doing our last minute packing.

When you do your final packing, always aim to have too much, so you end up leaving the excess behind. As it's no fun forgetting something at the last minute. However don't worry. Just make sure that you have your passport, plane tickets and money. As you can buy most anything out there, although you'll have to spend time looking for it.

Thanks also goes to the P.I.A. check-in staff at Manchester airport for making our journey to the plane a comfortable one. Meaning, we got everything in the hold without having to wear our plastic boots etc. However, a tip is to always expect the worst when travelling, then you'll never get too depressed.

Arriving in Islamabad always comes as a shock to your senses, first the heat and humidity as you step off the plane, and then the smell, which is heightened by the people packed into the airport. Be cool! Grab a trolley, grab your gear, then sit on it, and don't let any porters near it.

Once you step out of the baggage hall, it can become a bit of a nightmare. So, I asked everyone to stay in the hall until we brought a taxi back. It's alot cheaper to walk out of the airport and grab a taxi off the 'Link road'. In fact, we took a taxi for 30R into Rawalpindi and booked a room in the Flashmans Hotel. Then walked round the corner and hired a couple of Suzukis to return to the airport and pick up everyone and the gear.

On our return we stayed in the Hotel Holiday, which is just behind the Pearl Continental. This was a great place to stay. Good clean rooms with showers and the all important air-conditioning, and all for about R200 each. The added bonus was their own minibus which would transport you to and from the airport for about R150.

Unfortunately Flashman's has seen better days. About the only thing we can recommend is their food, being cheap with no after effects.

There are several advantages to staying in this part of town. The most important being you have the P.I.A. office a few blocks down the road, that is within walking distance. You have to confirm your internal flight before mid-day the day before. If the flights haven't gone for a few days, ask how large the backlog is. This will let you know if you'll have to hire a bus, or if you're brave, mad or skint you can go on a service bus. Anyway, the bus station is equally close by.

This area of town is quite commercial. If you want to see a very commercial area then it's worth grabbing a taxi and going to the Raj bazaar. You'll invariably get yourself lost, don't worry, as any taxi will get you back to the hotel. It is worth buying some of your food from 'Pindi, especially if the Karakorum Highway (KKH) has been hit with landslides preventing the resupply of food to Skardu, e.g. we arrived one year to find no flour in the town, I saw the empty stores. Don't worry too much about the excess baggage that you'll have on the plane; I think the cost is 1% of the first class fare per kilo. However it's no problem if you hire a bus, the bigger bus the better i.e. have a seat each so you can try and make a protective nest to try and get some sleep in.

The best reason for staying here is that after all your rushing round you can go and enjoy the air conditioning in the Pearl Continental, and treat yourself to an ice cream in the foyer. You can do this in the heat of the day, and in the evening you can have a meal in one of their restaurants for about R300 a head. Black tie is optional!

Don't forget to cash your money for the expedition here. You get a better exchange rate than in Skardu. It's up to you if you want to do it on the black market. I would advise against it for various reasons. The most useful notes to get are 100R, as the villagers can change them easier than the 500R notes.

For international flights, the P.I.A. office is in the same building as for the local flights, and there is a B.A. office in the Pearl Continental.

I'm afraid I can't tell you anything about the Ministry of Tourism and the acquiring of permits etc, as the Hushé area remained open when we arrived. In '94, they tried to close the area, but pressure from the trekking companies and the practicalities of implementing such a radical change in such a small space of time, had them cancel the rules by the time we arrived. Therefore, on arrival, I would recommend you ask someone in the tourist trade as to the situation for your respective area.

In 'Pindi we were touted for business by a Mr. Rozi Ali, of Siachen Travel & Tours. His office is in Skardu and somehow he'd heard of our arrival through the 'grapevine. I wasn't sure about hiring his services. However in the end it is something worth considering. I can certainly recommend him. Where he came into his own was smoothing our travel from 'Pindi to Hushé, sorting out the porters, and then getting us back to 'Pindi.

Please do not neglect your responsibility in obtaining insurance for your porters. This needs to be sorted out in 'Pindi. I have to admit to letting Rozi sort this out. I think any tourist agency will help you sort this out. It cost us £36 to insure our porters. Accidents can unfortunately happen and bear in mind what would happen to the victims family!

It is worthwhile photocopying a sheet containing all the expedition members details, e.g; name, nationality, passport number, date of expiry, issuing office, Pakistan visa number, expiry date, issuing office, D.O.B., home address, occupation, and anything else you can think of. The reason for this is that some of the many police checkpoints will accept this, thus speeding your way along the KKH, if you're in a bus of course. Otherwise you'll have to repeatedly get off the bus to sign their register. This is fine during the day, but a pain at night when you could be asleep.

There is only one important requirement of the bus you will be travelling in, and that is it must have a very, very loud horn. If it hasn't, don't hire it, get another one. The reason is that you'll be horrified the way they drive round the many blind hairpin bends without stopping as the driver tries to get to Skardu as quick as possible. You know how fast 'good' climbers drive, well all of these guys must be leading E8! However, on a serious note, it's worth checking that they have a second driver. I'm not sure, but I think they need one by law, for that particular journey. Be warned, it's 24 hours minimum, and the scariest most amazing journey I've ever done.

We accidentally set off for Skardu in the evening, as the bus was late. This worked to our advantage in that we passed through the Indus Gorge in daylight. However some people would disagree, and prefer not to see the terrain we going over. The Indus Gorge tells you what kind of mountains lie ahead!

Be sure to take plenty of bottled drinks and snacks with you for the journey. There are set stops on the way, but these are at the drivers discretion; few and far between. However, if you've hired the bus then you can tell him to stop when you would like.

Do not take photographs of the bridges.

In Skardu we stayed at the Indus Motel. It is run by a very friendly and helpful young man; Ghulam Muhammad. You must order your meals in advance, as he doesn't store any food. This is actually very good as everything is cooked fresh. I would advise getting rooms on the second floor, as it gets pretty noisy in the ground floor dining area at night. Plus the fact that they're cheaper. There's also a great place to swim in the river out the back.

Skardu is a great place, it's like being on a film set for a spaghetti western. It literally is a frontier town. This is where you will buy everything you need for the coming weeks. The only thing I bought in Hushé was our kerosene. This was to prevent spillage on our jeep journey.

The best fast food joint in town is the Hunza Inn. You can now eat and watch satellite TV at the same time. I have mixed feelings about the spread of TV.

The only thing you should do before leaving Skardu, is to leave your plane tickets with someone who could confirm your seats back to 'Pindi. You should also have someone confirm your International flight at least 72 hours before it's due to leave. We left Rozi Ali in charge.

We left in a jeep the following morning. It's worthwhile knowing that one jeep would carry 5-6 people, with kit. Also, keep plenty of soft things unpacked to lie on top of the gear in the jeep, to make the journey as comfortable as possible. I found the most comfortable spot to be hanging off the rear of the jeep.

The journey takes about 8-12 hours, depending on road conditions and break downs. So take juice and snacks with you, although there are plenty of snack bars on the road. If the weather is hot and sunny, then I would advise covering up, to prevent heatstroke.

Within Hushé, there are several walled camp sites, which are very good for keeping things secure. In a way, the camp sites work well, in keeping the foreigners away from the villagers, and vice versa. Leaving an effort to be made to "bridge the gap". For those with no tent, there is the Masherbrum Hotel.

It is almost essential now to take a cook/camp guard, to protect your base camp against theft. You will be surprised to learn that the threat comes from the increasing number of couples trekking in the area. So be warned, if you see a seasoned traveller, just bear in mind how that person has been able to travel for so long!

You will be able to hire all the porters you'll need from Hushe. The word soon gets out that there's an expedition in town. Please keep the loads to a maximum of 25kg. The porters are not daft, and know what 25kg feels like. This is the first time you will meet the porters and first impressions count. So a tip is to deliberately make some lighter loads. Have you tried carrying 25kg at altitude!

