

Argentina

Mercedario, South Face. In the second half of January Héctor A. de la Vega, Cesarino Fava and Fausto Barozzi, Argentines, set out to make the first ascent of the south face of Mercedario (21,884 feet). From a high camp at the foot of the face at 15,500 feet, they all started up the steep snow and ice face, making bivouacs at 17,000, 18,375 and 19,700 feet, where Barozzi remained while the other two continued. Fava and de la Vega bivouacked at 20,675 feet and then went on to the summit. Meanwhile, Barozzi had somehow let fall his sleeping bag and his boots, which were in it. It goes without saying that the descent was hazardous and difficult. The climbers did manage it finally, though not without serious frostbite.

Chilean and Argentine Patagonia

Cuerno principal, Paine group. A light Chilean expedition, made up of four university students, attempted the main horn of the Paine, locally known as Cuerno Principal del Paine (2110 meters or 6890 feet). The group was led by Eduardo García who had explored routes in the summer (January) of 1967. The 1968 attempt took place where British climbers, led by Ian Clough, tried to climb the peak, but they had to withdraw after one of their members had a broken ankle. After cooperating with the British climbers to evacuate the injured, García and his companions returned to the peak, but were forced to remain inactive for several days because of adverse weather. On January 31 they launched their serious attempt. The real difficulties were found only in the last tower, some 300 feet high; they ascended on two ropes, well separated, but following the same route. Most of the climb was rated as IV superior (Welzenbach), with some 20 to 30 meters of V and V + grades, and one section of A1. The group (Raúl Aguilera, Eduardo García, Osvaldo Latorre and Gastón Oyarzún, of the Universidad de Chile at Santiago), reached the top at 6:30 P.M. in good weather. In the descent they were forced to bivouac on a small ledge and the following day, at the foot of the tower, they were caught by a storm. They returned to Santiago after some forty days of absence, of which, due to the peculiarities of Patagonian climbing, only four were spent in actual mountaineering.

FEDERACIÓN DE ANDINISMO DE CHILE

Peaks above the Southern Patagonian Icecap. Since I have not reported for the past several years, I am sending the information now. On January 20, 1967 I made the first ascent of Cerro Cono (c. 8200 feet), a lovely