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Gazette

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Lance Metz makes his second trek to Advanced Base Camp.

Top of the world

GAZETTE REPORTER

The team of local climbers reached the highest point in the world, the 8 848m summit of Everest, last Monday.

First to reach the top at 3am Nepal time were team leader Sean Disney (Greenside) and Lance Metz (Sandton), followed by Ben Swart, Barend Engelbrecht and Dainfern's Vaughan de la Harpe and Arthur Marsden.

Disney and De la Harpe summited Everest from the south on the same date four years ago. Donald O'Connor decided not to go beyond Camp 3 and did not reach the summit.

De la Harpe recalled the excitement in the lead-up to the final climb. "After days of monitoring the weather, the summit window was identified and we knew our weeks of preparation had at last culminated in a summit bid.

"The plan was to climb to the North Col (7 050m), overnight there and proceed to Camp 2 (7 700m), and leave Camp 3 (8

200m) at 11pm that night for the summit.

"Once this had been accomplished we would descend to the North Col. All the emergency and radio drills were revised and the camp doctor showed how to administer dexamethazone, a powerful drug to be injected if a climber became totally incapacitated."

The team eventually summited in thick cloud and energy-sapping deep powdery snow.

"The macabre scene of several dead bodies while you are climbing is a reminder that this is not a game and the enormity of what you are doing and the dangers involved are real. Once I reached the summit and realised where I was standing, the feeling of accomplishment was overwhelming. The 20 minutes I was on the summit were the best of my life," said Metz.

The team is in Kathmandu celebrating its success.

Details: www.adventuredynamics.co.za



Sean Disney, Lance Metz and Nima Nurbu Sherpa on the summit of Everest.

Vaughan de la Harpe and his mascot, Frikkie the wild dog, on the summit.

