

NORTHERN ANDES

Volcán Llullaillaco, New Route. Llullaillaco, a volcano on the Argentine-Chilean border, was a sacred peak for the Incas who built on its summit the world's highest buildings. In March, a caving expedition went to Volcán Llullaillaco; Gustavo Lisi and Rafael Monti, both from Salta, were part of the expedition. They were transported by the expedition's vehicles from base camp on the southeast face to the south face. They were left at 5000 meters in the moraine, and continued on terrain formed by basalt rock up to 5200 meters. From there they climbed a gradual couloir then put up camp at 5600 meters behind a knoll that protected them from avalanches. It snowed heavily but the next day, March 29, they left at 9 a.m. toward the summit. It was very cold. They attempted the central couloir and then took another route (60°) to the left. From the couloir, it was another 300 meters to the top over steep, mixed terrain. The last 50 meters were rock. At 4:15 p.m. they reached the summit. They descended to the camp and the next day reached base camp, where the rest of the expedition waited.

It should be noted that on the Chilean side of Llullaillaco, as well as on other parts of the border, there are land mines placed by the Chilean Army in the pre-war events of 1977 and 1978. An American climber disappeared there some years ago under mysterious conditions; some say that he was a victim of the mines. Fortunately, due to improved relations with Argentina, the Republic of Chile has said it intends to abide by the Ottawa agreement and will clear the zone of mines.

MARCELO SCANU, *Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Cerro Ojos del Salado, Possible New Route, and Other Activity. Among the many teams active in the region, two Brazilian teams made climbing attempts; one was unsuccessful on Ojos del Salado and Pissis, while the other party claimed a new route, the Brazilian route, on Ojos del Salado.

MARCELO SCANU, *Buenos Aires, Argentina*

CENTRAL ANDES

Valle Encantado, Various Ascents. Since April, 1995, some new ascents have been made in this attractive and off-the-beaten-track area near Bariloche. Eduardo Lopez, Pablo Muller, Walter Rossini, Sebastian Mazzaro and Pablo Pontoriero did the second ascent of Torre Gebauer, the biggest tower of the valley, via a new route, *Sol de Otono* (5+ A1, 250m, eight pitches). Recently, Alfredo Aliaga, Peti Olivieri and Facundo Jose did the third ascent of the tower by a new route, *Horizontes Semiconquistados* (6a+, 300m). It is interesting to note that the first ascent was done in 1974.

FACUNDO JOSE, *CLUB ANDINO BARILOCHE*

Monte Pissis, Attempt, and Possible First Ascent. In April, I made a solo attempt on Pissis (6759m) via the route first pioneered by Greg Horne and Fritz Radun (documented by Horne in the 1996 AAJ). Later, an attractive alternative summit—the western peak of the Pissis summits—presented itself to the south-southwest. This was ascended. No cairns or other markers were found on this summit. I estimate its height at 21,650 to 21,850 feet. I believe this to be a possible first ascent of this peak and also the first solo ascent.

BOB VILLARREAL