

This book is an exercise in nostalgia. It would appear directed toward old-timers like me, who were active when some of the exploits chronicled happened and who may have known some of the perpetrators as well. (I was there when Fred Beckey was nailing the East Face of Snowpatch!). In his introduction, Geoff Powter, the current editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal*, identifies his audience as those who are not so fortunate as to own a complete set of *Canadian Alpine Journals*. It is supposed to give those readers a feeling for the ongoing mountain adventure chronicled in the 77 volumes of this ancient and estimable publication. As one of the fortunate owners and avid readers of the complete set, I think Geoff and his colleague, Bob Sandford, have in the main succeeded in communicating a rich tapestry of Canadian adventure.

ROBERT KRUSZYNA

*Mountaineering In Patagonia*. Alan Kearney. Cloudcap, Seattle, Washington, 1993. Hardcover. 143 pages, 24 color photos, maps, topos.

Having climbed in Patagonia on three separate occasions, I am an aficionado. My infatuation with the region has led me to buy numerous books, as well as to write several accounts of my trips for climbing magazines. Lacking in the realm of English-language climbing books (and my library) has been a comprehensive tome, similar to the work produced by Italians Gino Buscaini and Silvia Metzeltin, *Patagonia*.

Several years ago I heard rumblings of a book on Patagonia being worked on by Alan Kearney and I waited for its debut with enthusiasm. Moments after eventually seeing it for sale in the Chessler Books catalog, I was on the phone with my credit card. "Overnight Delivery," I said. I can still recall my anticipation of the book's arrival, and my first look at it—smaller than expected; excellent quality photos; not a guidebook (which is how the publisher describes the book). At the conclusion of my first reading of the book I felt that the text was informative and well written; the photographs deserved to be displayed in a larger format, and the information was quite comprehensive and useful.

Nearly a year later, I was asked to write this review. This assignment caused me to revisit my initial reactions to the book. Having written and published climbing guidebooks, I know that economics drive the publishing business. Unfortunately, mountaineering book sales in America just aren't large enough to support an expensive, coffee-table sized book on a place as far away as Patagonia, let alone popular rock-climbing areas in the states. Within its scant 143 pages, *Mountaineering In Patagonia* contains accounts of important ascents, an expedition planner, a list of all climbing routes, a bibliography, and a glossary. This shotgun approach might prevent anyone else in America from publishing a profitable, large-scale climbing book on Patagonia. This is good news for both Kearney and Cloudcap, but bad news for those of us that want bigger, more plentiful photos of climbing in Patagonia and a comprehensive

guidebook that's in English, but isn't done in shorthand. What Kearney and Cloudecap have produced is excellent—I just wish there were more of it.

TODD SWAIN

*Aconcagua: a Climbing Guide.* R.J. Secor. The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1994. 144 pages, 48 black-and-white photographs, 12 line drawings and sketch maps. Paper. \$15.95.

Although several Aconcagua guidebooks have been published in Spain and Argentina, no English equivalent has heretofore existed. This one by Secor is opportune since Aconcagua, located less than twenty miles in a straight line from the nearest bus stop, is being visited yearly by some 2000 mountaineers from all over the world.

The main characteristic of this new guidebook is its usefulness. A short but practical Introduction is followed by History and by fifteen short sections providing useful hints. Special attention is drawn here to the characteristics of Aconcagua itself: high, barren, windswept and unpredictable. Three chapters cover routes, always approached through the Horcones, Horcones Inferior and Vacas valleys. A total of ten basic routes and seventeen variants are surveyed. The accompanying sketches and photos are clear and useful. The South Face pictures (pages 87-89) in particular give at a glance information seldom put together in other publications on Aconcagua. The book concludes with several appendices, one of which contains an English-Spanish mountaineering vocabulary.

Perhaps a few misspelled words is all that I'd criticize. The use of this book is to be combined with the good folding map published in *AAJ* 1987. And finally, a note on nomenclature: the name of Aconcagua is universally, but wrongly, accepted to be a translation from the Quechua-Aimara *Acon* (stone) and *cagua* (sentinel). But no Quechua or Aimara term *acon*, or anything faintly similar, has been found to mean "stone." The original name was *Ancocagua*, the "White Sentinel." Explorer Jerónimo de Vivar found and correctly entered the proper name already in 1558, but the Aimara adjective *anco* (white) had its letter order transposed during colonial times. And the aptness of the original name will be clear to all who view the White Sentinel from the neighborhood of that former Indian place at its base, Puente del Inca.

EVELIO ECHEVARRÍA

*Montañas del Sol. Guía de Ascensiones a las Montañas del Ecuador.* Freddy Landázuri, Iván Rojas and Marcos Serrano. Ediciones Campo Abierto, Quito, Ecuador, 1994. 148 pages, 32 black-and-white photographs, 12 line drawings and sketch maps.