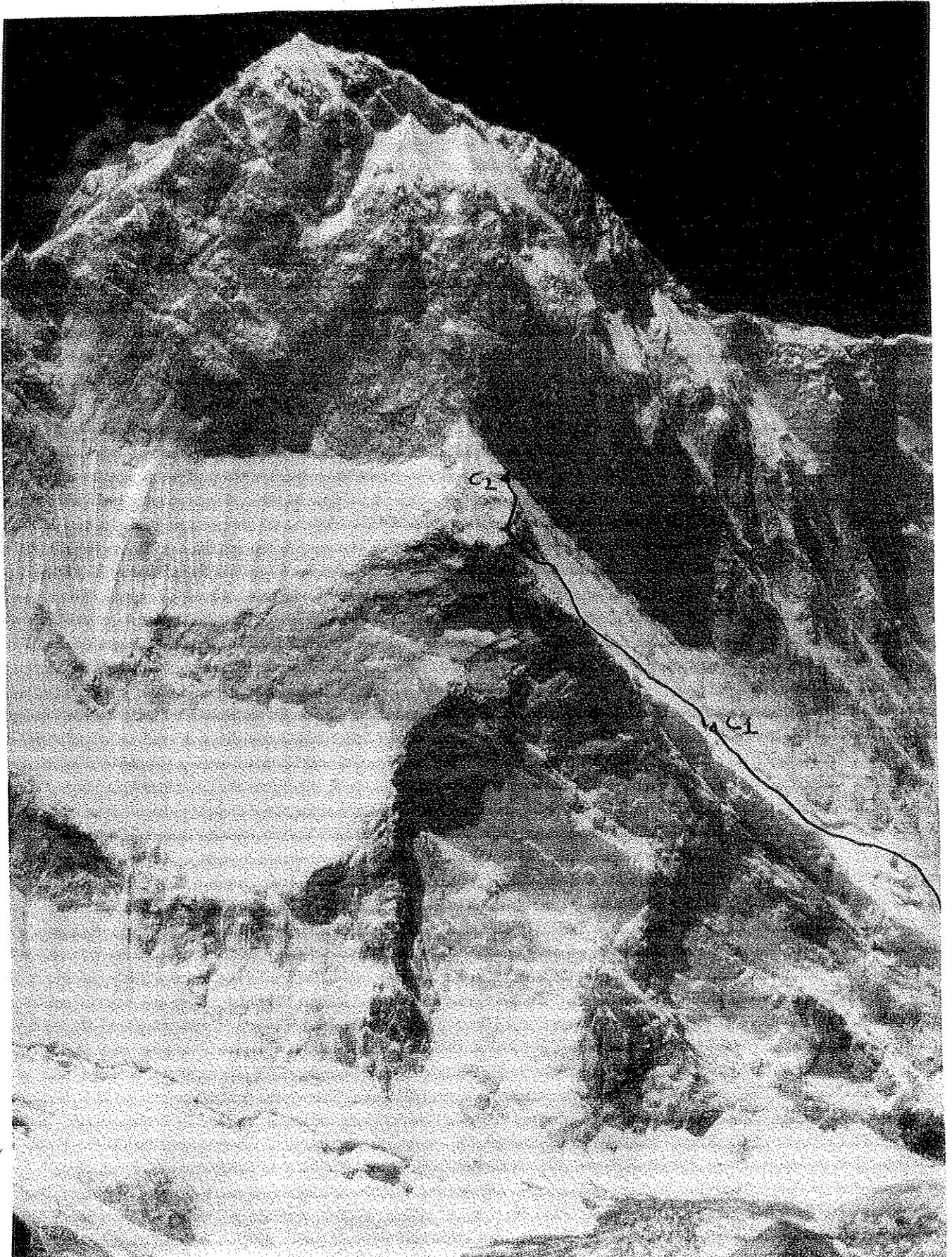


INTERNATIONAL NORTH FACE KALANKA  
EXPEDITION 2004  
*FINAL REPORT*



# INDEX

**: SYNOPSIS**

**: OBJECTIVES**

**: APPROACH MAP**

**: EXPEDITION DAILY LOG**

**: ACCOUNTS**

**: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## SYNOPSIS

In the spring season of 2004 a team of three climbers attempted the unclimbed North Face of Kalanka (6991m, 22,900ft) in the Indian Garhwal Himalaya.

Sandy Allan (Scotland) and Carlos Buhler (USA) were joint leaders of this capsule style expedition and were accompanied by John Lyall (Scotland).

Sandy Allan and John Lyall reached 6180m at a site for camp two in worsening conditions and due to the amount of snowfall were prevented from continuing.

## OBJECTIVES

KALANKA – 6991m/22900ft

The North Face of Kalanka has been attempted on two previous occasions, firstly by an American Expedition led by Carlos Buhler. This expedition reached approximately 5650m.

Another two person American team consisted of John Varco and Sue Knott. They attempted the route in 2003 and reached a high point of 6500m? before retreating in bad spindrift conditions and exhaustion.



## Expedition daily Log. April – June 2004

- 18 April: S. Allan and J Lyall flew from Aberdeen to Delhi with KLM  
19 Met with Carlos Buhler, Meeting with Home Affairs, IMF and Customs to gain permit. Meet Liaison Office and clear High Altitude EPI gas.
- 20 Two days of frustration trying to get permission to climb Kalanka and get EPI gas cleared from customs. Had Expedition briefing at IMF and met Amresh Kumar Jha, our L.O. Bought food and medicine for trip.
- 22 Drove to Rishikesh.
- 23 Delayed a day in Rishikesh as we needed a letter of permission from district H.Q. in Deri Dun to allow our expedition to visit Kalanka and there was a local strike.
- 24 Drove to Joshimath.
- 25 Sorted gear into porter loads and for permission from the Forest Authority to enter the area. Bought clothing and glasses for porters.
- 26 Should have left Joshimath today but Carlos was ill so delayed departure.
- 27 Took jeeps for 2 ½ hours up valley then met porters and walked to small village of Ruing (2800m) for the night.
- 28 Walked to Dunagiri and camped (3615m).
- 29 Porters took loads to the higher BC site, while others dropped theirs at lower BC and returned to Dunagiri to carry loads up with us the next day. Snowed in the afternoon.
- 30 Snowed through the night and all morning, with a slight break before continuing in the afternoon and evening. Porters return from BC and descend to Ruine.
- 1 - 2 May Two days stuck in Dunagiri as we wait for snow to melt a little. We broke trail half way towards BC to make it easier for porters.
- 3 Walk to lower BC and stay the night (4515m). Find some of our food stores have been eaten by a fox.
- 4 Break trail for porters to higher (Bengali) BC and return to lower (Delhi) BC for the night.
- 5 Move up to Bengali BC (4660m) on the other side of the glacier. Pay off porters.
- 6 Acclimatisation day and sorting gear to go to ABC.

- 7 The three of us walk to ABC with 2 High Altitude porters (HAP) and pitch a tent (5150m) and return to BC.
- 8 2 HAP carry more gear to ABC. We rested.
- 9 Snow in the morning so we rested.
- 10 All headed to ABC (5150m) with loads and stayed up this time.
- 11 Onto Kalanka N. Face for first time after 1 hour walk from ABC. Soloed lower part and fixed a few ropes at the steep sections and over crevasses on glacial ramp. Dumped some gear and returned to ABC.
- 12 Went back onto face early and we continue above our high point and fix a few more ropes to reach a site for Camp 1 in a bergschund. Leave some ropes here and clear a space for a couple of tents (5750m).
- 13 Next day we carry tent, porta-ledge, stoves, fuel, food and more technical gear to our high point and secure to the face. Quick descent to ABC and then return to BC for rest.
- 14 - 15 Two rest days. Eating, reading, playing chess and backgammon.
- 16 Walk back to ABC, which is much easier as snow melts away. A serac fall is heard and through binoculars we can see it has buried some of our gear on the face, Carlos decides not to go back onto the face.
- 17 Sandy and John head back to the face and re-fix some of the ropes which have melted out since last time. Discover what had been buried by serac fall and encouraged to find the tent sites which had been cleared were sheltered from falling debris. Porta-ledge, fuel, food, stoves, ropes and hardware, including ice axes are buried and un-recoverable. Return to ABC and find Carlos has left for BC and heading home.
- 18 S and J head back up to Camp 1 to re-stock on all the gear that has been buried.
- 19 More re-stocking of Camp 1 then head back to BC to get spare axes and other extras. Sandy carries down Carlos's port-a-ledge for porter to take out with Carlos. Carlos had left base camp by the time Sandy and John arrived there.
- 20 - 21 Two days at BC with cold unsettled weather.
- 22 S and J head back to ABC and it starts snowing at 2.30pm and falls heavily all night.
- 23 A clear night was followed by snowfall from 5am until 3pm, but cleared and allowed us to see spindrift pouring from face.

- 24 Started snowing again at 3am, and continued all morning, so we retreated to BC.
- 25 Better weather allowed us to see the snow plastered face and plumes of snow blowing from the ridges and spindrift curtain on the face.
- 26 Pressure rose overnight and after a lazy morning at BC we headed back to ABC for one last attempt on the face. It snowed again in the evening.
- 27 Lot's of fresh snow in the morning with big spindrift avalanches on the face so spent the day at ABC.
- 28 Up and away for Camp 1, with very heavy sacs and lots of hard trail breaking ahead of us. Pulled up all the sections of fixed rope to use higher on the face and carried them to the site of camp 1. All our dumped gear was well buried and it took us over 2 hours to find it. We then pitched the tent and brewed up, a long and very hard day. There were snow showers and spindrift during the evening.
- 29 Moved together across the upper glacial shelf until below the big ice face, where we pitched our way up the left edge. We continued up this for several pitches to gain rocks on the left edge where we left some equipment and retreated back to Camp 1 where we spent the night.
- 30 Up and away early from Camp 1 reaching our high point from the previous day. We climbed up an icy couloir to gain the foot of the central rib, more steep and brittle ice up on to the rib and some tricky mixed ground in worsening weather with poor visibility. This rib, led us to the steep central wall where the main technical climbing would really begin. We looked for potential sight for camp 2 (6180m) and having chosen a sight, left a cache of equipment here for a return the following day. Our intention being to move camp 1 to the new site for a camp 2. On our return to camp one in very bad weather we experience several huge rocks falling from the face above and spindrift avalanches. We returned to a buried camp 1 and after clearing the tent and area managed to semi re-pitch and get into our tent.
- 31<sup>st</sup> May The whole night was spent clearing our tent as we were buried several times inside it. It was almost impossible to brew up due to spindrift avalanches with some small stone fall pouring over us from the face above. Continuous snow fall which buried us

on several occasions cutting off air supplies. A very bad night. No upward progress was possible due to the unstable snow pack and continuing falling snow. As the snow fall continued we decided to risk descending back down to our advance base camp where we would wait for improving weather. Our escape was eventful as all our ropes had been pulled up and fixed or stashed between Camp 1 and the new camp 2 site. After several close escapes from avalanches we eventually got down to the glacier by late afternoon and had a desperate walk back across the glacier through waist deep snow. Snow fell heavily all night at ABC.

- 1 June In continuing bad weather we dismantled ABC and after burning all our main rubbish, tidied the camp and with heavy loads broke trail to Base Camp.
- 2 Day at Base Camp - snowed all afternoon.
- 3 Two high altitude porters went to ABC, cleared the camp and brought every thing remaining back to Base Camp. Snowed in the afternoon, to below base camp altitude.
- 4 Packed loads ready for porters and cleared up at Base Camp. Snowed in the afternoon, to well below base camp.
- 5 Left base camp and returned to Dunagiri
- 6 Continued walk to road head and Jeep back to Joshimath
- 7 Drove to Rishikesh
- 8 Drove to Delhi, met with agents and IMF for debrief. Re-packed and settled accounts. Flew back to UK late evening.

## Accounts: In

### Grants:

	£	\$US
Mount Everest Foundation	650.00	1157.00
BMC and UK Sports Council	2300.00	4094.00
American Alpine Club Spitzer Grant	1685.39	3000.00
Mazama Mountaineering Club	561.79	1000.00
Mountaineering Council of Scotland (Sportscot)	600.00	1068.0

### Members Contribution:

S. Allan	2602.58	4632.59
J. Lyall	2602.58	4632.59
C. Buhler	2130.94	3792.09
Total	£13133.28	\$23376.27

### Accounts: Expenditure out

	£	\$
Peak Fee	2247.19	4000.00
Agents Fee inc LO & Porters	4837.64	8611.00
Environment Fee and charges	523.03	931.00
Couriers	44.24	78.76
Flights (Note 1)	1905.61	3392.00
Excess Baggage charges	1562.53	2781.31
Air Freight (UK members) (Note 2)	203.60	361.34
Visa	94.15	167.60
High Alt Rations	608.82	1082.74
Food from USA	38.20	68.00
Custom Clearance	84.26	150.00
Extra Porter (ABC and runners)	485.95	865.00
Telephone and Postage	59.83	106.50
Bank Charges	56.17	100.00
First Aid (Bought in India)	102.76	182.92
Hotel & Misc members costs	82.68	147.18
Tips	196.62	350.00
Totals	£ 13133.28	\$23376.27

#### Notes

1. Expedition paid for all members flights
2. C. Buhler paid for his own return airfreight, amount not confirmed at time of preparing this report.
3. All members paid for their own insurance cover and some personal clothing and climbing equipment. This amount not shown in Members contribution.

Exchange rates at time of the expedition were:

£1.00 = \$1.78

£1.00 = Rs 76.06 Indian

\$1.00 = Rs 42.60 Indian

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks go to persons and organisations which generously contributed time, money or equipment and without whose assistance the expedition would not have been possible.

Doug Scott

Paul Braithwaite

Mount Everest Foundation

British Mountaineering Council (UK Sport).

Mountaineering Council of Scotland (Sportscotland & UK Sport)

American Alpine Club

Mazama Mountaineering Club

Equipment Suppliers:

Mountain Equipment

Gore Tex

Outdoor Research

Cascade Designs

Primus AB

Mountain Safety Research

Climb High

Metolius

Omega Pacific

Tecnica Footwear

Kelty

Wigwam Mills

Princeton Tec

I would also like to thank specifically for equipment which gave us outstanding performance we greatly appreciated help from Andrew Denton, and Duncan Machin of OSC Ltd. (Mountain Equipment).

In addition I would also like to thank Allen Fyffe, Rick Allen, Kathryn Grindrod, Bill Ruthven, Betty Lyall, Dr. Janis Tait, Catriona Strang, Doug Scott, Tut Braithwaite and all the staff at Mountain Equipment for their support, advice and contribution. We would also like to thank our agents, Captain Kumar and Mukul Azad at Shikhar Travels (India) Pvt. Ltd.