

CENTRAL ARGENTINA

(Between lat. 31°- 35°S.)

South of lat. 31°S. the main crest of the Andes rises first in Argentina, the principal massifs being those of Mercedario and Aconcagua. Between Aconcagua and Volcàn Tinguiririca (lat. 32°30' - 35°S.) most of the important peaks lie either on the Chile-Argentina border or wholly within Chile. This is the region known as the Cordillera Central of Chile, an extremely popular and highly developed climbing area. There are also several smallish groups of high peaks in Argentina, east of the Aconcagua-Tupungato region, e.g. Cordòn Chorrillos, Cordòn de la Jaula, Macizo Enanos Blancos and the Portillo group.

Mercedario Region

Just south of lat. 31°S. a mountain chain with peaks 5000-6000 metres high curves southwards from the north-west, being bounded by the valleys of the Colorado and de los Patos rivers. The northern half of this range, the Cordillera de la Totora, includes Cerro Totora, the highest point, and Cerro Ollitas, a rather inaccessible peak. The more important southern portion of the range is known as the Cordillera de Ansilta. It is about thirty kilometres long and includes seven principal peaks. Starting from Las Hornillas or Casas Amarillas, base camps on the east side of the range can be reached on mules in two days. The most technically interesting peak is Pico No.7, on account of the ice which covers its three summits and flows down to form three main glaciers. All the main peaks were climbed in the 1950s by parties from Argentina.

Peak List

Cerro Totora 5890m: 1-1967.

Cerro Ollitas 5400m: 1-1966.

Ansilta 1 5600m: 31°35'S. 69°55'W.: 1-1955.

Ansilta 2 5900m: 31°38'S. 69°54'W.: 1-1956.

Ansilta 3 5750m: 31°40'S. 69°55'W.: 1-1954.

Ansilta 4 5300m: 31°41'S. 69°56'W.: 1-1954.

Ansilta 7 5800m: 31°43'S. 69°52'W.: 1-1958.

Ansilta 5 5550m: 31°43'S. 69°53'W.: 1-1960.

--Sur (Pico Mario Fantin) 5100m: 1-1970 via rocky S.E.slopes.

Ansilta 6 5500m: 31°44'S. 69°51'W.: 1-1955.

Cerro de la Laguna el Tome 5135m: 1-1977.

Cerro Fiero 5020m, 5015m: 1-1977.

Cima Fortuna 4995m: 1-1977.

Torre Augusto 4860m: 1-1977.

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Cordillera de la Ramada

South of the Rio Colorado and Rio de los Patos lies the Cordillera de la Ramada, headed by Mercedario, the culminating point of a great cirque of 6000-metre peaks, heavily glaciated on the eastern slopes. Apart from Mercedario, the principal peaks are Pico Polaco, La Mesa, Alma Negra, and Cerro La Ramada. The most difficult mountain in the group is Pico Polaco, a striking ice peak, for although Mercedario has an ice-cap and some glaciers its main problems lie in storms and routefinding. The eastern side of the chain is easily approached with mules, again starting from Las Hornillas.

The first attempt to climb Mercedario was made in 1933 by Alfred Mass who reached 6000 metres on the north-west side before being defeated by bad weather. The following year saw the arrival of the first Polish expedition to the Andes, the members of the party being J. Narkienwicz-Jodko, J. Dorawsky, S. Daszynski, A. Karpinski, S. Osiecki and V. Ostrowski. The Polish climbers were successful in a number of first ascents, including Mercedario by the north face, La Ramada, and Alma Negra; also La Mesa although, because of mist, they did not know whether they had reached the highest point. Later they attempted the peak now called Pico Polaco but an accident to one of the party soon obliged them to give up. In 1957 the south ridge of Pico Polaco was attempted by the Argentine climbers Sergio Fernandez and Oscar Kùmmel but this proved to be too difficult. They returned the following year with a larger group and the first ascent was achieved by Antonio Beorchia and E. Yacante via the north-east ridge and summit couloir.

In January 1968 Hector de la Vega and Cesarino Fava made an incomplete ascent of the formidable south face of Mercedario, and were faced with a difficult descent when the third member of the party became badly frostbitten. Shortly afterwards a large Japanese-Argentine expedition completed this difficult climb. In 1973 an expedition from the Club Andino de Chile placed a base camp at the foot of the west ridge of Mercedario and three high camps on the ridge before the climbers were able to reach the summit. In 1975 an Italian expedition from Padua made the first ascent of the east face. This required ten days, four intermediate camps and a bivouac at about 6300 metres, the key being a 50ø couloir between Camps III and IV.

Peak List

Mercedario (Lighue) 6670m: 31°59'S. 70°08'W.: 1-1934 via N. slopes: S. face 1967: N. face-1971: W. ridge-1973: E. face-1975: S.W. ridge-1983.

Cerro de la Ramada 6410m: 1-1934 from north.

