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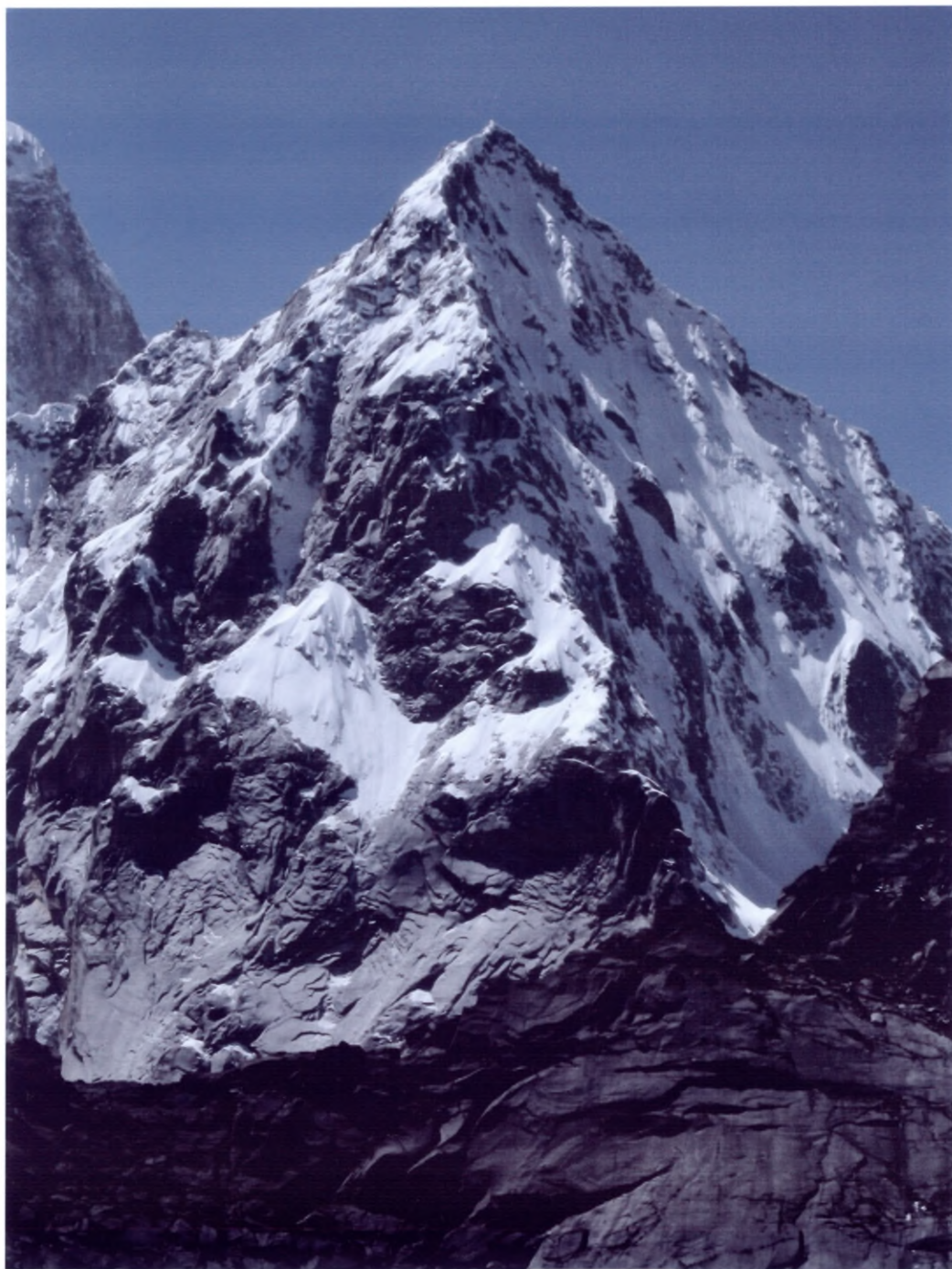


**BRITISH**  
**CORDILLERA BLANCA**

**2008**



## **Nameless Peak South Face**



# **CORDILLERA BLANCA 2008**

An expedition to explore and climb new routes in some overlooked and neglected areas of the Cordillera Blanca.

## **Abstract**

Towards the end of June Anthony Barton arrived in Huaraz and along with Olly Metherel undertook several trips into the Cordillera Blanca, joined in part by Jim Sykes and Tom Chamberlain.

The Cordillera Blanca still has a lot to offer climbers in search of new routes and surprisingly there remain areas close to some of the most popular quebradas that offer huge potential for exploration.

Access to the various areas mentioned in this report varies to some degree in respect of our main objective in the Quebrada Rajururi a longish day will have you in base camp if you are suitably acclimatised. As for the area explored on our initial foray into the mountains base camp was even easier to get too, although access to the unclimbed objectives discovered on the initial part of our trek would be a little more involved and a couple of days would be required to reach a base camp from Huaraz.

The weather in the Cordillera Blanca is normally extremely stable unless you happen to be visiting the mountains in an El Nino year which can affect the climate and climbing conditions considerably. This year the weather was somewhat unsettled, afternoon cloud being the norm and the large dumps of snow that fell early season would scupper our attempts to climb our main objective.

A short camping trip which included a couple of treks to view objectives in the Quebrada Rajururi helped with our acclimatisation before we set off on our first real trip to the mountains. Initially we intended to approach the Pongos/Raria Massif by the Quebrada Raria but a dispute between the local community and the national park forced us to approach this area from the far side of the range which entailed travelling to Chavin initially. Although no peaks were climbed, numerous unclimbed objectives were spotted along the way.

Our main trip into the Quebrada Rajururi resulted in two new routes and with one further last ditch effort to climb our main objective our expedition came to an end.

Report written by Anthony Barton.

**The compiler of this report and the members of the expedition agree that all or part of it may be copied for the purpose of private research.**

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Report written in October 2008.

## **Expedition Members**

The expedition was comprised of the following members and was sponsored by both the Mount Everest Foundation and the British Mountaineering Council.

Anthony Barton, British.

Oliver Metherel, British.

Jim Sykes, American and a resident of Huaraz who joined Olly and Anthony on the first ascent of Cop Out.

Tom Chamberlain, British who joined Olly and Anthony on a last ditch attempt on our main objective.

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## **Introduction**

This season was my seventh spent in Peru and this expedition had me along with my climbing partners returning to areas previously visited on several occasions. Indeed I visited Quebrada Raria in 2007 as part of my acclimatisation that year making an ascent of Nevado Raria and I had had trekked over to Chavin the previous year. As for the Quebrada Rajaruri I first visited that Quebrada in 2006 it being one of the few I had not managed to visit previously. I returned the following year with Jim Sykes to climb the highest of the Huaytapallana peaks.

Research done since has shown no evidence that anyone had previously climbed on Cerro Huaytapallana and that the nameless peak northeast of Huaytapallana was unclimbed, we decided to spend most of our time in this Quebrada. It would have been pointless trying to climb technical rock early on in the expedition so our first major foray into the mountains was more trekking with mountaineering objectives in mind.

I met up with Olly Metherel in Lima and we travelled to Huaraz on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June we made our first trip into the mountains on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June and our last on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August.

All in all I along with my climbing partners made four forays into the mountains in order to try and achieve those objectives detailed in the application submitted to the Mount Everest Foundation. I believe we gave it our best shot and we managed to make the first ascent of Huaytapallana II (slightly higher summit block not climbed) and put up two new routes on that peak. We also explored the little visited Quebrada Puchua which offers excellent potential for new routing.



## **Welcome to Peru**

### **Arrival:**

Upon arrival you will find yourself at Jorge Chaves international airport, which is located on the outskirts of Lima. Immigration and customs is usually a formality however you should make sure that they write the correct number of days in your passport. As a British citizen you are entitled to 90 days however sometimes they write 60 or even 30 over your entry stamp. If you exceed what is written in your passport you may encounter problems applying for an extension or be required to pay a fine when you pass through immigration on the way out of the country. It will cost you \$1 per extra day payable in either US dollars or Peruvian soles.

Finally make sure you use a registered taxi to take you into the centre of Lima, ask to see his ID card. You should pay around \$10 to Miraflores or Lima.

### **Money:**

Cash dollars and euros can be changed on the street (beware of forged notes and poor exchange rates), in casa de cambios and in banks. Make sure all your \$ bills are in perfect condition, any torn or well used notes or notes with writing on will almost certainly be refused. There are a lot of forgeries on the streets so ask a local as to the best way to check your money. They counterfeit every note and coin and I was amazed to find myself in possession of a fake 50 centavo coin (9 pence) at one time during my stay.

As of writing your £ is worth around 5 soles 29 centavos.

### **Accommodation:**

You can pay anything from 5 soles a night upwards for a room, in some small towns you would find it difficult to get a room worth any more than 5 soles however in major towns and cities there is a wide range on offer.

Generally if you are looking for a clean hotel with a hot shower you should expect to pay around 30 to 40 soles for a single, a little more and cable TV may be available! Expect prices to be higher in major cities and in the more exclusive districts of Lima such as Miraflores. If you want to pay a little more there are bargains to be had and I found an excellent hotel in Miraflores for 70 soles.

### **Food & Cooking:**

As you would imagine restaurants serving most types of food can be found in Lima however in smaller towns expect the standard set menus or fried chicken. A meal can be had for as little as 2 soles however a 2 sole set menu could give you more than just a full stomach so be warned. Lunch or almuerzo served between 12 and 2pm is the main meal of the day and a set menu of three or four courses is the norm. Dinner or cena is a lighter affair normally consisting of a couple of courses. Choosing a set menu is by far the most economical form of dining out and nearly all restaurants offer a range of set menu choices.

As for mountain supplies there are some excellent shops and markets in Huaraz and this would offer more of a choice than the markets in smaller towns and villages. Most villages have shops and it is always possible to find the basics but for a good choice I would recommend a visit to the market in Huaraz before heading out to the mountains.

I use a combination of stoves, generally an MSR XGK II with petrol or benzina and a gas burning hanging stove on the mountain. It is possible to buy gas in Huaraz at several shops and agencies, in Huaraz you should expect to pay around 20 soles for the standard sized canister.

I would also consider taking some freeze dried meals and I would recommend the Reiter meals which can be bulked out with a bit of potato powder. They really come in handy for high camps or bivi's. Something else I took this time around was a selection of Shwartz packet sauces which proved to be excellent.

### **Getting about:**

In Lima it is best to use registered taxis between districts and should cost around 8 to 12 soles depending on which district you are travelling to and from and at what time of day, expect to pay 3 to 5 soles for trips within the same district. There are numerous bus companies who travel to Huaraz and you will find details of the bus companies I have found to offer an excellent service in the appendix. Travelling to Huaraz can be an extremely comfortable experience if you take the bus cama, this service comes complete with hostess, movies, food and the all important fully reclining seat. Less expensive buses exist to the above mentioned destination however when a bus cama costs around 50 soles it seem silly not to take the opportunity to travel in total comfort. Day buses usually leave around noon or 1pm and night buses leave around 11pm and these times are the same in either direction. Expect to be on the bus 8hrs on the way up and as little as 7hrs on the way down! There is a baggage limit of 20kg but most of this time this weight limit is not enforced. Once in Huaraz 2 soles will get you to your hotel.

Getting to the start of the trek (Quebrada Rajururi) is fairly straightforward a micro from Huaraz which leaves from the bridge 1 block north of Raymondi will get you to Yungay in 1 ½ hours for around 3.5 soles. A taxi from there to road head at Queushu where there are ruins a lake and excellent bouldering on perfect granite will cost around 25 soles and take about 1 hour. It is possible to call in at Llanganuco lodge 5 minutes from the lake and arrange a taxi to take you back to Yungay.

As far as access to Quebrada Raria, it is normally quite easy to get on one of the many tourist buses leaving Huaraz for Pastoruri however this was impossible due to a dispute we therefore crossed the range to Chavin. Buses run several times a day at 10 soles for the 1 hour 20 minute trip. A taxi for 35 soles will get you to Pichiu where mules can be hired for the trek. We found it impossible to hire animals in Quebrada Raria and because there were no vehicles on the road to Pastoruri we were forced to hike all the way out to Catac. Micros leave at regular intervals throughout the day for Huaraz which is no more than an hour away this trip will cost you 2 soles.

**Safety:**

Finally a note on safety, I believe Peru to be a relatively safe place and attacks on mountaineers are rare however your belongings are constantly at risk. Never leave your personal effects unguarded. Even on the premier bus services your hand luggage is at risk from thieves, I prefer putting everything into my checked baggage. I have never had any trouble on the cheaper services but I always make sure my baggage is secure and leave it to the last minute before taking my seat. Try to avoid having too much kit strapped to the outside of your pack. Better still wrap it in a large sack which can be bought from the market for a few soles, it will also protect it from the weather and dust.

Once in camp there is the dilemma of leaving base camp unattended, there is always the possibility of theft. In the area covered by this report access is via mining trails and these trails are much frequented by the miners even as far as the glacier edge, we did leave our camp unattended and experienced no problems although on other trips out with the Cordillera Blanca I have had problems with theft.

Should you decide not to leave your camp unguarded there is always a possibility of hiring a local too look after your camp while you are in the mountains around 30 soles a day plus food would probably cover it.

**Further information can be found in the appendix at the end of this report.**

## **Queushu (30 June to 02 July)**

Having just arrived in Huaraz we decided a day bouldering at Huanchac may be a way of gaining some acclimatisation and touching rock for the first time. It showed us we were a fair way from being ready for rock climbing above 4500mts and so we decided a short camping trip and a chance to scope our objectives would be the order of the day.

We left the following morning at 7am and after taking the micro to Yungay then a taxi to Queushu we arrived at the lake around 10:30am. We found a wonderful campsite by the lake and set up camp.

We left camp soon after and walked up Quebrada Rajururi, taking it slowly we passed the spot where ice collectors remove large chunks of the glacier for transportation to Yungay and shortly after that the graves of several locals killed in a ice avalanche which fell from the unstable glacier above. We did not venture much higher as the altitude was beginning to take effect and we turned around at about 4200mts. It didn't take us to long to descend back to camp at a more comfortable 3500mts.

The following day dawned bright and we set of early, this time we attacked the slopes behind camp directly with the intention of gaining a different perspective of our objectives. A brutally steep and unrelenting climb followed and it was several hours before a spectacular view began to unfold before our eyes.

We mostly followed the ridge overlooking Quebrada Rajururi although higher up we were forced to detour rightwards to avoid some steep rocky towers however we managed to gain the ridge once again higher up which allowed us a great view of the southwest face of Cerro Huaytapallana II. We did not linger as we were again beginning to feel the effects, we had climbed to 4600mts which was pretty good going considering we were at sea level 4 days prior to this hike.

After a chilly night we were once again greeted by blue skies and we decided to explore the bouldering possibilities surrounding the lake. We had arranged for a taxi to pick us up at noon and so after breaking camp we headed for the rocks. The boulders turned out to be excellent comprising of the most perfect granite and with problems to suit all abilities, it was a shame we didn't have more time to fully explore the area.

We were soon back in Huaraz feeling pretty good about our little trip, a bit of trekking, a good look at our objectives and a bit of bouldering not bad for a first outing.....

## **Pongos/Raria massif (05 July to 13 July)**

After a couple of days in Huaraz we were ready for our first major foray into the mountains. Our initial plan was to join one of the many tour buses heading to Pastoruri as I did last year to get to the road head however we were told by one of the

agencies that there was a dispute and nobody was allowed access to that area. A visit to the park authorities confirmed this and we were forced to consider our options.

I had trekked up the Quebrada Raria crossed the pass and hiked down the Quebrada on the other side of the range two years before and thought why not approach our objectives from the far side of the range where there is no park entry. Olly agreed and thought it would be a good way to acclimatise and see a bit more of what the area had to offer. We bought tickets and left for Chavin on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>, we decided to spend the night in Chavin and use our time wisely so as soon as we arrived in Chavin we were on our way to Pichiu the starting point of our trek which is about 30 minutes from Chavin.

It didn't take long to secure animals for the next day and we arranged to meet them at the start of the trail at 8am. We were soon on our way back to Chavin and to our hotel on the main square, Chavin being a popular place to visit has a number of decent hotels and restaurants. The main tourist attraction is a nearby archaeological site and Olly made the most of his time in Chavin by paying a visit to the site.

Our taxi arrived at 7:30am and we were soon on our way, we arrived at the road head at the prearranged time and were surprised to see that our arriero did not look too familiar and he explained that the other chap couldn't make it. Same deal however, 140 soles to get us to our base camp at the head of the Quebrada Raria in two days.

Our arriero set off at a blistering pace and we gained height rapidly, too rapidly and I asked him to slow down. I got the feeling something was afoot and after about 4 1/2 hours we had reached our proposed camp site at an altitude of about 4100mts. It soon became obvious that he wanted to get us over the pass, collect his 140 soles and get back home. Unfortunately there was no way we could cross the pass that day as I was beginning to feel the effects of the altitude and it would have been crazy to cross a pass at 4700mts and set up camp at 4600mts that day.

We were fortunate to meet a family heading down to Pichiu as we were unloading our kit and managed to arrange animals for the following day. We paid our man 70 soles and settled on a price of 70 soles for animals for the following day. As we set up camp I developed a fairly severe headache and was feeling none too clever, I was glad that we had stopped Olly was by contrast feeling fine.

We had arranged with our arriero to leave at 7am and he arrived just as we were packing up and we left a little after 7am, it was a bitterly cold morning and we were glad of the sun when it finally arrived. When I had trekked down this Quebrada two years prior the weather had been terrible and I was happy to finally see the mountains and what a terrific sight it was. I was sure very few climbers had been this way prior to our visit and the peaks seemed very approachable and to offer numerous possibilities for new routes (see pictures on page 13). It was looking like our change of plan was paying off and we were indeed covering some very interesting terrain.

We arrived at base camp after 4 1/2 hrs and I was again feeling the altitude indeed so was Olly but not to the same extent. It didn't take long to get the tent up and it was with relief that I could get into the tent and lie down.

**Nevado Jatunllacsa east face**



**Nevado Shahuanca south face**





The morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> was somewhat grey, the weather was looking poor and I was feeling none to good so a day in camp seemed like the right option. Although I felt better as the day progressed I was aware that I was suffering from more than just the altitude.

After such a lazy day we felt the need to get out and explore the area so we decided to try and climb a rock peak just above camp, we also took some gear along just in case. The weather again was poor and we didn't get a very good view from the top the peak but it was an interesting viewpoint and we had gained a little more altitude as the top was about 4800mts.

We had noticed from camp some interesting looking crags just below the summit of our little rock peak and upon closer inspection one of those crags proved to be of the most excellent clean granite and we soon had a rope down the face. It was nice to be climbing rock and after warming up on top rope Olly went on to lead a route in his trainers, a rather sparsely protected affair but none to difficult. Climbing rock at 4800mts gave us a good idea as to where we were in relation to our main objective and we were glad to be warming up on a snowy peak as opposed to steep rock. We were soon in camp and again I was glad to be in the tent, I was not feeling at all well, my sinuses were blocked and I had no appetite.

The day after returning from our little excursion we had decided to have a go at getting to high camp on Nevado Pongos the next day and it was with some reservations that we set off the following morning with rather heavy sacs. We took it slowly as the terrain was steep and fairly loose, it did however ease off after a while and we soon came upon the perfect camp site. It took a bit of time but we managed to construct a level platform and get the tent up. Our camp was at an altitude of about 4950mts and not far from the edge of the glacier. We had a fantastic view of our objective (see pictures on page 15) and we could also see the normal if seldom climbed route from the Quebrada Raria side.

The weather deteriorated again that evening and the following morning, the 11<sup>th</sup> we decided to spend a day in camp. This was primarily to see what the weather would do as it seemed to be getting worse day by day and also to see if my condition would improve. That evening it snowed heavily for three hours and along with the poor weather of the previous two days it was looking less likely that we were going to get onto the mountain.

The following morning dawned bright and Olly and I discussed our options and it seemed like the right decision was to head down given the fresh snow and my deteriorating health, if I was going to get well it would be in Huaraz not sitting in a tent at almost 5000mts.

We left camp around 10am and after a steep descent we were back on the main trail, when I say main trail it was little more than a faint path in places testifying to the lack of visitors this Quebrada receives. We soon made it to the small settlement in the lower part of the Quebrada but were astounded to find that nobody was keen to help us ferry our kit out of the mountains. It looking like a long day and we decided to head for the most direct route to Catac which meant crossing another pass at 4650mts.

**Nevado Pongos southeast ridge**



**Nevado Raria point 5504 west ridge**



It was torture carrying our packs over this pass and it soon dawned on us that we were going to have to carry our kit all the way to Catac, to camp or not to camp was the question and we decided on the latter.....

We arrived in Catac at 10:30pm after 12 1/2hrs on the go covering approximately 35km we were as you can imagine exhausted however we soon found accommodation and fortunately their kitchens were open so all in all we were quite lucky.

We awoke the following morning feeling somewhat stiff and a tad weary, we didn't have to wait too long before we were on our way to Huaraz and a few days chilling out. All in all it had been an interesting trip even considering the fact that we had not succeeded in climbing any of our objectives. It was also good to know that I indeed had a problem with my sinuses and I immediately began to a course of antibiotics.

