



AAC Publications

Mururata (5,775m), south face, Guias AGMTB

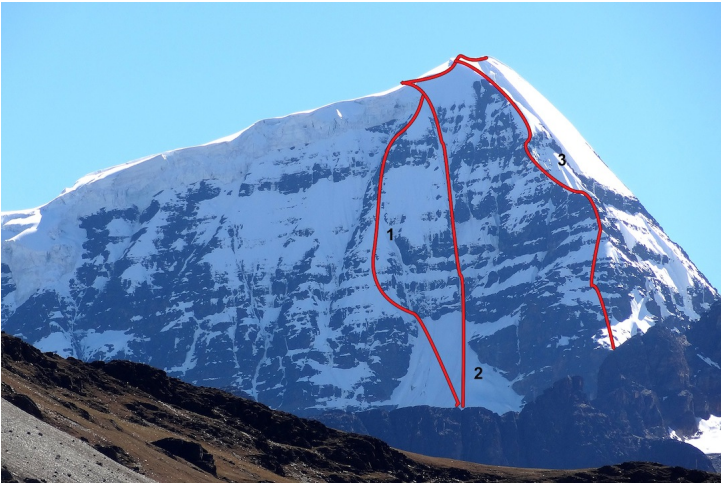
Bolivia, Cordillera Real

On April 21–22, a group of UIAGM guides and aspirants, led by Sergio Condori (head of the Bolivia Guides Association), opened a new route on the south face of Mururata. Departing at 1 a.m. from Lake Arkhata, they arrived at the foot of the face at 5:30. The 700m route begins at the same point as Goulotte Marie [a route most likely first climbed in June 1987 by Slovenians Filip Bertonec, Bojan Pockar, Bojan Pograjc, and Jernej Stritih, who quote 540m, with two pitches of 90°], then slants left to climb a snowy buttress before moving back right at the top. The climb was sustained, with the overall angle 55-65° and technical difficulties of WI4/5 M4/5.

The traditional route up flat-peaked Mururata (the summit was first reached in 1915) involves an endless glacier traverse, more suitable for skiing than alpinism. The south face is highly exposed and technically challenging, but threatened for much of its length by seracs. According to Andean mythology, the god Mururata was constantly mouthing off to Illimani and Illampu. After he tried to claim the title of highest peak, Illimani chopped off his head, leaving a large summit plateau. His decapitated head was thrown in the direction of the Chilean border to become Sajama, the highest of all Bolivian peaks.

Chris Clarke, Bolivia

Images



South face of Mururata. As with many Bolivian peaks, the history of its exploration is confused, with second (and third) first ascents reported. (1) Guias AGMTB. (2) Goulotte Marie, most likely first climbed by Slovenians in 1987. (3) Southeast ridge. Although claimed by parties in 1972 (French) and 1974 (French-Italian), this was most likely climbed first in 1970 by John Hudson, Roman Laba, and Roger Whewell.

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