You need to be firm but fair. Just bear in mind that if you have any accidents on the hill, you'll almost certainly need the aid of the locals. The nearest medical facilities are in Kapulu.

The locals love to play volleyball.

There are some springs in Hushé. We treated everything with iodine, but next time I would seriously consider taking a filter.

We were going to Spantser, which is at the junction of the Charakusa and Chogolisa glaciers. It is three porter stages from Hushé, but only takes two easy days walking to get there. It is important to find out how many porter stages it is to reach your destination before you leave Hushé, as it helps you prepare for paying them on arriving at base camp. Once at base camp, there'll always be one trying it on for

more money. Who can blame him? Don't be intimidated, they'll respect you more for sticking to the official rate. You also need to think of the future expeditions, and the hassle they will receive if you give in.

Arriving at base camp with everyone and your equipment, as it were intact, is the crux of the expedition. It's the time when you can forget about travelling, and begin on the real reason for being here, mountaineering.

We began by making base camp into a place called home. Making walls for a kitchen and mess tent are a great way to begin acclimatization. It's essential to have plenty of tarpaulins and string for the job. The most important job is to construct a toilet that's big and comfortable enough for everyone to use. This will help safeguard the health of the expedition, and others visiting the area in the future. Also dig a rubbish pit, and burn the rubbish regularly. Store all your food in water and Raven proof containers. We had real problems with the birds on the mountain, and would recommend taking a small tough plastic container on the hill; strong enough to withstand the Raven's bill.

The most important luxuries to take with you are books and music. These will help stimulate your mind when not doing anything.

We acclimatized by establishing camps towards our objective. Our first camp being the shelter that I built five years ago. The locals had called it Jog's house after myself. Two tarpaulins saw this turn into quite a nice secondary base camp.

Next we were faced with what turned out to be the crux of the climb, the crossing of the outflow of the Beusten Glacier. Previous years you could easily cross it in the morning, with problems in the afternoon caused by meltwater. I knew there was going to be problems, as this year had been plagued with "bad weather". That is, it was too hot. We subsequently found that there was no névé below 5500m, it had all been melted. To get on the north side of the moraine we were faced with two choices, descend 200m onto the main Chogolisa Glacier, or build a bridge. We elected to try the latter first, and succeeded in constructing a very effective tyrolean traverse. This opened the way to the Beusten Glacier and the very beautiful site for advance base.

When establishing camps, our bodies seemed to agree with a three hour walk and a 1500ft height gain. Then when we were acclimatized, we were able to leapfrog between camps.

From advance base, we were in perfect position to explore the upper reaches of the Beusten Glacier. We took a day to reconnoitre an approach to the mountain, and discovered that the heat had opened up the crevasses, making the walk relatively safe and straightforward.

Our first attempt ended in defeat. We had underestimated the mountain and the conditions. That is, it was a lot steeper than it looked, and the hard ice made climbing slower. However, the worst problem was the risk of stonefall. The heat had melted the névé, leaving the rocks that were in the snow perched on top of the ice, waiting for the sun to loosen them.

With the above knowledge we had another go. With an earlier start, we gained our high point quickly. However, the ice got steeper, and our sacs got heavier. So it was later than expected when Jerry, Ed and myself crawled onto the safety of the shoulder at half height. The route to the top looked very straight forward. That night we set off for the top. There was no névé, but the ice was excellent. However, Ed decided to turn back, as he wasn't happy about soloing. It was this decision that enabled Jerry and myself to move fast enough to get to the top and back down safely. Otherwise, Jerry and myself would not have forced Ed to go down, and carried on pitching the route. It was a valuable lesson learnt. The slope was deceptively steep, with a 50ft vertical section cutting the rock band near the top. By this point we were absolutely knackered, but confident that we could make it to the top. We had to stop to rest and drink, we'd taken a stove with us instead of carrying water. There was one point after that where our hearts sank, when we saw the summit had a bergschrund. At this point we were in no fit state for climbing radically steep ice. Thankfully it merged into a snow slope on the west ridge. It was quite an amazing feeling to see K2 as we crested the ridge, but that was nothing to the emotion felt when we both walked onto the summit together. It was uncanny how it was crystal clear and not a breath of wind. It has to rank as the best moment of my life in the mountains. We could have stayed there all day, however, the nagging in my mind to descend got louder the longer we stayed. I have yet to do a pleasurable descent, although it's great to be going downhill. If it had been névé we could have "walked" off. However, it was ice, so we abseiled it all for speed and therefore safety. The only nice thing that happened while being bombarded by ice sloughing off, was that I spied a way off from the bivi, avoiding the dangerous slopes we'd come up. This meant getting to the safety of the bivi was as good as getting off the mountain. Ed had been watching us and had got water melting and a brew waiting for our return. We were actually looking forward to tomorrow. The next day saw us make one abseil onto the start of the serac shelf which stretches across the whole face, eventually flowing into an easy angled ramp at its western edge. There was some danger from the slopes above, but we could move very quickly on this ground. It would be a better way to get to the shoulder. It was a magic feeling to get down safely and then meet everyone at advance base. It had been a superb team effort.

While we were on the route, Rob, Sally and Iain went to the col, just to the south of Pata Kha. They were a little concerned when they saw three head torches ascending in the night, and then only two specks descending in the day. On their descent, they'd very kindly left a stash of Kendal



mint cake in one of the cairns we'd built, to mark the route across the glacier.

The new Swiss map (which is excellent) names the Beusten Glacier as the Chubuger Dakusa Vestein Glacier. It also has Jog's peak marked @ c. 6700m. Judging from the surrounding peaks of Prupuo Baraka @ 6867m, and Pata Kha @ 6000m (which I'd climbed in 1989), we put the summit at just over 6000m.

On returning to advance base, we decided to clean the mountain and return to base at Spantser. After having dismantled Jog's bridge, and Jog's house, we decided that the only thing missing was Jog's peak.

We celebrated our summit success by opening a specially prepared food sac, only to be opened after someone had gained the top of something. I fully recommend its use on an expedition, it was a really nice surprise.

After this, the expedition concentrated on objectives around base camp. Sally teamed up with an American climber, Todd Gordon, and made a first ascent of a 20 pitch route on the ridge directly opposite Spantser, on the south side of the Charakusa glacier and went free at HVS/E1. Rob and George had an unsuccessful attempt on Sulo peak, because of the high risk of stone fall. To round the trip off, Rob, Ed, and Sally, made the summit of Naser (Pyramid) peak via the classic north ridge.

We all returned to Hushé, and enjoyed the hospitality of the people who we'd made friends with during our stay. It was a nice way to wind down the trip. It gave us a chance to share in the lives of the locals, to get to know them better, and get to meet their families. They even had us helping to bring the harvest in.

There were no problems returning to 'Pindi, except we had to return on the bus. Therefore I can conclude that it had been a very successful trip, as everyone returned home alive, well and a wee bit wiser.

A cautionary tale. We were in Hushé when a Japanese expedition passed through on its way out from K2. We couldn't help noticing one of the leaders reading a newspaper. All he had left on both hands were his thumbs and little fingers. It should be a warning to everyone that you have a responsibility to yourself as well as the others in your party. This is learned through respect for the environment and the people that live within it.

#### 4. Cost per person

Return flight (P.I.A.) Manchester to Islamabad...	£539
Communal food, equipment and insurance in the UK...	£ 69
Personal insurance.....	£189
Visa.....	£ 22
Taxis Rawalpindi.....	£ 2
Hotels Rawalpindi in + out.....	£ 24
Return bus journey to Skardu.....	£ 56
Hotels Skardu in + out.....	£ 15
Return Jeep journey to Hushé.....	£ 19
Insurance Porters.....	£ 6
Porters in + out.....	£128
Cooks.....	£ 42
Local food.....	£ 47
Guide service fee.....	£ 43
Airport tax (Islamabad).....	£ 4
Total.....	£1205

(This excludes the grants from the BMC and the MC of S, totalling £1250.)

