



Nevado de las Virgenes is the snowy massif on left. Chiara Janco Cuno is the rocky point on right.

JAVIER SANCHEZ

Nevado de las Virgenes, First Ascent, and Other Activity in La Choco Cota. Although previously reported as ascended, Nevado de las Virgenes, so christened by Theodor Herzog in 1911, remained unclimbed until June, when our Spanish expedition (Adolfo Díaz, Isidro González, Miguel A. Yagüe and I) arrived. We established base camp near Choca Cota Lake. The Bolivian Juan Alaña accompanied us to the summit of our third peak. From the head of the Choco Cota valley we first climbed P.5500m on June 28, southernmost within the basin. We named it Jaya Cuno (Aimara: "Distant Peak"). Two days later we made the first actual ascent of Nevado de las Virgenes (5500m) by its west face, which averages 50-55° (Dakin Cook believed he had climbed Nevado de las Virgenes some years before, but now says that his was an ascent of Corichuma). On July 2, we climbed P.5450m, south of the former. We christened it Chiara Janco Cuno (Aimara: "Black and White Peak"). After these three first ascents we moved to the southern Cordillera Real, where we ascended Tarija, Fabulosa and Huayna Potosi.

JAVIER SANCHEZ, *Spain*

Sajama, Scientific Expedition. A scientific expedition to Sajama (6542m) saw a team of scientists drill two 120-meter by four-inch core samples in the summit to check out weather patterns during the last 30,000 years. The initial idea was to float the samples off by hot air balloon. [Anyone who has been to the mountain or read up on it knows that it suffers from relentless and strong winds; during the second (undisputed) successful ascent of Sajama in 1946, T. Polhemus (U.S.) got separated from his three companions on the summit plateau in high winds, which whipped up fresh snow and reduced visibility to 45 meters. He was never seen again, and aerial and land searches failed to find any trace of him.] The balloon, apparently in the shape of a giant penguin, never took off and so the samples, in 28-kilo loads, were carried off by porters, one of whom registered 27 summit ascents in under six weeks.

YOSSI BRAIN, *United Kingdom*

Condoriri Group, Various Activity. Slovenes David Podgorelec and Aleš Kovač from the

Kozjak Maribor Mountaineering Club spent a week at Condoriri in 1997. On June 28, they attempted Aguja Negra (5280m) and got to the breche on the eastern arête, within 100 meters of the summit, before backing off due to bad rock and lack of acclimatization. On June 29, the two climbed Pequeño Alpamayo (5370m) via the southwest face direct (D+, 55/70° with the final three meters at 95°, 150m). Descent was made via the normal route. On July 1 they climbed Ala Derecha (5482m) via the southeast face (D 70°, 700m), a possible new route. The pair started directly over seracs because the snow in the couloir was awful and headed up to better snow. The route starts to the right of Ala Derecha and to the left of Huallogen (Wyoming). On July 3, they climbed Piramide Blanca (5230m) via a possible new route on the west face (D+ 75°, 250m). They followed the snowy diagonal from right to left and then a 50-meter couloir to the arête left of the summit. Snow conditions were not good, with the last section being soft cornices.

Italians Marcello Sanguineti and Alessandro Bianchi put up a hard new route on Wyoming (a.k.a. Huallogen) on Condoriri on August 19 that they named *Sognando un 8000 (Dreaming an 8000er)* (TD+ 90°, 350m). The pair approached via the normal route to Pequeño Alpamayo until they were below the southwest face of Wyoming. They crossed the bergschrund and went up the snow slope (60°, then 65°, then 70°) to reach, after 150 meters, a narrow rock band which was crossed with difficulty (80°). Another 80 meters of snow at 60-65° brought them to the base of the obvious couloir. The first part went with sections of 75 to 90°. This brought them to the base of a narrower goulotte that ended in a snow and ice cornice. They therefore went left up through mixed ground and a chimney at IV+ that brought them to the top. They descended off the back to the col on the normal approach to Pequeño Alpamayo.

Pico Schulze (5943m) stands northwest of Illampu across the high camp above Aguas Calientes and was first climbed in 1928 by Erwin Hein (Germany), Alfred Horeschowski, Hugo Hoertnagel, and Hans Pfann (Austria) via the Northwest Face route. The mountain has been climbed from three sides, with the south face having the hardest routes. Anyone climbing Illampu can see Pico Schulze, but due to its sub-6,000 meter height, it tends to be ignored in favor of its higher neighbor. An Anglo-Belgian pair of John Walmsley and Jean-Marc Dunsheimer traversed (AD+ 55°, 343m) the peak on September 3. From base camp, they climbed up onto the south ridge, meeting it at the point marked 5765m on the DAV map Cordillera Real Nord Illampu. They passed the rock section and followed the knife-edged ridge to the summit. From the summit, they descended north to reach a flatter area and then rappelled one or two ropelengths rightward down one of the rocky couloirs to reach the lower snow slopes. They then followed a ramp back down to the base camp glacier.

YOSSI BRAIN, *United Kingdom*

ARGENTINA

Aconcagua, South Face. We arrived at Plaza de Mulaz on December 26. We made our first attempt on the normal route up to c.6500 meters on December 31, but returned because of storms and deteriorating weather. On January 3, 1997, we summited via the normal route. On January 5, we arrived at Plaza de Francia. From January 8-14, we climbed the south face by the French route and Messner variations. We began climbing at the bottom of the face/but-tress on January 8 at approximately 3 p.m. There were very dry conditions in the rocky sections of the route, with almost no snow between 4000 and 5700 meters, so that most of the climbing was on very bad rotten rock. From the big serac zone (5700m to 5900m) we climbed on mostly good snow and ice, particularly on the 30 meters of vertical ice at the serac up to