

by its normal route, isn't difficult, but the weather (this is an El Niño year) and high altitude make it dangerous. Next year should see an increase in outsiders because of the Argentine peso devaluation. The park will be open this winter (Southern Hemisphere), but no rangers or rescue services will be available, so anyone challenging the mountain in winter will be on his own. A strange "record" was achieved in the first week of February. A New Zealand party had supper on the summit! They were dressed for the occasion, and the record was accepted by the Guinness Book of Records as the "Highest Supper on Earth." It's a strange world.

MARCELO SCANU, *Argentina*

*Cordillera de Olivares, Nevado de Bauchaceta.* A group composed of Miguel Beorchia Nigris, Luis Pontoriero, and I arrived at the post of Tocota in the last days of January 2002, thanks to the help of Gendarmeria Nacional (Border Police). From there we had a bad mule ride to the Quebrada de Chita. After the awful ride, which resulted in scars in unpleasant places, we retreated because of doubtful weather and bad conditions. However, I found a beautiful paleolithic spear point.

From Chita we went to Las Flores, where a Gendarmeria unimog took the group to the Quebrada Pismanta and the post of the Muñoz family. On January 26 the group began the ascent to base camp. The next day Beorchia Nigris quit because of a stomach disease, but we others continued, reaching base camp at Dos Quebradas (3825m) on January 28. This creek is beautiful, with much animal life (we saw guanacos and seven condors at the same time) and petroglyphs. On January 30 we attempted Nevado de Bauchaceta. At 4400m my companion descended due to fatigue. I continued, ascending the great massif and reaching the minor northwest summit of Nevado de Bauchaceta (5,036m S30°28'16.7" W69°38'23.1") at 4:20 p.m. This was the second ascent, and I took a variant to the first ascent 13 years before. I continued to the highest (southeast) summit despite fierce winds. After descending to a col, I ascended a ridge that ended in the big broad summit (ca 5100m, 5158m by GPS, S30°28'55.8" W69°37'38.1"), reaching it at 6:20 p.m. This was a first ascent, correcting a misunderstanding in the 1990 AAJ (p. 202). I descended, reaching camp at 9:30 p.m.

Afterward we had bad weather, certainly because of the El Niño phenomenon. On February 3 my companion descended because of illness, and I attempted another mountain, but descended because of bad weather that continued for two days, with rain and snow. On the 6th Mr. Muñoz and his 10-year-old son rode by horse to their post, where I rejoined my teammate. We ate goat barbeque, drank wine, and smoked Havana cigars, raising our cholesterol, alcohol, and nicotine levels to Argentine standards.

MARCELO SCANU, *Argentina*

*Cordillera de Colangüil, Cerro de la Quebrada Seca.* A group from the nearby city of San Juan was active in this mighty and relatively untrodden zone in mid-January 2002, having as a goal the highest summit, Cerro del Lavadero (6122m). They took the Rio Lavadero route, but bad weather prevented them getting higher than 5,000 meters. They did ascend four virgin 4000m peaks, the highest of which was the Cerro de la Quebrada Seca (4735m).

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