

Mountaineering in the Cordillera Blanca, Peru

ANUMC Expedition Proposal

June-July 2019



Introduction:

The Andes of South America form the world's highest mountain range outside of Asia and, as the longest mountain range in the world, promise numerous exciting and remarkable mountaineering excursions. Following on from a number of ANUMC expeditions to New Zealand in recent years, the Andes are a logical next stepping stone and a chance to venture further afield into bigger and bolder territory.

This expedition will focus on the Cordillera Blanca in northern Peru. This range is well explored and documented (see *The Andes: A Guide for Climbers* by John Biggar) and access is easy. There are numerous potential objectives in the Cordillera Blanca that suit our skills and experience, with peaks in the 5000-6800m range, including 15 major 6000m peaks.

The expedition is planned for the winter of 2019. June and July are the best months for climbing since, despite being winter, it is the dry season. We will be based in the town of Huaraz, which is a major mountaineering centre with good facilities and access to up to date information on conditions.

Potential Objectives:

The Cordillera Blanca is very well-developed so we have many options. We will base ourselves in Hauraz and make several trips in to different valleys to climb. A slightly optimistic (in terms of number of peaks) schedule would comprise one or two acclimatisation peaks and two or three more serious ones. The exact schedule will also attempt to minimise travel time between valleys by picking peaks which are close together. Potential objective include the following¹:

¹ Note: French Alpine grades are used in the Cordillera Blanca. An explanation can be found here: <http://www.alpinist.com/p/online/grades> .

Nevado Urus (5423 m , F/PD) / Nevado Ishinca (5530m , F/PD)



Nevado Urus

These two peaks are close together and are popular acclimatisation peaks because they are fairly high and technically easy, with a Bergschrund crossing and brief steep sections being the only challenges.

Nevado Yanapaccha (5460 m AD)



Nevado Yanapaccha

This is another easy acclimatisation peak, whose only technical difficulties are moderately steep snow slopes. Being next to the very popular Pisco Peak, it is very well serviced.

Alpamayo (5947 m AD/D)



Alpamayo

Alpamayo is one of the most striking and distinctive mountains in the world. It is most commonly climbed by the Ferrari Route (AD+), which pushes straight up fairly steep snow slopes between snow flutings to reach the summit ridge. Most parties do not continue to to summit because the final ridge is complex and difficult. It is a very popular mountain with a well-established base camp.

Huandoy (6000 m - 6395 m , AD - TD)



Huandoy Massif. From left to right are Huandoy Sur, Oeste, Norte, and Este.

This massif comprises 4 peaks. The tallest is Huandoy Norte at 6395 m. Huandoy Norte is an excellent peak for us to try a harder route as the North face holds several safe steep routes with an easier descent down the East icefall. There are also moderate routes on the other peaks. This mountain is accessed from the well-serviced Pisco base camp.

Artesonraju (5999 m D)



Artesonraju.

This striking peak is widely believed to be the one on the Paramount logo. There are a number of striking but moderate lines directly up the face, and safe descents down the ridges. This peak is climbed from the same valley as the very popular Alpamayo so access is quite easy. If we make it up this one we will form a human pyramid on the summit to make sure we pass the 6000 m mark.

Benefits to the Club:

This expedition follows a trend in recent years of increasingly more notable mountaineering trips in the ANUMC. It will build on the skills developed in these past trips and bring the ANUMC closer to its 1970-80's heyday (Dunagiri etc.)

The expedition will result in increased exposure of the club both nationally and internationally. Expedition members will publish articles on the internet and in the EPIC magazine and photos on social media. We will also host presentations/slides nights at ANU, which will attract new and existing mountaineers to the club.

There will be significant skill development -- before and during this trip -- for some of the club's most active contributors. These skills will definitely be passed on to other club

members, as the expedition participants have a track record of doing so. There is potential for new and/or up-and-coming club members to participate in this trip. This will enable significant up-skilling and also provide a good motivator to become more involved and volunteer for the club.

Costs:

Description	Cost (pp) (AUD)	Cost (group) (AUD)
Flights: Sydney->Lima (return)	1650	
Lima -> Hauraz (bus, return)	80	
Public Transport to Valleys to Climb	60	
Food and accommodation in town	280	
Food and fuel on the Mountain	180	
Vaccines	800	
Rescue Insurance	410	
Health Insurance	80	
Satellite Phone Rental	85	340
Total	3625	

Risks:

The major risks are the objective dangers associated with high-altitude mountaineering. Namely rockfall, avalanches, poor weather, and altitude-related illnesses. Although avalanches are uncommon in the peak climbing season, and the weather is typically quite stable with periods of bad weather lasting only a day or two. These risks are mitigated by not climbing after heavy snow, and not climbing before periods of bad weather. Team members will be educated on identifying avalanche terrain and avalanche conditions. (James plans to take his AST1 before going on this trip.)

