



## AAC Publications

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### Eastern Vilcanota Exploration

Peru, Cordillera Vilcanota

**On November 7, Vasili Lelos (USA) and I climbed Colquepuncu III (5,550m, 13°45'48.1"S, 70°49'35.0"W) in the "Nudo de Ayacachi" to warm up.** (The names in quotation marks are past references for these mountains in reports from the 1960s and 1970s—see AAJ 1974, for example. No one calls the peaks by those names today, and it is very difficult to piece together which peaks are which.) We then met up with Thalie Bernier, Val Bilodeau, and Sam Gagnon (Canada). We drove to Marcapata and on a dirt road over the ridge of Sahuancay Cruz into the Rio Tillpa Valley. We followed this road for a few hours to the Yanaruna Pass (4,570m). On the map of the Marcapata Valley by Olaf Hartmann (AAJ 1971), this pass is between the Rio Tillpa and the Rio Socapata in a group he labels "Huallahuañusca."

Yanaruna I sits right at the pass, and the road passes just to the north of it. Yanaruna II (marked "5330" on the map) is farther along the ridge to the south. We climbed Yanaruna II (13°45'48.1"S, 70°49'35.0"W). I believe our climb was a repeat of a route first done by a team from Germany in 1968 (see AAJ 1969). At that time the summit must have been snowy, but it is now an easy rock scramble. The summit had amazing views, situated as it is amid the eastern Vilcanota peaks and above the cloud forest of Marcapata.

We drove down the other side of the pass to the Laguna Ocucocha. A miner passing by said, "Be careful of robbers out here." That's why I carry a rifle in these remote places. We then continued exploring the 4WD road, moving camp to the head of the Socapata Valley, close to Mina Santa Rosa. We found more locals who said their valley was safe.

On November 13, from our truck camp, we climbed under the main east-west ridge of the "Pomachanca group" to get to the highest point of the previously climbed massif named "Huamanlipani Grande" (5,303m) via the west glacier (PD). There are a few rock towers sticking out of the glacial dome that offered exposed climbing. Bernier did not accompany us, and while Vasili, Sam, and Val stayed on the main ridge, I climbed several towers (13°44'01.4"S, 70°43'59.8"W) sticking out 40m above the glacier. Again, I could only find one previous expedition (1971) to this group of peaks (see AAJ 1973); they climbed Padrehurko (ca 17,330'), Colque Cruz de Pomachanca (ca 17,330'), Huamanlipani Grande (ca 17,400'), Huamanlipani Chico, and Chocorrosi (ca 16,570').

—Nathan Heald, USA/Peru

**Images**

Article Details

Author	Nathan Heald
Publication	AAJ
Volume	66
Issue	99
Page	207
Copyright Date	2025
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions