



AAC Publications

Peru, Cordillera Carabaya

On June 29, Vahi Beltrami (Chile), Yasu Beltrami (Chile), German Silva (Chile) Nathan Heald (Peru), Duncan McDaniel (USA), Aaron Zimmerman (USA), and I traveled to the Cordillera Carabaya. This seldom-visited range, with impressive snow and rock peaks rising to 5,780m, is located approximately 200km north of Juliaca in the Puno region of southeast Peru. A thorough history of mountaineering in the Carabaya is detailed in the 2008 U.K. *Alpine Journal* article "Frost, Dust, and Tear Gas: Exploratory Mountaineering in the Peruvian Cordillera Carabaya." The potential for new rock and ice routes remains significant.

On the afternoon of June 29, we drove north from the town of Macusani, capital of the Carabaya province, and made our first base camp at around 4,600m in the Antajahua Valley. This moraine-bound basin is located below the unclimbed south face of Allinccapac (5,780m), our main objective.

On June 30, after migrating to high camp directly below the glacier at 5,000m, we made an afternoon ascent of the gentle northeast face (450m, F) of Japuma, reaching the two highest summits (ca 5,550m). This was the first peak in the range to be climbed, during a 1954 British geological expedition. The summit of Japuma afforded us a valuable vantage on Allinccapac's south face; we identified a potential route on a runneled ice face below and slightly east of "Pico Carol" (5,715m), a pinnacle described as "a prominent gendarme on the east ridge of Allinccapac" by the 1960 Oxford Andean expedition. When our scouting was complete, we descended Japuma by the same route.

At 3 a.m. on July 1, Nathan, Aaron, and I set off from high camp toward the runneled ice face, intending to gain the east ridge of Allinccapac at the ca 5,700m col just east of "Pico Carol." After crossing a penitente plain, sloggng through deep snow, and overcoming a pitch of AI3 on the lower face, we crossed two significant crevasses and arrived at the base of the main headwall (ca 5,500m). This was the most serious section of our route, presenting four pitches of steep, hard, and blue ice (80°). The shady southern aspect of the face meant we had to endure torturously cold belays. On the fourth lead, we traversed 20m left across a steep, unstable snow slope to gain the aforementioned 5,700m col.

The three of us proceeded along the east ridge of Allinccapac, bypassing "Pico Carol" on its north flank. We were unable to find a safe route on Allinccapac, so we retraced our steps to the 5,700m col. As a consolation prize, we climbed 15m of easy mixed ground up the northeast ridge of "Pico Carol" to the summit, protecting the crux section with cams.

We then descended north down a snow slope in order to scout possible routes up other aspects Allinccapac. At around 5,600m, we crossed a glacial plain and wrapped around the west shoulder of Allinccapac, making two rappels from its west ridge down to the base of the glacier. We made it back to base camp at 5 p.m.; this concluded our full circumnavigation of the mountain. Our route up the south face of "Pico Carol" is 700m, D WI4.

Following this climb, on July 3, Aaron and I left Nate and the others in the Huayllatera Valley and set out on a two-hour hike up the fork of a north-trending tributary. Our goal was to enchain the two summits of Papaccapac (ca 5,460m) and Mamaccapac (ca 5,450m) from the south. Mamaccapac was first climbed in 2007 by a British party via its north side.

We made base camp on the shore of a brilliant turquoise tarn (ca 4,700m) nestled at the foot of an awe-inspiring cirque of rock towers. (I would suggest the name Laguna Carabaya for this unnamed lake.) The shapely skyline spans, from west to east: Twin Peak, Cornice, Chequilla, Tower, and Screwdriver, with a southern spur forming the Mamaccapac-Papaccapac duo. We spent the rest of the afternoon plotting our route before snuggling into a single, shared sleeping bag for the night.

Leaving the tent at 4 a.m. on July 4, we charged up a colossal mound of loose scree to a small rocky crest (ca 5,100m) dividing our base camp from the adjacent Chambine drainage to the east. From the crest, we dropped 100m (in a northeast direction) into the drainage in order to access the tongue of ice extending southward from the col between Papaccapac and Mamaccapac.

We navigated the lower crevasse field at dawn, arriving at the base of the main south face (ca 5,150m) at 7:30 a.m. We climbed the right side of the ice—about 200m with a 70–80° angle throughout. This brought us to the col between the two peaks (ca 5,350m), where we cached our ice gear and started up the complex east face of Papaccapac. The summit climb began with a traverse across a loose third-class ledge system; this gained a prominent rock gully on the right side of the craggy summit. We switched to rock shoes and three pitches of blocky but reliable rock (5.5–5.7) protected by cams and nuts brought us to the gendarme summit.

