



## AAC Publications

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### **Huandoy Este, northeast face, Come Moco Spur (not to summit)**

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

**Our team consisted of three people: Alessandro Fracchetti, Andrea Speziali (both Italy), and I. Alessandro and I first attempted the northeast face of Huandoy Este (5,950m) in 2017, but we were stopped about 200m from the summit ridge due to poor snow conditions.**

On July 17, we arrived at the Refugio Peru, where we set up our camp. On the 18th, we awoke to very bad weather. A short window of good weather had been forecasted; however, the 2019 season to this point was fairly unusual, with a lot of rain and precipitation, and few successful ascents. We decided to risk it anyway and see how far we could get. We got to our high camp, on the plateau between Pisco Oeste and Huandoy Este. Meanwhile, the day wore on. The weather had improved, and when we went to bed it seemed like it would be a good day for a summit attempt.

On the 19th, we left camp at 1 a.m. The strategy was to go directly up the northeast face to the summit in one push. If the weather got ugly, we would bivouac with the gear we were carrying, and as soon as the weather improved, we would descend. We started the route about 30m to the right of our previous attempt since the conditions were very dry. We climbed in blocks of three pitches each, following along a prominent spur. The route involved a lot of difficult climbing—much of it mixed, using crampons, with many complex sections. At dawn, we could see a huge mass of clouds building from the jungle to the east, which did not portend anything positive.

At approximately 200m before the summit ridge, we went a little more to the left. At that moment, the mass of clouds arrived with intense rain, snow, and super high winds. I suggested to Alessandro that we bivouac until the weather passed. He has more experience than I and told me it would not stop; it would be best to reach the ridge and then descend immediately. Quickly, I got to the ridge, still about 100m from the summit. As I belayed up the others, I began to realize the gravity of the situation. The weather was horrible, and we had to descend along a narrow ridge that none of us were familiar with in terrible visibility.

We began our descent along the north ridge, downclimbing simultaneously, and doing some short rappels. It was a very intense and dangerous experience. At one point on the ridge, we decided to rappel down the east wall, making two rappels and downclimbing. We got back to our tent at approximately 4 p.m. The morning of the 20th, we broke camp and descended to Cebollapampa, where we caught a ride to Huaraz.

From our research, it appears that our route Come Moco Spur (650m, MD+, 75° M4–M5 UIAA 5+) could be new. [Editor's note: At least several parties have climbed this face before, reaching the north ridge and/or summit, as far back as 1952 (Siri-Steck, see AAJ 1953), and parts of the central spur may have been ascended previously. Conditions on the face are much drier than in the past.] One needs a double rack of friends, pins, snow stakes, and a few ice screws. This obviously will vary each year depending on conditions; our successful ascent, involved a completely different route than the first attempt.

– **Renato Rodriguez, Chile (translated by Pam Roberts)**

## Images



The east face of Huandoy Este (5,950m) showing the 2019 route Come Moco Spur (650m, MD+, 75° M4–M5 UIAA 5+), which was completed to the north ridge, approximately 100m below the summit.

## Article Details

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