



AAC Publications

Avellano Towers: The Tooth; Crown Tower

Argentina-Chile, Northern Patagonia

In February, John Crook, Jim Donini, Angela Goodacre, and I spent a week in the Avellano Mountains of Chile. This area is near the northern Patagonian Ice Cap and northeast of the shores of Lake General Carrera. We focused our attention on the Avellano Towers, an area of granite spires at the head of the Avellano River. The lack of accurate mapping, coupled with various approaches to the towers, have led to fragmented descriptions of the region.

Our group approached from the small town of Bahia Murta, using the approach employed by John Bragg, Wes Bunch, Angela Hawse, and Brenton Regan in 2005, and used again by Jim Donini and Thom Engelbach in 2008. This approach leads to a valley west of these striking granite peaks. [See [AAJ 2008](#) for Jim Donini's description of this approach and climbing. See [AAJ 2004](#) and [AAJ 2006](#) for other established climbs.] After establishing a base camp between two lakes below the spires, we climbed to a bivy site in a col south of the smaller, tooth-shaped tower to the south of Avenali Tower, aptly nicknamed the Tooth.

The following day we climbed the east ridge of the Tooth. This tower had previously been climbed, as we found abseil tat on the summit, but due to the lack of written evidence it's suspected that this prior ascent was via easy, broken terrain to the north. There was no evidence of any ascent on the route we've called Tooth Arête (300m, 5.10). After descending we bivied again at the col.

The next day John Crook and I set out to climb the east ridge of the tower just north of Avenali Tower and south of a summit assumed to have been climbed by Dave Anderson and party ([AAJ 2004](#)). We first gained the hanging glacier below the towers by dropping from the col between the Tooth and Avenali Tower, then crossed under the northeast face of Avenali Tower before gaining the east ridge of the unnamed tower just to its north.

The ridge was easy for several hundred meters until it narrowed to form a classic knife-edge. Several steep pitches (up to 5.11-) allowed access to the upper portion of the ridge. From here we made progress up steep ground (5.10) to gain one of the twin summits of this tower. The climb took approximately 10 hours from the bivy. We descended the ridge, which took seven hours and involved a complex mixture of abseiling and downclimbing. Fortunately the upper section was descended in the daylight with no significant rope tangle issues.

This was a high-quality route, ascending mostly very good granite to a fantastically sharp and pointy summit. We called the formation Crown Tower and the climb Crown Jewels (800m, 5.11-).

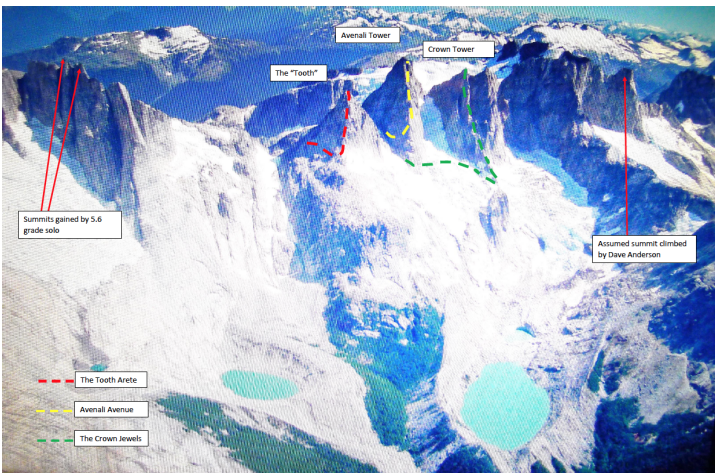
In addition, John Crook scrambled to the top of the two highest summits (both 5.6) south of the Tooth; the left of these had some abseil cord indicating a prior ascent while the right-hand one did not.

David Brown, U.K.

Images



Jim Donini and John Crook in the foreground, while climbing the Tooth. Avenali Tower and Crown Tower are visible in the background.



An overview of new routes on the east side of the Avellano Towers.



Looking down the route Crown Jewels on Crown Tower.

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