

FIDS Peru

Cordillera Oriental June 2011



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MEF Ref 11/16

With financial support from:



British Mountaineering Council



Mount Everest Foundation



Alpine Club

Introduction

In June 2011 a team of British climbers spent 3 weeks in the Cordillera Oriental attempting to climb a new route on the unclimbed south face of Huagaruncho Chico (c5300m). This face was previously attempted by Andy Houseman and Tony Barton in 2006, but they retreated after an avalanche back to basecamp, to find their basecamp had been stolen.

As an acclimatisation trip a new route was climbed on the south face of Huarancayo Sur (c51000m), the second recorded ascent of the mountain. This was *Boys don't cry*, 350m Scottish V,4.

An attempt was made on the south face of Huagaruncho Chico, however retreat was forced around 100-150m below the summit due to poor weather and dangerous snow conditions.



Figure 1 Looking up at the South Face of Huarancayo Sur

This report has been compiled by Matt Balmer, James Wake and Daniel Fitzgerald.

The compilers 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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Peru

The currency in Peru is the Nuevos Soles, during our trip £1 was worth around 4.5 Soles, US\$ are also commonly used in Lima. We withdrew Soles from cash machines, although there are hoards of money changers in the airport and streets of Lima, recognisable by their coloured tabards.

Make sure your Soles are in good condition, i.e. no tears marked etc or they may not be accepted. Forged notes and coins are also common. Debit/Credit cards are accepted in most shops in Lima, though not much use in the more rural parts of Peru.

Although we had a fairly limited grasp of Spanish amongst the team we managed to get along without too many problems. English is fairly common in Lima though less so elsewhere. A combination of writing things down, marking maps and a phrase book seemed to work, though we probably paid over the odds a few times as a sort of "language tax."

We found people generally friendly particularly in Huachon where everyone was interested in what we were doing and keen to help. Though this may have something to do with the legend of a cross of gold to be found on the summit of Huagarancho. That said you do need to keep your wits about you in Lima and at busy bus stations.

International Travel

We flew from Manchester into Lima's Jorge Chavez international airport, with KLM. At the time of booking we were under the impression we'd be able to book additional baggage before check in for a reasonable fee (£27). After much wrangling this turned out not to be the case and we had to purchase two extra bags for around £200, worth thinking about and confirming in writing before booking tickets.

At the time of writing UK citizens are entitled to a 90 day visa, this is stamped into your passport upon arrival in Lima. In addition to the stamp you will be given the stub of the visa form. Keep this stub in a safe place as you will be required to present it upon leaving Peru, or pay a fine of \$1 per day.

Bio security is fairly strict in Peru, so make sure you clean all your gear and if in doubt declare any food etc.

We took out travel insurance with the Danish firm IHI BUPA. However it is worth noting that although IHI cover medical costs and repatriation to the UK, they will not provide search and rescue cover. Given the availability of SAR in the Cordillera Oriental we were working on the assumption we would recover ourselves back to the road or a suitable helicopter landing site.

Lima

Lima airport is 20-30min drive from the centre of Lima, a registered Taxi should cost around 45 Soles, some hostels will pre book a Taxi from the airport for you. There are many Hostels in Lima to suit all tastes and budgets, the Miraflores district is home to some of the more upmarket hostels. We stayed at Miraflores House (Av. Comandante Espinar Nro. 611, Miraflores), at the pricier end of the market at 150S/. for a 3 bed ensuite.

The hostel owner Francis Chauvel is extremely helpful and was invaluable in sorting onward bus

tickets, information and supplies in Lima, he also organized a taxi from the airport. I had stayed with Francis on a previous trip to the Cordillera Blanca and would definitely recommend Miraflores House.

Supplies

We bought the majority of our food in Lima, there are several supermarkets in Miraflores, Plaza Vea is very well stocked, cheese and Salami were relatively expensive, but all the staples were there along with several luxury extras for base camp, see the equipment section for details.

There are a few climbing and camping shops in Lima though technical equipment is expensive. We found a camping shop on Av Independencia, near the Belgian Embassy that supplied us with gas cartridges.

Maps are available from the Instituto Geografico Nacional (Avenida A. Aramburu 1190-1198, Lima 34.) The South American Explorers club (Calle Piura 135, Miraflores, Lima 18) may also be useful.

We arrived in Lima on a Saturday night and found most of the smaller shops shut on Sunday. But still managed to pick up everything we needed and get out of Lima Sunday night.

Transport

Taxis are fairly cheap and probably the best way to get round Lima, though agreeing a price and confirming the destination before you set off will save hassle later. We essentially hired a taxi for a few hours to visit various bus stations, supermarkets and shops he was happy to wait while we sorted tickets etc.

To access Huachon we followed the same route described in Tom Chamberlain and Tony Bartons 2010 report. We had some difficulty finding a bus to Cerro De Pasco but ended up traveling with Junin whose bus to Cerro departed from a station near the junction of Grau and Av Luna Pizzaro. An overnight bus cost around 70Soles, left Lima at 22:30 and put us into Cerro around 04:00.

Cerro de Pasco is a fairly grim town clinging to the edge of a huge open cast mine at 4400m. The bus station is a large square in the centre of town, don't make our mistake and get off at the stop before. From here we hired a taxi to Huachon, for around 150 Soles.

In retrospect we should have waited to get off at the main bus terminal and got a Colectivo to Huachon. Colectivos are communal taxis, that act like a bus picking up and dropping passengers on the way. Returning from Huachon to Cerro colectivos leave the main square in Huachon every hour from 03:00-09:00. We got a Colectivo (15 Soles each) at 03:00 which got us to Cerro in time for a bus to Lima leaving at 08:00.

Huachon

Huachon is the nearest village to access Huagaracho Chico and surrounding peaks, three hours drive and a world apart from Cerro de Pasco. The village is at about 4000m, we left Lima on Sunday night and got into Huachon around 10:00 Monday. We then spent three days acclimatising and arranging animals before walking into base camp.



Figure 2 Village of Huachon

The Hotel Pariso is the (only) place to stay in Huachon, rooms were 6 Soles a night, if you can get a room on the ground floor it'll save you battling up a rickety spiral stair case with bags.

The hotel is on the street that runs up from the main square past the police station, this street has a couple of restaurants and a Pollo a Brassa (chicken and chips). A reasonable meal cost around 4 Soles.

There are several small shops in Huachon for bread, eggs biscuits etc. We bought petrol in Huachon, dished out with a measuring jug from the bulk tank, it was pretty dirty so it may be worth trying to source fuel in Lima or Cerro.

During our stay the road crew managed to take out the power lines while blasting a road cutting. However when the power is on there is an internet café next to the church in the main square that opens in the evening. Phones are also quite common.

Llamas and Base camp

We got in touch with Sebastián Mosquera, by asking round the village. He provide us with Llama to get our gear up to base camp. As a rule of thumb each Llama can carry 30kg of gear and we were charged 10soles per animal. Sebastian provided sacks to break the loads down. We'd highly recommend Sebastian.

On the return journey from camp to Huachon, we had intended to use Snr Quinto's Horses to transport our gear down. Unfortunately they weren't available, one of us walked out to the village to arrange Llama, which took a couple of days.

The Quinto farm is 5-6 hours walk from Huachon and provides a good base camp for the surrounding hills. Snr Quinto was happy to give us permission to camp next to the farm, and agreed to keep an eye on our camp when we were on the hill. Upon our departure we left the Quintos some food, fuel, tents and sleeping bags which they seemed quite happy with.

Diary

28th May

We left Manchester Airport at 09:00 and arrived Lima 22:30 local time. We took a taxi to Miraflores District and were in bed by 00:30.

29th May

Food shopping and preparations. Overnight bus to Cerro de Pasco

30th May

Taxi from Cerro de Pasco to Huachon.

31st May

Rest day in Huachon.

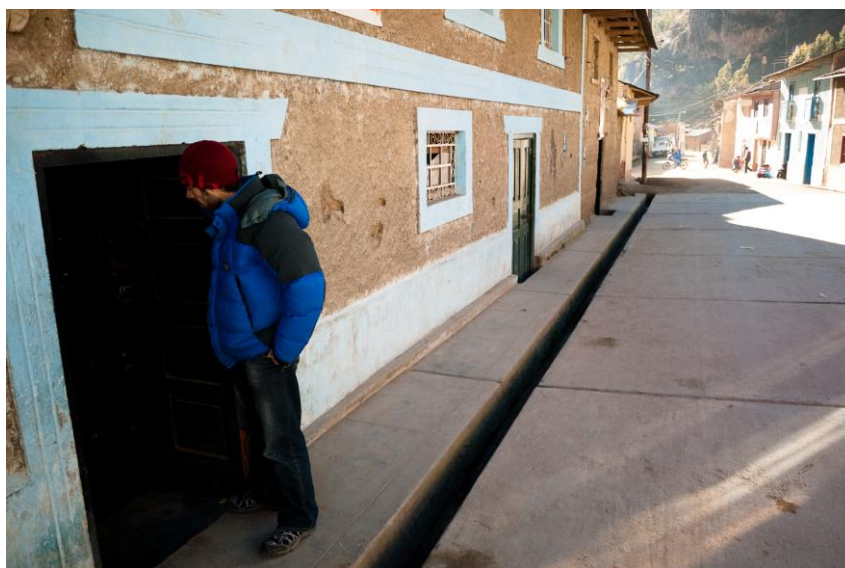


Figure 3 Shopping in Huachon

1st June

Walk to base camp. On the walk in to base camp, we spotted an interesting looking gully on the south face of Huarancayo Sur (c5200m). This line had been identified by Tom and Tony as a potential objective on a previous trip, however later in the season in August they found the line had melted out. We appeared to be in luck with our trip earlier in the season.

2nd

Rest day at basecamp

3rd

Acclimatisation trek

4th

Trek to backside of Huaguruncho to investigate possible descent off backside of mountain. A complicated retreating glacier was found.

5th

Scrambled to the foot of the small glacier below the cirque of the South face of Huarancayo Sur, where we then bivvied for the night.

6th

We made our way through the crevasse field of the glacier to the bottom of the gully. As we were unsure of the conditions we would find, the true angle of the gully, or its length, it was nice to finally see the route up-close. For 350m we climbed some of the finest icy gully climbing any of us has ever done anywhere in the world. The climbing was sustained and full of interest at around Scottish tech 4/5. In particular, the last pitch exiting the gully provided some exiting climbing on steep ground, with loose snow and poor gear. We perched on the top in the late afternoon, and then watched with a sinking feeling in our stomachs as we saw the cloud rolling in towards the mountain.



Pitch 3 on the South Face of Huarancayo Sur.

Unfortunately, due to the topographical nature of the valley and the fact that the cloud seemed to predominantly come in from the North, we couldn't see any approaching weather whilst climbing on the south faces until it was upon us.

Therefore, we now faced the prospect of a descent in thick cloud, and ever reducing light.

After one abseil from the summit we were well and truly in the cloud. The rapid cloud build-up made route finding incredibly difficult, and therefore compromised the safety of the descent. In the thick cloud we set up a second abseil in what we believed was the right direction, but with such reduced visibility it was all too easy to envisage taking a slight wrong turn, or abseil into the wrong part of the cirque. This had the potential of turning what should be an easy descent back to our bivvy site, into an epic. Therefore, we then decided that the safest thing to do was to wait and see if the cloud was going to disperse later in the night, thereby allowing us to make the way down by starlight (and torchlight!).

Sat on the snow a mere 50m below the summit of the mountain, was not the situation we were hoping to be in, and the prospect of an unplanned bivvy loomed. It was now dark, and the visibility still incredibly poor, forcing us to prepare as best as possible for the night ahead. We shared out some energy bars and our remaining water, and started the process of using the adzes on our axes to dig into a windscoop. As we did not have our sleeping/bivvy bags it was essential to make some kind of shelter, and after many an hour, the windscoop "remodelling" resulted in a very cramped snowhole for the three of us to crawl into. A feeling of dread surged through me, as the winter nights in Peru are long and cold. For the next 11 hours we talked rubbish, and we even heard Dan sleeping at one point.

