



AAC Publications

Chimborazo, Southeast Face to Southeast Summit, Paraphernalia

Ecuador, Andes

Over October 9–10, Nicolas Davalos and I targeted the very rarely visited southeast face of Chimborazo (6,268m) and its attractive southeast summit, which is commonly known as Pico (or Cumbre) Nicolas Martinez (5,719m). After a relatively short approach to a high camp at 5,000m, we observed a possible line following a series of icefalls and funnels.

Departing early, we opened nine new pitches up unequivocally great ice (85–90°)—conditions I have never seen before in tropical Ecuador. The morning was very clear, with intense views of the volcano Sangay (5,300m) erupting. However, due to the early morning sun exposure, we were bombarded with debris from the hanging cornices above. Below the upper headwall, our line deviated left toward the col between Politécnica (5,900m) and the southeast summit.

We descended untraveled terrain on the same face, mostly downclimbing wet snow down a complex series of ramps and funnels exposed to falling debris. The ascent took around six hours, the descent around five hours to base camp, followed by three more hours to reach our vehicle.

We named the route Paraphernalia (700m, TD AI4) for all the tools and instruments one needs amid the currently complex political environment in Ecuador, which has led to various climbing restrictions. It is recommended that future travelers stay informed.

[Editor's note: The large Boussingault Glacier (southeast glacier) divides the summits of Politécnica and Pico Nicolas Martinez. Previous routes on the eastern flank of Pico Nicolas Martinez include the 1983 route up the Boussingault Glacier (left of the 2020 route) and a second route up the northeast ridge, located to the right of the 2020 route (AAJ 1984).]

— Felipe Proaño, Ecuador

Images



The route Paraphernalia (700m, TD A14) on the southeast face of Chimborazo to its southeast summit (Pico Nicolas Martinez). Near the top, the route deviates toward the col between Politécnica (5,900m) and Pico Nicolas Martinez.



Felipe Proaño leading an ice runnel on Paraphernalia (700m, TD A14) on the southeast face of Chimborazo.



Felipe Proaño at camp below the southeast face of Chimborazo.

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