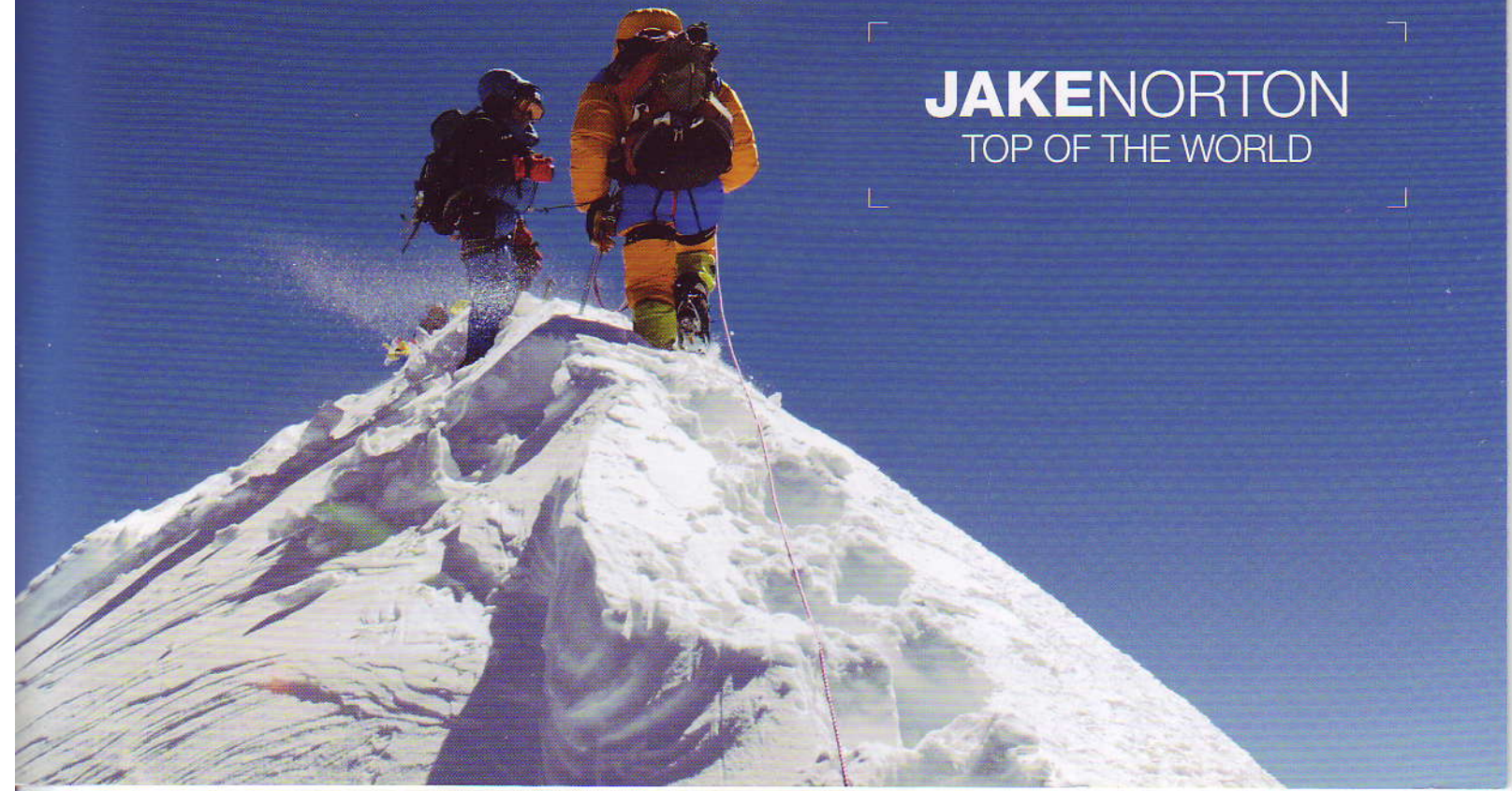


Nikon®

W O R L D

JAKENORTON
TOP OF THE WORLD



+ EDITOR'S NOTE

On June 8, 1924, two English climbers, George Mallory and Andrew Irvine, disappeared while attempting to reach the 29,035-foot summit of Mount Everest. They were last seen within 1,000 feet of the top, and there's evidence suggesting they were already above their greatest obstacle, the Second Step, when they vanished. If they made it, they would have been the first, preceding Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay by 29 years.

