

**DATELINE:**

**Report from Shira Camp 1, 3430m ASL, Mt Kilimanjaro**

**7a.m. Monday August 2, 2010**

**Day 3, Kili Climb 2010**

**Report by Paul Francis, Humpty's founder and Executive Chairman**



Bloody hell; it feels like only yesterday that I was on Mt Kilimanjaro at Camp Shira 1, right where Humpty's 19 trekkers and three special guests are as I write this report. And having just spoken on a satellite phone to Jamling Tenzing – the son of the famous Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, who made the historic climb of Mt Everest with Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953 – I'm itching to be back on the mountain with them. I reckon it must be a bit like childbirth – you forget how hard it actually is.

But the reality is that there is nothing like waking up under a clear blue sky with frost all over your tent and peering out at the spectacular snow-capped peak of Mt Kilimanjaro in the distance. It's the most awesome feeling, as Catherine Murray reminded me.

Cath, 44, is making the second annual Kili Climb with her 19-year-old daughter, Airlie, and she can't get over how breathtaking that view is – and how stunning it is to walk through the changing landscape which goes from lush rain forest to open heath and then the arid rocky desert mountain.

And yet there's something at work that is bigger than both the scenery and the climb: you feel a magical sense of camaraderie when taking on Kili as part of a team. "We are having a great time. We had a long day yesterday and we all took it easy and relaxed into it," Cath said. "What is so wonderful is that everyone is so incredibly supportive of each other, we are all getting really close and we've only been on the mountain for two days now."

I call that the Humpty Dumpty spirit. It's amazing what happens when you put a bunch of near strangers together to do something good for sick and injured kids.

The other great thing about Humpty's second Kili Climb is that we are making history yet again and that is something of which I am enormously proud. This year, Jamling Tenzing is climbing with Peter Hillary and his daughter, Amelia. Those names, Norgay and Hillary will be familiar to many as two of the most famous mountaineering families in history. They are carrying an enormous legacy on behalf of their legendary fathers and Humpty.

Jamling and Peter Hillary have climbed together before, but the Humpty ascent is a completely new experience. And Jamling is also making his own bit of personal history, as it is the first time he has been to Africa. "It's totally different, this mountain: it's just one solo mountain in the middle of nowhere," he said. "And the porters are something I have never seen in my life. It's an eye opener in many ways. Most of the porters live down in the lower altitudes and come up here to work."

For Jamling, the altitude is minor challenge – after all, he lives in the Himalayas at a height of 2500m ASL and spends six months of every year climbing mountains at least 5500m high. Still, he's not getting cocky. "I never take any mountain for granted," he said. "My one piece of advice to the other trekkers is to take it slow and easy and enjoy every minute of it because if you don't enjoy it, you shouldn't be here. And I really think it's a wonderful idea to do Kili and raise funds for children."

And there's one other thing that Jamling has noticed – a unique sense of humour that separates Humpty's climbers from your garden-variety mountaineers. "Everyone is laughing most of the time – it's a hilarious group."

Michele Rosengren from Adventure1000 said there was a tonne of giggling coming from the women's tents on the first night on the mountain, which is nicer than what was coming out of the men's tents last year.

This year, seven women are going up Kili. "We have sorted out the snorers and put them on the edge of the camp," said Cath with a laugh. "And yes, there's a lot of giggling going on – it's fun. It's like we are all 12 and 13 again."

Michele, a seasoned climber who also doesn't do too badly as a team cheerleader and psychologist, said the Kili Club are making great progress. There have been no injuries although a few have had slight headaches, which is normal when you're 3430m above sea level for the first time in your life.

The team climbed for six hours yesterday and made it to camp Shira 1 to be greeted by the porters who cooked a sensational meal and provided a hot bowl of water for a quick clean up. Funnily enough, the topic of creature comforts always comes up when talking about climbing Kili.

It's a five-star location but it's not quite five star accommodations. We share tents and yes, there are no showers, which makes those bowls of hot water delivered by smiling porters every morning and night such a relief. "There aren't that many creature comforts but you get used to that very quickly," Cath said. "No one is stinking just yet – but I don't know what it's going to be like in four days time!"

I didn't have the heart to tell Cath but I still remember Joe Hockey from last year – just kidding, Joe!

Today the team will take a few hours to climb 400m. That doesn't seem like a lot of ground to cover in a day but there is no point rushing something so magnificent. And to be frank, it's all about getting used to the altitude, which is the most important thing. Tonight, they team will bunk down at Camp Shira 2 at 3815m ASL and I'm sure they'll have another sensational report to entertain you all with.

I'll be back tomorrow but in the meantime, Jamling wanted me to pass on his love to his wife in Nepal – "tell her I miss her" – and Cath wanted me to send her boys a big hug and kiss, via satellite phone. Consider it done. You're doing us all proud.

***For more information on Humpty's climb and to support our trekkers go to [www.humptysmountain.com.au](http://www.humptysmountain.com.au)***

