

skies. Unaccustomed to the alpine starts after a long sedentary month, Pennings and Tague reached the base of the 500-meter east face of Cuerno Este in the early afternoon. Six pitches of fantastic free climbing, interspersed with a few moves of aid, brought us to within 50 feet of the horrendously rotten and overhanging sedimentary rock that overlies the granite. We dubbed our new route *Vuelo del Condor* (IV 5.11 A1) and rappelled the route.

Two days later, we awoke to clear, windless skies once again. We departed camp at 3:30 a.m. and arrived at the base of the east face of La Hoja three hours later. Our intended route followed a single crack system for 700 meters, and looked to be choice free-climbing. Feeling confident we could get by without, we left our hammers, pitons, and bolts back in camp. We fuckin' went sick! We got jams, we fuckin' pulled on 'em. Fingies, stemmin', the whole goddam bit. Pitches three and four!!! Jesus, fuckin', YIKES. Glad I was holdin' the other end of the rope on that shit. The Nuggetive Energy! Do you want to talk about GOOD. Oops—I got a little excited. The result of one day's work and one month's waiting was the best alpine rock climbing either of us have done. Our route was christened *Anduril* (IV 5.11 A1), with a short section of aid that could be eliminated if it is not snowing on you. Check it out, it's worth the wait.

MICHAEL PENNINGS and CAMERON TAGUE, *Uncoordinated*

*Perhaps the first female ascent of the Torre Sur. Reports of an Italian woman climbing Torre Sur in 1985 are unconfirmed.

Cuerno Principale, East Face. It was reported that a team of young Germans from Neu Elm climbed the previously unattempted east face of Cuerno Principale (2450 m) above the Pingo Valley. Rockfall down the center of the wall forced the team to the left edge of the face, where they followed a series of cracks for 18 pitches, eventually joining the upper section of the south ridge route that was climbed as the first ascent of the peak. Their nearly 650-meter route was given a grade of VII+ A3; the team reported the climbing to be superb and the atmosphere wild and remote compared to the commonly climbed Torres. (*High Mountain Sports* 164)

La Hoja, East Face, New Route. In the Pingo valley, the Chilean team of Christian Oberli and Sven Bruchfeld established a new route on the east face of La Hoja in January, 1996. The route, which was done in "classic style" with fixed ropes, was 14 pitches, 400 meters, and went at 5.10a A1. The pair was forced to pay U.S. \$300 in climbing fees.

PABLO BESSER J., *Club Alemàn Andino*

Cerro Cota 2000, The Keyhole Route (a.k.a. Eli's Wet Dream). On December 20, 1996, Eli Helmuth, Gardner Heaton and I arrived in the Valle Francaise of Parque Nacional Torres Del Paine in southern Chile. Cerro Cota 2000 is visible through the beech trees that provided shelter for our base camp at Campo Britanico. Following the usual load carrying in poor weather we climbed our first pitch on December 27. Over the following two weeks we were only able to fix three more pitches over two independent days of favorable weather. Those four rope lengths contained the difficult aid and all of the 18 holes that we drilled on the route.

Camp I was established under a roof 700 feet up. Gardner and I committed to the route on a clear January 16. Eli had run out of time a week earlier and had to leave to fulfill a guiding commitment. It took three days to fix the five pitches that brought us to the name-sake and the most



Cerro Cota 2000. The Keyhole is visible three-quarters of the way up the face to the left of the "nose."
Joe Reichert

prominent feature of the route: the Keyhole. This is an alcove/roof that is 30 feet wide at the top, pinches off 60 feet below and is recessed 20 feet. With sharp cracks all around, a more sheltered portaledge bivy could not be manufactured.

After a full day of hauling our two pigs into the Keyhole, we spent a marginal weather day in the comforts of the abode. We expected to fix several pitches on January 21; instead, we thoroughly enjoyed clean cracks on dry granite in the sun, and at 6 p.m. found ourselves straddling the knife-edge summit. On the descent that evening we left three ropes hanging and the next day enjoyed top-roping stellar cracks 2,000 feet off the ground.

We had finished more quickly than anticipated, and our descent was exciting due to the weight of the bags. After dumping 22 liters of water we still had 100-plus pounds going down! Eight more rappels, with only one stuck rope, found us back on the ground enjoying our mail in the comfort of the woods.

Over the next ten days Gardner and I packed our loads down from Cota, leaving only the rappel anchors. We made an attempt on Aleta de Tiberon and the *Caveman Route* but were weathered off both. *The Keyhole Route* (VI A4 5.10, 2,200 feet, 14 pitches) is the second route on the east face of Cota 2000.

JOE REICHERT, *Unaffiliated*

Aleta del Tiburon, Ascent. In November, 1996, Hugo Mieraga, Jaime Sapunar, Victor Munoz and Cristian Oyarzo, all from Puerto Natales, Chile, climbed *Nuestro Primer Rayo* (14 pitches, 5.9 A1) in three days. The team fixed ropes and bivied 30 minutes from the wall in a site with no water.

HERNAN JOFRE, *Amerindia, Chile*

Aleta del Tiburon, West Face. In March, 1997, a Chilean expedition called Amerindia II climbed two variations to the normal route in two teams. Team A, Claudio Retamal and Danielo Benavente, climbed *Ilusión Para Dos* (5.8) in 15 pitches from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. from a nice, well-protected base camp two hours from the wall. Team B, Hernan Jofre and Nacho Grez, climbed *Indigo* (5.8), also in 15 pitches, and also from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., on a beautiful blue-sky day. We could see the whole valley and the Hoja, Escudo, Mascara, Catedral and Cota 2000 walls. There are good anchors for the rappels.

HERNAN JOFRE, *Amerindia, Chile*

ANTARCTICA

Mount Foster, First Ascent. In January, Bruce Dowrick, Dan Mannix, Roger Thompson and Greg Langreth made the first ascent of Mount Foster on Smith Island in the Shetland Islands of the Antarctic Peninsula. A full account of their ascent and the involved approach used to get to the mountain appears earlier in this journal.

Solo Unsupported Continental Crossing. It was reported that Borge Ousland departed Antarctica's Berkner Island in the Weddell Sea on November 15 and arrived at Ross Island's New Zealand Scott Base in McMurdo Sound at 23:45 GMT, January 17, 1997, having trekked 1,764 miles in 64 days. During his crossing he pulled a 408-pound sled. Three other men also