

Five New Routes in the Central Andes

Argentina-Chile, Central Andes

In November and December, Oriol Baró (Spain) and partners climbed five new routes on five different peaks in the Central Andes. The peaks were Cerro Yeguas Heladas, Cerro Morado, Cerro San Francisco, Cerro Yeguas Muertas, and Gemelo Este, and the routes ranged in difficulty from D+ to ED.

On November 6, Baró and Andrés Zegers climbed a left-angling snow and mixed route up the west face of Cerro Yeguas Heladas (4,771m,), which they called Yeguas Salvajes (1,110m, MD M5). The route ascends snow, mixed ground, unstable cornices, and snow mushrooms. They descended by the south ridge and a couloir and their round-trip time from base camp at 3,050m was 20 hours.

On November 13, Baró and Zegers climbed Gemelo Este (5,117m) by its west face. The route ascends snow, ice, and rock just left of this face's central rock rib, with a crux in the middle consisting of a 90m WI4+ icefall and two M4+ pitches on bad rock. They descended to the east. Their round-trip time from a camp at 3,550m was 13 hours. They call the route Turbera (1,100m, MD- WI4+ M4+).

On November 22, Baró, Aike Parvex, and Zegers climbed Cerro Morado's south summit (4,490m) by a significant variation to the Tangol-Vasquez 1961 south face route. After following the Tangol-Vasquez for 400m, the team traversed a snow ledge to the right, gaining a steep, unclimbed ice flow (sometimes called Cascada Central in topos). They climbed this section of steep ice and mixed ground for 350m, eventually reaching the upper snow slopes and the summit. They called their variation Fina y Sucia (750m, ED 6a WI5 M4+), and the route took 11 hours round-trip from a camp below the wall.

On November 30, Baró, Xavi Farré, Seba Rojas, and Zegers climbed Cerro Yeguas Muertas (4,912m) via a prominent couloir on the central-right side of the south face. The climb is predominately snow with some stretches of mixed climbing and waterfall ice. They descended to the east, then climbed over the southeast ridge and descended a west-facing slope to return to base camp, eight and a half hours after leaving. They called the route Wenatti (1,150m, MD-).

On December 3, Baró and Xavi Farré climbed Cerro San Francisco (4,307m) by a series of weaknesses on its southeast face. They started from a camp at Laguna El Morado (ca 2,400m) and, carrying a rope but never using it, they ascended snow slopes below the face to reach a prominent, short, left-angling couloir. From the couloir's exit they made a couple of large traverses to gain weaknesses through the upper headwall and onto the summit ridge and the peak. They descended to the south and east, and their round-trip time from camp was 11 hours. They call the route Antiparkes (1,000m, D+).

- Erik Rieger, with information from Oriol Baró

Images

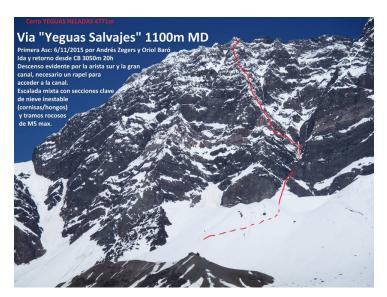








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Article Details

Author	Erik Rieger, with information from Oriol Baró
Publication	AAJ
Volume	59
Issue	80
Page	0
Copyright Date	2016
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions