This will come as no surprise to the seven or eight previous parties, who used only a few pins on the aid pitch above the bivy ledge. Shortly after our ascent, Dale McCauley and Dan Curley climbed the route clean in a day, realizing Tom Birtley’s original prediction. Now the bad news. The Happy Hooker is regarded by many San Diego climbers as the most enjoyable route on the Throne. It follows, unfortunately, that it gets the most abuse. In an epic that will surely become known as the Rape of the Happy Hooker, a party of four took four days to climb it, adding seven bolts to the original four. Their intention, apparently, was to free the route adding bolts where needed for protection. But they succeeded in freeing only thirty feet more than had been done on previous ascents. Two bolts were placed for a bivy because they missed the ledge by three pitches the first day. Two more were placed for a belay on the seventh pitch for reasons that have not yet been made clear. At least one bolt was placed on a section which had already been climbed free without one several times. Plans have been made to remove all seven bolts and to patch the holes with epoxy and sand. This decision was made with the unanimous consent of everyone who could be contacted who had climbed the route. It is hoped that this action will discourage other parties from such blatant disregard for precedent.

JOHN K. VAWTER, W-town Hardmen

*El Chancero, Northwest Face, Sierra Juárez.* On April 30 Steve Eddy, Mark Meng and I climbed El Chancero’s dome-like northwest face. The name, meaning “The Jester,” reflects the agony and frustration of reconnaissance by more than one party. In direct sight from the summit ridge off El Gran Trono Blanco, the prominent inviting formation has been noted for some years, but plotting its location and approach “roads” has been vexing. Rough wood-cutter roads were the reason for one car being towed out of the area. Two hiking reconnaissances located the dome. The route finally climbed was much shorter than anticipated, but of marvelous bubbly rock. (NCCS II, F7.) There are other opportunities in the nearby canyons, but approach problems magnify as one descends from the pinewoods plateau. On one search for El Chancero, Greg Bender and I found time to make the first ascent of a noteworthy tower northeast of Laguna Hanson, about midway between the lake and the dome.

FRED BECKEY

**SOUTH AMERICA**

*Colombia*

*Ruiz-Tolima Group, Central Cordillera.* Paul Monohan, Mickey Nowak, Ollie Wallock, and I on January 3 climbed Nevado de Quindío,
(c. 4800 meters, 15,748 feet) from the west, a new route. We reached the ridge crest at a break in the cornice, traversed the three main summits, and descended by a knife-edged ridge below the highest peak. Several parties have visited these peaks in recent years. Date of the first ascent is lost. I climbed with various people the other main summits in the group: Nevado del Tolima (17,109 feet), Nevado del Ruiz (17,454 feet), Nevado de Santa Isabel (16,733 feet). All climbs took place in January, 1977. An active fumarole near the summit of Nevado del Tolima was the scene of the first mountaineering fatalities among Colombian climbers. Hermann González and Alfonso Lazano died in August 1976 while exploring snow caves within the fumarole. Their deaths have been attributed to asphyxiation by volcanic gas.

Pieter Crow, Green Mountain Club

Nevado de Huila, Central Cordillera, Pico Mayor. Guillermo Cajiao led our Colombian-American expedition of nine. Our purpose was to make a film asking the Colombian government to declare the nevado and surrounding area a national park. We left Cali on January 28 and over the next two days filmed the archaeological site of Tierradentro. At Irlanda, last town before the nevado, we hired 14 porters, and drove to a small army post two miles from the trailhead. We started into the forest on February 1 and reached snowline in four days. Our route across the páramo took us below the glacier that descends between the north and central peaks. We camped directly beneath the latter (Pico Mayor). Other parties attempting Pico Mayor have bypassed the heavily crevassed glacier from above. After several days of high winds and clouds, Greg Beliveau and I made the fourth ascent of Pico Mayor (c. 5365 meters, 17,602 feet) on February 9. We passed near a fumarole at 17,225 feet whose sulphur fumes gave us some trouble. Other members of the expedition were Pacho Magaña, Jaime Guzmán, Bill & Jean Bullard, José Cristóbal Colón, and Steve Coombs. Huila is the only nevado in Colombia completely surrounded by virgin forests and páramos. Park status appears forthcoming, but complete protection will require new legislation. If park laws are not tightened and enforced to prevent exploitation, Colombia's highest volcano and last mountain wilderness will be doomed to logging, burning, and colonization. On February 23, the Germans Hubert Frank and Eric Meindl (age 65!), and the Austrian Guide Franz Kröll made the fifth ascent of Pico Mayor by the standard route. Frank believes the broad west summit is lower than the sharper summit 200 meters to the east. He estimates the difference between the two is no more than 5 to 10 meters. Ascents to the east summit have been made by the Poles (*A.A.J.*, 1976, p. 478) and by the two separate Frank parties in 1977; all other ascents appear to have been to the west summit. I returned to Nevado del Huila during Holy Week with an