### **Cerro Huaytapallana (17 July to 25 July)**

It was great to get back to Huaraz and relax but before long you begin to get itchy feet and it wasn't long before we were again ready to head for the hills. We had contacted Jim when we first arrived in Huaraz and although he had decided against joining us on our first trip to the mountains he was extremely keen to get back to Cerro Huaytapallana.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> Jim and I decided to visit Llanganuco Lodge and its owner Charlie Good hoping that he would be able to help organising animals to transport all our kit to base camp. As it happened he was only too happy to oblige and we also managed to arrange for a camp guardian, I doubted that we would have a problem but for 30soles a day it seemed silly not to have someone looking after camp.

We arrived at the Llanganuco Lodge a little after 10am and an hour or so later we were off, our guardian was going to come up the following morning. We had a donkey and a mule and having hiked up to base camp the year before I was a little worried about whether the animals could make it as the trail is quite steep and overgrown in places. In the end we did make it to camp but the animals found it really tough and we had to carry some of the load, the arriero ended up carrying the donkeys load entirely. I think porters are the way forward however we made it but it was getting late as we put the tents up at what must be one of the best camp sites in the Blanca.

The following morning our guardian arrived at 8am and we left camp a couple of hours later our intention being to get to the col between Cerro Huaytapallana and Nameless Peak. After several hours we finally arrived at the col, it had been a straightforward but hard climb up mostly loose scree and boulders for the last 300mts or so. The col at 4950mts was around 600mts above camp and if we were to have a go at Nameless Peak then we would probably be better of putting in a high camp as there were good sites for a tent.

One difference to the previous year was the amount of snow on Nameless Peak, it was absolutely plastered and we all thought that it was not really feasible and with that we left the col and headed back down to the moraine ridge. We soon left the ridge and



**Cerro Huaytapallana**



made our way around to the foot of Huaytapallana II with the intention of picking a line for the following day. After some discussion we decided to go for the direct up its west face, 40minutes later we are back in camp relaxing.

We left camp on the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> at first light and just over an hour later Jim was inching his way up the initial slabs, not too difficult but very thin on gear he reaches a belay and we are soon with him and he is off again covering much the same ground to belay below a white crack and groove. The way ahead looks steeper but a line just right of the crack and groove looks good and Olly is on his way.

Some delightful climbing leads us into a groove the way ahead certainly steeper and the bulge just above the belay looks tricky. Olly stays in the lead and he is soon at the bulge, managing to excavate a few runners to protect what is the first technical crux, the climbing for this and the next pitch which Olly also leads is stunning, beautiful climbing on perfect granite in a superb situation with just enough gear to make it safe.

It is now my turn to have a go at the sharp end and I am soon scraping my way up a steep little corner fortunately it is soon past and easier slabby terrain leads me to a spacious belay where Jim and Olly soon join me. I step out left and I am immediately balancing my way up superb granite slabs which lead me to a steeper groove. At this point I am beginning to notice just how far I am from my last piece and looking at the ground ahead I try and get something. The second crux follows, the groove steepens and I try to find something positive. The climbing is tricky and the gear I placed is now well below me and it is utterly useless, luckily I am soon over the top and at the belay feeling a little light headed.

Olly and Jim join me at the belay they are worried that we are running out of time it is 2pm and there is only 4 hours of daylight left. They want to head down I want to carry on confident that I can find a way down in the dark, we finally make a compromise and Olly heads for easier ground out left and after two quick pitches he is on the ridge. The next pitch is just perfect, beautiful climbing up the ridge, exposed interesting and again on perfect granite unfortunately we are soon stopped by a gendarme and with no easy way around we decide to head down. Olly scrambles down to a belay and he makes the first rappel, I make the next two and we find ourselves at the foot of the much shorter north face.

We wander down scree and slabs trying to contour back round to our starting point, it is now beginning to get dark and we make another two rappels to get back to easy safe terrain. Jim retrieves our sacs while Olly and I sort out the gear. We pick our way down the hillside and we are soon in camp being greeted by a rather worried Guardian. As we eat dinner Jim tells us that although he enjoyed the climbing he felt that it was enough for him and that he was going to head down the following day.

We were feeling pretty tired so we decided to have a rest day and after we had bid farewell to Jim we spent the rest of the day relaxing and contemplating our next move. We really wanted to get to the top of Huaytapallana II and thought our best chance of getting to the summit was probably by the north ridge.



## **Olly on the north ridge of Huaytapallana II**





We were still feeling a little weary the next morning and thought we would have another rest day. We did however wander over to the start of our proposed route and leave two ropes fixed to the rappel anchors we had placed two days before. As we were fixing our ropes the weather began to deteriorate and it snowed that night, this put paid to our plans and we were forced to take another rest day while it snowed on and off throughout the day.

We awoke to blue skies but the rock was streaked with water and we decided to give it one more day in the hope that the weather would remain stable and allow the cliffs to dry out, it did and we ate dinner that evening under a clear sky and sure enough we awoke to blue skies. It was however bitterly cold and as we climbed up the ropes we had fixed previously we soon began to warm up. We were soon at the start of the route proper and I led the first easy pitch my feet very quickly becoming numb with the cold.

Olly led the next pitch which led into a gully with a large chockstone at its top, by now my feet were completely without feeling and Olly let me off the hook and led the next pitch. The sun was still some way off and we would need to get out of the gully before we would feel its warming rays. I arrived at the chockstone and immediately removed my rockboots and wrapped my toes in my duvet jacket, Olly again took the lead and I felt rather envious of him as he entered the sunlight. Olly had took the only real option by chimneying up the right hand side of the chockstone and I found it difficult to follow having to remove my rucksack to allow progress. I arrived at the belay, a tiny exposed ledge on the ridge proper and as I warmed up Olly continued climbing what was to be the best pitch of the trip so far, serious with just enough gear but perfect.

We were now on a real alpine ridge narrow, exposed and a chance for me to get back into the lead. The climbing was delightful, interesting well protected and with a stupendous outlook, Olly led though and we were soon on the summit or should I say the first summit (north). Barely 100mts away was another summit (south) this comprising of a huge block and barely higher than the top we were on. We were happy with our efforts and after checking the altitude (5025mts) we decided to head down, a short scramble led us to a large ledge. We made 4 rappels down the north face reaching almost the same spot as our previous rappel several days before. Unlike our previous experience we had plenty of time to get back to camp and arrived in time to cook whilst soaking up the last of the sun's rays.

The following day the weather was a little unsettled and to be honest we were somewhat weary and so spent the day in camp, to our surprise the following morning our arriero arrived at 7am and so it wasn't long before we were on our way down. In no time we were back at Llanganuco Lodge having a cold drink whilst waiting for our taxi. We made it back to Huaraz late afternoon which was handy as we had tickets for the night bus to Lima. All in all it was a great trip with two new routes and an unclimbed summit to boot. Detailed topos and route descriptions can be found in the appendix.

## **Nameless Peak (11 August to 13 August)**

Although the expedition was effectively over Olly, Tom and I were looking for one last trip into the mountains after an unsuccessful visit to the Cordillera Central. Tom was keen to try something new and after seeing pictures of Nameless peak he wanted to give it a shot.

To save time we decided to spend a night at Llanganuco Lodge and try and make high camp in one push using porters. We arrived at the lodge mid afternoon and spent the day relaxing.

The following morning our porters arrived and we were soon on our way, it was a long hard slog especially for the porters but we made high camp at 4pm after a punishing 1400mt climb. It took an hour or so to level a couple of sites for the tents and we cooked dinner just as the sun began to set. We were camped on the col which was fairly exposed and a bitterly cold wind soon had us scurrying into our tents and getting into our sleeping bags.

Alarms were set for 3am and we settled down for the night, the weather looked perfect and we were optimistic. There seemed much less snow than the last time Olly and I had climbed to this col and with no real snowfall for the last month we were fairly sure the existing snowpack would have consolidated to some degree.

We awoke after a fitful nights sleep and I found that I was experiencing some rather strange symptoms, I had taken Diamox for the first time to try and secure a good nights sleep and although initially it had the desired effect later on I began to feel unwell. Tom confirmed my suspicions and it seemed like I was suffering some side effects unfortunately I did not feel well enough to attempt the climb.

Olly and Tom had breakfast and geared up leaving a little after 4am, I could hear them as they made their way to the foot of the face, it was not long before I heard them beginning to descend and after barely two hrs they were back in camp. Unfortunately the snow had not consolidated and conditions were desperate and dangerous so it was back into the tent to await the arrival of the sun.

As we packed up the wind began to increase and it looked like the weather was about to change, it was nice to get off the col and begin the descent although none of us were particularly looking forward to carrying our packs down to Llanganuco Lodge. As we descended cloud began to obscure the tops and by the time we reached Llanganuco Lodge the weather looked none to pleasant on the mountain. Charlie phoned us a taxi and we relaxed with a cold drink knowing this was our last trip of the season.

Three hours later we were back in Huaraz another season over.....

## Conclusion

Our expedition this year was different in that our objectives included both mixed routes and pure rock, in fact our trip into the Quebrada Rajururi included both mixed and pure rock objectives. The fact that we would be climbing on lower altitude peaks gave us a better chance of success given the unsettled weather conditions that we encountered.

I had known about the possibilities in the Quebrada Raria for some time and those objectives remain intact however this trip apart from giving us some much needed acclimatisation also allowed us to venture into a very infrequently visited Quebrada. We had the good fortune to experience excellent weather and so were able to see just how much the Quebrada Puchua could offer the adventurous climber looking for unclimbed objectives which are accessible, relatively free from objective danger and not technically desperate.

Our main trip and main objective was to fully explore the Quebrada Rajururi with a view to making first ascents of several unclimbed rock and mixed routes in the vicinity. Although we experienced some inclement weather we still managed to fully explore the area, climb to new routes and make the first ascent of Huatapallana II (more or less).

All in all I guess our expedition was a success and we certainly managed to cover a fair bit of ground. Our new routes were hard won considering that we spent a total of 22 days in the mountains.

The Cordillera Blanca remains one of the most beautiful mountain ranges in the world and still relatively free from red tape, rumours abound but if you have an Alpine Club membership card then you can still go pretty much where you want in the Blanca. If you are prepared to look for them new route possibilities abound on every medium, and they are major lines and not just filling in gaps and if you are lucky there are still a few unclimbed peaks out there,.....

