

# Breaking Trail

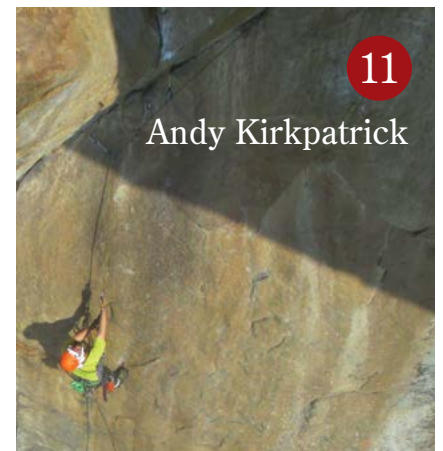
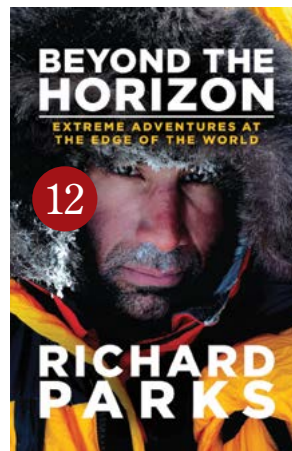
NEWS | EVENTS | COMMENT | BOOKS | TRAINING | EXPEDITIONS

## 8 Second tragedy of 2014 for Nepal



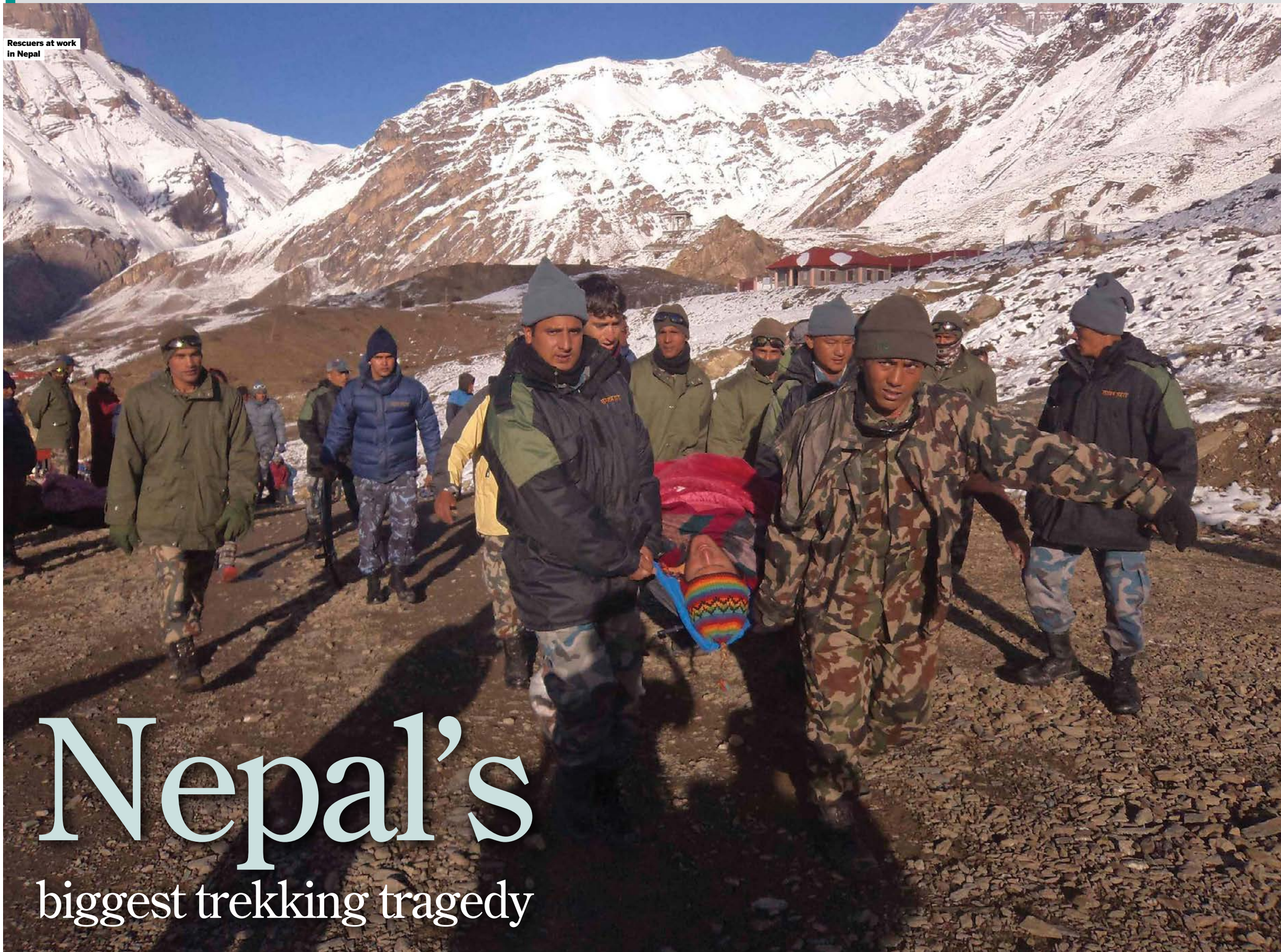
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Gadget of the month



