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Last update: June 3, 2005 at 7:18 AM

Chaska climber begins descent on Mount Everest

June 3, 2005 CLIMBER0603

After reaching the summit of Mount Everest in Nepal Thursday morning, Neal Mueller of Chaska and party were reported to have started the descent towards base camp, said expedition leader Jim Williams late Thursday, Minnesota time.

In the latest dispatch, dated June 3,

Williams writes, "Back to Camp 2 Urszula and Neal are back in Camp 2 after a full days descent from the S. Col. They are both tired but glad to be down. Tomorrow (today, Minnesota time) Base Camp and a days rest before starting down the valley for home."

After weeks of delays, howling winds and one avalanche, Mueller and two sherpas reached the summit of Mount Everest in Nepal on Thursday morning.

Lhakpa Gyltsen, Pasang Yella and Mueller left the South Col camp at 9 p.m. on Wednesday Nepal time. Clear, calm weather made conditions ideal, and the group reached the top of the world's tallest mountain at 9:40 a.m. (Nepal time is 10 hours, 45 minutes ahead of Central Time.)

Mueller's mother, sister and grandmother in Minnesota anxiously monitored updates on the Internet, posted by expedition leader Jim Williams.

"They reported that the first part of the expedition had summited last night, then there was a six-hour gap," said Laura Mueller, his mother. "We were sure something was wrong. We were going out of our minds. We're so happy to know he made it."

The clear weather allowed the party that preceded Mueller's to spend two hours on the summit, which is rare. Williams and another group

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member, Chris Grubb, did not climb to the summit for undisclosed reasons.



Updates are at <http://www.exploradus.com/dispatch-everest.htm>.

Chris Welsch

Mount Everest,
Nepal

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