

A. Oporto and J. Vergara, approached the mountain from the west, by way of the Pangal valley and established a high camp at 4000 meters (13,124 feet). The climb itself was painstakingly slow on account of the bad quality of the rock and the frozen conglomerate. Shortly below the top, two of the climbers decided to abandon the ascent, but J. Vergara risked it to continue alone and reached the summit, a first ascent (December 7, 1978).

HUMBERTO BARRERA, *Club Andino de Chile, Santiago*

La Columna. The Juncal massif, rising at the sources of the Aconcagua river, has several summits over 19,000 feet. Its lowest, the northwest peak, 5615 meters or 18,420 feet, had remained unclimbed. Using the North Juncal Glacier G. Cassasa, D. Delgado and G. Maccio ascended to the summit on January 28, having placed two high camps on the ascent and one on the descent. This was considered to be the highest unclimbed peak in central Chile. La Columna ("The Pillar") is a local name, not on maps.

HUMBERTO BARRERA, *Club Andino de Chile, Santiago*

Ojos del Salado, Winter Ascent. W. Ritter, P. Stecher and I left Tinogasta in the Argentine on June 7 and headed on foot across the desert to the Ojos del Salado. On June 20 we left our Camp VI at 18,875 feet and in eight hours climbed the south face to the summit. There were UIAA Grade III to IV climbing difficulties just below the summit. The rock was very rotten and dangerous. We believe this was the tenth ascent of the mountain. We were back in Tinogasta after 17 days.

UDO KNITTEL, *Deutscher Alpenverein*

Nevado de Chañi, South Face, Northern Andes. Nevado de Chañi is Argentina's northernmost high peak and a remarkable rock pyramid of 6060 meters (19,881 feet). A. Gantov, J. González and O. di Pietro (of the Centro Andino Buenos Aires) reached the base of the mountain in three stages and placed Base Camp at 15,800 feet near an unnamed lake. They tried first the south-southwest buttress, rotten rock covered with glassy ice, which they had to abandon at 19,000 feet. They chose then a direct route on the south face. On April 30 they climbed this route in nine hours from a bivouac at 17,800 feet, finding in the last 400 feet unstable rock with verglas.

EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA

Chilean-Argentinian Patagonia

Cerro Torre, East Face. In January Phil Burke and Tom Proctor from England climbed the east face of Cerro Torre nearly to the summit.

On a previous 28-day attempt, Brian Wyvill and Ben Campbell-Kelly had climbed over half the route. They left a "super-box" near the Col of Conquest. With that, they worked out a system of pulling up the super-box and then fixing another 1000 feet of rope ahead, enabling them to climb fast if the weather was good and yet be safe in bad weather. In 1981 they worked on much the same system. They used EBs on rock and usually they placed nuts and Friends in preference to pitons. Originally the team was four, but Brian Wyvill was hit by a rock and Geoff Birtles had to return to work, leaving Proctor and Burke to do the climb. For 1000 feet they followed Maestri's line of pitons and bolts, though they climbed mostly free. Then there were two rope-lengths on the icefield, a rappel into a gully, an A2 pitch and then another 1000 feet up a slabby buttress to near the Col of Conquest. That much had been done in two pushes interrupted by a short spell of bad weather. However, for the next three weeks it stormed incessantly. When the weather finally improved, they spent five days carrying supplies to the super-box. Above, rose a huge overhanging dihedral. The three-pitch entry into it was one of the most difficult parts of the climb. Though Wyvill and Campbell-Kelly had spent weeks on this problem, Burke and Proctor climbed 1000 feet nearly to the top of it in a day. The next day took them quickly back up the fixed ropes, but they found the exit from the dihedral very difficult. After another night in the box, they were away early. At their previous high point, they were 4000 feet above the base of the climb at the junction of the east and north faces. The next seven rope-lengths on nearly vertical, verglased rock took them twelve hours. Just below the summit, the ice turned to overhanging mush. Reluctantly they had to turn back a few feet from their goal. Further details are in *Mountain* N° 78 and N° 79, which also includes interesting comments on Cesare Maestri's disputed ascent.

Fitz Roy, Super Couloir, 1980. During the 1979-1980 season, Marius Norstad and I went to Fitz Roy Park, hoping to climb both Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre. We believed it possible if we could make light, fast ascents. There are such routes on both peaks: the Super Couloir on Fitz Roy and the southeast ridge of the Torre. On December 31, 1979 we started up the Super Couloir at 9:30 P.M., stopping at the rock pitches 2300 feet up to wait for light. At 5:30 A.M. on January 1, 1980 we started climbing again and reached the summit at six P.M. Forty-three rappels brought us to the base by 5:30 the next morning. We had taken 32 hours, 15 of them to reach the summit. The following week we placed gear at the foot of the southeast ridge of the Torre to be ready for a quick ascent. The next five weeks offered an occasional day of climbable weather but nothing stable. Studying the weather and discussing it with others indicate a pattern that is consistent and more