--Pico Sur 6200m: 1-1934.

Alma Negra 6120m: 1-1934 via N. slopes: Traverse E. - N.W. -1971: Inca remains found 1974.

La Mesa 6230m: 1(complete?)-1934 from N.: E. side, very difficult-1971: From S. & traverse-1974.

--N.E. peak 6200m: 1-1974, or earlier.

Pico Polaco (Innominata) 5920m: one of the most beautiful and difficult peaks in the group: 1-1958 via N.E. ridge & summit couloir: S. ridge attempt to 5800m 1957: S.E. rib-1971: E. face-1985.

Cerro Negro de la Ramada c.5480m: 1-1934.

Cerro Manantiales 5200m: 1-1968.

Pico Friuli 5190m: 1-1968.

Cerro Wanda 5100m: 1-1934.

Cerro Nuestra Señora de las Nieves 5100m: 1-1985.

El Cencerro 5070m: W. of Mercedario & probably on frontier: 1-1951.

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Other Ranges

Southwards from Cerro La Ramada the lower Cordón Espinacito is separated from the Cordón de los Penitentes, the northern extension of the Aconcagua group, by the Riio Blanco branch of the Rio de los Patos. East of the Mercedario group is the not very important Cordillera del Tigre.

Peak List

- Cordón de Espinacito 4968m (highest point):*
Cerro Bonete 5281m: 1-1984 via s. face: S.W. gully & ridge-1984.
Cerro Ulens 4920m)
Cerro Castro 5150m) 1-1984. Rock peaks on boundary of San
Cerro Frias 4875m) Juan & Mendoza provinces, E. - N.E. of
La Flaca 4900m) Aconcagua. Approached via Punta de
Cerro Alma Blanca 5300m) Vacas, & Matienzo Valley
--P.5170m: 1-1957.
Cerro Barallaca c.5400m: 1-1987.
Tambillos 5700m: 1-1946: N.W. ridge-1987.

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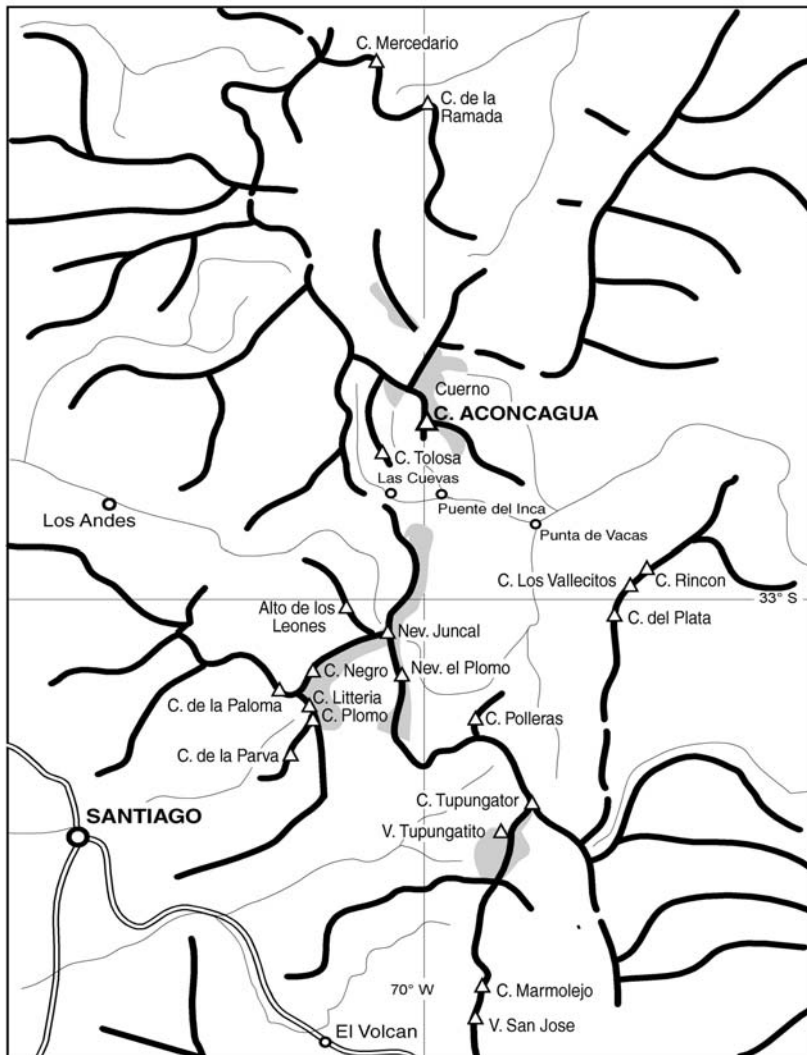
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Aconcagua Region

The Andean massif in the sector dominated by Aconcagua follows the main north-south axis, generally speaking, and is bounded to the north by the Rio de los Patos and to the south by the Paso de la Cumbre (or, Uspallata Pass), which carries the Trans-Andine road link (and rail tunnel) between Buenos Aires and Santiago. On the crest of this pass stands the celebrated Christ of the Andes statue. Between these limits lies first the Cordón de los Penitentes, which terminates with Cerro Cuerno, continuing south as the Cordón de los Dedos; while from Cerro Cuerno an eastern spur leads to Aconcagua itself, which again throws out many spurs to the east. In this region the surrounding peaks cannot compete with the rival attractions of Aconcagua but offer possibilities for training climbs or as consolation prizes.

Map of Aconcagua area



Cordòn de los Penitentes

The Cordòn de los Penitentes, which is some thirty kilometres long, lies between the Rio Volcàn valley to the west and the Las Vacas and Güssfeldt glaciers to the east. It is a range of beautiful, predominantly icy peaks, the principal of which are La Mano, Cerro Zurbriggen, Cerro Fitzgerald, Cupola di Güssfeldt and Cerro Reichert. The range was explored and climbed in 1953 by eight members of the Centro Andino Buenos Aires, no mean undertaking as the area was previously virtually unknown. The southern end of the range is marked by Cerro Cuerno, an impressive icy peak and outlier of Aconcagua. Cuerno was climbed in 1934 by an Italian-Chilean party, which included Piero Ghiglione.

Peak List

Cerro La Mano 5600m: 32°32'S. 70°01'W.: 1-1953 via S. face direct: S. face, further W., to W. ridge-1979: Combined S. face/W. ridge route-1979.

Cerro Reichert 5150m: 1-1953: S. face, steep-1979.

P.5150m: 1 km S.W. of Reichert:

Cupola de Güssfeldt 5486m, 5350m: 1-1953.

La Cupola Nevada 5400m: 1 1/2 km S. of Güssfeldt:

Cerro Zurbriggen 5322m: 2 km E.S.E. of Cupola Nevada: 1-1953.

Cerro Link 5083m: 1 km N.E. of Zurbriggen: 1-1979.

P.5171m: 4 km S.S.W. of Cupola Nevada:

Fitzgerald 5357m: 3 km E.S.E. of P.5171: 1-1953.

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N.B. See also *Mountain Craft*, n.32 (1956): 2-4.

Environs of Aconcagua

The Cordòn de los Dedos (about thirty kilometres long), which runs from Cerro Cuerno to Paso de la Cumbre, comprises a broken series of rocky peaks, bounded to the west by the Quebrada Matienzo and to the east by the Quebrada de los Horcones, principal route of approach to Aconcagua. The main peaks are Cerro Catedral, climbed by members of the 1896-7 Fitzgerald expedition; Cerro Dedos and Cerro México, both climbed in 1950; and Cerro Tolosa, the most impressive of all. It was first climbed in 1903 via the north-east ridge by Konrad and Nadine von Meyendorff after an unsuccessful attempt on Aconcagua. Three more ascents were made before the First World War, including a solo effort by Frederick Reichert. Later ascents were made by a more direct route on the east face. In 1945 the American climber Arthur Emmons and two companions climbed the south face. The south-west face was climbed in 1962.

Three satellites of Aconcagua itself are Cerro Ameghino, a rock peak to the north-east, first climbed in 1938 by Angel Landi and Juan Semper; and Cerro Mirador and Cerro Almacenes on southern spurs of the massif. These two peaks are fine rocky belvederes from which to admire the magnificent south face of Aconcagua; Almacenes is the more difficult of the two. In the region of Aconcagua there

remain two more small groups of peaks which rise inside Chile or astride the frontier, namely the Macizo Nevado de Leiva and Parva del Inca.

The Macizo Nevado de Leiva is a small but interesting group of 4000-5000-metre peaks lying astride the international frontier and is located approximately sixteen kilometres west-north-west of Aconcagua at the head of the Cajòn del Rio Leiva in the vicinity of the border passes Portezuelo Leiva and Portezuelo Cuevas. The first visit to the area was made in 1953 by a Chilean party who ascended the Rio Colorado tributary of Rio Aconcagua to Portezuelo Pedro Pablo. A beautiful peak to the north was climbed via the frontier ridge and named Nevado Leiva. Another peak called Tordillo, south-east of the lake of the same name, was climbed after two attempts. The climbers were impressed by the beauty and climbing possibilities of the surrounding peaks. In 1960 a Chilean-Japanese expedition visited the area. Nevado Leiva was climbed again, this time from Portezuelo Leiva. First ascents were made of the twin peaks of Aguja and Torre, characterized by scree and bad rock, Cerro Monjas and Cerro Amarillo, with an extensive field of nieves penitentes, scree and moderately difficult rock. Inside Argentina the party made the first ascent of the north-west summit of Expedición. The main peak is farther east, reachable via an ice arête, but was not climbed for lack of time.

