

Peru

CORDILLERA HUAROCHIRÍ

Nevado Sullcón, north face; Nevado Vicuña Sur, southeast face, southwest face. Unusually bad weather and deep snow were a constant handicap during the 2001 climbing season in central Peru. In May J.P. Perret and I attempted Pariacacca Norte (5701m), but deep snow forced us to abandon our climb. In early June we explored for routes up Nevado Sullcón (5650m). I returned three weeks later and on June 26, with Damián A. Vargas, tackled the steep north face. We reached the summit, a first ascent, up steep ice and a narrow snow ridge. In mid-July Bruno Castro and I made an ascent of Nevado Vicuña Sur (5500m). We gained the summit via the southeast face, but had to make a hasty descent due to strong snow squalls. On August 28, Alejandro A. Vargas, his son Damián, and I revisited the mountain. We climbed its southwest face by way of a steep gully and the west ridge.

ALBERTO MURGUÍA, *Club de Montañeros Américo Tordoya, Lima*



Pyramide de Garcilaso attempt. *Jeremy Frimer*

CORDILLERA BLANCA

Santa Cruz Norte, west face attempt; Pyramide de Garcilaso, east face attempt. Jay Burbee (Canada), Michel van der Spek (Netherlands), and I (Canada) spent June in the Cordillera Blanca, where we began with an attempt on the unclimbed west face of Santa Cruz Norte (5829m). Uncharacteristic of the region, the weather was not good. In marginal weather we climbed a runnel on the right side of the face (the first one that completely avoids the prominent rock band at three-quarters height). Eight pitches were climbed, principally on ice and snow of varying quality and as steep as 60 degrees, as well as minor mixed sections. We topped out on the west ridge at 5700m late in the day and retreated to avoid an unplanned bivvy. Our climb is not to be considered a new route, since it does not

connect with an established route (the west ridge remains unclimbed) or reach the summit.

Next we unsuccessfully attempted a route on the unclimbed east face of *Pyramide de Garcilaso* in the Paria Gorge. The easiest approach to this face seems to be straight up the valley headwall, but is exposed to ice and stone fall. We took the quickest route, which climbed a glacier, formed entirely by icefall, traversed a bombarded scree ledge, and climbed one pitch of Grade 3 ice up the toe of the glacier. The east face of *Pyramide de Garcilaso* contains about a dozen steep ice streaks and runnels. We chose what looked to be one of the easier ones, a water-ice line descending from the col between the north and south summits. From a bivy cave at its base Jay led the first pitch in the dark of early morning, fighting with an eight-meter vertical pillar. Three more pitches up excellent 45- to 70-degree water ice and snow led to a 20-meter vertical ice curtain at 5500m. The lower part of the ice sheet was thick and of good quality, but higher the ice became thin, detached, and rotten. The underlying and surrounding rock was not of good quality, making the climbing somewhat unprotectable. An attempt to aid the curtain on ice tools was abandoned just below the point of no return. A safer but more complicated descent route below the east face of *Paron*, on rock slabs and steep grass, was used to regain the valley.

JEREMY FRIMER, *Varsity Outdoor Club (UBC)*

Nevado Quitaraju, south face. Brits Nick Bullock and Al Powell opened a new route on the great south wall of *Nevado Quitaraju* (6040m). This route is to the right of the Slovenian line (the only previous route on this wall). The first climbers explained that it took seven hours to cross the barrier of seracs



Top: Jay Burdee on the still-unclimbed west face of *Santa Cruz Norte*. Below: Southern Discomfort on the south face *Siula Grande* (see pg 304). *Jeremy Frimer (2)*

at the base of the wall. The new route is primarily glacial, with sections of 75 to 80 degrees and some of 90 degrees, as well as mixed climbing. Bullock and Powell reached the summit on July 23 after two days of climbing.

JUANJO TOME, *Peru*

Tuctubamba, Middle Earth. Clay Wadman and I tried the prominent couloir on the right, climbing ca 300 meters and reaching the rock band before rappelling the line of ascent. We found conditions that varied from one-inch ice over rock to perfect névé to bottomless snow. The crux involved thin, 75-degree ice protected by knifeblades. On our descent we used primarily knifeblades and small stoppers, but placements were difficult to find, as the rock is compact.

Topher and Patience Donahue did the probable first ascent of a line that is hidden to the left behind Tuctubamba, and Clay and I repeated it two days later. Middle Earth (IV 5.8 WI5, ca 400 meters) lies in a cleft and deposits the climber on the saddle between Tuctubamba and Taulliraju. Another 70 or 80 meters of moderate snow climbing takes one to the summit. Pitches two and four were the cruxes. The first crux involved rock climbing to access a tenuously adhered, five-meter vertical pillar, while the second involved vertical ice for 15 meters, protected at the steepest part by rock gear in the wall. Conditions were generally excellent, as was protection. Middle Earth is a recommended route to a great summit and lends itself to being climbed from Punta Union in a day.

CHRISTIAN BECKWITH, AAC

La Esfinge, Via Gringos. On June 17 Joe Vallone and I, both of Colorado, began to climb the south face of La Esfinge (The Sphinx). Funded by an American Alpine Club Youth Fellowship Award, our team of two set out to make the first all-American ascent of this Peruvian gem. The Sphinx is perched three hours north of Huaraz in the Cordillera Blanca, humbly located beneath the proud faces of the Huandoy group.

The route entailed 14 days of ferrying loads, fixing pitches, and varied climbing on immaculate golden granite in an unbelievable setting. Our route, Via Gringos, is to the right of a route put up by a Spanish soloist several years ago. It began with a technical face pitch, which punched through several roof systems on hidden crimpers and required delicate face climbing. We rated the pitch 5.12a; the difficulties are protected with bolts.

We pushed upward for seven more pitches, navigating a maze of thin seams and difficult corners. The major difficulties were not in the climbing of the natural lines, which were there, but rather in the relentless cleaning of malevolently vegetated cracks. Future teams will surely find the gear placement and climbing more entertaining without the bushwhacking through the high-altitude jungle we encountered.

As we continued we rested each night looking at the single, tattered photo of the face we carried. "Somewhere up there is a big ledge"—we reaffirmed this glimmer of hope daily, after dumping dirt from our trousers and before passing out wincing in pain. To reach the big ledge, we continued forging our way up several difficult pitches involving A3+ hooking and sizable fall potential. Along the way bat-hooks were used to link natural placements and bypass plants that were too dense to be removed and too prickly to touch.

On the sixth day Joe led across what we dubbed Jose's Roof Traverse. Mostly protected by

large camming units, the roof required awkward moves, and much of the climbing was done while dangling from a crack. The pitch required a nearly horizontal traverse that finished under a small roof.

After an incredible hanging bivy several hundred feet from friends on a neighboring route, I led into the exit pitch of Jose's Roof Traverse. Varied climbing eventually brought me to an A2 knifeblade seam and an even more spectacular hanging bivy. Our pace of one grueling pitch per day began to wear our nerves thin, but after a long A3+ pitch the following day we finally rested in the comfort of the big ledge. However, the grim reality was that we were only halfway up.

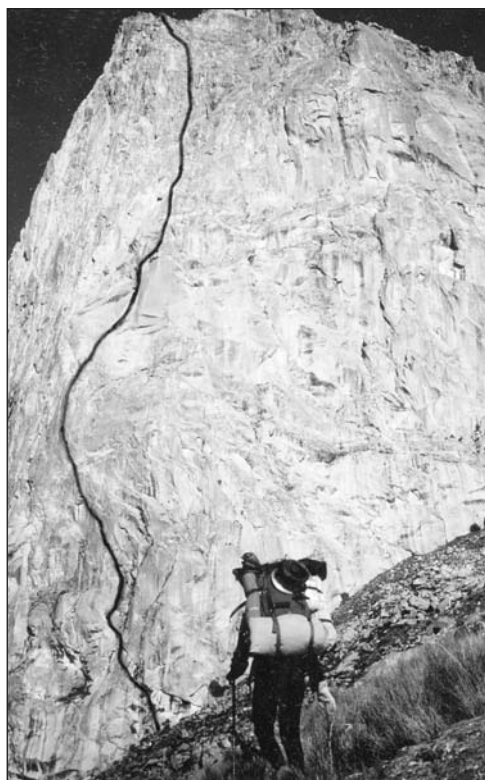
On the ninth day I ventured into what we called the Railroad Cracks, a pair of parallel cracks. From the ground we had been sure that the cracks would be finger and hand sized perfect for free climbing. Despite our optimism, however, the cracks turned out to be closed seams that would hold no gear of any kind. Once again I was reduced to hooking far above the bolt I had placed. The slow pace, coupled with untimely losses of both drills, forced us to escape from our initial line and look for a quicker path to the summit. We joined a route (Todos Narcos, I think) a hundred yards or so to the right and quickly gained elevation the next day. Before retiring the next day we hauled to a high ledge, where the angle of the wall eases, and managed to climb two new pitches below the gleaming headwall at the top of the face.

