



FRCC Cordillera Carabaya Expedition 2007

by
Stephen Reid

This expedition was originally scheduled for 2006, one hundred years after the founding of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, and the original intention was that the team should consist of three FRCC members. Unfortunately one member dropped out at fairly short notice and the decision was taken to postpone the expedition by one year. I also decided to recruit a friend who I knew would be keen and thus the final team consisted of Stephen Reid (FRCC), Mike Cocker (FRCC) and Jonathan Preston (BAMG). Although Reid was nominally leader, the team was very much a partnership of equals with Preston (who speaks Spanish) making most of the travel arrangements and Cocker researching into the history of climbing in the range.



The Team
(from left to
right):
Jonathan
Preston,
Stephen
Reid and
Mike
Cocker.

The team flew with KLM via Amsterdam to Lima, arriving on 14th June 2007 and spending one night there (the Rosa Nautica restaurant is highly recommended) before flying on to Juliaca where we were met by pre-arranged mini-bus and taken to Puno (3860m) on the shore of Lake Titicaca. We stayed there four nights, acclimatising and shopping for base camp essentials: we had intended to spend one extra night but heard that there was going to be a transport strike the following day so we left immediately for Macusani, 8 hours drive away and the nearest town to the Cordillera Carabaya.

This little known but spectacular mountain range lies south-east of the more famous Vilcanotta and not far from the Bolivian border. It had been recommended to me by John Biggar a climbing friend who runs commercial trekking and climbing trips to South America. He had taken a small team of clients there in 2005 and suggested that there might be plenty of scope for new routes. Research in the Alpine Club Library produced reports for seven expeditions that had visited the range between 1958 and 1972, but none since then with the exception of the Biggar team. John's photos gave us a target, the unclimbed South Face of Chichicapac (5614m) which looked to be mainly rock, and the rock, according to John (who lives in Castle Douglas) was akin to his favourite Galloway granite.



The **Cordillera Carabaya** from the south, with the town of Macusani nestling in the valley bottom. **Allincapac** (5780m), the highest peak, lies on the left. On the right is **Chichicapac** (5614m). Lago Chambine, the site of our base camp, was situated approximately in the centre of the picture, hidden behind the low foothills.

In Macusani (4159m) we found reasonable digs at the Hotel El Dorado which boasted hot water and (unlike the other Macusani hotels all of which also claimed to have hot water) did actually produce some, though at erratic times. It was also opposite one of the local brothels which played very loud music until 4am thus ensuring none of us got much sleep. We did more basecamp shopping, found a good if basic place to eat at the El Balcon de Yanahura (set menu 5 sols = 75p) and also were fortunate to bump into a local who had worked in America for four years and spoke good English. He had a car (bald tyres, dodgy steering and worse brakes) and for 100 Sols drove us at breakneck speed up dirt tracks to a dam at the entrance to the upper valley. Here the track ended but a vague path continued. Our guide also found us, lower down the valley, two women who owned a horse and three donkeys between them. With a little persuading and bartering they agreed to transport the baggage to our proposed base camp the following day. Our English speaking friend also rounded up a few compadres who would act as porters

and thus it was that the next day (after two nights in Macusani) we found ourselves in a cavalcade walking up a beautiful valley of lakes and waterfalls populated by little other than the occasional mixed herd of alpaca and sheep and their shepherds. The walk-in did not take long, only about 2½ hours,



The approach to Lago Chambine.

and we located a small patch of flat ground at the western end of Laguna Chambine, the largest and highest lake in the valley (4605m). It is a beautiful place, reminiscent of a Scottish loch in many ways. We saw moorhens and



Base camp at **Lago Chambine**.

Andean geese on the water and viscacha (a sort of cross between a rabbit and a squirrel) scampering shyly among the boulders and casually soloing the rodent equivalent of E11. We were restricted as to where we camped by the lie of the land and the need for water. Our chosen site proved good but rather exposed to the wind, and it lost the sun quite early (ca 4.30pm). It was the 21st June.

We spent the next few days exploring and acclimatising. One day we climbed a small rock tower (5200m) which appeared not to have been climbed before and gave us good views of the South-East Face of Allinapac (5780m and the highest peak in the range) and its neighbouring peaks.



The impregnable-looking South-East Face of **Allinapac** (5780m) with its massive corniced plateau. It has been climbed at both the left and right-hand ends, but not in recent times. The small rocky peak to its left is **Japuma** (5550m) and on its right is **Twin Peaks** (5723m).

We christened our tower Fiesta Peak as the intention had been to walk over to a fiesta being held in a neighbouring valley but we had run out of both time and energy by this point. Reid and Cocker also climbed the short cliff just above our basecamp which gave a rather scary route of loose and vegetated Mild Severe in five pitches. We met Marco Gomez, a very friendly character who walked up to the lake most days to go fishing on a tiny balsawood raft. He told us that he sold the fish in Macusani and that his family owned the valley.

We showed him a letter of introduction from the Peruvian Embassy in London and he said that we were very welcome to camp on his land. In exchange we gave him some chocolate and biscuits and bought a few of his trout which tasted very good fried with garlic and chips.



Fiesta Peak (5200m).

On the 26th we made a recce of the South Face of Chichicapac, the main objective of our expedition. Leaving camp at 8.30am, we crossed a pass at 5000m and dropped down the far side until we could view of the face which was hidden by a subsidiary ridge. At first sight it looked fantastic, a great mixed wall with a series of Scottish type gullies linked by traversing ledges wending a way up it, culminating in what looked to be a splendid bivvi site on top of a rock buttress standing proud of the cornices that ran away in both directions, forming a rim to the summit snowfields. However closer inspection revealed that the route seemed likely to be threatened for at least half its length by those same cornices and reluctantly the decision was taken to look elsewhere.



The South Face of **Chichicapac** (5614m). The best line looked to be via the gully just right of centre, then branching leftwards under the steep central tower to exit via a hidden gully up its left side.

Unfortunately it was threatened by cornices in the lower half.

On the 27th we ventured around to the north side of the same peak to inspect its rocky north ridge. Preston (who had sensibly brought his ice axe) scrambled up the easy couloir to its foot and on returning announced that it would go. A suitable bivi site was located in the combe below and we returned to base camp. On the way back we discovered the “High Level Route”, an old footpath that traverses the hillside well above the level of the lake and passes under a large cave. We found the remains of a wall in the cave which made us wonder if it was once a tomb. The path continues on to a natural balcony in the outcrop above our camp then descends down its centre. It made a pleasant alternative to stumbling amongst the boulders on the lake shore. The next afternoon we returned to the combe and bivied the night, Cocker and Reid shivering in somewhat inadequate sleeping bags.

Chichicapac (5614m) - the dramatic rock tower is unclimbed. The **North Ridge** is the rock ridge to its left starting from the shadowy col. Five pitches of rock led to snow which was followed (up the left-hand skyline) to the summit.

Descent was via the **West Ridge** which follows the right-hand skyline to the rock buttress, then down snowfields to the col between Chichicapac and the rock peak in the right foreground.



The alarm sounded at 3.30 the following morning and three hours later, at the col at the foot of the ridge, we gazed down at another beautiful remote valley beyond, the steam of the Amazon jungle forming a grey pall in the distance. We estimated the rock section of the ridge to be around nine pitches so Preston led the first three in rock shoes whilst his alpine boots added to the



Stephen Reid on the 4th pitch of the North Ridge of **Chichicapac**.

burdens of the other two. A starting chimney was awkward and looked difficult to leave but a series of surprise jugs across its right wall led to a good ledge. Traversing right avoided further chimneying and gained a slim exposed groove, at the top of which was a palatial stance. It was a glorious day with blue sky and sunshine and barely a whisper of a breeze. Reid took the lead for what proved to be the crux: a steep wall ahead was traversed to a groove in its right edge, which was followed to easier ground. The climbing was probably no more than MVS but the rock was very friable and every hold needed careful testing before use. Any that weren't up to scratch were thrown away.

The team was surprised to find themselves at the end of the difficulties with only one easy mixed pitch to go before simple snow slopes led to the summit, which was reached at 1.30pm. Descent was via the original route of ascent, the West Ridge, which proved straightforward except for one slightly corniced section. We regained our bivi site at 5.00pm but opted to continue down to base camp and the haven of our tents.



Mike Cocker and Jonathan Preston on the summit of Chichicapac (5614m).



The unclimbed South Face of **Screwdriver** (5543m).

and also that there was no obvious easy line. It still looked good though and, with a high camp on the snow, would make a great target for a future expedition. We turned our intentions instead to the spectacular but relatively easy rock tower behind us which we later found to be the unclimbed peak christened Mamacapac (5450m) by a 1965 expedition. A col was gained up steep snow to its west, between it and the neighbouring Papacapac (which still remains virgin).

On the 2nd July, after a few days rest, we walked round to the north-west side of the lake and found a bivi site as high up the valley as we could with the intention of “looking at” the unclimbed south face of the fine pinnacle of Screwdriver (5543m). Another cold night (at least -7°C) was suffered and an early start made, despite which it was past noon when we finally got close to our objective and realised that we really didn’t have enough time left



The twin peaks of **Mamacapac** (left) and **Papacapac** (both ca 5450m). The route up the former gained the central col and then followed the right-hand skyline.



From the col, Cocker led two and a bit pitches of appalling 45° rubble to reach the summit which we were pleased to see showed no signs of having been visited before. Descent was by very careful downclimbing and a worrying abseil from probably the only solid runners we encountered en route. We reached base camp at 6pm, after another 12 hour day.

Mike Cocker taking “appalling 45° rubble” in his stride on the first ascent of **Mamacapac** (5450m).

The final route of the expedition proved the best and began on the 5th when we walked up into the hanging valley due west of our base camp. We had been this way early in the trip when we climbed the small rock tower of Fiesta Peak but this time our objective was far more exciting. Viewed from the shore of the stunning turquoise glacier lake at the head of the valley one could see four major peaks from left to right, the massif of Allincapac/Twin Peaks (which was actually two summits though this could not be seen from our view point),



The Allincapac Range (from left to right): **Allincapac** (5780m) with **Twin Peaks** (5723m) in front of it, **Cornice** (5560m), **Chequilla** (unclimbed) and **Tower** (5577m). To the right of Tower are its satellite peaks of **Papacapac** and **Mamacapac** (both ca 5450m) with **Screwdriver** (5543m) in the background between them.

the fine looking snow and rock tower of Cornice (5560m), its slightly lower neighbour, the unclimbed spire of Chequilla and the huge bulk of Tower (5577m) with its satellite peaks of Papacapac and Mamacapac.

Cornice boasts a particularly fine south ridge, a sinuous snow and mixed line that extends the full height of the mountain. As the only ascent of Cornice we could find mention of was by an unrecorded route accessed from a camp on the far side of the mountain, we felt fairly safe in assuming the line was unclimbed. We duly slogged up the hill above the turquoise lake to a flat bivi site at the foot of the moraine. Unfortunately whilst traversing round the small pond that formed the bivi-site's water supply, Cocker slipped on a boulder and sprained his wrist. The following morning he decided that it was too sore to



The **South Ridge of Cornice** (clockwise from above):

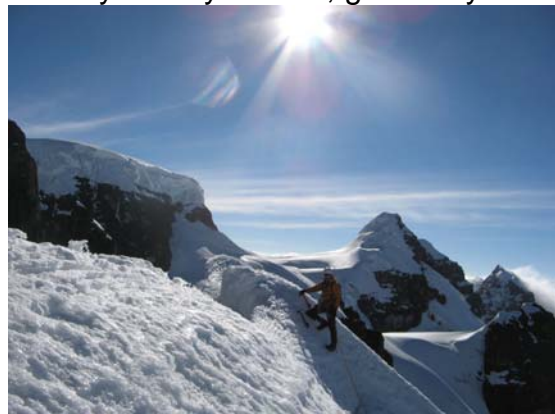
1. Jonathan Preston approaching the start of the difficulties on the first pitch proper. The snow covered wall ahead of him constituted the crux. The route then more or less stuck to the right-hand skyline above.

2. Jonathan Preston completing the second mixed pitch.

3. Jonathan Preston nearing the steep snow bulge on the third pitch.



allow him to continue, though he kindly carried his share of kit up to the glacier before making this announcement. Reid and Preston pressed on, crossing the glacier at its flattest point and gaining the base of the ridge. They moved together up this for around 150 metres until a rock wall covered with a film of snow ice barred the way. This was duly despatched by Preston and turn out to be the crux of the climb though the remainder was not without interest. Alternating leads up mixed ground on the crest of the ridge led to an easy traverse right to the col in between Cornice and Chequilla. From here steep icy snow pitches led to a rock band. Above, steep but well consolidated snowfields meant buried axe belays and no runners. Near the summit more rock, not very sound, was met with and the top arrived quite unexpectedly. The summit ridge extended almost horizontally for fifty metres, gracefully



4. Jonathan Preston following up a steep snow pitch near the top.

5. Jonathan Preston on the summit, as near to the cornice as he dared!

corniced along its entire length like a frozen Waikiki wave. The south end looked to be the highest (just!) and the team were grateful that they were not obliged to traverse it.

By now cloud that had been welling up on the north side of the range was swirling round the summits and a fine sunset was beginning to develop. Descent was made rapidly by down-climbing and abseiling the line of the route to the col, then by climbing down the snowy flank of the ridge, though this last section had to be done with care due to the large crevasses in this area and the fact that it was now very dark. As the moraine was reached, so the cloud came in and the way was lost. Thus it was not until 10pm that the biv-site was reached, 17½ hours after leaving it. The pair spent another night out with little food and no stove before descending back to base camp the next morning where they were met by a relieved Cocker who provided a very welcome breakfast.

The final night (the 8th/9th) was marked by a massive thunderstorm on the Amazon side of the range and when the bowler-hatted ladies arrived with the pack animals at 9am the next morning a full scale blizzard was raging. At the road-head we gave them all the base camp clobber (such as stoves and pans) and left-over food (including a whole box of chocolate bars which were seized with much glee) as well as a rather furry 50 metre rope. The other two ropes were given to Marco the fisherman and Alex the "fixer".



Passing a herd of alpaca on the way out from base camp.

Two days later we were returning to Puno where we intended to spend our last night before catching the plane from Juliaca to Lima. Although we actually passed through Juliaca we preferred to spend one more night at the very pleasant Casona Plaza in Puno rather than risk hotel X in Juliaca, besides we had left some valuable belongings in Puno. As we approached Juliaca though, we started to see rocks scattered on the highway and the closer we got the worse it became. On reaching Puno, we were told that there had been a lot of trouble and a huge transport strike was planned for the following day. Accordingly we returned post haste to Juliaca and put up at Royal Inn, which proved to be a good choice.



Rocks on the main highway near Juliaca.

Early next morning the streets were quiet but we managed to get two motorbike rickshaws to take us almost to the airport, a distance of some 4km. They wouldn't take us the last 400m though due to the huge crowds of protestors surrounding the place and the riot police keeping them at bay. Shouldering our 30kg+ of kit apiece we ran the gauntlet and then spent a frustrating day at the airport before bowing to the inevitable conclusion that the riots had brought the place to a standstill and neither our flight nor anyone else's would be leaving that day. We walked back the 4km to the hotel along with a small crowd of other westerners, all staggering under the weight of their luggage, shepherded along by a friendly tour guide who was clearly worried about our safety.

Two days were spent in the hotel during which running battles between protesters armed with slingshots and riot police equipped with firearms,

armoured cars and tear gas went on in streets all around us. There were also large marches of more peaceful people in which red banners were much in



Trouble in Juliaca (clockwise from above):

1. Rioters using slingshots to hurl stones at police.
2. Seconds later the street empties as police respond with a tear gas grenade. More rioters can be seen in the railway yard behind the wall.
3. Riot police patrolling in an armoured car.

All photos taken from the roof of our hotel.



evidence. At one point the steel shutters over the hotel's glass doors were battered in and many of the windows were broken as anything perceived to be pro-Gringo became a target. Rioters invaded the railway marshalling yards behind us and attempted to set fire to some of the wagons, which we were told later contained drums of oil. We watched fascinated from the roof until we were driven back inside by clouds of tear gas and the imploring of the staff who were in fear of adding to the already heavy glazier's bill. Fortunately the hotel had a good chef, seemingly a rarity in parochial Peru, but on a more serious note, they soon ran out of beer. Inside we continued to watch on the TV. Considering the scale of the riots, which extended to almost the whole of Peru, it seems amazing that more people were not killed. Four people died when their coach hit rocks and ran off the road and a small child was killed by a stone thrown at police, but that was almost all as far as we could gather.

The cause of the riot was allegedly the decision of the government to impose basic numeracy and literacy tests on all teachers (in a pilot study nearly 50% of them had failed these!) but in reality it was more about class war, not surprising in a country where most of the wealth is owned by people of Spanish descent whilst the majority of the local Indians live in abject poverty.



Crowds of protestors invade the railway marshalling yard.

On the morning following the protests we awoke to the sound of traffic. Motorbikes, cars and lorries were moving again with their usual mayhem and, barring a few broken panes, there was nothing to show the riots had ever taken place. We rushed across the road to the LAN-Air office but to our dismay it seemed that the airport would be closed for several days yet. Two well off and obviously well connected young Americans had had their family (with the help of the US State Department) arrange armed security guards to drive them across the border to Bolivia, but for the mere masses like us the best option seemed to be to transfer our flights to Arequipa and catch a coach for the four hour journey. The bus seemed very comfortable for the princely sum of \$20/head and we were soon congratulating ourselves on our good sense and good fortune, that was until they dumped us and all the other passengers at a cement works in the middle of the desert some twenty six kilometres from our destination. It was, they said, "too dangerous to go on". Unfortunately staying put was not a very attractive option either so when a couple of local scallywags in a beaten up pick up truck offered to run a load of us further along the highway we jumped at the chance. For a few sols they crammed some eleven people and all our bags in the back and took us about four or five 'k' until a point where we rounded a bend and the cliff on the left above the road was lined with yelling figures hurling rocks into the air that were raining down onto the highway. The pick-up did a quick about turn and we shouldered our 30kg apiece and legged it down the far side of the tarmac before they got our range. Further on, large crowds blocked the road and there must have been about twenty artics parked up unable to travel in either direction. For a while the few police officers present advised us to stay put but eventually they allowed us to follow a railway line adjacent to the highway and this we did, Gringos and locals alike. For a while I traipsed along beside an old man struggling under a huge sack of potatoes, wishing I could help him, but I had well over our KLM baggage allowance myself. We left the line after a while, and raised clouds of dust as we tramped wearily through dirty back

streets. Fifty metres or so away, on the main road, crowds of demonstrators and police battled it out, but thankfully they largely ignored us and friendly Peruvians went out of their way to point us in the right direction. Nevertheless it was hard labour and we were all terribly thirsty, having run out of water many hours before. Then, just as we were really beginning to flag, an ambulance stopped and offered us and our burdens a lift. Fantastic, and it was air-conditioned too! They finally dropped us at a point where there were so many rocks on the road you could scarcely see the surface. A kilometre ahead was a vast crowd and many red banners were in evidence, but too exhausted to care any more we just walked straight up to their barricade and asked if we could please come through. "Of course" they replied, all smiles, and opened the gate. At the far side of the crowd were equally friendly riot police. Cars were moving

here and they found us a taxi and directed us to a good hotel. That night, in a cool courtyard in old colonial Arequipa, we celebrated with Pisco 5ours and, pleasure of pleasures, a hot bath.

The next morning we arrived in Lima and the following day we reached the airport after the most terrifying taxi ride we had collectively ever experienced. We had managed to inform KLM by telephone from Juliaca that we would not be able to make our original flight and were fully expecting to be charged \$170/head transfer fee, when, just as our credit cards were about to be swiped, one of us happened to mention that reason why we had not been able to get there on time. "Oh, " said the check-in clerk, "Sometimes it is embarrassing to be Peruvian!" and, after due consultation with a supervisor, the charges were dropped.

We arrived home on the 16th July – it had been quite an adventure.



Protestors hurl stones down onto the road from the cliff (top) as we scurry past with our luggage keeping as far out of range as possible (bottom). Jonathan Preston is the figure in a bright blue jacket and cap whilst Stephen Reid is toting the far too heavy grey duffle bag. Ahead, lorries are parked up unable to go on or turn back. They had been there for three days.

The History of Exploratory Mountaineering in the Peruvian Cordillera Carabaya

by

Michael Cocker

At the southern end of the Peruvian Andes lies the remote and rarely visited Cordillera Carabaya, a compact and attractive range of mountains with summits between 5000 and 5780 metres and an area where the level of exploration and development approximates that in the Alps at the end of the Golden Age; in other words, all the major summits have been climbed, but there is still considerable scope for new routes on the unclimbed ridges and faces with a few minor peaks still virgin. In the early summer of 2007 Stephen Reid, Jonathan Preston and Mike Cocker spent 17 days in this area climbing three new routes including one previously unclimbed summit. No detailed maps are available and our primary source of information was a verbal recommendation to visit the area from South American specialist John Biggar and a handful of articles previously published in mountaineering journals. The principle aim of this paper is to provide a summary of the exploration to date, to clarify some of the confusing and contradictory records and to give an account of our own modest endeavours. It should be noted that the area has not been properly surveyed and that altitudes recorded in this article are only approximations, best estimates based on those recorded by earlier expeditions and ourselves.

For millennia the local Quechua Indians have farmed and grazed livestock in the high valleys below the glaciers. The mountains themselves were (and still are) considered sacred – Apu (deities) that govern the weather and water, and the mythical place of origin of alpacas and llamas. Traditional names exist for three prominent peaks – Allincapec, Chichicacac and Huaynacacac. The highest, Allincapec (5780m) takes its name from a legendary pre-Inca king, Allin, who buried his wife Macu at the foot of the mountain (near the town of Macusani). In Quechua the word cacac means chief, hence, Chichicacac means small chief. Huaynacacac was the name of an important Inca king. The identity of the first two summits, Allincapec and Chichicacac, is apparent, as they form distinct massifs, but the latter, Huaynacacac, is in the middle of the range, which, depending on where the mountains were viewed from, may have referred to more than one peak leading to some confusion for the late-comer mountaineers desiring greater clarity on the matter.

1. Dr Godfrey Francis and his wife made the first survey of the Carabaya with Tim Fisher, in 1954. This was a geological expedition whose purpose was to study, nepheline-syenite, a mass of unusual rock rich in aluminium trioxide, which outcrops in the area. On 9th July they climbed an outlining peak, which they named Japuma (5550m), from where they obtained good views of the south face of Allincapec and Huaynacacac. Francis led a second geological expedition to the area in 1959 with the intention of attempting the three highest peaks – Allincapec, Huaynacacac and Chichicacac. They completed the scientific work before turning their attention to the mountains. On 30th

June Francis, Simon Clark, Beverley Holt and Julio Cardenas climbed Chichicapac (5614m) by its west glacier and, assuming this to be the first ascent, were disconcerted to find footprints and rope-marks in the snow near the summit. Cardenas, their chief porter, made enquires and discovered that the Italian mountaineer, Piero Ghiglione, and a local porter, Fortunato Mautino, had made the first ascent, via the same route, on 22nd June - at the time Ghiglione was seventy-six years old. He and Mautino also made the second ascent of Japuma and an attempt on Allincapac before moving to other areas where they made another thirteen first ascents. Francis's party tried to climb Allincapac but, hindered by soft snow, were unable to find a suitable line. Francis, who wrote the instructional manual *Mountain Climbing* (1958), was killed by stonefall on Pillar Rock in 1960.

2. The first ascent of Allincapac 1, an imposing flat-topped massif encircled by steep cliffs overhung with huge ice seracs and cornices, was made via a short steep couloir on the west side by Robert Kendell and Michael Binnie, members of an Oxford University expedition, on 25th July 1960. The other members of the party – John Cole, Keith Meldrum and Nigel Rogers – made the second ascent, by the same route two days later. From a high camp west of Allincapac, they also climbed the lower of Huaynacapac's two summits (5715m), which they named Huaynacapac 1, by two separate routes on the same day – the north-nest Ridge (Cole and Rogers) and South-West Face (Binnie, Kendell and Meldrum). The following day Binnie and Kendell forced a track through soft snow, up the south-west Face, to a col between Juracapac (5610m) and Tococapac (5670m) continuing up the south-east Ridge of Juracapac to make the first ascent. The next day the rest of the party, using their tracks to regain the col, made the first ascent of Tococapac via its north-west Ridge. Kendell and Binnie made the first ascent of Allincapac 11 (5770m), which involved around 300 metres of cramponing up steep snow on the north-west Face. Recce Peak (5550m) was ascended by Cole, Rogers and Meldrum in order to inspect the four impressive rock and ice towers, which they named, Screwdriver, Wedge, Tower and Cornice. They also made a complete north – south traverse of Japuma and included the first ascent of Cacacapac (5425m), a rock peak to its south. Towards the end of the expedition Cole and Kendell made the first ascent of the second, slightly higher and south-westerly summit of Huaynacapac (5721m). During the evacuation of their high camp Rogers, Binnie and Meldrum climbed "Pico Carol" (5670m) "a prominent gendarme on the east ridge of Allpincapac as seen from base camp". The party had their base camp in the Antahoua valley, directly under the formidable south-west face of Allincapac, and spent six weeks in the mountains.

3. A Keele University Expedition made the third ascent of Chichicapac in July 1965, following the same line as the previous parties, before making first ascents of the difficult and impressive looking peaks of Tower (5577m) (which they confusingly and erroneously refer to as Huaynacapac) and Screwdriver (5543m), as well as nine other peaks, north and east of Screwdriver, that "stood out from the ice-sheets like nunataks". It took them the best part of a week to find a way up Tower, which was eventually climbed via "a huge ice-gully" on the north-east by Brian Chase, Rodney Gallagher, Geoffrey Bonney

and Andrew Tomlinson. During the exploration of Tower they named the two subsidiary peaks, east of the main summit, Papacapac and Mamacapac, both ca 5200m. A spell of bad weather and theft of some equipment detained them in base camp before a high camp was established in the glaciated cirque below Screwdriver and Pyramid. From here Chase, Tomlinson, Bonney and Gallagher made the first ascent of Pyramid (ca 5200m) by two independent routes. Chase and Tomlinson followed this with the first ascent of White Sail (5200m), another snow peak, possibly Vela Blanca (on the same ridge and slightly north of White Sail) and, on 16th August, Screwdriver via its north ridge. The latter giving a pure rock climb with two Very Severe pitches. Bonney and Peter Floyd made the first ascent of Red Rock (5200m) and a peak "just east of Pyramid" (probably Triangle). Chase and Tomlinson devised "a superb ridge traverse on snow and rock" over the summits of End Peak, Mid Peak, Carn Dearg and Finger Peak, all around 5200m. At the end of August bad weather set in "and only minor rock peaks nearby were ascended". The party established base camp at Laguna Lamakaw, on 15th July, and departed on 9th September.

4. So far all expeditions had accessed the mountains from Macusani to the south: the first to approach the range from the north was a team from the New Zealand Alpine Club who, in 1967, from a base camp at the lakes near the head of the Rio Taype, made first ascents of four unclimbed summits and five new routes on other peaks. On 14th June, Alex Parton, Dave Massam, Bryan Dudley and Alwyn Chinn made the first ascent of C2 (5075m), an impressive snow peak overlooking their base camp, finding it harder than they expected, "the difficult section being a 300 ft rock buttress which was iced in some sections." On 18th June a high camp was established on the glacier north-east of Trident. From the lower reaches of the glacier they "climbed steep fluted ice and rock to a ridge which made an interesting traverse to the summit" of C3 (5230m), the first ascent. Second ascents of Juracapac and Tococapac were made via a long snow couloir, presumably on the north-east face, by Parton, Dudley, Massam, Chinn and Roderick McKenzie, on 21st June. The following day the same party made the first ascent of Trident (5490m), their main objective: steep snow and ice led to a col between the middle and northerly peaks from where "an interesting rock ridge" led to the summit. After a couple of days' reorganisation in base camp, second ascents of Screwdriver (repeating the line taken previously), Tower and Huaynacapac 2 (allegedly by new routes) were made. And, on 4th July, the first traverse of Allincapac 1 and 2: third and second ascents respectively of the individual peaks. Massam and Parton made the first ascent of Cornice (5560m), at the end of June, finding it "longer and more difficult than was anticipated", but left no details of the line taken. Eight other peaks were climbed from base camp, the most spectacular being an ascent of a subsidiary summit of C2 involving a height gain of over 600m.

5. A British team, led by Roger Whewell, was also in the area at the same time. Based on the south side of the range, they too had come to attempt Trident, but turned their attentions to Wedge Peak (5550m) after meeting with the New Zealanders. In the event, due to a combination of bad weather and soft snow they failed to climb Wedge, and instead made first ascents of three

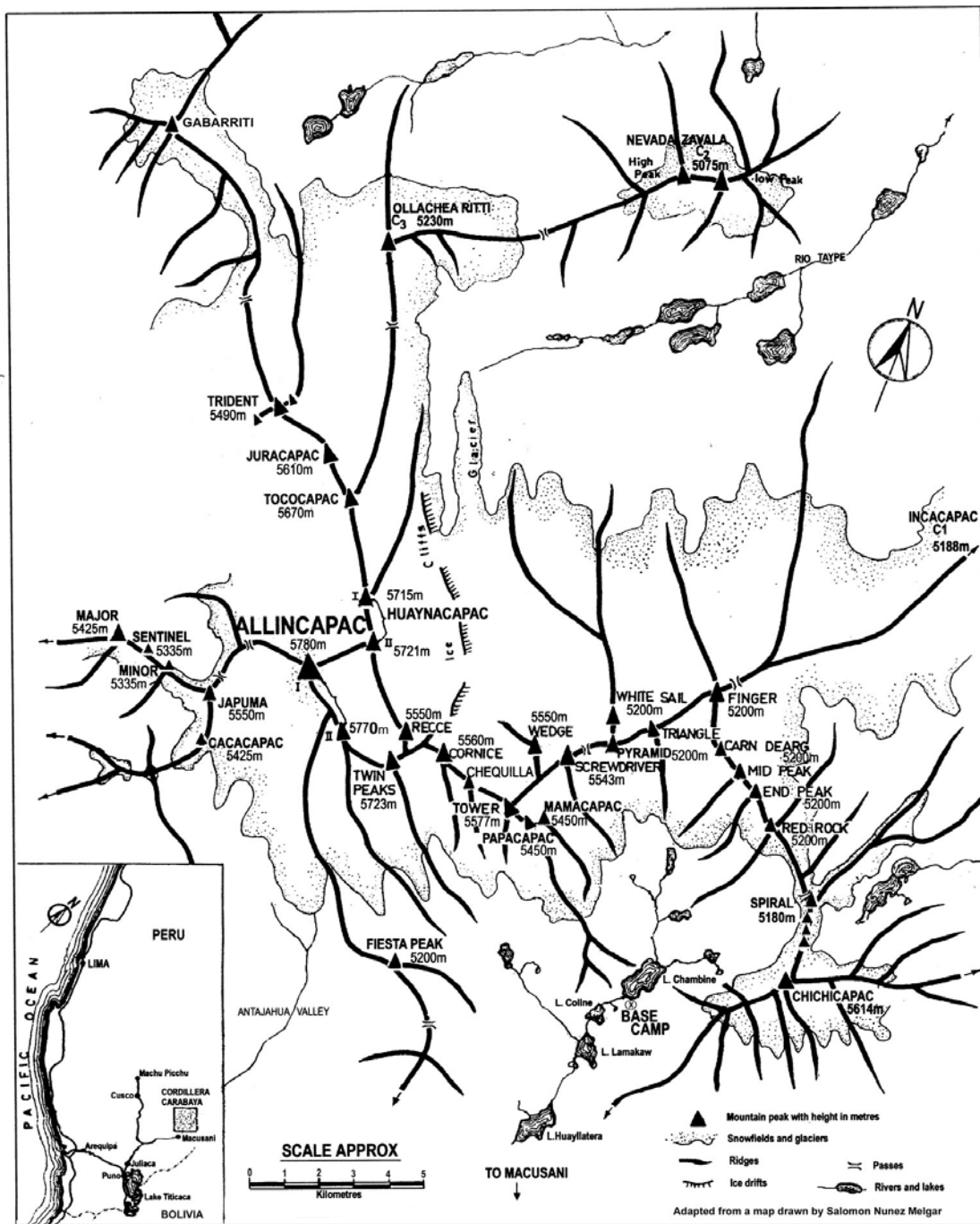
minor peaks on the ridge north of Chichicapac. Whewell succeeded on Wedge, the last significant virgin summit in the area, when he returned with his wife the following year.

6. In 1971 five British women – Kate Dilworth, Barbara Spark, Mollie Porter, Carol McNeill and Janet Richards – all mountaineering instructors, climbed Japuma from the north and, on 16th August, made the first ascents of three peaks on the ridge running west from this: Sentinel (5335m), ascending the south and descending the west sides, Minor (5335m), via the south face and west ridge, and Major (5425m), via the east ridge and south face. Spark, Porter and Richards also made the first ascent of Spiral peak (5180m), one mile north of Chichicapac, via the southwest ridge, on 20th August, while McNeil and Dilworth made repeat ascents of Triangle and Pyramid from the col between them.

7 & 8. In October 1973 Steve McAndrews (American), Ian Haverson (Australian) and Michael Andrews (New Zealand) made the fifth ascent of Chichicapac by the normal route up the west face. A Chilean team – G. Cassana, D. Delgado, G. Naccicio, and A. Neira – made the first recorded ascent of Twin Peaks (5723m) via the south-east ridge on 2nd August 1980 from a base camp in the Antajahua valley. This was the last expedition to visit the area for 25 years, political instability and the aggressive anti-government campaign by the Sendero Luminosos (Shining Path) guerrillas made Peru a virtual no-go area for ten years. By the time climbers did return, in the 1990s, the Carabaya, no longer having the lure of significant virgin summits, or peaks over 6,000 metres, slipped into relative obscurity until John Biggar led a commercial expedition to the area in 2005. From a base camp at Laguna Chungara, southeast of the Chichicapac massif, they climbed Chichicapac via a new route, the east glacier and north-east ridge, on June 14th, a technically straight-forward ascent which they graded alpine Facile. The following day Biggar and two others climbed the minor peak of Chichicapac South-East (ca 5285m), which they believed to be a first ascent. Scrambling and rock climbing on the north-west ridge up to British Very Severe followed an easy glacier on the south side. The party then moved their base camp to Laguna Chambine, west of Chichicapac and, on June 19th, Biggar and three others climbed an unnamed rock tower (ca 5267m) by two separate routes, the north ridge and west face. No location for this peak was given. They thought the summit may have been reached before but were fairly certain the climbs were new as there was clear evidence they had only recently emerged from the glacier. Ascents were also made of peaks they believed to be White Sail and Red Peak. The latter via a straight-forward scramble up the south ridge, possibly a first ascent. Various members of the team also climbed Quenamari (ca 5294m), which lies south of the main range, Iteriluma (ca 5270m), just south of Chichicapac, and an unnamed peak (ca 5057m) near Laguna Chambine, it's not clear if any of these were first ascents.

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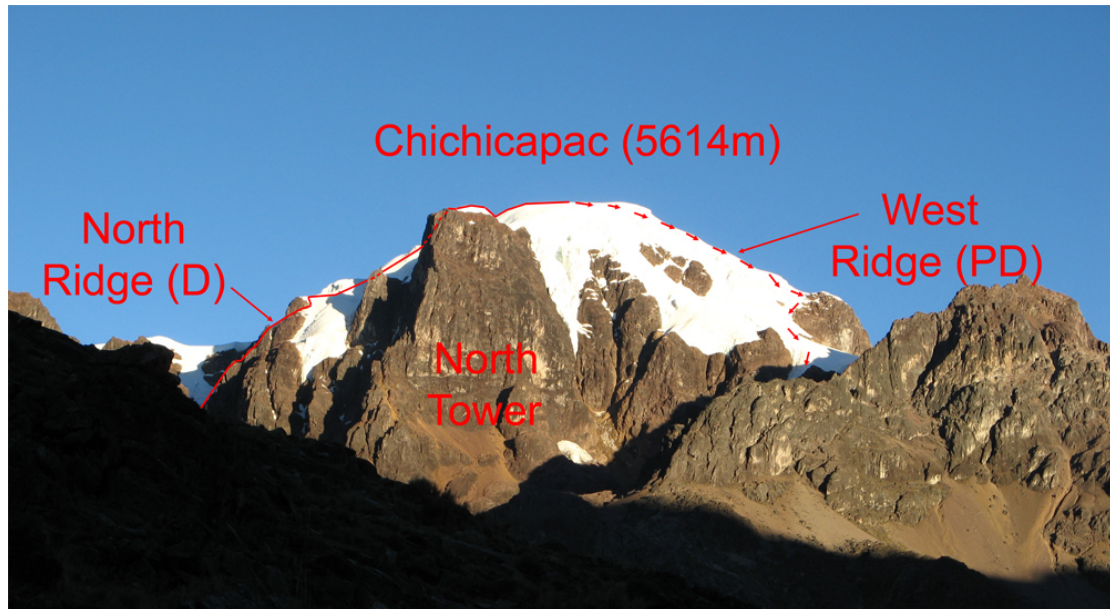
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The Routes

North Ridge of Chichicapac (5614m) D

Start from "Preston's Col" (5213m, S13° 56.377, W 070° 21.887), to the left of the very impressive North Tower. From the col, scramble leftwards to a belay under a deep chimney that cuts back towards the ridge.



- 1 25m (IV). Climb the chimney to an impasse under two huge chockstones.
- 2 10m (IV). Climb the right wall, exposed but on huge holds, to a platform.
- 3 45m (IV). Traverse right under a tower and climb a series of grooves to a platform at its top.
- 4 45m (V). Cross huge chockstones to the buttress beyond. Make a hard move to the right of the chockstones to get established on this and then climb up and rightwards to a niche. Turn the arete on the right to gain a shallow groove and follow this and the wall above trending left to the arete which leads to another platform.
- 5 40m (III). Scramble up the arete, cross a gully on the right via chockstones and continue to a stance under the final tower.
- 6 80m (II). Avoid the tower by snow on its right.
- 7 200m (I). Avoid the seracs by keeping to their right and continue to under the flank of the great North Tower.
- 8 400m (II). Climb a snow ramp flanking the tower on its left and continue on to a false summit.
- 9 80m (I). Drop down left a little and go up to the true summit (5614m, S13° 55.656, W 070° 21.934).

Descent was via the West Ridge which was not totally straightforward.

