



Los Esclavos del Barometro (Barometer Slaves) on the west face of the North Tower of Paine. Tomaz Jakofcic

difficulties around 5.11. On the first two pitches we found pieces of old fixed ropes.

On December 16 we climbed the Piola–Sprungli 1992 route, La Ultima Esperanza (500m, 5.11 A1). Our friends Janez Peterlin and Nejc Brescak repeated Taller del Sol (500m, 5.10+).

TOMAZ JAKOFCIC, *Slovenia*

*Torre Central, Riders on the Storm, second ascent.* David Stastny and I, both Czech, repeated the route Riders on the Storm on the east face of Torre Central in February 2002. The climb took 12 days (1/31–2/10), with four days spent in a portaledge in bad weather. We climbed alpine style, without fixing and without contact with base camp. During the first ascent German climbers Albert, Arnold, Batz, Gullich, and Dietrich used aid on pitches 7, 10, 15, and 20. We too used aid on these pitches, as well as on pitches 14 (5.12c on the first ascent) and 25 (5.12b). However, above the big roof on pitch 25 we managed to climb free (5.11) because of good conditions; during the first ascent this upper section was iced and was

climbed with aid. After nine days and 38 pitches we reached the summit of Torre Central. The descent took three days (two days in the portaledge in bad weather). Ours was the second ascent of the route, 12 years after the first ascent.

JAN KREISINGER, *Czech Republic*

*Torre Central, Riders on the Storm, attempt and third ascent.* In November Frenchmen Jerome Arpin and Sylvain Empereur attempted to climb Riders on the Storm in alpine style. They climbed 18 pitches in four days, but the weather changed, bringing very cold temperatures, and they retreated. From the French report it appears that the Czechs who made the second ascent (see report above) may have added a number of bolts, both at belays and in the middle of pitches. In early December Frenchmen Arnaud Boudet, Martial Dumas, Jean Yves Fredericksen, and Yann Mimet made the third ascent of this route. Over 14 days, eight of which they spent climbing, they fixed 500m of rope on the lower portion. On December 4 they started up on their final attempt, taking portaledges and food for five days. They set up a camp at the top of the fixed ropes and for four days fixed 400m of rope above, using the rope they had used in the lower section. On December 8 they started up the ropes, climbed the last difficult section, a big 50m overhanging dihedral, and continued up easy ground to the summit, which they reached around noon. That same day they retrieved all their ropes, dismantled their camp, and descended all the way to base-camp, reaching it around 11 p.m. Not counting belay bolts, the route apparently has around 46 bolts and drilled holes. The Frenchmen added one drilled hook on pitch 16, where a flake had broken. They climbed free the three main off-width pitches (17, 18, 19), for which

the route is notorious, not using the many drilled hooks (whether from the first ascent or drilled by the Czechs is unknown). The French note that their 4.5 and 5 Camalots were not enough, and suggest taking a 6 Camalot or a bigger Big Bro. They also note that many of the bolts do not have hangers, so they recommend taking 8mm Petzl self-drive bolts and hangers.

ROLANDO GARIBOTTI, *Club Andino Bariloche*

## SOUTH OF PAINE

*Cerro Balmaceda, west face, possible new route.* In February 2002 Spaniards Iñaki San Vicente and Carlos Garcia de Cortazar made what appears to be the second, or perhaps third, ascent of this beautiful 2,035m peak, which lies at the northern end of Fiordo Ultima Esperanza. They approached the peak from the Torres del Paine National Park, using kayaks to descend 70km of the Rio Serrano to the fjord, which they crossed to its western end to reach Laguna Azul. They made their ascent via the west face, starting early in the morning from a bivy at around 700m, and reached the south summit eight hours later. The most difficult section involved a steep 80m face with ice up to 85°. The central summit appears to be a few meters lower than the south summit, but they were not able to reach it because a big crevasse barred passage along an otherwise straight-forward ridge. The first ascent of Balmaceda was done from the north by Argentines Meiling, Arnsek, and Botazzi, and Chilean Saavedra in 1957.

ROLANDO GARIBOTTI, *Club Andino Bariloche*

## TIERRA DEL FUEGO, CORDILLERA DARWIN, CHILE

*Monte Shipton–Monte Darwin, naming and reconnaissance.* In 1962 my father, Eric Shipton, made the first ascent of the highest peak of the Cordillera Darwin in Tierra del Fuego with three Chilean companions, Cedomir Marangunic, Eduardo Garcia, and Francisco Vivanco (*Alpine Journal*, November 1962). It was the first attempt to get near this peak, guarded from the Beagle Channel to the fjords to the north by ice cap. Because their then-unnamed peak is the high point of the range, they called it Monte Darwin. However, they left cartographers with a problem, as the second-highest peak (2,438m), farther south, was already Monte Darwin. This peak was first climbed by a 1970 New Zealand expedition, who neatly resolved the confusion by referring to their peak as Monte Darwin, while referring to my father's Monte Darwin as Monte Shipton.

In February I engaged a fishing boat for the three-day voyage from Punta Arenas to the head of the Cuevas Arm of Bahia Parry with three New Zealand climbers, Paddy Freaney, Rochelle Rafferty, and Bill King. We intended to approach both Monte Darwin and Monte Shipton. As far as I know neither of the mountains has been climbed since 1962 and 1970, so we wanted to at least have a look at them. We were unable to get onto the ice cap, due to the Cuevas Glacier being too crevassed, but we did gain excellent perspectives of the eastern sides of the two very different mountains. We then made a traverse to the Beagle Channel via the alpine Paso Nuevo Ano, the Vedova Glacier, and the Lapataia Valley. At Yendegaia we gained passage back to Punta Arenas. I have since gone some way with Chilean authorities to confirm the naming of Monte Shipton.

JOHN SHIPTON, U.K.