7th

The following morning at first light, with clear skies and a beautiful sunrise, we made our way to the abseil point we had prepared the evening before, and continued our descent down the mountain. Five and half hours later we returned to our bivvy below the South face, and greedily ate the food we had been planning to eat the night before, and had spent the evening at the bivvy thinking about. We then packed our kit and made the long walk back to base camp.

Once back, we chatted about our route over dinner and agreed on a grade of Scottish V. Despite the unplanned bivvy, the route itself was fantastic, and we thought it to be up there with the classic gullies of the Ben in terms of quality.

8th

Rest day

9th

Rest and forming plan for Huaguruncho Chico.

Unfortunately, by now the reliability of the weather had become a concern, as every time the cloud came it rolled in from the north, meaning we couldn't see any approaching weather. The problem was enhanced by the fact that there was no clear pattern to enable us to predict the advent of bad weather. Everyday we had watched the mountain, and the same cloud that obscured our descent off Huarancayo Sur, would arrive fairly reliably at around midday. However, some days the cloud would remain and by mid-afternoon the top of Huaguruncho Chico would be in cloud, and others it would dissipate within an hour or two. As we could not predict what would happen each day (There were no tell-tale signs such as wind direction etc), this left us with the option of sitting at base camp, or taking a chance with the weather after a clear spell. We decided on the

later.

There are two obvious ridge lines on the South face, and whilst we had looked at the right hand spur on the South face, on closer inspection, this season, large mushroom of snow seemed to be frequently noted through binoculars along the spur. Some of these looked quite “interesting” to get through. The left hand ridge line looked slightly better, and we thought we could see a line through the rock bands and seracs.

10th

On the first day we worked our way up to the foot of the glacier beneath the South-West ridge and found an uncomfortable looking crevasse to attempt to sleep. Due to the chance of impending cloud, we wanted to try and be on the top and descending by the time this had a chance to come in, so we set off early. We had spied a line through the lower rock buttress on the snow ridge that would lead us up to the headwall on the South face.



Figure 4 Looking up at the ridge from near the bivvy

11th

In the dark we set off up the glacier to get to our spied snow ramp through the buttress. After about 300m I reached where we thought it to be and looked up. In the light of our head torches, we could see that between the snow ramp and ourselves, there appeared to be about 60m of rock wall. For the next hour and a half with heavy rucksacks, we scratched our way up the rock buttress in the dark. The climbing was awkward, steep, loose, and time consuming. Eventually we were on our ramp line and were soon on the main ridge moving together through amazing snow mushrooms.



Figure 5 Gaining the lower part of the ridge at first light

After sometime along the ridge, we arrived at what we had identified as “the bad step” from basecamp. This provided more loose rock and poor rock gear; but least this time it was light! At the top of the snow ridge, below the headwall, we moved into a gully on the left hand side of the face. Here we found excellent ice and thought we were in luck, and had found a way through the upper headwall; which appeared to sport lots of loose snow and flutings. This was especially welcome, as over the proceeding hour or two, the weather had started deteriorating and visibility reduced. Unfortunately, on the third pitch in the icy gully, the ice disappeared and changed to loose snow, making climbing and placing protection much more precarious. Dan led out getting into steeper and looser snow, but before long it was sleeting, and mini avalanches were triggering. The snow pack was changing rapidly which, combined with the increasing poor visibility, meant we decided it was time to bail. We cautiously made our way back to the ice gully, where we then started retreating on Abalakov threads towards the glacier. Luckily, this gully ran all the way to the glacier, and afforded us a quick and relatively safe descent to flatter ground.

Unfortunately, whilst we were now on flat ground, the visibility was still very poor. We attempted to find a way down the glacier, but it very quickly became clear that we needed better visibility and contrast to negotiate our way through the complicated maze of crevasses. For the second time in as many routes, the weather was going to force us to bivvy. Thankfully this time we were better equipped with more food, stoves and bivvy bags. We managed to find some “good” snow and dug a more luxurious snow hole than our first, this time with a shovel!

12th

For me, the time went slower on this bivvy and at 5am we shivered my way out of the snow hole as we geared up to start descending. The glacier was complicated and some of the holes could lose a whole street of houses down them, but thankfully most of the snow bridges were well frozen in the early hours of the morning, as were we. We reached our crevasse bivvy later that morning, and lay outside in the sun. The walk back down to our valley camp seemed to last forever.

13th

Back at basecamp we looked at what we had done. We had frustratingly got to within 150m of easy ground and the summit, before poor weather (Which came in much earlier than usual), and snow conditions forced us to turn back. The following day rain showers swept through the entire valley. After this, the weather in the area took a turn for the worse, with cloud/rain moving in everyday and enveloping the mountain. This, combined with the fact we had blown the majority our snow stakes on the descent down the glacier, meant that we could not justify another trip up to the face, so we began to make plans to leave the valley and four days later we eventually did.

14th

Rest at Basecamp, James trying to find Llamas

15th

James return to base camp.

16th

Walk out of basecamp. Whilst it was an incredibly difficult decision to leave the valley, and subsequently lose any chance of attempting the mountain again after coming so close, it was eased slightly by the continuing poor weather. The adventure remains to be completed.

17th June

Bus to Lima

18th June

Bus to Huaraz

18th to 22nd June

Matt Balmer to Huatan Machay, Dan Fitzgerald and James Wake climb north face of Ranrapalca.

23rd June

Travel to Lima.

24th June

Fly to uk

Future potential

The challenge of the south face of Huaguruncho Chico still remains. We think that with better weather this line will go. Perhaps once the headwall is reached, tackling one of the fluting lines might provide a better option, the tops of all these flutings appear to have some serious looking cornices to overcome.

The following picture shows the wealth of unclimbed ground on the north side of Huarancayo Sur. This ridge line would make a good outing.



The following photo shows the wealth of unclimbed ground on the south face of Huaguruncho Chico (the peak in the middle) also of note is the peak on the left Huarancayo sur, and the ridge line that can be seen running from left to right. The buttresses below this would provide some hard mixed climbing.



Food and Cooking

The majority of the food eaten during the trip was purchased in Lima, with only the dehydrated meals and Cliff Bars transported from the UK. Many of the local districts in Lima have a “Plaza Vea”, and it was from one of those shops that we bought our food, and the majority of miscellaneous equipment. However, it is worth noting that a number of items can be purchased from Huachon, with many small shops selling cookies, cooking oil, and even some tinned food. Whilst personal preference will play a big part in the selection of food, the lists below gives an indication of items we found easy for cooking at base camp.

Food

Breakfast:

Porridge
Powdered Milk
Museli
Fanny Jam
Honey
Raisins

Lunch:

Bimbo wraps
Fanny Jam
Peanut butter
Cheese (Relatively expensive)
Chorizo (Relatively expensive)
Canned Tuna
Instant noodles
Soup

Evening meals:

Canned tuna
Canned lentils
Canned beans
Soya (Dehydrated)
Pasta sauce
Rice
Pasta
Cous cous
Potato powder
Fresh potatoes (Limited number)
Fresh onions (Limited number)

Snacks and treats:

Nuts
Dried fruit
Cookies (Lots of them)
Fizzy chewy sweets

Boiled sweets
Chocolate
Tang (For flavouring water)
Pancake mix
Whisky

General cooking sundries:

Vegetable oil
Salt/Pepper
Hot chilli sauce
Curry powder

Mountain food:

Dehydrated meals
Cliff Bars

Cooking equipment

1 x 15L collapsible plastic water container
1 x Whisperlite
1 x Dragonfly
1 x MSR stove repair kit
2 x Jet Boil
1 x Large heat exchanger pan
1 x Large standard pan
1 x Small/medium pan
Pan handles
1 x Spatula
1 x Flint stick (In case fuel lighter or matches fail)
3 x Bowls
3 x Mugs
6 x 1L Wide-necked Nalgene bottles
Cutlery

Fuel

9 x Medium gas canisters.
2 x 5L plastic fuel containers
10L of "White Gas"

NB/ The "white gas" was purchased in Huachon, although the purity of the fuel did leave something to be desired! The fuel was stored in the above plastic containers, which can be bought at petrol stations in Lima. The gas canisters were bought from a camping shop in Lima, which kindly opened up for us on a Sunday!

