



## AAC Publications

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### **Pico Nordenskiöld, Escudo de la Puna, and Other Routes**

Argentina, Andes, Chañi Massif

**INSPIRED BY PHOTOS from my friend Martin López Abad, John Price, Quentin Lindfield Roberts, Will Stanhope, and I visited the Chañi massif in December.** We spent 10 days based in a dusty military refugio at 4,700m. Between snowstorms and altitude hilarity, we managed four new routes in the Pico Nordenskiöld amphitheater, an east-facing basin between Chañi Chico (5,571m) and Nevado de Chañi (5,949m).

First up was a cruisy 150m 5.9 on a buttress at the entrance to the cirque, which we named El Viejo after the headwall's appearance. The granite on this climb was typical of what we encountered the rest of the trip: occasional rubble connecting buffed, burnt red stone, featured with holds and splitters.

Our altitude-addled second route climbed a spire just left of Aguja Iñaki Coussirat. Climbed by hospitable locals Negro Jerez, Ignacio Karlen, and Carlitos Torino, that tower honors the vibrant life of Iñaki Coussirat, who died on Fitz Roy in 2015. Our route on Aguja Marco Andrés remembers our beloved friend Marc-André Leclerc, a kindred spirit that places him in good company with his neighbor. The line followed elegant cracks on the east face, scrambly ridge-work, and a beautiful summit block for 200m (5.11a).

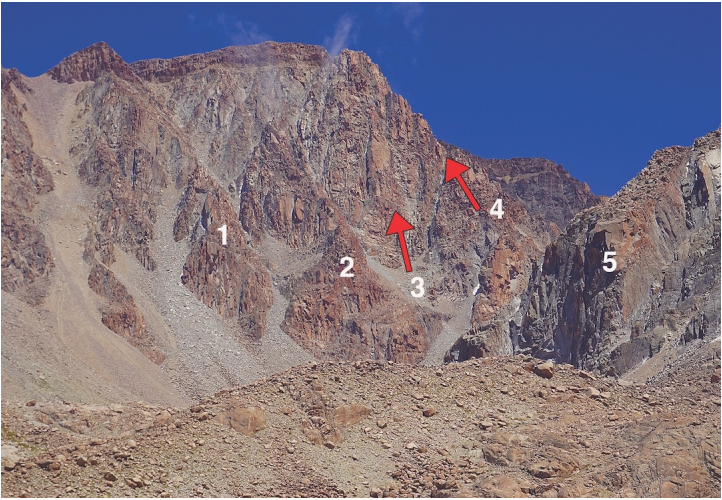
The main event took on the central pillar on the east face of Pico Nordenskiöld (5,470m). Half a dozen pitches through an impressive shield led to easier ground, where we unroped and scrambled 4th- and 5th-class to the peak of Aguja Intihuasi (named by Jerez, Karlen, and Torino, who climbed the adjacent buttress called Providencia (5.11+)). We then continued unroped through a choss band that guards the upper slopes of Nordenskiöld. The summit vistas over the Salinas Grandes salt flats to the high volcanoes dotting the western horizon were literally breathtaking. Our line, Escudo de la Puna, is 500m and goes at 5.11a. We descended the ridge to the south and cut down an east-facing gully that took us past Aguja Marco Andrés and into a meadow in the center of the amphitheater.

The last frigid day of the mission was spent watching Will and Quentin exchange laps on a beautiful west-facing crack about 100m east of El Viejo. Will eventually dispatched the pitch and christened it 54-46 Was My Number. This 30m 5.12+ is likely the hardest pitch in the zone.

The Chañi massif has heaps of potential for new rock routes on walls up to 600m and ridges that exceed 900m. With some planning and help from gracious locals, a trip to this unique part of the world will prove unforgettable.

– Paul McSorley, Canada

## Images



East side of Pico Nordenskiöld, showing approximate locations of (1) Aguja Marco Andrés, (2) Aguja Iñaki Coussirat, (3) Escudo de la Puna, (4) Providencia, and (5) El Viejo. Other routes are not shown.



Quentin Lindfield Roberts on 54-46 Was My Number (5.12+).



Will Stanhope on Escudo de la Puna on Pico Nordenskiöld.

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