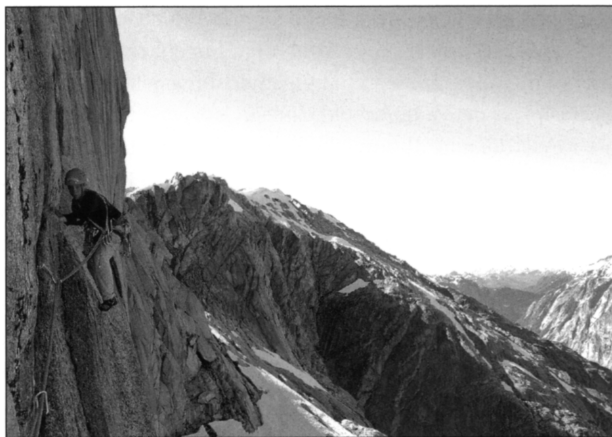


ED- 6B A2+). In the first weeks of January, Jose Ignacio Morales, Mikel Martiarena, and I made serious attempts, and then on January 28 Waldhor, Mink, and I freed two alternate pitches to bypass the aid on this route.

El Espejo, Excelente Mi Teniente (14 pitches, 5.11a). This route follows a system of cracks through a pair of obvious roofs in the center of El Espejo's wall. The route climbs 14 pitches, with difficulties up to 5.11a and a number of pitches of 5.8 and 5.9. A variety of climbing, from finger and hand cracks to off-width, along with the two roofs, makes this



Michael Sánchez Adams on an earlier attempt at the eventually successful free variation to Cien Años de Soledad. *Jose Ignacio Morales*

an interesting, athletic, and aesthetic line. Established ground-up on January 30, we placed 18 bolts, all on lead (14 of which were for rappels—in addition to some wedged knots). Our rack consisted of a set of Stoppers and a set of Friends, with doubles of #4.

El Espejo, Cinco Estrellas (400m, 5.10d). This route is located 15 minutes left of Excelente Mi Teniente. The nine-pitch route begins with a system of cracks and dihedrals to the left of an obvious pillar at the apex of the principal gully. The name, which is related to the rating scale for quality in the valley established by Daniel Seeliger, suggests that we think this route is of the highest quality and aesthetics (from the fifth pitch onward). The route was opened ground-up, with seven bolts placed on lead and the same rack as used on Excelente Mi Teniente. Descent was via Excelente Mi Teniente

Cerro Noemi Walwalun, lower wall, Sácalo pa'Entro Papá (ca 400m, 5.10b). Achim noted this system of cracks and dihedrals leading to the big ledge below the headwall on Cerro Noemi Walwalun. We climbed nine pitches, beginning in a system of somewhat dirty cracks. We used the same rack as on Excelente Mi Teniente and placed one bolt for a belay. From the ledge beneath the headwall, descent can be made via the rappels of Cien Años de Soledad.

MICHAEL SÁNCHEZ ADAMS, *Chile* (translated by Adam French)

*Capicua, Gato Negro Lo Mejor Vino En Caja.* Matt Touchette and I returned to paradise in January 2008 to try to find a route on the breathtaking, beautiful, serene Capicua, a 1,000m granite wall in Cochamó. There were two existing routes on the wall [photo p. 266, *AAJ* 2006], by a Catalan team and a German team, but both routes were 20 pitches, A4+, and called for 24 beaks. We wanted something more accessible and less intense, with less suffering.

Our discovery could not have been better. After some searching, we approached our line via two 30m pitches (dirty crack and moss, 5.10, then an easier second pitch) in the Mate Landia cragging area (below Capicua), which took one-tenth the time of the previous parties' vertical bushwhack, plus we got to climb. Another hour of scrambling over 4th class rocks and

bushes then brought us to the base of Capicua, and we put up four pitches (25m 5.8, 60m 5.8 A0 [pendulum], 40m 5.9+, 30m 5.10) of beautiful free climbing at a moderate grade on a sunny morning. The first three pitches angle up right to the base of the big left-facing system. Work was slow but rewarding. Pounding in pitons (the route doesn't need many, and we left two fixed), hand-drilling bolts, and cleaning dirty cracks doesn't sound like fun to many people, but we were onto a soon-to-be classic Cochamó climb, and the feeling could not have been better. After our first day we came down to camp exhilarated, excited to jumar up our fixed ropes and continue in the morning.

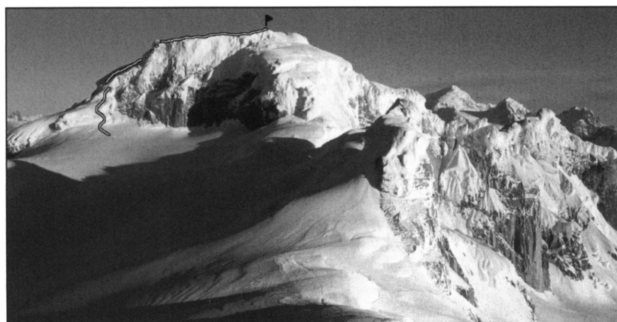
Ignoring the constant buzz of the huge biting horse flies (*tabanos*) was difficult, but we thought of the welcoming people down in the valley and their positive energy. The brilliance of the jungle surrounded us. Atop our fixed ropes we climbed a beautiful, wet, mossy chimney pitch to an enormous ledge (25m, 5.9), then a crack system on the right (25m, 5.9), then a steep aid corner and a final pitch to a huge, prominent ledge with a waterfall pouring down to the right. We reached the ledge at dark, feeling satisfied, content, and exhausted. IV 5.10+ A1+, 10 pitches (including the two approach pitches). Gear: standard free rack with extra TCUs, plus a knifeblade and sawed-off baby angle for the aid corner.

Though the ledge marked the end of the corner system and seemed like a logical ending, there is potential for more climbing above. The terrain looks vague and would likely require more bolts, though, and the waterfall could get you wet and cold if it is flowing at high volume. We had planned to sleep on the ledge, until the winds picked up and drenched our minimal clothing. We brought out our Nalgene bottle filled with Gato Negro wine, hence the route name: Gato Negro Lo Mejor Vino en Caja (Black Cat the best wine from a box). We rested on the ledge for a bit and then rappelled in the dark to eat lentil soup with sausage.

WINTER RAMOS

## CENTRAL PATAGONIA, CHILE

*Cerro Largo, first ascent, northeast ridge; Cerros Hyades, Turret, and Escuela, first winter ascents.* After making the first winter crossing of the Northern Patagonia Ice Cap in July 2006, we wanted to climb mountains on the northeast side of the Ice Cap, increase our knowledge of this vast glaciated area of Patagonia, and experience this unknown area in winter. Club Aleman Andino and Club Andino Universitario members Camilo Rada, Mauricio Rojas, Nicholas von Graevenitz, and I left Santiago on July 6 to enter the Lake Leones sector. After days of transport by horses and Zodiac, we reached the foot of the Leones Glacier, the easiest access to the northern sector of the Ice Cap. Three days later we gained Cristal Pass, the entrance to the plateau, where an intense storm, quite infrequent in winter, pinned us for



Cerro Largo's first ascent route, the northeast ridge. Pablo Besser