



## AAC Publications

---

### **Nevados Humantay (north summit), north face**

Peru, Cordillera Vilcabamba

The Nevados Humantay (5,403m GPS, also spelled “Huamantay”) are a chain of peaks extending northwest from the west ridge of Nevado Salcantay (6,279m). There are three main summits (south, central, and north) in the chain, all ca 5,400m. The chain is extremely inaccessible due to the cloud forest that rises from the surrounding jungle. The mountain itself is quite technical on all sides, with no obvious, easy route to the summit. I have not found any reference to these peaks in past accounts of the range and noted them in the AAJ 2014.

In early July, Michael Church (U.S.), Michael Hauss (U.S.), Waldemar Niclevicz (Brazil), and I set out from Soray Pampa, hiking along the lower northwest aspect of Nevado Salcantay. Our objective was to explore the west face and climb it if possible. We placed an advance camp at about 5,000m below the northwest buttress. However, at this camp Michael got altitude sickness and Waldemar did not have faith in an unseen route hidden by clouds. From camp we decided to try a line up the north ridge, but this ended in retreat due to mixed climbing and broken rock.

After our attempt on Salcantay we had two days remaining. From our camp the Humantay chain and its highest point (north summit) looked accessible. I had previously studied this peak and believed that the northeast ridge or north face would provide the best chance of summiting. Both Michaels were in, but Waldemar was skeptical and decided not to go with us. He lent his ice axes to our porter, Macario Crispin (Peru), so he could climb.

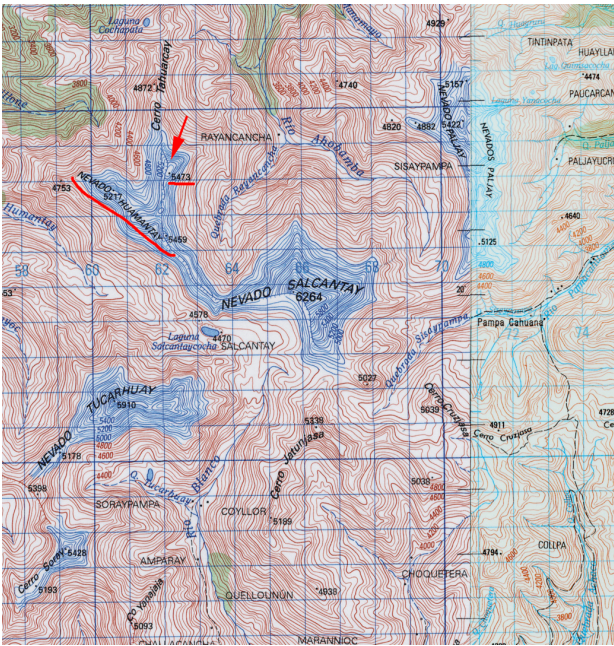
On July 8 we approached the peak and found a good camp low on the northeast ridge, just below the glacier. From here we could see that the remainder of the ridge was not the route for us due to steep, technical rock sections. However, a ledge appeared to connect the ridge with the north face, and we decided this would be our best bet.

We left the tent at 1 a.m. and made our way to the north face. An easy glacier wound its way up the face for most of the climb. At ca 5,150m, the terrain steepened and we climbed the right side of a large rock wall via two pitches of unprotected climbing in a chute-like feature (5.7). Above the wall, we climbed good 70° snow until reaching a steep, sheer rock wall. This forced us to traverse right onto the west face for the final two pitches to the summit ridge. One rope length along the ridge brought us to the summit (AD). It was 8:30 a.m. and clouds were beginning to rise up from the valley below.

We downclimbed from the summit to the top of the rock chute, where I made a V-thread and we rappelled to the lower-angle glacier below. We were back at our high camp by 12 p.m., and hiked out to the Ahobamba Valley the same day, arriving at 5 p.m. The next day we walked out of the valley to Santa Teresa.

Nathan Heald, Peru

## Images



A map of the area, showing Nevados Humantay and an arrow marking the ascent up the north face of the north summit.



An overview of the route to the north summit of Nevados Humantay.



Coming up the summit ridge of Nevados Humantay.



Atop the north summit of Nevados Humantay.



Macario Crispin rappelling the 5.7 rock chute.

## Article Details

Author	Nathan Heald
Publication	AAJ
Volume	59
Issue	87
Page	0
Copyright Date	2015
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions