



AAC Publications

Nevado Huantsán, South Ridge (West Summit to Main Summit)

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

An Italian team that included Casimiro Ferrari reached Nevado Huantsán's western summit from the south in 1972 (AAJ 1973). At 6,270m, this top is only about 125m lower than the main summit, but the gap proved too difficult to cross for the Italians and subsequent teams. Since then, other climbers have reached the west summit without continuing to Huantsán's main summit, including Spanish (AAJ 1978), Polish (AAJ 1981), Americans (AAJ 1985), and French (AAJ 1990), along with a few undocumented climbs.

On July 28, Devin Corboy (USA), Macario Crispin (Peru), Arttu Pylkkanen (Finland), Javier Reyes (Chile), Johannes Suikkanen (Finland), and I traveled from Huaraz to Laguna Rajucolta, below the western flank of Nevado Huantsán (6,395m). We portered our equipment to a moraine camp next to the glacier at 5,000m the same day.

On the 29th, Macario and I climbed 300m of ice and snow on the west wall (similar to the 1972 Italian route on the west face) and established a high camp at 5,750m just below the col between the south summit (5,900m) and west summit (6,270m). During the descent, we left fixed ropes on the steeper sections. On the 30th, we re-ascended the west wall to our high camp with the rest of the group.

On the 31st we started climbing the south ridge at 12:30 a.m. and made the west summit (6,270m) by 5 a.m. From there we walked down to the col below the main summit. We ascended the main 150m summit block via steep ice and rock. The summit cornices were unstable and dangerous and required some aid off of a snow stake to overcome; only I touched the highest cornice, while the rest of the team stayed 20m below.

To quicken our descent, we were able to rappel a steeper line instead of retracing our steps down the south ridge and west summit. We arrived back to our high camp at 9:30 p.m. after a 22-hour day. On August 1, we rappelled four times down the west wall, walked the glacier back to the moraine camp, and made it down to Laguna Rajucolta by 3 p.m.

We called our route—the first known linkup of the west and main summits—Apus Circus (1,200m, ED WI4 M5).

– Nathan Heald, Peru

Images



Nathan Heald climbing the icy west wall of Nevado Huantsán to the high camp.



Nathan Heald leading steep mixed terrain below the main summit of Nevado Huantsán.



The team poses just below the main summit of Nevado Huantsán.



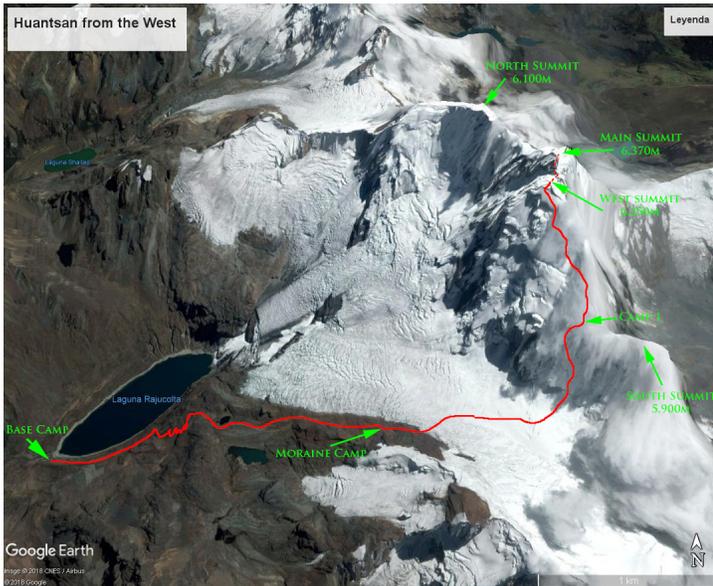
Macario Crispin and Javier Reyes just above the team's high camp on Nevado Huantsán.



Looking down at Johannes Suikkanen from the main summit of Nevado Huantsán.



Looking up toward the west summit (6,270m) and main summit (6,395m) of Nevado Huantsán.



An overview of Nevado Huantsán, showing the 2018 route Apus Circus (1,200m, ED WI4 M5), which was the first known linkup of the west summit (6,270m) and main summit (6,395m).



The 2018 team's high camp with the west summit of Nevado Huantsán behind.



Johannes Suikkanen climbing steep mixed terrain on Nevado Huantsán.



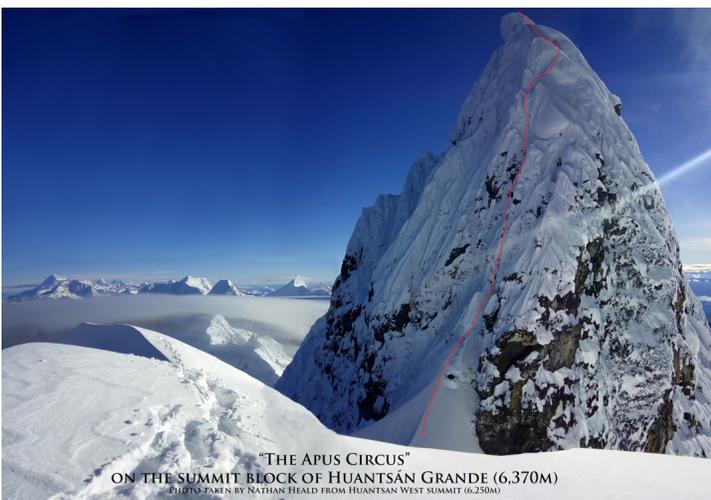
The team approaches the overhanging summit cornices of Nevado Huantsán.



The route on the south ridge of Nevado Huantsán to the west summit (6,270m) and main summit (6,395m), as seen from the south summit.



The route on the west wall of Nevado Huantsán to the 2018 team's high camp between the south summit (5,900m) and west summit (6,270m).



A close view of the 2018 route up to the main summit (6,395m) of Nevado Huantsán, as seen from the west summit. Nathan Heald noted that this photo was taken on a previous attempt in 2017, when there was much more snow than on the successful 2018 climb.



Nathan Heald poses on the final summit cornice of Nevado Huantsán.

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