

northeast of Puente del Inca. We wanted to verify the existence of the several 500-foot-high ice cascades hanging from the south face of Santa María, already noted in 1908 by Walther Schiller. The cascades are still there, but much thinner. One of our group, Evelio Echevarría, stayed behind and on December 31 made the first ascent of Cerro El Durazno (4597 meters, 15,083 feet), southwest of Santa María. Aconcagua was expecting a record number of expeditions. Already registered for the period from November 1, 1987 to January 31, 1988 were 136 expeditions, and more were expected later. Of this number 25 were American, 20 German, 19 Spanish, 16 Argentine and 10 Japanese. Seventeen other countries were also represented. A total of 421 men and 59 women were expected to participate.

FERNANDO GRAJALES, *Club Andinista Mendoza*

Argentine-Chilean Patagonia

San Lorenzo Attempt from Chile. John Hauf, Tom Walter and I went in from the Chilean side, an interesting and varied six-day trip: by bus from Puerto Montt to Quellón, ferry to Puerto Chacabuco, bus to Coihaique, plane to Cochrane, horses to Arroyo San Lorenzo and finally by foot to the De Agostini Base Camp site at the edge of the forest. To drive in from the Argentine side is obviously simpler, but one needs the proper vehicle, access problems have been reported with the owners of the *estancias*, and the scenery on the Pacific side is better than the pampas. Coihaique has all the food and supplies an expedition might need at typical Patagonian prices. Cochrane, a very isolated village of 3000 people, has some food but it is expensive and there is no gas. At Base Camp we spent a few days scouting routes. One line that looks good is the north-northeast face at the head of the glacier that drains into the Río de Oro, a large alpine ice gully that goes straight to the summit. This gully would require cold weather as we watched much ice and rock falling down it on a warm afternoon. Instead we chose a line on the north face, directly above Base Camp. This face gets raked by ice avalanches from the ice cliffs at the top, but after watching it, we thought we saw a route that would keep us safe. We began on a beautiful hot day, March 3. The following day started clear and we set out from a bivouac at 2000 meters. After an hour of exposed climbing through séracs, we crossed the bergschrund and relaxed, continuing up on ice through small buttresses. What made the rest of the route fairly safe was that we were not in the larger gullies that receive everything falling from above. Our crux was a 40-meter frozen cascade, 70° to 90° steep and only a meter wide, which took us through a rotten cliff. It led to a snow ridge which went directly to the top cliffs, full of icicle-hung overhangs. Some zigzags through them got us to the summit ridge at four P.M. The weather was deteriorating fast, with a lenticular cloud over the summit and clouds sweeping in from the west. For that reason, we did not continue east to the very top. For a brief period, the view was spectacular, from San Valentín, across the valley

of the Río Baker, south to the peaks of the Southern Icecap. We didn't know how to get off the mountain quickly and without rappels, aware only that De Agostini's first-ascent route was somewhere on the west side, and so we staggered through the wind for a while before finding an icefall that looked good. We raced down it under lowering clouds. We spent that night in rain and snow perched on rocks somewhere on the west side and returned to Base Camp the following day, March 5. Since the weather stayed unstable after this, we hiked in the neighboring valleys. The adjacent Cadena Cochrane has some very nice climbing and one can be active there even when upper San Lorenzo is engulfed in storm. Rock quality is disappointing on the north and west sides of San Lorenzo. Clearly, the big routes are on the east or northeast of the peak.

TIMOTHY RAWSON, *National Outdoor Leadership School*

San Lorenzo, East Ridge. Casimiro Ferrari, Danilo Valsecchi, Annibale Borghetti and Maurizio Villa made the sixth ascent of San Lorenzo and the second ascent of the east ridge in January. Their route was somewhat more directly on the ridge than that of the South Africans.

SILVIA METZELTIN BUSCAINI, *Club Alpino Italiano*

Cerro Torre, First Female Ascent. Italians Maurizio Giordani and Rosanna Manfrini arrived in the early southern spring below Cerro Torre. Only ten days after their arrival the two completed the Maestri route on the peak, reaching the summit on October 29. The descent was difficult because of very stormy weather. This is the first time that this peak has been ascended by a woman.

Cerro Torre. Carlos Buhler and I set up Base Camp in the forest below Cerro Torre at the beginning of December. The weather in October and early November had been phenomenal and already over 20 persons had summited in 1987. With only a month in Patagonia, we decided on the Maestri bolt route. After an unsuccessful attempt, Carlos and I set out on December 16. We broke trail through deep, fresh snow up the southwest glacier to the five or six pitches below the col. We reached the col by late afternoon and bivouacked in an ice cave. The next morning we began to climb at three A.M. by headlamp. The climb is mostly ice and rock of only moderate difficulty with abundant fixed protection. The snow of the previous days still plastered the ridge and at times made route-finding difficult. The bolt ladders dominate the middle of the route. To save time, we moved together on those sections. By one A.M. we were one pitch below the summit on Maestri's compressor. Carlos' headlamp had died and we were forced to stop until daylight. At six A.M. we stood on the very summit. Later that day, three more teams also made it. Descent to the ice cave took ten hours as high winds on the first rappels played havoc with our ropes.

MARK RICHEY