



AAC Publications

Nevado Chainopuerto, East Face

Peru, Cordillera Urubamba

In April, Eduardo Baca, Yjeguel Camasa, Coqui Galvez, and I climbed a probable new route up the east face of Nevado Chainopuerto (5,650m), an outlying peak of Nevado Sahuasiray (5,818m). I had seen this peak a few times from other summits in the area; its three-sided summit pyramid is 150m tall and comes to a sharp point.

On April 5, we started our approach from the northeast via Maucau. It took five hours to reach the eastern base of the peak, which was covered in dense clouds. Unfortunately, due to the low visibility, we unknowingly pitched our camp below an icefall, which led to a close call in the middle of the night. The following day we moved camp out of this shooting gallery to a more secure location and rested.

We left the tent at 2 a.m. on April 7 and navigated the eastern glacier through the clouds and dark until a beautiful sunrise. From the col between Nevado Can Can and Chainopuerto, we started up the summit pyramid of Chainopuerto, climbing 70° ice up the southern aspect. Clouds had rolled in from the jungle, reducing visibility to 40m. We could not stand together on top of the unstable summit cornice, so we went one at a time. We reversed our route, reaching the tent before dark.

Chainopuerto was first attempted by a Scottish team in 1964 by its southeast side; they came up 200 feet short of the summit (AAJ 1965). In 1968 an Irish team made the first ascent. It was attempted by Club de Andinismo Cusco a few times in the early 2000s without success. I believe our route up the east side of the peak to the col is new, but we likely climbed the summit cone via a similar route to the Scots and Irish—the 600m route was D AI3.

– Nathan Heald, Peru

Images



Rounding the eastern shoulder of Chainopuerto to reach the summit pyramid.



Climbing the final summit pyramid of Chainopuerto in poor weather.



Coqui Galzez traversing below the summit of Chainopuerto.



Descending from Chainopuerto.

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