## 5. Food

This is the most important item on the expedition. What you need is plenty of variety, and not to run short.

### FOOD FROM THE U.K.

Chocolate was the most important item. We calculated that we would consume two to three bars per day. In a way it was a guesstimate, and we ended up eating the last bar two days before leaving Hushé.

Twix, Mars bars, and Snickers.... All very good.

Plain chocolate seemed more palatable than milk. However the most popular was Cadbury's Fruit and nut, and Nestlé's Milky bar. We took some fudge bars, but they didn't go down too well although the \*Fingers of fudge might have been better because of their smaller size.

Traker bars were excellent.

Boiled sweets were a must.

Trail mix, raisens, salted peanuts, and roasted sunflower seeds were very good, eaten individually or mixed.

Birds Angel whip were great as a sweet, just add water. We took raspberry, strawberry, banana, with the best being butter-scotch. However, even better was Birds instant cheesecake mix.

Tins of Nescafé coffee were essential, beware of the lids flying off at altitude! Cadbury's drinking chocolate was popular. We also took a selection of herbal tea bags. We also took tins of Gatorade powder, which was excellent. Something like \*Complan would have been good, especially if someone wasn't feeling too well.

Tins of Peanut butter and jam were taken. The combination on chapattis was a sensation. Honey wasn't as good as we'd thought, \*golden syrup would have been better. I think I could also find a place for tubes of \*condensed milk.

Tins of tuna and corned beef were a welcome break from the dehydrated catering packs we took, which were sweet & sour chicken (too sweet), chicken supreme (good), and savory mince (O.K.).

The small packs of noodles were brilliant.

Tins of Cadbury's Smash potato were extremely tasty, suprising everyone.

Packet soups were the only thing we took too many of. Just take cup-a-soups, the more interesting flavours the better, and I think croutons adds variety.

Parmesan cheese was very good.

Garlic salt and mixed herbs were well used.

The small\*plastic sachets of tomato sauce and mustard would have been ideal for taking up the hill.

Note \*,these are items I would take in addition to what's been mentioned.The quantities I leave to work out for yourselves.A useful tip is to deflate any packaging,as it has the potential of bursting on its way to base camp.This is best done by using a pin and then sealing the hole with tape.

#### FOOD BOUGHT LOCALLY

It helps alot if you have a local to buy the staple foods, as the quality and type of food can vary.For example,the cook will know which spices are which.

Rice.

Flour for chapattis.It is also worth taking some chickpea flour to make pakora with.

Tins of peas and sweet corn.We didn't take enough.

Tins of fruit.These were a treat.

Tinned cheese.Try a can before buying too many.It's great for making cheese parathas.

Potatoes are essential for making chips.Onions and garlic are the other vegetables to get.Although you can get turnips at Hushé.

Sugar.Take plenty.

Salt.The baltis use alot of it in their teas.

Tea.Black for the 'milk tea',and green to make a herbal brew with cardamon pods.

Vegetable oil.Extremely important for the chips,parathas,and pakora.It's worth paying for the best,and avoid the local ghee.

Milk.The full fat powdered milk is wonderful,so take plenty.We used Nido,and came in tins and small packets.

Tomato ketchup.You can get bottles of it,and is a necessity to be able to eat the chips.

Mango chutney,and lime pickles.Try them out before getting.

Porridge oats for breakfast was very good.

Biscuits. We bought McVites Digestives, and Abbey crunch. The latter weren't too good. There were a good selection. Again try a few out. Peanut pic, were good.

The local jams and honey weren't as good as taking your own.

Eggs. These are worth taking up if you can buy any. There are often shortages.

