

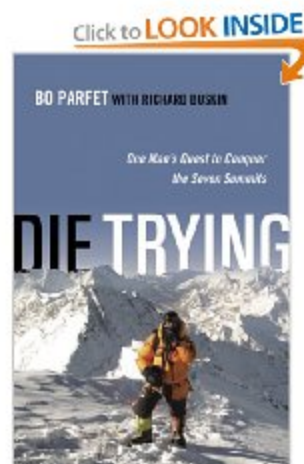
THE ADVENTURE BLOG

NEWS, COMMENTARY, AND INSIGHTS ON ADVENTURES, AND
ADVENTURERS, FROM AROUND THE GLOBE. NOW, PROUDLY ASSOCIATED
WITH JPFREEK ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

Book Review: *Die Trying*

In the world of mountaineering and adventure, the Seven Summits is one of the most sought after goals. In order to complete the challenge, a climber must successfully climb the tallest mountains on all seven continents. The list includes Kilimanjaro in Africa (19,340 feet), Aconcagua in South America (22,841 feet), Denali in North America (20,320 feet), Mt. Vinson in Antarctica (16,050 feet), Mt. Elbrus in Europe (18,442 feet), Carstensz Pyramid in Indonesia (16,024), Mount Kosciuszko in Australia (7,310 feet), and of course Mt. Everest in Asia, the tallest mountain on the planet at 29,029 feet. Sharp eyed readers will have already noted that that was eight mountains and not seven. When the original list was put together by Dick Bass, the first man to climb all of the Seven Summits, he included just the continental mountains, and thus Kosciuszko in Australia was on the list. Later, the list was amended by Reinhold Messner to to included all of "Oceania" which then added Carstensz Pyramid to the list. Most climbers do both just to cover their bases.



The Seven Summits are the the central theme for the book *Die Trying* by Bo Parfet and Richard Buskin, which was released earlier this year. The book follows Parfet's quest to climb each of those mountains, as he goes on a journey of self discovery along the way.

Parfet does a competent job of telling his own story, starting as a young man who struggled with a learning disability, but over came that to go on graduate college and get a lucrative job on Wall Street. But in the midst of working many long hours, while constantly eating takeout, and slowly getting out of shape, Parfet decided he needed to put a little excitement into his life. So, he planned a trip to Tanzania to make the trek up Kilimanjaro. While in college he had done some climbing, and caught the bug, but he had never been up as high as he was on Kili, and when he reached the summit, it gave him a sense of accomplishment that ended up changing his life.

From there, Bo decided that he would move on Aconcagua, which other climbers told him was a nice test to see if he could handle even higher altitudes. At that time, he

wasn't even considering the Seven Summits, just going on a mountain adventure that would get him out away from his desk and out of his office. Parfet became creative with his approach, even using his corporate ties to do fund raising for a variety of charities that would help get him to the places he wanted to go climbing in. Not only was he getting to climb mountains, he was doing some good along the way too.

Eventually mountaineering began to become a more important part of his life, and by the time he left for Denali, his third peak in the Seven Summits, he was in better shape, carrying more appropriate equipment, and had experience level had risen dramatically. After topping out successfully on that mountain, which is often seen as a warm-up for Everest, he began to think about completing the Seven Summits in earnest.

Overall, I enjoyed *Die Trying*, as it is a good read to familiarize yourself with the mountains that make up the Seven Summits, and learn the basics of mountaineering. Parfet does a good job of describing the conditions that are faced on each of the Summits, and explains the various approaches to climbing each of them as well. He also mixes in plenty of his own personality, giving the story a more accessible, personal approach. He comes across as a likable guy that you wouldn't mind sharing a camp fire with, swapping stories into the night.

But make no mistake, this book isn't amongst the all time great mountaineering books. It is a fun, light read, and if you're looking for something new for your bookshelf, then by all means, give this one a go, just don't expect [Into Thin Air](#) or even Dick Bass' own [Seven Summits](#), which I preferred to this book, although it is a bit dated now. For a fun adventure story though, you could do a lot worse.

POSTED BY ADVENTURE JUNKIE AT 7:59 AM 

LABELS: [ACONCAGUA](#), [BOOK REVIEW](#), [CARSTENSZ PYRAMID](#), [DENALI](#), [KILIMANJARO](#), [KOSCIUSZKO](#), [MOUNT ELBRUS](#), [MOUNT EVEREST](#), [MOUNT VINSON](#), [MOUNTAINEERING](#), [SEVEN SUMMITS](#)