

summit on the Polish Direct. (He had been feeling tired and was encouraged by his partners to take a nap and catch up when he felt better.) Three Brazilians were avalanched off the technical and massive South Face, and an American froze to death while climbing alone in a storm on the Normal Route.

The official number of deaths could not be attained, because the Argentine permit office feared the impact on tourism. I was more-or-less escorted out once the officials learned of my request for information. However, rangers in Base Camp gave an unofficial estimate of 13 to 15 killed. Although all guides agreed the weather was worse then they had ever seen on Aconcagua, unsound decisions to push for the summit are behind most of the deaths.

KENT MCCLANNAN, *unaffiliated*

Walther Penck, Ojos del Salado Region. Walther Penck, near Ojos del Salado, is one of the world's highest volcanoes. In February, a group led by Jaime Surez climbed a sub-summit: Volcan de los Arianos (6562m). This was perhaps the first ascent of this summit.

MARCELO SCANU, *Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Ojos del Salado Area, Various Ascents and Observations. From February to March, I was in northern Chile and Argentina in the area south of Ojos del Salado with a group of seven, all from Germany: Martin Blumenstock, Fritz Felber, Michael Fuchs, Werner Geys, Alexander Hartlein, Bernd Tarnosky, and Manfred Unterholzner. Five of us (Blumenstock, Fuchs, Hartlein, Tarnosky, and me) climbed Veladero (6436m), a peak near Bonete Chico. We found only a pick ax on the summit, which had probably been left by Johan Reinhard in 1985 or 1986. Two days later, we tried to climb Bonete Chico (6759m) but failed to reach the summit due to a heavy storm. In Jagüe we met Sr. Urriche, who made the first ascent of Bonete Chico with Cicchitti in 1970. In 1954, Cicchitti climbed Pissis, but he thought he had climbed Bonete Grande. He wrote of a mountain with four or five very high summits and he saw a very high mountain south of the mountain he climbed. This means he was on Pissis and what he saw was Bonete Chico. Walther Penck, who said he had climbed Bonete in 1913, most likely reached the summit of a nameless mountain (6222m) about eight kilometers north of Bonete Chico. He came from the east along the Rio de la Tamberia. A sketch in his book, *Puna de Atacama*, shows the route to a summit north of what is now called Bonete Chico.

Later Felber, Fuchs, Geys, and Tarnosky climbed Ojos del Salado (6885m) while Blumenstock, Hartlein, Unterholzner and I reached the summit of Tres Cruces South (6749m), where we found a broken ski-pole, a note of Greg Horne's (1995)—and an old box with Paryski and Osiecki's calling card from November 26, 1937! So they didn't climb the central peak on this day as is written in Jill Neate's *A Survey of Andean Ascents, Second Edition*.

ALEXANDER VON GOTZ, *Deutschen Alpenverein*

TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Monte Sarmiento, Attempt. Nelson Bareta and Nativo Fransen of Brazil, and Eduardo Lopez, Mariano Sebesta, and Walter Rossini of Argentina departed December 14 from Puerto Bahía Mansa with the goal of repeating the 1995 route on Monte Sarmiento. During their 29 days

waiting for an opportunity to climb, they saw the mountain twice. They made their first cache at approximately 600 meters in heavy rains. Three days later they made their second carry in the rain. On the 11th day, they saw the west summit for the first time for some two hours. On the 14th day, the rain stopped for some eight to ten hours. In the hopes of good weather, they climbed to Camp I the next day and slept there for the first time. They were able to see the east summit for one hour and the west summit for two hours. On the 16th day, it began to rain again. They remained in Camp I. On the 17th day at noon they went down to Base Camp, taking advantage of a break in the weather to reprovision Camp I. When they went down, the mountain cleared and for the first time they saw it in all its grandeur. This lasted two hours. On the 22nd day, they climbed to Camp I again. The next day they climbed up in bad weather and reached 1000-1100 meters, but a snow storm left them without visibility and forced them to go down. On the 26th night, they saw clear skies for the first time. When they woke at 2 a.m., however, the mountain was not visible. It was their last day before they would have to catch their boat. Until this moment, it had been raining every day. Unexpectedly, the mountain cleared at 7 a.m., and the team began up. They found the 1995 route very changed, which forced them to try a new route on the west face. Conscious of the avalanche danger and the late hour, they nonetheless continued. Once above 1000-1100 meters, they crossed the west ridge and continued climbing with the hope of reaching the 1995 route. Two-thirds of the way up the mountain, in strong winds, they observed that avalanches had already fallen from the east summit toward the Lovisato Glacier. They decided to go down. Once in Camp I, as they prepared for the descent, they heard a considerable avalanche above the west face, followed by a dozen more avalanches.

The team carried out ten bags of garbage that they collected from the beach. They wondered how so much garbage could be found in such a remote place. The expedition members believe it is possible to reach the south ridge of the peak by the Mauri-Mafei route. Regarding the west summit, there don't seem to be too many options between the 1995 route and the west face, both being very prone to avalanches.

FACUNDO JOSÉ, *Club Andino Bariloche*

CHILEAN PATAGONIA

Chilean Patagonia, Overview. The weather in Chilean Patagonia was terrible from November to February. March was very good from the first to the 16th. Climbing activity in Paine National Park was down in general—perhaps 50% less than in the last three years.

HERNAN JOFRE, *Amerindia Concept, Chile*

Escudo, Southwest Face, First Winter Ascent. On August 7-8, Italians Marco Balla Longa, Marco Birolin, and Mario Curnis climbed the Southwest Face of Escudo in the Valle del Silencio. It was the first winter ascent of this route.

HERNAN JOFRE, *Amerindia Concept, Chile*

Aleta del Tiburon, East Face. From January 15 to 25, in the Valle del Frances, Esteban Chacon (Chile) and Hubert van Ham (Dutch) established *Game Over*, *Man!* and *Pa' la Casa* ("Go Home") on the east face of Aleta del Tiburon. The following notes are from Hubert's