# **Appendices**

## **Itinerary**

### **Queushu Trip:**

**Day 01** 30 June: Trek up Quebrada Rajururi.

**Day 02** 01 July: Trek onto Cerro Huaytapallana.

**Day 03** 02 July: Pack upcamp and return to Huaraz.

### **Pongos/Raria Trip:**

**Day 04** 05 July: Travel to Chavin.

**Day 05** 06 July: Trek into Quebrada Pachua.

**Day 06** 07 July: Trek to Base Camp by Lagunas Raria.

**Day 07** 08 July: Rest day.

**Day 08** 09 July: Climb small rock peak/rock climbing.

**Day 09** 10 July: Trek to High Camp on Nevado Pongos.

**Day 10** 11 July: Rest day.

**Day 11** 12 July: Trek to Catac.

**Day 12** 13 July: Return to Huaraz.

### **Cerro Huaytapallana trip:**

**Day 13** 17 July: Trek to Base Camp.

**Day 14** 18 July: Recce area.

**Day 15** 19 July: Climb Cop Out.

**Day 16** 20 July: Rest day.

**Day 17** 21 July: Fix ropes on approach slabs.

**Day 18** 22 July: Rest day (poor Weather).

**Day 19** 23 July: Rest day (wet rock).

**Day 20** 24 July: Climb Last Exit.

**Day 21** 25 July: Rest Day.

**Day 22** 26 July: Trek out and return to Huaraz.

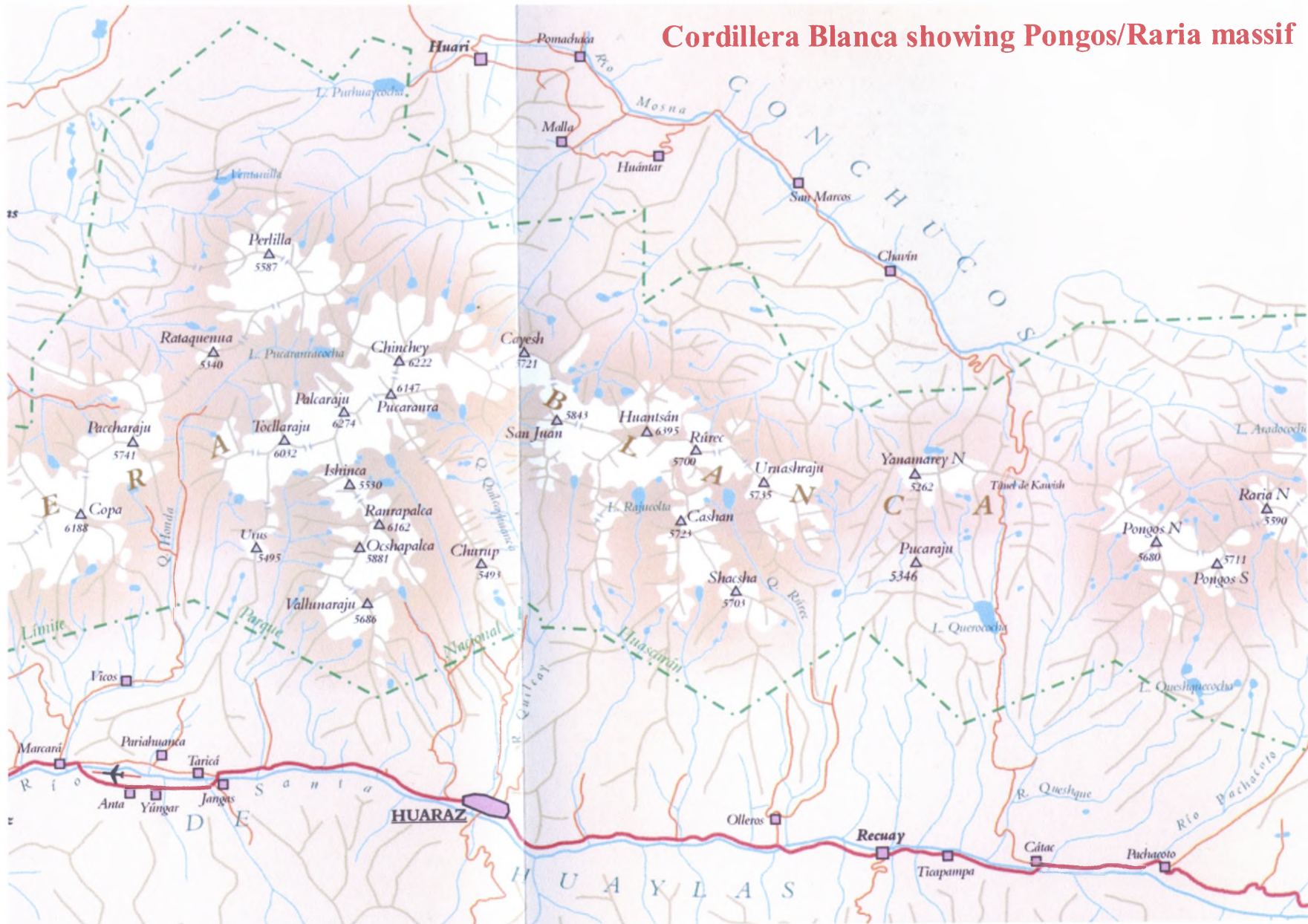
### **Nameless Peak trip:**

**Day 23** 11 August: Travel to Llanganuco Lodge.

**Day 24** 12 August: Trek to High camp.

**Day 25** 13 August: Attempt new route, trek out and return to Huaraz.

## Cordillera Blanca showing Pongos/Raria massif













**Cerro Huaytapallana (5025mts) North face**





Cerro Huaytapallana (5025mts) West face  
Cop Out VI, TD, 375mts, E1 5a



## **Route Description for Last Exit Cerro Huatapallana II North Ridge**

**LAST EXIT: VI, TD, 375mts, E1 5a**

*Pitch 01: 60mts, 4a, climb leftwards onto a broad ridge, follow this ridge to reach a belay.*

