

itches), we thought the route warranted a grade of TD-. We stopped on reaching the ridge and rappelled the route.

ANTHONY BARTON, U. K.

Nevado Chugllaraju, west face. American Thai Verzone and Australian David Clinton climbed a new route on Nevado Chugllaraju's west face. Their route angles up and right, atop a prominent hanging glacier from the lower left side of the face on 45-60° snow and ice, then climbs a 60-75° runnel for five pitches to the ridge at the left-side base of the summit pyramid. It follows the ridge for 30m to the summit.

Churup, Northwest Ridge, direct variation. On May 24 Ben Ditto and I climbed a direct line up the northwest ridge of Nevado Churup (5,493m), beginning on the west side of a squat rock buttress separated from the main peak by a narrow col. We dubbed this formation the "Entrance Stool" and climbed it in six short pitches, with a downclimb and rappel into the snow gully that drops from the north side of the col.

From this notch we climbed a low-angle mixed pitch, followed by several pitches of steep and, in places, rotten rock. I crept up the first (and worst) of these pitches using tools and crampons, then happily relinquished the rack to Ben in our single pair of rock shoes. Seeking solid rock, he traversed left to the very arête of the ridge in a wandering pitch, which I scratched and sparked my way up wishing for sticky rubber of my own. The next lead angled up and sharply right to reach the snowfields on the upper ridge, near their highest point. With darkness settling in, we climbed four long pitches up the snow ramp to the summit slopes.

For the real adventure, we descended the '76 American Route, which follows a wide, mixed gully on the right side of the southwest face. We renovated a number of old anchors and built new ones, as we rappelled through the night over a jumble of loose rock and rotten snow. We returned to our camp at the lower lake 30 hours after leaving it, having encountered difficulties of 5.9 M4 R/X 65°. The descent was more frightening than the climbing. From the research I've done, both in Peru and through the AAC library, the pitches on the rocky lower half of the northwest ridge appear to be a new variation.

Given the great Andean thaw, over the last few seasons this once-classic mixed objective has dried considerably, exposing lots of exfoliating rock. While the climbing on the lower Northwest Ridge is less than superb, the climb's position and awesome views, including that of a lone condor buzzing us at the col, made for a fine outing easily accessible from Huaraz.

ADAM FRENCH, AAC

Cayesh, Slo-Am Route, and other activity. In May, Marko Prezelj and I visited Peru, where neither of us had been. We started our acclimatization with cragging on La Esfinge (5,325m). We first climbed the first three pitches of Cruz del Sur, originally graded 7c+ (5.13a), 7a (5.11d) obligatory, 800m, to ascertain the rock quality and the protection.

The next day we climbed the Original Route, originally graded 5.11c, free, onsight, in five-and-a-half hours, with the rarely done direct finish, which provided some of the best climbing on the route. After two days of rest, on June 1 we climbed Cruz del Sur free (onsight except the first three pitches) in seven hours.

All the pitches we climbed on this cliff seemed overgraded. At sea level I would say that the Original Route is probably 5.10b and Cruz del Sur is 5.11b. That said, Marko and I probably acclimate better than some parties that don't have altitude backgrounds. Also we had fine sunny and cool temperatures during these climbs.

Our next destination was the west face of Cayesh (5,721m), a peak that I had long felt epitomized hard climbing in the Blanca. We spent June 6 packing in to the head of the valley, and the next day we made a bivy just below the edge of the glacier. On June 8 we left the tent just before first light and in 16½ hours (round-trip from the base) opened a new line between the German and Charlie Fowler routes.

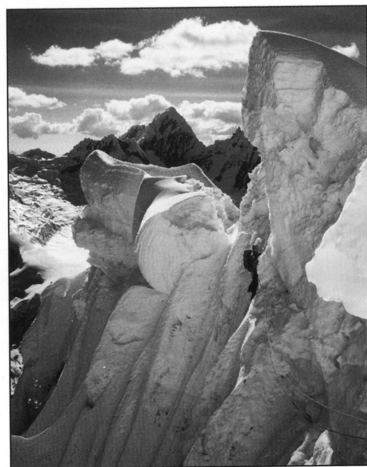
The climbing was uncertain from the start to the summit, which is just the kind of thing we like. After the initial 150m of an ice/snow couloir and 11 steep pitches with real mixed climbing, one pitch of pure rock and a final pitch of super-funky ice/snow led to the corniced summit. The difficulties were up to M7+ (M8?) on the mixed sections and 5.10c on rock. Dry conditions and unreliable protection made the route hard to grade, but we both managed to free it all onsite.

