

## **A broken ski pole - Jorguś in Dauphiné Alps, March 1991**

(in memory of **Jerzy Zachorowski**, 1955-2017)

Our 1991 ski tour in Massif des Écrins was planned to culminate in climbing Dôme de Neige (4015) – a side summit of Barre des Écrins (4102m) – the most southern skiable four-thousand peak of the Alps. During a four-day tour we completed a passage around Mont Pelvoux by Col du Selé, Refuge de Pilat and Col de la Temple, went down to Refuge Cézanne along Glacier Noir and were ready to go for the highest peak of the tour.

The next day the weather was perfect and we were climbing happily towards Refuge des Écrins (3170m), were the last night before the summit was

planned. Just before we reached the level of Glacier Blanc Bruno suffered bad luck: one of his skiing poles got broken. Those days the touring poles of adjustable length were rather expensive and they were not so robust as they are now. Our group stopped for a brake and we started to analyze all possibilities. It was hardly thinkable

to climb up another thousand meters with a single pole. Fritz considered an option to return immediately back to the car left in the village of Ailefroide, to drive to Briançon and buy a new pair of poles. However, it was rather too late to get them that evening, and waiting till the next day would cost us more than 24 hours delay, so we would had not enough time for the summit.



***Jorguś, Jean-Pierre, Fritz and Bruno***

As all these options were carefully examined (and no satisfactory solution was found) Jorguś looked around and realised that we are standing just at the level of the highest clumb of bushes growing in the valley. He took his well-equipped pocket knife with a saw, cut a few sticks, took the broken pole of Bruno and opened his workshop.





He put a polished wooden piece inside the broken pole, took some binding tape and embedded the outer part of the pole. As we still busy with eating and drinking, Jorguś was about to finish his work and kindly asked Bruno:

- *Einhundertfünfundzwanzig?*

Bruno was still afraid, the tour is definitely over for him, so he could hardly understand the question right away.

Thus Jorguś explained

- *The pole will be fine but it will not be adjustable any*

*more. But now we can set it to any length you wish.*

Bruno answered with a smile that any length is fine for him, so the work was completed soon. Jorguś did his work well – Bruno used the repaired pole until we reached the Refuge des Écrins, and the next day he climbed to the top of the desired four-thousand peak of Dôme de Neige with all of us and successfully skied down to finish the tour.



**Jorguś and Karol fix the pole**



**The team at the top of Dôme de Neige**

During numerous excursions with Jorguś during the period 1985-2015 I could not only enjoy a wonderful company, but also rely on his wise advises and help in solving all possible problems.

**The 1991 tour in massifs Ecrins, Haut Dauphiné**