Jonathan Preston, Stephen Reid, Mike Cocker (VL), 29th June 2007

West Face of Mamacpac (5450m) PD+ (Hard Very Loose)

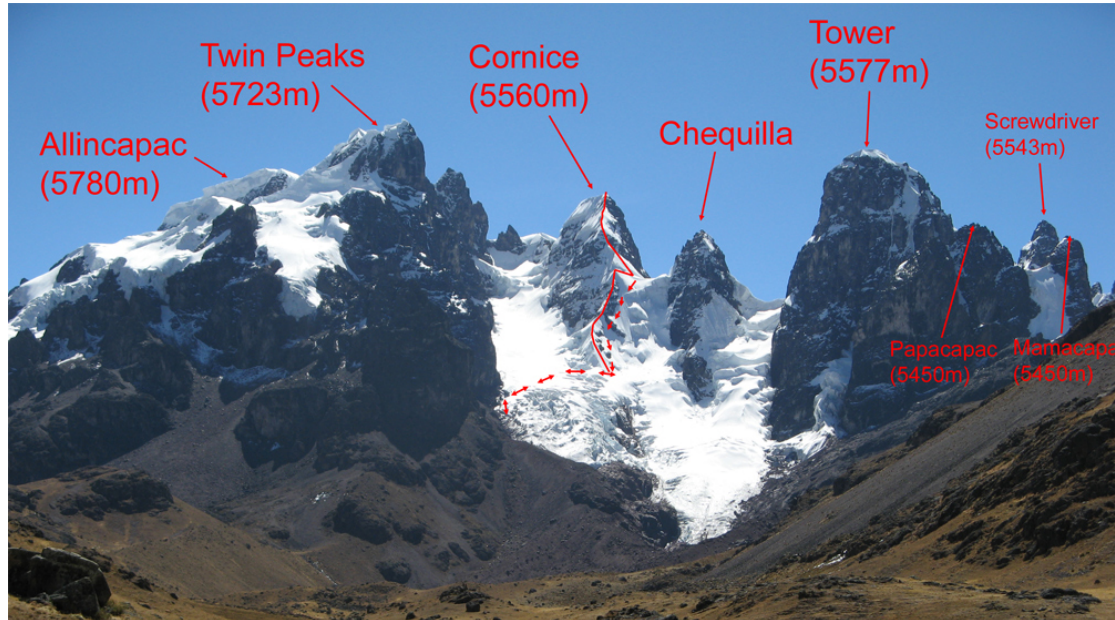
Start from a snow col" (ca 5400m, S13° 54.865, W 070° 23.913), between Mamcapac and Papacpac. This is easily gained from the north-east.

- 1 50m (III). From the highest snow traverse left then back right and straight up to easy rubble and a dodgy block belay.
- 2 50m (II). Scramble right and up a groove then trend leftwards and back right to just under the summit.
- 3 10m (I). Scramble to the top.

Mike Cocker, Stephen Reid, Jonathan Preston, 3rd July 2007

South Ridge of Cornice (5560m) D

Cross the glacier at its highest easily accessible point and start at the foot of the main snow arete, on its right flank. Move together up the flank/arete for ca 150m to an airy crest. Where this steepens take a rock belay on the right.



- 1 50m (V). Climb the crest then steep snow leftwards to rock before moving rightwards to a good rock belay.
- 2 45m (IV). Climb steep rock above the belay to a snow crest, which is followed to more rock.
- 3 50m+ (IV). Follow the snow arete over a bulge at 50m (axe belay).
- 4 20m (I). Traverse easily rightwards to the col.
- 5 50m (III). Climb steep snow ice, starting on the left and trending rightwards to overcome a crevasse. Belay at a higher crevasse.
- 6 50m (II). More snow ice leads to a stance on the left.
- 7 40m (IV). Climb up through the rock band to belay on the left, about 7m below the last rocks.
- 8 50m (IV). Move right and climb up to a snow arete and follow it (axe belay).
- 9 50m (II). Continue in the same line (axe belay).
- 10 50m (II). Continue in the same line to the start of a rock band.
- 11 40m (III). Follow the arete on friable rock to a good stance by a huge spike on the right.
- 12 40m (III). Climb up mixed ground to a snow arete which leads to the summit. A good belay lies a few metres down on the north side.

Jonathan Preston, Stephen Reid (AL), 29th June 2007

Descent was by reversing pitches 12 – 5 (pitch 7 was abseiled), then from the col, traverse down and hard leftwards (facing in). Keep descending down and leftwards, hugging the rocks, to avoid crevasses and regain the starting point. None of this lower section is more than grade I/II.

Notes

by
Stephen Reid

General & Travel: The unit of currency in Peru is the Sol which was worth about 15p at the time of our expedition. It is worth having lots of small denomination notes. US \$ are equally welcome, again take lots of small denomination notes. Traveller's Cheques were only accepted by banks, but most hotels and restaurants took credit cards.

Spanish is one of the three main languages spoken in Peru. English is not one of the others and relatively few Peruvians speak it, therefore a good knowledge of Spanish is essential in at least one member of the team.

We flew to Lima via Amsterdam with KLM, an airline that we cannot praise highly enough. They had a fairly liberal attitude to baggage allowances and we were all 1 or 2 kg overweight but did not get charged for it. We also managed to get 50+ litre rucksacks on board as hand luggage though we did try and make them look as small as we could. It pays to book as early as possible as the cost of the flights can increase by as much as £200/head as you get nearer to the date of leaving. Return flights from the UK to Lima cost us £784.25 each but probably could have been bought for £100 less had we booked as soon as they went on sale. Internal return flights from Lima to Juliaca were with LANair and were booked in advance via Limatours (<http://www.limatours.com.pe>) who were very helpful and efficient. They cost £123.25 each.

In Lima we stayed at the Hotel Sipan in Milaflores (<http://www.hirners.com/hotel/hotelsipan>). A room for three of us cost about £37 for a night and included a very basic breakfast and hot showers. The hotel was not perhaps quite as nice looking as its website implied and, like a few Langdale climbs, it was a tad overstarred but the staff were friendly and helpful and it was only a short walk into town. The price also included being met at the airport. The Rosa Nautica Restaurant (<http://www.larosanautica.com>) was fantastic (and in an amazing location) for about £20 a head we had a superb meal including wine and free Pisco sours.

In Puno we stayed at the Casona Plaza Hotel (<http://www.casonaplazahotel.com>) which was right in the town centre and did excellent smorgasbord-like breakfasts with loads of fresh fruit. Hot water was a little erratic – it paid to get up early. A room for three cost about £35 (after a bit of bartering) and some of the staff spoke English.

As part of our acclimatisation program we can recommend going out on to Lake Titicaca in a launch and visiting the famous islands. For arranging such excursions and also hire of a minibus to meet you at Juliaca, or take you to Macusani, we can recommend Lillian at Nayra Travel who speaks excellent English (<http://www.nayratravel.com>).

In Macusani we stayed at the Hotel el Dorado which was OK but rather noisy. It did at least have hot water at times. The family of Marco Gomez should be sought out as they own the valley containing Lago Chambine and should be able to help with horses etc (cost was 20 Sol per animal and 20 Sol per porter one way). However there are other valleys one could approach different parts of the range from.

Base Camp – Food: All food shopping can be done in Puno. There is a small supermarket near the main vegetable market where packet goods can be bought and it is well worth taking

sacks of fresh vegetables (potatoes, onions, carrots, garlic) to base camp as they will keep well for about two weeks. We bought these from the market in Puno, however if we had bought them in Macusani instead where there is also a market, then we probably could have caught the local bus rather than hiring a minibus and driver – this would have been much cheaper.

We also purchased base camp kit in Puno. Some of this could probably have been bought in Macusani but it is probably best to buy it in Puno rather than find out later that you can't get it elsewhere.

Stove: We took one MSR XGK with us and bought a "third world primus-type stove" in Puno. When purchasing the latter it is essential to also buy Prickers x 3, Heatproof Washers x 2, Rubber Washer for Lid x 1, Complete Spare Burner x 1, Adjustable Spanner x 1. It is not worth buying spare Jets unless you can also get the tool to replace them with. A wind shield would be handy – an MSR one would do.

Fuel: Parafin (Kerosene) can be bought in Macusani but benzino blanca (White Spirit for priming and for the MSR) is sold in the Ferreteria (ironmongers) in Puno, in 1 litre bottles. The plastic containers (20 and 10 litre) were also bought in Puno - use plastic bags as washers to stop them leaking. It is worth taking an extra one for water but important to label them clearly so as to prevent anyone filling up the kettle with benzino blanca (as happened with us!).

Shovel: A sharp steel one is essential for digging latrines.

Shelter: We could not find a suitable base camp cook tent for sale. In the end we bought some cheap polyester fabric from the market, a lot of 3mm polyester cord and two long reed poles that were as thick as bamboo. The intention was to make a tent but the poles did not survive a stormy night and in the end we constructed a windbreak/shady area for the food.

Other Kit: In addition to our high altitude cooking kit bought with us from the UK, the following were also really useful. An extra mug, bowl and plate each, a large cooking pot, saucepan, frying pan and kettle, spatula, wooden spoon, chopping board, sharp knife, plastic washbowl, washing up sponges and scourers and three times as many matches as you think you'll need. All the above were bought in Puno and given to the porters as a tip when we left and appeared to be very welcome.

Climbing Kit: Sleeping bags should be 4 season (ie at least 800g of high quality down) and clothing appropriate to summer alpine mountaineering should be taken with the addition of an extra-warm jacket as, although warm during the day, it gets very cold when the sun goes down. We used layering systems with down jackets as back up as Buffalo type gear would not have been versatile enough. We all wore 4 season leather climbing boots but did get quite cold feet on early morning glacier approaches. Tents need to be of the high mountain 4 season type. We took three 50m 8.1mm ropes (one spare) all of which had seen some use and gave them to the porters when we left. We had a full rack of cams from UK 00 to 3.5 (and were glad of them) as well as a good selection of wires, nuts and slings.

Maps: Peruvian IGM maps, sheet **29-v Macusani** and sheet **28-v Ayapata** can be purchased at the Peruvian IGM offices, Av. Aramburu 1190, San Isidro, Lima.

Heights: The heights given are guesstimates based on what we actually measured adjusted slightly for existing accepted heights. Thus:

Location	Measured	Accepted	Difference	Result
Base Camp	4605			
Chichicapac	5564	5614	+50m	5614
Mamacapac	5393 + ca 57	-	-	5450
Cornice	5660	5560	0m	5560

As the weather was fairly stable one would expect that if our measurements were 50m under for Chichicapac then the true height of Cornice should also be 50m higher but this would then make it higher than Tower which it clearly wasn't.

Expedition Accounts:

Costs (for 3 people)	£
Airfares (External and Internal)	2722.50
Costs in Peru (including food)	1473.00
Sub-total (total cost)	4195.50
MEF Grant	1550.00
BMC Grant	400.00
Total (less grants)	2245.50
Individual Cost (/3)	748.50

Acknowledgements: The expedition members are very grateful for the generous financial support they received from the **Mount Everest Foundation** (<http://www.mef.org.uk>) and the **British Mountaineering Council** (<http://www.thebmc.co.uk>) which virtually halved the cost of the expedition. It should be noted that applications to the MEF need to be submitted in the year before the expedition leaves.

We are also extremely grateful to His Excellency Ricardo V Luna, the Peruvian Ambassador in London, who furnished us with a letter of introduction in Spanish which came in useful on more than one occasion (a copy is reproduced in this report). We received a similar letter of introduction from Nick Colton of the BMC which was also useful in establishing our credentials.

The Alpine Club Library (<http://www.alpine-club.org.uk>) was invaluable in providing reports from previous expeditions to this area and should be a first port of call for anyone researching first ascent possibilities in the Greater Ranges. This service is free if you are a member, which you really should be if you are doing this sort of thing, otherwise a small charge is made.

Finally I would like to thank John Biggar, long time climbing partner and friend who first gave me the idea of going to the Cordillera Carabaya and furnished me with a considerable amount of information about the area. John's organisation (<http://www.andes.org.uk>) could take you on a very enjoyable expedition to the Carabaya (or anywhere else in South America for that matter) if you don't have time to organise one yourself.



The unclimbed **North Tower of Chichicapac** (5614m) catches the last rays of the setting sun prior to our successful first ascent of the **North Ridge** (D) which starts from the obvious col on the left and followed the rocky spur to easier snow and thence the summit.

Cover Photos from left to right and downwards:

1. Market in Puno.
2. Marco Gomez.
3. Lago Chambine.
4. An evening view of Chichicapac on the descent from Mamacapac.
5. High pass en route to Macusani.
6. A local inhabitant
7. Lady of the lake. A native of Uros (the Floating Reed Islands) plies her canoe.

Please note: all photos © Stephen Reid and Mike Cocker 2007

Embajada del Perú

A QUIEN CORRESPONDA

La Embajada del Perú en el Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte tiene a bien informar que el señor Stephen Reid, viajará al Perú liderando el grupo de expedicionarios conformado por los señores Jonathan Preston, Mike Cocker y Sally Bennett, con la finalidad de realizar el primer ascenso por la cara sur del Chichiccapac, en la Cordillera Carabaya. La expedición está siendo financiada por el 'Mount Everest Foundation' y el 'British Mountaineering Council', dos de los organismos más importantes relacionados al montañismo en el Reino Unido.

La expedición liderada por el Sr. Reid está respaldada y aprobada por el 'British Mountaineering Council' según lo manifiesta en la comunicación que se adjunta el Sr. Nick Colton, Director Ejecutivo de dicho organismo, y su Comité Internacional ha otorgado los fondos necesarios para la organización de dicha expedición.

En tal sentido, la Embajada del Perú en el Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte mucho agradecerá brinden las facilidades del caso al señor Stephen Reid y su grupo de expedicionarios.

Se extiende la presente a solicitud del interesado y para los fines que considere convenientes.

Londres, 10 de mayo, 2007



Ricardo V. Luna
Embajador



The letter of introduction kindly provided by the Peruvian Embassy