We rested for two days in Huaraz, then hiked up to the north face of Huascaran Norte. We planned to spend a day observing the face, and between 7:00 a.m. and 7:43 a.m. I counted 17 significant rockfall events down the center of the face, in the vicinity of the Casarotto Route. Instead of scoping the face, we retreated to Huaraz.

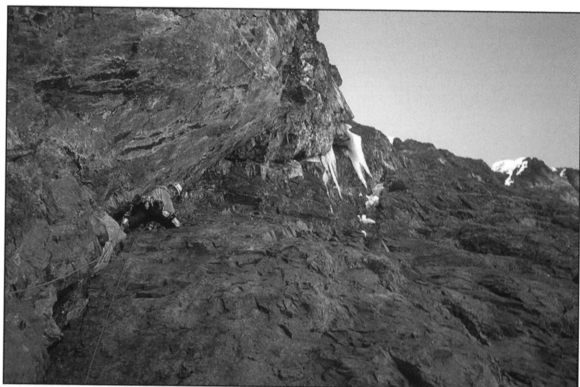
For our last week we chose Taulliraju (5,830m) and the Italian Route (900m, ED1 VI 5.9 A1), a beautiful and logical line to the summit. On the first third of the route we found good conditions, with dry/mixed sections that we climbed free (up to M6+). On the middle third,



The west face of Nevado Cayesh, showing the Slo-Am Route. Several other routes and variations exist on this face. *Marko Prezeli*



Steve House well past the "end of the difficulties" (as the common refrain goes), high on the summit ridge of Taulliraju's Italian Route. *Marko Prezeli*



Steve House scratching his way toward the first icicle, low on Cayesh.
Marko Prezeli

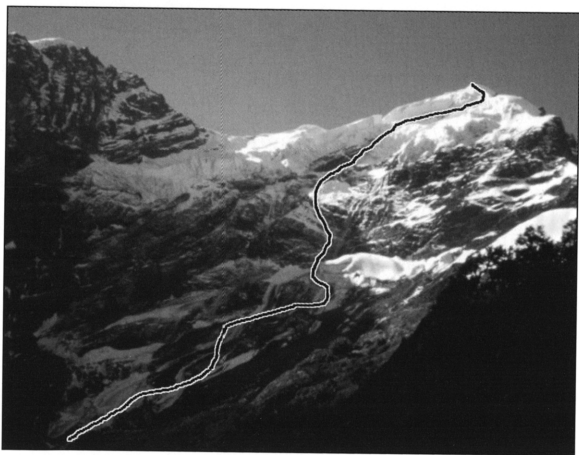
conditions were not so good: deep sugar snow on steep slabs and dry parts. Overall the terrain left the impression that we had to use every trick in the book to route-find (and climb) this rig. Super-fun.

The first night we bivied in a strange flat-floored ice-box, which required minimal chopping. The multiple chambers were hidden inside the cornice that forms on the crest of the spur. During the second day, we reached the long summit ridge, which was very corniced with poor-quality snow and

ice. It took a lot of energy and some dangerous snow-climbing/crawling to get to the summit mushroom, where we made our second bivy just 15m below the top. We crossed the summit the next morning and descended the other side of the mountain, having freed the entire route.

STEVE HOUSE, *Bend, Oregon, AAC*

Andavite/Chopiraju Central, Fight Club. In the summer we, both 21, spent several weeks in the Cordillera Blanca. During our first stay in the Cayesh Valley (climbing Maparaju, San Juan, and Andavite's South Ridge) we got a good view of the south face of Andavite (a.k.a. Chopiraju Central), which looked really nice. We then left, but a few days later returned to Cayesh base camp. After a day of bad weather, on July 27 we started at 2:30 a.m. from base camp, and two hours later roped up and started climbing. The face was quite dry, and we followed an intermittent line of frozen waterfalls leading to the big snowfield halfway up. (Here an escape to the south ridge would be possible.) Then the crux followed: steep, bad rock covered with thin ice, difficult to climb either with or without tools, poor protection. Pitch after pitch of steep snow brought us close to the final serac barrier. It looked frighteningly big and unstable, but we found a narrow couloir and, three pitches of steep, hard ice later, we reached the snow slopes leading to the summit. It was noon; the 800m face had taken seven hours. What a climb! We called the route Fight Club and, based on the information we got in Huaraz, it was the first



Fight Club, on the south face of Andavite (a.k.a. Chopiraju Central).
Moritz Wölde