



AAC Publications

Chilpariti, Southwest Face

Peru, Cordillera Carabaya

In 1967, the southwest face of Chilpariti (ca 5,550m) was so highly coveted by two visiting expeditions that the British team, led by Roger Whewell, literally bargained for it with the New Zealand Alpine Club in exchange for Trident (ca 5,490m), the only other major unclimbed summit in the Allinccapac massif. Unfortunately, the Brits were unsuccessful on Chilpariti, citing deep snow as their primary opponent. Meanwhile, the New Zealand team, who succeeded on Trident, wrote, “There was much grumbling at Camp IV when we saw what a fine climb the southwest face of Chilpariti would have been” (New Zealand Alpine Journal 1968).

Whewell and his wife, Elspeth, returned to the Carabaya to attempt Chilpariti in 1968, making the first ascent from the glacier on the northeast side; they first climbed to the high col shared with Screwdriver (5,543m) and then finished on steep rock and ice (AAJ 1969). They subsequently bestowed the name Chilpariti (Quechuan for “wedge of snow”) on the mountain. To the best of our knowledge, no subsequent attempts have been made on Chilpariti.

On August 10, my husband Derek Field and I arrived at the trailhead for Laguna Canocota at dusk. By the time we arrived at our camp by the lake, nestled in herder-made rock walls, a thick fog had turned to a steady rain. The season had been unusually wet, so Derek and I kept our expectations low.

The next morning, our taxi driver from the night before and a new friend, Martin Surco, met us with a school backpack and old soccer cleats. He and his family have herded and fished in the Cordillera Carabaya for generations and know it well. He volunteered to show us part of the way, warning that it would be very difficult to navigate without prior experience. We realized how fortunate we were later that day when Martin split from us at Laguna Añilcocha (ca 4,500m) to catch trout with his father, leaving us to our own devices. That evening, Derek and I reached a camp at around 4,600m below the northern glacier of Chilpariti.

On the 12th, we began our day at 5:30 a.m. with four and a half hours of traversing moraine and glacier. We reached the base of the southwest face at 10 a.m. Initially, we climbed knee-deep snow up a gradually steepening ramp. This gave way to more sustained climbing on excellent ice, providing a nearly direct shot to the summit ridge. Eventually, the fog thickened to the point that Derek disappeared, so I just followed his trail of snow pickets and ice screws.

We topped out the southwest face at 1:10 p.m., and, chased by an impending storm, I quickly led us northward along the final ridge to the summit, arriving at 1:30. We returned to our final anchor point at the top of the southwest face and began our rappels back down our ascent line in a blizzard.

We reached the toe of the glacier again at 5:45 p.m. and sought refuge from the never-ending snowfall under a house-size rock before returning to camp. On the 15th, we hiked out to the town of Ccochahuma under steady rainfall. Our new route up the southwest face is 250m, D 80°, plus over 600m of vertical gain on the glacier below.

– Giselle Field, USA

Images



From a report by Derek Field in AAJ 2017. Derek stands on the summit of Mamaccapac, with a view to the impressive tower of Screwdriver behind. The shoulder of Chilparati is visible on the left. The 1968 first ascent of Chilparati climbed from the Chilparati-Screwdriver col shown here.



The 2018 route up the southwest face (250m above the glacier, D 80°) of Chilpariti (ca 5,500m). The rock spire to the left (northeast) is Screwdriver (5,543m). The 1968 first ascent climbed Chilparati from the opposite northeast side via the col between the two peaks.



Derek and Giselle Field at a belay on the southwest face of Chilpariti.



Derek Field leading the first belayed pitch on the southwest face of Chilpariti.



Giselle Field below the southwest face of Chilpariti after the successful ascent and during a break in

the storm.



Giselle Field topping out the southwest face (250m, D 80°) of Chilpariti (ca 5,500m).



Giselle Field walking due north along the final ridge to the summit of Chilpariti (ca 5,500m).



Giselle Field walks up the glacier toward the southwest face of Chilpariti. Giselle says, “The high twin-peaked summit in the background on the right is known locally as Auzangate (ca 5,075m). The first ascent team was unaware of an existing local name and called it “Nevada Zavala” in honor of their porter (New Zealand Alpine Journal 1968). Local names for peaks in the Cordillera Carabaya should be preserved wherever possible.”

Article Details

Author	Giselle Field
Publication	AAJ
Volume	61
Issue	93
Page	0
Copyright Date	2019
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions