

ten pitches they arrived on the summit at three P.M. In worsening weather they descended and in darkness reached the glacier. This completed the first ascent of the last major unclimbed peak of the region. On February 9 Carrington and I were once more trying the west face of Fitz Roy. That night we bivouacked just under the large corner. The next day we set off up the corner, which was mostly artificial, and at the end of the day reached its top in worsening weather and could see the rest of the route stretching above us. It snowed throughout the night and was extremely windy. We had to retreat, deciding that it was too big an undertaking for the available good weather. On February 17 we set out for our new objective, the west face of Poincenot (9941 feet). Easy rock led to a tongue of ice coming from the Col de la Silla and then we traversed to the foot of the ramp which diagonals across the west face. We bivouacked halfway up the ramp, but it snowed during the night and the next morning the weather was so bad that we returned to Base Camp. The next good weather occurred four days later and we went back. On the night of the 21st we bivouacked at the end of the easy rock climbing. On the 22nd the climbing on the ramp proved difficult and like most Patagonian climbing required the use of crampons. The upper part of the route was straightforward and we reached the top at seven P.M. We descended in deepening darkness to a ledge at the top of the ramp and completed our descent the next day.

ALAN ROUSE, *Alpine Climbing Group*

*El Mocho, Southeast Buttress and Mojón Rojo.* After 12 days of hiking and waiting for climbing partners, I was graciously asked to join the Australian Patagonian Expedition. We spent the next few days of precious good weather ferrying loads up to Base Camp in the Torre valley. We had intended to attempt the southwest ridge of Cerro Torre, but after two of the lads were nearly snuffed by an avalanche, we re-vamped our plans. The elegant southeast buttress of El Mocho, a nearby unclimbed pillar, looked within our capabilities. While the other two expedition members, Bob Killip and John Nitschke, recuperated, on February 28 Robert Staszewski and I made our attempt. Two snow-and-ice pitches got us to the buttress of pure granite. Because of my familiarity with this kind of climbing, I did most of the leading. Four pitches of F7 to F9, stemming, jamming and chimneying went quickly. Then I huffed and puffed myself over a nasty, unprotected overhanging off-width crack. Since the next pitch appeared easy, Robert led, but it turned out to be F9. The famous Patagonian wind increased and high overcast became ominous. We were halfway up. The next pitch was over a dome-like bulge on giant, detached flakes and I traversed right to a single-finger crack splitting the bulge. Robert led a fourth-class pitch

to the base of the crux. This proved to be a short F10 finger crack, giving access to a not obvious traverse right, which brought us to easy ground. Two more easy pitches found us smiling and shaking hands on top. The rappel was the scariest part of the climb, since we used doubtful anchors to save hardware for future climbs. For almost a month it stormed. At the end of March the walls looked desperate when the storm abated. Robert and I decided to climb alpine-style a route on Mojón Rojo, across the valley from Torre. We ascended unroped 1500 feet up the north couloir. The angle steepened and we roped up. The first five leads up the ramp were the most difficult of the route. Two pitches of up to 60° ice led to a slabby ramp which went to the summit. The ramp was covered with verglas and running water. With crampons poised directly above Robert's face, I grappled with the bulging, slippery rock. My axe hooked on a half-inch edge and held my weight long enough to reach a finger-tip hold. The axe wedged in a crack too small for fingers while one crampon point tetered on a tiny edge. One long reach and I was over. Since protection was poor, the climbing on the ramp in the fading light was speedy. A tip-toe tension traverse off a knife-blade tip got me to a corner and a tiny bivouac ledge. A long, cold, sleepless night turned much too slowly into a beautiful dawn. We started for the summit with the sun. Unprotected F7 climbing up a loose-block-filled, ugly corner brought us to easy slabs. A traverse of the slabs and a final F8 summit pitch were the end of the climb. The day was perfect. We sat on the summit blade taking photographs and soaking up the sun.

JAMES D. BRIDWELL

*Torre Egger Attempt.* An Italian expedition led by Aldo Gross and composed of 16 guides from the Fassa valley failed to climb a new route, the east face of Torre Egger in December, 1976.

*Fitz Roy.* In December of 1976 Ruedi Homberger, René Major, Paul Muggli and Jean Troillet, Swiss, climbed the American route on Fitz Roy in four days. In late January Mike Weiss and the Frenchman Jean Afanassief made a 19-hour ascent of the Super Couloir and descended in another twelve. South Africans, Dave Cheesmond and Phil Dawson, had nearly climbed the whole couloir when bad weather forced them back. The British climbers Alan Rouse and Rab Carrington made an attempt on the west face, climbing 5000 feet in two days, but doubtful weather and uncertainties for a retreat made them call off their try.

*Fitz Roy.* On February 28 Alan and Adrian Burgess and I climbed Fitz Roy via the American route; this was the third time on that route