Camping, clothing, and climbing equipment

As with the food, this section is not meant to act as a prescriptive list of the items that must be taken, as different systems may be more appropriate for other people. However, it will hopefully provide an insight into the pieces of equipment we found to be useful during the trip.

Camping

Sleeping equipment:

- 1 x Crux tent (2-man)
- 1 x Nemo single skin tent (2-man)
- 1 x Quechua tent (2-man)
- 2 x Rab Survival Zone Bivy Bags
- 1 x Black Diamond Bivy Bag
- 1 x Outdoor Design Emergency Bothy Bag (Four-man)
- 2 x Cheap thin sleeping bags (Purchased from Plaza Vea to use as liners)
- 2 x Pillows (Purchased from Plaza Vea)
- 1 x Summer PHD sleeping bag
- 2 x Rab Neutrino 600 sleeping bag
- 1 x Winter PHD sleeping bag
- 3 x Small Prolite Therm-a-rest
- 1 x Alpkit full-length inflatable mat
- 1 x Small foam mat
- 1 x Down filled full-length inflatable mat
- 1 x Black Diamond Orbit Lantern

NB/ The cheap (~ £5) sleeping bags from “Plaza Vea” acted as great sleeping bag liners at base camp, and the pillows gave some luxury comfort during long bus journeys as well as at camp.

Personal equipment:

- MP3 players
- Cameras
- Solar chargers (Ensure connectors fit all electrical items)
- Books
- Head-torches

NB/ A set of speakers for MP3 players would have been useful for lie-up time.

Miscellaneous equipment:

- Large plastic bowl (Useful for washing dishes, clothes, and self!)
- Soap
- Washing-up liquid
- Dishcloth
- T-Towel
- Toilet roll
- Bin bags
- Zip-lock food bags
- Lighters

Can opener

Duck Tape

NB/ Whilst many of the above items are not necessary, they did make life a lot easier, and had minimal impact on the transport of the equipment to the valley camp. In particular, the large plastic bowl made washing away from the river much easier, and thus also reduced the impact on the environment.

Personal clothing

Whilst each of the team members used a slightly different combination of brands, the general “system” was the same, as we all utilised a “layering” approach. An overview of the main items used by each member can be found in the table below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>James</u>	<u>Dan</u>	<u>Matt</u>
Baselayers:	Ice Breaker	Ice Breaker/Rab	Ice Breaker/Rab
Trousers:	Patagonia Alpine Guide	Rab Exodus	Rab Exodus
Synthtic Trousers:	Rab Photon	Rab Photon	Rab Photon
Mid-layer:	Patagonia fleece/Rab Vapourise	Ice Breaker	Rab Vapourise
Primary jacket:	Patagonia Ascent	Rab Baltoro Alpine	Patagonia Ascent
Low-weight Synthetic jacket:	Rab Photon	Patagonia Nano-Puff	Patagonia Micro-Puff
Heavy-weight insulated jacket:	PHD Down	Rab Summit Extreme Down/PHD Synthetic	PHD Synthetic
Gloves:	Rab Baltoro	Rab Baltoro	Rab Baltoro
Thermal hat:	Rab	Rab/Extremities	Rab
Socks:	Merino	Merino	Merino
Mountain Boots:	La Sportiva Spantiks	La Sportiva Spantiks	Scarpa Omegas
Approach Shoes:	Merrell’s	Inov8	Vasque
Sunglasses:	Cebe	Cebe	Cebe
Snow goggles:	Cebe	Cebe	Cebe
Sun hats:	BBM	Columbia	Outdoor Research
Neck protector:	Rab/Buff	Rab/Buff	Rab/Buff

Climbing equipment

The main items of climbing equipment used on the trip were composed of those that all team members used, and pieces of more personal preference. Whilst the sections below will give an indication of what we utilised, there are no doubt many other options.