Some thirteen kilometres to the south-west lies the peak of Los Tres Hermanos on the frontier crest. From this peak, on a spur running south-west, is the little group of rocky peaks known as Parva del Inca - La Parva, Cerro Bastion, Cerro Aguja and Cerro Gloria. Cerro Aguja, a fine rocky spire in a complex of striking peaks, was the last to be climbed, the work of W. Itturriaga and J. Simkin in February 1950 after several previous attempts. (See under Chile Central.)

A number of lesser peaks in the side valleys north of the Trans-Andine road have been explored in recent years, such as the Estero Relinchos which runs west (towards the eastern side of Aconcagua and the Cordòn Penitentes) from the valley of the Rio de Los Vacas, coming up from Punta de Vacas.

Peak List

P.5584m: 5 km N.E. of Aconcagua:

Aguja El Monje: 2 km N.E. of Aconcagua:

--West 5939m:

--Central 5550m:

--East 5517m:

Cerro Ameghino:

--Principal c.6000m: 1-1938.

--Norte c.5800m:

--Este 5883m:

Cerro Ibañez 5650m: 3 1/2 km S.E. of Aconcagua:

--Norte:

Cerro de los Horcones 5395m: 2 1/2 km W.N.W. of Cuerno:

Cerro Cuerno (Horcones) 5462m: 32°37'S. 70°05'W.: 6 km N.W. of Aconcagua: 1-1934: S. face direct, difficult-1986: S. face, solo-1986.

--North peak 4650m: 1-1912.

--Punta H 5400m: 1-1958.

P.5286m, P.5331m, P.5371m: points on ridge between Cuerno and Manso:

Cerro Manso 5557m: 32°38'S. 70°02'W.:

Cerro Piramidal 6009m: 3 1/2 km S.W. of Aconcagua, on end of S.W. ridge:

Cerro Mirador 6089m: 2 km E.S.E. of Piramidal, on ridge leading S. from Aconcagua: 1-1953.
Catedral 5335m: 32°39'S. 70°05'W.: 1-1897: S. face, 1000m-1975.
Cerro Bonete 5100m: 32°40' 70°06': 1-1950.
Cerro de los Dedos 5018m: 1-1950.
Cerro Mexico 5083m: 1-1950.
Tolosa 5370m: 32°46' 70°03': 1-1903 via N.E. ridge: E. face-1941?: S. face-1945: S.W. face-1962.
Santa Marja 5100m: S.E. of Aconcagua: 1-1908: S. face ice cascades explored, (much bigger in 1908)-1987.
Almacenes 5102m: 1-1925.
Cerro El Durazno 4597m: S.W. of Santa Marja: 1-1987.
Cerro Relincho 5150m: E. of Puente del Inca, in Relinchos valley: 1-1982.
Peaks near the Mendoza frontier with Chile, in the Las Cuevas valley, and near the source of the Rio Navarro: A number of 4000-metre peaks were explored and climbed (1988-90) by Evelio Echevarría (see AAJ 1989-, 1990, 1991).

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Aconcagua

As the highest peak of the Americas, Aconcagua has attracted more attention than most Andean mountains, even though the normal route is strenuous and uninteresting. Any attempt on the peak is, however, a serious undertaking, as testified by the high fatality rate, on account of altitude, wind, cold and permanent dehydration, caused by excessive sweating and panting in the extremely dry atmosphere. Apart from the normal route there now exist several much harder ones, particularly on the famous South Face.

The mountain has two summits joined by a ridge (Cresta del Guanaco) approximately one kilometre long. Various ridges radiate from each summit and the whole massif is isolated from other high peaks; only to the north-west is it connected, by a high snow ridge, with the surrounding mountain systems. The usual approach is from the south up the Quebrada de los Horcones, which circles the western flanks of the peak, to the Plaza de Mulas base camp at a height of 4230 metres. From here three routes start - Ordinary route, via the Horcones Glaciar Superior and north ridge; the West route; and the South-west route. On the eastern side of Aconcagua there are three more main lines - South Face, via the Horcones Glaciar Inferior (numerous routes); Glaciar del Este route; and the Glaciar de los Polacos route. Very stringent regulations are now imposed by the Argentine authorities on all persons wishing to climb Aconcagua*, in an effort to minimize accidents and fatalities. The best climbing

period is December-March. On the ordinary route there are two refuges, i.e. Berlin (c.5800m) and Independencia (c.6150m). (*See AAJ, 23 (1981): 236-7; AAJ, 33 (1991): 196; South American Handbook; and enquire before leaving home for current climbing regulations, e.g. medical certificates.)

