

ERIK MONASTERIO
Bolivia 2009-2011



211. Ancohuma (6430m) from Viluyo Jankohuma, showing the line of the 2011 ascent. Peaks from left to right are Nevado Piramide (5907m), Haucana (6200m)(flattish summit), Ancohuma (in centre), the Yacuma Peaks (5970m, 5953m, 6062m) and then Illampu (6300m). (Erik Monasterio)

Over recent years there has been little mountaineering information coming out of Bolivia. This may be partly due to the fact that there isn't an agency or an individual who is committed to collecting mountaineering information, particularly activity relating to new routes or notable repeats of established climbs. One of Bolivia's best known guides and archivist Alain Mesili has taken a break from climbing to concentrate on writing, and this may have further limited the flow of information. Unfortunately it seems that the total number of climbers to going Bolivia is decreasing, despite the country offering one of the most stable weather patterns in the mountaineering world and the scope for new route development remaining high. Most climbing activity in recent years has centred on the popular (often guided) peaks in the southern Cordillera Real; Huayna Potojsi, Kondoriri and Illimani, which are easily accessible for the capital.

In August 2009, Gregg Beisley and Andy Baker (USA) climbed a new route on **Maria Loco (5523m)** via the south-east couloir, which involved three steep pitches of hard ice climbing after a long scramble/ snow climb on the lower slopes. Maria Loco is a striking subsidiary peak just north



212. North face of Jankhopiti (5723m) (centre), showing the line of the 2011 ascent. Other summits in the photo remain unnamed. (Erik Monasterio)

west of Huayna Potojsi.

On 20 June 2010, Florian Hill of Austria, Robert Rauch of Germany and Stefan Berger climbed a new mixed route up the south face of **Serkhe Kholu (5546m)**, in the southern Cordillera Real. They named the route *Chamaka*. The route was climbed in eight hours and followed a discontinuous ribbon of ice, 3m wide and averaging 80°. Between 24 and 31 July 2010, Hill and Rauch climbed an impressive new route on **Illimani (6438m)** and added to the challenge by immediately traversing over four more peaks. On 25 July they climbed *Deliver Me* (VI WI6 M6+, 1700m) on the south face of Illimani, in a 21-hour push. The next day, after reaching the summit, they continued traversing the Illimani massif, heading east. Hill said they climbed Pico Likho Linkho, Pico Layca Kholu, Pico Central and Pico Sur – about 5km of mountainous terrain – over the three days that followed. They arrived back in base camp on 31 July.

In June 2011, Beisley and Baker climbed a new route to the summit of the south face of **Huayna Potojsi, Pt. 5600m**. This involved nine pitches of ice/ mixed climbing and descent via the south-west ridge, in a round trip of 16 hours. In late July 2011, Isabel Suppe and Robert Rauch climbed a new route on **Serkhe Kholu**. The route called *The Birthday of the Broken Leg* (TD+/ED) is reported to climb 500m up the south-west face before meeting with the normal route on the summit ridge. Once they joined the normal route the pair began their descent, avoiding the 45min walk to the summit.

In September 2011, after a five-year break from mountaineering, Erik Monasterio travelled home to Bolivia and joined Kiwi expat Gregg Beisley for two weeks of intensive climbing. Gregg and his family work as missionaries in the city of El Alto, Bolivia. On his backyard Gregg has set up what must be the highest bouldering wall in the world, at 4000m. After Erik repeatedly failed on the easiest problems the pair decided to tackle bigger,

easier and potentially achievable objectives, and headed into the northern Cordillera Real mountains.

They approached the isolated eastern valleys of this mountain chain from the town of Cocomayo and over a nine-day period climbed three routes. On 1 September they climbed a new route on the north face of **Jankhopiti (5723m)**, which involved an easy glacier approach and five pitches of rock climbing, straight up the steep face (F6b/20). They called the route, which was climbed in a 16-hour round trip from their base camp at 4800m, *Via Santiago*. Two days later from the same camp they climbed what may be a new route on Pt. 5540m (DAV Map), **Viluyo Jankohuma**, via the south-east ridge, in an eight-hour round trip. After a rest day the pair set up a low(ish) high camp at 4900m, from where they climbed the highest peak in the area, **Ancohuma (6430m)**, in 16 hours of sustained and at times complex climbing. The route was climbed up the north-east ridge onto the north ridge and summit. Erik, hardly acclimatised after only a week at altitude, staggered onto the summit in a whiteout before receiving assistance from Gregg to get down to the col at 6200m, where he found his legs and sufficient air to get back down to camp. Although there is significant scope for new routes, the eastern aspect of the northern Cordillera Real has been all but abandoned by expeditions over recent years and there have been no reported climbs on Ancohuma from this side for a decade; since Erik's last visit to the peak (15 years ago) the characteristics of the climb have changed significantly with the appearance of penitentes and loose rock on the summit ridges, making it now a more serious undertaking.

This year has seen significantly more snowfall than usual and some of the traditional ice routes (which had disappeared through climate change) re-formed. On 13 September, Monasterio and Beisley climbed the longest, most sustained route in Bolivia – the west face of **Huayna Potosi (6088m)**, in a single push to the summit in eight hours. They climbed a variation of the direct route, *Via del Zorro*. The 900m route involved zigzagging around a series of bergschrunds before taking the steepest, direct line to the summit. This route is a variation of the *West Face Direct Route*, first climbed by Mesili, Faure, Challeat and Levy in September 1978. Beisley and Monasterio had previously climbed the west face via another (ridge) route 15 years earlier and were delighted to have one final weather window in the season to climb back up memory lane.

MARCELO SCANU

Argentine Andes 2010-2011

This report is ordered from north to south by province.

Jujuy

On 27 May 2010, Martín Altamirano and Martín Castillo, both Argentinians, made a new route to the summit of **Morro Von Rosen (5450m)** in the Chañi group. They departed from 4700m and finished the route at 5400m on the ridge leading to the summit. They spent six hours ascending the 14 pitches, the most difficult of 6a, and called the route *Guanuqueando*. The last 300m were very steep. They descended on scree.

Salta

On 12 January 2010, Adrián Gandino, Ariel Seghezzi, Gerardo Casaldi and Emilio González Turú opened a new route, *West route* or *Luracatao route*, on the important **Nevado de Cachi** (also known as Cerro Blanco). The next day Guillermo Martín reached the 6380m summit solo from a slightly different line. The route was attempted in 1904 by Federico Reichert, known as the father of Argentine mountaineering, nearly reach the summit.

The sacred mountain of **Cerro Acay (5716m)** was first ascended by the Incas for religious purposes (by the easy route). On 13 February 2011, Argentine Gustavo González and a friend from Salta left from a 5000m camp at an ancient mine. They crossed a col and switched to the snowy south ridge. At 5500m, González descended 50m and climbed a 200m ice and mixed couloir, very exposed and steep (he stated up to 80°). He finally climbed a little rock wall to a ridge that took him to the summit where he joined his friend. He called the route *Como llegar a rozarte el alma*. From the summit they descended in a storm and got lost. When the sun reappeared, they re-ascended 500m to the summit to find easier terrain.

Catamarca

The Cordón de los Arrieros is a very little visited range on the Argentinian-Chilean border, between **Ojos del Salado (6864m)**, the second highest American summit and the highest volcano and active volcano on Earth) and Cerro Solo. This zone has the highest 6000er density outside Asia. On the first days of December 2011, Argentines Glauco Muratti and Adrián Petrocelli ascended three of the four summits of the ridge. They ascended virgin **De los Grillos (5768m)** and **De las Chullpas (5898m)** (both are official heights from IGN / ex IGM). They also summited **De los Arrieros (5860m)** where they found documents from 1955 and 1956