**LEAD STORY**

Rescuers at work in Nepal



# Nepal's biggest trekking tragedy

## Second big tragedy hits Nepal in 2014 after Sherpa deaths in April

WORDS SOPHIE NICHOLSON PICTURES COURTESY OF TAAN & NEPALESE ARMY

**T**he autumn Himalayan trekking season was hit by tragedy when a heavy and unexpected snowstorm struck northern Nepal on Tuesday 14th October. At time of going to press 39 people, including numerous foreigners, were confirmed dead and many left seriously injured. It is still unclear how many people may still be missing in the country's worst ever trekking disaster.

The blizzard and ensuing avalanches that struck the Annapurna region last month were the result of the Category 3 tropical Cyclone Hudhud that came ashore in India on the 12th October. Up to six feet of snow is believed to have fallen in some areas. Autumn in Nepal is typically the dry season so the unexpected snowstorm and high winds will have caught trekkers and guides seriously off guard.

Among the dead were eight people killed in an avalanche in Phu village in the Manang district and 10 people whose bodies were recovered from the Thorong La, the 5,416m pass on the Annapurna circuit. Authorities claim five climbers (two Slovaks and three Sherpas) were killed in a separate avalanche incident at Dhaulagiri Base Camp.

Four helicopters were involved in the rescue effort and again, at the time of going to press The Trekking Agents Association of Nepal (TAAN) reported that 289 people had been rescued, including 70 from the Manang area and 47 from Mustang. With communications notoriously patchy in the area, the TAAN set up a rolling news service on their website and a group of concerned relatives established a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/pages/Annapurna-Nepal-Avalanche-and-Blizzard-Info-Share/336895043154367](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Annapurna-Nepal-Avalanche-and-Blizzard-Info-Share/336895043154367)) to share news and help locate the missing. The disaster has led to urgent calls for improved safety regulations for trekkers and the establishment of a national weather warning system.

This is the second major disaster to have struck Nepal in just six months with the country still reeling from the effects of April's devastating avalanche on Everest that claimed the lives of 16 climbing Sherpas. For a country so dependent on trekking and climbing tourism, 2014 has been a truly dreadful year. Our thoughts remain with all those affected by either of these tragic events and the people of Nepal as a whole. ■ **T&M**

Nearly 300 trekkers have been rescued



PREVIEW

# The Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature

Kendal Mountain Festival 2014 judge **Chris Harle** previews this year's shortlisted books

In recent years there has been a worry that mountain literature has been slowly sliding into obscurity. Expedition books with the format of a leech-infested walk-in, a macho gritted-teeth ascent, and the inevitable tragedy and ensuing heroic descent, no longer appeal to readers who have heard it all before. Furthermore, with the death of Peter Hodgkiss (Ernest Press) in 2010, and the recent retirement of Ken Wilson (Bâton Wicks), we have lost two great stalwarts of the publishing world who championed mountain literature.

Having said this, the increase in number of entries to the Boardman Tasker Prize would suggest that there is still a story to be told (and sold). 21 entries in 2012 were followed by a record-breaking 30 in 2013 and an astonishing 41 this year. Perhaps it is the £3,000 prize money that is attracting ever more entries, but there are certainly other factors that have helped.

In the UK, Sheffield-based Vertebrate has filled the publishing void and the specialist



Last year's winner, Harriet Tuckey

distributor Cordee continue to ferret out climbing and mountaineering titles from around the world. Also, although the rise of self-publishing has gone through some growing pains with many poorly-produced books, there has been a marked

improvement as authors realise that there is no shortcut to quality, both in the look of a book and in the proof-reading and editing processes. Of course, the shop window for purchasing a book has increased exponentially with countless websites compensating for the decline of the high street bookseller.

The judges for this year's Boardman Tasker Prize have had six months to read and consider the 41 entries and decide the shortlist. As you would expect, the judging panel of Audrey Salkeld (noted mountain historian and former BT Prize winning author), Robin Campbell (the current SMC Archivist and Librarian) and myself (a climber and bookseller) did not always agree on the relative merits of each book, but the democratically selected shortlist is a reflection of the entries that had most impact on the panel. The authors that did not make the shortlist will be understandably disappointed but they should be proud of their efforts as many of the stories are well

worth a read. A complete list of this year's entries can be found at [www.boardmantasker.com/award/entries2014.html](http://www.boardmantasker.com/award/entries2014.html)

It could be argued that there should be more categories within the Boardman Tasker Award to cater for the diverse range of genres that are encouraged to enter a book prize where the central theme must concern mountains. Therefore, mountaineering and climbing might be considered just one category. Consider fiction, travel, nature and environment, and other forms of mountain activity such as fell running and mountain biking for example. However, the strength of the award is that there is only one winner, selected ideally for literary and creative excellence with something new to say about the mountain world. As long as the judging panel is constantly changed and represents a cross-section of mountain interests, then the Boardman Tasker will continue to be relevant and inspire readers to buy books.

If you are looking for an insider's tip for this year's winner then you are going to be disappointed. I am currently re-reading all six shortlisted books with an open mind, and getting ready to debate with the other judges before a decision is made. The 2014 winner will be announced on Friday 21st November at the Kendal Mountain Festival. ■ T&M

**Tickets are available at:** [www.mountainfest.co.uk/programme/event/boardman-tasker-prize-for-mountain-literature](http://www.mountainfest.co.uk/programme/event/boardman-tasker-prize-for-mountain-literature)



Andy climbed two Yosemite walls in three days this September

## Andy Kirkpatrick

### 'The Need For Speed'

Speed climbing big walls is one of the most committing things I've ever done. Standing at the bottom of a wall a few thousand feet high, a route that would usually take three or four days, and imagining you are going to do it in a day is both terrifying and addictive. 15 to 30 pitches of climbing above you, each pitch usually taking two or three hours to climb normally, plus a few more hours each for hauling, faffing, sleeping and making mistakes all eat up the time.

Remove the hauling by only taking a small pack that just contains some snacks, water and a thin fleece and waterproof and you save all that time and effort in hauling (not that jumaring with 10kg of water on your back is easy). Having no sleeping bag or mat probably saves the most time, as without these you can't sleep on the wall, doubly so if you've left your portaledge as well (most walls have no ledges to sleep on anyway). Without bivvy kit you are really committed, and even if you fail to climb the wall in under 24 hours – the gold standard for an El Cap ascent by mortals – you still have to do it in a one-er (or push as they call it). In order to further up the ante in commitment, you also dump your haul line or second rope, after all you're not hauling anyway, plus this has the advantage of not allowing you the luxury of retreat. To the summit or death.