The first known attempt on Aconcagua was by the German mountaineer Paul Güssfeldt who, in 1883, reached 6600 metres by following the north ridge. On his second attempt on this route he failed to get as high as before, and his lack of success can be attributed partly to the absence of a strong climbing partner. In January 1897 the mountain was attacked by the Fitzgerald expedition who were the first to use the Horcones valley approach. On 12 January Fitzgerald's guide Mathias Zurbriggen reached the ridge between the two summits, and two days later made a complete ascent. The ascent was repeated by other members of the expedition a month later. The next to reach the top was W. M. Conway nearly two years later; however he stopped short of the very top out of deference to Fitzgerald, something he later regretted. Ascents and attempts were made quite frequently thereafter, including the first winter climb in 1915 by Eilert Sundt and two companions; the party was unable to reach the highest point because of a cornice. The first fatality occurred in 1926.

The first group to put up a new route was the 1934 Polish Andes Expedition who climbed what is known as the Ruta del Glaciar de los Polacos, on the east face; this required four intermediate camps. In 1947, in the course of a golden jubilee year anniversary climb, Thomas Kopp and Lothar Herold made a difficult traverse of the summit ridge to the south peak, discovering the carcass of a guanaco, which has led to speculation about the possibility of an Inca ascent of the great peak. In 1953 the Swiss couple, Frédéric and Dorly Marmillod, with two companions, traversed across the western flanks from Plaza de Mulas and ascended to the south peak via the south-west ridge. In 1951, W. Foerster, L. Krahl and E. Meier, repeating Güssfeldt's route, succeeded in joining up with the ordinary route at around 6200 metres. Finally, in 1954, a strong group of French climbers made a route up the south face, one of the hardest in the whole of the Andes. The climbers were Lucien Berardini, Adrien Dagory, Edmond Denise, Ren, Ferlet, Pierre Leseur, Robert Paragot and Guy Poulet. Several of them suffered severe frostbite as a result of the ascent which lasted nine days and required four intermediate camps. Since then the face has been climbed by a variety of routes - in 1966 the Ruta de los Argentinos was put up to the right of the French route, as well as the Central Couloir route between the two; in 1974 Reinhold Messner soloed a direct finish to the French route, while yet another variation was added by the 1981 Japanese expedition. Ample literature is available for Aconcagua.

Peak List

Aconcagua 6960m: See Capellas guidebook for routes and historical survey: 1-1897 via N.W. (ordinary) route: E. face (Polish)-1934: Traverse to S. peak-1947: N.W. (Intégral)-1951 (Güssfeldt route): S.W. ridge-1953: S. face (French)-1954: W. ridge-1965: S. face (Argentina)-1966: S. face (Central couloir)-1966: S. face (Messner finish)-1974: Glaciar Este-1978: S.W. ridge variant-1979: S. face (French variant)-1981: S. face (Yugoslav) -1983: S. face (new route between French & Argentine)-1985: Traverse, S.W. ridge, descend E. face: N. face from Refugio Berlin-1986: S. face (new Yugoslav route)-1986: S.W. ridge, descend S. face-1988: W. face (IV-VI) to S.W. ridge-1988: S.E. ridge (section of VI)-1990.

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Other Argentine Massifs

South-east of Aconcagua, and south of the Trans-Andine road, are several smallish massifs. Each contains a number of 5000-metre peaks, which have provided interesting fields for exploration by

small groups of climbers, mainly Argentines from the Club Andinista Mendoza and the Centro Andino Buenos Aires. The Chorrillos and Enanos Blancos groups are reached from Punta de Vacas railway station by travelling south up the valleys of the Rio Tupungato and its various tributaries. A little further east is the better known Cordòn El Plata, accessible from Potrerillos railway station. Much further south is the Cordòn Portillo.

Grupo Alto del Rio Blanco

This is the easterly extension of the Chilean group headed by the frontier peaks Leòn Negro and Leòn Blanco. It is located between the Trans-Andine road and the Cordòn Chorrillos. The peaks lie on a north-south ridge, the Filo Central-Doris. The northernmost is Cerro Phillippe Central, east of Leòn Negro; the southernmost is Cerro Doris Sur, south-east of Leòn Blanco. Cerro Central and Cerro Doris (Norte, or Principal) were climbed in 1910-11 by R. Helbling and F. Reichert. The other peaks were ascended in 1964 by a Chilean climber, Miguel Gòmez, during a solo traverse of the whole ridge from south to north.

Peak List

Cerro Phillippe Central 5150m: 1-1962.

Pico Mirador 4450m: 1-1962.

Cerro Central 5175m: E. of Leòn Negro: 1-1910: S. ridge, descend to W. -1964. è§

Cerro Don Juan 5120m: 1-1964 via S. ridge. §

Cerro Expedición 5100m: 1-1964 via S. ridge. §

Benicadell 5154m: 1-1964 via S. ridge. §

Cerro Doris Principal 5210m: 1-1911. §

Cerro Excursionista de Valencia 5050m: 1-1964 via S. ridge. §

Cerro Doris Sur 5210m: located in extreme S: 1-1964 via W. slope. §

Cerro Ugarte c.4800m: marks end of N.E. ridge of Nevado Juncal: 1-1983.

§ - These peaks are located on the ridge called Filo Central-Doris.

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Cordòn Chorrillos

This nudo of easy 5000-metre peaks is located between lat. 33°-33°15' S. and long. 69°45'-70°W. (i.e. between the international border and the Rio Tupungato), and was unexplored until 1965 when a party of Spanish climbers spent some time in the area. After four days' march up the valleys of the Tupungato and Taguas rivers, base camp was established at the junction of the Rio Plomo and Juncal No.2 glaciers. After crossing the fast-flowing Rio Plomo, a hard day's work enabled them to place a high camp at the foot of the main peaks. During the next three days they explored the Glaciar de los Españoles and the surrounding peaks, making in all twelve first ascents, including Acuña-Brasas, Rabada-Navarro, Gaucho, Francisco Ibañez, Hispanidad, CAE and Amezua. Then they moved to Nevado del Plomo, where two members of the party made a new route on the east-north-east face.

Peak List

Cerro CAE 5450m)

Cerro Amezua 5350m)

Cerro Hispanidad 5330m)

<i>Cerro Teniente Ibañez 5260m</i>)
<i>Cerro Rabadà y Navarro 5160m</i>)
<i>Cerro Acuña-Brasas 5150m</i>)1 - All 1965
<i>Cerro Gredos 5070m</i>)
<i>Cerro del Gaucho 5050m</i>)
<i>Espolòn Central del Glaciar Españoles 5050m</i>)
<i>Cerro Rojo 4500m</i>)
<i>Espolòn del Cerro Rojo 4320m:</i>)

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Macizo Enanos Blancos

This massif (literally the 'White Dwarfs') lies east of the Rio Tupungato and within twenty kilometres of Punta de Vacas, and may be considered as part of the north-western sector of the Cordòn El Plata. It was explored and climbed in 1964 and 1966 by two expeditions from Mendoza. The group, which consists of six peaks, is in the form of the letter 'M', with the base facing south-west. It is bounded to the north and south respectively by the convergence of the Quebradas Fea and Santa Clara, to the east by the Tres Mogotes of the Cordòn Jaula, and to the west by minor hills above the Rio Tupungato. The two quebradas provide reasonable access although mules can only be taken one-third of the way. There is considerable glaciation in places, particularly on the two main peaks.

The first expedition approached via the Quebrada Santa Clara which enabled them to climb the three peaks on the southern leg, Elmer, Dopey and Bojan. From there they ascertained that a col of icy rocks led to Enano I and another peak on the central leg of the 'M'. From Enano I a high, remote ice col led to Enano II. They were able to obtain a complete series of photographs and made two topographical maps. Profiting from this work the 1966 party ascended the Quebrada Fea and reached the high col between the two Enanos, which were climbed simultaneously by separate groups.

Peak List

Cerro Elmer 5500m: just S. of Mogotes group: 1-1964.

Cerro Bojan 5400m: 1-1964.

Cumbre Dopey 5200m: 1-1964.

Enano I 5700m: 1-1966

Enano II 5600m: 1-1966

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Cordòn de la Jaula

This group may be considered as the northerly extension of the Cordòn El Plata, being located at approximately lat. 32°50'S long. 69°30'W. In 1956 a small group from the Centro Andino Buenos Aires set up camp in a side valley of the Rio Blanco. From there they established a high camp and climbed steep ice to a col between Giewont and Tatra, which were both climbed. From camp in another valley a little further north they climbed Karpinski and continued along the ridge to CABA

and Aguila Blanca. Adjacent to the Enanos Blancos group is the Tres Mogotes massif of the Cordón Jaula, consisting of Nevado Excelsior, Mogote Oeste and Mogote Ibañez. Excelsior, a snow and ice peak and highest of the three, was climbed by three Argentines in 1964. (See sketch-map in Boletín, C.A.B.A., no.27 (1956): 3).

Peak List

(See Boletín, CABA, no.27 for sketch map).

Tres Mogotes:

--Excelsior c.5900m: snow & ice peak & highest of the group, just N.of the Enanos Blancos: 1-1964
(see LM, n.6 (1965): 19)

San Esteban 5400m: 1-1965?

Pico Rosa 5350m: 1-1965?

C.A.B.A. 5280m:)

Aguila Blanca 5400m:)

Karpinski 5230m:) 1-1956

Tatra 5200m:)

Giewont 5000m:)

Cerro Mensajero de la Paz 5200m: 1-1986, 1st complete ascent.

Cerro Plataforma:

Domo Nevado:

P.5500m, P.5400m, P.5300m, P.5200m: remote peaks reached via steep, narrow valley S. of Punta de Vacas: 1-1990.

Cordón El Plata

The main group has been known for many years. The principal peaks are Cerro Rincon, Cerro El Plata and Cerro de los Vallecitos. It was visited in 1937 by Mario Bertone and several other Italian climbers resident in Mendoza. Bertone was at that time one of the most active members of the Club Andinista Mendoza. From the railway at Potrerillos they crossed the desolate altiplano, ascending the Rio Blanco valley, to a fairly low camp at the edge of the Rincon glacier, which was too broken to allow further passage by mules. Next day they made the first ascent of Cerro Rincon. After crossing the glacier they slogged up to a ridge of loose rock and another glacier bristling with nieves penitentes, finally reaching the large upper snowfield and the summit.

After a rest day they set off for Cerro El Plata. From the upper snowfield of the Rincon glacier they turned south and after negotiating the seracs of the Glaciar de los Vallecitos, reached a dip in the ridge at c.5400 metres. Crossing to the opposite slope they traversed vast fields of n,v, and climbed the Glaciar del Plata, arriving at the highest point of the mountain at seven o'clock in the evening. The long and far from easy climb had been very demanding but they were rewarded with an uninterrupted panorama and the sight of the long triangular shadow of their peak projected by the setting sun across the vastness of the Argentine pampa, which extended from their feet as far as the eye could see. However they were robbed of their main triumph by the discovery of a cairn and visiting card proclaiming the second ascent in 1925 by Federico Stepanek and Francisco Peters, the first ascent having been made by Stepanek alone a few days previously.

After another rest day they set off for the third peak. The Glaciar de los Vallecitos was traversed, this time in the middle, through a forest of nieves penitentes, whence they reached the ridge somewhat south-west of the previous point. Avoiding the formidable 1000-metre east wall, Bertone and his

companion Landi followed the long ridge and in the late afternoon reached the virgin summit of Cerro de los Vallecitos, from which they were able to enjoy a view which extended from Mercedario and Aconcagua to Tupungato, a distance of some 250 kilometres.

In 1961 four Polish climbers living in Buenos Aires attacked the fairly difficult and dangerous south 'face' of Cerro El Plata, a great glaciated slope furrowed with rock spurs. Their route lay up a very steep rib which rises at an average 60° up most of the 1700-metre slope. After two days they had climbed over 1000 metres but the third day was spent trying to find an escape route for one of them who was ill. On the fourth day one pair continued upwards in a snowstorm, reaching the top at six o'clock in the evening, and bivouacing on the way down. In 1963 the Argentines, Peter and Jorge Skvarca, Auguste Mengelle and Carlos Vittone, made the first winter ascent of the face by a new route further east, to the right of the central glacier. This climb was accomplished in two days despite enormous quantities of new snow and avalanches. All the climbers suffered some degree of frostbite, Vittone losing all his toes.

Peak List

Neveros 5500m: bounded to N. by Quebrada de Casa & to S. by Quebrada de Guevara; southern spurs unite with those of Cordòn de las Jaulas: 1-1953.

Cerro Negro 5800m?: 1-1945.

Cerro Colorado 4650m: 1-1925.

Pico Sur del Cerro Blanco 5015m: 1-1925.

Torre de Plata 4500m: 1-1925.

Torre de Cristal 4200m: 1-1925.

Olonguimini (Blanco de Plata) 5200m: 1-1943.

Cerro El Plata 5850m: 33°S. 69°40'W.: 1-1925: S. face-1960: E. face-1985: Winter traverse, descent towards Tres Mogotes, crossing 12 5000m peaks (including lesser unclimbed points)-1986.

--Pico de la Plata 5700m: 1-?: Winter ascent of E. face/buttress-1989.

Platita (Cerro Vacas) 4380m: on southern spur of Cerro Plata: 1-1944.

Cerro Vallecitos 5756m: 1-1937: E. face-1953: E. face, Gran Pilar-1982: Vallecitos-Rincòn traverse (3 km), including 1st ascents of 5 lesser points-1985: S. face, new route-1987.

Cerro Rincòn 5518m: 1-1937: E. face, new route (1100m,mixed)-1986: 'Supercanaleta'-1986.

Pico Pablo Francke 5200m: 1-1943: Winter ascent-1953: S. face, very exposed-1986.

Lomas Amarillas 5300m, 5200m, 4750m: 1-1942: S. face, Canal Huam n-1987: All three peaks and most of the difficult faces have been climbed.

Agustín Alvarez 5400m: 1-1939. (See also ACAB, n.14 (1945): 36-8.

Santa Elena 5240m: 1-1939: S. slope to junction with Agustín Alvarez ridge-1987.

El Salto 5100m: 1-1941.

San Bernardo 4420m: 1-1943?

N.B. All the peaks in the range, and most of the difficult faces, have been climbed.

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Randis, A. ‘Primera travesía de la cresta Vallecitos-Rincon’, *Rev.CAB*, 16 (1987): 44.

Peaks near Chilean border (Lat. 33°- 34° S.)

Cerro Polleras 5947m: 1-1908.

Cerro Negro (Cerro Pabellòn de Santa Clara) 6152m: 33°28'S. 69°42'W.: 1-1969.

--lower summit 6140m: 1-1953.

Cerro Chocolate 4058m: 1-1969 from Piuquenes Pass.

Cerro Palomares 4260m:) 1-1969. All traversed in one day by

Cerro Gran Abanico 3674m:) Chilean climbers from camp on

Cerro El Peñon:) Piuquenes Pass

*Nevado Palomares 5920m: 5 km inside Argentina: 1-1965 from Argentine side: 2-1965, same day by
traverse from the Chilean peak Marmolejo Norte.*

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Cordòn Portillo

This group of 5000-metre peaks is located south-east of Tupungato (approx. lat. 33°41'S., long. 69°34'W.) some 120 kilometres distant from Aconcagua. The highest peaks are Cerro Fiala, the triple-headed Tres Picos del Amor and Gemelos Grande and Norte. Possibly all quoted heights in the Portillo group should be lowered by 200 metres.

In the mid-1950s groups of Argentine climbers paid several visits to the area, climbing a number of peaks. The first and perhaps best peak to be climbed was Tres Picos del Amor. In 1954, after a long approach march, members of the Mendoza club established themselves at c.4900 metres. On their first attempt they were defeated by wind and verglas, but next time, after crossing a large field of nieves penitentes, they reached the main summit and followed the sharp ridge to the central and south peaks. The descent which necessitated various abseils was completed after seventeen hours of climbing. The ascent was repeated the following year by a Centro Andino Buenos Aires group, who also climbed Cerro Fiala, the south face of Cerro Punta Negra, Pico del Amorcito, Cerro del Oso, Cerro Pirquitas and three lesser mountains. In 1956 it was the turn of the Mendoza climbers, who ascended Gemelo Norte among others. The fine peak of Gemelo Grande was not climbed until 1968.

Peak List

Cerro Fiala (2 peaks) 5600m: 1-1955.

Tres Picos del Amor 4900m, 4950m, 5400m: 33°41'S. 69°34'W.: 1-1954 from S. & traverse of summit ridge.

Gemelo Norte 5400m: 1-1956.

Gemelo Grande c.5490m: fine peak S.of Gemelo Norte: 1-1968.

Entrenquina 5300m: 1-1955.

Pico Huarpes (Fraile Panzò) c.5230m: 1-1963: N. face-1986: N.E. spur-1987.

Torre del Campanario 5200m: beautiful granite tower: 1-1956.

Campanario del Currul 5200m:

Cuernos de la Luna 5150m:

El Fraile 5100m: 1-1955.

Amorcito 5100m: 1-1955.

Krakus 5050m: 1-1956.

Yeporà 5050m: 1-1956.

Cerro del Oso 5000m: 1-1955.

Cerro Bcquer 5000m: 1-1966.

Punta Negra 4800m: 1-1955 via S. face.

Pirquitas 4750m: 33°44'S 69°33'W.: 1-1955: Traverse-1956.

Needle at end of Gran Glaciar Tunuyàn: 1-1986/87.

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Cordillera de Còrdoba

This is a sub-Andean range to the east of the main ranges. These rolling hills consist of the Sierra Grande (the central and longest), Sierra Chica (to the east) and Sierra de Guisapampa (to the west), which continues as the Sierra de Pocho. The region (approximately 500 kilometres long by 150 kilometres wide) provides pleasant walking and scrambling in varied countryside with a moderate year-long climate. The highest peak is Champaqui (2,975m).

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Isolated peaks to the south (Lat. 34°- 35° S.)

In the region of the Chilean peaks Maipo and Tinguiririca are three isolated peaks, Cerro de la Laguna, Overo and Sosneado, which is the southernmost Andean mountain over 5000 metres. It was primarily for this reason that E.S.G.de la Motte decided to investigate the remote Sosneado in 1935, the only previous attempt having failed from shortage of supplies. Seen from the east the mountain presents an impressive rock face draped with ice, but on the west side long, snow free, scree slopes

lead up to the final rock wall which is only forty metres high. This was found to be breached by a broad gully leading to the horseshoe shaped summit, the remains of a former crater.

Peak List

Cerro de la Laguna 5034m: N.E. of Maipo: 1-1942.

Overo 4765m: S.S.E. of Maipo, N. of Sosneado: 1-1924.

Sosneado 5189m: 34°45'S. 70°W.: 1-1935 from west: E.face explored-1986.

--Sosneado Sur 4800m: Ascent in 1982 via S.E. face.

Cerro Pire 3850m, Cerro de la Natividad 3810m, P.4250: Sosneado group: 1-1990.

Cerro Cajòn Perdido 4660m: fine rock peak S.E. of Tinguiririca: Incomplete ascent (unstable rock)-1986.

Cerro Alvear 4534m: 1?-1986.

Risco Plateado 4920m: S.E. of Tinguiririca: 1?-1986.

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