

## **Ascents in the Cordillera Real in the early Bolivian climbing season**

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### **Hati Kollu (5,421m)**

We acclimatized on Hati Kollu in the Hampaturi Group just outside of La Paz. On April 20, we ascended the previously climbed south face of the peak on 45° snow and ice to a rock scramble on the west ridge that led us to the summit (AD-). We descended the normal, southeast ridge (PD+). It was a delightful climb in a rarely visited region of the Real, with extremely easy access from La Paz.

### **Cabeza de Condor (Condoriri) (5,648m)**

On May 12, from a high camp below Condoriri, we climbed a combination of the easier sections of both the Monasterio-Ogden route and Mesili's Directissima (D) on the southeast face. We started up the former then crossed to the latter once we had surmounted the first major rock band. Conditions were poor, with mostly unconsolidated, sugary snow, making the exits from vertical rock to snow dicey and difficult. There was basically no rock fall (this face later in the season supposedly suffers from it) other than what we kicked off ourselves, and we were able to complete the route in just three long pitches under perfect blue skies. The descent of the normal route was uneventful, but we were surprised by how much unconsolidated snow remained on the well-traveled southwest ridge.



### **Ala Izquierda (5,540m)**

On May 13 we climbed Ala Izquierda by its long west ridge (D-). The beautiful lines on its south face enticed us, but we knew the snow conditions would be even worse than what we had dealt with the day before on Condoriri. We climbed two, half pitches on steep, mixed ground made of broken rock, snow, and ice to a small ridge, which was followed by very good névé on the northwest flank to access the main west ridge just to the east of the prominent notch at its end. The ridge was followed on mostly good snow, with short sections of broken rock, to below vertical rock guarding the west summit. We traversed very good snow on a northwest aspect, then climbed directly to the west summit by a steep couloir (70°) on good snow and ice. From there we descended easily to the col, and continued on the west ridge to the main summit. We descended the same route, apart from where we bypassed the west summit by traversing onto the unconsolidated snow on the upper south face. A single rope rappel, followed by a double rope rappel, both off "burn"



pickets, got us off the steep mixed section, and back onto easy terrain.



### **Ala Derecha (5,330m)**

On May 14, we climbed the very easy Ala Derecha (grade F), and, motivated by a strong, freezing wind, made the round trip from high camp in under two hours. We were treated to wonderful views of our route on the southeast face of Condoriri.

### **Huayna Potosi (6,088m)**

On May 21, after bivouacking below the glacier at around 4,930m, we climbed the west face (American route, grade D) in perfect conditions. The entire ascent took us a little under nine hours. Most of the climbing was on well consolidated snow, under clear skies, and with almost no wind. We simul-climbed all but the last five pitches. The upper couloir had big patches of hard ice, but most of it was avoidable, and it provided easy protection as we climbed the snow alongside. We descended the normal route to one of the highest Refugios, before returning to La Paz the following day. This is a world class route, ridiculously easy to access from La Paz, and with an extremely easy descent. It should get climbed much more often than it does.



### **Illampu (6,368m)**

On May 30, from a high camp on the north glacier at 5,330m, we climbed the normal route on the southwest ridge of Illampu (D). We ascended the northwest headwall easily, without protection, to reach the southwest ridge, where we were met by an extremely strong wind and bitter cold (we still had three hours until dawn). At 6,050m an unexpected, large, overhanging crevasse blocked the ridge. We were forced to descend slightly onto the southeast face, traverse along the crevasse in deep snow until it was feasible to cross it, then continued climbing back up to the ridge. Just below the summit, at around 6,280m, another large crevasse again blocked our ascent. This time we descended onto the northwest face, and climbed one and a half pitches, first on ice, then 65° névé, to reach the summit ridge and the welcomed warmth of the sun. Shortly thereafter we reached the summit. We descended the same way.

### **Illimani (6,438m)**

On July 5, for our final climb of the trip, we climbed the normal route (PD+) on Illimani. We had hoped to traverse all five summits, or at least climb a route on the north peak, but due to deep snow left behind by storms in June, these routes were impractical. Luckily, we were able to enjoy the Nido de Condores high camp all to ourselves, and made the ascent from their in an astounding three and a half hours.