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# Another SA team jets out to take on Everest

By LINDA RULASHE

**SOUTH AFRICA's second Everest attempt begins today with the departure of a five-member team from Johannesburg international airport.**

**It is the culmination of a three-year dream for the climbers, some of whom have known each other since their school days.**

**The team hopes to scale the summit, without oxygen, from the less-popular and more difficult North Ridge — and they hope that they will not be dogged by the controversy that plagued Ian Woodall's expedition earlier this year.**

**Alexander Harris, the team's leader, said the drama of the earlier South African attempt had had a negative effect on their expedition.**

**"It has made it harder for us to find sponsors, but people are rooting for us nevertheless."**

**The team — which includes Mountain Club of South Africa members Sean Disney, Mark Campbell, Anton Erasmus and Robin Walshaw — has already raised R95 000 and another R150 000 worth of equipment and food. However, they still need a further R200 000 to cover government charges and logistical support from the Tibetans.**

**Harris said the team had spent almost every day of the last five months together.**

**"There was a lot of hectic preparation. A farewell party we had on Friday night with family and friends was the first time we were really able to get our minds off things."**

**While Harris said they were not feeling nervous, "our first concern is to get back safely".**

**The team arrives in Katmandu tomorrow before transferring to their Base Camp the next day.**

**After acclimatising and establishing Camps 2 and 3 on the North Ridge, they plan to scale the summit on October 20.**

**The team have committed themselves to a long-term development programme aimed at promoting rock climbing and mountaineering among disadvantaged youths.**

**Four affirmative action candidate climbers with leadership skills will be selected for the programme, which is being run with the Gauteng government and the Mountain Club.**

**The four candidates will join four of the expedition members to form a team which will attempt to climb the sixth highest peak in the world, Mount Cho-Oyu, in Tibet, during March.**