### COOKING

If you hire a cook, they may have some of their own gear. Although it's recognised that pots, pans, pressure cookers and cookers, are perks of the job. However, ask their advice on what to buy. You'll need things like plates, washing basin. washing powder, pan scrubbers, rolling pin and board for chapattis. The size of the cooker is important, and take loads of spares. A 'hurricane' lamp is a nice luxury, again take spares. It's worth taking a radio cassette for the cook, to ease the boredom. A sheet to serve the food onto. Knives, forks and spoons. The bigger mug, the better. Insulated mugs are no good for warming your hands up. Tea strainer, and the bigger kettle the better. Take plenty of matches, and the locals love lighters. Take some sharp kitchen knives. You can buy some really nice pots, for climbing also, lightweight aluminium.

## 6. Medical Report.

Fortunately there were no serious illness on the trip. However, you should go well equipped, and with the feeling that you could cope with most situations. The reality is, that you are on your own. In the Hushé area it's unlikely that you'll get a helicopter.

See your local G.P. about getting your vaccinations up to date. You'll probably need Polio, Tetanus, Hepatitis, Typhoid, Meningitis, Japanese Encephalitis and anti-Malarials.

Diarrhoea is the commonest problem, leading to varying degrees of dehydration. We took powdered electrolyte to make up with water and drink. It is worth taking saline/glucose solution to administer via a drip (intravenously) for severe dehydration, and if the person is continuously vomiting. In a few cases it was Giardiasis, which must be treated promptly (sulphurous burps) with Metronidazole (Flagyl). For anti-diarrhoeals we had Immodium and Codeine phosphate.

For general respiratory infections we used Oxytetracycline.

Water purification was with Potable aqua (Iodine). Next time I would take out a filter to try. Common sense, boil the water and be very careful with hygiene.

The only altitude problems were with headaches. We had Aspirin, Paracetamol, Codeine, and Ibuprofen to choose from for analgesia. No one used Daranide, so I can't comment on its use, except to say there is no substitute for gradual acclimatization, and "listening" to what your body is telling you. We took along Dexamethasone injection and tablets in case of cerebral oedema, and Frusemide tablets for more generalized oedema.

It's important to have topical eye ointments for infections and trauma. Chloromycetin, and the Hydrocortisone version were taken, and Opthaine, which are local anaesthetic eye drops. Optrex eye wash would also be useful.

Surgical instruments and suture material were taken but not needed. Local anaesthetic for injection, and Temgesic sublingual tablets were taken for minor surgery.

Loads of bandages, dressings, and antiseptic creams were needed more for the locals than ourselves. The brighter coloured bandages the better, just for fun.

Take a good selection of syringes and needles, to use in the hospitals if need be.

I think that the sleeping tablets Tamazepam, were the most popular (most were consumed on the bus journey), as the altitude makes it very difficult to get some rest.

It would be useful to take some fibreglass casting material,

which sets by just soaking in water after about 3-5 minutes.

We had a medical kit at each camp, and carried a small one with us on Jog peak, with everyone knowing where to find things, and how to use them. It helps to keep instructions with each kit.

If you have any medical supplies unused, it would be good to donate them to the local doctors, explaining to them what their use and dosage is.

## 7. Travel.

### VISAS

You'll need to apply and pay £22 for one prior to departure. I know you can get one in London and Glasgow consulates.

### FLYING

I would recommend you fly direct to Islamabad. It is more expensive, but it's less stressful, and there's a lower chance of losing your kit.

If you have a little spare time, then I would buy your flight to Skardu locally, as it costs £20 return. Do not worry about excess baggage on the internal flight.

Make sure you turn up at the airport very early, allowing plenty of time to get through the crush of people. This applies to both internal and international flights.

### TAXIS

The cheapest taxis are the ones that wouldn't pass an M.O.T. The three wheelers are also very cheap. However the best compromise for getting about town are the Suzuki "buses". These are also ideal to hire for transporting a small amount of gear, for larger amounts of kit, do two journeys, or hire another one. The Holiday Motel had a Transit minibus with a roof rack that was surprisingly cheap to use to and from the airport.

