



## AAC Publications

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### **Cerro Socavones, First Ascent, via West Face and Northwest Ridge**

Chile, Central Andes

Emil Stefani ascending the couloir on the west side of Cerro Socavones. Photo by Agustín Ferrer

**On September 18**, Hernán López, José Vial, and I—all members of the Club Andino Universitario—left for Cerro Socavones (3,772m, -34.4279, -70.2609), 100 kilometers southeast of Santiago. We knew of three previous attempts on this peak by another group, led by Heraldo Droguett and Raúl Pavez, and we followed a similar approach to them. This involved ascending Cerro Alto de los Bueyes (3,064m), northwest of Socavones, from the Las Leñas Valley road, then descending 200 meters across an exposed rock ridge and snow slope to reach a site for base camp.

The next day, we traversed two kilometers across snow to the west couloir of Socavones, which we ascended for 600 meters before turning left (north). Droguett's group had attempted to climb to the right but were unable to reach the summit ridge. At the end of the couloir, on the northwest ridge, we climbed 100 meters of rock, linking a series of corners and gullies (up to UIAA V+). The rock quality was not bad compared with other Central Andes routes, but loose rocks were still common. By 1 p.m. it was windy and snowing, and we decided to descend, following our ascent route, with three rappels.

On October 31, José and I returned to Cerro Socavones, this time with Emil Stefani, following the same approach. On November 1, from our previous high point on the northwest ridge, we descended 100 meters on an exposed snowfield on the north face. Then, following a short couloir, we connected to the snowy east face and reached the summit 200 meters higher, at 3 p.m. We saw no evidence of prior ascents. We retraced our ascent route and returned to camp after 14.5 hours.

This was a special summit for me, as Socavones can be seen from Rancagua, the city where I was born. The Central Andes still hold many unclimbed routes. Cerro Socavones' east summit is three kilometers to the southeast; eager climbers should attempt it from Cajón de Flores to the east.

—Agustín Ferrer, Chile

## Images



Overview of the route through the west face of Cerro Socavones.



The west face of Cerro Socavones. The first ascent followed the prominent snow gully, traversed left to reach the rocky northwest ridge, then circled around the north and east faces to the top.



Detail of the rock climbing section on Cerro Socavones.



Emil Stefani ascending the couloir on the west side of Cerro Socavones, where it turns to the left (north).



José Vial leading the first pitch of rock climbing on Cerro Socavones, belayed by Agustín Ferrer.



The last few meters on Cerro Socavones.

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