Climber and photographer Jake Norton, featured in this issue, was part of a 1999 expedition to Everest

FEATURES

- 8 JAKENORTON**
TOP OF THE WORLD
- 16 MARSHALLAPLANTE**
L.A. STORY
- 22 DANB. MONAKIL**
A CLOSER LOOK

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 FIRSTFRAME**
NIGHT RIDER
- 4 OUTSIDESHOTS**
THE BEST OF TIMES
- 6 HANDSON**
CHOOSE THE HUES
- 30 NOTEBOOK**
NET WORTH
- 32 THEEDGE**
SHARP SHOOTER
- 34 PARTINGSHOT**
WAIT RIGHT HERE

ON THE COVER

While Jake Norton has literally been at the top of the world—he's scaled Mount Everest twice—our cover photograph wasn't taken there. You're seeing Stuart Sloat and Kirk Allen approach the 25,502-foot summit of Gurla Mandhata, one of Tibet's sacred peaks, during the first American ascent of the mountain. Jake took the image with a D200 and a 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G ED-IF AF-S VR Zoom-Nikkor. For Everest, start your climb on page eight.



that found the body of George Mallory some 1,900 feet from the summit. There is no conclusive way to tell if he died going up or coming down.

Jake returned in 2001 to try to locate Andrew Irvine, but that expedition became involved in the rescue of other climbers and was unable to complete the search. Finding Irvine could mean solving the mystery, as it's believed he carried a Kodak Vest Pocket Model B camera. Were it to be found, it might contain photographs of the highest point they achieved. Because the film in the camera has been frozen, experts think it would produce printable images.

"A lot of people say that [Mallory] wasn't good enough to have made it to the top," Jake says, "but I think it's unfair to the early explorers to say that. They did things that we today have trouble repeating. There's a chance that he made it, and until anyone can prove otherwise, I like to believe he did."

Jake has contributed to two books about the 1999 and 2001 expeditions, *Ghosts of Everest* and *Detectives on Everest*.

And, of course, to this issue of *Nikon World* magazine.

Benny T. A.

+ FIRSTFRAME

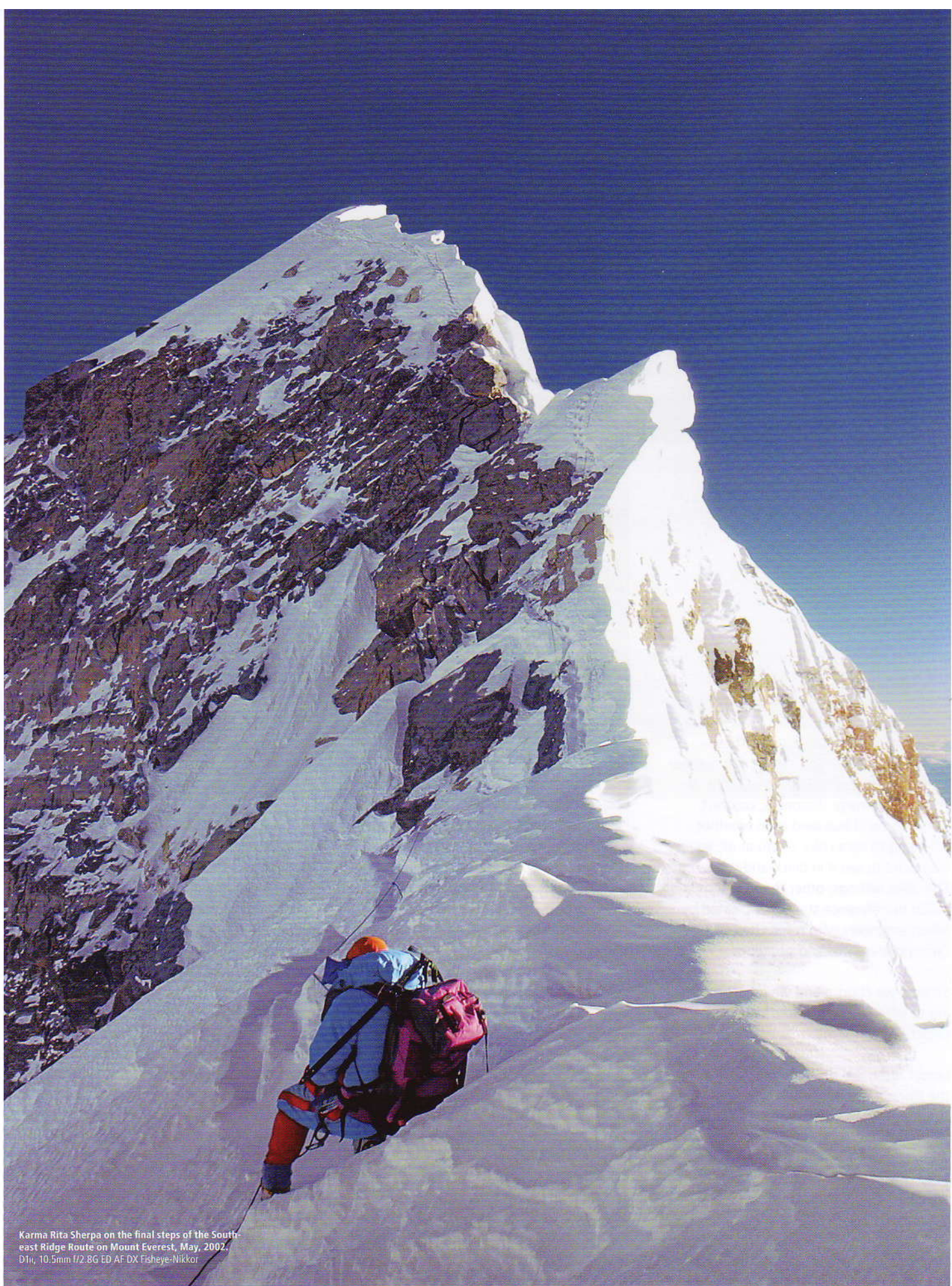
NIGHT RIDER Shooting a 24-hour mountain bike race in Conyers, Georgia, Andrew Kornylak's first thought was that he wouldn't be able to do much once daylight was gone. But then he figured, well, they're riding through the night, there is a pretty cool stretch where the path winds through the woods and they do have headlamps on the bikes. So he fitted a 12-24mm f/4G ED-IF AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor on his D200 and set the rig on his tripod. When a rider came through he timed the passage: 30 seconds. He set the D200 for a corresponding exposure (at f/6.3) and tripped the shutter as soon as he saw a light in the distance. Pretty straightforward.

Back up a moment; there's more happening here. Andrew realized that while the narrow beam of the headlamp would give him a very nice light streak, it would do little else. So during the 30-second exposure he walked into the scene with an SB-800 Speedlight and fired light into the treetop canopy and along the trail. "I stayed out of the frame so I wouldn't leave a shadow," he says. "I also hid behind the tree. There was quite a bit of trial and error going on."

Andrew photographed a dozen night riders on their way through the forest, checking each image to see how he was doing. What you see here was for him the best ride of the night.



Andrew Kornylak



Karma Rita Sherpa on the final steps of the Southeast Ridge Route on Mount Everest, May, 2002.
D1i, 10.5mm f/2.8G ED AF DX Fisheye-Nikkor

TOP OF THE WORLD

JAKE NORTON



Kevin Russell

LET'S SEE NOW: He's climbed to the summit of Mount Everest twice. He's taken part in 16 Himalayan expeditions, five expeditions in the Alps, five in Peru and three to Kilimanjaro. He's reached the summit of Mt. Rainier 86 times via six different routes. And he was a member of the 1999 expedition that found the remains of legendary explorer and climber George Mallory, who disappeared during a summit attempt on Everest in 1924. It's a notable resume for anyone, but when you consider that Jake Norton is only 32 years old, and he photographs as he climbs, it becomes pretty remarkable.



Phuru Sherpa steps off the ladder and onto the face of the Second Step at 28,400 feet on Everest's Northeast Ridge.
D100, 16mm 1/2.8D AF Fisheye-Nikkor



And, of course, he's remarkably low-key about it.

"Well," he says, "photographing adds a whole new wrinkle to climbing. You're constantly leapfrogging the climbers, setting up a shot, then packing up and trying to get back ahead of them. On the one hand it's definitely a huge burden, but for me it really adds an exciting element to the climb because it brings in a whole other cerebral aspect. I've got to be not just thinking about myself and what my goals are for the day, but also about the shots and creating what I want and what I want viewers to see. I'm always conscious of trying to figure out how to translate this experience to pictures to give people an idea of what it felt like."

His primary concern is balancing safety and photography. "I do things as efficiently as possible always," he says, "and the people I'm climbing with know what I'll be doing. I won't add to their task in any way, but lower down on the mountain I'll be more willing to ask them to slow

down or stop or stand in a place. On summit day, though, there's such a narrow window of opportunity and safety, I never feel it's appropriate to make them delay. So I put the onus on myself to get in position and let them keep climbing as I work around them."

For the Everest summits, Jake was on the job: "The first time I reached the summit was in 2002, and I was shooting for Discovery Communications, on the south side of the mountain. The second time was in 2003, from the north side, shooting for Outdoor Life Network's *Global Extremes* TV series. They'd hoped to do the first live telecast of a summit day on Everest. I was shooting video off my head with a helmet-cam and trying to take stills at the same time; it proved a little difficult. Then the Chinese pulled the live video permit at the last minute, so we did the next best thing, which was to edit on the fly, drive [the tapes] to Kathmandu and transmit it. So it was almost live."



While it's his climbing photography that first grabs your attention, there is an equally important aspect to Jake's work, and that's the people and the culture of Central Asia and the Himalayas. "I remember as a kid looking through the pages of *National Geographic* magazine and being especially drawn to that area. I was in high school when I made my first climbing trip to Nepal, and when I got there I immediately realized the mountains are a small part of what makes Nepal and Tibet such a magical place. The people are the majority of it; they bring the really beautiful elements to the region, and they are the reason I go back again and again. Sadly, I think they're left out of the picture far too often, figuratively and literally."

