

## GUMC PERU 2000 EXPEDITION REPORT

After the culture shock of Lima's hustle and bustle it was a relief to arrive in the pleasant mountain town of Huaraz. Huaraz is situated at 3090m at the foot of the Cordillera Blanca and formed a perfect base to climb in the nearby mountains.

Our first week was spent in Huaraz, acclimatising, sussing the place out, clubbing or in Tom's case crawling from bed to toilet after eating a particularly fine example of 'Chicken Supreme'. Once recovered and reasonably acclimatised we headed for the Quebrada Quilcayhuanca accompanied by a cook we'd met during the past week and a young lad claiming to be an arriero with six laden donkeys. As it turned out we're pretty sure he hadn't looked after donkeys before but it provided great amusement and he still managed to get the bags up to base camp (with a little help). We'd chosen this valley for acclimatisation as it had suitable peaks and sounded less frequented than others. Our first peak, Huapi, went OK except for the final 100m which was avalanche prone due to recent snow fall, we cut our loses and headed back to base. After a day of rest we moved camp up towards our main objective in the valley, Chinchey 6222m or 6333m, this was the first hint that people didn't come here often as the guide book description bared little resemblance to the actual route. Kev unfortunately succumbed to the dreaded 'skitter monster' at this point and after Oli volunteered to stay and tend to him, just Nick, Tom and Iain set off for the top. Unfortunately they were turned back at 5500m due to poor snow conditions.

After hearing horror stories of the Ferrari route on Alpamayo such as 30 teams strung out in the 300m summit gully, three fixed ropes, dropped ice axes and one in two returning bloodied we decided it would be wise to steer clear of this famous route. Instead we chose the NW ridge of Tocllaraju (6034m) as our next objective. Nick and Iain were succesful and reported a fantastic route, Kev got the skitters again and Tom and Oli were turned back at 5700m due to altitude sickness. Tom, Oli, Nick and Iain also climbed Urus (5420m) whilst in the vicinity.

Nick and Kev had to return home at this point due to work commitments so just Tom, Oli and Iain headed off to try Caraz Oeste (6025m) in the North of the range. All three made the summit, which was a spectacular snowy needle. The three then set off to attempt Chopicalqui (6356m) by this point feeling much more used to the altitude, however 12 inches of snow fell after arriving at the first camp so the attempt was abandoned. A fantastic boulder field near Huaraz provided a welcome rest for the last couple of days before heading home.

The Cordillera Blanca provided a superb setting for a first trip to the greater ranges, with plenty of spectacular peaks so easily accessible and almost as hassle free as climbing in the Alps, the main worry we had was whether Peru was on the brink of civil war!

We would like to thank the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, the Andy Fanshawe Memorial Trust and the Liam Elliot Memorial trust for their invaluable support without which the expedition would not have been possible.

# A beginners guide to Peru



By Tom Marshall

Glasgow University Mountaineering Club received an MCoS expedition grant for their trip to Peru this year (as well as The Liam Elliot Memorial and the Andy Fanshaw Memorial Awards). Other members of the expedition were Oliver Brown, Nick Tarmey, Iain Hutchinson, and Kevin Neal. Here they give a brief report of their trip.

After the culture shock of Lima's hustle and bustle it was a relief to arrive on the pleasant mountain town of Huaraz. Huaraz is situated at 3,090m at the foot of the Cordillera Blanca and formed a perfect base to climb in the nearby mountains.

Our first week was spent in Huaraz, acclimatising, sussing the place out, 'clubbing' and in my case crawling from bed to toilet after eating a particularly fine example of "Chicken Supreme". Once recovered and reasonably acclimatised we headed for the Quebrada Quilcayhuanca accompanied by a cook we'd met during the past week and a young lad claiming to be an "arriero", with six laden donkeys. As it turned out we're pretty sure he hadn't looked after donkeys before but it provided great amusement and he still managed to get the bags to base camp (with a little help).

We'd chosen this valley for acclimatisation as it had suitable peaks and sounded less frequented than others. Our first peak, Huapi, went

OK except for the final 100m which was avalanche prone due to recent snowfall, so we cut our losses and headed back to base. After a day of rest we moved camp up towards our main objective in the valley, Chinchey (6226m, or 6333m). Here we had our first hint that people didn't come here often as the guidebook description bore little resemblance to the actual route. Kev

unfortunately succumbed to the dreaded "skittermonster" at this point and after Oli volunteered to stay and tend to him, just Nick, myself and Iain

set off for the top. Unfortunately we were turned back at 5500m due to poor snow conditions.

After hearing horror stories of our intended 'Ferrari Route' on Alpmayo, such as 30 teams strung out in the 300m summit gully, three fixed ropes, dropped axes and one-in-two climbers returning bloodied, we decided it would be wise to steer clear of this famous route and instead we chose the North West Ridge of Tocllaraju (6034m) as our

Summit of Urus



Photo: Tom Marshall



Photo: Tom Marshall



Photo: Tom Marshall

5,800m on Caraz Oeste

next objective.

Nick and Iain were successful and reported a fantastic route, Kev got the skitters again and myself and Oli were turned back at 5700m due to altitude sickness. Oli, Nick, me and Iain also climbed Urus (5420m) whilst in the vicinity - another of our original objectives.

Nick and Kev had to return home at this point due to work commitments so that left just me, Oli and Iain. We headed off to try Caraz Oeste (6025m) in the north of the range. All three made the summit, which was a spectacular snowy needle. We then set off to

attempt Chopicalqui (6356m), by this time feeling much more used to the altitude, however, 12 inches of snow fell after arriving at the first camp, so the attempt was abandoned. A fantastic boulder field near Huaraz provided a welcome rest for the last couple of days before heading home.

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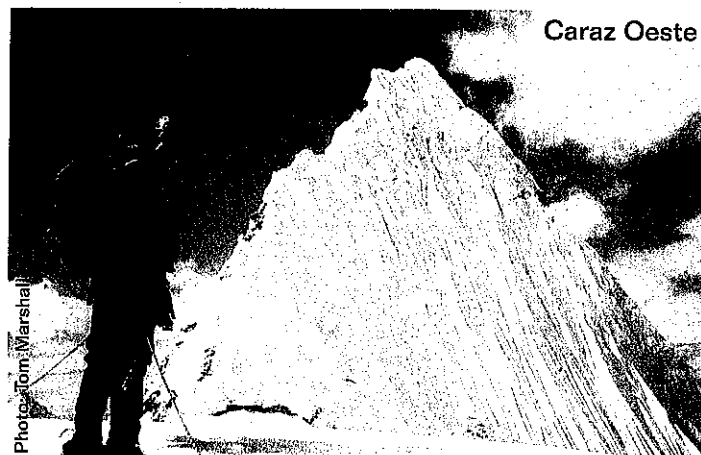


Photo: Tom Marshall

Caraz Oeste