



AAC Publications

Ishinca, northwest face variation, Carlito's Way; Ranrapalca, north face, Learning of our Weaknesses

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

Carlos Solé and I met in Huaraz in late May. On our way up to a bivouac at the Ishinca-Ranrapalca col, a possible new route caught my eye on the northwest face of Ishinca (5,529m), leading directly to its summit. I suggested to Carlos we climb it the next morning.

We began climbing on June 5 at 5:45 a.m. at ca 5,050m, directly in line with the summit. From there we climbed 40° snow for 190m to reach a prominent rock band. [Editor's note: At this point, the route intersects the start of Celjska Smer (Gracner-Gracner, 2009), which diagonals left under the rock band to the southeast ridge, and the Cosley-Houston (2003), which climbs a prominent snow and rock ramp on the right side of the rock band. Pineda and variation, Carlito's Way, ascends a line up the center-right of the rock band, just left of the Cosley-Houston, joining that route again on the final snow slopes.] We climbed two pitches of steeper mixed ground directly through the rock band, left of the Cosley-Houston, and then three more pitches of 60-80° snow. A short final pitch of easier snow climbing led us to the summit by 11:15 a.m.: Carlito's Way (480m, D+ M5 60-80°). From the summit we descended the north-northwest slopes, reaching our bivouac two hours later.

From the summit of Ishinca I had scouted the north face of Ranrapalca (6,162m) and its central, unclimbed couloir. [This is the major couloir right of the normal route on the northeast face and left of the many other north face routes, and long thought too dangerous to climb.] On the morning of June 7 we climbed Ishinca again to better acclimatize, and then rested in the afternoon, trying to calculate the best time to start up the couloir and avoid the rock and ice avalanches we had witnessed each day and night.

We left our bivouac at 12:30 a.m. on June 8, walking up to the huge debris cone at the couloir's base. We climbed this on its right side and simul-climbed into the couloir, hoping to get out of the most exposed part before sunrise. Passing the first crux, a pitch of thin ice and mixed on an almost vertical slab, and having been hit by some showers of powder, we found our first protected belay just before 6 a.m. From there we navigated our way up, avoiding the danger of the main channel in the couloir while watching large amounts of ice and rock go through it. We climbed for some time on the central rock pillar in the gully, comprised of rotten and loose rock. Just before sunset we reached the upper couloir, which is divided by three channels. We took the left one, which contained a series of vertical waterfall ice steps.

When we reached ca 5,700m, the sun set and the temperature plummeted to -20°C. We fought to stay warm by rubbing our hands over our knees, taking short rests, and continuing to climb through the night. Just before midnight, we encountered the last waterfall ice, just below the summit plateau. The last pitch required us to break through an unstable cornice to reach the glacier and ramp leading to the summit.

We reached the top at 11:30 a.m. on June 9, under strong winds, with snow freezing on our faces and a very little visibility. We descended the normal route down the northeast face. Dehydrated, tired, and walking incoherently, we reached our bivouac at 7:30 p.m., after 43 hours on the go. No matter how much we suffered, we loved it: Learning of our Weaknesses (960m, ED M6 5.10+ 70-90°).

Images



Carlos Solé following a section of loose rock, halfway up the new route Learning of our Weaknesses.

Ranrapalca (6,162 m)
North & Northeast Face

CLIMBER'S TOURS

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|----------------------------|----------|---|--------------|
| Learning of our Weaknesses | ED | Carlos Pineda & Carlos Solé | June, 2013 |
| North Face, Normal Route | D+ | Murray Johns, Michael Rouke & Curry Slaymaker | August, 1975 |
| Scandinavian Direct | TD / TD+ | Allan Christensen & Sveinung Skoglund | 1997 |
| North Face, Variation | D (?) | Michael Kittell & Taylor Kittell | June, 2011 |
| North Face, Variation | MD+ A2 | Eduardo Angulo, Guillermo Mejia & Patrick Knoll | August, 1997 |
| Mazohizen (Masochism) | ED- | Andrej Markovic & Matej Zorko | June, 1996 |
| North Spur | TD | Rick Potter & Joe Simpson | August, 1994 |
| Northwest Ridge | D+ | Walter Brecht, Siegfried Rohrer, Karl Schmid & Hans Schweizer | June, 1939 |
| Northwest Face | D | Giuseppe Dionisi, Piero Fornelli, Luciano Ghigo y Giuseppe Marchese | July, 1958 |

Ranrapalca topo



Ishinca topo



Climbing the lower part of Learning of our Weaknesses.



Ascending sun-baked ice on Learning of our Weaknesses.

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