



AAC Publications

Quebrada Rurec Updates and Corrections

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

The 2018 season saw continued interest in the granite walls of Quebrada Rurec in the southern Cordillera Blanca.

In late July, Steve House and Josh Wharton made the second free ascent of Qui lo Vado Ancora (585m, 7c+/8a-; see AAJ 2007 and AAJ 2018) on Chaupi Huanca (5,179m), with Josh Wharton onsighting the route over two days. The first free ascent, in 2017, was also made onsite over two days.

In early August, the Ecuadorian team of Nicolás Dávalos, Fernando Dávila, Juan Carlos Merlo, and Felipe Proaño added a five-pitch extension to the route Pietrorrago: Vaffanculo! (200m, 6a) on Pumawaqanqa (AAJ 2006), a northwest-facing wall at the start of the valley. Above the initial six-pitch slab climb, the new variation ascends a left-trending crack system under roofs. They called the extension Quien carajos es Pietro Rago?! (an additional 200m, 6b); it does not top out.

In AAJ 2006, Pietrorrago: Vaffanculo! was noted to be 420m; however, Proaño reports that the upper half of the route, continuing approximately 200m above the main slab, comprises a vegetated, mostly third-class ramp. The formation was also incorrectly spelled Pumhauagangan. “Waqanqa” (or “wakanka”) means tears in Quechua, so the spelling should be “Pumawaqanqa” (or “Pumawakanka”); it is also spelled this way in *Huaraz: The Climbing Guide* (Lazo-Timmermans, 2014), which offers further information about rock climbing in the Cordillera Blanca.

Proaño also mentioned that present climbing literature fails to account for the possibly hundreds of Incan ruins in the valley, some which can only be seen once you’re high on the walls. Two items of note include an 8km stone road, which may have led to Chavin de Huantar, and thousands of Tambos (Incan square house formations). The locals use the latter to herd cattle and sheep and climbers should avoid camping inside them.

– Erik Rieger, from information by Felipe Proaño, Ecuador and Josh Wharton, USA

Images



The northwest-facing wall of Pumawaqanqa, located at the start of Quebrada Rurec (climber's right side). The yellow line indicates the 2006 route Pietrorrago: Vaffanculo! (200m, 6a); the original route continued up the vegetated, right-trending ramp for approximately 200m more. The five-pitch 2018 variation, Quien Carajos es Pietro Rago?! (200m, 6b), is indicated by the left-trending line.

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