

5,300m. During the night the weather improved and they started climbing at 5 a.m. Conditions were good, and they could follow the line in the center of the wide face, avoiding the obvious horizontal rock barriers that give a special character to this wall. The hardest climbing was in the last 150m, where they had to find their way through overhanging seracs, following steep gullies with hard ice and powder snow. They reached the top at 1 p.m. and descended their route, downclimbing and rappelling. They descended the last 300m at night and returned to the glacier to find their tent destroyed by wind. They climbed in a rapid, lightweight style, taking only drinks and climbing equipment. Except for the last 150m, they climbed unroped.

PAVLE KOZJEK, *Slovenia*

Siula Grande, west face nearly to summit ridge. Dutch climbers Eva Oomen and Rogier van Rijn made an attempt on the west face of Siula Grande (6,348m), climbing 800m in nine hours on July 31. They climbed (ED 90°+) to the left of the three existing lines on the face. They report: "It is an ice line with sections of rotten vertical ice. We took almost no gear and tried to climb the whole face in a day. We had to descend from a couple of meters below the main summit ridge because of very unstable snow conditions. During the descent we were almost killed by a huge serac avalanche."

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *High Mountain INFO*

Puscanturpa Norte and Nevado Cuyoc. In June a four-man Italian team climbed a new variant on the most imposing part of the northwest face of Puscanturpa Norte (5,652m), between the 2000 French routes (AAJ 2001, pp. 284–6) Pasta Religion and Macanacota. The Italians, Francesco Balzan, Bice Bones, Fabrizio Conforto, and Andrea Zanetti, appear to have climbed not far from Pasta Religion, with difficulties up to VII and A4. After they had covered 600m of new ground, the weather deteriorated, and the four were forced to finish on Pasta Religion.

The Italians also climbed the east spur of Nevado Cuyoc (5,500m), almost a subsidiary summit of the Puscanturpa Group. This may well have been a first ascent.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *High Mountain INFO*

CORDILLERA CENTRAL

Cordillera de la Viuda, ascents. In late June 1999 Gerardo Telletxea and I arrived at the village of Culluhuay, in the northwest part of this cordillera. From the Leóncocha lake shore, where we camped, we explored the valleys draining west. On July 1 we climbed Nevado de la Viuda (5,200m/17,061'), a second ascent—two Peruvians had been on top in 1959. Ours may have been a new route up the south face, on rock and ice. From base camp we had noticed a bold, massive, rock tower (ca 4,750m/15,885'), which we climbed by a technical route on its west face, on excellent rock. We named it Torre del Curco, after a local hunchback duck. Three days later, we attempted another equally fine rock tower, but bad weather forced us to abandon the climb.

JORGE MALLES, *Spain*