

During our reconnaissance, we spotted a small range of unclimbed peaks in an area known as Cerro Auchuma in the next valley. To get to the Cerro Auchuma Range required a long and heavily laden haul over a pass at 4800 meters and back down to a camp at 4400 meters. We then found ourselves in a position to attempt three unclimbed peaks situated at the head of this valley.

The next day dawned cold but clear. We made a traverse across all three peaks. There was little technical climbing involved, and nine hours after leaving, we arrived back at the camp, having completed the "Travesia de las Tres Hermanas" (Traverse of the Three Sisters), at 4995 meters, give or take a meter or two between the height of each peak. The summits of each gave clear views of the Jankho Whilliki Range, but it also confirmed that the best approach to them would be via valley systems running to the west rather than our southerly approach.

MIKE ROSSER, *United Kingdom*

Southern Cordillera Quimsa Cruz, Various Activity. The idea of a possible expedition to visit the southern region of the Quimsa Cruz was first proposed in September, 1999, following Sue Savege's successful trip to the northern region. Having limited information concerning the area, Sue and I set about researching possible mountains to visit. Finally we decided to explore the alpinestype peaks in the area of Corichuma (5675m) and to establish a base camp at Laguna Choca Kkota. This area appeared to offer a great deal of potential for new routing and possible first ascents.

With funding from the British Mountaineering Council, The Mount Everest Foundation, and the Alison Chadwick Fund, a team of six female climbers (Sue Savege, Catrin Thomas, Di Gilbert, Sarah Nuttall, Clare Waddingham, Adele Pennington) was assembled. The team left the United Kingdom in July and flew directly to La Paz. After organizing supplies, retrieving lost baggage and acclimatizing, we left La Paz and were dropped off at the side of the road nine hours later. After a very uncomfortable camp on a 30-degree slope, we ferried all the equipment to base camp (4500m). With perfect weather and surrounded by mountains, we set about our exploration, initially scrambling on unclimbed peaks below the snow line and climbing on a granite buttress close to the base camp.

"Base Camp Buttress" was ascended by Di and Sue on a route called *Bakers Oven* (E1 5b) and by Clare and Sarah on a loose and not recommended line (V. Diff). In addition to completing new routes on Cerro Huari Taranca and on the southwest ridge of Cerro Salvadora, we were able to recon the area and acclimatize. Within a couple of days, we were all ready to tackle our first alpine routes. In two teams, we set off with separate objectives and successfully completed an ascent of an unnamed peak we called Les Tres Marias (5480m) and an ascent of the west peak of Cerro Yaypuri (5500m). At approximate alpine grades of PD+, these mountains, which had no recorded ascents, enticed us to look at possible lines on the south ridge of Korrichuma. Two routes onto the ridge were made, along with an ascent of Cero Hualla Kkota as well. Gaining the south ridge from the east was perhaps the better choice, and a delightful slab took Sue and Di to the central tower on the ridge. The western approach was not so profitable and is definitely not recommended.

After some more new routes on our base camp buttress, two teams set off to explore new lines on subsidiary summits of Chiaro Jancho Kkuno (5460m). A superb line named Passos Celestios straight up the south face was made to the east peak. The following day, this route was repeated and a traverse west to an unnamed peak that we called "Pico Helado" (5400m) achieved. With just a couple of days left and the threat of unsettled weather, the team concluded their trip with

a day out on the upper tier of Base Camp Buttress. On this day, five new rock routes were climbed. With the arrival of snow, the team walked out, satisfied with their exploration.

ADELE PENNINGTON, *United Kingdom*

ARGENTINA

NORTHERN ARGENTINE ANDES

Incahuasi Region, Various Ascents. On the last days of January, a truck left the members of the Argentine-Czech Incahuasi Expedition in base camp (4400m) on the slopes of mighty Volcan Incahuasi (6638m) on the Argentine-Chilean border. Czech members were veterans Vlastimil Šmída (67 years old) and Jan Cervinka (69 years old), two spectacular guys with many Himalayan expeditions under their belts. The Argentine group was comprised of Nestor Perez, Santiago Rocha and me. We had 500 liters of water brought by the truck because in the region there is a lack of this vital element. The zone had very strong winds throughout the expedition. We ascended to 4000 meters for acclimatization but my two Argentine friends gave up some days after because of poor health. We made a first camp at 5150 meters on Incahuasi's north ridge, but after two ascents there, a new camp at 5450 meters, a torn tent, and other problems, I decided to give up Incahuasi and ascend other virgin peaks in the zone. These problems didn't disturb my friends, who continued on. On February 2, I headed south from base camp through a lava-and-ash zone toward a subsidiary volcano near the Incahuasi base. I headed to the volcano's rim and descended a little bit because of fierce winds. Finally I reached, solo, the summit of what I called "Volcan Negro del Incahuasi" (5106m, 27° 00' 31" S, 68° 15' 46.8" W). The wind made me tumble, so I descended to the crater, which was full of giant rocks. On February 7, I headed south once more, chasing vicuñas toward another virgin peak. I called it "Volcan Rojo del Incahuasi" (5000m, 27° 00' 44.9" S, 68° 15' 03" W) because of its red color. I descended to its perfectly rounded crater. On February 9, I headed north toward the minor summit of the volcano San Francisco (6016m). I had reached the principal summit in 1997 by a new route (noted in that year's *AAJ*). I took a ridge and found a trickle that descended from the top. By late afternoon I reached the summit (5450m). On top, there was a huge cairn made by the Incas or probably by Walter Penck in 1913. The wind once more made me tumble; I descended to the crater, which has a beautiful, perfectly round lake with a huge rock in the middle. I descended to camp at 8 p.m. happy to find the Czechs, who had ascended Incahuasi the day before. I returned to Buenos Aires, but the incredible Czechs ascended Ojos del Salado on February 23.

MARCELO SCANU, *Buenos Aires, Argentina*

PUNA DE ATACAMA

Nacimiento, New Route, Previously Unreported. Between December, 1999, and March, 2000, I returned to the Bonete-Pissis area in the southern Puna de Atacama, south of the well-known Ojos del Salado. On December 23, W. Zieglmeier, M. Betzl, and I climbed a mountain normally known as Casadero (6658m, 27° 12' S, 68° 33.5' W), but it seems that most of the Argentinian climbers call it Walter Penck, even though W. Penck, a German geologist and geographer who worked in Argentina from 1912 to 1914, had never been on