



AAC Publications

Beaschochea Bay, six first ascents

Antarctica, Antarctic Peninsula

Hannah Baker, Derek Buckle, Jamie Goodhart, Mike Pinney, and I (all U.K.), Stefan Jachmich (Germany), and Bjorn Riis-Johannessen (Norway) traveled on the Spirit of Sydney to an unclimbed range north of Beaschochea Bay. Favorable ice conditions allowed us to disembark from the yacht at an audacious landing, allowing us to move up the broken Trooz Glacier, and after four hours establish base camp on the Belgica Glacier, below the peaks. On the first day, January 11, the whole team was able to make the first ascent of Alancer Peak (1,592m) by the northeast ridge, an easy snow ascent (PD+) with fine views.

The following day we all climbed unnamed Peak 1,333m via the northeast face (AD), again a largely straightforward ascent, except for a large crevasse crossed by a steep and elegant ice fin.

The dominating peak of the area is Valiente (2,270m), further south. Utilizing a day of thick cloud to move camp up glacier, the whole team set off to climb it over a 2,032m snow dome (north-northeast flank, F). Baker, Goodhart, Jachmich, and I then continued onward to make the first ascent of Valiente via the east ridge (F). A ski descent, followed by a recrossing of 2,032m, made this a long, tiring day.

Two days later came our first totally cloudless day, and the whole group elected to try an attractive mountain above camp, first skinning to a shoulder where we deposited skis. Two successive ice slopes and a short ridge on the north flank brought us to the summit (1,475m, AD).

On the 17th we descended to the yacht, and the weather deteriorated, making further climbs too dangerous. Thanks to the Mt. Everest Foundation, the Alpine Club, and a 2013 Julie Tullis Memorial Award for financial support.

Phil Wickens, Alpine Club, U.K.

Images



Phil Wickens climbing through a large crevasse on the first ascent of Peak 1,333m.



Hannah Baker climbs a steep ice are te just above the major crevasse on Peak 1,475m.



Second camp on the Belgica Glacier with Peak 1,475m behind.

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