On most such climbs you start early, a



pre-alpine start, 3am or 4am. Not that you sleep much anyway, just half dreams about missing the alarm and blowing the day (or fantasies). Sometimes you don't even go to bed, but simply start as the sun sets, the chance to climb into a fresh day when tired

better than climbing into the night when knackered. Having said that, if you start at 7pm and end up climbing into a second night you're in trouble; I've seen the sun rise three times without sleep climbing in this 'disaster style'.

And so there you are at the bottom, racking up, a little nervous about what the day will bring and whether you will perform and do your duty to your partner or partners. Will the end of the day see you at the top as planned or at the bottom of a hole of utter gnarly horror (sleeping in a harness is by far the worst experience one can ever have on a wall)? You check your headtorch and its spare, tie on your long skinny rope, and check your watch is clearly visible. It is there both to keep tabs on your movement/speed and also to remind you how once upon a time, climbing three pitches in a day was your biggest ambition. Time is all important; the time you have spent on these walls, time grasping your limits and your potential has brought you to this moment, bold enough to imagine you are capable of this. The time and work that has led to this moment is almost as important as the speed ascent that lies ahead. ■ T&M

More at: [www.andy-kirkpatrick.com](http://www.andy-kirkpatrick.com)

## BOARDMAN TASKER PRIZE

The 2014 shortlist is (alphabetically by author):

**Hanging On: A Life Inside British Climbing's Golden Age, by Martin Boysen** (Vertebrate Publishing, UK)

Boysen has been climbing for 55 years, during which time he has known and climbed with most of the notable British climbers. He regales us with stories from his early pioneering days at Harrison's Rocks to the discovery of Gogarth in 1964, and the landmark ascent of Annapurna South Face in 1970.

**Law Unto Himself, by Michael Law** (Open Spaces Publishing, Australia)

Law gives an entertaining insight into the anarchic New Wave generation of climbers in Australia that he was part of during the 1970s, providing a comprehensive history of this period of Aussie activity.

**Tears of the Dawn, by Jules Lines** (Shelterstone, UK)

Lines has, until now,

kept largely under the radar of publicity. His extreme and scary solo exploits, at locations around the world described in this book, expose a side of climbing not often written about.

**In Search of Peaks, Passes and Glaciers: Irish Alpine Pioneers, by Frank Nugent** (The Collins Press, Ireland)

Nugent examines the influence of Irish alpinists during the 19th Century with well-researched biographies of many of the leading exponents of early

alpine mountain exploration, such as John Tyndall, John Ball, Anthony Adams-Reilly, Elizabeth Whitshed and Valentine Ryan.

**Nanga Parbat 1970: Tragedy and Controversy, by Richard Sale & Jochen Hemmleb** (Carreg, UK)

Sale and Hemmleb have summarised all the accusations, rebuttals and new evidence that have followed the ill-fated first ascent of the Rupal Face of Nanga Parbat by Reinhold and Gunther Messner in 1970.

## EXPEDITION NEWS

## Success and tragedy

Achievements in the mountain world this month tempered by sad losses

**W**e're delighted to bring you news of yet another Himalayan success for Mick Fowler and his partner Paul Ramsden. The pair left the UK in September hoping to establish the first ascent of the northeast face of **Hagshu** (6,515m) in the East Kishtwar region of the Indian Himalaya. After six days on the mountain, they succeeded in their objective and followed it up with a traverse of the mountain before descending the route that was taken by the first successful climbers of the peak in 1989. Details are still coming in as we go to press but initial reports from Fowler suggest that the 'climb was brilliant' and that they have secured some great pictures and footage of the expedition.