Team equipment:

The items used by all team members are listed in the table below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Brand</u>	<u>Number</u>
Ice screws (3x 22cm, 3x 17cm, 2x 10cm):	Petzl/Black Diamond	8
Pitons (Selection):	Grivel	10
Nuts:	DMM/Wild Country	2 sets (One carried, one spare at camp)
Cams (Size 0.5,1, 2, 3, 4):	Black Diamond	5
Quickdraws (All set up on extendable 60cm slings):	DMM slings and karabiners	8
Ripstop extenders:	Yates	2
Slings 120cm:	DMM	6
Slings 240cm:	DMM	4
Lead ropes:	Mammut (60m; 8.5mm Genesis)	2
Spare Rope:	Beal (60m; 8.5mm)	1
Shovel:	Black Diamond/Backcountry Research	2
Snow Stakes:	MSR/Generic	5
Locking karabiners:	DMM	8
Maillon:	Petzl	10
Compass:	Suunto	3
GPS:	Garmin	1

Personal equipment:

The main personal items used are listed in the table below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>James</u>	<u>Dan</u>	<u>Matt</u>
Harness:	Black Diamond Aspect	DMM Renegade Pro	Petzl Corax
Belay device:	Black Diamond Guide XP	Black Diamond Guide XP	Petzl Reverso
Helmet:	Mammut Skywalker 2	Petzl Elios	Petzl Elios
Ice axes:	Petzl Quarks	DMM Xenos	DMM Rebels
Crampons:	Grivel G14s	Grivel G14s	Grivel F2s
Knife:	Petzl	Petzl	Generic

Daisy chain:	Mammut	Mammut	Mammut
“Prussicks”:	Cord (x2), Petzl Tribloc	Cord (x2), Petzl Tribloc	Cord (x2), Petzl Ropeman
Ice axe spring leash:	Grivel	Grivel	Grivel
Ice clipper karabiner:	Black Diamond (x2)	Black Diamond (x2)	Black Diamond (x2)
Spare karabiners:	DMM Revolver (x2)	DMM Revolver (x2)	DMM Revolver (x2)
Watch:	Suunto Core	Suunto Vector	Suunto Vector
Headtorch:	Black Diamond Icon/Petzl Zipka	Petzl Tikka/Petzl Myo RXP	Petzl Tikka
Trekking poles:	N/A	Leki	Leki

Equipment problems and suggestions

The majority of the equipment worked very well, with just a few problems becoming apparent. There were also a couple of things that we became aware of that could possibly make life at base-camp even more enjoyable. The items, and the issues, are discussed in the following sections.

Equipment issues:

Scarpa Omega Boots – Whilst these boots performed extremely well in most circumstances (as they have done in the past), they were found to be cold during the nights spent at the bivy sites. The team members wearing La Sportiva Spantiks, whom reported that their feet remained warm throughout the evening, did not encounter this problem. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the Omega boots used were much older than the Spantiks, and this may have had an impact on their insulating ability.

Petzl Myo RXP – Unfortunately, a problem was encountered with this headtorch, which has been an issue with the standard XP model. It seems that some issue with the wiring means that if the wire connecting the battery pack to the bulb is stretched in a certain position, the power will cut out. Other than this, the headtorch performed very well.

Equipment suggestions:

Tents – The three-tent system worked well from a personal space point of view, although the single skin Nemo resulted in a lot of condensation. However, the periods of bad weather meant that the single tents were not large enough to accommodate all three members to comfortably sit in and cook. In retrospect, it may be useful to have taken a larger tent to base camp which would allow all team members to socialise during lie-up conditions. As the base-camp tent does not need to be very technical in nature, it may be that even a cheap large generic tent would do; although the weight of the tent may be an issue on the flights.

General – Many items can be bought at the “Plaza Vea” stores, which are effectively like a Peruvian version of Tesco.

