

Editor.) The peak is in the spur south extending from Cerro Placas, near Lo Valdés.

IVÁN VIGOUROUX, *Federación de Andinismo de Chile*

Volcán San José, Winter Ascent. A large group made the first winter ascent Volcán San José from September 12 to 17. After leaving Lo Valdés, they placed camps at 2900, 3250, 3900 and 4520 meters. The women climbers were A. Barrientos, M. Chiozza, V. Morales and C. Castillo and the men were C. Gálvez, N. Muñoz, L. Napolitano, F. Varela, C. Cancino, M. España, A. Mancini, C. Fuentes, J. Palma, R. Traub, F. Vito, M. Tapia, D. Rutland, J. Jaña, M. Quiroz, E. Garrido and I. This ascent took place during the most severe winter in the last 50 years.

IVÁN VIGOUROUX, *Federación de Andinismo de Chile*

Argentina

Mercedario, South Face. An Italian expedition originally had the west face of Mercedario as its objective. They were Alessandro Angelini, Giuseppe Angelotti, Carlo Barbolini, Gianluca Benedetti, Fabrizio Convalle, Bruno Nicolini, Giancarlo Polacci and Emilio Riccomini. The difficulties of the approach were considerable. They left Barreal, the last inhabited place, on January 10 but got to the foot of the south face at 3400 meters only on January 20. They reconnoitered to see if they could cross over the 5200-meter shoulder and descend 1000 meters on the other side to reach the foot of the west face but this would have been too arduous. They then headed for the left side of the icefall of the south face. On January 22 and 23 they carried to Advance Base at 4400 meters a half kilometer from the base of the face. Half of the group established Camp I at 5270 meters on January 26. After a snowstorm, while they moved up to Camp II at 6200 meters on January 28, the other half occupied Camp I. All were established at Camp II on a level spot below the foresummit on January 30. On the 31st Angelini, Barbolini and Benedetti reached the summit (6670 meters, 21,884 feet). There was no time for further summit climbs and the entire party withdrew.

Aconcagua, New Route on the Right Side of the South Face, 1986. Milan Romih and I made a trip to the Plaza de Francia in bad weather from February 9 to 11, 1986. We returned there on February 14. We were held back by bad weather until February 18 when we left the Plaza de Francia at noon. In the very region where we had wanted to climb, a sérac broke, causing an avalanche, and so we changed our route and started up the right side of the south face of Aconcagua. After climbing 200 meters of very rotten rock, we crossed to the left toward the icefall, where it was dripping and wet. We found the French Camp I and followed their route to the top of the southeast buttress

and there we bivouacked. On February 19 we climbed the lower glacier up to under the séracs. First we tried to climb the left side of the séracs, but because of heavy cracking we retreated 200 meters, turned right and started up the séracs on that side, in the middle of which we had to bivouac. On the 20th we climbed to the top of the séracs, where the slopes had been in part 90° or overhanging. A storm caught us in the afternoon and forced a bivouac below the ridge, where in the night we were frequently covered by avalanches. On February 21 we climbed onto the ridge and dried our equipment. On the 22nd we ascended the last of the rock and then the long ridge. We bivouacked in bitter cold 200 meters below the summit. We got to the summit on the morning of February 23, 1986 and descended the normal route to the Nido de Cóndores with bad weather from the Berlin shelter on. We were back at Puente del Inca on February 25.

DANILO TIČ, *Alpinistični Odsek Impol, Yugoslavia*

Aconcagua. Aconcagua was the goal of a Polish group led by Andrzej Gardas. Of the 14 members, 13 reached the summit and eight got there twice. Piotr Konopka and Zbigniew Winiarski climbed the French route on the south face in just two days. Anna Skowrońska and Ewa Szcześniak made the first female ascent of the Argentine route up the Glaciar de los Polacos on January 25. The best success was the third ascent of the very difficult Slovene route on the left of the south face, done from January 25 to 31 by Leszek Cichy and Ryszard Kołakowski. Because of the cascades of water in the first 1000 meters, they had to make many variants. The rock was murderously rotten and both had minor rockfall injuries. There were UIAA difficulties up to V+ and ice up to 90°. Five climbed to the summit and back from the Plaza de Mulas on the normal route in a single day, a difference of 2760 meters or 9055 feet; Cichy and Konopka did the round-trip in 13 hours. With so many ascents now being made of Aconcagua, there are many cases of high-altitude sickness and frostbite, leading in some cases to tragedy. Dr. Anna Skowrońska persuaded an American to turn back; he was suffering from obvious cerebral edema and yet was continuing to crawl toward the summit. On the summit lay the body of an Argentine whose German companion did make it down, but with severe freezing injuries. Expert climbers Spaniard Felix de Pablos and Frenchman Dominique Radique died on the south face on January 27.

JÓZEF NYKA, *Editor, Tatarnik, Poland*

Aconcagua, South Face, Winter Solo, 1986. Spaniard Fernando Ruiz made the second winter ascent of the south face of Aconcagua solo in alpine style. At the beginning of September, 1986, he made a first attempt with Antonio de Lorenzo, but they were turned back by the weather at 5000 meters. On September 8, he set out again solo on the 1954 French route with the Messner finish. After five-and-a-half days he reached the summit on September 13. The