Altitude is a particular concern. At around 6000m, the peaks in the Cordillera Blanca are much higher than any in New Zealand or Australia. To mitigate the risks of altitude sickness we will thoroughly acclimatise in villages and on low peaks before attempting serious climbing. We will carry and take Diamox as a prophylactic for altitude sickness. All team members will be educated about the symptoms of altitude-related illnesses. Oscar's medical training will also be helpful in mitigating these risks.

Although the Cordillera Blanca is a popular and well-developed climbing area it lacks an official rescue system. There are two private rescue organisations - The Yungay High-Mountain Rescue Squad, and the Peruvian Mountain Rescue Association. We plan to purchase [Global Rescue](#) membership. In the event of a life-threatening or time-critical injury or event, we will effect self-rescue, and also contact Global Rescue, who will organise and fund a rescue with these providers. Global Rescue membership will also cover the costs of medical transport back to Australia. We will carry a satellite phone to contact Global Rescue and the rescue organisations. A satellite phone is more effective than a PLB because it allows us to contact the rescue providers directly. We will also purchase health insurance through Global Rescue, which will ensure we have access to treatment in Peruvian hospitals (the health insurance has no exclusions for mountaineering). A party size of at least 3 increases our chances of effective self-rescue, and all team members will be trained in relevant rope self-rescue skills.

If the team is at any point unable to continue an ascent or the trip, we will return to the town of Hauraz, which is very close to the mountains.

Expedition Members:

1. **James Bailie:** James has had two summers of mountaineering in New Zealand. He participated in the ANUMC NZ mountaineering course in '17-'18 and will be going on the ANUMC expedition to Kyrgyzstan later this year, which will further build his skills. He has contributed significantly to the club, with four years on the exec (2 years as president) and is the current climbing officer. He has passed on skills learnt on previous club expeditions, running many climbing club trips and a vertical self-rescue course.
2. **Daniel Comber-Todd:** Dan has had two summers mountaineering in New Zealand, and climbed in Kyrgyzstan. He participated in the '17-'18 ANUMC mountaineering course in NZ and is leading this year's expedition to Kyrgyzstan. He also has extensive trad climbing experience. He has been on the ANUMC committee for two years and the exec for one year (as mountaineering office, climbing wall officer, and general officer). He has passed on his skills to the club by leading many climbing trips, rope skills courses, and a "learn-to-lead" course.
3. **Oscar Hatten:** Oscar has significant experience rock climbing, skiing and long distance bushwalking and good rope skills. He will be developing his mountaineering skills by participating in a mountaineering course in South America prior to the expedition. He also brings valuable medical expertise and Spanish language skills.

All three current members have committed to the expedition. We will be advertising this expedition within the club and aim to recruit a further two or three members.

Proposed Club Funding:

We are asking the club for funding of \$1000 per person, up to a total of \$5000. The total amount will be split between students and non-students at a ratio of 3:2. This is in-line with previous funding for similar expeditions.

References:

Title page photo: Alpamayo, Frank R 1981, licensed on Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alpamayo_12.jpg

The Andes: A Guide for Climbers, John Biggar, Andes, 2005, ISBN:0953608727

Notes for ourselves:

Previous expeditions:

- NZAC: Taulliraju (5830m), Santa Cruz Massif., Cordillera Blanca, Peru
<https://alpineclub.org.nz/parkside/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Cordilera-Blanca-Peru-Exp-Harris-Morris-Pearson-2016.pdf>
<https://alpineclub.org.nz/parkside/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Peru-Report-NZAC-2016.pdf>
- Bus pricing from
<https://ventaonline.moviltours.com.pe/MoviltoursPasaje-Web/wnConsultaltinerario.zul?codCiuOrigen=72&codCiuDestino=47&dFechalda=06/13/2019&dFechaRetorno=> Note S/100 (or ~AU\$40 is on the high/VIP side), prices go as low as S/60 (~AU\$25).

Vaccines:

CDC health information: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/clinician/none/peru>

- We won't be travelling in malaria-risk areas

Vaccine	Dickson medical and travel	Travel doctor Canberra
Hep A (recommended by CDC)	\$75	\$146, combined Typhoid
Hep B (recommended by CDC due to risk of medical care)	\$25*3	\$33*3
Yellow Fever (mandatory for entry back into Aus.)	\$139	\$81.60
Typhoid (recommended by CDC, due to travel to remote areas)	\$60	\$146, combined Hep A
Rabies (recommended by CDC, due to travel to remote areas)	\$125*3	\$124*3
Doctor's consultation (compulsory)	\$69	\$83-103, minus Medicare rebate
Nurse fee	Unknown	12.5 (compulsory, each

		visit but the first)
Total	\$793	\$806.60

Guidebook chapter:

https://www.kobo.com/au/en/ebook/northern-peru-the-andes-a-guide-for-climbers?utm_campaign=shopping_feed_au_en&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&gclid=EAlaI_QobChMln4-Nib7N2wIV0w0rCh2VHwptEAYYASABEgKaXvD_BwE