The following day we finished the route and enjoyed a quiet, warm sunset over the Cordillera Negra. Over tuna fish and tomato sauce, we soaked in the soft rays of the sun as it drifted out of sight, all the while exchanging casual conversation about one of the toughest climbs we had done together. Via Gringos (The Way of the Gringos) is VI 5.12a A3+ route that was completed in 17 pitches, over two weeks, gaining the summit at around 18,000 feet.

ZACK MARTIN

La Esfinge, Mecho Taq Inti? Our team was two women, Tanja Rojs and Aleksandra Voglar, and I, Andrej Grmovsek, all from Slovenia. After acclimatization on Vallunaraju (5686m) we put up base camp under La Esfinge on July 11. Because of many articles in recent climbing magazines, we were expecting big crowds on and under the wall, but we were all alone. In the month of our stay under La Esfinge, only a few parties came and climbed the classic 1985 route.

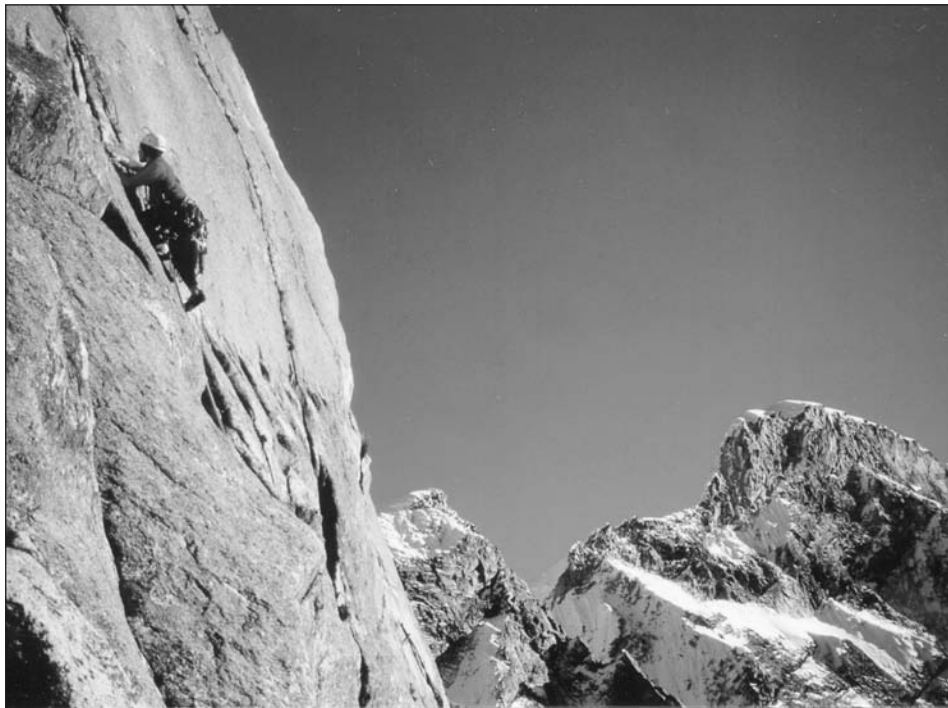
Our plan was to put a new route on the wall, but the wall was almost full of routes. Nevertheless, we found a nice unclimbed line



La Esfinge, Mecho Taq Inti? Andrej Grmovsek

on a very steep buttress on the far left side of the east wall. The wall is highest there and faces south-east. We started 50 meters left of the route Cruz del Sur. We climbed mostly free but used aid while cleaning dirty cracks or placing hand-drilled bolts. We used mostly natural protection, which was hard to place. The cracks were dirty, filled with earth and plants, and also flared. That's why it was much easier to free climb, with runouts, than to use aid. The women found the climbing hard and climbed two pitches with aid, at 6b, A2+. We placed 13 bolts for belays on the lower part of the route and 9 on the pitches. On the lower part of the wall we fixed ropes and returned to the base every night. We had problems with weather, which is not typical for this mountain at this time of the year. During our 16 days under La Esfinge we had six days of snow, wind, and cold. In five climbing days we fixed six 60-meter ropes. Then in one day we climbed the upper wall to the summit. We named the route Mecho Taq Inti?, which in Quechua means "Where are you, sun?" It's 800 meters long, 15 pitches, Grade VI.

