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Watchmaker Commits to Climbing Mount Everest

Pittsburgh - Seven months after returning from Mount Everest Base Camp, watchmaker an entrepreneur Michael Kobold has decided to make an attempt at reaching the summit of the world's highest mountain with the use of supplemental oxygen. Kobold, who accompanied veteran adventurer Sir Ranulph Fiennes on this year's expedition but who did not plan on climbing himself, has no background or experience in mountaineering. The 2009 Everest Challenge Expedition will leave for Kathmandu in the spring of 2009 and has at its core a charitable mission: Kobold hopes to raise more than \$250,000 in donations from the general public for the Navy SEAL Warrior Fund. He also plans on raising the Navy SEAL flag atop the Himalayan peak.

Kobold hopes that his lack of experience will be balanced by training he is expecting to receive from several U.S. Navy SEALs who have agreed to volunteer their time. "There are many reasons why someone in my position should not even think about climbing a mountain, let alone a peak in the Himalaya. However, with the SEALs training me for up to nine weeks before I head out to Nepal, and with an expedition partner like Kenton Cool, I think the chances of success are greater than the chances of a fatal accident." Kobold and his team, which includes British explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes and American climber Will Cross, will be directed from Base Camp by the veteran mountaineer and expedition leader Henry Todd. "Henry is a man of some controversy but no matter what people say about him, he has one of the most successful operations in the high Himalaya. His outfit also has a safety record that is far more convincing than what other operators can claim," explains Michael Kobold.

The Navy SEAL Warrior Fund is a 501c3 charitable organization that provides financial aid for the families of SEALs who are wounded or have fallen in action. The U.S. Navy SEALs are arguably the most well-trained fighting force in the U.S. Armed Forces. Each Navy SEAL must complete a grueling 7-month-long program that tests his mental and physical toughness and endurance.

www.everest-challenge.com

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