clockwise, from right

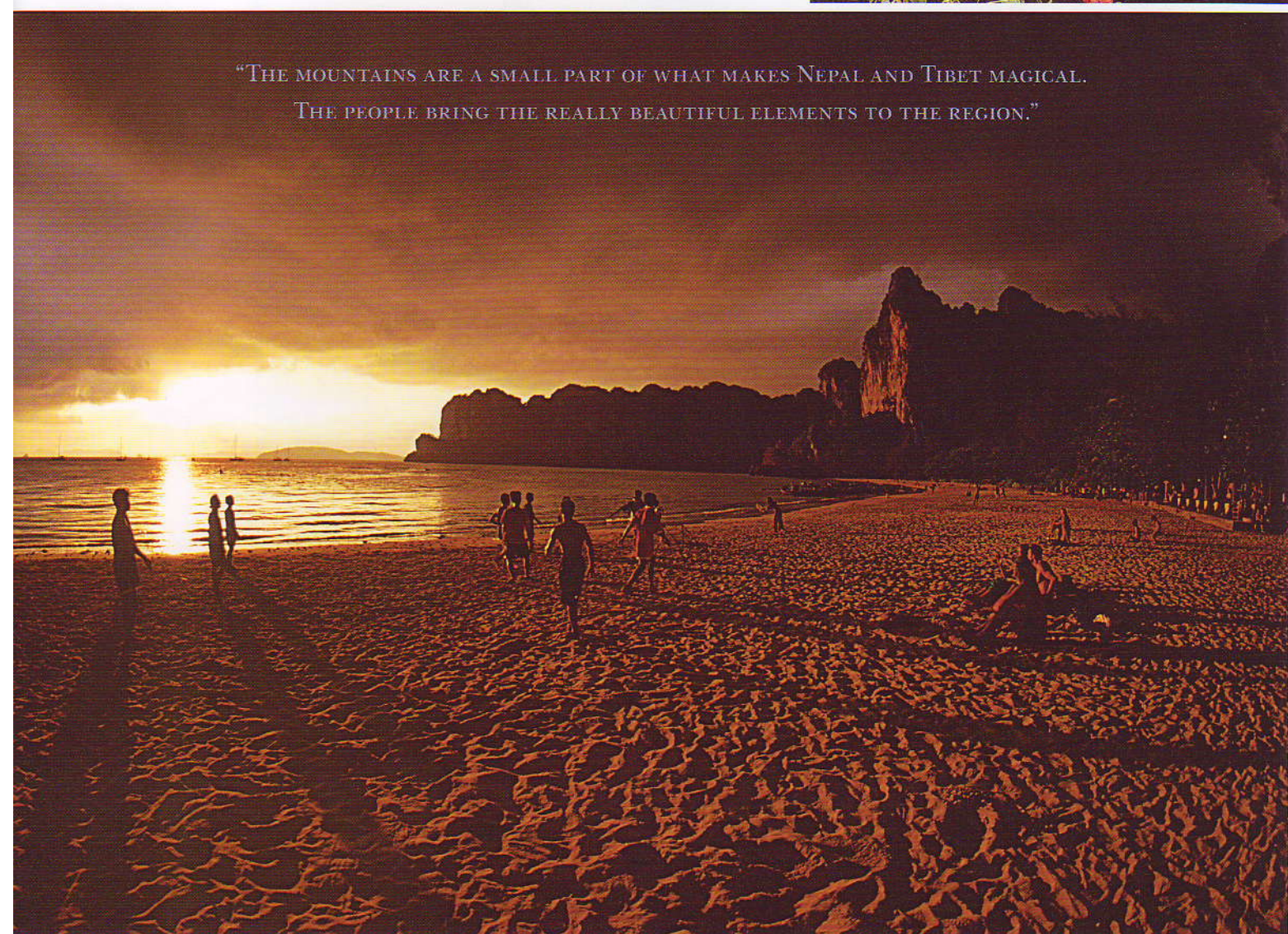
A Mayan girl enjoys an ice cream cone in Solola, Guatemala.
D100, 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6D ED VR AF Zoom-Nikkor

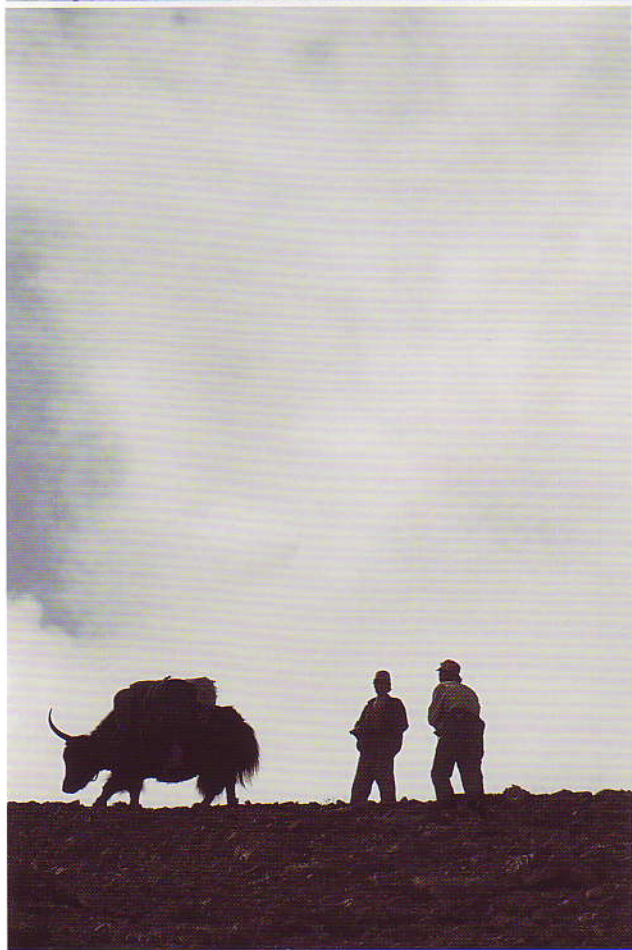
In Thailand for a few days prior to his 2002 Everest climb, Jake photographed a sunset soccer match at Railay Beach.
F5, 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G ED-IF AF-S VR Zoom-Nikkor

