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Cerro Bonete, first winter ascent; south summit, new route

South America, Argentina, Northern Andies

The volcano Cerro Bonete (6,759m), located outside of La Rioja, is the continent's fourth highest summit, the world's third highest volcano, and until now was the highest summit in South America lacking a winter ascent. On June 9, Basques Javi Txikon and Arkaitz Ibarra traveled to the Veladero hut (ca 4,375m) to acclimatize and wait out bad weather. On June 21, the beginning of the South American winter, they walked 28km in very bad weather before pitching camp below the mountain (ca 4,960m). On June 22 they erroneously climbed the south summit (6,668m) by the southwest face, calling their new route Ruta Mendizale. They rested the following day, and, on June 24, they reached the main summit via the southwest face after 12 hours of climbing. They returned to the hut the following day.

Images

Article Details

Author	Marcelo Scanu, Argentina
Publication	AAJ
Volume	55
Issue	87
Page	230
Copyright Date	2013
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions