



## AAC Publications

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### **Cerro Redondo, South Face, Painakan**

Chile, Southern Patagonia, Sierra Baguales

**Around the same time that Torres del Paine closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19**, we received the unfortunate news that our friend Johan Millacahuin Vivar had died in an accident on the North Tower while descending the Monzino Route. More than 50 people took part in the ensuing body recovery—seven days of hard work in Patagonian conditions. Once back in Puerto Natales, we were required to stay there due to COVID restrictions.

We could not have anticipated the austral winter to come, which was cold enough to freeze rivers and lakes, ice climb, and backcountry ski. The many monkeys forced to stay in Puerto Natales were full of motivation, and we explored many new-to-us mountain areas, including Chacabuco, Prat, Señoret, Sierra Contreras, and, later, Sierra Baguales. The conditions for winter activities in this area are impressive, but make sure you bring many layers!

In late September, we decided to make a final exploration in a chain of mountains to the northeast of Torres del Paine. The Sierra Baguales is composed of basalt and is of a completely different character from nearby areas. We based ourselves at the MacLean family's property after asking their permission. We planned to stay for 10 days, exploring with our skis as much we could. On the final day of this trip, Eduardo Weber and I skied a steep mountain in front of the property. From the summit, we saw the south face of Cerro Redondo for the first time. We knew we would have to come back and climb it.

In the beginning of October, a good weather window arrived. Karla Barria, Gonzalo Vasquez, Eduardo Weber, and I decided to give Cerro Redondo (ca 1,850m, 50°38'47"S, 72°24'7"W) a try. After a three-hour walk to the MacLeans' on October 3, we got some food and slept. We left early the next morning. It took us one hour to reach the base of the south face, which rises for 800m.

We followed the left side of the face. The first part ascended ramps of good, hard snow (65–70°). The second part ascended ice and mixed passages with a beautiful 50m section of waterfall ice, with some steps of 80–90° (WI4). This brought us to the final ridge and summit, where there is a view extending from the mountains around Torres del Paine all the way to Chaltén. We descended the north face through easy terrain then traversed back around the base of the mountain. The climb took us 12 hours from our camp to the summit and was the first on the face and, possibly, the peak.

The indigenous Aonikenk once referred to people from the north as "painakan," and this was also the name of the last Aonikenk chieftain, who lived in this area during the late 19th to early 20th century before being driven out by colonizers. Thus, we called our route Painakan (800m, MD WI4) to honor the Aonikenk, Johan, and the community of Puerto Natales.

— Jose "Chacho" Navarro Jorquera, Chile

## Images



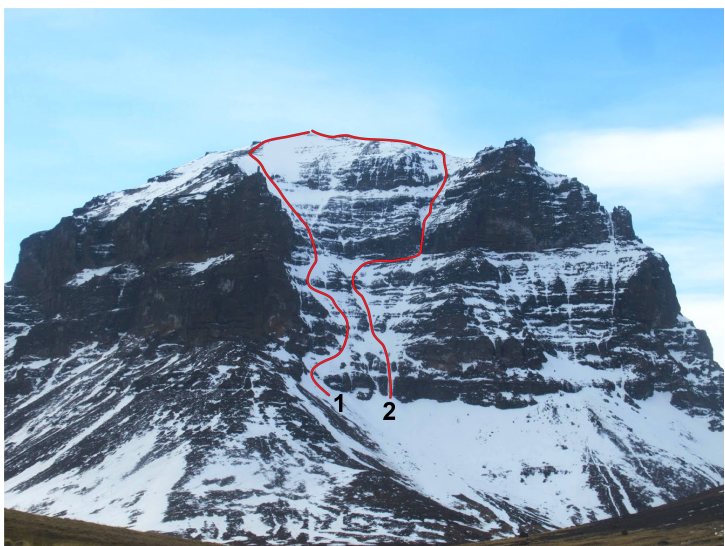
Ascending a steep mixed step on the route Painakan (800m, MD WI4) on the south face of Cerro Redondo (ca 1,850m).



Part of the volunteer rescue team after recovering the remains of Puerto Natales climber Johan Millacahuin Vivar, who died in an accident on the North Tower of Paine (above) in March 2020.



Chacho Navarro and Eduardo Weber's ski line from late September on a summit of around 1,800m to the southeast of Cerro Redondo. The view of Redondo's south face inspired them to return and make the first ascent.



The south face of Cerro Redondo showing the routes (1) Painakan and (2) Corta Corriente, both climbed in October 2020.

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