Traffic jam, Nepali style. A herdsman urges his flock down a steep trail in the Humla district of remote west Nepal.
D200, 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6D ED VR AF Zoom-Nikkor



"THE MOUNTAINS ARE A SMALL PART OF WHAT MAKES NEPAL AND TIBET MAGICAL.
THE PEOPLE BRING THE REALLY BEAUTIFUL ELEMENTS TO THE REGION."





“YOU’RE CONSTANTLY LEAPFROGGING
THE CLIMBERS, SETTING UP A SHOT,
THEN PACKING UP AND TRYING TO GET
BACK AHEAD OF THEM.”

THE GEAR...AND THE GLOVES

"I've always shot with Nikons," Jake says, "and I used my first digital Nikon in 2002, when Discovery loaned me a D1H." In 2003 he got a D100 and is now shooting with a D200, which he likes for its light weight and quality images. Not to mention the performance and reliability of its batteries.

Because climbing brings weight considerations, Jake has to choose his lenses wisely. "I always have the 10.5 fisheye for the scenes and the perspective it captures, and a 24-120 and a fixed 24 and a 70-300 and 80-400 VR." The backup lens, an extra 24-120, stays at the lower camp as he climbs.

And we had to ask about gloves: on or off when working the camera? "I'm really fortunate," Jake says. "What really allows me to shoot up there is that my hands and feet are always incredibly warm, which can be incredibly annoying at sea level, but up there it's to my advantage. I can take my gloves off and leave them off for quite a while. And I also cheat a little bit: I've got hand warmers in my gloves."

Everest? 29,035 feet, the tallest mountain in the world? No one's going to call hand warmers cheating.

clockwise, from top
Climbers ascend from Camp I to Camp II on Gurla Mandhata in Tibet.
D200, 10.5mm f/2.8G ED AF DX Fisheye-Nikkor

Ted Mahon struggles through wind and snow on the North Col Headwall at 22,500 feet on Everest's Ridge Route.
D100, 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6D AF Zoom-Nikkor

A Drokpa, or Tibetan nomad, leads a yak uphill toward an advanced base camp on Gurla Mandhata.
D200, 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G ED-IF AF-S VR Zoom-Nikkor

The next pictures for Jake might be related to a project he's thought about for a long time. In the manner of John Fielder, who traced the steps of photographer William Henry Jackson through the Colorado landscape and photographed from exactly the same vantage points in order to show the changes a century had brought to the land, Jake would like to follow the route of the pioneering Everest expeditions of climbers like George Mallory and his climbing partner, Andrew Irvine, who traveled halfway around the world to attempt Everest. "I'd like to re-create the shots from 1924 that they took on their route. They sailed by steamer from London to Bombay and then took a train across India to Darjeeling and then walked five weeks to get to the base of the mountain. They covered everything on the first couple of trips with a big plate camera and then with smaller Kodaks. It's a great collection of photographs, and I think it would be fascinating to see what, if anything, has changed in these little villages and along those routes. That's something I've always dreamed of doing."

And one other thing: From the childhood days of leafing through *National Geographic* and dreaming of visiting the places pictured on the pages, there's always been the thought of getting his photographs published in the magazine. "I've been in *National Geographic Adventure* quite a few times," Jake says, "and in one of their books, but never in *National Geographic* itself."

Still one more mountain to climb.

Note: There are many more of Jake's images at his website, mountainworldphoto.com, along with details of the Mallory expedition. To go *inside the image* with Jake Norton, visit www.nikonnet.com/jakenorton.