



AAC Publications

Chaupi Huanca, Northwest Face, Attempt; Chaupi Jirca, Southwest Face, Euphoria; Huanka Punta, Blood and Sand (variation)

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

From May 29 to June 6, our crew consisting of Simon Bustamante, Nicolas Davalos (both Ecuador), Austin O'Brien (USA), and I visited the Rurec Valley, establishing a basecamp in the valley at 4,050m. Our goal was to reach the summit of Chaupi Huanca (ca 4,800), through a system of dihedrals on the left side of the northwest face. On our attempt, we encountered pre-existing anchors on a nearby route begun by an Argentine team in 2016. Our route initially climbs to the right of this line, then joins it for several pitches. We reached a new high point after three days, returning to our base camp each night.

On day four, we established three more pitches involving technical plant/mud climbing on decomposing granite to reach a ledge (4,475m) where we spent the night. Unfortunately, what had looked like cracks through binoculars turned out to be mere water streaks above the ledge. It appeared that many bolts would be required to keep climbing the face, and without enough water or food, we decided to retreat the next morning. In all, we climbed 11 pitches, installing bolted anchors and some intermediate bolts to allow for free climbing and facilitate hauling. [Editor's Note: This climb was completed to the southeast summit of Chaupi Huanca by Álex Gonzalez and Jaume Peiro in July 2021, after beginning on the Argentine line. They called their route Big Fighter (750m, 6c A2).]

Following this, from June 11–18, Lee M. Krieger (USA) joined us in the Cerro Tornillo basin, located four to five hours from Huaraz, east of San Marcos. This zone was pioneered by the Pou brothers (Spain) in 2019 and offers an insane number of possibilities (AAJ 2020). Unfortunately, it is located along the boundary of the world's largest combined zinc and copper mine: Antamina. This mine threatens the future of climbing here; they do not like or welcome visitors. Nonetheless, the location is spectacular and offers limestone walls up to 500m.

We made our camp (4,400m) outside the mine's boundary, which belongs to the Huaripamba and Carhuayoc communities. The local people are friendly and can provide animals to shuttle gear, though, ironically, they live in extreme poverty just next to Antamina. The base camp has limited water sources.

There are three main peaks, all approximately 5,000m: Huanca Punta (ca 4,900m), Chaupi Jirca (5,012m GPS), and Cerro Tornillo (5,017m GPS)—and at least five secondary summits. [Ed: The elevations listed are based on the author's assessment.] **Our made the second and third ascents of Burrito Chin de los Andes on Cerro Tornillo.** [This route was originally graded 700m, 6b, however, the author believes the route is closer to 500m, 6a.]

Next, we made the first ascent of Chaupi Jirca by a route we called Euphoria (500m, 5.10+ PG). The route ascends a crack and dihedral system on the southwest face. This line can be identified by a single bolt (the only one on the route) at the pitch one anchor. To descend, we traversed the south ridge from the summit and made three 60m rappels (leaving bolted anchors) to access the valley floor.

Lastly, we opened a variation to Cabeza Clava (470m, 6c+) on Huanka Punta. This 80m variation consists of technical crack and face climbing to the right of the original route, which it joins after a

huge ledge in the middle. We named it Blood and Sand (5.11+/5.12).

– Felipe Proaño, Ecuador

Images



The southwest face of Chaupi Jirca (5,012m GPS), showing the route Euphoria (500m, 5.10+ PG), with the rappel route to the right (dashed), as seen from Cerro Tornillo.



Felipe Proaño on the first pitch of Blood and Sand, Huanka Punta.



The southwest face of Chaupi Jirca (5,012m GPS) showing the route Euphoria (500m, 5.10+ PG).



The northwest face of Chaupihuanca (ca 4,800m). The northwest spur was first attempted by Leandro Jochymek, Anibal Maturano, and Santiago Scavolini (all Argentina) in 2016. They climbed approximately eight pitches, with difficulties to 7a+, and placed some bolts for protection and anchors (red line). In June 2021, Simon Bustamante, Nicolas Davalos, Felipe Proaño (all Ecuador), and Austin O'Brien (USA) began just right of the Argentine line, joined it for several pitches, then continued up new terrain to a large ledge. They climbed 11 pitches in all on their attempt, with difficulties up to 6c, also placing bolts for protection and anchors (blue line). The climb was completed to the southeast summit by Álex Gonzalez and Jaume Peiro in July 2021 after beginning on the Argentine line. They called the route Big Fighter (750m, 6c A2).



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