

Torch relay delays climb

Everest climber, David Cole has had to wait at base camp for the Chinese team to summit the mountain with the sister Olympic torch, so he said there was not a lot going on at the time on Everest south side, when he communicated on Wednesday.

Restrictions were enforced on the south side by the Nepalese army at base camp and up at camp two.

David said only persons registered on climbing permits were allowed to stay at base camp and all visitors, trekkers, spouses, support doctors and team leaders were supposed to leave.

All teams were forbidden from being above base camp at all as the Chinese were expected to summit.

David said the Chinese team was waiting at advanced base camp on the north side at 6400 metres for a good weather window.

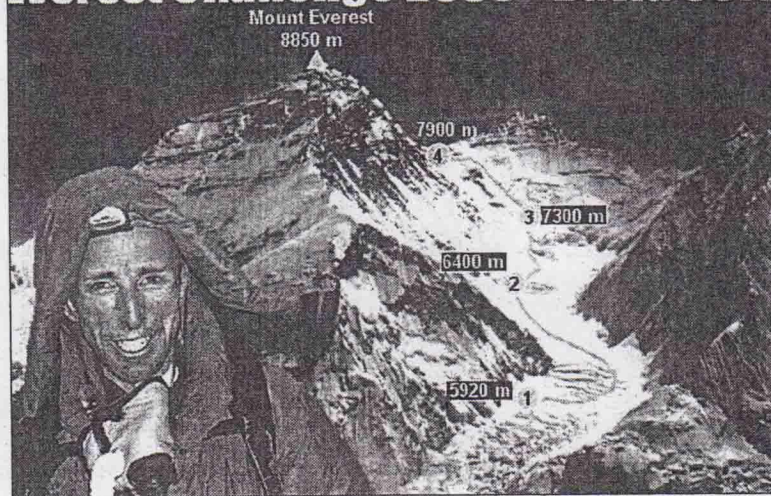
"The last few days there has been heavy cloud coverage, snowfall and high winds preventing them from reaching the summit.

"There is rumour they will summit now around May 6 to 8," David said.

The Chinese team did reach the summit on Thursday morning.

"This is a little frustrating for all of us here at base camp as by having to stay at lower altitude, we lose valuable acclimatisation already

Everest Challenge 2008 - David Cole



gained by having been up to camp one and two," David explained.

"Furthermore, for every day the Chinese torch team does not summit, all teams are getting pushed into a smaller summit/weather window later in the month, potentially creating greater congestion on the mountain.

"All we can do right now is hope for good weather.

"At the moment none of the route above camp two is fixed.

"Apparently it will be fixed by a Sherpa team on May 8 and 9, in readiness for teams to progress to higher camps and towards the summit."

David said he and a team mate had spent a few nights down the valley at lower altitude and felt a lot stronger for it and charged with a new energy arriving back at base camp.

Hopefully next time anyone hears from David he will have reached his goal.