### BUS

I've never been to the bus station in 'Pindi, but I've heard it's quite a place. The best way of getting there would be to get a taxi. NATCO and Mashabrum are the two companies that have regular services up the KKH. We hired a big bus for R16000 (R46 to the £), one way. We managed to hire the same bus back to 'Pindi for R12000. I don't know what it costs to hire a minibus, I would estimate R1000 per person. By far the cheapest way is to go on the service bus. There is also a service bus that goes from Skardu to Khapulu.

### JEEPS



The jeep journey to Hushé costs about R2600. This is standard and the same for a small jeep as it is for a large cargo jeep. Therefore ask what size the jeep will be. You can get 5 to 6 people in a jeep, sitting on top of the equipment.

### PORTERS

The rate is fixed by the government at R260 per stage (which includes the return) plus R50 for equipment and food. This price should be adhered to by both sides. The important thing to do is to know how many porter stages your journey will be the villagers will know this. Please do not try and give the porters more than 25Kg, and make it lighter if it's an awkward load to carry. Also, if you plan to go over the Gondogoro La, keep the limit to 20Kg, and equip them with crampons and glasses. I think it is R75 to insure one porter. Please be responsible for the porters.

We hired a cook for R300, and a helper for R200 a day. There is no set fee for this, so you'll have to work it out for yourself. It is worthwhile taking along old sleeping bags to give them for base camp. Any old fibre pile jackets would also be welcome.

There is suprisingly little equipment that you can buy or hire. There seemed to be more gear in Hushé than in Skardu.

## 8. Equipment.

We took both multi-fuel and gas stoves. The kerosene seemed to be good quality. The Coleman Peak 1 and MSR International stoves worked well at altitude, once they'd been converted. The MSR Whisper-lite didn't work very well. We used Epigas, which we collected in Skardu, which we'd ordered through M.L.M Systems. We could have bought small quantities of gas in Skardu and Hushé cheaper. We found that the Epigas burners with the pre-heat tube were superior at altitude. Remember that the higher you go the less gas you will manage to get out of the canisters.

It is worth taking out at least one heavy-duty tarpaulin for the kitchen. Also take one to use for shade on the mountain.

Leak proof containers for the kerosene to prevent it spilling onto the porter's back, which results in nasty burns to the skin.

A spring balance is essential.

Some kind of seat for base camp. We used the ones that incorporated a Therma-rest, and were excellent.

Peronal Hi-fi and batteries to power them. Take plenty of books to read. Games such as Scrabble, chess and cards were the most popular, except for volleyball (we bought a ball and

net in 'Pindi).

It is worthwhile taking treated ropes to stop them getting wet and freezing up in the night. On our abseils we left old karabiners to help stop the ropes getting stuck.

Print film is easy to obtain in Skardu. After quite a search, I managed to find some slide film.

## 9. Comments.

Make sure you know the regulations relating to the area you intend to visit beforehand. And double check on your arrival in Pakistan.

Useful contacts:

Rozi Ali & Ghulam Ali  
Siachen Travel & Tours,  
P.O. box 622, Skardu.  
Phone Nō. Skardu (0575) 2649  
'Pindi 73240/73250  
Fax Nō. 550531.

Ghulam Muhammad  
Indus Motel  
Nayar Bazar, Skardu.  
Phone Nō. Skardu (0575) 2608

Hotel Holiday,  
232-B, Iftikhar Khan Road,  
Rawalpindi.  
Phone Nō. 'pindi 568068/568069/568070

Agha Syed Abbas (Mr. "Fix it")  
New Bazar, Skardu.  
Phone Nō. Skardu 3432

## 10. Acknowledgements

The Mount Everest Foundation

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

Punk & Zoe, and Elaine & Paul, for putting up with us in their back gardens.

Mam & Dad, who provided the venue and hospitality for the expedition ceilidh.

Louise Garthwaite.  
Karakorum Experience.  
RAB

Phoenix  
Sierra Designs  
And special thanks to the People of Hushé.