

CORDILLERA APOLOBAMBA

Sunchuli Pass Area, Ascent. On June 9, Yossi Brain (U.K.) and I climbed the northwest face of an unnamed peak just northeast of the Sunchuli Pass. This face is located between what are named Cuchillo II (5450m) and P. 5450 on the 1993 Paul Hudson map. We climbed the glaciated face directly through a rock band up to a large, well-built miner's cairn just 100 meters south of the summit and then traversed the summit ridge to the true summit at about 5400 meters. This involved a 300-meter ascent on well-consolidated snow up to 55 degrees with a 50-meter mixed pitch (M3) in the middle.

DAKIN COOK

El Cuchillo, New Route. On June 10, Yossi Brain (U.K.) and I climbed a new route on El Cuchillo (5655m). We started up a difficult, 250-meter, narrow (20-30m) icefall on the south side of El Cuchillo that involved short sections of technical 90-degree-plus alpine ice. This initial section (250m) took almost ten hours with one fall through a seemingly bottomless hole in the icefall and the breaking off of a large triangular block of ice on a 90-degree-plus move. The aforementioned block of ice was significantly slowed by the quick response of my nose, which blocked its downward path. The last 350 meters of the climb was accomplished more rapidly in a light snowstorm on up to 60-degree snow to the summit. The descent was made down the Northeast Ridge route.

DAKIN COOK

Soral Este, Southwest Face. On July 24, Fred Bahnson, Baker Perry and I climbed the southwest face of Soral Este to its lower, southeast summit (5460m). Our approach was made up through the moraine just southeast of the obvious rock pinnacle that divides the long-tongued northwestern glacier from the wider but shorter southeastern glacier tongues. After a short two-hour roped climb through icefall and seracs, we reached the southwest headwall and proceeded unroped up 60- to 65-degree snow directly to the lower summit. The descent was made via the route of ascent.

DAKIN COOK

Pico Integral, Southwest Face. On August 24, Joe Stock and I left La Paz at 3 a.m. for the southwest face of Pico Integral, a "small" satellite peak of Huayna Potosi. The southwest face of Pico Integral (18,640') may have been climbed in earlier years, but the rapid recession of snow and ice on many of Bolivia's peaks gives routes such as ours an essentially different character. After a quick two-hour drive, we made the approach and were at the base of the face at 7 a.m. After an initial grunt and heave-ho, we were over the bergschrund and on route, ropes still in the packs. We made quick work of the initial climbing, mixing it up at 5.7 rock and 60-degree-plus ice. From there, the ground steepened and we roped for the following nine pitches, with the crux coming three pitches below the top. The first was a traverse pitch of M4-: clean a time bomb of rocks from the vertical terrain, mantle, repeat four times. From there, Joe led a stunning two-hour pitch through a gully of M4+ climbing interspersed with unconsolidated snow. This led to a quick 5.7 pitch to the top of Pico Integral at 4 p.m.. We opted not to continue onto the summit of Huayna Potosi and arrived at Zongo Pass at 8 p.m.