



## AAC Publications

---

### **Monte Giordano, West Ridge, Shark's Fin Ridge**

South America, Chile, Tierra Del Fuego

In April 2012, Jorg Heller, Robert Jasper, and I climbed the west ridge of Monte Giordano in Tierra del Fuego's Cordillera Darwin. The peak lies east-southeast of Monte Buckland (1,746m) in the western Cordillera Darwin, southeast of Isla Dawson. We reached the region by charter boat, having sat out a violent storm on a lonely island partway through the journey. Upon arriving, the bay we had hoped to anchor in proved too dangerous, and eventually the boat was tied securely to a cliff to prevent it from being damaged by storms.

Our approach was typical of the Tierra del Fuego: bushwhacking through dense rain forest and open swampland. Foul weather, for which this area is renowned, prevented us from establishing a base camp at the foot of the peak, and we were forced to operate from the boat. However, we knew what to expect: In 2010 we climbed a new route on Monte Sarmiento, at the western end of the Cordillera Darwin, perhaps the most famous peak in this little visited range.

Our first attempt on Giordano failed—Heller cracked a rib. However, three days before our scheduled departure, a weather window appeared and allowed for a rapid ascent. We reached the previously unclimbed summit shortly after midnight in bright moonlight, returning to the boat in a 27-hour round-trip. The spectacular shape of the ice-encrusted west ridge led us to name it the Shark's Fin Ridge. Maximum difficulties were M7. On our maps Monte Giordano showed an altitude of 2,042m, but a GPS reading on the summit recorded the altitude at 1,517m.

Editor's note: Giordano lies east-southeast of Monte Buckland (1,746m) in the western Cordillera Darwin, southeast of Isla Dawson. Until this year Buckland had only one ascent, in 1966 by the strong Italian alpinists and Patagonian activists Alippi, Ferrari, Guidici, Machetto, Mauri, and Pirovano, from an expedition led by Carlo Mauri. These Italians approached via the southern Agostini Fjord and made the first ascent via the southwest ridge.

In 2012, Daniel Gross, Markus Kautz, and Robert Koschitzki from Germany made the long-awaited second ascent, this time approaching from Fitton Bay to the north and climbing the northeast ridge and northeast face (D), with a crux pitch of WI4 90°. This team managed to set up a high camp at 1,100m, and later in the expedition were able to make the first ascent of nearby Monte Niebla (1,430m) via the northeast face.

## Images



Robert Jasper rappelling in the dark after a short weather window allowed the team to make a rapid ascent of Monte Giordano's west ridge.



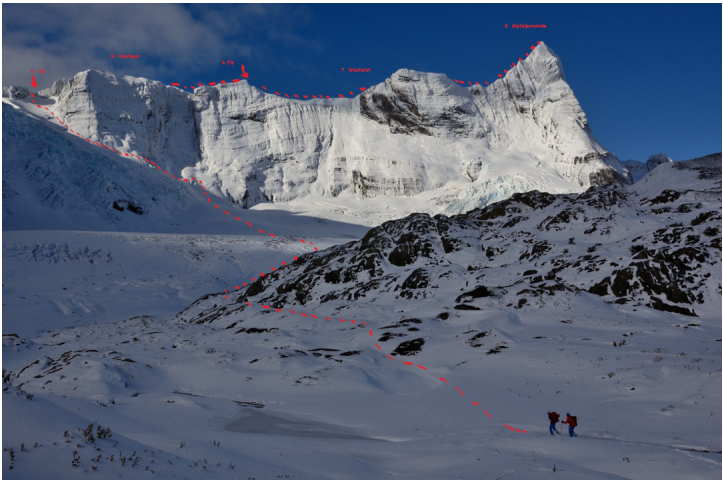
Approaching Monte Giordano's west ridge (the Shark's Fin Ridge), the obvious sweeping ridge line to the left.



A stormy approach to Monte Giordano.



Racking up below the ridge.



An overview of the long route via the Shark's Fin Ridge.



Traversing along the ridge.





An overview of Monte Giadorno.

## Article Details

Author	Ralf Gantzhorn
Publication	AAJ
Volume	55
Issue	87
Page	226
Copyright Date	2013
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions