



AAC Publications

Pico Italia–Huayna Potosi traverse; Pico Milluni east ridge, solo ascent

Bolivia, Cordillera Real

In May, David Mayta and Robert Rauch made a rapid ascent of the southeast ridge of Pico Italia (ca 5,750m) followed by the south ridge of Huayna Potosi (6,088m).

They started from the Casablanca Base Camp (ca 4,700m) by Zongo Lake, and 12 hours later were on the main summit of Huayna Potosi, having climbed the southeast ridge of Pico Italia at night. Descending the north side of Italia they found a nasty pitch of M4, followed by a corniced ridge with more mixed terrain. One pitch on the south ridge of Huayna Potosi took two hours, shovelling away 1m of sugar snow, and then climbing with two snow stakes instead of axes. Ice difficulties on this rare traverse were reportedly AI3.

Rauch also made possibly the first solo ascent of the east ridge of Pico Milluni (5,500m), climbing over all five summits. The rock was generally good, but there were loose sections, and the climbing mainly French 3–5. On the second top was a 10m double crack that Rauch thought might warrant 6a.

Lindsay Griffin, from information supplied by Robert Rauch, Bolivia

Images



David Mayta starting up the south ridge of Huayna Potosi in good conditions a little after dawn.



The east ridge of Pico Milluni, with two tops to go before the main summit. In the background on the extreme left is Pico Triangular (ca 5,600m). Left of center is Pico Italia (ca 5,750m), with the upper southeast ridge facing the camera. On the right is Huayna Potosi, with the south face of south summit (ca 5,960m) facing the camera and the south ridge the left skyline.

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