*Pitch 02: 50mts, 4b, continue following ridge aiming to reach the left hand of two faults and belay.*

*Pitch 03: 60mts, 5a, follow fault into a gully and climb this until a large chockstone is reached at the very top of the gully, belay below this chockstone.*

*Pitch 04: 25mts, 5a, gain top of chockstone by following a narrow chimney on its right hand side, from top of chockstone climb directly up the ridge passing a loose flake to reach a small ledge and very exposed belay below a steep corner.*

*Pitch 05: 60mts, 5a, step left and follow steep slabby ground left of the corner, more slabs and short walls lead to an airy belay on the ridge proper.*

*Pitch 06: 60mts, 4b, follow ridge staying as close to the crest as possible to reach a large ledge and belay.*

*Pitch 07: 60mts, 4b, continue along ridge to arrive at the south summit and a belay.*

To descend retrace steps to large flat ledge below an area of broken ground not far from summit. Make four rappels down Cerro Huaytapallana II steep north face. An easy scramble and short walk lead to an area of slabs. Two more rappels gain easy ground below Cerro Huaytapallana II west face.

## **Route Description for Cop Out Cerro Huatapallana II West Face**

**COP OUT: VI, TD+, 560mts, E1 5a**

*Pitch 01: 60mts, 4b, start in niche below grassy crack, climb slabs to reach aforementioned crack and continue up a short corner to belay.*

*Pitch 02: 55mts, 4b, climb directly to a bay and belay below an obvious white vegetated crack and groove.*

*Pitch 03: 50mts, 4b, trend rightwards to reach a corner groove system right of the white vegetated crack and groove, belay below bulge.*

*Pitch 04: 60mts, 5a, surmount bulge and continue following corner groove until a leftwards traverse presents itself. Follow this traverse for several metres then continue directly before stepping right to belay.*

*Pitch 05: 50mts, 4c, continue directly climbing slabs and grooves to reach a belay.*

*Pitch 06: 60mts, 4c, climb slabs to an obvious corner, climb this and more slabby ground to large ledge and a belay.*

*Pitch 07: 60mts, 5a, step left and climb slabs to reach a clean cut corner, climb corner and bulge at its top to gain another large ledge and belay.*

*Pitch 08: 45mts, 4a, follow easy ground bearing slightly left to reach a belay.*

*Pitch 09: 60mts, 4a, follow a rising traverse left across slabby terrain to reach a notch and a belay on the ridge.*

*Pitch 10: 60mts, 4b, follow ridge to a belay below a steep tower.*

From this point scramble down to the left to find belay and make three rappels down Cerro Huaytapallana II steep north face. An easy scramble and short walk lead to an area of slabs. Two more rappels gain easy ground below Cerro Huaytapallana II west face.



## **Budget**

**Transportation: £223**

**Arriero's, Porters and Guardians: £174**

**Food: £439**

**Accommodation: £258**

**Misc items: £75**

**Flights: £1560**

**Insurance: £594**

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE - £3323**

## **Useful addresses and information**

Below you will find a list of services that we found both excellent and of good value, Huaraz has an excellent choice of restaurants, bars and club's. It seems superfluous to go into detail regarding restaurants etc as you will have no difficulty in finding a restaurant meeting both your budget and choice of menu. In regards to the other towns we passed through, there was little in the way to be recommended as most places we ate and stayed were on a par with each other.

### **Maps:**

The areas discussed in this report are covered by the Alpenvereinskarte maps sheets 0/3a Cordillera Blanca North and 0/3b Cordillera Blanca South. These are excellent maps although they still contain the odd inaccuracy.

For Peruvian IGN maps:

Instituto Geografico Nacional – Avenida A. Aramburu 1190-1198, Lima 34.

Open Monday to Friday 8am to 5:30pm.

It is worth mentioning that most of the IGN maps are fairly inaccurate, they are produced from very old aerial surveys and they have never been updated. Expect to find roads, mines, dams and many other structures which will not be shown on your map. Place names can be a problem, lakes, mountains and towns can all be incorrectly named.

### **Information:**

La Casa de Guías – Parque Ginebra 28G, Huaraz.

### **Gear repairs and manufacture:**

Yuraq Janka – Pasaje Agutin Loli 465, Soledad, Huaraz.

### **Transportation:**

For Huaraz, Julio Cesar – Jose Galves 562, La Victoria, Lima.

For Chavin, Chavin Express – Mariscal Caceres 328, Huaraz.

### **Hotels:**

Hotel Maria Luisa – Pasaje Tello 241, Miraflores, Lima.

Albergue Churup – Jr Amadeo Figueroa 1257, La Soledad, Huaraz.

### **Food:**

There are several small supermarkets in Huaraz two on the main street Luzuriaga and there is also a large indoor market on Raymondi.

### **Websites:**

[www.climbingperu.com](http://www.climbingperu.com)

## **Acknowledgements**

No expedition relies solely on the efforts of its members and with this in mind the Cordillera Blanca 2008 Expedition would like to thank the following organizations.

First of all we would like to thank the Mount Everest Foundation for supporting our expedition and along with them the British Mountaineering Council who also contributed.