

APRIL 12TH CAMP 1 ACCLIMATIZATION TRIP

I HAVE TO CONFESS I REALLY UNDERESTIMATED THE TRIP FROM CAMP 1 TO CAMP 2, ALL I HAD HEARD ABOUT THE WESTERN CWYM IS THAT ITS TORTUROUSLY HOT AND RATHER FLAT. FROM MY PERSPECTIVE THERE ARE A TON OF HUGE CREVASSES THAT WE SPENT ALL MORNING CLIMBING IN AND OUT OF. THERE WAS ONE WHICH I JUST HATED WHICH ONCE AT ITS DEPTHS, YOU LOOK UP TO SEE A HUGE 100FT TOWER OF ICE LEANING (HEAVILY) OVER YOU. I SCRAMBLED UP THE LADDER AS FAST AS I COULD TO GET OUT OF THERE. TRUE TO WHAT I HAD READ ABOUT THE WESTERN CWYM IT STARTED OUT BOILING HOT, BUT AFTER A COUPLE OF HOURS AN ICY WIND SET IN. I WAS ILL PREPARED FOR THIS TEMPERATURE DROP AND HAD TO BORROW SOME CLOTHES. WE GOT A GOOD LOOK AT EVEREST, THE SHEER IMPOSING MASS OF HER LOOMING TO OUR LEFT. THE LHOTSE FACE, OUR ROUTE THAT WILL TAKE US TO CAMP 3 LOOKS EXTREMELY ICY AND INTIMIDATING. THE ROUTE IS NOT FIXED YET ADN THE MEXICAN TEAM ARE LEADING THE WAY HAVING JUST SPENT 3 DAYS AT CAMP 2.

HAVING FINISHED CROSSING ALL THE LADDERS IN THE CWYM, THERE IS A LONG WALK SLOPING GENTLY UPWARDS TO CAMP 2 SITUATED ON A ROCKFACE NEAR THE BERGSCHUND OF THE GLACIER. THIS SEEMINGLY GENTLE BUT LENGTHY WALK ISA MINEFIELD OF HIDDEN CREVASSES WHICH WE HAVE TO JUMP OVER UNROPED. A REMINDER ABOUT NOT FALLING INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY AT ANY GIVEN TIME ON THIS MOUNTAIN.

WE ARRIVED AT CAMP 2, AND THE WEATHER HAD DEFIANTLY CHANGED. WE CHATTED BRIEFLY WITH THE MEXICANS AND THEN HEADED FURTHER UP TO TRY AND FIND OUR CAMP. WE PASSED A BATTERED GREEN TENT, SEEMINGLY ABANDONED FROM A PREVIOUS EXPEDITION, HOWEVER AFTER A SERIES OF PHONE CALLS WITH PERTEMBA AT BASECAMP, IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT THIS WAS OUR MESS TENT, OUR ADVANCED BASE CAMP! SEEING ANDRONICOS LOOK OF SHOCK AT THIS DISCOVERY I COULDN'T STOP LAUGHING - WE WERE MEANT TO MOVE TO CAMP 2 TOMORROW, THIS WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT GOING TO BE

THE CASE!! PERTEMBA THEN RADIOED UP AND TOLD US TO GET BACK TO CAMP 1 AS FAST AS POSSIBLE AS A STORM WAS COMING OUR WAY. WE RUSHED BACK DOWN TO CAMP 1 WITH SNOW PELTING OUR FACES. I HAD ONE REALLY SCARY LADDER CROSSING WHERE MY RIGHT CRAMPON CAUGHT MY LEFT SHOELACE LEAVING ME IMMOBILIZED HIGH ON A LADDER. REFUSING TO PANIC, I SQUIRMED AROUND A BIT AND THANK GOD THEY SEPARATED! I DO NOT WANT A REPEAT OF THAT AGAIN! WE ARRIVED BACK AT CAMP 1 AFTER A 6 HOUR TRIP INCLUDING OUR BREAK, HOPEFULLY WE WILL BECOME MUCH MORE ACCLIMATED AND THEREFORE MOVE FASTER BUT RIGHT NOW THE AIR FEELS REALLY THIN!!!

WE PILED INTO OUR TENTS AND A BIG GALE SET IN. PALDE GAVE US OUR DINNER IN OUR TENTS, HE IS TRULY AMAZING. PALDE SPENT ONE MONTH AT CAMP 2 WORKING ON THE TAIWANESE EXPEDITION IN 1996, FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT

HAVE READ ALL THE BOOKS ON THAT DISASTER, HE WORKED FOR THAT CRAZY GUY MAKALU GAU THAT GOT EVACUATED FROM CAMP 1, ONE OF THE HIGHEST HELICOPTER EVACUATIONS IN HISTORY.

I WAS VERY UPSET TO HEAR ON THE RADIO THAT ONE OF MY FRIENDS CHRISTOPHER DORE WAS AT BASECAMP AND I WAS UP BETWEEN CAMP 1 AND 2

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND THEREFORE UNABLE TO SEE HIM. HE HAD DINNER WITH RODRIGO, PATO AND PHILLIPE AND I HAD A BRIEF CHAT WITH HIM ON THE RADIO. SUCH A SHAME TO MISS YOUR FRIENDS BUT THAT IS PART OF CLIMBING MOUNT EVEREST.