

and had difficulties that could probably be rated V A3+ AI6. It was done in perfect, though cold, weather.

Last summer the weather was not obliging for the three French. Apart from the clear and sunny first and last days, it was generally overcast with some snowfall. The trio fixed the first 60m, already aiding where they expected free-climbing, and continued in alpine style with a large haul bag, using bivouac sacks rather than a tent. They reached the top after 30 pitches and six bivouacs, the last just three short pitches below the summit. The icicle seems to have been too fragile to climb, but Pessi managed to aid the wall just to the right, with a long reach at the start that was only possible for someone of his 6'2" height. He then moved carefully over the top ice bulge. The team used a lot of aid (to New Wave A2), free-climbed only one rock section, and confirmed the AI6 rating (sections of 90°–95°). Only one peg was found in place on the entire route. The three descended by rappel. This was another fine French effort in the Cordillera Blanca and was short-listed for the Piolet d'Or. It confirmed, if confirmation was needed, that the first ascent in 1982 set a new benchmark in Peruvian climbing.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *High Mountain INFO*

*Santa Cruz Chico, east face to within 20m of summit.* Scottish-based Jason Currie and Guy Robertson made a new route up the east face of the rarely climbed Santa Cruz Chico (a.k.a. Atuncocha), the 5,800m peak on the ridge between Santa Cruz (6,259m) and Santa Cruz Norte (5,829m). The face is not big and appears largely rocky, but before last year was unclimbed. The only previous recorded line on the mountain seems to be the 1958 American Route (Michael-Ortenburger-Ortenburger).

The Scottish pair reached base camp on July 7 and made their first attempt on the 13th. They tried a single-day push up the center of the face but came to a halt 150m below the summit, being forced to retreat, dehydrated, the following day. On the 17th they tried again, making a very early start and carrying a stove, though no bivouac gear. They first climbed three pitches (75°–80°) up a gully left of the toe of a rock spur in the center of the face, then, after a short rock pitch, followed a 60° gully and snow slopes to a very steep rock band. This was overcome at A1. Above, the pair climbed up right through mushrooms and seracs to a couloir leading to the summit ridge. They climbed the couloir (100m, 55°) to the crest of the ridge and eventually stopped 20m short of the summit due to typical Peruvian unstable cornice formations. A rappel descent was made of the route largely using rock anchors and Abalakov threads. Although there was around 600m of climbing, the height of the face was no more than 400m and the route graded Alpine TD. The pair report that the weather was generally stable throughout their stay in the mountains.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *High Mountain INFO*

*Abasraju to summit ridge, Moonlighting.* On July 7 Tony Barton (U.K.) and I climbed a new route (Moonlighting, 11 pitches, TD) on the west-southwest face of Abasraju (5,550m). There is only one other route on the face, and it goes up to the left of the summit. Our route is an almost vertical line approximately 200m to the right of the summit. At the base of the face, directly below the summit, is a small rock buttress. To the right is another larger rock buttress. Between the two is a snow funnel that leads up to an ice runnel. We followed this into mixed