

Chile

Portillo and Pangal districts. Among the more important activities for the 1969-1970 local season (December through March) are the following climbs. The rock peak of Caracoles (4510 meters, 14,797 feet), located near the ski resort of Portillo, was ascended for the first time by Police Captain Pedro Rosende and five other companions on December 7, 1969. Sergio Kunstmann and P. Marín ascended a small peak near the international pass of Piuquenes, which they named Punta Rayada ("Striped Mountain", c. 13,100 feet). The fine rock spires, with small hanging glaciers, located at the head of the Pangal river, behind the town of Rancagua, were the goal of a party of the Club Andino de Chile, section Santiago, led by S. Kunstmann. The following ascents were made: second ascent of Cerro Cotón (4500 meters, 14,764 feet) on January 16, 1969, the first of Cerro Triangulación (4000 meters, 13,124 feet) on January 15, Morro Trasnochados (4500 meters, 14,764 feet) and Punta Campamento (3900 meters, 12,795 feet), the latter two on January 20. Augusto Figueroa and Oscar Urrutia, of the Club Andino Rancagua, made also the first ascent of the rock peak Chapa Verde ("Green Slab"; 3400 meters or 11,155 feet) on August 30 in wintry conditions. At the end of the season and in the same area of the Pangal valley, Alto del Cipresito (3950 meters, 12,959 feet) was also ascended for the first time on April 19 by W. Foerster, S. Kunstman, L. Rivas and M. Zwahlen.

The most important ascent of the 1969-70 season in Central Chile was the opening of a new route on Alto de los Leones (5445 meters, 17,854 feet), located near Río Blanco. A group of eleven men of the 2nd Mountain Regiment of the Chilean army, led by Major Emilio Moraga, attempted the peak in three different rope teams; two of them followed the normal route (used by the six previous successful expeditions to the top) and the third climbed a variant to the right (north face, northern gully). The groups joined in a high camp at 16,400 feet, and the following day, January 9, reached the top. The descent was made by the normal route. Difficulties of the new route were rated as V, with one short section of VI, in which a rope was fixed. Rock was found to be extremely unstable, which is typical of this district in Central Chile. All the remaining faces and ridges of this fine mountain remain as yet to be climbed.

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Southern Volcanic district. The peaks of southern Chile, which bear strong resemblance to the mountains of the American Northwest, are mostly isolated ice volcanoes and rocky spires that rise above dense

forests. One of the few that had remained with no recorded ascent was Las Yeguas (locally called San Pedro; 3499 meters or 11,447 feet), which was climbed by Juan Barrera, Sergio Kunstmann and Fernando Novoa on December 27, 1969. The peak is heavily glaciated on its southern and western slopes.

Argentina

Northern Andes or Puna. An expedition of eight members of the Club Andino Mercedario (San Juan, Argentina) set out to explore some peaks situated astride the Chilean-Argentinian border, with the hope of finding Indian remains on their summits. The main objective was Nevado Tambillos (5800 meters or 19,029 feet), whose base was reached with the aid of mules; Base Camp on the east side of the mountain was set up on December 3, 1969, at 15,000 feet. An ascent of the nearby Cerro Imán (5070 meters, 16,623 feet) was made on November 30 (A. Beorchia, the expedition leader, and C. Fava, F. Baruzzi and R. Accoroni), finding on top a rock-walled enclosure some 15 by 19 feet. The next mountain, Nevado Tambillos, was ascended on December 6 (Beorchia, Fava, Baruzzi and Héctor de la Fuente), locating many traces of Indian occupancy, such as textiles, ceramics, rock altars, feathers and clothing. An excavation on the top seemed to indicate that probably a mummy had been unburied by grave-diggers, coming perhaps from the Chilean side of the mountain. With one climber suffering from mountain sickness, the summit party retreated, giving up a detailed survey of the findings. The expedition arrived back at San Juan on December 30. (From *Revista del Club Andino Mercedario* # 5, 1970).

Northern Andes, Bonete group. The Argentinian Mountaineering Association, to commemorate its 10th anniversary, organized an expedition to Bonete Chico, located at 27°55' S and 68°45' W, in the northern extreme of the province of La Rioja. Besides the sporting interest that this mountain offered, there was also the incentive of gathering useful geographical evidence regarding the height, and even the existence, of this mountain, since in some charts there appears only Cerro Bonete (6872 meters or 22,547 feet), while mountaineers who had climbed this mountain in 1954 had reported another peak as high to the south. The clarification of this problem became our main objective, although we also planned to carry out experiments with high-mountain food and medicine. On January 5 Vicente Cicchitti, his wife Yolanda, nurse, A. Pagniez, M.D., and I left by station wagon for Jagüé. In the region we were aided by two local hillmen, Gramiciano Barrera and Cirilo Urriche, both from Jagüé. We