Medication and emergency first aid kit

The remote location of the areas means that access to medical care will be limited to virtually non-existent. Therefore, it is worth learning some basic first aid before travelling to these locations, or to take a relevant text to leave at base-camp to help in the aid of an emergency, or more likely treating minor wounds and infections. The “Travel Doctor” sites are also a good source of information.

There is no point in carrying equipment that you are not comfortable using, so in many cases simple “butterfly strips”, rather than sutures. However, it is virtually always worthwhile carrying a selection of painkillers, and antibiotics for the treatment of ailments such as tooth/gum infections. A large number of antibiotics can be purchased cheaply in Peru (although a number may be just as cheap on prescription from the UK), but advice should be sought from a medical professional beforehand to ensure that you are aware of the correct dosage for specific treatments. Also ensure that all team members are aware of any known allergies (e.g. penicillin).

A selection of items to consider having at base-camp, or carrying in an emergency first aid kit on the mountain, is listed below:

Antibiotics:

Amoxicillin

Metronidazole (Good for treating tooth abscess. However, cannot take it with alcohol!)

Clindamycin (Another option for tooth abscess)

Ceftriaxone

Painkillers:

Paracetamol

Ibuprofen

Co-codamol

Tramadol (To be used only after appropriate training)

General:

Diamox (Acetazolamide)

“Triangle” bandage

Selection of adhesive, non-adhesive bandages

Tubigrip

Sterile gauze

Selection of plasters

“Butterfly” strips

Micropore tape

Antiseptic cream

Clotrimazole cream

Sun lotion

After-sun lotion

Alcohol gel

Scissors
Safety pins
Rehydration sachets
Immodium
Senna Tablets
Boiled sweets

Illnesses during trip

A number of the team suffered the usual diarrhoea and vomiting at some point during the trip. Other than this, the only other problem was due to one of the team having a tooth/gum abscess. Luckily, this happened near the very end of the trip and so did not effect any mountaineering objectives. A course of antibiotics (Metronidazole) was commenced whilst still in Peru, and the dentist was visited upon returning to the UK to address the problem.

Budget

Income	Amount	Outgoing	Amount
BMC grant	950	Flights	2315.96
AC grant	700	Insurance	540
MEF grant	1500	Gear	600
Personal	1769.13	Food	270
		Spending in country	960.17
		Excess baggage	233
Total	4919.13	Total	4919.13

Itinerary summary

Date	Activity	Weather
29/05/11	Shopping in Lima	Lima smog
30/05/11	Over night travel to Cerro de Pasco, arrive in morning at Huachon.	Fine
31/05/11	Huachon rest	Fine
01/06/11	Trek to basecamp	Fine
02/06/11	Rest day at basecamp	Fine
03/06/11	Acclimatisation trek up local hill to 4800m.	Cloudy with sunny spells
04/06/11	Trek to back side of Huaguruncho Chico	Cloudy all day with rain showers
05/06/11	Trek to below Huarancayo Sur	Cloudy
06/06/11	New route on south face of Huarancayo Sur	Fine in morning, cloud developing and lowering through the day
07/06/11	Return to basecamp	Fine
08/06/11	Rest day at basecamp	Cloud developing in afternoon
09/06/11	Prepare for kit	Cloud developing in afternoon
10/06/11	Trek to advance camp on south face of Huaguruncho Chico	Fine in morning, rain by afternoon
11/06/11	Attempt on south face of Huagurucho Chico	Fine morning, cloud developing through day to rain/sleet/snow by mid afternoon
12/06/11	Retreat from Huaguruncho Chico, basecamp by evening	Cloudy
13/06/11	Rest, James return to Huachon	Cloudy/rain
14/06/11	Rest at basecamp	Cloudy
15/06/11	James return to basecamp	Cloudy with rain showers
16/06/11	Leave basecamp	Cloudy/Sunny spells
17/06/11	Travel to Lima, overnight bus to Huaraz	Cloudy

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks for the MEF, the BMC and the Alpine club for their generous financial support. Aswell to Rab, Nemo and DMM for their generous gear contributions to our trip.

We would like to thank Tony Barton and Tom Chamberlain for all their help in our trip preparation.