

TWO U.S. CLIMBERS MISSING ON PAKISTANI MOUNTAIN

A pair from Utah trying to complete the first ascent of a steep face in the Karakoram mountain range were caught in a snowstorm last month and haven't been seen since

BY: ERIC KILLELEA SEP 1, 2016



Kyle Dempster (left) and Scott Adamson (right) have gone missing in Pakistan. Photo: GoFundMe

A pair of alpinists from Utah who set off on a five-day climbing trip in northern Pakistan in late August became lost in a snowstorm and are missing.

Scott Adamson, 34, and Kyle Dempster, 33, began their ascent on August 21 up the 4,593-foot unclimbed north face of Baintha Brakk II (Ogre 2), a craggy 23,901-foot peak off the Choktoi Glacier in the Karakoram range. During the men's ascent, their cook, Gahfoor Abdul, says he spotted their headlamps halfway up the peak. That was the last time anyone saw them.

Family and friends have initiated a search and rescue effort with the help of local authorities and a climbing team, and they created a GoFundMe page on August 31 with a goal of raising \$100,000. At press time on Thursday, roughly 3,400 people had pitched in more than \$142,000 and the goal had been raised to \$150,000.

"Please help these boys. With the initiation of the Search and Rescue we have also been required to transfer money for the helicopter rescue and porters on foot in search of Scott and Kyle," reads the GoFundMe page. "With the unreliable weather we are needing more money everyday. Please consider the urgency of this situation and how thankful we are for your help."

A Global Rescue helicopter was unable to fly near the route Monday night due to low clouds, according to Jonathan Thesenga, global

sports marketing manager at Black Diamond Equipment, which sponsors Dempster. "There's no wind or snow right now, but most of the mountain is cloaked in clouds," Thesenga says. "They have held out until a better forecast in the weather. We need to have a solid weather window for the helicopter to fly in."

A team of porters from the small town of Askole in the remote region of the Karakoram mountains have been hired to investigate the south side of the mountain, in case the climbers rerouted, says Thesenga. Black Diamond is posting updates to its Facebook page with details of the search and rescue efforts.

Last year, Adamson and Dempster pulled off a self-rescue when they attempted the north face of Ogre 2. They climbed at least 2,696-feet, making it just shy of the summit. But then Adamson fell 100 feet and broke his leg, forcing them to descend. Several rappels down the snow-covered granite slab, the climbers' anchor popped and they fell another 295 feet to the glacier. They were able to make it back to camp safely. Dempster later wrote that he beat himself up over the "mistake" and what he called "complacency" that nearly killed him and his partner.

Dempster twice won the Piolet d'Or, alpinism's highest honor celebrating the most innovative ascents, in 2010 and 2013. His cousin, Drew Wilson, died during a 2005 climb on Baffin Island in Canada.