

was mostly névé with sections of steeper ice. It was probably a first ascent.

On July 19, Jane and Heather climbed Huayna Potosi (6088m) by the normal route on the east side, while Rob, Tom, Sam and I climbed the West Face (1000m of 55° névé). Jane and Heather then climbed Illimani (6438m) by the standard route. After this Sam and I traveled to the Illampu region, and on the east side of the range we climbed, together with Jenz Richter, the Austrian Route on Pico del Norte (6045m). This was an excellent 1000-meter ice face, beginning with 55-60° névé and leading to an upper rock band where a right-hand exit was taken, resulting in several hundred meters of water ice up to 70°.

On August 19, Sam and I did the probable second ascent of the French Direct Route on the West Face of Illampu (6438m). This 1000-meter line was first climbed by Gabbarou and Villerroel in 1990. The bottom half of the original ice ramp was badly melted out, so we opted for a thin ice ribbon cutting through the first major rock band well to the left of the French Route. This involved a short overhanging section (Scottish technical 6) to enter the narrow couloir, then several pitches of good ice to eventually join the French Route. The upper ramp was mostly 65° ice with very little snow or névé. The weather deteriorated in the afternoon and we had to climb through blizzards and whiteout. We reached the summit in a storm at midnight, and were forced to bivouac with no food or bivy gear. We descended the normal route the next day.

While Sam and I were in the Illampu area, the others traveled to the Sorel Oeste region of the Apolobamba range. On August 6 the foursome did the first ascent of the beautiful Southwest Face of Sorel Oeste (5471m). They approached the face by ascending the west side of the glacier on the south side of Sorel Oeste. The lower section of the face was 300 meters of 50° snow/névé, while the upper section was an icy runnel to the summit, with about 200 meters of 60° ice. Finally, from August 10 to 14, Rob and Tom did a four-day traverse of the Palomani group.

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CORDILLERA REAL

Illampu, West Face, New Route. It was reported that a French pair climbed a new route, *Entourloup* (TD, 800m+) on the west face of Illampu (6368m) in September, 1996. Further details are lacking. (*High Mountain Sports* 176)

Cordillera Real, Overview. In the Cordillera Real, snow consolidated on the normal routes to give perfect conditions for most of the season. The normal route on Huayna Potosi was regularly climbed by guided parties in four hours from high camp and the Illimani normal route in five hours from high camp. A bad weather period during one week in August was blamed on the El Niño phenomenon, as are most things at present. There was a major theft problem from tents at Camp I (Puente Roto) on Illimani in July, but decisive police action appeared to put an end to that. However, climbers should make sure everything is inside the tent (not the vestibule); tying packs together seems to work.

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The Jallawaya/Nigruni-Mountains, Various Ascents. The Jallawaya/Nigruni-Mountains, part of the Cordillera Real, have a lot of small glaciers. The highest peak is Jallawaya (5660m). A small rough road accesses the range, but if there is a lot of rain and snow, the "road" is impassable (there are a lot of river crossings, with no bridges and stoneslides and landslides).