

buttress. Above the “Eagle’s Nest” the route joins The Sound and the Fury. The rest of the route follows the low-angle line of the buttress.

We made the first ascent of Golden Eagle without any prior exploring or preparation: fully alpine style from Campo Bridwell to Campo Bridwell. Because of snowfall in the days just before our ascent, the cracks of the first three pitches of the vertical, central part of the wall were iced up and made the climbing difficult. Thus, we had to aid two short sections of the first of these pitches, but under better conditions this pitch should go free at 5.11. The rest of the route went free, even though, due to the cold, we had to rest several times on several pitches (French free, difficulties up to 5.11).

The central part of the route offers mostly steep climbing in hand and fist cracks. The granite is typically very rough, and tape might be helpful. The rest of the 25-pitch route is moderate and not-too-steep face climbing.

We recommend bringing Camalots 0-4, with doubles in the midrange sizes, plus a full set of stoppers. Though not necessary, a small set of pitons might be sensible. Except for one piton in pitch nine and one stopper at the belay after that pitch, there is no gear in place.

STEPHAN SIEGRIST, *Switzerland*

Various ski descents. In the fall Ben Bowers, Ben Ditto, and I completed a ski mountaineering circumnavigation of the Fitz Roy massif. Christened the “Southern Patagonia Ice Cap Expedition”—SPICE Tour for short—we traveled 65 miles, completed several ski descents, used traction kites for high-speed glacier travel, and endured some of the most notoriously bad weather on earth.

Starting from El Chalten we walked and horse-packed up the Rio Electrico valley, then shuttled heavy loads up talus slopes and crevasse fields to the edge of ice cap. After establishing a camp on a rocky ledge, we endured a four-day wind, rain, and snow storm, with steady winds of 40-50 mph and gusts of over 70 mph.

After a break in the weather, we ascended the nearby Gorra Blanca Peak and made a ski descent from the mushroom-capped summit down the southwest face to the west ridge.



Ben Ditto leading some high-speed glacier travel, with Cerro Torre in the background. *Andrew McLean*

During this descent Bowers made an airborne variation near the summit and survived a serious fall that took him over a 50' cliff, before he miraculously stopped, unhurt, on a steep ribbon of powder. After regrouping, we used traction kites to fly downwind to the Circo de los Altares, where we established Camp 2.

Basing out of a camp located in the middle of the cirque, we spent the next week making day trips to nearby couloirs. We warmed up with a descent of what we called *Effecto Venturi*, a short, south-facing corner/couloir on the western flank of Cerro Rincon, then moved on to ski the steeper and more committing *Col de Bloque Empotrado Couloir* on Torre Egger. After enduring another storm, we skied two more couloirs, which we called *The Shark's Fin* and *Sacrificial Virgin*. The former was a prominent south-facing arête on the western flank of Cerro Rincon, the latter a north-northwest-facing couloir on the ridgeline leading west from Cerro Adela Norte. The final and most spectacular descent in this area was from the *Col de la Esperanza* on Cerro Torre, which was first reached by Bonatti and Mauri during their 1958 attempt on the peak.

We then kited over to the Mariano Mereno mountain range at speeds up to 30 mph, while towing our heavy sleds. This area had less skiing potential and more bad weather, but we accomplished two more ski descents of remote peaks (shorter, likely unnamed subpeaks near *Dos Cumbres*), before running out of time.

ANDREW MCLEAN

HIELO CONTINENTAL

Cerro Murallón, Gone with the Wind. On the north pillar of Cerro Murallón (2,831m), Stefan Glowacz and Robert Jasper made the first ascent of *Gone with the Wind* (1,200m to summit plateau, 27 pitches, 7c+ A2 M4), in November. See Glowacz's feature article earlier in this *Journal*.

Cerro Lliboutry, first ascent, winter ascent. On July 20 Abdo Fernández and I, both Chilean, flew to Punta Arenas and from there traveled overland to Chalten. We intended to accomplish the first ascent of Cerro Lliboutry (1,980m), located 10km northwest of Paso Marconi in the Cordon Gaea. We had attempted the mountain during the 2004 winter, with four other partners, but were driven back by bad rock and lack of adequate protection, a mere 60m from the summit. After carrying our gear to the vicinity of Paso Marconi, we moved into the Eduardo García Soto hut, located north of the pass, on the Chilean side of the border. Bad weather pinned us down for five days, with 5°F temperatures inside the hut. Finally the weather improved and, using sleds and skis, we crossed Glaciar Chico to reach the base of the mountain, where another storm pinned us down for a further five days. On our last available day before we had to start our journey back, the weather improved. We woke at 5 a.m. and started up, climbing the southwest face while it was still dark. Deep snow slowed our progress, and we did not reach the technical part of the climb until well past midday. The upper portion consisted of several pitches of ice and mixed terrain, with difficulties up to WI3 (70°) and M3. We reached the summit at 4 p.m. on August 6. Ours was the first ascent of the mountain and the first winter ascent.

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