After two weeks of resting and healing a heel injury, I returned to the wall with Tanja in August. Our plan was to free climb the harder, steeper first half of our route (we free climbed the upper part during the first ascent). I climbed it free, despite strong wind and cold. The difficulties were up to 7b (obligatoire 7a), with some long runouts. (1. 6c, 60m; 2. 7b, 60m; 3. 6c+, 60m; 4. 6c+, 60m; 5. III, 20m; 6. 6c, 60m; 7. 7a, 60m; 8. 6a+, 30m; 9. 6b+, 60m; 10. 6a, 60m; 11. 6b, 60m; 12. 6b, 60m; 13. 5c, 60m; 14. 6a+, 60m; 15. 6b+, 30m.) After a day of rest we also climbed the 1985 route (free onsight, at 7a). Of course it was snowing from the midpoint to the top. Then we took two days of rest and tried Cruz del Sur, a route that was climbed last year by a very strong party, Slovenian Silvo Karo and Italian Mauro "Bubu" Bole, and rated 7c+. We climbed it in three days. On the first two days we returned to the base by fixed ropes. We were really getting



Pitch 9 of La Esfinge's Mecho Taq Inti? (Where Are You Sun?). *Andrej Grmovsek*

tired, because we climbed so hard day after day. Except for the second pitch, which I needed to first nail (I climbed it on my second try), I climbed the route free onsite. I think the first-ascent climbers overgraded the route. It is only a little harder than Mecho Taq Inti? and not as serious.

ANDREJ GRMOVSEK, *Planinska zveza Slovenije*

Caraz II, south face variation. After we returned from the Huayhuash we climbed in the Blanca. Viktor Mlinar and I decided to climb the Fisher-Warfield-Sheldrake route on the south face of Caraz II (6020m), also called Caraz de Santa Cruz. The route was climbed in 1986, graded alpine TD+, and is 700 meters high. The first-ascent team ended the route at the east ridge, about 300 meters from the summit, and descended by rappelling the route. They spent three days round-trip. The wall faces more southeast than south, so it receives sun until noon.

On August 3 we started from our bivouac site at around 3 a.m. Luckily we passed the very broken glacier and climbed the lower, easier part of the route unroped, in ideal conditions. Halfway up the route we started to place protection. We climbed mixed pitches (Scottish V). Conditions on the upper part of the wall were bad. We needed four hours to climb the last three pitches on a snowy crest to reach the east ridge. We were happy, but realized that it was too soon to celebrate. The ridge is very corniced, and it took us another four hours to climb to the summit, which we reached at 2 p.m. The weather was still nice, just a bit windy. I don't know where exactly the Fisher-Warfield-Sheldrake goes in its upper part, but I think we climbed a different line.



The southeast face of Caraz II, showing (1) the approximate line of Superduper Couloir, 1998; (2) The Fisher-Warfield-Sheldrake route; (3) the Mlinar-Jost variation, 2001. Descent is behind left skyline. Viktor Mlinar

We started to climb down the original 1955 route (Huber-Koch, 800 meters) but had to make two short rappels—one in the upper part to overcome a 25-meter vertical step and the second to pass the 25-meter bergschrund. After 16 hours we reached our bivy site. The next day we descended to Laguna Paron and via Caraz returned to Huaraz. We took three days for the whole trip.

MATIC JOST, *Slovenia*

Artesonraju, northeast face. In June 2000 Spaniards Nemisio Matalobos and Angel Terrain established a ca 800-meter route rated alpine D (55 degrees) on the northeast face, which is accessed from the upper Santa Cruz Valley. The route lies between the 1965 Hartman-Reiss-Schatz-Steiger Route and the East Ridge (Janis-Lowe-Lowe-Ortenburger, 1971). It starts from the same snow slopes as the 1965 route, then crosses the rock rib on the couloir's left side to gain snow and ice that leads to the summit (6025m). It might be better thought of as a variation to the 1965 route.

MOUNTAIN INFO, *High Mountain Sports* 227

Chacaraju Oeste, south face. In the first week of August Steve Moffat (New Zealand) and I climbed what was most likely a new route (600m, WI5 5.9 mixed) just to the right of the 1982 Yugoslav route on the south face. This side of the mountain has over ten established routes. Our route choice was not determined by logic but rather by adventure. The thin ice-filled gully we chose was quite threatened by unconsolidated snow flutings on its sides and by a 30-foot corniced roof laced with large icicles. The climbing was enjoyable, for the most part made up of moderate, 50- to 70-degree, thinly iced granite slabs, with a few vertical sections of water ice and mixed climbing. The crux was a rotten 40-meter icicle at about 18,500 feet. Having underestimated the amount of rocky terrain on the route, we progressed slower than expected. We only had knotted slings for stoppers and a spare pick as a piton. We did not summit the peak, but reversed our route from a junction with the ridge near the low point between the two west summits. After 17 hours or so we safely made it back to our camp in the bergschrund, only to have our luck run out. Once we were in our tent the entire route ripped in a slide of ice, rock, and snow, most likely triggered by a falling cornice. Eventually the lip of the 'schrund broke, and we were buried, tent and all. We dug ourselves out and hightailed it back to the lake in an exciting snow storm. The south face in general seemed to be dry compared to conditions reported in most first-ascent accounts—further evidence that things are warming up in the Cordillera Blanca.

JOHN VARCO, AAC

Editor's note: This is likely a repeat of an existing route, There are already 10 "established" routes on this face, and their exact location is somewhat vague as conditions change from year to year.

Huandoy Sur, No Fiesta Hoy Dia. I noticed the northeast face of Huandoy Sur the first time I visited Peru, in 1990. It is clearly visible from the approach to Pisco, looking steep and difficult. Five years later I climbed a new route on it, Oro del Inca, which crosses the steep rock band and follows ice directly to the top. But the rock face to the right was untouched.

This year I had no intention of continuing my solo ascents in the Cordillera Blanca. I came with Urban Golob, also from Slovenia, but after acclimatizing he had to give up due to health problems. So, solo again. The weather was not perfect, but good enough, and I started climbing early in the night on July 4. The approach had changed since 1995: the glacier was much easier now.

I started right of my 1995 route. After an easy icefield I found a good path to the rock and mixed ground of the route's central part. I used ice tools on rock (dry tooling). The rock was solid in difficult sections but worse on easier ground. Some short icefalls helped me avoid difficult rock. The upper icefield was relatively easy, although steeper than the lower one, but the 150 meters above were really difficult. I hoped to find a steep gully through the overhanging seracs above the icefield, and there were possibilities. But the quality of the black ice, combined with powder snow, was so bad that I had to descend more than 100 meters before finding a way through the seracs on the third attempt. It was still hard and risky, passing overhanging ice, but the top was too close for me to return without reaching it. I reached it in fog and snow at about 1 p.m., after seven hours of climbing, and immediately started to descend the French Route (Astier, 1979) on the same face. The descent took five hours.

I named the route No Fiesta Hoy Dia (ED sup, AI6+ M5/6 WI5). There was a relatively large amount of ice on the face this year, and it probably made the central rock easier. But the final seracs were probably harder than usual.

This is my fifth new route on big walls of the Cordillera Blanca (four solo): Huascarán, Chacaraju, Huandoy (two), and Chopicalqui. I consider NO Fiesta Hoy Dia my hardest solo in the Andes.

PAVLE KOZJEK, *Slovenia*

Palcaraju Oeste, Ratz Fatz. On the west face of the west summit (6110m) a new route, Ratz Fatz (500m, TD-), was established by Chileans Eduardo Mondragon, and Martin Waldhoer on July 25, 2000. The route begins just right of a prominent rock spur near the bottom of the face and takes a fairly direct path to the top. Most of the climbing was 45- to 60-degree snow, with some 65-degree mixed climbing midway and a 75-degree exit on flutings. Although they used the Ishinca Valley for their approach, they traversed the northwest ridge (towards Toclaraju) from the summit, before descending a couloir between seracs. The couloir led to a glacier, which they crossed to the base camp used for Toclaraju's normal route.

MOUNTAIN INFO, *High Mountain Sports* 223

Editor's note: this may have been climbed more than once before.

Huamashraju, west face. On August 4 Toma Erovnik (Slovenia) and our new Canadian friend Bruce Gordon climbed a new route on the west face of Huamashraju (5434m). They left Huaraz in the morning. After four hours of walking they reached the foot of the west wall. They climbed the central part of the wall, a five-pitch new route, about 200 meters high, that ends at the top of the rock wall. The difficulty is UIAA V to VI. They descended by rappelling the rock wall. In the evening they returned to Huaraz, where we met and celebrated.

MATIC JOST, *Slovenia*

Chinchey Group: Shahuanca, Cherup II, El Roca del Cuyé Loco. In the Chinchey Group, up behind Huaraz, the French alpinists Clément Guntz and Hugo Robin made what they think may be the first ascent of a peak they called Shahuanca on July 25, 2000. The peak, which is labeled 5,383m on the 1939 Deutschen Alpenverein map, lies east of Chopihirca (5057m) and Catac, in what appears to be the Shahuanca valley. The route ascends the west-southwest side of the peak, is 1,000 meters long and AD+ in difficulty. On August 2 Guntz soloed, a possible first ascent, the Northwest Arête of Churup II (5461m), from Q. Cohup at ca 4000m. He descended the face to the right. Guntz, Robin, and Joel Menard also established a new 500-meter rock route at El Roca del Cuyé Loco, near Churup, climbing a series of left-facing corners through a roof. The route appears to be called Le Pilier du Hamster Fou.

Based on correspondence with CLÉMENT GUNTZ, FFME, France

Churup, 496spa-smos. On October 2, I placed my tent at the upper Churup Lake and the next day broke trail to the base of the wall, where I left ropes, harness, and ice ax. On October 4 it took 1 hour and 30 minutes to return to the base, thanks to the trail I had opened. From the bottom of the face I climbed the obvious couloir to the right. This couloir comes to an obvious intersection. To the left, leading directly to the summit, is the Princesa Malinche route. To the right is Fear, a route up a mixed dihedral. I began by trending slightly to the right and then straightened my line and ended below a promontory to the right of the summit. From this point I took less than ten minutes to reach the summit. Descent was by the Fear route; the rappels are in place. (I used two 60-meter ropes.) I found good ice conditions, the average slope being 70 to 80 degrees, with two sections of 85 degrees. Equipment left: one ice screw, one pin, four slings. The route is named 496spa-smos (V AI4, 450m), on the southwest face of Churup (5493m).

RICHARD HIDALGO, *Peru*

Cashan Este, Mathi, Matias. In July 1998 I departed from Olleros and walked toward Rurec's Quebrada (creek), before arriving at Tararhua Lake (4400m), where I set up my tent. From there I went to the southeast face of Cashan (5723m). I climbed in a couloir, to the right of a buttress that passes through the center of the face. I surmounted a section of 75-80-degree verglassed rock below a serac barrier. After surmounting a bergschrund I traversed to the left across a snow slope that took me to the southeast ridge. I crossed the ridge and continued on the 70-degree southwest face to the summit. I called the route Mathi, Matias (500m, MD-, 70-80 degrees). Descent was via the northeast ridge and the crevassed southeast glacier. It took all night, and I came back to camp early the next morning.

RICHARD HIDALGO, *Peru*

Ocshapalca, Variante Peruana. Guillermo Mejia and I installed the tent at the moraine camp in September 1998. Our new route on the south face of Ocshapalca (Variante Peruana, 650m, ED-) begins to the right of the central buttress and the Alquimia Route. We climbed straight toward 5881m summit, joining the American Route for the top third. The descent to camp was by the Alquimia Route, after we made a bivouac in a cave 50 meters from the summit. (*Editor's note: is likely a repeat of an existing route.*)

RICHARD HIDALGO, *Peru*

Nevado Kayesh, Italian Route variation attempt. In June Guillermo Mejia and I set up a tent on the glacier, a half-hour from the bergschrund of Kayesh (5721m). We started up the German line, then followed the fixed Italian ropes (1973) until they ended. We continued for one more rope length up a couloir with hard ice until we reached a rock wall, at the bottom of which we bivouacked. All night it was snowing. The next day, leaving gear at the bivouac, we went as light as we could. We climbed the 40-meter wall, which was covered with snow and verglas, exposed and difficult to protect. We then traversed to the left over a hanging serac (soft snow, 60 degrees). We continued to the ridge, which we gained as high as we could, since it was double-corniced. We reached the ridge from the bivy site in three ropelengths, approximately 70 meters in a straight line. We descended the same line. It would be possible to climb the route in a day by going light. The route (400m, MD+) has eight pitches, of which we believe the last four are a variant of the Italian route.

RICHARD HIDALGO, *Peru*

Punta Numa, So Long Fox. An Italian pair opened an impressive route on the Punta Numa (baptized by Eloy Callado and Cesar Pedrochi after they made the first ascent on August 19, 1997). Roberto Iannilli and Luciano Mastracci climbed a line to the right of the Monttrek Route. They summited on August 2. They graded the route 7a, A3+ and called it So Long Fox. The first half of the route ascends compact plates; the finish is wild. The climb is complicated by the compactness of the rock. The rare cracks are too closed for nuts and are full of moss. The route was left partially equipped, and the belays are equipped with pitons or bolts. Fifteen bolts were used for protection and three for aid. To repeat the route carry nuts; cams, including the biggest; a variety of pitons; and small carabiners.

JUANJO TOME, *Peru*

CORDILLERA HUALLANCA

Nevado Huallanca, Koso. Between the cordilleras Blanca and Huayhuash is the small Cordillera Huallanca. Although it does not rise above 6000m, it offers beautiful mountains with glaciers and rocks. David Rodriguez Lopez climbed the mountain known as Cumbre de los Burros or Nevado Huallanca (5470m), the highest summit of the Cordillera Huallanca. The route, completely on glacier, starts near the west side of Collado de los Burros, next to a small lake. The route is approximately 500 meters long and is graded MD, with 70-85-degree snow and ice. The descent was by rappelling the route. The name of the route is Koso.

JUANJO TOME, *Peru*

CORDILLERA HUAYHUASH

Nevado Yerupaja Grande. Equadorian Santiago Quintero climbed the west face of Nevado Yerupaja Grande (6634m). The main summit of Yerupaja had gone many years without an ascent until Santiago climbed it solo on July 4. The ascent and descent took him 17 hours. He followed the Northwest Ridge route, which was opened as far as Yerupaja Norte (6430m) by R. Bates and G. Dingle and completed to the main summit by D. Wilkinson and R. Renshaw. Because of the changing morphology of the wall, Quintero followed a route that is

completely different from the original route. Although we cannot talk of a new route, we must mention that what Santiago climbed was for the most part unknown terrain, while being practically free of objective dangers. The difficulty is ED.

JUANJO TOME, *Peru*

Siula Grande, south face, Southern Discomfort; other peaks. In July Jay Burbee (Canada), Michel van der Spek (Netherlands), and I ventured to the eastern side of the Cordillera Huayhuash. Ten hours of dusty buses from Huaraz to Huallanca to La Union to Baños to Queropalca put us just 12 kilometers from the Cordillera. From a base camp at Laguna Siula (4300m) we climbed the left (south) side of the badly broken Sarapo Glacier in two days, making use of narrow passages between seracs and large crevasse fields. Most previous parties approached the right side of the glacier and reported mid-fifth class rock pitches below the glacier. Our route, however, was nontechnical, aside from one 50-meter, 55-degree, ice pitch at 5000m. We placed a high camp at 5500m in the isolated basin below the north face of Carnicero, the northeast face of Sarapo, and the south face of Siula Grande. On July 8 we climbed the northeast face of Sarapo by the Bachmann-Lugmayer line on the far left side of the face. The route involved eight rope lengths of 45- to 55-degree snow to gain the east ridge, which was narrow and corniced at first but became broader after 90 meters. In places, a long crack in the snow five meters below the cornice revealed either imminent cornice collapse or severe avalanche hazard. We decided to tread lightly on the cornice, and no incident occurred.

After rejuvenation at base camp, we returned to our high camp for our main objective, the south face of Siula Grande. Despite the notoriety of Siula, its south face remained

unclimbed. Our principal source of information was a mislabeled postcard. The south face is threatened by seracs largely on the right and is steep and rocky on the left, so we chose a route up the center. After four pitches of 55-degree quality blue ice, the angle steepened. Ice bulges and runnels as steep as 80 degrees led, in two more pitches, past the serac level and onto a snow slope at just over 6000m. As the sun was setting we happened upon an excellent bivy location, a steep crevasse eight meters wide. Its upper wall overhung and spilled large icicles onto the lower lip of the crevasse, effectively sealing it off. After a little shoveling we could safely unrope and stay dry without bivy bags. On the second day we crossed the bivy crevasse and attempted a direct finish but were thwarted by poor ice conditions (30 centimeters of rotten ice atop hard, brittle ice). We made a 150-meter traverse to an alternate finish, in hope of finding better conditions. Being in steep, south-facing



Siula Grande's south face, Southern Discomfort. *J. Frimer*

terrain we had been climbing in the shadow of Siula. To our short-lived delight, the sun now rose above the ridgeline at noon—only to set behind a cornice five minutes later. Several more ice pitches led to steepening mixed terrain above. We attempted to veer right but were met by the 60-degree sugar snow flutings for which the area is famous. I began a hair-raising tunneling traverse of the seven deep flutings separating us from a snowy shoulder of the east ridge. Fluting crests



Siula Grande's west face: (1) Simpson-Yates descent; (2) Noches de Juerga, 2001; Buhler-Price, 1999; (3) Simpson-Yates, 1985. The north (left) ridge was first climbed in 1936 by Awerzger-Scheider. *Jeremy Frimer*

were up to three meters deep and of particularly poor quality snow. In failing evening light on July 14 we reached the East Ridge route at 6250m. Having left our bivy equipment below, we were wary of a cold night and decided to retreat without summiting. Even so, I became hypothermic after making the final rappel to our traverse track. In my mentally weakened state I constructed perhaps the sorriest belay I've ever trusted. Ice screws were later removed by simply pulling straight out. The new route is named Southern Discomfort (ED-, 650 meters). We spent the next week thawing, while hiking the enjoyable Huayhuash circuit, where we met the Slovenian team that had just succeeded on a new route on the west face of Siula Grande. The team thanks Mountain Equipment Co-op and The Canadian Himalayan Foundation for generous support.

JEREMY FRIMER, *Canada*

Siula Grande, Noches de "Juerga." On July 3 Viktor Mlinar, Tomaz Zerovnik, Aritza Monasterio, and I left Huaraz and took a bus to Chiquian, where we hired donkeys to get to the Cordillera Huayhuash. From July 4-6 we marched to base camp, which we placed at 4,300m, half an hour from Lake Sharapococho. The weather was bad, with snowfall. From BC we saw only Yerupaja, Sharapo, and Trapezio. We used the bad-weather time for BC settlement, resting, and planning. We decided to put a tent with food and equipment under the wall. On the 10th, accompanied by our cook Marselindo, we carried heavy rucksacks to the base of the wall, at ca. 5,200 meters. Marselindo turned back, while we set up a tent and settled down for sleep. From BC to the tent was a six-hour walk. The next day we returned to BC to rest. The weather was odd.

On July 14 we left for the tent under the wall. Crevasses looked strange, so Viktor and Toma roped. After a hard beginning over the crevasse, with some dry tooling, Viktor traversed a snow mushroom to a steep icefield and beyond to the first rocks (Scottish VI). He placed a bolt, fixed a rope, and roped down. The first 55 meters of the huge wall was climbed. We slept in the tent under the wall. The weather was beautiful.

We started at night on the 15th; helped by the fixed rope. The slope beyond was a constant 65 degrees. The hardest pitches ascended a vertical icefall with very hard ice. We intended to bivi halfway up the wall, but when the sun got to the wall, ice and rocks started to fall. We were at ca 5800m and very exposed, so we quickly settled for a bivouac in a snow mushroom on our left. We took a little nap on a small shelf. It was very uncomfortable. The weather was beautiful. Next day in the morning we first descended 40 meters. The day's first pitch was led by Viki, the next by Aritza; then I took a pitch that involved a steep section with bad ice. The next pitch looked hard. I placed a bolt and roped down to a safe overhanging rock. We decided to bivi there and for four hours dug a shelf. With the sun, rocks and ice started to fall, but we were safe. The weather was good.

On July 17 we started at night. We left sleeping bags, bivi sacks, and food at the bivi site. We first ascended the fixed rope, then easily traversed left. The next two pitches combined bad vertical ice with rock. Aritza climbed more ice and a precarious mix with bad protection (Scottish VI). When I joined him a collapsing snow mushroom just missed us. We were surprised, as the wall was still in shade. There were only steep snow gullies and huge cornices left to overcome. Aritza took two more pitches, and finally Viktor masterfully traversed to the ridge. At 5:30 p.m. we stood at the top of the wall. We were 50 meters vertically and 200 meters horizontally from the summit of Siula Grande. We prepared for a bivouac in snow holes on top of the cornice. It was cold, the wind was blowing, and our sleeping bags were far away. We kept moving our fingers and tried not to sleep. At about 4 a.m. it started to snow. First we thought it was coming from the fog but soon found it getting serious.

We descended our line of ascent. We made 21 rappels: 13 from ice screws, 3 from bolts, 1 from a piton, and 4 from snow sabers. It was constantly snowing, and avalanches were



Before the traverse that leads out of the wall on west face of Siula Grande. *Victor Mlinar*

burying us. Fortunately, the wall is too steep for a big avalanche. At 2:30 p.m. we got to the tent under the wall, tired but happy and safe. In the morning we descended to BC, leaving wet ropes and the tent. New snow covered our tracks on the glacier, but we had no major problems. It snowed all day, and in BC it was raining. Finally, base camp, beer, Cuba libres. Then rest, rest, rest. The weather was beautiful. Marselindo retrieved our equipment from the base of the wall. He is 62 years young and walks so fast that we had problems catching him. He is quite a legend. We were waiting for donkeys on July 21, and the weather was sunny but windy. We returned by another path to Cajatambo, the nearest phone and road. On the 24th and 25th we rode back to Huaraz. And finally we chose the name of the route: Noches de "Juerga" (27 pitches, 1,000 meters, ED 65-90-degree ice; mixed Scottish VI).



MATIC JOST, *Slovenia* On thin ice in the middle of the west face of Siula Grande. *Victor Mlinar*

Central Puscanturpa, Insumision. Spanish climber David Rodriguez Lopez opened a route, Insumision, on Central Puscanturpa (5442m), a beautiful mountain. The route ascends an oblique couloir that goes almost directly to the summit. The 450-meter route was ascended and descended in less than a day and is graded D, snow 65 degrees.

JUANJO TOME, *Per*