Elsewhere in the Himalayas, both **Manaslu** and **Cho Oyu** enjoyed successful seasons with the majority of teams making it to the summit over the course of an eight-day period. Favourable weather conditions towards the end of September and early October facilitated summit pushes for many climbers, not least that of Polish ski mountaineer Andrzej Bargiel. Despite



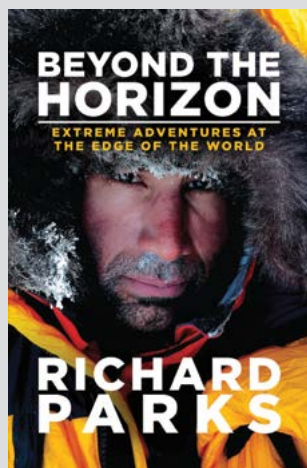
Looking along the summit ridge of Hagshu

blustery conditions, Bargiel set a new record for the fastest ascent of Manaslu on the 25th September when he made it to the top in an incredible 14 hours and 5 minutes. To put this into context, this normally takes most mountaineers around 3-4 days to accomplish. Bargiel also holds the speed record for Europe's highest mountain, Elbrus, which he established in 2010 in just 3 hours and 23 minutes.

The favourable conditions experienced on Manaslu and Cho Oyu were sadly not replicated on **Shishapangma** this year. The tragic avalanche which claimed the lives of two members of the Dynafit Double 8 team (more on page 16) and continuing dangerous conditions on the mountain led both the Swiss Kobler Partner team and the legendary Spanish climber Carlos Soria to abandon the mountain. 75-year-old Soria is currently attempting to become the oldest person to summit the 14 highest mountains in the world.

Finally, the mountaineering world felt the full painful force of the current international political situation with the news of the horrific murder of French mountain guide **Herve Gourdel**. Gourdel from Nice had travelled to the Jurjura mountains in Algeria's Titi Ouzou region to hike for 10 days and recce a new climbing area. Just one day after arriving in the area he was captured by an Algerian extremist group with links to the Islamic State and two days later a video documenting his beheading was released. Eric Ciotti, a member of France's National Assembly, described the married father of two as a "man widely appreciated for his skills as well as his human qualities".

## BOOK OF THE MONTH



### 'Beyond The Horizon'

by Richard Parks (Sphere, £14.99)

**R**ichard Parks' story is well-known to most readers of this magazine; ex-rugby player turns to mountaineering in aftermath of career-ending injury and proceeds to break endurance records while raising money for good causes. What people probably aren't aware of is the heartache and struggle behind his heroic exploits or the personal demons that stalked Parks along the way. The 737 Challenge for example, in which Parks climbed the Seven Summits and stood on both poles within seven months, seemed on the surface to be one glorious adventure that took our hero around the world on a wave of goodwill and adrenaline. Behind the scenes, though, financial and logistical problems continuously threatened to derail the project at any moment, yet somehow Parks was able to press on and achieve his ambitious goals despite the almost overwhelming uncertainties surrounding the challenge.

In 'Beyond The Horizon', Parks is incredibly open and honest about the problems he faced post rugby

career, and how he found a new direction in life by reinventing himself as an 'extreme environment athlete'. His accounts of the almost masochistic challenges he sets himself – an ultra-marathon through the Peruvian jungle, the world's highest mountain bike race, a double iron man triathlon in Snowdonia, and two solo expeditions to the South Pole – are eye opening, and make one wonder what drives a person to push themselves to the edge (and sometimes beyond) of their physical and mental limits. The appeal of this book however, is that Parks goes to great lengths to answer exactly this question, and his explanations of how he turned his insecurities into strengths that would allow him to achieve great things is quite inspirational. The fact that he always seems to be able to go beyond that 'last room' inside himself, as he puts it, when suffering physically is what marks him out as an exceptional athlete, and person. 'Beyond The Horizon' is as impressive a book as the endeavors it describes, and comes highly recommended. ■ **Chris Kempster**

## TALKS &amp; EVENTS

## First On The Continents

November 27, 28, 30

Hosted by Doug Scott CBE, this unique event is the first ever to celebrate the challenges, rewards and landscapes met by climbers searching out new routes and first ascents across the globe. A trio of climbing legends - Alex Huber, Michael Kennedy and Andy Kirkpatrick - are the lead speakers at the three events due to be held in London, Oxford and Chesterfield. Huber will speak of his awe inspiring solo ascent of the overhanging Cima Grande face in the Dolomites, Kirkpatrick is set to reveal the details of his new route climbed in 2013 on the Wolf's Tooth in Ulvetanna, Antarctica, and Kennedy will focus on what goes into establishing first ascents in Alaska, one of the harshest of mountain environments on the planet. Tickets cost £15.00 and all funds raised will go to the Community Action Nepal charity. **More at: [www.canepal.org.uk](http://www.canepal.org.uk)**



First On The Continents

Kendal Mountain Festival  
November 20 - 23

Kendal is back for the fifteenth straight year and the line-up for 2014 looks as tasty as ever. Over the course of four packed days, visitors to the internationally famous mountain festival will have the opportunity to attend premieres of the best outdoor films and documentaries, lectures and art exhibitions, literature and photography events, specialist sport nights and much more. This year's speaker programme includes the likes of Ueli Steck, Alastair Humphreys, Sir Chris Bonington, Leo Houlding and 80's French speed alpinist Christophe Profit. The film programme is looking equally unmissable with screenings of the latest from a host of renowned filmmakers including Hot Aches Productions and Seb Montaz-Rosset. *Trek & Mountain* will also be there, so stop by our stand and say hello. Tickets are available to buy online now. **More at: [www.mountainfest.co.uk](http://www.mountainfest.co.uk)**

Alpine Club Symposium  
- 'How To Do It'  
November 29

The 2014 Alpine Club Symposium and Dinner is a must for any members looking to organise an expedition. The event aims to provide a practical insight into how best to organise, fund, plan and execute a mountaineering trip worldwide. A host of experienced alpinists and explorers including Mick Fowler, Twid Turner, Becky Coles, and Julian Freeman-Attwood will be on hand to share stories and offer practical advice on 'how to do it'. The day-long event will be held at the Palace Hotel in Buxton and the £30 tickets include dinner and a talk by guest speaker and rock climbing legend Michael Kennedy. Head to the Alpine Club website below for more info and to book your tickets!

**More at: [www.alpine-club.org.uk](http://www.alpine-club.org.uk)**



## Gadget of the month

OUTDOOR RESEARCH  
LUCENT HEATED GLOVES £260

## What is it?

Suffer from cold hands? The Lucent Heated Gloves with rechargeable battery-powered heating system, could be just the answer. The gloves are durable, waterproof, breathable and quick drying. They have leather palm overlays for good rope handling, and moulded EVA foam knuckles for protecting your pinksies.

## How does it work?

The Lucent gloves use Outdoor Research's AltHeat Battery Powered Heat Technology with Rechargeable Lithium Ion battery. Press a single button to turn the heating on and press again to choose from High, Medium and Low heat settings. The batteries are removable for charging and last up to eight hours in use.

## Why do I need it?

Everyone gets cold hands sometimes, and when you do it's far more pleasant to slip your hands into heated gloves than under your mate's armpits. So whether you want ultimate comfort on the slopes this winter, or need back-up for your hands when at extreme altitude, the Lucent gloves come to the rescue.

## What we like?

Before you even talk about its heating system, the Lucent is a quality glove in its own right. With Gore-Tex inserts and Enduraloft insulation, weather protection is already impressive - add the heating system into the equation though, and you have one helluva piece of gear.

## What we don't like?

It's unavoidable of course, but having a battery in each glove makes the Lucent heavier than your average mountain mitt, and you'll need to keep an eye on charge levels too as on the high setting you've only got two and a half hours of heat. The Lucent gloves aren't cheap either, but bearing in mind they might be the difference between keeping or losing fingers to frostbite, then you might consider them to be worth every penny.

## Where can I get it?

You can find a complete list of Outdoor Research stockists around the UK on their website - just head to [www.outdoorresearch.co.uk](http://www.outdoorresearch.co.uk)

Cold hands,  
be gone!

## NEWS

# Legends lost

Five leading ski mountaineers killed in three avalanches

**T**he tight-knit global ski mountaineering and boarding community has been left reeling by the devastating loss of a handful of its most proficient athletes and influential characters in the space of just five days.

On the 24th September, three of the five members of the Dynafit Double8 expedition were caught in an avalanche at 7,900m, approximately 100m below the summit of Shishapangma. The Double 8 team had planned to speed climb two 8,000m peaks in one week and cycle between them. Sebastian 'Basti' Haag (GER), Andrea Zambaldi (ITA) and Martin Maier (GER) were all carried 600m by the

slide in which both Haag and Zambaldi tragically died. Maier miraculously survived the avalanche and was able to make his way to Camp 3 where he was reunited with the remaining members of the expedition, Ueli Steck (SUI) and Benedikt Böhm (GER).

Less than one week later on the 29th of September, two separate avalanches in South America tragically claimed the lives of the modern day freeskiing legends, Andreas Fransson (SWE) and JP Auclair (CAN), and the hugely popular pro snowboarder and alpine guide Liz Daley (USA). Fransson and Auclair had been climbing a couloir on Monte San Lorenzo in southern Chile when the avalanche struck,

carrying them several hundred meters down the remote mountain. The pair had been filming for a new web series and their colleagues Bjarne Salen and Daniel Ronnback were on an adjacent peak and unharmed in the incident.

On the same day, prominent splitboarder and IFMGA-qualified guide Liz Daley was tragically killed in a separate incident on Cerro Vespignani, a 7,000ft mountain near Mount Fitzroy in Argentina. Daley had been part of a group of well-known skiers, snowboarders and photographers descending the mountain and was the only victim of the avalanche.

All five mountaineers will be sorely missed but remembered fondly for their contributions to their sports.



Andrea Zambaldi



Andreas Fransson



Basti Haag



JP Auclair



Liz Daley

## Are you 1 in 100?



Mount Edith Cavell,  
Jasper National Park

Get your heart pumping in aid of Cavell Nurses' Trust

**L**ooking for a challenge? Then why not join Edith Cavell Nurses' Trust in Jasper National Park, Canada, on 22nd – 29th August 2015, for a fundraising week filled with a choice of activities! Participants can choose from a range of activities including white water rafting, rock climbing, mountain biking,

kayaking and – the one that'll appeal most to Trek & Mountain readers – an ascent of Mount Edith Cavell (3,363m).

Your efforts will help Cavell Nurses' Trust to raise £1 million that will change the lives of over 3,000 nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants in need and crisis, whilst also

commemorating the Centenary of Edith Cavell's death; a heroine of WW1 she was a British nurse who saved the lives of soldiers, helping some 200 escape from German occupied Belgium during World War 1.

So who can enter this event? Edith Cavell Nurses' Trust say they are looking for people who love to challenge themselves, whilst having fun in the outdoors, and all whilst raising money for a really worthwhile cause. You will be able to select which challenge you take part in, with summit teams selected from those that express an interest in climbing Mount Edith Cavell. To be considered for a summit team you will need to have some mountaineering experience, or be fit and determined and prepared to attend a minimum of two training weekends. There are challenges to meet all levels of fitness, so if you don't fancy the climb but still want to get involved, there will be plenty of other activities to get your heart pumping!

So, what are you waiting for? Challenge yourself to the climb of your life in the Canadian Rockies. If you would like to register your interest in this event or just find out more, contact the trust via the details below.

**More from: Visit <http://bit.ly/edithcavell>, email [fundraising@cavellnurses.org](mailto:fundraising@cavellnurses.org) or call 01527 595 999.**