With regard to the summit elevation of this previously unclimbed peak, Aaron and I made two observations: (1) Papaccapac is definitely taller than Mamaccapac, which was reported by the first ascensionists as 5,450m. We estimated the difference to be about 10m, making Papaccapac roughly 5,460m; (2) It is difficult to tell which of the highest gendarmes on the summit ridge of Papaccapac is actually the true summit.

We returned to the col by rappelling twice from slung blocks. After a short rest, we began up the west side of Mamaccapac's summit tower. (This was called the "southwest ridge" by the 2007 British expedition. It's more of a blocky wall or buttress than ridge, and it generally faces west.) The crux came early, with 50° ice transitioning directly into vertical rock. The upper part of this pitch featured an 8m horizontal traverse (5.7) on slippery but sturdy rock, protected by nuts. Leaving our rope at the top of this pitch, we scrambled to the summit, where we found a cairn and rappel anchor left by the 2007 team. Two rappels brought us back to the col.

In the final hours of the afternoon, Aaron and I made four V-thread rappels down the first part of our route and then descended the lower glacier and moraine back to camp. Collapsing in our tent at 8 p.m., we concluded a beautiful 16-hour day in the Carabaya. We called our Papaccapac route Mom and Pop Shoppe (350m, D 5.7 AI3).

– Derek Field, Canada

Images



Base camp at 5,600m below the south face of Allincapac.



Aaron Zimmerman belaying Nathan Heald on the first steep pitch up the south face of Pico Carol.



Nathan Heald leading the third pitch on the south face of Pico Carol, the most difficult of the ice

climbing on the ascent.



Looking west at Aaron Zimmerman leading the fourth-pitch traverse to a narrow col below Pico Carol.



The base of the short crux dihedral on the summit block of Pico Carol.



: Looking east at Nate Heald on the rocky summit of Pico Carol, with Twin Peak behind. Duncan and Yasu are just visible climbing Twin Peak.



Descending the north side of Pico Carol, with Huaynaccapac (southwest face) on the left horizon.



Derek Field



The team nearing the top of the steep climbing on the south face of Pico Carol, with the rocky summit just above.



Derek Field following the first belayed ice pitch on the south side of the Mamaccapac-Papaccapac group.



Derek Field leading the 5.7 crux dihedral on the first pitch of Papaccapac.



Derek Field leading the final 5.6 headwall on Papaccapac.



Derek Field on one of the summit towers of Papaccapac, with the impressive peak of Screwdriver behind; Screwdriver has three known routes.



Derek Field leading the 5.7 face up Mamaccapac's summit tower.



Looking north from base camp next to Laguna Carabaya. From left to right, the major peaks are: Twin Peak, Cornice, Chequilla, Tower, Papaccapac, and Mamaccapac.



Aaron Zimmerman leading the first belayed pitch on Mom and Pop Shoppe, the route followed to make the first ascent of Papaccapac.



Belay selfie showing angle of ice on Mom and Pop Shoppe.



Looking west at Aaron standing at the col below the summit tower of Papaccapac.



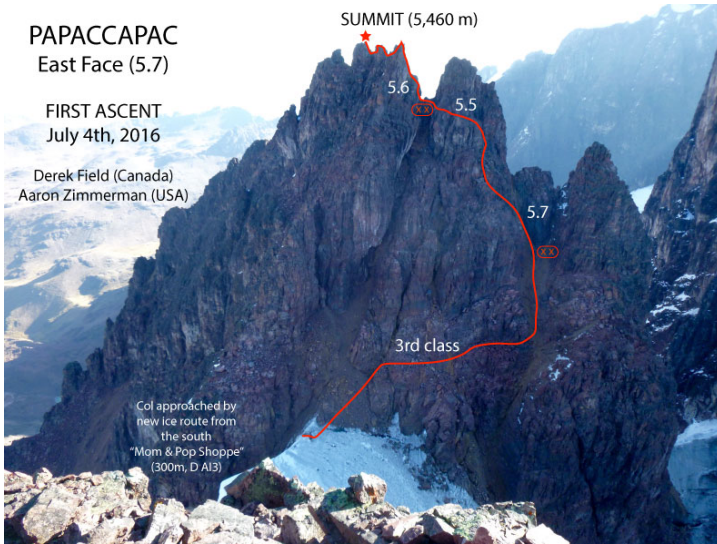
Looking southwest at Aaron Zimmerman on one of the summit towers atop Papaccapac.



Looking east at Aaron retracing the 5.5 traverse on Papaccapac, with the west face of Mamaccapac looming beyond.



A topo of the climbing up the summit tower of Mamaccapac.



A topo of the climbing up the summit tower of Papaccapac.



The route of Mom and Pop Shoppe on the south side of the Mamaccapac and Papaccapac peaks.



Derek Field on the summit of Mamaccapac with the impressive tower of Screwdriver behind.

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