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Paragliding adventurer Squash reaches first camp in her Everest challenge

A WOMAN aiming to become the first female to jump solo off the top of Mount Everest has embarked on the first stage of her climb.

Squash Falconer, 29, of Thulston, is co-leading a nine-week expedition to the 8,848m summit of the world's highest mountain and will paraglide down solo.

She is climbing on the Nepal side and has now reached camp one – the first of four camps on the way to the top – at a height of about 5,950m.

On her internet blog, she said: "To get to camp one, you have to climb through the Khumbu ice fall. It is a huge glacier that is full of crevasses, ice and snow. Some of

the blocks of ice are the size of buildings. A team of Nepalese Sherpas, called the ice fall doctors, put ladders across the crevasses so that you can cross them."

Squash, who was the first British woman to climb Mount Blanc and paraglide from the summit in 2009, noticed changes to the atmosphere as she climbed.



Squash Falconer will paraglide solo from the top of Everest.

She said: "We made good time getting to camp one and I could certainly feel the altitude gain. The next day, we

did a small hike about 200m up before returning to a very windy and cold camp one again for another night.

"The following morning, we were up early to come back down the ice fall for a couple of days' well-earned rest at base camp. I'm happy to report the first acclimatisation trip went well and I'm feeling good. The next time we go up,

we'll aim to stay a few nights at camp two."

Squash is tackling the challenge for three charities – Treetops Hospice, cancer charity Solea and the Mount Everest Foundation for Sustainable Development in Nepal.

To donate to Squash's charities, visit the website www.squashfalconer.com.