

He continued on to the great flat area below Olivares and camped on the névé of Olivares Norte. On December 28, he made the second and the first solo ascent of Olivares Norte (c. 6000 meters, 19,685 feet). He descended to the Quebrada Amarilla to Guarda Vieja at 3000 meters. The route to Cerro Olivares (6266 meters, 20,558 feet) from the Quebrada Amarilla had been attempted by Manzi and me in 1990. Campodónico made this new route on the little-visited peak. He ascended the quebrada on January 2, 1994 and camped at 5400 meters. The next day, he started early, traversed various false summits and got to the highest summit.

MARCELO SCANU, *Grupo de Montaña Huamán, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Cerro Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (Ansilta 7). Though this peak was first climbed in 1958 by the northwest ridge, it has rarely been visited. It is second in height in the Ansilta group, but the most difficult. Humberto Campodónico made the first ascent of the north ridge solo. On March 30, a truck of the border police left him at the Estancia los Arroyos and by afternoon he was camped at the Casa de Piedra. The next day, he reached Laguna Fría. On April 1, he camped on the edge of the Glaciar la Fría at the foot of a great ice wall. On the 2nd, he threaded through *penitentes* and moraines to camp at 4550 meters. On April 3, he climbed scree to the ridge, traversed the north summit to the highest peak (5780 meters, 18,963 feet). He descended from his camp by a different way to Villa Pituil, which he reached on April 6.

MARCELO SCANU, *Grupo de Montaña Huamán, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Cordilleras de Agua Negra and Olivares, San Juan. In January Pablo and César Carlacchiani and I continued exploring this beautiful zone. On January 12, we got from Las Flores to Base Camp at Gendarmería Nacional (Border Police) post at Guardia Vieja at 3000 meters. On the 13th, from the nearby Quebrada de los Milicos or las Yeguas, Pablo and I reached by the south ridge the rocky summit of unclimbed Cerro Mogote de Agua Negra (4310 meters, 14,140 feet). On the 15th, a truck left us in the Quebrada de San Lorenzo. We continued on foot to the unclimbed southwest face of the Cerro Bonete de Olivares (4715 meters, 15,469 feet). We three completed the second ascent of the peak at three P.M. César had to leave. On a rest day, Pablo and I discovered a petroglyph of a mounted Spaniard. On January 17, we ascended the Quebrada de las Trancas. We made the first ascent of Cumbre Alto de las Trancas (4317 meters, 14,163 feet) by the north face. We continued along the northeast ridge, making a new route and second ascents of Cumbre Bífida de las Trancas north and south summits (4210 and 4221 meters, 13,812 and 13,848 feet). On the 19th, a truck took us to the Paso de Agua Negra. We continued along the frontier with Chile and climbed the Cerro del Paso de Agua Negra (c. 5000 meters, 16,404 feet) and descended to the Portezuelo de Agua Negra. We kept on along the border, making second ascents of Cerro Portezuelo de Agua

Negra Este and Oeste and of Cerro Laguna Bonita (all 4950 meters, 16,240 feet), camping that night on the edge of the lake. Two days later, we were back in San Juan.

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Cerro de la Coipita (or de la Lagunita), Cordillera de Colangüil. This range lies in northern San Juan province, parallel to the Argentine-Chilean border. The Cerro de la Coipita is the northernmost peak of the range. We were Swiss Raphael and Stéphane Joliat, Frenchman Jean-Yves Piffard, Argentines *baqueano* (local hillman) Carmelo Martínez and I. On January 26, we passed through Angualasto with its interesting pre-Columbian ruins after making a check with the Gendarmería Nacional (Border Police) because we were entering the Llanos de San Guillermo Provincial Park and Biosphere Reserve. At the nearby ranch of Rodeo del Toro, we met our *baqueano*. On January 28, we ascended the Quebrada del Molle in incredible heat but little humidity. That afternoon, we got to the Vega de los Médanos on the river of the same name. We finally entered the Arroyo del Fierro and camped at 3750 meters. On January 31, horses took us to 4310 meters. We continued on foot, but I got only to 4800 meters because of pain in my knees. The Swiss and French climbers climbed the east ridge and then the summit ridge to complete the first ascent of Cerro de la Coipita (5423 meters, 17,792 feet).

MARCELO SCANU, *Grupo de Montaña Huamán, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Mercedario, First Winter Ascent. Many parties had attempted the winter ascent of Mercedario (6770 meters, 22,212 feet), fourth highest in the Americas, but all had had to retreat under extreme conditions. In June, Mauricio Fernández, Carlos Domínguez and Esteban Arellano met Humberto Campodónico, who was making a solo attempt. They joined forces. Separately, they had walked from Borreal by the Río de los Patos, Río Blanco and the old houses at Los Molles to the Quebrada de la Laguna Blanca, where they met at Ojos de Agua. Snow fell that night, but the next morning they continued along an old road. The Laguna Blanca was frozen. They camped in the old shelter of Laguna Blanca at 3100 meters. On June 21, the first day of southern winter, they passed the day organizing equipment. The next day, they climbed to camp at 4100 meters and built snow walls against the fierce wind, but the wind ripped one of their tents and so they retreated to Laguna Blanca. On June 25, they made a new attack, leaving at eight A.M. and reached the Inca ruins at Pircas de Indios at 5000 meters at six P.M. At six A.M. on June 26, they set out for the summit. They climbed past La Hollada (5800 meters), El Diente (6100 meters) and finally the summit ridge with its numerous false tops. The main summit was gained at 4:50 P.M. with a -22°C temperature. The descent was fast. At ten P.M., they were back at Pircas de Indios and the day after they reached Los Molles.

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