Amateur Radio Aids
Mt. Everest Climbers

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...and more!
Amateur Radio Aids Mt. Everest Climbers

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Climb leader Sean Disney (South Africa) asked his friend, technical expert and fellow climber Mike Hodges from San Francisco, California to help provide communications assistance for a climb of Mt. Everest. Mike has many years of experience hang gliding and mountain climbing. He asked Mark Novell, W7YN, manager of the Oakland California HRO store for his recommendation for a small portable antenna for use on 2 Meters.

Mark suggested a five-element antenna, the Elk 2M/440L5, which Mike bought. Elk Antennas is in Walnut Creek, California, and makes log periodic antennas for VHF/UHF Amateur Radio use. (www.ElkAntennas.com)

Sean Disney on conditions: “Mt. Everest is perhaps the harshest environment on the planet for humans and their climbing gear as well as their communications equipment. Laptops, satellite phones, and two-way radios are put through incredible daily temperature extremes, amazing storms, and the abuse that comes with being dragged up and down the icy and rocky terrain of the world's highest mountain. The season just completed on Mt. Everest proved to be the most deadly in the last decade. At least ten deaths were attributed to the extreme conditions encountered this past May on the mountain.”

However, expedition leader Sean Disney and his team from South Africa were successful at reaching the summit, and returning home with all fingers and toes intact. Their communications gear stood strong through the worst storms this season had to offer, while other teams struggled to maintain communications between base camp and the higher camps. The Khumbu icefall above base camp is perhaps one of the most treacherous crossings, with house-sized blocks of ice shifting daily in the afternoon sun. The ridges separating base camp, the icefall and upper camps also causes problems with communications.

Communications between camps I through IV were rather straightforward with the Yaesu VX-170 handhelds the team brought along.
The communications tent on Mt. Everest.

with them. Making the hop from base camp to the upper camps and the summit is made a bit more complicated by some rather vertical terrain. Sean Disney reported after the expedition that “Our communications gear is one of the best assets for team safety on the mountain. Thanks to Mark Novell, W7YN, of the HRO Oakland store for suggesting the Elk antenna,” Sean counted on the Elk antenna to assure contact between all members of the team. The true portability, light weight and ease of assembly contributed to the success of the team.

OWN THE ANTENNA USED TO CONQUER MT. EVEREST

You'll Find Elk Antennas at HRO, AES, HamPros & Jun's

www.ElkAntennas.com