

ice — quite different from the Polish Route, which is wholly ice. Climbers were Javier Alviza, Javier Subias and Jose Hidalgo. (*Desnivel*, June 1995)

EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA

*Aconcagua Bites Back.* The last two seasons on Cerro Aconcagua (22,800 feet) have been remarkably cold and windy, and authorities with Aconcagua Provincial Park report that unseasonably cold temperatures and high winds have made getting up even the Normal Route a matter of survival. According to informal estimates for this most recent austral summer (1995-96), the normal success rate of 30 percent had been replaced by a success rate of two to three percent. Park paramedics, based at the Plaza de Mulas, the regular basecamp for the normal route, are generally used to evacuating one to two people per season with frostbite injuries. (The standard method of evacuation is on the back of a mule.) In January, 1996, they made 30 evacuations for frostbite. Until the last two seasons, climbers could expect 15 to 16 days of clear, still weather between storms. The 1995-96 summer saw afternoon clouds and high winds nearly every day. Temperatures at Camp Berlin (19,500 feet), the standard high camp for climbers, saw nighttime temperatures dipping as low as minus 40°F and winds up to 100 miles per hour. One South African climber who took his hand out of his glove for five minutes while putting up a tent received severe frostbite on his fingers. Norwegian climber Otto Olsen climbed the Polish Glacier Route, then spent two nights on the mountain trying to figure out the way down the Normal Route. He was probably this season's worst victim. Olsen was found by two Argentinians and helped down the mountain. He suffered severe frostbite on his right foot and Park paramedic Raoul Benegas expected all five toes would require amputation. Only two deaths occurred in the area this season. Japanese climber Kimura Shigeru died in late January as a result of a fall in the Canaleta (couloir) on the Normal Route; and a 25-year-old Swiss man died at the 11,000-foot Confluencia Camp on the Horcones Valley approach hike as a result of a heart attack. According to Park records, the 1994-95 season saw 2,700 climbers. By January 31, the 1995-96 season had already seen 2,500 permits issued and the estimate was for over 3,000 to be issued by the end of the summer. Several ascents of the South Face were made this season as well.

CAMERON BURNS

*AAJ, 1995, Correction.* On page 205 there is a sketch of Aconcagua's routes that I submitted. The real names of these routes are: 1) Normal Route. 2) *Vía de los Guías de Mendoza*, 1994. 3) *Vía Mendocina*, 1991. 4) West Face Route, 1988. 5) Southwest Ridge.

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