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Disabled City Climbers Attempt to Scale Kilimanjaro

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(WINS) August 29, 2001 1:47 pm
NEW YORK (AP) -- Six disabled New Yorkers, four of whom are blind, one deaf, and one who is missing an arm and part of a lung, are attempting to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

By Wednesday, the second-day of their trek, they had reached 9,000 feet, said Dick Traum, president of the Achilles Track Club, a Manhattan-based group of disabled long-distance runners.

They hope to reach the top of summit, which is 19,341-feet high, by Saturday.

The adventure was inspired by a blind Achilles member from South Africa, Geoff Hilton-Barbara, who last year ran the New York Marathon.

The four men and two women range in age from 22 to 55, Traum said.

The increasingly thinner air will be most difficult for the man missing part of his lung, as a result of cancer, and another climber who is both deaf and asthmatic.

Members of the group include Thomas Cobb, a cancer survivor who lost his arm and Katie Kenney, a 24-year-old actress who is deaf and asthmatic.

Cobb has completed five New York City Marathons and one Boston Marathon. Kenney recently appeared in Leslie Ayvazina's play "Deaf Day" to rave reviews.

Among the 19 volunteers accompanying the group are three doctors.

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